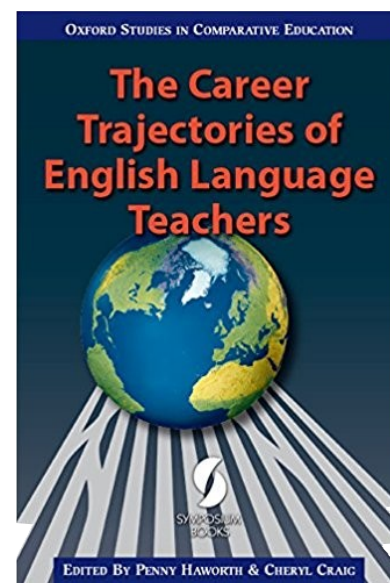


Book review

The Career Trajectories of English Language Teachers

Edited by P. Haworth & C. Craig, Didcot, Symposium Books, 2016, Pp. 246; ISBN: 978-1-873927-87-8, £42.00 (paperback)

Since language teacher education experienced a sociocultural turn, research programmes and publications have examined aspects which go beyond second language acquisition and linguistic investment and processes in language learning and teaching through teachers' eyes (Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2015). In the teaching dimension, key concepts such as teacher cognition, identity, motivation, autonomy, and professional development among others are the focus of sustainable interest.



The title edited by Haworth and Craig is based on English language teaching as a career through the compelling thick descriptions and informed accounts of teachers and teacher educators around the world. A clear and well-framed qualitative research paradigm permeates through the chapters particularly in the form of narrative inquiry making links to sociocultural theory and other humanistic approaches in education. These features are elegantly crystallised in the use of I- and We- statements and a writing style which includes readers in the big picture. Readers will feel that the authors are talking to them in their situated practices and fluid realities.

This edited collection is divided into two sections, offering in total an introduction, 18 chapters, and a conclusion. The stories which constitute the backbone of this book come from Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Iceland, India, Greece, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Thailand, the UAE, the UK, the US, and Turkey. This amazing list of countries from all the continents illustrates the reach and influence of collaborative work, decentring views, and efforts to include a wide range of life histories and settings through readers can feel identified with.

Section 1, *Stories of English teachers' career paths*, comprises eight chapters. One major running theme across the chapter is that of change. Change is possible through several

interconnected dimensions:

- Sustained involvement (Chapter 1)
- Reflections on the tensions around theory, practice and policy (Chapter 2)
- Negotiation in informed decisions (Chapter 3)
- Interpellation of one's identity (Chapter 4)
- Engagement in dialogic constructions (Chapter 5)
- Awareness of policy and educational processes (Chapters 6 & 7)
- Analysis of motivation in less mainstream settings (Chapter 8)

Section 2, Socio-political contexts in teaching and teacher education, consists of eight chapters. Authors in the section articulate their trajectories through narrative accounts and research reports from a more encompassing angle by revisiting programmes and experiences in pre-service as well as in-service teacher education across educational levels and academic/teaching posts. I briefly summarise the settings of each chapter:

- Initial teacher education/course experiences with prospective teachers (Chapters 9, 11, 12, 17)
- Programmes with experiences but unqualified teachers (Chapter 10)
- Higher education and international research projects (Chapter 13)
- Status of EFL teaching in higher education (Chapter 14)
- Professionalism, self-determination, and identities across sectors and experiences (Chapters 15, 16, 18).

Readers must be warned. This section is not light reading where authors narrate change from A to B as if it were a straightforward road. It is a captivating collection of voices, voices which have been eloquently carved in the pages of this book. They are not parochial stories which do not bear connections with the multitude of experiences around us. They are complex stories carefully researched and referenced. They put forward research possibilities and affordances which invite teachers to embark on examining their own career paths, regardless of their length, placing themselves in a broader context to transform social practices from a social justice lens. As the editors put it in their concluding chapter:

[...] chapters provide an understanding of the identity of the good teacher of English, an awareness of the teacher's role as a curriculum maker rather than just a curriculum implementer, and a view of how the journey to find an English language teacher's best-loved self is often driven by a sense of social justice. (p. 237)

All in all, *The career trajectories of English language teachers* is an inspiring collection of autobiographies which capture the professional and personal tensions and symbiotic interactions that teachers navigate to become their best version possible to make changes in their context. In my identity as a teacher educator and curriculum planner, I highly recommend this book to teacher educators who have the tremendous responsibility of designing and implementing initial as well as continuous professional development

programmes and courses. Here, we are confronted with the inescapable truth that all our lived experiences leave a mark on our teaching configurations. Furthermore, they all exert and influence on our directed motivational current (Dörnyei, Muir & Ibrahim, 2014) to maintain and support our drive for teaching. In this regard, the volume acts as a catalyst of teachers' drives, concerns, and situated biographies, and as an invitation for others to reflect on their professional lives and continue moving forward.

References

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