



Haworth, P., & Craig, C (2016). *The Career Trajectories of English Language Teachers*. Oxford, UK: Symposium Books.

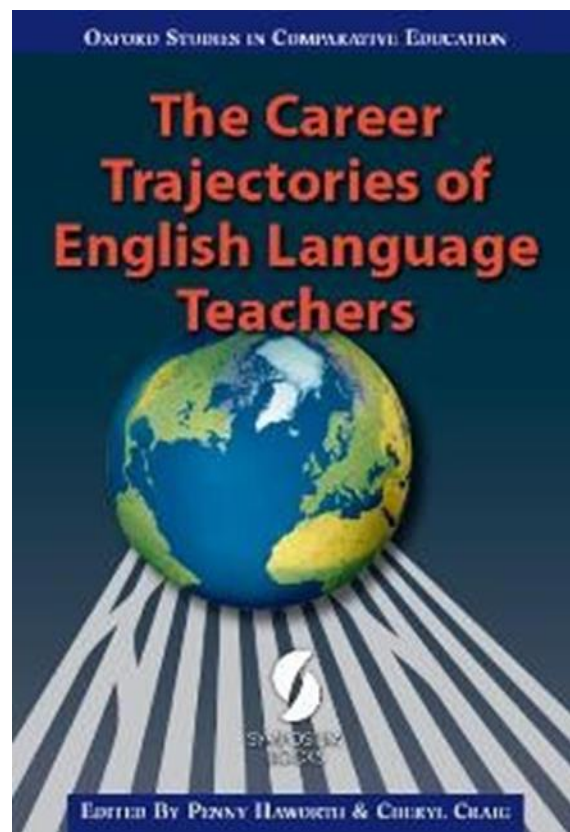
256 pp.

ISBN: 978-1-873927-87-8

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The Career Trajectories of English Language Teachers, coedited by Penny Haworth and Cheryl Craig, explores some key aspects of the professional development for EL teachers around the world, examines the influence of contextual factors on their career trajectories, and presents the fluctuating trends of English language teaching under the local and international contexts. Towards that end, the editors/authors compiled a volume that elucidates the professional lives of the EL teachers and their career trajectories and exposes the hidden tensions caused by language policy and implementation issues affecting the career paths.

The first section of the book (the first eight chapters) illustrates what an EL teacher's career path in local and international contexts looks like and how each EL teacher navigates his or her career trajectory to success. For instance, John Mckeown's chapter provides an inspiring account of how his career path started as a local EL teacher in Canada and how he navigated and expanded his EL career



by teaching in different countries (i.e. Abu Dhabi, Angola, Qatar, and Turkey). He observes that through his intercultural dialogue and professional collaboration with innovative experts and technology groups internationally, he eventually transformed into an international EL teacher educator and researcher who strives for culturally-responsive EL education. Reflecting on his international journey, Mckeown notes that “Living in different cultures reinforces my belief in the necessity for social cohesion, and for advocacy for intercultural awareness in an ongoing dialogue of diversity” (p. 22).

Other chapters are situated in a national context and cover diverse issues, including but are not limited to EL teachers’ professional development, foreign language education policy, curriculum challenges, and professional support for EL teachers in high-needs schools. For example, contributors Jhanna Boone, Ramona Maile Cutrl, and Stefinee Pinegar address the pressure that high-stakes testing places on EL teachers, highlighting their efforts to establish rapport with ELLs and take their “hearts and minds” as priorities. Similarly, Ida Fatimawati Bt Adi Badiozaman’s chapter illustrates her struggles with the contradictions between her philosophy of language teaching and language policy in Malaysia. Noticeably, she exposes a phenomenon of English language teaching that tends to exist in other non-English-speaking country contexts (i.e. Chile, China). She describes an exam-oriented system that “produced a new breed of students and graduates who can do well in examinations but have limited competency in English” (p. 53). Overall, these career stories open up a window for readers to obtain insightful knowledge about an educational system in a foreign country and to develop multiple perspectives by reading about different EL teachers’ career lives.

