

INTRODUCTION

This issue of our journal *Colombian Applied Linguistics* is dedicated to the topic of Second Language Teacher Education. Known authors, for those of us in language teacher education, such as Jack Richards, Karen Johnson, Michael Wallace, Donald Freeman, Kreeft Payton, and others have guided the field of language teacher education for some years.

They have identified concerns, transformations and changes within the field of second language teacher education. However, applications of such theories in our Colombian context result in newer understandings and the construction of local theories about the processes that Colombian language teachers experience when learning to teach. Language teacher education programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels in Colombian Universities have for years produced considerable amount of knowledge that moves teachers and teacher educators to action and ideological change permanently.

Because it is very important for us to make local theories and pedagogical actions known to the academic community in Colombia and abroad, the articles selected for this issue focus on reflection, decision making and research as key components for teachers' growth and development in second/foreign language teacher education. The articles selected cover a variety of issues that depict the complexities of educational experiences lived by both preservice and inservice teachers in the challenges that teaching to teach and learning to teach impose on them. Thus, to illustrate the dilemmas of student teachers, the first article presents a case study of a foreign language teacher learning to deal with multiple problems. A second article on the design and implementation of classroom research with undergraduate language teachers at Universidad del Valle describes the processes of learning to do classroom research. Thirdly, two articles present experiences with inservice teachers that depict their decision making processes and teacher reasoning within contexts of teacher professional development programs. In the fifth article, the authors raise questions about the standards in EFL teaching and present teacher education programs as alternatives to better qualify EFL teachers. In the sixth article, the author describes a research experience on literacy carried out at a private bilingual school from an *emic* point of view. She highlights the impact that the project had in teachers' professional growth and development. A seventh article presents a study about

informed decision-making processes carried out by inservice teachers. Additionally, this issue includes an article about research study that examines an assessment tool to measure student oral production in English.

The last section of our journal on teaching issues presents two articles related to literacy instruction in the second language classroom and cultural issues that may affect pedagogy.

All the articles in this journal point out the view of reflective practice as a way to critically re-examine the teachers' role, the structure of curricula and materials, and the function of schools in establishing and maintaining a culture of learning through permanent observation and inquiry in classrooms. Within this critical view of reflection, second language teachers' thought processes are central. A way to have access to those thought processes as mentioned by Richards (1998) is by observing and talking about teaching as well as by writing about teaching. Both procedures serve, the development of reflective practice because they engage teachers in reviewing and rethinking what they are doing.

It is our hope that our readers enjoy the themes presented in this issue and consider sharing with us teaching and research experiences that allow other teachers to be informed of important actions taken in the field of second and foreign language teacher education and learning in Colombia.

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Journal Editor