

## Editorial

In this issue I would like to address community based pedagogies (CBP) as an approach to teaching and learning used by people interested in doing educational work within a social perspective in our context. Research studies focused on CBP use community asset mapping to document the resources of a community by viewing the community as a place with strengths or assets that need to be preserved and enhanced, not deficits to be remedied. Gee (2000) asserts that recognizing valuable sources available in the community helps learners acquire knowledge embedded in social, cultural and material contexts.

For Medina (2012) CBP has shown to be a suitable pedagogical approach for literacy development in foreign language online environments. Her study with university students doing community projects in Bogota, Colombia, fostered multiple literacies. The results of her study show that the students' community projects provided six types of assets identified in the university community as: human, cultural, historical-ideological, ecological, communitarian and linguistic. For Medina (2012) an asset-based approach is useful to take advantage of the embodied and non-material cultural, linguistic and social capital that students can find in the multimodal book of the community. She defends that this type of projects involved two stages: recognizing the material and non-material assets of the community and reading the community critically. These two stages highlight "the complex richness of the community as a valuable resource for literacy development in foreign language contexts" (p.72).

Sharkey (2012) and Johnson & Davis (2008) have used CBP with preservice and inservice teacher education programs. Sharkey considers that:

Community-based pedagogies are curriculum and practices that reflect knowledge and appreciation of the communities in which schools are located and students and their families inhabit. It is an asset-based approach that does not ignore the realities of curriculum standards that teachers must address, but emphasizes local knowledge and resources as starting points for teaching and learning. (p1)

Johnson & Davis (2008) found that strong links between tertiary institutions and their communities are beneficial for regional institutions and believe in the need to further explain the advantages of Community Based Learning programs in educational settings.

Similarly, Ledwith's book (2011) on *Community work as critical pedagogy* emphasizes on the challenges of any community-based practices with a social intention. She claims that there is much good practice evidenced in community development but its weaknesses lie in 1) remaining local and 2) dividing theory from practice. For her staying local and untheorised limits our practice. She claims that "without an understanding of the theory and politics of community development, we leave ourselves open to distraction and manipulation" (p.11).

In the local context of teacher education programs in Bogota, community based pedagogies and literacies were key topics discussed by researchers and classroom teachers in the recent local inter-

national symposium on literacies and discourse studies at Universidad Distrital in Bogota, Colombia. Classroom teachers from Bogota's public schools showed evidences of students learning by inquiring the community and using it as a resource to learn in the different areas of the curriculum. University researchers also examined the power of collaborative school-university inquiries to understand community based pedagogies, different language ideologies and language socialization in Catalan education systems and the challenges and opportunities in higher education for a bilingual country. All the presentations in the two-day symposium provided a context for language teachers and researchers to share ideas and experiences that foster learning of EFL in different contexts. Research and pedagogical articles in this issue also deal with important aspects of language pedagogy, school literacies and social issues within educational communities. We hope you enjoy reading the articles in the four sections of this issue.

### References

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