

Early Language Learning and Teacher Education: International Research and Practice. Subhan Zein and Sue Garton (Eds.). *Multilingual Matters*, 2019. ix + 296 pp. <https://doi.org/10.21832/ZEIN2654>

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In 2020, language educators in Japan are currently in the 1st year of English education as a formal subject in public Elementary schools nationwide. Simultaneously, the number of young learners growing up in bilingual, trilingual, or multilingual households in Japan is increasing. Furthermore, the pace of globalization is driving down the age at which the world's children are exposed to multiple languages through societal and educational settings. Accordingly, this is an opportune time for educators of current and future teachers to read this volume from the *Early Language Learning in School Contexts* series edited by Janet Enever.

The chapters within the book highlight the diversity of situations in which English and other Modern languages are being taught now and how teachers learn, develop, and apply new skills in classrooms. Part of the appeal of this edited collection is that individual contributions are included from multiple regions in Asia, Southeastern Europe, the UK, Australia, and the USA. In one volume, readers can become familiar with how a variety of early childhood education systems are responding to the rapidly changing educational needs of children between the ages of 3 and 12.

The volume is in four sections with the "Preface" material setting the context and closing with conclusions and future directions. Although it is probably preferable to read the book sequentially, the individual chapters are also suitable for stand-alone reading. In Chapters 1 and 2, editor Subhan Zein introduces the themes explored in the book, and Yuko Goto Butler introduces research-based lessons illustrating how teachers of young learners of English (YLEs) are educated in East and Southeast Asia.

"Part 1: The Complexity of Teacher Learning" presents a narrative research study from Vietnam by Le Van Canh (Chapter 3) of how a young English teacher transitions from a student with a love of English to the overwhelming reality of needing to satisfy a wide range of pupil, school, parent, and personal expectations. The teacher undertakes postgraduate study, which

helps to balance her self-concept as an educator. In Chapter 4, Zein looks at differences in how adults and children learn and use language. This study in Indonesia looked at the ability of YLE teachers to put themselves into the mindset of a child to modify their language, with the result of making them much more effective communicators. Chapter 5 by Yuefeng Zhang opens with a short description of the role of English as an official language in Hong Kong. Following this, Zhang describes a Learning Study research project involving six preservice English Language Teachers who work collaboratively to identify areas of difficulty, research, teach and/or observe, evaluate, consider, refine, and then reteach a variant of the lessons. This method is intended to increase the ability of teachers to notice needs and adapt to their learners. In Chapter 6, Gee Macrory explores the attitudes of teachers and students in England to the introduction of new orthographies when the students are still relatively new to their first orthography. The scope of this chapter includes English and modern languages, generalist versus specialist language teachers, and the role and perceived applicability of phonics training in classes of different languages.

“Part 2: Innovations in Mentoring and Supervision” commences with a study from Taiwan by Chiou-Hui Chou, focusing on preservice YLE teachers using the communicative language teaching approach (CLT). A strong theme was connecting their coursework to practicum with the opportunity to microteach, review, refine, and reteach with the supervisor as a coach. In Chapter 8, Yasemin Kirkgöz discusses research in Turkey focused on in-service teachers with an external supervisor aiming to build more interactive, student-centered lessons for 7-year-old students. This 7-month study examined shifting from textbooks to incorporate more realia and encouraging collaboration over competition between students. In Chapter 9, Nettie Boivin outlines the context of multilingual education in Kazakhstan, where a goal of English competency by 2020 was set in 2007, shifting English as a foreign language (EFL) to English as an additional language (EAL), commencing with Year 1 students and aiming to use 21st-century techniques to underpin education. This was a major departure from a teacher-centered model delivered predominantly in Russian.

