

From the Editor

As some of you may know, this is the last issue of the MEXTESOL Journal to be edited by the present editor. When JoAnn Miller, the previous editor for eight years, asked the Language Department at the Universidad de las Américas-Puebla and myself in particular to take over her position, my first reaction was, "I can't do it!! How can I commit myself as she did?" To make a long story short, we in the Language Department decided that if we were to bring the Journal to the University, then the editorship position would have to become a rotating one with support from the Department members. The latter would also function as Journal staff to help with the reading of the non-refereed articles and work with styling and formatting of the articles.

For the past two-and-a-half years, I have enjoyed the position of editor, and as JoAnn told me, I have grown professionally and learned enormously through my many errors. When I agreed to become editor, I set many goals for myself to attain before rotating the editorship, but here I will only discuss my main objectives. My first goal was to design a cover for the Journal which would reflect an image that any reader could associate with Mexico, as do other international language teaching journals. Another goal was to divide the articles into different sections: Research Issues and Professional Practice Issues. Both these goals were achieved for the first time with the publication of the Fall 1999 Issue. And, soon afterwards the Commentary Section was begun. A third major goal was to establish a website for the Journal, and this was accomplished and announced in the Spring 2000 issue. For those of you who have not yet visited the site, it can be found at:

http://www.pue.udlap.mx/~lldl_www/congreso/mexjournal/mexjournal.html

And finally, my most ambitious goal was to publish the first special issue of the MEXTESOL Journal. This was done in the Winter Issue of 2001 through the help of Nancy Hayward, an Editorial Board member from the University of Indiana of Pennsylvania and a specialist in ESL writing who agreed to be special guest editor. Another special issue is now being planned concerning bilingual education. However, this will be the job of the next editor, Natalia Martinez. Natalia is also one of the full-time professors in the Language Department at the UDLA-P. She will become editor as of the Summer Issue. She and I have been in close contact about the workings of the Journal for approximately 3 months and she knows she can count on my support and help during the first issues.

Congratulations Natalia, and Good Luck.

In this last issue as editor of the Journal, I would like to thank those who have helped me during the past two-and-a-half years and who have made possible the many goals reached. Without the help of the Journal Staff (Hiltrud Boege, Eileen Dickens, Patricia McCoy and Ashley Withers) through their careful reading, commenting, and styling of the articles, the Journal would not have been able to publish each issue as such. Also, the Editorial Board members are gratefully recognized for the group of professionals that they are. These members have read numerous refereed manuscripts making detailed comments to the authors and returning them in minimal time, and all this for only an occasional "Thank you." Both the Staff and the Editorial Board dedicate their time to assure the quality of what you read. Dr. Christopher Hall deserves a special mention for all the help he has provided the Journal since its arrival to the UDLA-P. Whenever I needed advise or University support, he found a way of providing it for me and the Journal. I also want to thank my student aids and social service students at the UDLA-P who have taught me a lot, the MEXTESOL National Office staff who have helped with the printing, and all the past and present officers of MEXTESOL for their support. And finally, I want to thank you the readers of the Journal because without you, none of this would have been possible. **Thank you for your interest and devotion.**

In this my final issue of the Journal, we have some interesting articles. The first in the Research Issues section is from Michael Dordick of Ohio State University entitled *Diagnosing Individual Second Language Reading Problems through the Use of Think Aloud Protocol Analysis*. This article examines why commonly used reading assessment instruments do not yield the kind of information about second language readers needed to identify specific reading problems and needs and it recommends think aloud protocol analysis as an alternative method of assessment.

The second research article is from Anastassis Kozanitis of the Université du Montreal concerning the connection between student participation and their grades. This is an interesting study conducted with two groups of French as a foreign language students in Mexico but the findings of the research could also be interpreted as reflecting EFL groups.

The last article in the Research Issues section is written by José Manuel Ortiz who is also the Oaxaca MEXTESOL Chapter president. José writes about his project on learner autonomy in the language center at the Universidad Benito Juarez. The paper first briefly reviews the historical development in the area, and then summarizes and interprets data obtained from the English teachers working in the language center.

The first article in the Professional Practice Issues section is by Elizabeth Ruiz from the Universidad de Sonora entitled *Avoiding the Avoidance Strategy*. In this article Elizabeth provides practical suggestions for us when our students do not want to use a new grammatical form and instead fall back to more familiar ones.

The next article provides a historical perspective concerning the teaching of pronunciation throughout the annals of language teaching and especially focuses on the different methodologies and their approaches to pronunciation.

And our final manuscript in the Professional Practice Issues section is the written version of a presentation at the last MEXTESOL National Convention by George Wilcox, English Language Officer, U.S. Department of State. His article, *Reflective Teaching and Teacher Development*, lists many ways by which teachers can be constantly receiving feedback on themselves as professionals as well as giving feedback to colleagues.

In our Commentary section, Frank Farmer of the Universidad de Quintana Roo provides us with some interesting reflections on professionalism by giving insights into himself as a language teacher and as an architect. This issue contains two book reviews. The first is by the next editor of the MEXTESOL Journal, Natalia Martinez. Natalia has reviewed *Studies in Language Learning and Spanish Linguistics*. This compilation of 30 articles focuses on research by Tracy Terrell before his death. And finally, the last book review by another of my UDLA-P colleagues and a member of the Staff, Hiltrud Boege, is of a Spanish translation of a book by Joan Rubin and Irene Thompson, *Como Ser un Gran Estudiante de Idiomas*. This book could be of enormous use to students and teachers if placed in language learning centers for all to read since it deals with language learning autonomy which is a very relevant area in Mexico at this time.

**Happy reading and thank you again for your support,
THE EDITOR**