

# Presentación

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**L**a presente edición de GiST que el lector sostiene en sus manos tiene para nosotros un significado especial. Se trata de la quinta, y dado que esta es una publicación anual, representa un lustro de esfuerzo en la promoción de la investigación y la diseminación de los resultados de trabajo de académicos importantes tanto en Colombia como en otros lugares del mundo.

Cada año, al escribir estas palabras, hemos hecho un recuento de avances y hemos presentado un inventario de propósitos para que nuestros lectores conozcan y comprendan los principios que animan a la publicación de la revista y los parámetros cualitativos y técnicos bajo los cuales se enmarca este esfuerzo. Desde la publicación del primer número el mandato fue servir de medio para difundir trabajos de académicos en las áreas de enseñanza de inglés como segunda lengua o como lengua extranjera, bilingüismo, formación docente, innovación educativa, política pública, y temas más técnicos en el área de la lingüística aplicada y sus diferentes ramas. Y en la medida en que el número de contribuciones es mayor y el nivel científico de los artículos es cada vez más exigente, el número de académicos que sirven como pares evaluadores se ha hecho creciente, y sigue expandiéndose a otros países.

Sin embargo los logros más significativos, además de la cada vez más fascinante calidad y pluralidad de las investigaciones que publicamos, tienen que ver con la indexación de nuestra revista, la conformación del Comité Científico, el establecimiento de canjes con publicaciones afines en Colombia, Estados Unidos, España y el Reino Unido, y la creación de los canales virtuales de difusión de la publicación y de otros artículos de interés en las líneas de trabajo mencionadas en el párrafo anterior.

En el presente año obtuvimos la indexación por parte de agencias internacionales de la talla de ERA - Educational Research Abstracts, Linguistics Abstracts on Line y CLASE - Citas Latinoamericanas en Ciencias Sociales y Humanas, reconocida base de datos creada en 1975 en la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). Estamos seguros que con las distintas acciones emprendidas en el fortalecimiento de la estructura científica de la revista y el creciente reconocimiento que la comunidad académica le ha ido deparando en estos cinco años, pronto obtendremos la indexación por parte de otras agencias de enorme importancia en el terreno de la difusión del conocimiento.

En cuanto al Comité Científico, para GiST es un honor haber podido reunir académicos de la talla y trayectoria de quienes hoy lo conforman. Nuestros agradecimientos a sus integrantes: John W. Knagg Director de Investigación y Consultoría para Consejo Británico en el Reino Unido, Natalie Kuhlman de la Universidad de San Diego, Barbara Noel de la Universidad George Mason, Luz Libia Rey del Centro Colombo Americano de Bogotá, Mónica Rodríguez-Bonces de la Universidad ÚNICA, Josephine Taylor Autora y Consultora independiente, y Anne-Marie Truscott de Mejía, de la Universidad de los Andes.

Para ustedes será refrescante encontrar que, además de la tradicional publicación impresa, podrán encontrar el sitio oficial de GiST y el blog en el que se divulgan contribuciones de alto nivel que contribuyen significativamente en la construcción de conocimiento pertinente en nuestro campo de trabajo. El sitio oficial de la revista tiene la siguiente dirección electrónica: <http://gisteducation.weebly.com/> y la dirección del blog es <http://gistjournal.blogspot.com/>. Reciban nuestra invitación no sólo a visitarlos sitios, sino a enviar sus contribuciones para ser publicadas.

Finalmente quiero compartir con nuestros lectores una reflexión de Larry Summers, ex secretario del tesoro de los Estados Unidos y ex presidente de la Universidad de Harvard, quien en un foro que tuvo lugar recientemente en nuestro país decía. “Hay algo que no está bien en Los Estados Unidos de América, y que no está bien tampoco en Colombia: las oportunidades en la vida de un niño no pueden seguir dependiendo de quiénes fueron sus padres... Hay sólo un medio para generar equidad social verdadera en nuestros países, y ese medio es la educación de calidad...” Si ese llamado a la equidad social toca nuestras vidas, y en nuestra condición de investigadores, de docentes, de generadores de políticas públicas o simplemente de ciudadanos comprometidos con propender por mejorar nuestro planeta de cara a las generaciones por venir decidimos hacer algo, el generar conocimiento que permita dar educación de calidad, estrechar lazos entre los pueblos, ofrecer a los niños y las niñas del mundo herramientas para labrarse un futuro mejor, será una gran contribución. Y esta revista, los aportes de sus colaboradores pasados, presentes y futuros se constituirán en privilegiada plataforma para ello.

