

English as a Foreign Language Teacher Education: Current Perspectives and Challenges. Martínez Agudo, Juan de Dios (ed.) (2014). Amsterdam: Rodopi, ISBN: 978-90-420-3800-4, 364 pages.

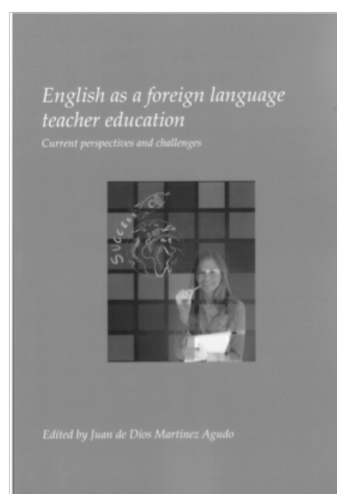
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At a time of profound transformation in the language teaching arena, when the language educator has to be prepared to assume new roles and responsibilities, it is more incumbent than ever on the key stakeholders in the profession to reinforce teacher education. Against this backdrop, the volume herein reviewed does an admirable job of shedding light on a topic which is indisputably coming to the forefront of applied linguistics research: second language teacher education (SLTE).

The volume, edited by Juan de Dios Martínez Agudo, is a welcome and *timely* publication which constitutes a reactive and proactive response to the changing trends and influences in the field of teacher development. It impeccably identifies and foregrounds the burning issues which at present run through the language education scene, including English as a lingua franca, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), competency-based language teaching, multicultural awareness, or the heightened role of technology.

In line with the foregoing, the monograph is extremely *comprehensive*, as it spans a remarkably broad array of topics (including language teacher education models, teaching pronunciation, developing multicultural awareness, professional identity construction, lesson planning, or the use of specific materials and resources), contexts (affecting all educational levels, face-to-face and online learning environments, or campus- and classroom-based settings), and stakeholders (it is an invaluable resource for pre-service teachers, in-service practitioners, and teacher trainers alike).

And it canvasses these multifarious aspects by striking an ideal balance between a series of binary distinctions: theory and practice; generalness and specificity; practical skills and concrete knowledge; or research and teaching. Indeed, the *balanced* character of the publication transpires in its well-crafted structure. The book comprises sixteen chapters, grouped in a four-pronged manner. The initial two thematic blocks provide a more general and theoretical approximation to SLTE. The first of them offers theoretical perspectives and models on the topic under scrutiny, centering on such core issues as competency-based teacher education, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages, the role of pronunciation, or the development of multicultural awareness. The second chief section, in turn, glosses how the emotional and cognitive dimensions of teaching (emotions, beliefs, attitudes) impinge on



professional identity construction. Once the theoretical groundwork has been laid, the subsequent two sections canvass the topic from a more practical and concrete vantage point. The third one offers guidance for grassroots lesson planning, materials development, or use of internet-based ICT resources, while the fourth and final section showcases the practical application of teacher education to the fields of CLIL and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The interlocking nature of the chapters is further evinced by the way in which the research and teaching missions dovetail in the diverse sections, one feeding into the other in a clear and commendable instantiation of evidence-based practice.

A fourth and final trait of the volume under consideration is its *updated* and *forward-thinking* nature. The foreword, by Jack C. Richards, is already a highlight in this sense: it expounds on the author's personal reading of the most recent factors which are at present shaping language teacher development, in connection to each of the sixteen chapters. The latter are also fully commensurate with the latest trends in language teaching and language teacher education, as the theoretical models and practical investigations included in the monograph are pivotal in making the shift towards an action-oriented, discovery-based, and dialogic pedagogy. The publication thus identifies major niches to address in the field of SLTE and maps out an agenda for future ways forward. All in all, a critical reference to help operate the transition from teacher training to teacher education and to provide research-based and practice-oriented evidence to equip the pre-service teacher, the in-service practitioner, and the teacher educator to successfully step up to the new challenges and increased demands posed by our current language teaching scenario.