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Editorial*

Giving Voice to Novice Teacher-Researchers

Profile was created as a forum to bring to the forefront the attempts of practitioners in doing action research. This was also an initiative promoted by scholars from different Anglo speaking contexts, in some cases, with different names and definitions—teacher research, exploratory action research, and exploratory practice, among others. All of them, in one way or another, highlight the fact that teacher education and educational policies confer importance to integrate research to the teaching profession.

In order to make that goal somehow possible, initial teacher education, professional development, and postgraduate programmes need to prepare the grounds and provide spaces for teachers to explore such dual roles: being both a teacher and a researcher. In the first case, introductory courses to research, together with first teaching experiences that connect prospective teachers to the research activity have been widely used and shown interesting results. In the case of professional development programmes, practitioners are expected to be accompanied along the process of exploring ways to solve teaching problems. This way, they feel motivated to share with peers common concerns and foresee ways to ensure continuous learning in their professional career. Postgraduate programmes, on the other hand, often place the research component as one of the tenets of the curriculum, with the idea of fostering attitude change and leadership. Nonetheless, critiques also claim that all of the above sounds fine on paper. And although there might be reasons to agree with them, we cannot deny advances in familiarising teachers with research and in making their work known to others.

Profile is aware of the difficulties non-experienced teacher-researchers have to get published in scholarly journals. Hence, in 2003, it started including research in its *Issues from Teacher Researchers* section articles by teachers who had recently completed their BED programmes and who had conducted classroom research as part of the requirements to opt for their degrees. In its following edition, in 2004, *Profile* officially named its second section *Issues from Novice Teacher Researchers*. Since then, the journal has maintained this section for novice teacher-researchers' contributions. Additionally, and in order to enhance

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collaborative writing and to ensure confidence in less-experienced writers, we have welcome manuscripts authored by novice teacher-researchers and their mentors.

So far, forty (40) articles have been published in the *Issues from Novice Teacher-Researchers* section (including the one in this edition—Volume 21, No. 2). According to the methodological approach used, these articles can be classified as follows: twelve (12) are action-research studies, eight (8) describe pedagogical innovations or implementations, eight (8) are report case studies, five (5) are exploratory in nature, three (3) have incorporated the principles of narrative inquiry, three (3) revolve around discourse analysis, and one (1) follows a phenomenological approach.

Sixty-one (61) authors have been featured in the section; twenty-one (21) of which submitted their articles as single authors. Three (3) of these novice authors have published again in the journal and six articles have been coauthored by the thesis advisor(s). The institutions represented in the articles are mostly Colombian, to wit: Universidad Nacional de Colombia (19 articles), Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas (6 articles), Universidad El Bosque, Universidad de Antioquia, Universidad de Pamplona, Universidad de Guanajuato - Mexico (2 articles each), Universidad de La Salle, Institución Universitaria Colombo Americana, Universidad del Valle, Universidad del Quindío, Universidad de la Amazonia, Universidad Veracruzana - Mexico, and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (one article each).

We are very pleased with the active participation of the Colombian community in this particular section, as well as in the journal, in general. We are also glad we have become a point of reference for other initiatives that have emerged in the past few years in different parts of the world, inspired by the idea of recognising practitioners' and teacher-researchers' efforts in systematising their inquiries and, most importantly, in getting published. Therefore, and bearing in mind that for many MA students the publication of a manuscript is of great importance to their academic experience, we wish to remind them about the options they can find in our journal. We hope that they take advantage of the detailed guidelines and of the mentoring strategies we use to accompany novice teacher- researchers along such journey.

We have gathered ten articles in this edition. Four of them are authored by Colombian scholars; three are from Chilean researchers, one from a Turkish researcher, and two from North America: one from Canada produced by a Colombian researcher and one from the United States of America by a Fulbright Scholar at a university Language Center in Quito.

The first section, *Issues from Teacher Researchers*, includes seven articles concerning teacher education, EFL practices with an emphasis on young learners, and EFL employment from the perspective of school administrators. In the second section, *Issues from Novice Teacher Researchers*, we include a paper by two young researchers and their tutor regarding a pedagogical experience. The last section, *Issues Based on Reflections and Innovations*, contains two articles that also discuss teacher education in specific contexts.

We open this issue with an article by Miguel Farías and Leonardo Véliz from Universidad de Santiago de Chile and Deakin University (Australia). In it, the authors explore the

communication and semiotic competences of English language pre-service teachers and educators' approaches in the use of multimodal texts. The second article is a joint effort between Roso Freddy Cadena Aguilar and Albedro Cadena Aguilar from Universidad de La Sabana (Colombia) and Javier Hernando Ortega Cuellar from Universidad Nacional de Colombia. These authors discuss the impact of Daily 6, an approach to enhance oral fluency in secondary education with significant gains in oral fluency and positive attitudinal changes. Next, the research coming from Turkey in the words of Sibel Tatar, from the Boğaziçi University in Istanbul, illustrates the employment criteria used by school administrators and their views on the strengths and weaknesses of local teachers and expatriate teachers. We continue with a study by Fabián Benavides Jimenez and Yenny Lisbeth Mora Acosta from the Universidad El Bosque (Colombia) in which there is a discussion of the ideas bilingual teachers from different contexts hold regarding the concepts of education, bilingualism, and interculturality. The article written by Pamela Andrea Saavedra Jeldres and Mónica Campos Espinoza from the Universidad Católica de Temuco (Chile) explores the perceptions of pre-service teachers at the pre-intermediate level in the development of writing skills in English as a foreign language through the implementation of a portfolio. This is followed by the article authored by María Claudia Nieto Cruz from Universidad Nacional de Colombia, which depicts the development of the writing competence of pre-service intermediate students through the expansion of nominal groups. We close the first section with Chilean author Ramón Antonio Ortiz Neira from Universidad Católica de Temuco (Chile). In his article, Ortiz Neira displays an improvement in oral fluency through information gap activities on young English as a foreign language learners and a positive perception of the technique used during the intervention.

The section *Issues from Teachers Researchers* features an article which is the product of a joint effort between two pre-service research students from Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas (Colombia), Erika Johana Cortés Roza and Daniela Andrea Suárez Vergara, and their research tutor, Jairo Enrique Castañeda-Trujillo, from the Universidad Surcolombiana (Colombia). These three authors develop their paper based on a pedagogical practice and how this could trigger reflection of their students with material used in class, namely songs in English, to understand the students' context representations.

The final section, *Issues Based on Reflections and Innovations*, starts with the contribution of a Fulbright Scholar at a university Language Center in Quito (Ecuador), Joan Rubin from Joan Rubin Associates (USA). Rubin reports the experience of helping language teachers improve the language learning skills of their students based on the concept of learner self-management (LSM) or self-regulation. Rubin consider the roles of the teachers and learners as well as critical teaching issues. Finally, we have the article by Yecid Ortega, representing the University of Toronto (Canada), which offers a description of how a Colombian teacher attempts to use a social-justice approach to teaching English by valuing her students' linguistic and cultural repertoires.

As always, we hope you enjoy the articles gathered in our publication. We also hope its contents contribute to our readers' professional knowledge and inspire them to put into practice the lessons learned from the authors participating in this edition.

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