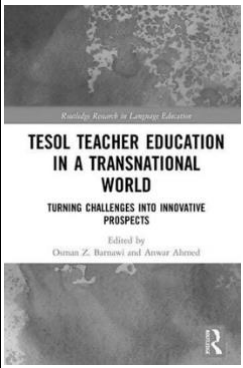


TESOL Teacher Education in a Transnational World: Turning Challenges into Innovative Prospects

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TESOL Teacher Education in a Transnational World: Turning Challenges into Innovative Prospects		
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TESOL teacher education is, at its core, a set of practices that involve collaboration and interaction among individuals from various cultural, linguistic, and national backgrounds. It could be argued that its transnational aspect is a defining feature, which has become increasingly apparent in recent years. Transnationalism can be broadly understood as a process and practice of maintaining multiple connections between individuals and institutions that span nation-state borders (Vertovec, 2009). With English playing a pivotal role in mediating and shaping these connections, language educators have the responsibility to prepare students for participation in a globalized world with an awareness of its cultural and linguistic diversity. This raises a set of challenging questions about how transnationalism affects teacher knowledge formation, how teachers understand their work in the context of transnationalism, and what TESOL teacher education can do to prepare teachers for the challenges of transnational work.

The book *TESOL Teacher Education in a Transnational World: Turning Challenges into Innovative Prospects*, edited by Osman Z. Barnawi and Anwar Ahmed, is a timely response

to these questions. In addressing them, the editors bring together the diverse perspectives of scholars on the complexities of transnationalism in relation to teacher education.

The volume begins with an introductory chapter reviewing the literature on transnationalism and establishing its relevance for the TESOL field. The rest of the chapters are grouped thematically into four parts. Part 1 (Chapters 2–4) seeks to uncover the epistemological, conceptual, ideological, and political layers of transnationalism and their connection with TESOL teacher education. First, it critically evaluates the impact of monolingual ideology in shaping TESOL teachers' identities and identifies a need for a translanguaging approach that prioritizes linguistic diversity. Next, the review of the existing literature on the evolution of transnationalism in TESOL reveals the gaps and areas for future research. For example, 'virtual mobility' as a form of online cross-border connectivity, emotional dynamics of transnationalism, and their intersection with teacher education are some of the dimensions that deserve more scholarly attention. The concluding chapter calls for a more critical revision of the normative beliefs about language, culture, language users, and teachers' reflexivity in confronting them.

Part 2 (Chapters 5-7) examines the spatial dimensions of transnational activities as collaboratively negotiated practices situated within a particular space and time and shaped by the conditions, resources, and participants in that space. The first study of Hong Kong pre-service TESOL teachers and their teaching experiences in Mainland China reveals the benefit of such practices in preparing students for future roles as transnational educators. The next study considers the negative perceptions of regional ELT professionals towards the involvement of the British Council in *Colombia Bilingüe*, the Colombian National Bilingualism Program, and how this skepticism led to the emergence of alternative critical approaches to TESOL teaching and teacher education in the country. The following chapter includes an autoethnographic analysis of the construction of translanguaging teacher identity through the lens of Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), which views teacher identity work as an 'activity' resulting from human interaction with the socio-cultural environment.

Part 3 (Chapters 8-11) introduces the reader to the ways technology enables communication, interaction, and collaboration among individuals and institutions across national borders. Recognizing the increasingly digitalized nature of TESOL education, the authors in Chapter 8 propose a framework to help teachers navigate the challenges associated with an online learning environment. The next two chapters dwell on the growing importance of collaboration in virtual spaces as an opportunity to engage in intercultural exchange. Throughout the remaining chapter, readers are made aware of the importance of authentic contexts in online teacher development programs to foster transnational teacher learning and the benefit of collaboration within a community of practice for professional identity development.

Part 4 (Chapters 12-15) highlights the links between transnationalism and its (mis)representation in TESOL policies, curricula, and pedagogical practices. In the opening chapter, such connections are visible in the ways a *transglocal* approach that acknowledges the value of both "global" and "local" resources has been utilized in preparing teachers for work in transnational settings. In later chapters, transnationalism is featured as an important element in TESOL, and the need to support its inclusion in teacher preparation programs for graduate language students is emphasized. However, adopting transnational approaches can be fraught with challenges and tensions. Within the Brazilian teacher education context, such tensions arise in the tendencies toward homogenizing discourses of national values, which left little

space for a transnational dialogue. A proposed solution to resolve these issues is to take up a social justice orientation based on the principles of human rights and equality. Another study reports on the experiences of Chinese postgraduate students enrolled in a one-year MA TESOL course in the UK that reinforced a sense of disconnection between their theoretical knowledge and practice. The section ends with a closing reflection in which the author considers transnationalism in TESOL in light of COVID-19. He poses new concerns that are yet to be addressed within the framework of transnationalism and TESOL teacher education in the future.

The book, with its focus on transnationalism, is both timely and thought-provoking. Although previous attempts to shed light on the complexity of transnationalism are evident (Canagarajah, 2018; Duff, 2015), the emphasis of the book on the intersection of transnationalism and teacher education in TESOL makes it distinct from others. What stands out is the fact that it was written by established and emerging scholars, most of whom are L2 English speakers. Their work may inspire other ESL/EFL colleagues to enter transnational discussions.

Overall, the book is a valuable resource and a significant addition to the growing body of work on transnationalism. At the same time, there are some areas for improvement. First, the term ‘transnational teacher’ is persistent throughout the chapters, yet there is no clear explanation as to what it means. It would have been appropriate to provide a brief summary of the characteristics of such a teacher. The same applies to CHAT in Chapter 7, a term that requires unpacking, especially regarding translanguaging. Furthermore, despite many authors being L2 speakers, they are situated either in their home countries or in Anglophone contexts (e.g., the UK, USA, and Canada). Future editions of the volume would benefit from the voices of the so-called ‘self-initiated expatriates’ (SIEs) (Cerdin & Selmer, 2014), teachers who relocated abroad temporarily for employment purposes. Insights into expatriate teachers’ lives and work in countries where English is spoken as a second or foreign language, could prompt new ways in which transnationalism and teacher education can intersect.

Regardless of its minor shortcomings, the book is a unique read that appeals to a wide audience of TESOL professionals. For educational practitioners, it brings awareness of how their cultural backgrounds and language varieties can be incorporated into their pedagogical repertoires. Student teachers enrolled in TESOL programs worldwide would benefit from knowing how their engagement in a transnational dialogue could boost their readiness for work in the globalized world. TESOL program coordinators and those involved in teacher training may consider tailoring their curricula to meet the needs and expectations of the growing population of international students. Academics with an interest in transnationalism will find this book to be a relevant and essential source of information and ideas for their own research.

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