

SURVEY REVIEW

The Qualitative and Quantitative Rise of Literature on Teaching English to Young Learners

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Policy and Politics in Global Primary English

J. Enever

Oxford University Press, 2018, 208 pp., £42.80

ISBN 9780194200547

Transforming Practices for the Elementary Classroom

J. Sharkey (ed.)

TESOL Press, 2018, 180 pp., \$45.95

ISBN 9781942799481

Young Learner Education

F. Copland and S. Garton (eds.)

TESOL Press, 2018, 154 pp., \$32.95

ISBN 9781942799733

Early Instructed Second Language Acquisition: Pathways to Competence

J. Rokita-Jaśkow and M. Ellis (eds.)

Multilingual Matters, 2019, 272 pp., £25.00

ISBN 9781788922524

Early Language Learning and Teacher Education: International Research and Practice

S. Zein and S. Garton (eds.)

Multilingual Matters, 2019, 296 pp., £34.95

ISBN 9781788922647

The Routledge Handbook of Teaching English to Young Learners

S. Garton and F. Copland (eds.)

Routledge, 2019, 544 pp., £190.00

ISBN 9781138643772

The professionalization of teaching English to young learners

When I started teaching English in the mid-1990s ‘young learner’ classes were an appendix to the adult business of out-of-school ELT. English as a subject or foreign language in primary mainstream education was tentatively being experimented with and introduced unsystematically and

in different ways in various contexts. For example, in France, English was introduced into the last year of primary school in 1989 (M.E.N. 2001) and only reached 1st grade (Cours Préparatoire) in 2016, whereas Norway had introduced English in the upper levels of primary school in 1939 and officially into grade 1 in 1997 (Krulatz, Dahl, and Flognfeldt 2018).

In addition, there was a dearth of literature focusing on teaching English to children and teenagers, as the ELT profession was largely based on adult perspectives on teaching and learning. My own MA in TEFL, in the early 2000s, only included one optional module on Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL), although I chose to focus my research and assignments for all of my six optional modules on young learners. The bibliography included the seminal works of Brumfit, Moon, and Tongue (1991), Brewster, Ellis, and Girard (2002), Moon (2000), Cameron (2001), and others. These works had a significant impact on many teachers trained in the CELTA and DELTA tradition, who then grudgingly ended up in the growing numbers of classes of ever-younger learners. These books also brought attention to, and paved the way for, more intensive research into how young children learn foreign languages. Twenty years later, as we witness the rise of early language learning, the young learner classroom has become a mainstream research interest, generating much-needed theoretical insights and practice-based pedagogy; and I educate future primary teachers of English with a whole bookshelf dedicated to TEYL. The ‘Cinderella area’ of scholarship (Copland and Garton 2014: 223), where research and informed discussion were scarce, has now come of age (Rixon 2016, Copland and Garton 2014).

So, it was with a strong sense of the importance of the undertaking that I set out to review this sextet of recent publications, which give a comprehensive overview of the status quo of primary English worldwide. These six books contain a total of 138 different contributors from six continents, highlighting the exponential spread of English across the globe in 92 chapters. As I turned the 1593 pages in total, it was with a sigh of relief that I realized that teachers, researchers, and students now have access to quality academic literature on teaching young language learners, and I gasped in amazement at how so many different contexts experience similar problems associated with this runaway train.

What I would like to do is assess whether or not this plethora of books on teaching young learners is relevant, up to date, and useful for language learning in the 21st century. I first look at each individual book and provide a brief overview of its structure, content, and main focus. Even though all the books have a strong teacher education foundation, each book is unique in the angle it takes in exploring the different issues, contexts, and outcomes. I will then conclude with a summary of common trends and issues that embed these books firmly in 21st-century teacher education of young language learners.

I start with this volume by Janet Enever, because it is the foundation on which rest the other five publications in this review. It is the only monograph (the other books are all edited volumes), and analyses, critically and soberly, the exponential spread of English across the

Policy and Politics in Global Primary English

Summary

globe. The author bases her analysis of the current situation on 12 short studies that highlight comparisons and similarities at both national and supranational levels of governance.

The book is divided into two parts. Part One (Chapters 1–4) gives an overview of key forces that have influenced the rise of global primary English. It starts with a description of the theoretical lens through which Enever analyses the growing phenomenon of English education in the primary as well as pre-primary sector worldwide. This is captured in Chapter 1, where Enever situates her investigation of the global flows of economic, cultural, and political power within a sociohistorical theoretical framework. Enever draws on [Cox's \(1987\)](#) ideas of historical materialism to examine how and why specific processes, in this case the provision of English in primary schools, emerge within particular geographical, economic, and cultural histories of policy and practice across the world, and the impact thereof on learners' lives. She also employs [Lukes's \(2005\)](#) three-dimensional view of power, which helps focus the debate on the decision-making processes and the roles of various actors engaged in the process.

Chapter 2 looks at emerging patterns of global primary English with a focus on India and Spain, two markedly different contexts, as illustrative of sociohistorical contexts where policy decisions have been influenced by global forces, i.e. the introduction of EMI (English as Medium of Instruction) and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), respectively. In both cases, 'the economic priority has been employed in these instances as a rationale for the benefits of English as a cultural capital' (p. 52). In Chapter 3, Enever discusses pre-school English provision, which has been described by [Knagg \(2016: 3\)](#) as 'perhaps the final frontier in the rush to teach and learn English at ever younger ages'. The chapter focuses on the European ECEC (Early Childhood Education and Care) contexts of Italy, Portugal, and Spain, and a small-scale study of kindergartens in Shanghai. In the European context there are still no official policies governing the provision of English, or any other foreign language (FL), in early-years contexts. This incursion of English into pre-primary is an example of how global forces, combined with the bottom-up pressures of parentocracy, are pushing the English agenda. In this policy vacuum, English is by far the main FL in pre-primary classrooms. Despite the importance of an integrated approach in the early years, English exists as standalone lessons with little evidence of integration with other curricular areas in the Portuguese context.

Enever also stresses the need for qualified teachers and training opportunities, as well as clarification of the reasons for this early start in low-exposure contexts. In contrast, the situation in Shanghai, a multilingual and multicultural international city, offers an invaluable opportunity 'to explore the nature of multilingual contexts for early language learning' (p. 62). Enever highlights the importance of viewing language through 'a multilingual lens' (p. 71) based on [Cummins and Persad's \(2014\)](#) orientations: affirmation of identity through the language curriculum, through the support of other languages in class, and through the participation of parents in kindergarten activities; rich language

interaction and print access; and children's awareness of and willingness to experiment with English and create meaning in this multilingual context. Chapter 4 analyses three contexts where primary curricula have been present for some time: Poland, Italy, and Sweden. Certain gains have been identified in these situations, especially related to attitude, motivation, and progress, while also linking outcomes to historical, geographical, sociocultural, and economic factors and challenges.

