



FROM THE EDITOR

With great pride and pleasure, I introduce to you the second issue of *Dialogues: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Language Teaching and Research*. I invite you to peruse the array of topic areas this issue offers:

In our first article, Luis Javier Pentón Herrera explores the following questions: How do English language teachers perceive their instructional strengths and challenges? And how do these self-perceived strengths and challenges influence their teaching style and classroom practice? Pentón Herrera holds a mirror in front of four ESL teachers who not only reflect on their self-efficacy as teachers, but also create a plan of action to overcome a particular shortcoming they identify in their teaching. His findings are a powerful reminder of how much of our teaching is influenced by our own self-image, underscoring the importance of reflective language teaching practices.

Mark Johnson's research is also focused on what influences teachers' decision-making and classroom practices. In particular, he examines how content high school teachers decide which vocabulary to teach their English language learners (ELLs). The study yields some unexpected results: teachers' choices in this study were not influenced by the subject area they taught, but rather by their years of experience. The implications of the study not only encourage teachers to reflect on their criteria for vocabulary selection, but may also be informative for college educators who work with student teachers in all subject areas.

Teachers, researchers, and students hold many misconceptions about the translanguaging and codeswitching practices of language learners. One is the assumption that switching between L1 and L2 deters learners' progress in their attempts to master the target language. Consequently, the use of L1 is often discouraged—even prohibited—by some teachers and administrators in K-12 schools. However, contributing authors Joy Hamm and Mary McLachlan illustrate how language learners and established bilinguals benefit from using both L1 and L2 in academic discourse.

Working with fourteen 6th-8th Latinx emergent bilingual learners, Hamm implemented four Paideia Seminars (student led, text-based discussions) to promote active learning and critical thinking skills. She encouraged her students to freely use both their L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English) in their discussions of a given text. Based on her qualitative research study, Hamm found that student engagement and self-expression was greatly enhanced due to "shared social capital" and equity via these "translanguaged" Paideia Seminars.

From a more sociocultural perspective, McLachlan's study examines the prevailing attitudes of both educators and students in a public middle school regarding codeswitching practices. In her qualitative study, she sought to explore whether content teachers allowed ELLs to code-switch in their classes, as well as teachers' rationales for their decisions. McLachlan also probed the attitudes of students who code-switched and those who did not. Her findings—some predictable and not surprising—underscore the importance of educating professionals in the area of multilinguistic language use, as well as the key role schools can serve as "safe houses" in which students feel empowered to use their linguistic resources to better "perform their full identities."

Finally, those of us who teach academic writing are familiar with the challenges of helping students learn to not simply regurgitate what they have read but also to develop their own voice as they engage with ideas on a more substantive, analytical level. To help his multilingual students develop their writing and self-expression,

as well as gain familiarity with the norms of textual borrowing, Joel Bloch implemented digital storytelling in his college writing course. Bloch posits that digital storytelling can foster “the same degree of complex thinking about academic topics” that is required for more traditional undergraduate essay writing. To demonstrate the results of this innovative approach, he provides examples of students’ digital stories—some quite remarkable and moving.

We decided to focus our Spotlight article on the current, pressing topic that has permeated national headlines: the future of DACA holders and undocumented immigrants more generally. To shed light on this very complex and highly contentious situation, especially due to recent policy changes by the current U.S. administration, we asked attorney Hoang Lam to explain in more layman terms how these recent developments affect undocumented students and their families, as well as what resources are available to them. Lam practices immigration and criminal law and has defended many clients against deportation. He currently works at University Student Legal Services (USLS), a nonprofit corporation initiated by the Student Government at NC State University.

I wish to conclude by thanking associate editors Juliana Pybus and Bethany Monea for the many hours of hard work they have dedicated to this issue. Because of their discerning eye for quality content, style, clarity, and design, this issue meets the high standards of professional scholarship. In fact, *Dialogues* is now a member of The Publishers International Linking Association (PILA). I also wish to extend our appreciation to the authors for their contributions and perseverance throughout the process. We are grateful for the support and time of our reviewers. Finally, we thank you, our readership, for your interest and engagement with this issue. Please help us get the word out about *Dialogues* and encourage your colleagues, students, and other professionals involved in English language teaching and research to subscribe. True to NC State University’s mission as a land-grant university, *Dialogues* was conceived to be a free resource in innovative research and teaching practices for the people of North Carolina and beyond.

Jillian S. Haeseler
Editor-in-Chief