

Book review:

Building a Culture of Research in TESOL- Collaborations and Communities

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The topics in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) have been undergoing significant changes over the years. It is particularly evident in recent years that themes of impact such as Teaching in the Post -Pandemic Era (Cahapay, 2020), Technology for Communication (Amalia, 2023), Creativity (Heidari, 2024), Formative Assessment (Zhengdong Gan, 2020), Translanguaging (García, et al, 2016), Mindfulness in EFL classes (Zeilhofer, 2023), Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (Thomas et al, 2020), among others have been readings that have gained eminence. Despite the relevance of these trending sources, there still has been the need to review, trace back, inquire, interpret, and research many broader trends in TESOL.

In accordance with this trend, there is now a need for a text that provides an opportunity to learn more about the realities of research in TESOL. Research in TESOL is an opportunity to explore, analyze, and find similarities/differences in learning/teaching processes in the ELT field, it also gives a chance to educators, students, and educational directors to provide contextual and critical insights of the realities of the field. This research dives beyond inquiries, going in depth into an analytical and critical focus of the many facets of language education. The book *Building a Culture of Research in TESOL* holds great value in these times, as it highlights research as a medium of dialogue, exploration of new horizons, and application of the inner daily thoughts that occur inside and outside of the EFL/ESL classrooms. The objectives of the book are to provide guidance to help educators incorporate research into teaching through mentorship and professional development and encourage collaboration between researchers, practitioners, and teachers. These goals are difficult tasks for the academic community that require heavy workloads with generally limited access to contextually relevant research.

This book is also complementary to other works in the discipline, particularly Farrell's *Research on Reflective Practice in TESOL* (2017) book. Farrell uses a detailed analysis of recent research on encouraging reflective practices in TESOL and demonstrates how the embrace of research within TESOL has continually impacted the field. In highlighting how analytical methods have been embraced, the book does a thorough analysis of recent research on promoting reflective practices within TESOL which prompt researchers, academics, and educators to self-reflect and further shape the future of this field. This book is an innovative compilation of key research on philosophy and ideals, study tools, theory, and practice that offers a comprehensive picture of reflection.

It is important to state that this review focuses on providing a critical evaluation of the book *Building a Culture of Research in TESOL-Collaborations and Communities*, demonstrating its contribution to the field, its validity, and its relevance within specific contexts from daily experiences as an educator, student, and researcher in TESOL. Additionally, the book review also includes certain criticisms of the structure and

some of the authors' arguments. The review is intended for academics who are actively engaged in TESOL research, including educators, researchers, students, directors, and others within the field. Readers will find value in the book's insightful observations and contextually relevant examples. Furthermore, this offers readers a chance to identify the relevance of researching in TESOL by citing examples from the book as well as the reviewer's personal experiences; thus, being a way to prompt dialogues between colleges in various contexts of the field. The purpose of this book is to emphasize the value of collaborations and communities, exploring the realities of education, within the discipline of TESOL.

As an ELT educator, researcher, and reader, it is a pleasure to offer this review from the book *Building a Culture of Research in TESOL- Collaborations and Communities*. This book consists of tables, charts, names of ELT teachers from around the world, countries, quotes, and headlines, among other insightful elements which can help ELT researchers around the world to reflect, inquire and (co)learn about the dynamics of TESOL educational research, as well as its options and challenges in diverse real-world contexts.

Building a Culture of TESOL of Research in TESOL, edited by Curtis and Ustuk, from a natural and challenging overview encourages the reader to broadly reflect upon their research practices and analyze the ways of researching TESOL. The book is divided into two parts, each with diverse articles related to the book's core. The foreword, written by Barkhuizen, introduces three pivotal questions that are constantly placed into research practices: *Who*, *Where*, and *When*. These questions identify the subjects of research, the settings of inquiry, and the time of acquiring knowledge of the research. Barkhuizen creates a need to explore these elements of research to provide meaningful impacts within the ELT field.

The first part of the book, *What Does It Mean to Build a Culture of Research in TESOL?* is divided into four chapters.

The first chapter, "Fostering a Culture of Research in TESOL: A Review and a Look Ahead", provides a challenging yet fruitful insight to explore. Part of this chapter includes a review of studies done about TESOL between the years 2000 and 2022. Using combinations of these key terms, such as teacher-researcher, TESOL, professional development, teacher education, teacher-researcher partnerships, and lesson study, the authors conducted searches through Scopus and EBSCOhost databases, discovering 50 research publications. The findings in this study provide an opportunity to explore Conceptual Approaches for building a culture of research, highlighting aspects related to Research Engagement in several countries which emphasizes that Action Research (AR) studies impact research procedures. The impact is presented through a professional development component in six different countries, mainly from the Global South. Using this, the authors built their arguments from paradigms of Professional Identities and Purposes of Research, Building Collaborations in Research,

and Understanding Teachers' Beliefs about Research and The Culture of Research in TESOL Today and Tomorrow. This chapter provides a great opportunity to examine the complex ways that national and regional policy can both support and hinder research done by teachers.

The second chapter, titled "Towards Equitable, Bi-directional, and Reflexive Research Collaborations in English Language Teaching", discusses how research topics, questions, and design are decided, how human subjects are protected in a culturally appropriate manner, how access research venues are, and how participants are compensated and fostered. The chapter draws examples of these from research collaborations in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Myanmar. A notable focus of the chapter is the special emphasis placed upon Intentional and Transnational Collaborations. This emphasis allows the reader to identify ideas to find and use solid and pertinent research findings in English language classrooms and among international communities involved in language education. The authors propose a few tactics to find and foster collaborative partnerships, negotiate ethical dilemmas in international research, and participate in more equitable collaborative processes in intercultural collaborations.