In Part Two, Enever addresses broader social issues that influence the growth of English, such as regional soft policy, assessment, accountability, transparency, and standardization in education. In Chapter 5, she discusses six regional soft policy initiatives in Europe – the ECML (the European Centre for Modern Languages), CEFR (the Common European Framework of Reference), ELP (the European Language Portfolio), Action Plan 2004–06, Eurydice, LLP (the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007–2013) and Pre-Primary Language Learning – and the significant contribution these have had on achieving European convergence regarding the introduction of FLs at primary and pre-primary level. After examining three critical areas that still challenge the implementation process – namely language choice, teacher provision, and commissioned research – Enever uses two contrasting examples, Slovenia and Germany, to illustrate the impact of regional soft policy on national policies. Even though both countries have steadily moved towards convergence, in the latter there is more resistance to measurements of outcomes for FL, for example, whereas in the former, a smaller and newer country in the EU, the perception is that full convergence is not only more straightforward but also beneficial.

Chapter 6 critiques the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001) and its far-reaching influence beyond European borders, where it was initially developed, evidenced by the cases of Vietnam and Uruguay. The CEFR has been adopted internationally in order to facilitate global comparisons and, consequently, has imposed formalized, standardized outcomes-driven measures in primary assessment. Traditionally developed for adult language learning, the CEFR is an inappropriate tool for measuring young learners' language attainments. These developments force us to overlook the individual characteristics of young learners, including 'motivation, anxiety attitudes, self-perception and self-confidence' (p. 120). The chapter ends with an urgent call for more empirical research to clarify the CEFR's strengths and weaknesses in terms of cultural appropriacy and identify realistic expectations, the aim being to stem the escalation of high-stakes testing and private language classes, which contribute to growing inequalities in some contexts. Furthermore, Enever concludes that the convergence of global forces and EU soft policy has diverted the focus from supporting and creating a multilingual Europe to promoting English instead.

Chapter 7 examines a further level of international influence on primary English: the weight of transnational organizations, such as the OECD, UNESCO, and the UN, on the growth of a measurement culture in global education. It also discusses the impact of the application of business terminology, such as accountability, transparency, and meeting targets.

The conditions attached to these funding organizations, which countries need to meet in order to receive these funds for education, infrastructure, and curriculum modernization projects, very often set the agenda for local policy decisions. Enever expresses concern about this growth of an ‘audit culture’ (p. 155), where ‘measurement by numbers’ (p. 156) prevails and the individual nature of children’s learning and the agency of the teacher is ignored.

The final chapter summarizes how the decisions made in multiple contexts are triggered mainly by the coming together of the top-down influence of global forces and global alignment and the bottom-up pressure of parentocracy. Ultimately, the resultant realities of limited teacher expertise and teacher supply, for example, widen the inequalities that already exist between socioeconomic groups and rural and urban areas, and suggest the need for a more equitable, long-term, and sustainable approach supported by realizable goals. Enever formulates 13 desirable conditions for promoting equity and quality primary English for all learners, which are echoed in a number of studies in the edited volumes in this review. These recommendations include appropriate teacher models, teacher qualifications and continuous professional development, policy implementation, budgetary commitment, school commitment and support, classroom size and resources, curriculum model, outcomes and assessments, continuity across phases, and equity and quality of provision.

Evaluation

The main premise of the book is the inherent complexity of early language learning today, which includes multiple stakeholders navigating the pull between global forces and local contextual factors. This tension exists within and as a result of the dynamic nature of globalization, a global power shift towards more economic-driven policies, and the consequent cultural and linguistic capital accorded to the learning of English. Enever expertly weaves conflicting elements into her exploration of the interplay of top-down policy decisions that sometimes boils down to campaign promises that are never kept, short-termist politics, and the grassroots pressures of parentocracy.

The blurb on the back cover describes this book aptly as timely and important. It is also ground-breaking as it is the first to explore the drive for primary English within a global policy perspective. I would also describe it as comprehensive, well researched, and impactful. It requires us to stop and reflect on the power global forces have exerted on charting our English language journey so far (as students, teachers, educators, policy-makers, and parents). Furthermore, standing at the crossroads of the exponential increase in primary English, it encourages us to consider the path to follow for English to be a truly empowering force that improves the life chances of *all* children.

Transforming Practices for the Elementary Classroom

Edited by Judy Sharkey, this volume highlights the power of researcher and practitioner collaborative projects in elementary classrooms in the United States, with a specific focus on supporting English language learners (ELLs) using culturally responsive pedagogy across the curriculum. It is the latest in the *Engaging Research* series from TESOL Press, which encourages dialogue between practitioners and researchers,

between research and practice, and between the classroom and the research institution. It systematically brings together an article or chapter chosen from a TESOL publication, followed by a standardized lesson plan which is the result of the paper being discussed. The authors explore these encounters as interactive, collaborative, and inclusive practice, thus creating a dialogic relationship, which encourages researchers to ground their work in the day-to-day realities and challenges of the classroom and urges the practitioners to engage with evidence-based knowledge from the classroom. The series editor's preface claims that it 'serves ELT practitioners by providing nuggets of original research from TESOL publications in the form of rich and detailed synopsis' (p. v), which is then transformed into an applicable format in the classroom. This publication succeeds in building that bridge between research and practice effectively, with accessible research-focused articles and manageable research-led classroom-based projects that encourage research and practice to meet half-way.

Summary

The book is structured into three sections, representing three main areas of the US curriculum: Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science, thus grounding the chapters in the Common Core State Standards and language standards. Each chapter follows a similar format: it starts with a description of the educational background of the study and a brief synopsis of the original paper which informed the rationale for the intervention; this is followed by the application section, which includes a comprehensive lesson plan and ends with reflections on the study, its applicability, and future directions.

The Language Arts section consists of four chapters. Chapter 1, by Erickson, investigates the applicability of critical empathy, based on Empathetic Critical Integrations (ECI) of multiple perspectives in a context where educators were struggling to balance culturally responsive teaching and educational requirements against a backdrop of increased hate speech, anti-immigrant sentiment, and racism post the 2016 US presidential election. Academic literacy, with a focus on adapting the teaching learning cycle of deconstruction, joint construction, and eventual independent construction of a text for Grade 1 children, is the focus of de Oliveira, Jones, and Arana's Chapter 2. Elsamí and Chowdhury, in Chapter 3, explore the affordances of technology and multimodality to help close the achievement gap between native-speaking and language-minority students' literacy development in Grade 1. This not only gave the students more agency in choosing their topics, but also allowed them to express their identity via their multimodal stories. The focus on teaching strategies and modelling of teacher language are also very helpful examples of classroom-based adaptation of the original study. In the final chapter in this section, Hansen-Thomas describes a writing lesson using the mini-novella as a structural, culturally relevant, and hence motivating support to encourage upper elementary students to engage with the writing process.

