

Editorial

We are pleased to present our readers with volume 12, No. 2 of the Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal. This volume presents four research studies on Critical Literacy and a study on the interlanguage of Turkish EFL learners through the use of complaints. As teacher educators and researchers, one of the goals of our Language Teacher Education program in Applied Linguistics to TEFL is to help teachers reflect upon the need to promote critical pedagogies and literacies in schools. We believe that critical literacy “connects the political, and the personal, the public and the private, the global and the local, the economic and the pedagogical, for rethinking our lives and for promoting justice in place of inequity” Shor (1997, p. 2). Therefore, it is of paramount importance to make the results of critical pedagogy practices carried out by classroom teachers visible through our publication. Critical literacy studies such as the one conducted by the researchers in our first article entitled *Bilingualism of Colombian Deaf Children in the Teaching-Learning of Mathematics in the First Year of Elementary School* are needed. The researchers examine the problematic situation of illiteracy (51.4%) and lack of schooling opportunities (88.7%) for the deaf population in Colombia and discuss the education of the deaf, analyzing students’ communicative skills in learning mathematics, the importance of the socio-cultural perspective of language in the conceptual development, the schooling for the deaf, the importance of bilingualism in the learning processes of the deaf children, and the development of arithmetic processes in deaf children. The goals of the study as well as the results indicate the unequal conditions that many educational systems have with respect to minority populations.

In addition to studies related to education for the deaf as the one mentioned above, other minority populations in different countries require attention from the educational systems to address particular needs of learners. For example, in the study *Discussing Critical Social Issues with Young Latinas*, carried out by a first grade bilingual teacher in the USA, the researcher analyzed the meaning making processes of Latina bilingual first grade children around literature discussions of socio-critical issues lived by students’ families as Mexican immigrants. The teacher in this study enacted a critical literacy curriculum through literature discussions about critical issues that impacted the childrens’ lives. She defends that “the praxis of critical literacy involves language in and for action beginning from the everyday words and knowledge students bring to class”.

Two research studies carried out in public schools in Bogotá: *Building Students’ Voices through Critical Pedagogy* and *A Guided Reading of Images: A Strategy to Develop Critical Thinking and Communicative Skills* offer a local perspective of language education. The first study

dealt with a teacher researcher experience using critical pedagogy practices to help high school students construct their own voice and recognize their role as citizens in terms of responsibility and commitment towards the others. The second study with elementary EFL students examined how guided reading of images, as a pedagogical strategy to develop communicative skills in English, could help children develop critical thinking.

Two articles discuss theoretical issues of interest to foreign language teachers: the use of the native language in the *EFL* classroom and *La Perspectiva discursiva y la comprensión de lectura en lengua extranjera* (the process of reading comprehension of texts in English as a foreign language from a discursive perspective).

Our last section introduces a curriculum innovation project from six universities in Chile that intends to evaluate the quality of Chilean English as a foreign language teacher education. The team of teacher educators in charge of designing and implementing the project consider that critical pedagogy can be one of the main supporting models to change inflexible traditional curriculum for more participatory and reflective instructional activities, such as situated and transformed practice and critical framing. The main aspects of the innovative curriculum proposed by the six universities includes on-going education, inviting classroom teachers to be part of the methodology classes, reflection workshops, early teaching practice, and mentoring as key practices in creating and consolidating communities of interest in language education.

I would like to thank the authors whose articles were selected for publication in this issue for their contributions and the peer reviewers for their valuable feedback that help us maintain the quality and standards of our publication.

We hope all our readers enjoy the articles in this volume of the *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*.

Amparo Clavijo Olarte
Editor