The second section of the book shifts emphasis to the impact of socio-political contexts on English language teaching and teacher education. Focusing on the contextual factors and tensions underlying the diverse

national and international settings for EL teachers, the chapters in this section investigate how a context affects the teaching practices and professional development of EL teachers. For example, Leslie Gauna’s chapter provides a particularly thought-provoking example of the influence of bilingual education policy on a bilingual teacher’s career path. She recounts how “Oscar” fails to pass a Spanish proficiency test to become a bilingual teacher and how he finds himself at an awkward “between” position as an English and Spanish speaker. Having a mixed background where he grows up in a Mexican-tradition family and attends classes taught in English, he sadly realized that he could only communicate with his Spanish-speaking mother through others’ translation. Now that he has become an ELL teacher, he is concerned that “Spanish-speaking children (like him) are pressured by the teachers – who are pressured by the principals – to be moved into English monolingual classes as quickly as possible” and eventually “cannot speak either of the two languages” to the extent of fluency standards (p. 222). Similar to Oscar’s career trajectory, the career trajectories of other EL teachers and teacher educators in the remaining chapters are affected by complicate contextual factors. These contextual factors include teacher support, technology-assisted professional development, new curriculum challenges for teacher educators, international professional community, EL researchers’ low research productivity issues, low teacher wages, and teacher motivating factors. In sum, these chapters provide important insights in the effects of different contextual factors on EL teachers’ career development.

By collecting the above studies on the various dimensions of EL teacher career paths, Haworth and Craig have brought together the diverse voices of EL teachers to provide “holistic insights” into the understudied career path (p. 246). Together, the chapters cover EL teacher experiences in 18 countries around the world (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile,

China, Greece, Iceland, India, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Thailand, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and the Middle East) and show the globalizing trends of EL teachers' professional development. Moreover, the authors expose underlying tensions caused by socio-political factors that shape the teaching practice and professional development of English language teachers and teacher educators. It is likely that international scholars and researchers in this field will find these overarching tensions familiar: pedagogical challenges, teacher identities, high-stakes testing, curriculum, language policies and implementation. Regardless of these challenges and obstacles, the editors end the book on an optimistic note, underscoring the positive outlook of EL teachers and teacher educators as well as their passion for teaching, resilience, autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Most importantly, readers with backgrounds and career paths similar to the EL teachers in the book will likely find points that resonate with their own experiences. As a former English as a Foreign Language learner (EFL) and EFL teacher, I found Liping Wei's story in chapter 2 particularly echoed my own, as Wei was also an EFL in a non-English-speaking country (China) and an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher in an English-speaking country (the US). Through personal narrative, she uncovers major tensions that she encountered along her career journey that are similar to the hardships that I faced. For example, she found herself struggling with conversational English in the US, despite 20 years of English language lessons and communication in China. Regardless of the difficulties and frustrations, she eventually overcame them and now views her multiple identities (EFL and ESL) as assets. I agree with her insight that, "to be genuinely

understanding of what it takes for a non-native speaker to learn English, it is indispensable that an ELL teacher possess a first-hand experience of learning a second or foreign language" (p. 29).

Despite the book's strengths, prospective readers should be aware of two primary limitations of the book. First, since many of the chapters have a strong grounding in theory, the analytical and theoretical lenses needed more detailed explanation to reach the needs of a novice teacher or a casual reader unversed in complex theoretical language. Second, although the editors highlight the "international or cross-cultural" feature of the book, the majority of chapters are situated in just one national context and only three out of the 18 EL career paths spanned across several nations.

In the end, there is much to admire about *The Career Trajectories of English Language Teachers*. The format of the book is clear and reader-friendly, with chapter summaries that enable readers to quickly grasp the topic before examining it in greater depth. Each chapter portrays the career trajectories of English Language teachers locally and internationally, drawing on scholars' extensive research on the EL practitioners throughout their career paths. To provide readers with a deeper understanding of each career trajectory, author(s) of each chapter use(s) a methodological lens (i.e. narrative inquiry, the rivers of life, self-study, life histories) to illustrate and interpret each career path.

In addition to English language teachers, teacher educators, students interested in entering the EL field, school administrators and policy makers might also benefit from reading this book, given its broad and in-depth examination of the career trajectories of English language teachers and teacher educators locally and internationally. Through the book's rich

descriptions of the ups and downs of the professional lives of EL teachers, many EL practitioners will likely be inspired by these teachers' success stories or feel as though the voices of the teacher peers were their own. Further, the book's attention to the contextual influences on the EL teachers'

career paths may be of special interest to local policy makers, school administrators, and teacher educators to better support the teaching practices and professional development of the EL teachers, which ultimately benefits the large population of EFL and ELL students in a particular region.

About the Reviewer


Sumei Wu is a doctoral student in education at Southern Methodist University. Her research interests focus on computer-assisted language learning (CALL), telecollaboration for intercultural learning and teacher professional development.



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Supported by the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, Arizona State University

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