In the Social Sciences section, Chapter 5, by Daniel and Riley, is based on an article that articulates a vision of integrating social justice paradigms in all classrooms. The authors present three lessons that aim to empower

all students in the class to voice their opinions, participate in classroom dynamics, listen actively, and create a trusting respectful learning environment. These classroom-based activities of building classroom rules and setting and conducting weekly meetings allow students to experience democratic processes and social justice by creating equitable classroom environments. Brisk, Alvarado, Timothy, and Scialoia describe an extended set of lessons aimed at developing ELLs' academic writing in Chapter 6. This approach is based on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and results in a scaffolded instructed plan to avoid the adultification of students into teacher roles, i.e. those children who are used to help and support their weaker classmates. The theme of understanding democracies appears here as well and students were asked to investigate and write about the positions of the 2016 presidential candidates, thus revealing real-world applicability and relevance.

The Science section includes four chapters with a strong focus on scaffolding students' access to scientific content while dealing with the linguistic demands of texts at a receptive and productive level. The intervention in Chapter 7, conducted by the authors, a university student (Lawver) and her supervisor (Rilling), took place in a kindergarten. They look at formative participatory assessment practices that allow ELLs to demonstrate proficiency in content knowledge and language abilities. The following chapter, by Verplaetse, Ferraro, and Mazzaro, is about eliciting high levels of engagement from students by asking questions that focus on personal and thematic relevance, provoking critical enquiry that requires high levels of cognition and stimulates the development of academic language for ELLs. This approach requires extensive use of scaffolding and modified instruction in order to allow the students to engage in discussions. In Chapter 9, scaffolding is once again the main object of the intervention, but this time Peercy, DeStefano, Sethna, and Bitter focus on a project to help a student teacher gain a deeper and more practice-based understanding of designed-in and contingent scaffolding strategies. Colombo, Finneran, and Gormley-Bonanno incorporate SFL to help students access content and concepts in the curriculum and academic language and thus leverage students' metalinguistic knowledge. This approach contributes to improved reading skills, academic language, and content area knowledge, but requires intentional, explicit, and routinized focus on language, and quite a lot of preparation time.

Evaluation

This book serves as an excellent example of research which is expertly translated into concrete classroom action, replicated across the curriculum in classrooms with different age ranges to the participants in the original paper, hence the relevance of the adjective 'transformative' in the title. The repeated structure of the chapters (overview, synopsis, lesson plan, and reflection), the choice of one study on which to base the classroom enquiry, and the close alignment with curricular standards provides teachers, students, and researchers with a template for how to identify a gap and instigate a research project. Scaffolding stands out as a key strategy throughout the book in order to ensure equity and social justice in terms of ELLs accessing the curriculum.

One of the strengths of this publication is how it supports and includes teachers in the research process, in translating research into classroom practice and in giving them a voice as authors of the chapters in this book. Another strength is the underlying theoretical basis of culturally responsive teaching that acknowledges the multiple identities of children in mainstream classrooms today and provides a unifying thread through the book. Even though these research projects are based in a very specific language learning context, the United States, the relevance of the gaps identified in each study to many other minority language situations are evident and the solutions are potentially applicable to other parts of the world. In fact, this book demonstrates how research can be translated into practice and how practice can be research-based via a succinct and doable project based on reflective practice. I believe this is the most accessible book in this survey review for busy practitioners as the summary of the original study provides them with a door to the world of research. It also provides a mirror to reflect on their own practice and make appropriate changes to their teaching. The dilemma of integrating ELLs in an equitable fashion into the mainstream classroom places the book at the forefront of education in the 21st century.

Young Learner Education

This is another TESOL Press publication, from the TESOL Voices series, which aims to bring a multitude of voices (teachers, educators, children, parents, and administrators) to the playing field of educating young language learners. The chapters are short, and the projects described in them are dealt with clearly and succinctly, and in accessible language. Some of these projects were initiated and conducted directly in schools and managed by the teachers, professional learning teams, and/or the administrators, with the support of university researchers. This places teacher learning and reflection on learning in the very context that teachers inhabit, assess, and change.

Summary

This volume is organized into four parts: Teacher Education, Developing Appropriate Pedagogies, Young Learners in the Mainstream, and Engaging the Wider Community. These chapters cover a range of contexts in Asia, Europe, North and South America, and the Middle East. In the first chapter, Reynolds and Chang report on a project in Taiwan that aimed to bridge the gap between the college courses and the practicum. The context was a course that aims to help pre-service teachers with selecting and using picturebooks in the young learner classroom and included a weekly story time session at the university library with young learners and their parents. Even though there was a reference to selecting picturebooks with content that will increase children's world knowledge and deliver an important and relevant message, any activities that highlighted links to cross-curricular or social issues are absent, as the main focus of the sessions was language development and practice.

Both Chapter Two (Poonpon, Satthamnuwong, and Sameephet) and Chapter Three (Kirkgöz) focus on supporting teachers to implement effective classroom management techniques to improve learning and engagement in classrooms in rural Thailand and in a state primary school in Turkey, respectively. The focus of the intervention in Thailand was helping teachers implement more effective communicative language

teaching approaches through student engagement and reflection. In Turkey, the collaborative action research project, consisting of four cycles, involved the teacher in exploring different techniques for improving her classroom management skills. This cyclical approach helped the teacher refine her techniques with the support of her mentor, the university researcher.

The authors of Chapter Four, Bezerra and Di Lello, describe a project in which teachers implemented a soft version of project-based learning (PBL) into their EFL young learner classes (age 7–10) in Brazil. This project also integrated a multiliteracies element as it culminated in the students publishing their work in the *Junior Magazine* online. The last chapter in this section, by Loh and Lai, describes a project in which a group of teachers in a primary school in Singapore investigated the effect that different reading strategies had on children's learning. The structure of this chapter is interesting as the voice of the researcher is interspersed with the voice of the teacher in alternating paragraphs, with a strong focus on reflection.

The next section focuses on age-appropriate pedagogies for young learners. Chapter Six by Yanase explores a story-based approach to developing autonomy and language in a private language school in Tokyo. The invitation for students, aged 8–10, to contribute to syllabus design challenged the traditional top-down approach and gave the children voices and choices in negotiating their learning in the English language classroom. The story-based approach continues in the next chapter, where Allen-Tamai describes a project with 200 5th and 6th graders, where a story-based curriculum (based on well-known fairy tales and folk tales) was created in order to enable young learners in an impoverished language learning environment to engage in meaningful linguistic interactions. In Chapter 8, Mourão describes how pre-primary children engage with story material in the English language area (ELA) in the classroom, which is used by the teacher in a story-based circle time session. Through the presentation of circle time and ELA voices via carefully chosen vignettes, Mourão presents evidence of the benefits of a cyclical process in integrating English into the child's learning environment. Chapter 9 (Emery and Al-Marzouki) explores the benefits and issues of introducing task-based learning in a primary class in Oman. In the last chapter in the section, Inostroza, a teacher in Chile, 'puts on her researcher hat' (p. 85) to explore the use of games in two Chilean classrooms. This chapter highlights the advantages of games in the young learner class for motivational, affective reasons and how they encourage language practice despite curriculum and time constraints.

