



### Book Review

#### **Professionalizing Your English Language Teaching**

Christine Coombe, Neil J Anderson and Lauren Stephenson (Eds.), 2020

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At present, ELT moves from globalization to localization (Bayyurt & Dewey, 2020) in TESOL, rendering the field locally and globally more professional. The main impetus for this universal move traces back to the advent of the paradigm shift in the 1990s (Kumaravadivelu, 2001); Kumaravadivelu maintains that two dramatic changes appeared in language education: A paradigm shift in ELT and a paradigm shift in teacher education. The central tenets of both are to professionalize education and language teaching further. Accordingly, being context-sensitive, the paradigm shift has brought the debate concerning professionalism in ELT to an end, professionally, practically, locally and globally, going where the scholars have not gone before.

However, the field must cover the long way lying forward; the envisaged Promised Land followed by the cited paradigm shift is by degrees continued and consolidated, giving rise to other fancied Promised Lands to better the field. In the Promised Land, plenty of course books have been authored for centuries. Nevertheless, there lies sporadic access to the findings regarding what elements and requirements to consider when dealing with the very nature of the English language teaching profession in general and the essence of syllabus design and curriculum development in specific. As is clear, the missing link lies in the lack of framing a sophisticated organization and integration of scholarly articles into solid course books and textbooks in the field; that is to say, if any, the invaluable works in the field go unnoticed and bypassed due mainly to the marketization of academy, namely, not to see the wood for the trees.

The book under review covering the content of both of the paradigm-shift elements broadens the horizons for the position of TESOL and professional attitudes towards TESOL. As an overall view, including a thoughtful and insightful collection of state-of-the-art articles, the book reveals up-to-date issues and discussions in conjunction with the process of professionalization, the relationship between professionalism and ELT-relevant issues such as technology, the identity of teachers, learners' attitudes, emotional intelligence, communication skills, online profiles of the teachers, leadership abilities, mentoring and coaching the teachers, reflective practice, continuing professional development, learning community, conference

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presentation and publication. The book, therefore, includes loads of constructive and instructive tips, most of which are in-brief explained below. Although my reaction to the collection is overwhelmingly positive due to its practicality and theory-embeddedness, there are a few potential recommendations that merit due consideration. In the beginning, I would like to start with the privileged facets of the book.

The book includes thirty-six chapters, i.e., every chapter containing an independent article, and is divided into ten parts, as indicated in the book's introduction. It succinctly and profoundly sketches out the professional, scholarly, empirical and historical enterprises in the work of English language educators from fourteen countries to the present, as the authors rightly claim and materialize the notions into the book's architecture. Viewing language education from the lens of positive psychology, the First Part of this volume looks at various aspects of professionalism's theoretical and empirical foundations. More interestingly, elaborating on various historical and empirical perspectives towards professionalism, the authors include thought-provocative and engaging articles highlighting ELT professionalism via pointing out where the TESOL profession was, how it was developed and where it is now and, in the end, they predict and assist in exploring the long ways lying forward. To be more specific, the book follows to relate the word professionalization to the interests of the occupational groups so that the professional group goes through a process to develop and strives to stick to the characteristics which a profession demands. In other words, professionalism, serving as a guideline and road map, contains qualifications, acquired skills or capacities, and competencies required for the successful exercise of an occupation.

The Second Part of this volume examines topics related to teacher self-care and well-being. Coombe and Anderson broadly viewed the literature on the relationship between positive psychology and happiness and how it exerts a dramatic impact on our personal and professional lives. On the other hand, emotional intelligence's significance is highlighted. Teachers' self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship management, general mood, and adaptability are further examined. Closely related to Part Two, Part Three of the book maps how organizational and productivity skills pave the way for teachers' professionalism.

Overall, the three chapters reveal the various aspects of professionalism, like how the most productive English language teachers fit it all in, work/life balance, and the importance of personal and professional strategic planning. The book deals with communication skills, technology and leadership skills, and their relationship with professionalism in proceeding to the following parts, i.e., Parts Four, Five and Six. In much deeper pursuance of issues, Part Seven sheds some light on the role of individual and collective learning, reflective enterprise and professional development. Moreover, the final parts, i.e., Parts Eight, Nine and Ten, present other diverse aspects of professionalism concerning ways forward in the ELT profession; the parts examine the role of research in professionalism and the processing of sharing work with others and demystify the tips for a conference proposal and the dissemination of the published work.

Beyond the thirty-six chapters, there is an Introduction elaborated by Christine Coombe and Chloe Burrige, shedding a general light on the sense of being a TESOL professional. They well-describe and design the general issues of professionalism and ELT; they reflect more deeply on the old and new understanding of professionalism, i.e., the various stages of professionalism. The empirical and historical viewpoints are sketched out in the introduction. These all lead the readers to review the discussions ranging from cognitivism to constructivism, namely, the non-stop continuum on which the educators, teachers, teacher educators, the researchers and the learners should be placed. Therefore, considering the book's overall architecture, the elaboration shifts from the micro-cosmology of practical classroom events to the macro-cosmology of the scholarly enterprises, priorities and preferences, and the inter-relationship and the interdependencies of the variables affecting each other in the field.

Optimistically, the book offers a tremendous number of other updated references to boost continuing professional development, research and practice. To be blunt, in a word, what distinguishes the book from other books is the centrality of professionalism as a key strand running through the whole book, missing mainly in other textbooks and course books.

Until relatively recently, some research studies have indicated that book reviews are more positive than negative in their evaluation and assessment of the books in question. Accordingly, not crucially as criticism, I would like to offer a couple of potential and personal tips and recommendations for improving the book in the future. The first suggestion can be the inclusion of Headings and Sub-Headings framed within explicit Chapters or Parts. Since the book includes impressive articles and works in the field, all of which are needed for the readers and fully germane to the title, some neat reorganization and sophisticated categorization for the Table of Contents would merit some reflection. The second feasible suggestion can be the inclusion of the Index at the end of the book. Another estimated strand can be that the book could benefit from the inclusion of articles on language assessment and language assessment literacy and their relationship with professionalism, as assessment seems a taken-for-granted fact and supportive and complementary to English language teaching.

Furthermore, the book could be more privileged to include articles related to feedback literacy and professionalism, teacher education and professionalism, curriculum development and syllabus design and professionalism dominant in ELT context and teacher education setting. Added to these all, another vague notion I came up with is the inclusion of a chapter or some articles on how to take care of professionalism and provide guidelines for deterring the professionalism from the possible risk of deprofessionalization. The final estimation can be considering the chronological order for every separate section, as the book deals with the whole summarized work done since the fourteenth century to be highly profitable for the mind-mapping purpose.

In conclusion, it must be admitted that if included as a leading book or coursebook in the curriculum, course syllabus and term syllabus of the graduates and postgraduates, the book will be advantageous and will contribute more insights into the course. Therefore, considering the recommendations solely personal roadmaps on the way, and relying exclusively on the evidential, pedagogical and practical reasoning in the collection, the book can academically convince and keep the interest of the readers, contributing significantly to those experienced in the field and also to those novices to the field.

## References

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