

<http://dx.doi.org/10.15446/profile.v19n2.64604>

Editorial*

Resisting exclusion from core indexing systems

For discursive and material reasons, Third World scholars experience exclusion from academic publishing and communication; therefore, the knowledge of Third World communities is marginalized or appropriated by the West, while the knowledge of Western communities is legitimated and reproduced; and as part of this process, academic writing/publishing plays a role in the material and ideological hegemony of the West. (Canagarajah, 2002, p. 6)

The quote from Canagarajah shows the situation most academic journals have recently been going through in developing countries. In the Colombian scenario, academic publications like *PROFILE* are being demanded to comply more and more with regulations emanating from Colciencias, the Colombian research agency in charge of the classification of the scientific journals edited within the country (Colciencias, 2010, 2016). Its latest rules have relied heavily on JCR (Journal Citation Reports, led by Thomson) and SJR (Scientific Journal Ranking, managed by Scopus) and, to a lesser extent, on the *h5 index* (*h5*). The changes introduced in the national policies are based on the need to measure the impact of the national scientific production and to increase its acknowledgment in the international picture. The *h5 index* examines the number of citations made per article in a period of 5 years using Google Scholar and measures researchers and journals impact.

To our surprise, two local initiatives, Redalyc (Red de Revistas Científicas de America Latina y el Caribe, España y Portugal) and Scielo (Scientific Electronic Library Online), created and led in the Latin American region, have not been given the same role in defining the classification of journals. Colciencias is more inclined to accept the standards born in the heart of the West, which is to say within the Americo-European boundaries.

Colciencias (2016) has eagerly tried to align the measurement of Colombian research and journal impact to international standards. In the words of Colciencias, the idea is to gain robustness, reliability, and the appropriation of the production of knowledge in the many different disciplines. However, we do not understand why the peculiarities of journals from humanities and social sciences are not taken into consideration when deciding upon the databases and indexing systems that serve as reliable and appropriate for evaluation purposes.

Another expected by-product of this intended measurement is the editorial self-management. According to Colciencias, this measurement would allow Colombia to strengthen and

* How to cite this article (APA, 6th ed.): Cárdenas, M. L., & Nieto Cruz, M. C. (2017). Editorial. *PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 19(2), 7-11. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15446/profile.v19n2.64604>.

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acknowledge academic communities, promote the generation of new knowledge products, and the creation of national and international networks. Nice as it may sound, Colciencias' statement has led academic journals into a frenetic run which has stimulated an urgent need to compete for citations. This may, in the long term, have an influence on the disposal of academicians who do not fulfil "the standards".

Apart from yielding authority from the locals to the hegemony of the West, the expected short-term results hinder a reflection that must be carried out by the national actors who are in charge of creating and spreading knowledge. The assurance of quality in research publications is of course a desirable goal of any research agency in search of benefits for the country, the issuing institution, the publication and the authors themselves. This is by no means an undesirable ambition. What is neglected is the way in which the process has been carried out by imposition. Although editors have raised their voices in different forums and via working documents, and warning Colciencias about the inconveniences of the new policies, the modifications have been superficial and the alignment with JCR and SJR indexing systems remains as the main factor in the classification of the journals. To this end, Cárdenas (2016), claims that

the ranking systems and the pressures they place on today's academic or scientific journals and scholars cannot be the only reason to evaluate the relevance and quality of knowledge produced as a result of the examination of issues chosen by academic circles based in periphery countries like Colombia. (p. 52)

At the other end of the spectrum, as articles from authors of developing countries start to get citations, they become an interesting target for international agencies. The so-called bibliographic databases as Scopus and Thomson are of great importance for the academic world but their financial interests may hinder the spread of knowledge because of the fees they charge for access to articles written by authors including those from the developing countries.

Money moves the world. Its most representative financial institutions, among which is the editorial industry, are no exception to this popular sentence. Open access systems emerged as an action that defends the right to know without economic restrictions. If it were not by the open journal systems that enable academic publications to be posted for free in benefit of many national and international readers, the international publishing tentacles would have made it almost impossible to increase readership on a free basis. Sharing, on the other hand, promotes the exchange of information for free and sharing moves communities.

Sharing is a challenge faced by *PROFILE*. Despite the necessary alignment to standards, *PROFILE* has fought back these international standards by the promotion of the spread of knowledge, by motivating potential writers to contribute, as their knowledge is of incalculable value, even if the contribution is not perfect. The battle against marginalization is present in the philosophy of our publication, in the actions taken along our history and in the belief we hold of public benefit over all. We may even be gaining some ground in our attempts at international recognition when the journal has been included since June 2016 in the Emerging Sources Citation Index, produced by Thomson Reuters, precisely.

Luckily, we count on the support of the scholars who make up part of our committees, and whose participation is decisive to ensure the rigor of our publication. This time, we are pleased to welcome to our Editorial Review Board the following professors: Miguel Farías (Universidad de Santiago de Chile), Paula Rebolledo Cortés (RICELT, Chile), Maritza Rosas Maldonado (Universidad Andrés Bello, Chile), Constanza Tolosa (The University of Auckland, New Zealand), and Anne Westmacott (Universidad Chileno-Británica de Cultura).