The chapters in Section Three are based in the US context and report on projects with ELLs. Yee and Li grapple with the question of equitable testing for Chinese ELLs in Chapter 11, given that national assessment standards do not take into account the situation and profile of ELLs and do not consider how long it takes to pick up the academic language of the classroom. This focus on testing has a negative washback on teaching, distorts sound pedagogical principles, affects students' self-esteem, and puts ELLs at a disadvantage as it impedes their ability to

progress. In Chapter 12, de Oliveira and Ma focus on one teacher using planned and interactional scaffolding techniques with her Latino/a ELLs to support and develop their knowledge of language. The extracts of the teacher demonstrating the scaffolding techniques are useful examples of classroom discourse that could be used to demonstrate translanguaging, recasting, and the use of semiotic and multimodal resources. Santavicca and Terrell, in Chapter 13, describe pre-service teachers' reflections on using the ELL Shadowing Protocol, which aims to track and explore culturally and linguistically diverse students' learning trajectories. The protocol involves the pre-service teachers observing the students' interactions in the classroom and making notes on clearly identified criteria. This chapter shows how teachers become aware of, and develop greater sensitivity to, the lived experiences of ELLs as they navigate the language–content divide.

The last section is interesting because of its focus on the wider community. This is an area that is missing from most of the publications in this survey, so it is one of the strong features of the book. Chapter 14 (Ball) describes a community-based English language programme that aimed to make English relevant to children's daily lives in a low-income community in Brazil. The main aim of the study was transforming the curriculum to be driven by real-world social issues that affect the children in their communities and to foster critical thinking and intercultural awareness, with language playing a facilitative role. As a result, more student engagement was observed, children used learning strategies that made them more accountable for their learning, and developed more emotional intelligence. In Chapter 15, G. Ellis explores the role of parents in motivating children to learn English in France in an after-school programme. Fostering effective home–school educational partnerships increases mutual respect and opens up avenues for communication that values the different traditions, cultural values, and perspectives of teachers and parents. Ellis recommends helping parents formulate realistic expectations, dispelling myths and misconceptions about language teaching, and helping parents ask effective questions to support their children's learning at home. Encouraging children to reflect on their learning also develops children's metacognitive ability and the language to talk to their parents about their learning.

In the closing chapter, Copland and Garton sum up the variety of contexts and learning situations that characterize current issues in TEYL. The spotlight is shone on the different ways research can empower all stakeholders involved. The editors highlight the different voices present in this publication that come from or are formed in the space of the classroom. This perspective provides insights from the classroom that inform an agenda for future research that must include children's and practitioners' voices in democratizing and levelling the practice–research divide. They also call for a more interdisciplinary approach where bilingual and EFL approaches are placed on a continuum and not pitted against each other in separate camps.

Evaluation

This publication offers interesting insights into how classroom interventions can make a difference, with the inclusion of multiple voices

(students, teachers, parents, the community). Despite the short chapters, the small-scale studies were grounded in theoretical perspectives, and the foregrounding of voices ‘from the classroom floor’ (p. v) emphasizes the day-to-day complexities of teaching young learners. The editors claim that the chapters in the book bring new insights to old themes and address relatively new areas. Without undermining the importance of the linguistic aims of the language classroom and despite some of the interesting resources used in the different learning situations, I feel this volume has an overly strong language focus. This is not a new focus, yet as English becomes a basic skill in primary schools, we need to go beyond language and vocabulary and integrate more holistic interdisciplinary approaches that encourage critical reflection and deep learning. This does not, however, detract from the strength of the book in integrating diverse voices from the classroom and beyond.

Early Instructed Second Language Acquisition

The next two books in this review are part of the series *English Language Learning in School Contexts* from Multilingual Matters. This series is quite recent, and fills a gap in the literature as it brings to the table a specific focus on early language learning in contexts across the globe. The two books highlight the spread of early language learning policies and underscore the implications for all stakeholders concerned with these profound educational changes. However, while underlining the need for further research into this phenomenon, the two books take different routes to assessing the many contexts of early language learning: *Early Language Learning and Teacher Education* specifically highlights the implications for practitioners, whereas *Early Instructed Second Language Acquisition* focuses on the impact on young learners, their learning contexts, and those directly related to them, the teachers, and their parents.

Early Instructed Second Language Acquisition, edited by Rokita-Jaśkow and M. Ellis, is based on the recommendations for further research in early FL learning (FLL) made in the [Edelenbos, Johnstone, and Kubanek \(2006\)](#) report and by [Nikolov and Mihaljević Djigunović \(2006\)](#). These documents call for a number of actions related to early FLL: holistic and longitudinal investigation into what leads to successful early FLL, description of good practice based on observation data, more research on individual factors and how these interplay with learning outcomes, and the role of the L1 in L2 development.

Summary

The publication consists of three parts with a short introductory chapter to each part by Melanie Ellis. The first part explores policy and practice in compulsory early language learning in two low-input countries, Poland (Rokita-Jaśkow and Pamuła-Behrens) and Portugal (Mourão). The two chapters present two aspects that impact significantly on low-exposure instructed contexts, namely the changing face of politics that highlights the vulnerability of early language learning in Poland, and the integration of ECEC practices, such as child-initiated play within especially set-up English language areas, to enhance language learning and foster engagement *through* English.

Part Two looks at developing early L2 oracy and literacy and is divided into these two overarching areas. The section on oracy, ‘Form and

Functions of L2 Classroom Input', presents two studies of child FL language production in Spain and one study that analyses the impact of teacher language use on the language production of 6th grade students in Poland. These studies use longitudinal classroom-based approaches to understanding early FLL, which was mentioned above. Chapter 3 (Fleta) describes a longitudinal study conducted in an early years bilingual setting in Madrid. It looks at the different stages in the acquisition of English grammatical forms in a high input context, which favours oral communicative interaction through listening and speaking. In Chapter 4, Lázaro-Ibarrola and Azpicueta-Martinez use a case study approach to analyse the child-child and child-adult interactions of 8-9 year-olds and how they negotiate for meaning in the two situations. One of the recommendations of this study is to increase the number of case studies in FL settings in order to better understand the multitude of settings in which FLL occurs. Chapter 5 (Szulc-Kurpaska) concludes that excessive teacher language use, focused on language items only with no attention to personalization, encouraged overly controlled production of language on the part of the children without creativity or spontaneity.

