

Editor's Note

This issue starts off our fourth year of publishing this journal. For 2014, we maintain the traditions that have worked well for us thus far -the different sections that include one invited guest author, an interview of an expert related to our field, a book review and of course, articles by the exceptionally talented students and young researchers working in the area of teaching and learning language and literature. We also continue to enjoy the wonderful talent of the young illustrators of each volume cover, stemming from our fruitful collaboration with the EINA (Escola de Disseny i Art, Barcelona).

There will be a few changes for 2014. We announce that we will have a new Reviews and Criticism Editor. Dr. Emilee Moore will be taking over from Dr. Dolors Masats, starting out in issue 7.2. I take this last issue in which Dr. Masats participates to thank her for excellent work; her efforts have helped ensure that each volume always includes a high quality review of a recently published book and an interview of someone with innovative and stimulating ideas in the field of teaching and learning language and literature. To underscore this point, I bring attention to our interviewee of this volume - Dr. Vincenza Tudini of the University of South Australia. Interviewed by Maria Luisa Malerba, Dr. Tudini discusses her work on the use of technology applied to language teaching. Our book review brings a lighter touch to this volume. Belotti provides an overview of the six language teachers' narratives of their experiences teaching Catalan in diverse parts of the world.

Turning to our research articles, two of them in this volume tackle the thorny but essential issue of student performance, although they enter into the question from distinct perspectives and at different levels of language learning. Muñoz-Luna provides a comparative analysis between two university student cohorts studying English as a Second Language in order to determine motivational factors, in particular, the impact 'routine-breakers' can have on their drive for language learning. Cañete Outeiral outlines and analyzes an Action Research project that aimed to improve her assessment strategies of very young language learners' oral competences. The importance of research concerning the teacher's impact on student performance is paramount. As it has been pointed out in a Rand Report:

Many factors contribute to a student's academic performance, including individual characteristics and family and neighborhood experiences. But research suggests that, among school-related factors, teachers matter most. (2013, para. 2)

Our third article, by Menti and Alam also look at the impact the teacher can have on students' performance, in particular, primary education students' oral comprehension as scaffolded by teacher gestures. The authors provide an interactional analysis into the multimodal aspects of the teacher's interventions with her students as they work together to negotiate meaning-making.

Finally, last but definitely not least, it is an honor to have Dr. Paul Seedhouse and colleagues from Newcastle University writing our 'invited guest' article. The authors provide the pedagogical and technological background to an innovative European-funded project that combines state-of-the-art Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) technology with Task-Based Language Learning instruction to bring students to more realistic, intercultural language learning settings.

All of the articles included here set high benchmarks for the rest of the volumes for 2014. We will strive to maintain and build on this momentum throughout the year for the benefit of our readers.

Melinda Dooly
5 March 2014

Works Cited:

Rand Education. (2013). *Teachers matter: Understanding teachers' impact on student achievement*. Rand Corporation. Retrieved 27 February 2014 from <http://www.rand.org/education/projects/measuring-teacher-effectiveness/teachers-matter.html>

Credits:

Illustrations for the covers of each issue are designed by students of EINA (Escola de Disseny i Art, Barcelona) studying in the postgraduate course 'Il·lustració Creativa', under the direction of Sonia Pulido, teacher of Illustration for Publishing Media.

Reviewers for Volume 7.1

The editor would like to thank the following reviewers for their contribution to the preparation of Volume 7.1:

Cristina Aliagas (University of Sheffield), Jesús Alirio Bastidas (Universidad de Nariño), Mariona Corcelles (Universitat Ramon Llull), Cecilia Silva-Diaz (Ekare Publishing House), Emilee Moore (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), Adriana Patiño (University of Southampton), Neus Real (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), Randall Sadler (University of Illinois Urbana Champaign), Lou Tolosa (University of Georgia), Anna Turula (Pedagogical University of Krakow), Virginia Unamuno (Universidad de Buenos Aires y CONICET) and Annie Wilson (Universitat de Barcelona).