

Book Review

Teaching English as an International Language: Implementing, Reviewing, and Re-envisioning World Englishes in Language Education by Roby Marlina, New York, NY: Routledge, 2018 (pp. xi +285) ISBN 9780203341544 \$102.71

Reviewed by Supanit Kulsiri

Language Center, International College for Sustainability Studies, Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand

This book is related to the paradigm shift in English language teaching and learning that acknowledges diversification of the English language as a result of the change in the sociolinguistic landscape of English around the globe. It is listed under the book series titled “Routledge Studies in World Englishes”, edited by Ee-Ling Low, and contains details and discussions on the change in perspective on the new paradigm of English language teaching and learning across the disciplines of English language education, linguistics, applied linguistics and TESOL. As part of the series, the author criticizes the current state of teaching from the perspective of English as an International Language (EIL) by stating that “EIL still remains an abstract concept, and there have not been any attempts by EIL-inspired scholars to illustrate what an EIL curriculum/program/course may look like” (p.4). The author argues that the teaching of EIL can be realistic and practical, and its pedagogical practices require the consideration of engaging learners with the pluralized forms, users, and cultures of English, and its status as an international language. The author proposes that it is important to engage learners in exploring and discussing the nature of language variation by stating how differences in English can be conceptualized as sociolinguistically normal at the very first stage of the program.

The purpose of this book is to provide syllabus materials and advice on how to engage learners in learning about varieties of English, perceiving the varieties of English as equal and promoting intercultural communication among learners with different lingual or cultural backgrounds. Additionally, the author identifies a gap in EIL research, in that inadequate research has focused on feasibility and realistic application of EIL in classroom practice. The author claims that most of the research and studies in EIL have been carried out for the advancement of knowledge rather than providing techniques, approaches and materials for actual classroom practice. This author aims to close this research gap by providing realistic

guidelines for organizing classes that promote EIL in the university context by using case study research to support the recommended practices for teaching EIL, which has not been proposed by the books in the EIL field before.

This book presents a case study carried out at Urban University, Australia. As Australia has become a multicultural country, the result of the increasing flow of tourists, migrants and refugees, international outsourcing workers and international students, the findings from research can be discussed under the concept of EIL. This is especially true in the context where attempts to instill the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed for effective communication in today's globalized world are the focus. The case study described lived experience of lecturers from the Bachelor of Arts program in EIL and voices of students who were enrolled in the program. The lived experience of lecturers makes this book a perfect practical guide for EIL teaching; it is an in-depth reflective practice that takes the reader on a journey of material development for EIL education. The students' voices make the research justified with regard to closing the gap in EIL research on the feasibility and practicality of EIL.

The book is well structured and flows seamlessly. It is divided into nine chapters. Starting in the first chapter with the concept of English as an International Language (EIL), which originated almost four decades ago, the author gives an overview of the book by laying the foundations of the theoretical background of the research project as well as the research questions that serve as the framework of the book. In each chapter, there is an opening section and a concluding section that tell readers what the overall theme of the chapter is and what follows next. The reader is taken on a journey through the changes in the sociolinguistic landscape which have resulted in the pluralization of English users and forms. The author shows the detailed progression of the English language movement by pointing out that the majority of English speakers are bi-/multilingual speakers of English. These groups are categorized as 'Outer Circle' and 'Expanding Circle' under Kachru's concept of the three circles of English speakers, which is used widely in differentiating English speakers in the world (Kirkpatrick, 2014). In Chapter 2, the EIL literature is critically analyzed and reviewed, with its focus on EIL curriculum and syllabus materials to support the author's research arguments and discussions, especially in Chapter 6 and 8, and the concluding chapter, Chapter 9. With regard to the quality of the exploration of the EIL scholars' views on pedagogical

principles, it is uniformly concise and at times provocative. The review of the EIL syllabus materials makes Chapter 2 an excellent chapter for the reader to build up their knowledge of the concept of teaching EIL.