The second part of this section, 'Pathways to Developing Early Literacy', investigates reading performance from a product and process perspective, a specific focus on teaching critical reading strategies, and the affordances of story apps to encourage extensive reading. In Chapter 6, Šamo uses a mixed-methods approach to explore the 'reading (awareness) performance' (p. 138) of two 10/11-year-old twins in Croatia. The interesting aspect of this study is that the post-reading open-ended questionnaire introduces the child's voice into the research process. The focus in Chapter 7 (Ruiz de Zarobe and Zenotz) is on critical reading strategies in four year 5 and year 6 classes learning English in a CLIL programme, touching on an area of utmost importance in the world today, i.e. developing critical readers and critical thinkers. This intervention study clearly shows that explicit reading strategies instruction has a positive effect on enhancing critical reading competence in the English language classroom. Kolb and Brunsmeier in Chapter 8 also bring a much-needed focus on how best to develop extensive reading with FL learners, in this case, with the under-researched resource of story apps. The findings are interesting as they indicate that the story apps on their own are not effective unless they are quality story apps with interactive multimodal features that closely reflect the story, and are flanked by pre- and post-reading activities that elicit the use of reading strategies that support understanding.

Part Three consists of four chapters, all based in Poland and concerned with attitudes to language learning and language learners and how this affects key relationships in the various learning contexts. This includes the parents' perceptions of the language learning process in Chapter 9, where Loranc-Paszylk examines reasons why parents enrol their children in bilingual primary schools, which include parents' preference for native-speaker teachers, maximum exposure to English, and linguistically homogeneous groups, which inevitably undermines the initial egalitarian principles of CLIL. The chapter confirms the many findings of the relationship between socioeconomic status of parents and successful L2 acquisition, highlighting parents' beliefs that their children are provided

with better educational opportunities by going to bilingual primary schools. Chapter 10 looks at the benefits of parental involvement in pre-primary children's learning of an FL and how that impacts on student motivation and parent-teacher and parent-child relationships. Rokita-Jaśkow recommends parent training via teacher-parent conferences, in order to help parents maximize their children's exposure to the L2 at home in a playful and motivating interaction. The author also advises parents to observe their children's lessons in order to be able to recreate familiar activities at home. Chapter 11, by Król-Gierat, is remarkably the only chapter reviewed here dedicated to SEN. It looks at teachers' perceptions of SEN learners vs the children's self-concept and how that affects the relationship. In Chapter 12, Guz and Tetiurka look at a novice teacher's struggle to establish a relationship with an early year FL class. This study is based on power relationships in the classroom and how power is negotiated between the teacher and the children via verbal and non-verbal communication.

Evaluation

Despite the narrow focus of the contexts covered in this publication, mostly Spain and Poland, the authors try to bring in a variety of voices, especially those from the classroom. The teachers' voices are well represented, yet even though the focus is the child in the classroom, the voice of the child could have been made more prominent. In the afterword, M. Ellis and Rokita-Jaśkow stress the impact that parental pressure, despite parents' limited knowledge of how children learn, has on their children's learning, which reflects Enever's analysis of the bottom-up pressures of parentocracy. The editors further summarize the need for effective education of young learners, involving age-appropriate pedagogy and continuity between stages, pointing out that playful early contexts are often followed by formal language instruction, with negative effects on motivation for further learning. Interestingly enough, they conclude that 'we need to know more about YLs themselves and to find ways to give them a voice about what happens in their language education' (p. 247), which I wholeheartedly support.

Early Language Learning and Teacher Education Summary

This volume, edited by Zein and Garton, is divided into four parts, preceded by two introductory chapters by Zein and by Butler, respectively, and ending with a concluding chapter by Garton. I am particularly impressed by the introductory chapters as they make a convincing case for the research-practice tandem and set the scene for the chapters that follow. These robust introductory chapters highlight the impact of early language learning policies on teacher education, which have resulted in a shortage of adequately trained teachers with appropriate proficiency levels across the globe.

Part One consists of four chapters that draw attention to the complexity of teacher learning in building a thorough understanding of the young learners in their classes. In Chapter 3, Le shows that teacher learning is complex and dynamic. He emphasizes the importance of teachers developing an in-depth knowledge of children's psychology and how they learn English as being more critical than 'the codified knowledge about language teaching' (p. 54). In Chapter 4, Zein highlights the importance of teacher classroom discourse in scaffolding instruction. He analyses

how imagining themselves as children leads teachers to using effective speech modification features that, together with body language and visual and textual support, provide age-appropriate multimodal scaffolding as comprehensible input. In many teacher education research studies the teacher educator is the elephant in the room, yet the methodology employed in this chapter acknowledges the teacher educator as being part of the teaching learning process and the post-observation discussions provide an opportunity for teacher-educators to reflect on their own scaffolding practices with pre-service teachers. In Chapter 5, Zhang examines how Learning Study can empower teachers to become more learner-centered and proactive in their own professional development. In keeping with the overall focus of the book in turning research into practice, this study demonstrates how collaborative experimenting, observation, and reflection supports pre-service teachers' understanding of the situated, lived complexity of the classroom. Chapter 6 is based in the UK, where Macrory investigates undergraduate and postgraduate student teachers' school-based experiences and perceptions of helping children access the orthography of the new language via the phonics approach. Macrory highlights the lack of opportunity for student teachers to observe literacy-based lessons in their school placements, which highlights another issue related to the role of university teacher education programmes in terms of student teachers' practice experiences.

Part Two consists of three chapters describing studies that highlight innovative approaches to mentoring and supervision. In Chapter 7, Chou uses the reflective clinical supervision model, consisting of four clear stages (planning, observation, feedback, and professional development), to support primary EFL pre-service teachers in Taiwan to effectively develop pedagogical knowledge through supervised field work. This collaborative teaching practice experience gave the student teachers an opportunity to connect the theoretical basis of their university courses to a step-by-step practice programme, by making them reflect on and re-examine their role in the complex foreign language classroom. In Chapter 8, Kirkgöz explores a collaborative action research project with grade 2 teachers in Turkey. This professional development project included a university-school partnership where the researcher used mentoring to support teachers in the first years following curriculum innovation and to enhance their professional development in teaching young learners. This study also highlights the importance of the mentee-mentor relationship and the characteristics the mentor needs to develop in order to effectively help teachers develop new knowledge and improve their self-efficacy. Boivin, in Chapter 9, poses the question of how best to conceptualize professional development for teachers who are required to implement new educational policies, reflecting 21st-century skills. This collaborative project between in-service English teachers and MA students in Kazakhstan allowed for co-construction of knowledge in embedding a multiliteracies approach in early language learning. This chapter emphasizes that shifts in curriculum development must be accompanied by professional development initiatives that encourage the same shift in teachers' attitudes and increase their theoretical knowledge. Most importantly, teachers experience learning that is applied knowledge in the classroom context. These

transformative processes are especially important in the multilingual and multimodal contexts in which our learners function today.

Part Three consists of two chapters with an overall stress on development and evaluation of programmes in two languages via the implementation of bilingual (Chapter 10) and cross-curricular projects (Chapter 11). Chapter 10 is unique in this survey review as it is the only one that describes a study with languages other than English, namely Italian and Turkish. This is refreshing as English very much dominates international research on foreign language teaching, yet the author, Carbonara, underlines the common issues that teachers experience in any language classroom. Carbonara looks at developing the competences of teachers of Italian as a foreign language in a private pre-school in Turkey in view of implementing a bilingual education model to promote higher linguistic competence from an earlier age. The long-term aim was to promote advanced language skills to prepare the children for secondary school, where they get eight hours of Italian as a second language via a CLIL teaching approach and are exposed to a more cognitively demanding academic language. The three-year longitudinal study identified the competences teachers working in a bilingual context need and implications for teacher training. The paper includes a comprehensive table of prerequisites for working in a bilingual pre-school, which are aligned to the Target Competencies in the European Framework for CLIL Teacher Education developed by [Marsh, Mehisto, Wolff, and Frigols Martín \(2010\)](#).

