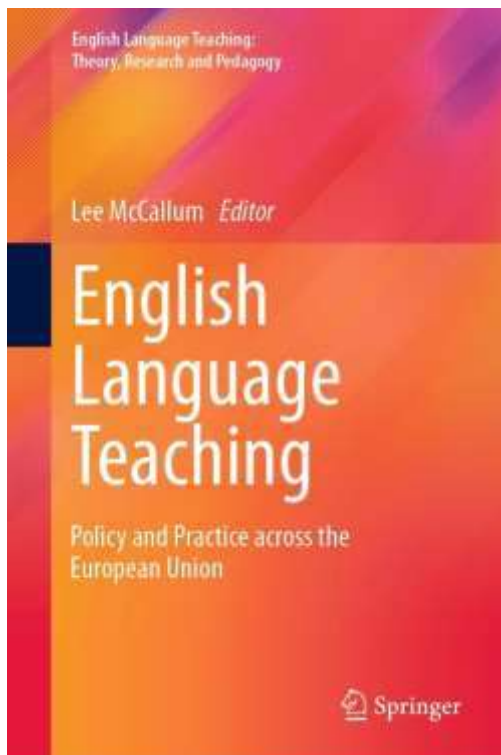


ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: POLICY AND PRACTICE ACROSS THE EUROPEAN UNION – BOOK REVIEW

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Although indisputably the global lingua franca of our times, English is the native tongue of just a small percentage of the European Union's (EU) population. However, its broader social, economic, and cultural importance means that the teaching and learning of English is now common at all levels of education across Europe. Using a variety of approaches, the nineteen chapters of this edited volume examine the interplay between language policy and classroom practice in a range of selected EU member states. Adroitly edited by Lee McCallum, Lecturer in Academic Writing at Coventry University (United Kingdom) with a global background in both research and teaching, *English Language Teaching: Policy and Practice across the European Union* forms part of Springer's book series in 'English Language Teaching: Theory, Research and Pedagogy'.

The contributions are divided into four thematic sections. The first (and with seven chapters, the largest) is devoted to examining how policies relating to English Language Teaching (ELT) have had a bearing on classroom practice. Lee McCallum's introductory contribution outlines the scope of the volume, paying necessary attention to relevant EU language policies and the ever-evolving role of English in the European context, particularly in the light of Brexit. In addition, she highlights the book's objectives in encouraging a reflective and comparative perspective on current ELT-related issues. This broad focus is taken up in the second chapter, entitled "Teaching and Learning English in the European Union: A Research Review", by Chiew Hong Ng and Yin Ling Cheung. Using publications from a prominent international language policy journal as a source, this literature-based study employs thematic discourse analyses of selected conceptual frameworks relating to the growing prevalence of English in tertiary-level education.

Portugal is the centre of attention of Chapter 3, by Lili Cavalheiro, Luis Guerra, and Ricardo Pereira. Here, the authors describe the quantitative and qualitative findings of their research examining various aspects of multilingual primary and secondary school English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. This includes demographic and linguistic information about teachers and pupils, the general awareness of pertinent language education policies and training needs among teaching staff, as well as pupils' own attitudes towards English both at school and outside of it. Moving eastwards to Poland, the role of language-in-education planning, combined with linguistic imperialism, is the object of the contribution by Aleksandra Ita Olszewska, Maria Coady, and Urszula Markowska-Manista. Here, the authors analyse the historical and contemporary trajectory of English since the fall of Communism, contrasting it with the former role of Russian during Soviet times.

In Chapter 5, “Mother Tongue Support as a Scaffold to English Language Proficiency: An Ideological Analysis of a Belgian International School’s Language Policy”, Anne-Sophie Bafort, Kerrilyn Thacker, and Mieke Vandenbroucke conduct a linguistic ethnography of an international school in Belgium where English is the medium of instruction but linguistic diversity is also appreciated. Using school documents and through analysis of the institution’s linguistic landscape, insights are gained into how English is used in such environments to accommodate varying proficiency levels, as well as how the importance of different mother tongues can still be acknowledged.

Accent choice among university students of English in Austria is the centre of Karin Richter and Andreas Weissenbäck’s analysis in Chapter 7. Noting that often the binary choice between “British” or “American” pronunciation is made, despite English’s status as a global language, the authors outline the linguistic, pedagogical, geopolitical and social/psychological aspects informing the selection of a given accent before providing the results of an online survey. The final contribution to this first part of the book is by Lee McCallum, the editor of the volume. In her discourse-focused study of the experiences of native-speaking EFL teachers in Spain, she examines the narratives of her interviewees through the prism of socio-political and economic aspects, thus uncovering valuable information about the broader professional identity of practitioners in that context.

