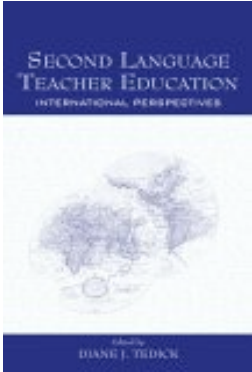


Second Language Teacher Education: International Perspectives

Author:	Diane J. Tedick (Ed.) (2005)		
Publisher:	Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum		
Pages	ISBN	Price	
Pp. xxiv + 348	0-80584879-7	\$36.50	

I highly recommend Diane J. Tedick's *Second Language Teacher Education: International Perspectives*. The text provides an interesting array of articles on language teacher education, particularly, for those working in EFL, TESOL and Bilingual education. Tedick has done well to present topical, critical and innovative perspectives on important questions for language teacher education: what is it we do, why do we do it, and how can we do it better?

Although the textbook is written primarily for a general audience both practicing and prospective second language teacher educators, I think the text will have the greatest appeal for those familiar with specialist issues and debates in language education. However, I think new teachers or those simply intellectually curious about what teachers do and why, may also benefit from reading this book. Indeed, as Tedick explains, the rationale for the text is that "rarely do teacher educators from different second language and instructional context have an opportunity to engage in professional development of second language teachers so that their students might communicate across linguistic and cultural boundaries" (p. xvii).

The scope of the collection is large, and Tedick ambitiously tackles a number of different second language settings and contexts, in multi-educational, international and elementary, secondary and post-secondary areas. She manages to include articles on

teacher education relating to ESL, EFLT, FL, and Bilingual Immersion, and the inclusion of inservice and preservice teacher education; as a result of Tedick's ambitious scope, readers are sure to find something of interest.

In a nutshell, the major themes of *Second Language Teacher Education: International Perspectives* include the following: a definition of language education; critical issues in language teacher education; the contexts and setting of education; and recent innovations and designs in education.

Tedick's editorial skills, as well as the organization and presentation of the book, is excellent. She divides major themes of Language Teacher education into four broad categories: 1) The Knowledge Base of Second Language Teacher Education (pp. 1-96); (2) Contexts of Second Language Teacher Education (pp. 97-176); (3) Collaborations in Second Language Teacher Education (pp. 177-256); and (4) Second Language Teacher Education in Practice (pp. 257-334). Each section is introduced with an interesting analysis of current practice and theory. Also included is a summary of the main questions raised in each of the articles. In introducing various views in each of the categories, Tedick synthesizes debates, adding clarity to each section.

What is second language teacher education? What do teachers need to know in order to be professionally educated? And what kind of knowledge informs second language teacher preparation? These are some of the questions which Tedick presents to the reader throughout the text. Indeed, these questions mark the starting essays in the collection in which readers are presented with an interesting debate between Tarone and Allwright (Ch. 1, pp. 5-23) and Freeman and Johnson (Ch. 2 pp. 25-32), the former arguing that language teacher education needs to be reconceptualised with student/learners in mind (which they suggest Freeman and Johnson have ignored), and the latter claiming that they have been misrepresented, and in fact, that all teacher education includes a negotiation between teachers as learners, schools, and the activity of learning and teaching. The framework for the rest of the collection follows, as the following questions are raised: how do teachers learn, help others to learn, and create programs where others learn? In a sense, what the volume instilled in this reviewer is the idea that language teacher education is a constant negotiation between what one is doing in one's own professional practice and what theories and practices are evolving and being shaped in other contexts.

A further important theme that Tedick delves into is the critical issues in language teacher education. It is an important point of the volume that teachers are not to be isolated in developing professionally, but are also framed and defined by the context in which they are working. Indeed, some of the most interesting articles were those questioning the success and impact of language teacher education and teachers themselves. Some highlights include Elana Shohamy's "The Power Of Tests Over Teachers: The Power of Teachers Over Tests" (Ch. 6, pp. 101-112). Shohamy's, for instance, unpacks issues in assessment and teaching, and the ways in which teachers'

movements and teaching strategies are limited by the tests they must administer. Shohamy's points out the often murky line between teachers serving bureaucracies and teachers serving their students. In reference to Japan, Hiramatsu (Ch. 7, pp. 113-134) provides critical enquiry concerning the success of the JET program in Japan. She raises serious questions about the qualifications of both native and non-native teachers of English as professional practitioners, the efficiency of team teachers, and the overall usefulness and purpose of non-English teaching specialists working in high schools in Japan to improve their learners' communicative competence (pp. 130-133).

Tedick also provides an overview and analysis of macro-issues in teacher education: preparing teachers for different types of curriculum and programs including bilingual, content-based, and mixed first and second language programs. In an interesting review of where practice is at, Tedick (Introduction, pp. 257-260) presents an illuminating collection of articles on innovation in second language teacher education. An interesting and important contention of these articles is that the stark reality that it is not only language experts who need to be trained to deal with language learner needs, but teachers in general. As Walker et al. point out: "[A]s a result of changing demographics, we now face the task of moving beyond preparing second language teachers to preparing all teachers to address the language needs of their learners" (p. 313).

Despite these strengths, I have three main criticisms. In some respects the volume is international, capturing ideas and views from USA, Japan, and Australia; however, there is a lack of information on teacher education from important contexts throughout Asia, South America and Africa. This somewhat undermines the editor's claim to provide an international text (see, for instance, Tedick's overview of teaching contexts on xx. and xxi). It would seem an important to include at least one article from these areas. Secondly, the ambitious scope of the book at times may be its undoing. Undoubtedly, the collection of essays is thoughtful and interesting; however, at times it is hard to find the glue holding the book together. That the text is bursting at the seams with ideas that take the reader in several directions, at times, it feels that there is seepage and perhaps the collection could be more focused. One notable example is Edge's reflections on values in ESOL (Chapter 10, pp. 181-199) where he ruminates on political, economic and cultural implications of teacher education, but ultimately leads to very little understanding of what is important in providing better teacher education programs (the focus of the volume).

Finally, an important issue that is not explicitly addressed in the volume, but is an important one in teacher education is the difference between "training" and "education." Some consideration is given to the problems in approaching language teacher education from the point of view of training teachers and educating them. Some of the largest teacher education programs are four-week certificate courses. I feel that Tedick might have addressed issues in teacher certification, qualification and efficiency of these teacher-training courses in greater depth. To be fair, however, there are some contributions which address such issues, notably Snow's chapter on key themes in

TESOL MA teacher education (Ch. 14, pp. 261-272); however, considering the fundamental importance of qualifications and certification in teaching programs, the issue deserved to be given more attention and critical examination than it was.

As an educational reference for language teachers, especially those working in non-English speaking backgrounds where access to English language materials are often lacking, a collection of essays like Diane J. Tedick's *Second Language Teacher Education: International Perspectives* provides a stimulating and valuable reference tool to facilitate better language teacher education research internationally..

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