We have gathered thirteen articles in this edition; two of them come from Mexico, one from Chile, one from the United States, and nine of them are authored by Colombian scholars. The first section, *Issues From Teacher Researchers*, includes ten articles concerning teachers' narrative inquiry, language learning, English language teacher education and language policies. We open with an article by professors Paula R. Golombek and Karen E. Johnson who return to their concept of teachers' narrative inquiry as professional development to complement it by resorting to Vygostky's sociocultural theory and a couple of instances of empirical research. Professors Golombek and Johnson stress the importance of regarding language teaching as a situated phenomenon prone to contextual influences, a condition that teachers can be made aware of through the dynamics of narrative inquiry. The figure of the "expert mediator"—the teacher educator—emerges as a facilitator who encourages teachers to gain agency and to conduct inquiry to make sense of their past, present, and future teaching practices, while engaging in narrative. Next, we have Gerrard Mugford from Mexican Universidad de Guadalajara, who starts by sharing with us an analysis of formulaic language and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) requests and highlights how formulaic language can enhance learners' ability to come across in acceptable and appropriate ways and thus become more pragmatically competent in the target language. Then, Colombian teacher Julio César Torres-Rocha adds a contribution to the field of language policies in the country. His research report focuses on the influence of the National Bilingual Programme on the reconstruction of teacher identity. Among the interesting aspects we find we can highlight in his manuscript is his study on how teachers feel about language requirements associated with a language policy, their familiarity with the policy, as well as their views and feelings on the language policy and language requirements for English teachers.

The fourth article of this section, authored by Colombian authors Ady Marcela Vaca Torres and Luis Fernando Gómez Rodríguez, tells us how a group of ninth graders enhanced the speaking skill in an English as a foreign language classroom through project-based learning. The results show how and why project-based learning encouraged students to increase oral production through lexical competence development, helped to overcome fears of speaking in the learning process, and increased their interest in learning about their school life and community.

Next, we present an account of a qualitative evaluation system that has been incorporated into a Colombian private English institution. Javier Rojas Serrano describes the way students face the new qualitative evaluation system and their views on alternative assessment as a way to help them make progress in their English learning process.

Then we can read a couple of research reports dealing with the use of learning strategies. The first one, by Chilean teachers Claudio Díaz Larenas, Lucía Ramos Leiva and Mabel Ortiz Navarrete, concentrates on rhetoric, metacognitive, and cognitive strategies pre-service teachers use before and after a process-based writing intervention when completing an argumentative essay. We can learn about the strategies used by the prospective teachers and the implications that can be drawn from them in order to decide upon the contents and development of writing programmes. The second article, authored by Colombian teachers Maria Eugenia Guapacha Chamorro and Luis Humberto Benavidez Paz, is a report on an action-research study aimed at improving the English language performance and language learning strategies use of a group of pre-service language teachers by combining elements from the cognitive academic language learning approach and task-based language teaching.

Afterward we include an article on the role of educational stakeholders in the appropriation of foreign language education policies written by Oscar Peláez and Jaime Usma. The study depicts how different educational stakeholders in a rural region of Colombia perceive foreign language education policies, and how these perceptions shape the way they recreate these reforms at the ground level. We believe this investigation can illuminate other inquiries in those contexts where attempts are being made to enhance foreign language competences mainly by issuing policies to be implemented in fixed periods of time.

The following article contains a report by Janeth Juliana Contreras León and Claudia Marcela Chapetón Castro on the impact of implementing collaborative learning from a social and dialogical perspective on seventh graders' interaction, in an English as a foreign language classroom at a public school in Colombia. As we can read in their manuscript, they followed the action research approach which let them conclude that taking a critical approach to language education and understanding collaborative learning as a social construction of knowledge can boost opportunities for changing ways of teaching and learning practices, encourage the teacher and the students to take different roles, have an impact on the classroom relations and interaction, and also promote students' empowerment.

We close this first section with an investigation by Mariza G. Méndez López and Moisés Bautista Tun, from Universidad de Quintana Roo (Mexico). The investigation's main aim was to understand the factors that may motivate and demotivate students with low emotional intelligence to participate in speaking activities during English class. We should point out that results not only account for those issues but help us get acquainted with differences between male and female students in given educational circumstances.

In the second section, *Issues From Novice Teacher Researchers*, we include a study dealing with pre-service teacher education. Colombian novice teacher researchers Sergio Andrés Suárez Flórez and Edwin Arley Basto Basto share with us the findings of a study that sought to identify pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching English as a foreign language and their potential changes throughout the teaching practicum.

The last section, *Issues Based on Reflections and Innovations*, brings readers this time two articles. In first place, Juan David Gómez González, from Colombia, describes an approach

to developing intermediate level reading proficiency through a strategic and iterative use of a discreet set of tasks that combine some of the more common metacognitive theories and strategies that have been published in the past thirty years. He explains its benefits and its three main components (textual indicators, strategy instruction, and content learning) and suggests a model for their implementation. Then, and to close this edition, we present an article by Colombian scholar Mónica Rodríguez-Bonces. In it, she depicts the foundations to design a curriculum that integrates music and drama as strategies for the teaching of English as a foreign language to children. As the author argues, the interdisciplinary curriculum not only innovates the offer of English courses for children but also promotes meaningful learning and creates a positive attitude towards learning a foreign language.

The articles present in our current issue depict the voices of academicians from Colombia, Mexico, Chile, and the United States. They reflect and act upon their realities and findings in specific contexts. Their very presence in our publication is a demonstration that we, as language teacher-researchers, have our own vision that merits the acknowledgment as active actors in the creation of local understanding that can be shared with and compared to the material and ideological experience of the West.

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