In Chapter 11, Matsuzaki Carreira and Shigyo describe a study that combined cross-curricular learning and PBL in order to enhance EFL teaching in Japanese elementary schools. The study elicited teachers' feelings about developing a cross-curricular project and their subsequent micro teaching thereof. Teachers were generally positive about the cross-curricular approach (which a generalist teacher could easily integrate into their teaching), and saw it as one that increases their motivation and engagement in the learning process. Implications for teacher education include the usability and usefulness of PBL for the young learner and the pre-service teachers.

The last part consists of two chapters, which emphasise the perceptions, knowledge, and assessment in bilingual early language learning contexts in Australia and the United States. In Chapter 12, Jenkins, Duursma, and Neilsen-Hewett explore the perceptions and knowledge of bilingualism and bilingual pre-primary children among educators in Australia. This comparative study revealed the need for professional development that better prepares teachers for working with bilingual children, increases their knowledge of the different stages of child language development, and provides them with the tools and knowledge to deal with the challenges of teaching culturally and linguistically diverse children. Griffin, Bailey, and Mistry, in Chapter 13, explore how teachers in dual-language contexts use bilingual assessment data to inform their classroom practice. This study highlights the importance of bilingual assessment of students in demonstrating their performance and the benefits of professional learning communities (PLCs), a model of professional development that requires

teachers to reflect together on a daily basis on teaching practice to improve student outcomes.

The final chapter summarizes the emerging themes in the publication related to teacher education. I agree with Garton's optimistic view of the field and that this publication offers a ray of hope as the authors present the reader with 'possibilities and affordances, rather than obstacles' and 'bring fresh perspectives to some of the long-standing issues' (p. 267). In looking forward, Garton identifies four key areas for reflection: space for more languages in the curriculum; linking bilingualism and foreign language teaching; equality of access to training and professional development; and methodological issues, e.g. a need for more large-scale quantitative research to complement the undoubtedly valuable small-scale qualitative studies.

Evaluation

The book is coherent, contains sound pedagogical and theoretical reflections on a number of issues in primary English, and starts to break down barriers between disciplines, such as foreign language teaching and bilingualism. This is an important step forward considering the number of multilingual children in classrooms around the world whose multilingual voices are usually silenced.

One of the strengths of the publication is its focus on research-based teacher education and the implications for practitioners. The different chapters provide examples of reflective, enquiring, questioning, and critical approaches to developing language teachers' identity. This goes beyond the mere replication of teaching strategies and techniques, moving the agenda towards ensuring autonomy and highlighting experiential, collaborative, and autonomous learning. An additional strength is the grounding of teacher education in contextual, autobiographical, and sociopolitical realities, which characterizes the complexity and multidimensionality of educating language teachers in a globalized world, with chapters from Asia, Europe, Australia, and North America (Africa is conspicuously absent). Another interesting aspect of this book is the spotlight on methodological considerations in teacher education research, which include mixed methods, narrative enquiry, case studies, and quasi-experimental, longitudinal, and multivocal ethnography, and paves the way for a reconceptualization of teacher education research and evidence-based practice. Most chapters begin with a reference to the globalized world of the 21st century, thus placing teacher education firmly in the present and serving the needs of future generations of teachers.

The Routledge Handbook of Teaching English to Young Learners

I conclude my review with this handbook because, unlike the contributions in the other volumes, the chapters in this volume each give an overview of a particular area, rather than focus on specific projects. Edited by Copland and Garton, this publication was a response to Janet Enever's 'It's a done deal' challenge at the *ELT Journal* debate at IATEFL 2014, where she opposed the motion, 'This house believes that primary ELT does more harm than good.' Basically, Enever urged researchers in the field to move beyond the polarized debate of an early start and begin researching the different contexts in which early language learning occurs in order to better understand the phenomenon and bring methodological and theoretical insights into this growing area of interest. The description

on the back cover aptly celebrates the ‘coming of age’ for the field of research in primary-level English language teaching.

This volume is certainly a hefty tome covering a range of contexts, such as Mexico, Japan, France, the USA, the UK, and, I am thrilled to add, regions that are usually excluded from major publications in young learners, East Africa and the Pacific region. It is the only book in the survey that has chapters from Africa, which has a massive multilingual population dealing with the major educational issue of finding a happy balance between English and local languages. These chapters are also written by African scholars: Ssentanda and Ngwaru on ‘Early Language Teaching in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities’ and Kuchah Kuchah’s ‘Teaching English to Young Learners in Difficult Circumstances’, which identifies the unequal North–South power struggle, highlighting the lack of visibility and representation of research *from* the South *by* the South in major publications.

From a content perspective, this volume includes a rich and varied range of traditional and new areas of teaching English to primary-aged children, such as L2 acquisition, discourse analysis, classroom experience, technology, and some of the more recent developments in young learner pedagogy, such as children’s literature (Bland in Chapter 17), children’s other languages in the English language classroom (Murphy in Chapter 7; Copland and Ni in Chapter 9). It also includes a section dedicated to methodological issues when researching children (Part Five) and research *with* children (Pinter in Chapter 25). Overall, chapters reveal their authors’ experience and insight, even though they vary in focus and pitch: some would be relevant for practising teachers and first-year student teachers and others could serve as a base for further research.

Summary

The book is divided into six parts, covering both macro issues related to policies for early language learning and micro issues associated with pedagogy and classroom-based practice. Each chapter follows the same structure, starting with an introduction, historical perspectives, critical issues, current contributions and research, recommendations for practice, future directions, and further reading and related topics. This recurring structure adds cohesion and unity to the volume and functions as a flexible framework that allows readers to dip into parts of chapters, if they so wish. I found each historical perspectives section a useful and enlightening soundbite of the specific theme covered in each chapter, as it references major contributions and offers a springboard for further reading for anyone interested in the subject.

