

Review of “Initial English Language Teacher Education: International Perspective on Research, Curriculum and Practice”

Title	Initial English Language Teacher Education: International Perspective on Research, Curriculum and Practice
Editor	Dario Luis Banegas
Year of Publication	2017
ISBN	9781474294409
No. of Pages	248 pp.
Place of Publication	London
Publisher	Bloomsbury

Reviewed by Souba Rethinasamy (Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Malaysia)

This book is aimed at providing an understanding of the processes and experiences that teacher educators and teacher students undergo in their early stages of the English language teacher education journey, with a focus on the voices of teacher educators and teacher learners. The book also aims to encourage institutions to move from training to development in the quest for sustainability and vision in teacher education. The book delivers the intended aims by providing research based studies conducted in teacher education settings in various countries, namely, Argentina, Brazil, China, Colombia, Kenya, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom and Uruguay.

The first chapter is based on a teacher education programme in Argentina. It informs about the beliefs of teacher learners and novice English language teachers, examines the extent to which the beliefs are congruent with knowledge based on their second language teacher education, and discusses curricula reforms.

The second chapter is based on a teacher education programme in China. This chapter shows the value of student engagement in their training and provides insights that are not only applicable in teacher education in China, but also in many other parts of the world.

The third chapter, which is situated in Singapore, shares how approaches to teacher education emerge from and serves the needs of the social context. Based on a course designed to support the development of children’s literacy, it demonstrates how beginning teachers are prepared to implement the new English language syllabus. The chapter highlights the importance of teacher education in empowering teachers to be agents of change.

The fourth chapter emphasises the importance of strengthening the link between teacher education programmes and school curricula by examining the alignment between university English language teacher education to the secondary school English curriculum in Kenya.

The fifth chapter provides much needed information on teaching practicum, especially post observation feedback, which is a central component of the practicum. It contains valuable insights about the development and implementation of a professional development intervention for teaching practicum supervisors in a university-based language course in South Africa.

The sixth chapter addresses the development of technology and how it can be effectively utilised to enhance learning in relation to teacher education. Based on an action research project, the author shares his experiences in applying an alternative framework to the development, delivery and assessment of a technology-mediated teacher education course in Uruguay.

In line with the growing demand for online education, Chapter 7 provides an understanding of student teachers' professional identity development in an online initial English language teacher education course in Argentina. The chapter points out the need to consider the processes that student teachers undergo in the construction of their professional identity within the learning community to which they belong.

Considering the fact that language classrooms can take multiple forms, Chapter 8 emphasises the critical need for fostering self-regulatory learning in student teachers by providing evidence captured from teacher educators' voices in Columbia.

Along the same line, based on work done over 5 years, Chapter 9 advocates the need to develop reflective teachers and argues for the inclusion of tools that foster the ability to think and reflect in teacher education.

Similarly, considering the multifaceted forms that language classroom can take, Chapter 10 promotes critical development as a tool for enhancing teacher autonomy.

Chapter 11 begins with information about oppressive forms of EFL teaching and moves on to describe the efforts taken to emancipate EFL student teachers from these oppressive forms by engaging a pedagogical strategy using identity text. This chapter emphasises the need to align theories and practices by equipping student teachers with tools for developing professional skills via collaborative context-based research.

The penultimate chapter, Chapter 12, discusses the link between globalisation, superdiversity, multilingualism and teacher education. It describes the importance of play in creating imaginary possibility and argues for the development of collaborative contexts in teacher education.

The final chapter ties up the research studies presented in the previous twelve chapters. It links the chapters to issues in teacher education and recommends future directions for initial English language teacher education programmes. The orderliness of the book is praiseworthy. Each chapter starts with objectives and ends with questions for change. This presentation format provides a clear direction and enables the reader to reflect on the content in relation to the local context of the reader. Each chapter presents perspectives on different components which are fundamental to teacher education. Thus, a wide range of readers from various parts of the world can relate to the book and its contents.

There are only a small number of minor drawbacks to the book. At times, some parts of the chapter contents are slightly confusing because of the many abbreviations. For example, on Page 1, MLEA is used to refer to Modified Learning Experience Approach. Later MLE is used on Page 46 with perhaps an assumption that the readers would know that MLE is MLEA without the "A". Since there are many abbreviations, it would be good to provide a list of abbreviations before Chapter 1 so that the readers could make a quick reference to the list and develop a better understanding of the contents. The benefits of Chapter 3 could have been enhanced with a more comprehensive description of the approaches to the design and delivery of the programme, including specific examples.

Teachers play a crucial role in mobilizing the education system in every nation. Similarly, teacher education programmes which prepare the teachers to take on this important role requires careful planning and implementation as well as evaluation. This book serves as a useful resource for teacher education. It offers much value to stakeholders who are directly involved in teacher education programmes, such as education policy makers, teacher training college/university administrators, head of education faculties/departments, teacher trainers, teacher trainer researchers and student teachers. The book also offers much benefit to those who are indirectly involved in teacher education programmes, such as school administrators and student teacher supervisors.