In continuation of the book, the following chapter is called "Cultivating Co-learning in Participatory Design for Translanguaging Pedagogies". This chapter is based on a participatory design research (PDR) experiment conducted in a U.S. English-medium school. It also explores ideas of sustainable and equitable cooperation by examining how co-learning was present and encouraged in our research partnership and co-teaching. It is based on critical and feminist approaches of collaborative and design research. There are two main aspects to keep in mind during the reading of this chapter. The first is the research methodology employed in this chapter is called Ongoing Positionality. This concept reiterates that as we develop throughout time and, ideally becoming more aware of our identities, power dynamics, and the structural injustices present in educational settings, positionality is a concept that should be constantly studied. The second aspect is the recommendations for institutions and organizations looking to create and foster fair, longer-term teacher-researcher partnerships that promote fruitful co-learning.

"Maintaining Our Integrity as Teachers and Human Beings: How Dialogic Research Partnership Created a Humanizing Space for Early Career Teachers of Multilingual Students" is the final chapter of the first section. It is evident from reading this chapter that educators need assistance implementing equity-based alongside culturally sustainable practices. So, according to the chapter's findings, ECTs (Early Career Teachers) can benefit from spaces that allow them to ask insightful questions about their own work, feel comfortable sharing their doubts and obstacles, think deeply about humanizing pedagogy, exchange ideas and resources, remain connected to the university, have a voice, and feel like they are becoming independent.

This comes to the second part of the book, “How Are Collaborations and Communities Building a Culture of Research Globally?” which consists of five chapters.

The first chapter, “How Establishing an Inclusive TESOL Research Community in Chile”, illustrates the creation and upholding grassroots, self-governed, non-profit TESOL research community of practice in Chile-Red Chilena de Investigación en English Language Teaching (RICELT). Something challenging to keep in mind in this chapter is the importance of identifying very local research assumptions as well as exploring practical and initiatives in research. In essence, the reader can dive right into the concept of establishing a research network. The RICELT network aims to create programs that (a) improve relationships between experienced researchers and student teachers performing research in Chile and (b) allow researchers with different backgrounds and affiliations an opportunity to share their work.

The next chapter, “Blurring Boundaries: A Longitudinal Teacher-Researcher Collaboration in South Korea”, deals with the process of building researcher communities. The chapter examines teacher-research collaboration developed around a shared objective and by the development of group standards and ideals that united and inspired participants. The authors draw attention to how the community changed over time to better accept their constantly changing identities as teachers, researchers, and authors. It is also important to note that the chapter closes with a discussion of the difficulties faced during research and provides for creating TESOL research communities that support and encourage classroom teachers, particularly those who are new to teaching.

The third chapter of the second part is titled “Understanding the Teaching-Research Nexus in the Saudi EFL Context: Insights from an Intercultural Language Teaching Project” by Alharbi and Aslan. They focus on a project conducted at a public English Language Institute where two in-service teachers and a researcher worked together to modify and apply an Intercultural Communicative Language Teaching (ICLT) framework. A focus of this project highlighted by the authors include the institutional leaders’ active support, organizational time devoted to research, financial assistance, and communication of expectations for teachers’ research involvement as forms of institutional investment in research. This part of the book offers a critical insight into the reality of disparities in access to these resources for many TESOL researchers, making it difficult to conduct more research and reflections.

Continuing the reading, the chapter, “‘We Are Learning So Much Together!’: A Sustained Teaching-Research Collaboration”, focuses on partnership to modify and instruct two online MA programs in TESOL for aspiring teachers. Their findings highlight the significance of creating and maintaining university-school research relationships as well as producing and disseminating knowledge in the context of a higher education climate that encourages collaborative action research between professors and K–12 teachers in the United States.

The final chapter of the book, “College Writing Teachers as Co researchers: Promoting Faculty Understanding of Multilingual Writers Through Collaborative Program-Wide Assessment”, highlights the importance of localized teacher-researcher collaboration, the value of including the voices of TESOL practitioners, and the need to provide more opportunities for institutionally marginalized faculty members to access research collaborations as a means of professional development, and to challenge and enhance research approaches to student learning. These findings are based on polyvocal reflections from co-researchers in a college writing program assessment project.

The book concludes with “Afterword: Collaborative Turns in Building a Research Culture”, written by Anne Burns. In this edition, she is invited to act as a discussant for the book’s earlier chapters. Since the concepts of community and collaboration in research have long been important to her interests and goals for TESOL due to her extensive work over the past 25 years in relation to practitioner action research, she enthusiastically accepted the editors’ invitation. She offered advice for future directions in this afterward in addition to synthesizing some of the deeper ideas about the relevance of research communities of practices, the action research as a key process in Education and new challenges for research educators at TESOL lands, from the chapters in this book.

One final and relevant aspect to mention regarding an area to improve in this book consists of incorporating the terminology that is used in each of the chapters. A glossary may be included in the book to help readers, particularly novel teachers/researchers, follow the reading and access all the research findings, even if many EFL teachers struggle to understand the different concepts that are presented. Aside from that, I am pleased to have finished reading this outstanding book, which showcases research applications both inside and outside of the classroom, explores government policies in educational research, offers strategies for research communities of practice, and highlights the significance of the subject who is involved in these lands: the researcher. A warm invitation is extended to all who wish to learn next/for/with the entire educational community and want to immerse themselves in research, since this formidable book *Building a Culture of Research in TESOL-Collaborations and Communities* is a must-read for the TESOL community.

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