Part One, ‘Macro issues’, includes five chapters looking at the wider context in which teaching English to primary-aged children takes place. It opens with Johnson’s excellent chapter on the rapid growth of early language learning, and the global effects of this trend as a result of the unprecedented spread of English in the 21st century. His recommendations for policy-makers include, among others, thoughtful decision-making based on contextual factors; long-term planning for generalization and sustainability across the country; the place of English or local Englishes in linguistic diversity; and going beyond a focus on language to developing children’s cognitive, social, and intercultural

learning, as well as values such as developing a humanitarian, citizenship, entrepreneurial, international outlook. In Chapter 2, Singleton and Pfenninger take up the age debate, offering a critical overview of the issue. Their historical perspectives section starts with a reference to language learning and bilingual education in Ancient Rome, where the age and time factor was already being debated, illustrating that this issue is by no means a new phenomenon. The authors conclude that earlier is not necessarily better and professionals, as well as parents, teachers, and students, should be informed that time is an important factor in language learning, and recommend more intensive programmes, such as CLIL (with its own debate raging!). They also encourage researchers in ELL to communicate their findings to wider audiences and encourage the generalizability of results to other individuals and contexts. Rich, in Chapter 3, writes about the need for effective teacher education to improve teacher quality, both from a pedagogical and linguistic perspective. In her introduction, Rich points out the current importance of teacher education in research into ELT, which is corroborated by the number of volumes in this survey review dedicated to pre- and in-service teacher education, in classrooms, in collaborative action research with university educators, and many more. Rich highlights the complexity of teaching young learners and calls for specialized language teacher education, underpinned by relevant theoretical content, in order to develop highly trained and skilled professionals. The next chapter, by Li, Han, and Gao, looks at the complex, shifting, and dynamic features of children's motivation, and the impact of parental/caregiver involvement on motivation. In the final chapter in Part One, Kuchah Kuchah looks at the teaching and learning of English in difficult and under-resourced environments and how collaborative inquiry-based projects can bring benefits to both teachers and children.

The five chapters in Part Two, 'In the Young Learner Classroom', move to the micro level and cover the realities of the classroom context in a range of settings, acknowledging the diversity of English language learners in schools today, as well as the need to take into account the important area of literacy development in English. Ching and Lin tackle English as a medium of instruction in Chapter 6, and the role of translanguaging in supporting and acknowledging children's linguistic repertoires. Chapter 7, by Murphy, describes the challenges children with linguistically diverse backgrounds face when developing reading and writing skills in English in countries where the dominant language is English, e.g. EAL children in the UK. She calls for more inclusive approaches to educating children so they 'take advantage of all the opportunities that being bilingual presents' (p. 119). In Chapter 8, Sullivan and Weeks highlight the enhanced role of differentiated instruction in these linguistically diverse classrooms. They suggest integrating differentiated instruction with other educational initiatives such as response to intervention, culturally responsive teaching, and universal designs for learning. Chapter 9 looks at the use of the child's own language in the learning process. Copland and Ni conclude by saying that there is 'no one-size-fits-all response' (p. 148) to issues of LI use in the FL classroom. Zein, in Chapter 10, differentiates between instructional management and behaviour management in young learner ELT and laments the dearth of research into this critical area of young

learner classroom management worldwide. He underlines the key role of effective classroom management in providing the conditions for optimal learning, the need for a whole-school approach, and the need for more time to be allocated to behaviour and classroom management in teacher education programmes.

Part Three, 'Young Learner Pedagogy', presents an interesting array of chapters that seem to contradict the current thinking of holistic approaches in young learner pedagogy. The first four (Chapters 11–14) cover the skills areas of listening and speaking (Kirkgöz), reading and writing (Shin and Crandall), grammar (Puchta), and vocabulary (Hestetræet) in separate chapters, reflecting the continued influence of language-based syllabi on young learner pedagogy. This choice is justified by the editors in the introduction, as 'Many coursebooks are organised according to these principles (language systems and skills) and teachers may have to follow that guidance even when they prefer a more holistic classroom approach' (p. 5). Despite this organizational decision, some authors also recommend an integrated approach to skills development, for example, 'a balanced literacy approach that is meaning focused but also provides explicit instruction in phonics and bottom-up processing skills' (Shin and Crandall, p. 200). Chapters 15–18 then cover areas that are more in keeping with whole-child development. López-Gopar looks at critical pedagogies in Chapter 15 with a specific focus on democratizing English language education so as to challenge monolingual ideologies and the hegemony of English-only. This approach acknowledges the students' and teachers' linguistic and cultural identities in general education and how they might be relevant to the primary classroom. In Chapter 16, Ellison looks at the benefits and challenges of a CLIL approach, concluding that primary CLIL should be integrated into pre-service teacher education. Bland expounds the benefits of a literature-based approach in Chapter 17, which not only exposes children to authentic language but also to multiple and critical literacies. I find the list of multimodal formats in this chapter extremely useful as it expands our understanding of children's literature and invites the uninitiated teacher/educator to consider options such as picturebooks, graphic novels, story apps, playground and nursery rhymes, oral storytelling and plays, as well as chapter books and graded readers for children who can read more independently. Chapter 18 looks at PBL, which promotes an integrated skills and learner-centred approach. Besides the need for teacher training, Arnold, Bradshaw, and Gregson suggest that learners need training in collaborative participative approaches that require more personal investment, more responsibility for their own learning, and more decision-making through a learning to learn, reflective approach.

Part Four, 'Technology and Young Learner Curriculum', consists of six chapters, divided into two groupings: Chapters 19–21 look at the use of three types of educational technologies and ICT in the primary classroom, and Chapters 22–24 focus on three areas of the curriculum: syllabus design, materials, and assessment. Starting with the well-established concept of games in EFL, Butler gives a thorough overview of the contradictory results of research into use of gaming for improving L2 learning. Even though research into digital game-based learning is quite

recent, there are indications that when combined with instruction, and mediated by the teacher, it does contribute to motivating and developing children's autonomy. In Chapter 20, Belinchón Majoral introduces the concept of Mobile Learning (mLearning), and once again identifies a massive gap in research into mLearning both inside and outside the young learner classroom. Notwithstanding, the author makes some recommendations that include careful planning and implementation of mLearning, continuous monitoring of the experience, consideration of practical applications, and child protection implications. The chapter includes a list of online tools and concludes with a call for further research that offers evidence of educational outcomes and impacts. Chapter 21 focuses on the use of new technologies in the classroom such as interactive whiteboards, tablets, and telecollaborations. Whyte and Cutrim Schmid identify the purposeful and learning-enhancing integration of technology as an important consideration and highlight three critical issues in the young learner class: interactivity, the design of teaching and learning tasks, and CMC (computer-mediated communication).

In Chapter 22, Parker and Valente focus on the primary English curriculum looking at syllabus development and providing a critical analysis of the way teaching and learning English in the primary classroom needs to be organized. They give a thorough overview of how young learner syllabi have been heavily influenced by adult perspectives, especially by the linear language-structured syllabus, by the CEFR, and by high stakes tests. The lowering of the start age has invited more holistic, mainstream educational approaches into the young learner class, thus aligning classroom content with children's ages and better reflecting developments in how they learn. Chapter 23, by Ghosn, picks up some of the issues highlighted in the previous chapter, as course books are also very heavily influenced by the traditional syllabus, and are largely inappropriate in terms of content, structure, and approach. Ghosn also includes materials development for the pre-school years. As the push for starting English at earlier ages has included children aged 3–6, publishers have started churning out course books for this age group. Ghosn rightly recommends that early language learning needs to break away from the course book model. Furthermore, research into how teachers use course books in the classroom, children's perceptions thereof and learning outcomes should be analysed. In the final chapter, Papp addresses the complex area of assessment within a multitude of English learning contexts, with a specific focus on EFL, ESL, and CLIL. This includes the increase in large-scale national and international tests of English for children, the impact of assessment on motivation and the competences that should be assessed in the future in addition to communicative competence.