“Part 3: Strategies in Program Development” opens with Chapter 10 in which Valentina Carbonara discusses teacher competences and certification. The research focuses on a bilingual kindergarten in Turkey implementing an Italian educational approach known as Reggio Emilio. Chapter 11 by Junko Matsuzaki Carreira and Tomoko Shigyo includes a history of reforms of English education in Japan and the transition from English as a foreign

language activity to English as a subject. The authors also discuss in detail the training and infrastructure needed to shift from grammar translation to a team-taught communicative language teaching approach and ultimately to the cross-curricular approach and use of project-based learning, often delivered as content language integrated learning (CLIL). A large part of this transition has been to reduce the anxiety of generalist teachers who felt unprepared to create lesson plans for English language activities and lacked confidence in their spoken English.

“Part 4: Perceptions, Knowledge and Assessment” starts in Australia with research by Larissa Jenkins, Elisabeth Duursma, and Catherine Neilsen-Hewett. In a small study of bilingual and monolingual early childhood services, the researchers investigated the perceptions of deficits and advantages of bilingualism in services for children. They also explored educator bias not only on language use but also cultural background and the relationships with children who spoke different home languages. In Chapter 13, Katherine M. Griffin, Alison L. Bailey, and Rashmita S. Mistry detail how mass immigration in the USA has influenced the development of immersion methods for teaching alongside monolingual English education. Dual English–Spanish immersion courses have been developed where students get a good foundation in their home language before transitioning to a higher percentage of English, thereby making assessment fairer to these students. Both Chapters 12 and 13 contain evidence of a move away from a deficit approach of bilingualism to a benefits approach, which can only provide much-needed help to bolster the self-image of these learners in a predominantly monolingual system. In Chapter 14, editor Sue Garton brings together all the issues that have been discussed and looks to the future implications of early language learning. Part of her discussion is the speed of the introduction of English and the hope that some of the difficulties encountered during the introduction of CLT may be overcome during the introduction of CLIL. Garton also reflects on the importance of access to pre- and in-service training for educators on pedagogy for young learners and training in language skills. The shift from transmissive and prescriptive to learner-centered education requires substantial scaffolding for teachers to provide them the resources and confidence to stick with the new models, rather than relying on previous teaching habits when things do not go as expected.

This book is a very useful resource for university educators of future teachers and also education policy makers because of the clear overview provided about the varying ways in which English and other Modern languages are taught. This is important because it is unrealistic to expect that

languages can be taught the same way universally when there are stark differences in political and economic priorities and consequently the resources available to fund the education people may want. The unexpected appearance of SARS-CoV-2 has catapulted many students and educators around the world into online learning. It will be interesting to see if a by-product of this abrupt shift will unexpectedly translate into the increased learning opportunities for teachers that this volume recommends.

Reading in the Brain: The New Science of How We Read.
Stanislas Dehaene. Penguin Books, 2009. xii + 388 pp.

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Numerous works have been written concerning the pedagogy of reading (for example, we could turn to Grabe, 2012 or Bamford and Day, 1998), but few have been written concerning how the brain functions as we read. Stanislas Dehaene is not a reading researcher, but rather a mathematician and psychologist, and he approaches research about reading from a cognitive science perspective. *Reading in the Brain* offers insights into several aspects of how the brain interprets the written word. This book focuses on the process the brain uses to interpret the many glyphs used to represent sounds, and how the brain decodes these. Dehaene describes the physical paths neurons take while we read, explores how the brain interprets various symbols into phonological units, and shows us where reading lives in our brains. He also discusses brain functions that impede reading and some possible reasons why. This book begins with an introduction, which is followed by eight chapters, and it ends with a conclusion offering some final thoughts.

The introduction gives an overview of the key points of the book and the way the author intends to approach discussing it. From the first page, in the first paragraph, Dehaene calls reading “an amazing feat.” He suggests that human beings are unusually culturally similar and that this is an effect of having brains with functionalities that are nearly the same from person to person. On page 7, Dehaene introduces an idea that he calls the “neuronal recycling hypothesis” by which he argues that the architecture of the brain is restricted to a set of rules, which nonetheless can become amended due