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Agradezco profundamente al equipo editorial conformado por Claudia Caicedo, Directora de Investigaciones de ÚNICA y Devin Strieff, Editor de la revista por hacer posible que el quinto número de GiST llegue a sus manos. Si esta es la mejor versión de nuestra publicación hasta ahora, eso se lo debemos a los autores de los artículos y a ellos. Muchas gracias.

### Expanding Horizons

The articles in this edition of GiST, as they have been in past editions, are excellent examples of exhaustively researched, well-thought-out research papers that cover a broad range of issues related to teaching practices and bilingual education. This year, however, we have included some new changes to the publication as part of a strategy to widen exposure for GiST.

We are raising the bar to meet the more demanding standards of both national and international indexing agencies. We feel that the quality and format of the articles contained herein reflect our commitment to publishing a better journal. Moreover, by complying with these more rigorous standards, our aim is for GiST to be included in an ever-expanding list of libraries in centers of learning, thereby increasing the journal's accessibility.

Bilingual education is, of course, not limited to Spanish and English. This year, in an effort to appeal to interested readers in Brazil and Portugal, we have included Portuguese versions of the article abstracts. Our vision is to disseminate the valuable knowledge detailed in GiST articles to educators around the world in many languages and many countries, and this edition is the first step towards achieving that goal.

The articles themselves also reflect the new changes we have implemented. Readers will find them more engaging, as well as more thought- and discussion-provoking. One of our goals is to establish links with an increasing number of interested educational communities, and if a GiST article sparks a dialogue among educators, it is our hope that even a highlighted, underlined and dog-eared copy of the journal makes its way into new hands and new minds.

### Summary of Articles

This issue includes nine papers concerning pedagogical strategies, second language acquisition, applied linguistics, bilingual education and assessment. The articles are derived from action research projects, reflective practices and innovations.

In the first article, **Albeiro Ramirez** establishes the effects of masked priming by translation equivalents in Spanish-English bilinguals. The findings in the article support the hypothesis that semantic representations mediate the mental association among non-cognates

from a speaker's first and second languages as proposed by Grainger and Frenck-Mestre (1998) in their article entitled "Masked Priming by Translation Equivalents in Proficient Bilinguals." The author reports the results obtained from a graduation thesis written as a requirement for the M.A. degree in Linguistics at Universidad Nacional de Colombia. This project was finished in 2009 and was funded by the Unit of Research Administration from the School of Human Sciences at Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Sede Bogotá, through the contest "Convocatoria de Apoyo a Trabajos de Posgrado 2008-II".

The second article is based on an action research led by **Angélica Martínez**. The study took place during the academic year of 2009-2010, in three first grade classrooms in Bogotá, Colombia. In this study, we can see how phonics instruction for EFL students was differentiated: the instructional time, instructional sequence and phonics vocabulary were adapted to meet EFL students' needs. The findings show that, not only does explicit and differentiated phonics instruction have a positive effect for EFL learners in reading comprehension, but also that the differentiation of it has a considerable impact on EFL students literacy skills in general.

Next, **Carlo Granados** shares the preliminary results of an ongoing research project named "Towards a Pedagogy for Autonomy" carried out at the Languages Department at Universidad Central in Bogotá, Colombia. The final goal of the project is to create a teacher development program whose emphasis is on pedagogy for autonomy and whose theoretical and practical underpinnings are based on the findings of this specific study. The article discusses the origins of the project, the design and organisation of the initial teacher development workshops which will constitute the program, the limitations and some general results obtained from the experience so far.

**Claudia Peralta Nash** and **Celia den Hartog King** are the authors of the next article, which contains information about pedagogical strategies of six teachers in schools in the United States. Informal interviews were conducted throughout the time of the study, and semi-structured interviews were conducted at the end of a semester of observation and recording of field notes. The data shows evidence that spaces were made for student voices to be heard, not only as they shared events of their lives, but also as they faced new learning opportunities, thus mirroring the opportunities that the teachers had to embed their beliefs. The results of the study demonstrated that the beliefs teachers held do not operate in isolation, but influence thoughts, actions and motivation.