The strength of this book is the real lived experience of EIL lecturers, and first and third year undergraduate students who experienced the EIL program. Chapter 4, 5 and 7 describes the lived experience of the author and his three colleagues, who were EIL lecturers, and students from culturally diverse backgrounds. The two groups reflected on their experience in the EIL program through anecdotes and interviews respectively. Chapter 4 presents the author's own reflective practice and experience in EIL curriculum development. As the author, Roby Marlina, is a proven language specialist and author specializing in language teacher education with an emphasis on teaching English as an International Language, his expertise and experience in EIL education makes the description very informative and practical, which allows it to contribute tremendously to the field of EIL education. Chapter 5 contains personal reflections on the teaching of EIL from EIL lecturers who are the author's colleagues and the development of materials and their implication for classroom practice. This section can provide useful materials for those who are designing an EIL classroom, such as authentic samples of English language variation collected from a wide range of sources in various Kachruvian circles. The sections on lecturers' lived experience contribute vastly to the practice of teaching EIL as they contain curriculum elements and useful teaching materials, online resources, and the invitation of "a live authoritative voice" (p.124) where a person who had expertise in varieties of English was invited to class to promote student exposure to varieties of English. The teaching techniques made in this book are novel and innovative suggestions not found in other resource books. Chapter 7 contains in-depth detail on the thoughts, ideas, attitudes, and perceptions of students after studying EIL, which is not found in other books. The tone of the book reflects students' appreciation for varieties of English, as illustrated in Chapter 7.

Chapters 6 and 8 are devoted to discussing the findings on lecturers' and students' voices, respectively. The author argues that EIL educators should emphasize the metacultural competence that involves the ability to demonstrate awareness of language variation, the ability to interpret and explain different concepts and the ability to seek clarification. His contributions tackle the central issues of EIL practice, arguing that a metacultural competence should be developed among EIL learners through the provision of scenario-based activities,

“where students are assigned to work with real-life scenarios or cases that consist of issues that have arisen from cultural and linguistic differences” (p.168). Chapter 9 is the conclusion of the book and the author’s recommendations. The book strongly emphasizes the engagement of students in learning about sociopolitical issues, which is an unavoidable issue in EIL. It is very interesting to learn how the author and his colleagues adopted teaching methods for an EIL classroom that was a mix of so-called “native/non-native speakers” and how they dealt with tension among their students regarding resistance to varieties of English and the concept of diversity. The author describes how teachers or scholars may perceive this tension; some may perceive it as an obstacle to learning EIL. Tensions and conflicts can be resolved over time as resolving them is an organic process, according to the author. This section raises awareness on how to manage conflict in class and how to promote respect with regard to varieties of English. In this chapter, the concluding chapter, the author illustrates the way that theories are applied, by explaining findings and phenomena theoretically and practically. The author supplies an in-depth analysis of various aspects of EIL by providing recommendations and comprehensive advice on syllabus design and classroom practice of EIL. The appendices are concluded with a list of useful resources, such as the objectives of both the previous EIL program and the current one as well as a list of subjects offered on the EIL program at Urban University. The book is well referenced, and the author skillfully uses first-person sources.

Teaching English as an International Language: Implementing, Reviewing, and Re-envisioning World Englishes in Language Education, by Roby Marlina, is a timely collection of topic and practice guides written by a person who has direct experience in providing EIL education. The author’s enthusiasm for the demonstration of how the EIL concept is assimilated into the program and the feasibility of teaching EIL is obvious throughout the book. Timely and innovative teaching practices that teachers in the field of EIL education can benefit from are well presented. Thus, this book is an excellent resource for curriculum developers and university lecturers who are seeking advice on providing a learning environment that raises awareness of world Englishes, engages learners in learning how to communicate interculturally, and promotes an awareness of the lingual-cultural backgrounds of today’s speakers of English. It is also suitable for EIL researchers who are planning to gain insights into real practice in EIL and use similar research methodology, as the research methodology of the project is described very well in Chapter 3. However, English language teachers at the school level may find it less beneficial than those at the tertiary level as the

book provides guidelines for content-based courses rather than English language proficiency courses. This means EIL is introduced as course content rather than a self-contained English language proficiency course where the development of language proficiency is the main focus.

References

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AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Supanit Kulsiri is currently a Chair of the Bachelor of Arts in Language and Intercultural Communication Program and a lecturer at Language Center, International College for Sustainability Studies, Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand. She holds a PhD in TESOL from the University of Canberra and a Master of Arts in Linguistics from Australian National University, Australia. Her area of expertise is English language curriculum development and ELT policy. She has been working on research related to national school-based curriculum development in Thailand for more than ten years and on several projects with the Ministry of Education in improving and developing English language teaching and learning materials at the school level. She has also published several articles on English language curriculum development for higher education. She is currently a First Vice President of Thailand TESOL.

Contact information

Name: Dr. Supanit Kulsiri

Institutional affiliation: Language Center, International College for Sustainability Studies, Srinakharinwirot University

Mailing address: 114 Sukhumvit 23, Wattana District, Bangkok 10110

Email address: supanit@g.swu.ac.th