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### Editorial Comments

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## EDITORIAL COMMENTS:

In our spring 2011 issue of *International Education*, one of our review board members, Xiaodan Huang (Shawnee State University, USA), served as guest editor. Huang invited a group of scholars focused exclusively on one research project to present their work. The collaborative research is a language immersion project between China-Canada-USA. I hope you agree the issue was strong and significant in terms of the scholarship and should be of interest to second language teachers at all levels of instruction. Our next themed issue will be on poverty at an international level, for the Fall 2013 issue.

This Fall 2012 issue is an open issue and includes diverse topics. Once again we find that our expanded and strengthened editorial board held submissions to high standards, with all essays going through revisions after receiving excellent feedback from their reviewers. We are very pleased with the results. We hope you will appreciate the quality of the work you find within the covers. We continue to anticipate that by inviting more top scholars in diverse fields of education to the board, we will attract more submissions from diverse fields of study in education with an international focus. Please help us spread the word, and thank you for your support.

This issue begins with several policy-related essays that focus on different policies in different parts of the world. "Language of Instruction: Unlocking Educational Effectiveness and Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa," by Natasha Truong, Bowling Green State University (USA) focuses on language instruction in Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA). Truong argues that indigenous SSA languages have suffered devaluation in colonial and post-colonial SSA education, causing alienation of the majority of SSA people. According to Truong, using the students' first or native language as the medium of instruction is the key to unlocking local people's talents and knowledge. This is a literature-based position paper that defends the notion of linguistic rights and demonstrates how SSA languages can be integrated into instruction.

Staying on the continent of Africa but turning our focus to Swaziland, Connie Titone, Emily Plummer, and Melissa Kielar, all at Villanova University (USA), contribute to the conversation on language learning, in particular English language learning, through their essay "Creating Culturally Relevant Instructional Material: A Swaziland Case Study." Again, Swaziland is a country where English is not the native language, but it is the language of instruction. Because teachers are often given English books to use with their students that lack cultural relevance, many of the texts go unused. The researchers in this study investigate the creation of culturally relevant materials with undergraduate university students and how native English speakers must first gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between the learners' lived realities and the cultural content depicted in the instructional material in order to increase the engagement, language acquisition, and self-worth of the English language learner.

Moving to the Asian continent, Guangyu Tan, State University of New York – Fredonia (USA), considers the impact of China's one-child policy in "The One-Child Policy and Privatization of Education in China." The author's focus is on the relationship between the one-child policy and the privatization of K-12

education since China's transformation of education policy in 1979.

In "Learning About Aging in Hong Kong through a Linked Service Learning Project," Alicia Skinner Cook and Christine Fruhauf, both at Colorado State University (USA) explore cross-cultural gerontology. Their project linked Semester at Sea (SAS) study abroad students and gerontology students at Colorado State University with an elderly community center in Hong Kong. The SAS students served as English tutors to older adults in Hong Kong, while the gerontology students helped the SAS students prepare for their service-learning project. The project evaluation demonstrated that all groups benefitted from their involvement.

In our fifth essay Thomas Misco, Miami University, OH (USA) debates "The Importance of Context for Teaching Controversial Issues in International Settings." Misco pulls together the various continents with a discussion of two empirical case studies in Korea and Latvia that highlight how context can serve as a pathway or obstacle to the discussion of controversial issues. The case studies suggest a variety of implications for teacher education programs and education policy makers.

Our final essay is a quantitative study that shifts our focus from students or teachers in other countries to students in higher education in the United States of America (USA) who are seeking to learn a second language, in particular introductory level Spanish. In "Do Foreign Language Learning, Cognitive, and Affective Variables Differ as a Function of Exceptionality Status and Gender?" Sherry Mee Bell and R. Steve McCallum, University of Tennessee (USA), study the relationships between foreign language learning, anxiety, aptitude, attitudes and attributions of success with 95 students enrolled in introductory level Spanish classes. Results underscore the importance of understanding and addressing both cognitive and affective variables in learning a new language.

This issue does not conclude with a book review as we made the decision to publish six accepted manuscripts instead. We will have a book review in the next issue.

Our Guidelines for Contributors can be found on the final page of this issue. I invite your contributions to this journal and look forward to hearing from you. Our Spring 2013 issue will also be an open issue to help us insure accepted manuscripts are published in a timely manner. We appreciate your excellent submissions and encourage more contributors to send their work our way.

**Barbara J. Thayer-Bacon**