**Hector Manuel Serna** shares with us an action research study which explores explicit vocabulary instruction in a second language

(English) content-area course with a group of university student teachers. The study reviews several positions on the treatment of vocabulary in second language contexts. The data collection procedures included the teacher's lesson plans, the students' Word Study entries, and their opinions on both their vocabulary learning and their notebook completion through a final interview. Research findings reveal that the Word Study notebook did contribute to students' learning since they had a grasp of the vocabulary used in the class in terms of participating in the instructional conversations led by the professor and doing the class activities.

Our sixth article, written by **Joel Dworin**, is a result of a research project carried out in a Spanish-English bilingual school program in the United States. This study investigated the language and literacy practices of five graduates of a Spanish-English K-12 dual language immersion program through semi-structured interviews to understand the residual impact of thirteen years in a Spanish-English bilingual school program. Drawing from sociocultural theory, the interviews also sought to provide an understanding of the participants' specific social networks and uses of Spanish and cultural affinities. The basic research question guiding this interview study was: What can be learned about the Spanish-English bilingualism and biliteracy of former students who attended a 13-year bilingual school program? The findings are significant because they indicate some of the strengths and limitations of K-12 bilingual programs in the U.S.

The seventh article, by **Joshua Schulze** explores how a genre-based approach to writing instruction influenced by both genre theory and systemic functional linguistics supported the academic writing development of English language learners (ELLs) transitioning to middle school. Drawing on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as a tool for pedagogy and linguistic analysis, the teacher-researcher analyzed three instantiations of texts composed by ELLs to determine changes in the register of their texts during the course of genre-based writing pedagogy. Methods were qualitative in nature, involving both analysis of the text and the surrounding context of composition. Data came from multiple sources. They included videotaped observations of classroom interactions, transcriptions of semi-structured interviews with the student, collection of lesson plans and materials used in lesson implementation, and field notes made by the participant observer. Findings suggest that a genre-based approach to writing instruction supported ELLs in producing texts that more closely approximated the register of the target genre.

Next, **Julio Lopez** reports on the results of an action research that focused on the influence that first language (L1) written structure has on second language (L2) written structure when students are asked to carry

out assignments in the L2. To answer this question, twenty four students of the first semester at UNICA University were asked to write some papers in English during the semester. The results of this study indicated that the influence of L1 (Spanish) can definitely hinder the writing processes in L2. In addition, four basic mistakes in student papers were found to be a direct influence from L1 to L2 writing: word order, missing the verb “be”, implicit subject, and the incorrect use of the article “the.” Those mistakes emerged mostly due to the influence of their native language and also the lack of knowledge about the second language.

We close this issue with an article by **David Schwarzer** and **Melanie Bloom**. In this article, the authors respond to what they see as a crisis in world language education by proposing a spectrum of situatedness and its relation to five distinct pedagogical approaches. They describe this spectrum in part by using classroom vignettes that illustrate different scenarios in world language education and some of their curricular components. They conclude the article with the presentation of a tool to aid the reader in self-guiding and self-directing their own pedagogical practices. The authors hope this spectrum provides practitioners within the field with more accurate vocabulary for describing the phenomena of the world language classroom. They also draw our attention towards the main advantages of the use of this tool as well as alternatives so that teachers, administrators, policy-makers, and researchers can redesign and redefine their own programs and practice.

## Reference

Grainger, J. & Frenck-Mestre, C. (1998). Masked priming translation equivalents in proficient bilinguals. *Language and Cognitive Processes*, 13, 601 – 623.

## The Editor

\***Devin Strieff** is a new Editor of *Gist – Education and Learning Research Journal*. He has worked in the corporate environment drafting and editing client correspondence at international law firms in San Francisco, California and Caracas, Venezuela. His education background is in History and Political Science from University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon and Visual Journalism from Brooks Institute in Santa Barbara, California. He currently teaches Academic Writing both at undergraduate and graduate students in UNICA. The curriculum includes the preparation, research, writing, revising and proper citation process of composing formal academic research papers.