Part Five, 'Researching Young Learners', looks at the shift from conducting research 'on' children to research 'with' children. Pinter (Chapter 25) stresses how research with children is qualitatively different from that with adults. She describes the methodological shift from research *on* and *about* children to research *with* and *by* children in a paradigm shift from seeing children as objects to considering them as participants and co-researchers. Listening to and placing children at

the helm is not only ethical but sheds a different light on the children's experience of language learning and the research process. Mourão, in Chapter 26, describes the challenges in teaching children in the early years. First and foremost, Mourão recommends the implementation of context-dependent policies for English in pre-primary. As the traditional language teaching approach is inappropriate, she suggests developmentally appropriate practices, such as an integrated approach and emulating local ECEC approaches. Sayer and Ban, in Chapter 27, highlight the disconnections between SLA research and informal learning. The authors acknowledge the difficulty with researching language learning outside the classroom and recommend the following: bridging research on SLA and bilingualism; developing pedagogical approaches that connect instruction in controlled learning environments and more informal naturalistic settings; building connects between the digital and real-world social environments; and focusing on the role siblings play in supporting L2 learning.

The five chapters in Part Six, 'Teaching English to Young Learners: Regional Perspectives', looks at how teaching English to primary-aged children is implemented in different regions of the world, namely Africa (Ssentanda and Ngwaru), East Asia (Jin and Cortazzi), Europe (Rixon), Latin America (Miller, Cunha, Moraes Bezerra, Nóbrega, Ewald, and Braga), and the South Pacific (Willans). This provides a broader, global perspective of primary English language teaching and exemplifies the main challenges and opportunities that exist in different parts of the world.

Evaluation

In conclusion, this book offers a comprehensive overview of many areas related to young learners, with an extensive guide to further reading, which will be beneficial for students, teachers, and researchers. Another strength are the chapters focusing on authentic children's literature, as well as multilingualism and the children's voices. These two areas are picked up by Garton in her closing chapter in the Garton and Zein publication as being in need of urgent attention. However, despite including a wide range of areas, it still lacks a specific focus on the intercultural dimension and the integration of social issues in language education. It is a pleasure to read these world-renowned authors, with a range of background and experiences, writing about their area of expertise even though there may be some inconsistency and variability in style and content. It would have been interesting to see a final chapter pulling the threads together, as this volume has a lot to offer in terms of recommendations for future directions in young learner teaching and research. Of course, space and length may have been a consideration when deciding what to include; however, a space-saving technique could have been to include one long bibliography at the end of the book instead of at the end of each chapter. Overall, though, this book is a must-have in any library.

Conclusion

In my introduction, I promised to evaluate the relevance of these six publications for TEYL in the 21st century. I believe these books together confirm the rise in prominence of the discipline of TEYL, and contribute to moving the field forward. They bring together key names in the field of teaching and researching young learners, and include consultants,

practitioners, students, and university-based researchers. Each individual publication contributes knowledge, insights, and evidence to a field in need of more food for reflection, discussion, and research. Over the last 20 years researching young learners has attained a certain recognition as an area of enquiry, and one that blends practice and theory in a marriage that many of the studies in the edited volumes were able to demonstrate. These six books begin the process of bridging the research and practice divide by providing examples of dialogue between ‘the doers and users of research’ (Hansen-Thomas 2018: v).

A common and recurring theme across all six publications is the variety of contexts where primary English is being taught and investigated, with voices from and by practitioners and researchers *in situ*. Another common thread was research by teachers and the teacher–researcher tandem, which validates the practitioners’ perspectives and experiences, giving teachers an expert voice. This classroom–university collaboration is a model with great potential for enhancing pre-service and in-service teacher education. Nevertheless, I believe we still need to do some decolonizing of English language teaching. In 92 chapters there are only two studies from Africa and two chapters from the South Pacific, despite the global spread of English language teaching to young learners and the considerable attention to integrating English with other languages in these settings.

In order for TEYL to mature and anchor itself firmly in 21st-century pedagogy, we need to listen to the concluding voices from these books as they highlight gaps I too identified as I perused these publications. Firstly, we need to increase our knowledge of the different stages of child language development in the current multilingual and multicultural dispensation, as English cannot be learnt in isolation and independently of children’s other languages and identities. Secondly, we need more voices that research inclusive practices, such as SEN, which appeared only once in this review. These six books abound with a multitude of research designs and approaches, some with lesson frameworks and useful appendices, that allow readers to replicate studies in their own teaching or teacher training. However, we need to continue our forging of appropriate methodologies for teacher education in order to impact positively on children’s learning. Garton, in the concluding chapter of the Zein and Garton publication, calls for an increase in large-scale quantitative methods to multiply the lenses through which we view and evaluate young language learners. We must find a happy medium between theory building and classroom practice, placing them on a par, so practice does not become the poor cousin of teacher education. We need to look at the profile of teacher educators and how they model good practice underpinned by theory, and ensure *they* are sufficiently trained and knowledgeable. Hence, I make a call to restructure education programmes to include educators with classroom experience who can connect linguistics, literature, general education, and subject pedagogy in the service of the teachers.

Even though the focus of the majority of the studies in this volume is *on* children in various settings, they are not necessarily *with* or *by* the children

and lack the child's perspective on the aspect of language learning under scrutiny. In most cases, the child's voice is heard vicariously through the prism of the adults'. At a time when children have a right to voice their opinion, to be heard and have their opinion acted upon (G. Ellis and Ibrahim, forthcoming), this is a big gaping hole waiting to be filled. Pinter has opened the door, but much more needs to be done in this area. I was pleased to see so many studies, and a whole publication, *Transforming Practices for the Elementary Classroom*, focusing on integrating the children's languages in the English language classroom. In the technologically interconnected and mobile world of the 21st century many children come to our classrooms with multiple languages and cultural backgrounds. Even though cultural and linguistically diverse students featured prominently, there was no chapter on intercultural learning in the English language classroom. Creating the global citizens of tomorrow requires children to understand interculturality, global issues, and ecocriticism. The English language classroom or English across the curriculum is an excellent place to start, as is the wealth of authentic children's literature, with its potential for developing critical reading and deep learning, which only got a couple of mentions.

Finally, Enever's excellent foray into global policy, together with other authors' focus on local contexts, shine a light on the need to educate the public, which includes policy-makers and parents, on the workings of early language learning in order for informed decisions to be made in the future. Only when every child has access to quality language learning with properly trained, reflective teachers will TEYL have matured into a much more robust 'done deal'.

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The reviewer

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