

From the Editor-in-Chief

What sort of papers can one expect to see in a regional journal like this? First, we should not be surprised to find an emphasis in specific problems of teaching in Asian countries: three of the papers in this issue do in fact look critically at such topics as teacher perceptions of a standardized national test in Iran, suggestions to improve late immersion teaching in Hong Kong and an evaluation of the effectiveness of English teaching in Laos, bringing scholarly investigation to bear on matters that seem to require improvement. While local, they deal with issue of wide concern. The others deal with topics that are also important wherever English is taught as a foreign language: they include an empirical study of the methodology of investigating learner strategies, a study of variation in classroom presentation of textbook material as two different teachers interact with different classes, an essay presenting arguments for the importance of standard English and arguing against localized variants, an effort to correlate interest in selected topics and reasons for wanting to learn English, and an investigation of differences of reading strategy with printed and web material. Second, as I have previously remarked, the studies tend to have comparatively small numbers of subjects, and to report fairly shortterm studies. They are essentially reports of research carried out by active teachers without additional funding or released time alongside their other duties. To overcome the difficulties, half of them report work of two or more collaborators. Third, most of them contribute to current issues of concern among researchers in the field, representing new developments and continuations of ongoing concerns. In the circumstance, there is little opportunity for major innovation.

We continue to receive contributions from the full region: this issue includes two papers from Iran (and another set in Iran), one each from China, Hong Kong, Japan, Laos, Malaysia and Vietnam. The quality continues good,

showing evidence of the rigorous peer review to which all contributions are submitted. In future issues our review system will be even more strongly bolstered by the addition of several score new readers, selected internationally on the advice of local representatives. And we are exploring the possibility and advantages of finding an international publisher.

The journal continues to grow and serve as a valuable window on the growing professionalism of TEFL scholarship in Asia and the way that it is being supported by research that meets international standards. And we are grateful to Professor Jihyeon Jeon and her team of fellow editors for maintaining this quality. But the guarantee of the standards is ultimately in the hands of the contributors. We depend on you to offer us your best work.

Editor-in-chief
Bernard Spolsky