

## Editor's Notes

It's always difficult to get back into the swing of academic life after the summer holidays. It is our hope that this volume will inspire both new and experienced scholars to fresh and innovative ideas as we all return to our teaching, research and of course, learning.

To do so, we start this volume with a stimulating article on language teacher identities by the well-known author and thinker, Dr. David Block. In his article, Block considers how two preservice language teacher construct their identities (or subjectivities) within the cultural and professional constraints of their context. This connection between context and learning is quite often underlined for language learners but does not figure as predominantly in discussion about language teacher-learners whereas, arguably, it should be taken into consideration more often. As Kelly and Grenfell (n/d) point out in their report and guidelines on language teacher education in Europe:

Even within one national context, learners have a wide range of cultural perspectives and attitudes, shaped by social, ethnic and political factors, as well as gender, age and sexual orientation. These affect how learners respond to teaching and learning. (p. 9)

Block's article will surely spark critical thought concerning the challenging trajectory from novice to experienced, professional language teachers and how language teacher educators can best support this process.

Next, Carvalho da Silva and Pereira da Costa describe a study carried out in Portugal concerning the way in which literacy competencies are officially evaluated by the Portuguese Ministry of Education, paying specific attention to the underlying values and criteria applied to assumptions about language knowledge and skills. This article is followed by Girón-García and Llopis-Moreno and also deals with student assessment. In their case, the researchers examine how peer perception of their fellow learners' command of the target language can affect the outcomes of their own performance. The study also delves into the practicality of using rubrics for oral assessment for communicative competence. Our final article in the volume, based on a study by Rubio Moreda, looks at the 'explicit teaching' of nominal groups (NG) in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) class for Spanish engineering students. Centred on a study set of diverse language level learners, the author applies a 'noticing' methodological approach and then examines its efficacy for teaching ESP learners at university.

In our last two articles, we feature an interview (carried out by Mulyono) of Florentina Taylor (University of Greenwich) and Dr. Ruth Breeze (Universidad de Navarra), both very experienced teachers and researchers in foreign language teaching, then we close the volume with Mulyono's review of Swain, Kinnear and Steinman's book entitled *Sociocultural Theory in Second Language Education: An Introduction through Narratives*, published by Multilingual Matters.

Dr. Melinda Dooly  
31 August 2015

**Works cited**

Kelly, M., & Grenfell, M. (n/d). European profile for language teacher education. A frame of reference. University of Southampton & EACEA. Retrieved 16 August 2015 from <http://www.lang.soton.ac.uk/profile/report/MainReport.pdf>

**Credits:**

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**Reviewers for Volume 8.3**

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