

Applied Linguistics Research at the Service of Classroom Practices: Bridging Connections

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With educational practices changing more rapidly than ever, there is a need for new approaches in the classroom regarding the increase of heritage language instruction inside and outside of the United States. Hence our decision to choose such a title for the presentation of this issue of *NAER*; after all, it contains a large special section with papers specifically dedicated to this topic.

For that purpose, we took as a point of departure the assumption that applied linguistics research does in fact have numerous pedagogical implications. Thus, we have wondered how it can improve the field of education as a whole. Educational research cannot leave aside pedagogical insights gained from applied linguistics and its more specialized focus on the topic of second and foreign language acquisition. In turn, this type of research influences methodology and approaches in classroom teaching practices. Our conclusion is that a need definitely exists to expand our perspective and teaching methods according to new discoveries in the field. This special section consequently serves a twofold goal: 1) to make research in applied linguistics known to those researching and working in the field of education; 2) to show some of the recent advances in Applied Linguistics research and check that it forms an integral part of education.

With this aim in mind, we have included well-documented articles on the pedagogical implications of applied linguistics research and one about the implementation of a classroom based project. Likewise, three articles provide empirical studies on the acquisition of Spanish as a foreign language (Checa, Chui, Pardo-Ballester) while another three report research on heritage languages in the United States and its implications for educators (Lamar-Prieto, Lee *et al.*, Rao & Kuder).

In “An analysis of communicative language functions in the speech patterns of bilingual Korean and Mexican immigrant children,” Jin Sook Lee, Jane Y. Choi, & Laura Marqués-Pascual analyze patterns of language use identified in children from Mexican and Korean households. Given the significance of language development opportunities in home settings, this study examines the home language use of 20 second-generation children (ages 6-8) of Mexican and Korean descent in the United States. Amongst the most important findings in this study stands out the fact that Mexican-American children had a greater tendency to use the heritage language in the home than Korean-American children, who used more English. Another finding worthy of mention was that children do not have enough chances to use all communicative functions at home and, therefore to develop their bilingual abilities fully.

In her article on “Prosodic Cues in Relative Clauses Disambiguation: Bilinguals vs. L2 Learners,” Irene Checa García investigates the preferences for relative clause attachment to complex noun phrases in Spanish-English bilinguals and advanced students of Spanish. Her results suggest that advanced learners are influenced by their L1 (mother language) more heavily in oral comprehension than in reading, whereas it takes bilinguals longer to process prosodic cues. The author offers some interpretations about why this happens and draws some consequences for prosody teaching.

In the article “Heritage, Second-Language and Native Speakers’ Intuitions on Deictic Verbs in Spanish: Beyond the Linguist’s Intuitions,” Daniel Chui uses the classical results based on the analysis of the deictic verbs *venir* and *traer* carried out by Fillmore (1975) and concludes that both heritage speakers and second language learners made a significantly higher number of errors than native speakers when the direction expressed in the stimulus was oriented towards the listener, suggesting that both groups may benefit from instruction on this topic.

The focus of Cristina Pardo-Ballester’s study about “Using video in web-based listening tests” is placed upon the renewed interest in the relationship between visual and auditory channels to determine competence in oral comprehension. Findings on whether the video serves as a listening support device and about different class formats in this respect, as well as the participants’ competences on their preferences, are offered in this article.

In their “Research on heritage Spanish phonetics and phonology: Pedagogical and curricular implications,” Rajiv Rao and Emily Kuder create a novel link between research on linguistics and education by discussing what we know about the sound system of heritage language users of Spanish and how these findings can inform practices implemented in heritage Spanish courses in the United States.

Finally, Covadonga Lamar Prieto (“On Teaching the History of California Spanish to HLLs using Siri: Methodology and Procedures”) reports results from a classroom project in which two groups of university students were exposed to interactions with Apple’s Siri in order to foster dialogue about their dialectal features. The activities designed for these study present to participants the historical dimensions of the Historical California Spanish dialect, or *Californio* Spanish, and pursue two different goals for participants: 1) to foster the interest in discovering a dialectal past; and 2) to increase linguistic self-esteem, as a result of the external validation provided by technology.

In addition to these articles, the present issue contains four interesting contributions about different research initiatives undertaken within the educational context. Thus, Merino & del Castillo show “The benefits of interactive videogames for educational and physical activity approaches: a systematic review”; Santana focuses on “Entrepreneurship and adolescents”; Gómez pays attention to “Historical skills in compulsory education: assessment, inquiry-based strategies and students’ argumentation”; and finally, Grau, García-Raga, & López-Martín enlighten us with their useful article “Towards school transformation. Evaluation of a coexistence program from the voice of students and teachers.”

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