It is our pleasure to introduce the papers for this issue of the *Instructed Second Language Acquisition* journal.

In her contribution ‘Issues of narrowness and staticity in ISLA’, ZhaoHong Han discusses the overall nature and role of research undertaken under the ISLA label. One of the conclusions she draws from the existing database is the importance of adopting a more systematic and dynamic approach in the investigation of how external interventions and manipulations can affect (or not) language acquisition. The author also proposes how to implement such an approach.

Gabriele Pallotti replies to ZhaoHong Han’s paper reflecting critically on its contents and providing a way forward.

In the second contribution to this issue, Majid Nikouee and Lelia Ranta present the result of an interesting study with a dual scope: (i) investigating the validity of elicited imitation tasks in measuring implicit knowledge; (ii) investigating whether or not certain design features of these tasks affect learners’ task performance. Overall the findings indicate that the use of these types of tasks might not be a practical measure of implicit knowledge, and suggest that several factors might influence learners’ performance during elicited imitation tasks.

In the next contribution, Laurene Glimois examines how language background differences (monolingual and bilingual subjects) might affect the positive results generated by processing instruction on the acquisition of numeral classifiers *ba* and *tai* in Mandarin Chinese. Given that the goal
of the processing instruction is to alter L2 learners’ non-optimal processing strategies during comprehension, the author’s study is a much needed and welcome addition to the processing instruction research agenda. Overall, the results of this study show that processing instruction is an effective pedagogical intervention no matter the language background difference of the participants.

In the final contribution to this issue, Zainab Allaith presents the results of a study investigating the potential benefits of two different interventions on the development of spelling in several orthographic English patterns. Both interventions were effective in improving the participant’s ability in spelling correctly the patterns under investigation.

This issue includes two book reviews. English Medium Instruction Practices in Higher Education: International Perspectives is a timely contribution considering the growth of EMI provision in higher education. This book succeeds in outlining different approaches to EMI in different contexts through various case studies. The Cambridge Handbook of Task-Based Language Teaching is a must-read as it provides a comprehensive and up-to-date overview of the field.

Taken together, the papers in this issue represent the wide variety of ISLA research, building on and expanding on a range of themes, research areas and activities in the field.

Note
1. Please note that Gabriele Pallotti’s response ‘Constructive dialogue, disruptive criticism and complex dynamics of academic life’ was accepted for publication and published in this issue as Gabriele Pallotti’s review was written after reading Han’s publication, which was available online since September 2022.