

The MEXTESOL Journal: 2001-2002

Reflections on my Experiences as a MEXTESOL Journal Editor and Guest Editor

Natalia Martínez León¹, Universidad de Málaga, Spain

Although my tenure as Editor was relatively short, I have pleasant memories of the experiences I had then. In 2001 I was offered the position of Editor-in-Chief by Connie R. Johnson². I was already a full time teacher-researcher of the Department of Languages at the *Universidad of las Américas, Puebla*. It was a satisfying to work as an editor and to have professional colleagues on the Editorial Board. Connie helped me from day one with the editorials, authors, and reviews. I would like to thank her for this opportunity. In this brief article I will reflect my experiences as an editor.

I was the Editor-in-Chief for three issues from 2001 to 2002. During this time, with the help of my editorial group, we published Volume 25 (Nos. 1, 2, 3) and in 2003 (Volume 26, No. 3) as a group of Guest Editors. The Associate Editor Board consisted of: Hiltrud Boege, Eileen Dickens, Connie R. Johnson, Patricia McCoy and Ashley Withers. Christopher Hall and Octavio Espinoza formed part of the Advisory Board. The members of the Editorial Board were: Elvira Leonor Díaz Valdez, Octavio Flores, Juan Manuel Guerra, Nancy Hayward, M. Martha Lengeling, Virginia LoCastro, M. Elena Llaven Nucamendi, JoAnn Miller, Héctor Gerardo Ochoa Díaz, Saul Santos, Ma. Guadalupe Santos Espino, Ulrich Schrader, and Patrick H. Smith. Karla Hernando, an art student, was in charge of the formation of the journal and I would like to thank her for her work.

The first issue (Vol. 25, No. 1) covered a number of topics such as: 1) the myth of the bad learner and the backwash effect of testing which leads to success and/or failure in language learning; 2) literature circles in an academic composition and reading course using popular fiction readings such as *Harry Potter*; 3) action research practices; and 4) factors of motivation and/or demotivation for foreign language teachers. In the Professional Practice section, there were two articles dealing with teacher training at the *Universidad de Quintana Roo* and teaching in rural communities. In the Commentary section, Patrick H. Smith contributed an article about BAs in languages and language planning. Lastly Glenda Gartman reviewed VanPatten's (1996) book *Input processing and grammar instruction in second language acquisition*.

The second issue (Vol. 25, No. 2) had five articles. The first one dealt with English for veterinary students in Cuba. The second article was about academic writing experiences and how a program revision is relevant for the students' needs and success. The third article was concerned with teaching World English by Anthea Fraser Gupta. The Professional Practice section included an article regarding how to organize a MEXTESOL convention as well as taking into consideration the time references of before, during and after the conference. I reviewed the book *Bilingual education. Case studies in TESOL practice series* (2001) by Christian and Genesee.

¹ nataliaml@uma.es

²See the article: Johnson, C.R. (2016). The MEXTESOL Journal: 1999 to 2001 and beyond my personal journey with MEXTESOL. *MEXTESOL Journal*, 40, 3, 1-3.

The next issue (Vol. 25, No.3) is made up of five articles. The first one was about attitudes among Mexican teachers in a pre-service teacher training program in Texas and the second article dealt with using the communicative method to teach appropriacy of language in a creative way. The third article treated emotions and cognitive responses of students as an important fact to include in our teaching and including the voices of students in the dialogue. In the Professional Practice section there was an article about how to use music to provide variety in class as well as the objectives, material selection and techniques. The last article was related to the importance of promoting autonomy and how students feel about their teachers and testing.

The *Special Issue of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education in Mexico* (Volume 26, No. 3) was edited by Patrick H. Smith (*Universidad de las Américas-Puebla*), Natalia Martínez León (*Universidad of las Américas, Puebla*), and Kathryn Singh (*Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey*). The first article was concerned with bilingualism in Mexico by Smith and was followed by an article on the use of English vocabulary in border Spanish in Sonora. The third treated teachers and students' perceptions of bilingualism based on the context of a private Mexican university, while the fourth dealt with linguistic and educational politics of Mexico. Local communities, their language and cultural promotion in the Nahuas communities in Guerrero were discussed in the next article. In the Professional Practice section there were three articles about: 1) bilingual education from the point of view of a private institution and challenges; 2) the challenges of bilingual education: language policies, language needs, the best age to start learning and effects of bilingual education; and also 3) a biliteracy program and becoming bilingual, bicultural and biliterate in a California setting. In the Commentary section the definition of indigenous languages and the national education programs, based on four premises, was explained in-depth. Book reviews were written by master's students at the *Universidad de las Américas-Puebla* and the following are the books reviewed:

- Tabors, P. O. (1997). *One child, two languages: A guide for preschool educators of children learning English as a second language*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
- Suzán, G. C. (1999). *Porque hablar dos idiomas...es como saber más. Sistemas comunicativos bilingües en el México plural*. Mexico City: CIESAS/CONACYT.
- Nettle, D. & Suzanne, R. (2000). *Vanishing voices, the extinction of the world's language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Suárez-Orozco, C. & Suárez-Orozco, M. M. (2002). *Children of immigration*. Boston: Harvard University Press.
- Muysken, P. (2000). *Bilingual speech: A typology of code-mixing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Another unique part of the Book Review section was a series of book reviews for bilingual children which were carried out by and for bilingual children themselves: seven reviews of their books in their own handwriting—an example of what young bilingual children can do. Finally, Singh contributed a list of electronic resources on the theme of bilingualism and bilingual education.

During my time as the Editor, we received contributions from many different institutions: the British Councils in Greece and in Mexico, California State University, *Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social*, Illinois State University, Institute of Monterrey, Lebanese American University, *Secretaría de Educación Pública*, *Universidad Autónoma de México*, *Universidad Autónoma de*

Nayarit, University of Leeds, University of Nariño, Universidad Agraria de La Habana, Universidad Regional del Sureste de Oaxaca, and the University of Texas.

All in all, I enjoyed this enriching experience and I am thankful for being given this opportunity to be part of the *MEXTESOL Journal*. MJ has a long history of articles that provide the readers with updated information on professional matters for teachers and for students. The archives are available on line and are of great interest for those who would like to see some of the history of the *MEXTESOL Journal*.