

A Word from the Editor

Three years ago we ushered in a new rubric of *SSLA*, *Replication Studies*. We believed—and still do—as did many researchers and consumers of second language and foreign language (S/FL) acquisition research that the problems of reliability and generalizability are best resolved through attempts at replication. We realized that the system of rewards in academe inhibited investment in research that could be viewed as lacking originality. However, we have been gratified by the response from workers in our field who perceived the potential contribution of replication studies and have availed themselves of this new venue.

With this issue, we inaugurate yet another rubric, *Point and Counterpoint*. Our editorial policy states that, although we prefer to publish theoretically oriented papers and reports of empirical research (qualitative as well as quantitative, I might add), we also welcome the discussion of pedagogical matters “if they refer to major theoretical issues in the field.” *Point and Counterpoint* is designed to encourage the latter type of submissions. We invite producers and consumers of S/FL research to nominate issues for discussions or to send papers that address issues of interest to teachers, provided these are related to methodological or theoretical concerns of the field.

This first *Point and Counterpoint* features an exchange of views about the relevance of S/FL research for language pedagogy between two colleagues who have contributed to the development of our journal as authors and members of the editorial team. Rod Ellis has served on the *SSLA* Editorial Board since the journal joined the Cambridge University Press family; Graham Crookes is currently a member of our Advisory Committee. As members of our editorial team, they play a central role in vetting contributions and helping to chart editorial directions. It is thus fitting that these two productive and distinguished SLA workers launch the new rubric by examining a question that all researchers have no doubt asked themselves: What does this particular piece of research contribute to more effective and efficient instruction? The reader will note that, in addition to this central question, the discussion deals with broader epistemological and social issues, notably those of the respective responsibilities of researchers, teacher trainers, and educational institutions in the initiation and dissemination of S/FL research.

Albert Valdman
Editor