Part Two of the book, “Exploring Challenges and Practices in Primary Education”, is divided into four chapters. The first contribution of this section, Chapter 8 (titled “Benefits and Challenges of Learning and Teaching English: The Case of Student Teachers in France”) focuses on the impact of the 2016 decision ensuring that English would be taught in French primary schools. As such, Jill Kay Partridge Salomon and Sophie Dufossé Sournin examine the ramifications of this decision on teacher education, using their own institution, the Teacher Training Institute of Limoges, as a case study. They provide valuable hints and tips for any institution or individual seeking to accommodate similar changes to their professional reality.

Chapter 9 of the volume returns to Poland. Using both questionnaire and interview-based approaches with EFL practitioners from primary and secondary schools, Agnieszka Kałdonek-Crnjaković examines teachers’ perspectives regarding the impact that Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) can exert on pupils’ learning of additional languages.

With the title “Building Young Learners’ Plurilingual and Pluricultural Repertoire: An Analysis of EFL Textbooks’ Speaking Activities”, the contribution by

Maria Daniela Cifone Ponte pays specific attention to those textbooks used by sixth-year primary school pupils in La Rioja, Spain. Using the definitions offered by the 2018 Companion Volume to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), she seeks to examine how relevant cultural aspects are incorporated into textbooks used at that level. Young learners are also the focus of Chapter 11, where Olga Vraštilová utilises a mixed-methods approach to ascertain information about supplementary and leisure-time reading habits of a group of fourth-graders in Czechia.

The third part of the volume, “Exploring Pedagogic Practices and Models in Secondary and Tertiary Education”, is also comprised of four chapters. The first contribution to this section, Chapter 12, provides a comparative overview of three EU member states: Austria, France, and Sweden. Here, observing the modern-day prevalence of communicative language teaching across Europe, Alexandra Schurz and Marion Coumel use an interview-based approach to examine EFL teachers’ own perspectives and experiences of the issue, paying particular attention to the presence of English outside the classroom and how this could potentially influence classroom-based activities.

In Maria del Mar Suárez and Ferran Gesa’s chapter on “Integrating Foreign Language Vocabulary Research into the Curriculum: Extensive Video Viewing in the University Classroom”, the authors report on the findings of a research study which tested how a television series could be used to aid vocabulary learning among undergraduates. In addition to encouraging the students to self-reflect on their learning process, the authors also provide advice and sample materials on how practitioners could incorporate similar initiatives into their pedagogical practice.

Chapter 14 focuses on theoretical approaches. Here, Niall Curry analyses the interplay between corpus-based contrastive linguistics and language pedagogy, reflecting on various common points and providing suggestions regarding future academic and practical implications. The subsequent chapter by Eloy Romero Muñoz, “Teaching Form in the Action-Oriented Classroom: Can-Do!” is also centred on theory-based aspects. In this instance, the study focuses on the intersection between usage-based linguistics (UBL) (Diessel, 2017) and the ‘can-do’ descriptive statements of the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2020).

The four chapters of the final section of the book focus on “Exploring Broad Applications of Technology-Enhanced Teaching and Learning”, which is particularly relevant in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the rapid global switch to online education. In Chapter 16, Dara Tafazoli examines how English teachers in Spain view computer-assisted language learning (CALL) as based on the data of an online survey.

Using the SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) framework, he outlines the benefits and challenges of increased technological integration, together with some pointers for its practical implementation. The following chapter, "ICT Training of Pre-service Bilingual Teachers: Present, Past, and Future Needs", is also based in the Spanish context. Here, María Elena Gómez-Parra uses a mixed-methods analysis to elucidate how these pre-service teacher trainees view technology, not only in terms of their perceptions and skills but also with regard to the relevant infrastructure required and the approaches needed to integrate digital aspects into the teaching and learning process.

The penultimate contribution to the volume (Chapter 18) also focuses on pre-service teachers, this time at the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia. With COVID-19 restrictions meaning that teaching placements had to move online, Lara Burazer and Janez Skela utilise surveys and reflective essays completed by trainee EFL teachers to provide a panorama of the insights obtained at that time. The nineteenth and final chapter of the book is by Georgios Vlassios Kormpas. Noting the specific role and importance of English in the Greek context, his study is based on both surveys and interviews with teachers and school owners of private English-language institutions in Greece, and portrays the past, present, and future impact of technology in that domain.

As illustrated by the breadth and depth of the chapters summarised above, one of the most impacting aspects of this book is its diversity. This is apparent not only in the different research studies presented, but also in the number of EU member states featured (11), and in the wide range of affiliations represented by the contributing authors, thus echoing the volume's pan-European subtitle. A mixture of theoretical and applied methodologies are featured, and each chapter offers a new and useful contribution. Accordingly, given its quality, content, and scope, the appeal of this edited volume certainly extends well beyond researchers and practitioners in the domain of English Language Teaching. Indeed, those with wider interests in multilingualism and language policy will surely also find relevant and insightful information, thus contributing to their broader academic and professional development and practice.

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