

Editorial (ENG)

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This issue of *Matices en Lenguas Extranjeras* presents eight academic and scientific articles on unpublished research in the teaching of second and foreign languages. Some of this work takes into account factors that impact motivation in the teaching/learning of a language (as a second language or a foreign language) while other work analyzes how socio-linguistic aspects determine a community's cultural integration or alienation or the degree of language comprehension in endolingual contexts. These contributions can be considered multilingual and multicultural as they are written in English, French, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese.

The first article looks at research done in Portugal on teacher training. The work aims to understand why elementary and secondary school teachers of French as a foreign language underemphasize the development of writing skills. To do so, the author carried out mixed research by collecting data through statistically analyzed questionnaires (in particular, non-parametric analysis) and by interviews to which the content analysis technique was applied. A comprehensive analysis of this data indicates that the main factors mentioned by the subjects referred to extrinsic contexts, not dependent on the action of the teachers involved.

The second article presents research done with students from public universities in Colombia. The research is qualitative and employs action research methodology to determine how the use of an educational virtual platform and writing circles favors the development writing competencies in English as a second language in pre-intermediate level students. An analysis of the data showed that the implementation of these resources increased students' interest, confidence, enthusiasm, mastery and comprehension of English. Through these, the students had more time to think, rethink, review, edit and incorporate feedback on their writing production.

The third article is a qualitative case study done on a public higher education institution in the United States. It looks at an innovative experience carried out with undergraduate students of Spanish as a foreign language. The purpose of the study was to determine to what degree students would be motivated to produce written texts using the interactive diary and the impact on the quality and quantity of their written production. For this, the author used the interactive diary as a pedagogic strategy. The results demonstrated that the students improved the organization of their thinking and of their ideas by writing in their diaries. Additionally, they developed a positive attitude towards writing in Spanish and used the interactive diary to generate topics and produce more extensive compositions in Spanish.

The next article is an action research report carried out in Mexico on task based learning. The purpose was to examine the impact of video self-recordings of task based

activities for the improvement of English speaking skills of a group of beginner students at a private upper education institution. The data compiled from the analysis of the videos, the structured interviews and the reflections of students led to the conclusion that students improved their English vocabulary level, their self-confidence, motivation and oral production. Additionally, this provided tools to the teacher to give significant feedback to the students.

The fifth article looks at a private university in Argentina. It aims to first present a definition of indirectness from a strategic-functional and multimodal perspective and then, based on this conceptualization, sustain the relevance of its didactic application in the Spanish as a second and foreign language class. The research was carried out with students with B2/C1 level in accordance with the European common reference. For this, the author analyzed from the artifact perspective a corpus of conversations extracted from six Argentine films of the last fifteen years. The results showed the signification process is indirect according to the degree of interactionality analyzed (0,1 and 2) because they are negotiated by specific conditions of realization.

The sixth article is also a descriptive research report analyzing a phoneme as determinant of cultural interaction or alienation. The work looks at the production of the phoneme /r/ of Anglo-English and bilingual Punjabi-English teenagers in West Yorkshire. The data was collected in urban secondary schools in Bradford and Leeds. The results of the study show that Punjabi speakers' preference for Punjabi rhotics or British rhotics depends on whether they identify themselves as culturally integrated "Asian British" or as alienated Asians. Additionally, the study looks at how the communities that speak English as a second language develop pronunciation.

The next to last article is a descriptive-interpretive case report on an undergraduate English program in a public university in Colombia. It presents the impact of the context for learning English as a second language (ESL) based on content and critical pedagogy in relation to the cultural capital of students in the undergraduate ESL course which last two semesters. The analysis and interpretation of the data collected from interviews with the participants, from their writings and from the observations of the teacher show that their cultural capital increased with the teaching in ESL of the history of the western world and of the artistic expressions related with this topic, which positively impacted their socio-political awareness.

The last article is a case report from Japan which applied questionnaires to first and second year students of Italian at the University of Kyoto Sangyo to determine their perceptions on aspects that motivated them to study Italian. The study's results showed that both the institutional and socio-cultural environment of the students as well as the active learning of the language influenced their motivation to learn Italian. Additionally, the study found that the connection of these three factors improved the student's retention of knowledge.

Undoubtedly, the contents of these articles from Asia, Latin America, Europe and North America will contribute to a permanent discussion about the research and reflection that takes place in the field of teaching and learning foreign languages.

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