

# Editorial

“We treat our location (in all its relevant senses: geographical, social, geopolitical) as the ground on which to begin our thinking. Local knowledge is not a *product* constituted by the beliefs and practices of the past. Local knowledge is a *process*—a process of negotiating dominant discourses and engaging in an ongoing construction of relevant knowledge in the context of our history and social practice.”<sup>1</sup>

Colombian teacher-researchers have been working towards what Canagarajah (2002) states as “Reconstructing Local Knowledge”<sup>1</sup>, by becoming acute readers, critical interpreters and active agents in foreign language teaching and learning practices in our contexts. It is only through voicing our experiences that we, as an academic community, might generate a process of contextual knowledge construction. Thus, sharing our research products in journals is a necessary step to shift the paradigm from knowledge consumers to knowledge producers.

In this sense, ENLETAWA Journal has become a space for pre-service and in-service teachers, researchers and novice researchers to share their research results and ideas regarding issues connected to Spanish and English teaching and learning in our diverse Colombian contexts.

To face the challenge of making ENLETAWA Journal 4 possible, we were supported by Terry Demczuk, a professor from the School of Languages at Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia, who contributed with the technical revision of some of the academic products included in this issue. I also want to acknowledge the efforts and commitment of the editorial committee.

The fourth issue of ENLETAWA journal has been organized in two sections: research report and reflections. Therefore, the reader will find four articles based on research experiences and six reflective papers.

The first section, research reports, begins with a paper by Carmen Matilde Hernández related to the exploration of high school students’ oral interaction and the multiple factors that might shape it. Data was gathered through the teacher’s journal, audio recordings of students’ discourse and field notes. The main findings indicate that participants’ interactional patterns in that specific context were determined by the gender and the teachers and students’ roles in their classes.

The second article, by Yadira Colmenares, addresses the relationship between adult learners’ first literacy practices and their English as a foreign language experiences. The analysis of the participants’ narratives demonstrated the role parents, the academic community and diverse social factors have in their learning process.

Mauricio Barrera, a Master Candidate from the Master in Language Teaching Program at Uptc, reports a project which examines the issue of cultural awareness in sixteen students registered in a Basic English Course at Uptc. Findings suggest that by developing local and foreign cultural awareness in students, their communicative competence might be strengthened.

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<sup>1</sup> Canagarajah, S. (2002). Reconstructing Local knowledge. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 1(4), 243-259.



The last research report aims at showing how five trainee teachers at the Normal Superior Sor Josefa del Castillo y Guevara School implemented alternative assessment within the English classroom using Task Based Learning (TBL). Findings highlight that trainee teachers played different roles when implementing TBL lessons. All the same, Angelica Carvajal discusses how assessment practices were influenced by trainee teachers' previous learning experiences.

In the second section, reflections, Nancy Carvajal shares a discussion about the importance of making in-service and pre-service teachers, teacher administrators and teachers trainers aware of the necessity to construct a clear understanding of the concept of language and how it relates to their teaching, learning and assessment practices.

Aura María Huertas, a Master Candidate from the Master in Language Teaching Program at Uptc, reflects upon a pedagogical experience carried out with ninth semester students from the Modern Languages Program at the Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia. The focus of discussion is the student-teachers' perceptions regarding sociocultural factors of Tunja society and the connection to their prospective teaching experiences.

In the same spirit, the third reflective paper ponders about the use of Problem Based Learning (PBL) to change the perspective that public schools teachers and students hold regarding the learning of English in Tunja. Jeyson Díaz and Clemencia Herrera highlight the importance of raising awareness about what learning English entails; in this sense, being communicatively competent in a foreign language implies not only the language skills strengthening but also the development of critical thinking abilities.

The eighth article describes an experience related to the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language (ELE) to a group of Brazilian students. Mary Cárdenas portrays the challenges ELE teachers have faced when preparing students with specific academic and professional needs. The author emphasizes on the various factors that play a role in such a process and the importance of conducting sound research in this area.

The next paper accounts for a critical and theoretical reflection about the relevance of using ICT in English classrooms at public schools in Boyacá. Mauricio Bolivar points up how the use of ICT might contribute significantly to students' language performance as well as in teachers' construction of pedagogical knowledge.

In the last paper of the current issue, Amanda Arismendy, Emily Aparicio and Ana Cruz, three pre-service teachers from the school of languages at Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia, shares a reflection in regard to the comparison of women roles and marriage in the XIX century and nowadays. The discussion is based on "Emma", the literary piece of work by Jane Austin (1815).

I hope the academic community enjoys the fourth issue of ENLETAWA Journal and that the papers included generate reflection, changes in our pedagogical practices and motivate in-service and pre-service teachers and researchers to contribute with their research and reflective products for future editions.

*J. Aleida Ariza*  
In charge Journal Editor

