

Introduction

Schools have been always perceived as the most traditional of all social institutions. They function with certain implicit understandings between themselves and the societies they serve. But this implied agreement is increasingly being questioned as schools do not respond to the expectations of the communities in which they operate. New conversations are currently taking place in response to an era of evolving information, global interdependence and common-core standards. In order to avoid operating on an outdated understanding of the society they function in, school-communities seem to slowly but progressively begin to take control of their destiny through community-based and cultured-embedded curricula.

The articles in this issue of the *NABE Journal of Research and Practice* point to the need and capacity of schools, colleges, universities and teacher-education programs to rise to the challenges of educating linguistically-diverse children to ensure that all involved in this enterprise have a voice, a fair chance to do work effectively, and to help children learn through a curriculum defined by their communities and cultures.

Our first section provides an international perspective through a position paper written by Kumar-Singh and Espinoza-Herold on the role of culture and its manifestations in various international educational contexts. *Culture-Based Education: Lessons from Indigenous Education in the U.S. and Southeast Asia* compares community-based indigenous education models in the U.S. to innovative programs in Southeast Asia where culture is embedded in every area of the curricula and it is being progressively controlled by local communities.

Section II (Applied Education Research) includes four papers. The first two articles focus on teacher education programs in the context of English language teaching and learning. Heineke and Johnson-Davine promote the development of more rigorous levels of teacher competency through exposing English learners to clinical practice and laboratory work. Their article, *Situating Practice in Schools and Communities*, provide sources for teaching innovation embedding instruction in cutting-edge research. Nancy Dubetz examines the impact of an advocacy and mentoring program which has successfully improved instruction in bilingual settings. *Enacting Advocacy-Oriented Visions of Bilingual Education* shows how changing teachers' visions in bilingual education through advocacy, training, and mentoring can be fruitful for bilingual education and English as a second language teaching and learning.

Mary Soto fills an important research gap, looking at English language learners in the secondary education context. Her article, *Teaching the Academic Language and Concepts of Language Arts to Secondary English Learners*, suggests that improving the competency in academic language of English language learners at the secondary level in target areas can bring fruitful results. She also provides sources for implementing effective academic language instruction. Alanis, Machado-Casas and Ruiz analyze the role of affective processes in second language learning through an innovative identity- generator strategy called "auto-narrativa

virtual”. Their article, *Beyond the technical apparatus: Identity, connections, and the use of “Autonarrativas virtuales”* looks at cultural-identity and language learning through a new angle in this era of digital learning.

Section III focuses on Research Infused Practices and brings in two articles. Both contributors describe their empirical studies on literacy practices and, also, go beyond the evidence base. They discuss the need to make a moral commitment to Latino students and draw attention to a culturally responsive education perspective. In her article “*Culturally Relevant Books: Culturally Responsive Teaching in Bilingual Classrooms,*” Alma Dolores Rodriguez poses issues surrounding children’s literature and culture and the need to strengthen instructional literacy frameworks with Latino/a students’ cultural traditions as a valuable resource to promote their academic achievement. By the same token, in her article “*I Don’t Want to Write for Them: An At-Risk Latino Youth’s Out-of-School Literacy Practices,*” Mary Amanda Stewart calls attention to students’ funds of knowledge that can broaden the curriculum and their academic success.

Section IV is a new section dedicated to manuscripts written in languages other than English. It is our hope that this section, will meet one the goals of the NABE organization: to promote literacy in various languages in addition to English. We encourage the submission of manuscripts in Spanish and Mandarin for future volumes of the NJRP.

On this volume, we also present to you an article written in Spanish and authored by Fredy Morales (faculty at the National University of San Cristobal de Huamanga, in Peru). Morales reviews the anthropological and literary work of Jose Maria Arguedas (a Peruvian-born scholar considered one of the pioneers of multicultural education in Latin America) and relates this work to the Peruvian educational system in the context of a rich cultural and ethnic diversity.

In sum, all 8 articles we present to you in Volume 5 have undergone a rigorous competition process and were selected after reading over 40 manuscripts submitted. They greatly expand our knowledge in the field and raise new questions on how to elevate the quality of education for English learners. Enjoy the reading!

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the excellent, dedicated and thoughtful group of scholars who have served as peer-reviewers for Volume 5 and whose names appear on a special place on our website. Many thanks for your generosity in sharing your expertise and knowledge! Additionally, our gratitude goes to our colleague, Mariella Espinoza-Herold, for her invaluable support and hard work. She did not only found a new house for the journal and ensured the necessary resources necessary for its optimal functioning, but she took care of the training of new personnel and was involved in every step of the preparation of Volume 5. Mariella took the leadership of the journal during challenging personal circumstances and we are grateful for her professionalism and support.

The Editorial Team.

San Diego, California, February, 2014