

**Julian Edge.** *The Reflexive Teacher Educator in TESOL: Roots and Wings.* Routledge: New York–London 2011, 196 S.

Although primarily intended for language teacher educators, this latest book by Julian Edge, offers an unforgettable and profound read for anybody interested in education. The author's aim is to explore "what a reflexive teacher educator might be" (p. 8) when reflexivity in teacher education is distinguished from yet still embedded in reflective practice.

The structure of the book is very clear. It comprises a preface followed by ten chapters. Throughout the book Edge refers to two Greek myths (the Icarus myth and the Narcissus myth) and insights from two American pragmatist philosophers, John Dewey and Richard Rorty.

Constituting a very original introduction, chapter 1 familiarizes the reader with the dialogically philosophical climate of the book. Here the author explains his understanding of terms encompassing dimensions of being in teacher education – Copying, Applying, Theorizing, Reflecting, and Acting (CATRA) – as well as dimensions of doing in teacher education – methodological, technical, theoretical, intellectual, and pragmatic, drawing on Rorty's metaphor of "final vocabulary" and assigning his own meaning to it. At the same time he explains the subtitle of the book – the imagery of "roots" and "wings" that regularly recurs in later chapters of the book.

In chapter 2, "In Praise of Reflective Practice," Edge relies heavily on Schon's conception of "reflective practitioner" and presentation of three teacher education models. In this chapter, inspired by Boxer's categories of "framing" and "interpretation," he explains a teacher educator's styles of working: instructional, revelatory, emancipatory, and conjunctural, along with the potential risks involved.

Chapter 3, "In Search of Reflexivity," further explains the dimensions of reflexivity, expanding on its linguistic, psychological, philosophical, and ecological aspects, as well as elucidating four useful aspects of teacher education: internal relations, consistency, coherence, and continuity. A thought-provoking question in this chapter for a teacher educator might be not what knowledge people have acquired as a result of learning, but what they have become "in the sense that the person entering the next experience is no longer the one who entered the last" (p. 42). Likewise, the questions "What difference does it make to the teacher education that I offer that it is I who offer it?" and "What difference does offering this teacher education make to me as a teacher educator?" (p. 46)

pose powerful considerations regarding the interaction between the teacher educator and his or her praxis.

Chapters 4 through 8 exemplify the teacher education experience, drawing on autobiographical snatches in which the author describes Copying and becoming methodological in a craft mode (chapter 4), Applying and becoming technical in an applied science mode (chapter 5), Theorizing and becoming theoretical in an exploration mode (chapter 6), Reflecting on all of these activities in an intellectual sense (chapter 7), and dealing with them pragmatically (chapter 8).

The penultimate chapter (chapter 9) is unique in a different sense. Rarely does it happen in the literature that writers focus on lack of success. If problems do appear, remedies are proposed, and solutions find their way to the field articles. Unexpectedly enough, Edge explores his experiences of failures in the TESOL profession, to the point of questioning the objections raised by first-class applied linguistics researchers concerning some content of his articles, revealing the critics' bias and their pursuit of their own research interests (Bonny Norton), superficial and careless reading (Mick Randall), or selective reading (Adrian Holliday). Although all three researchers make their apologies, it is a brave step undertaken by Edge to express his grief in public, draw the reader's attention to these criticisms, and disclose the faults of writers of otherwise excellent books.

The final chapter (chapter 10) provides some conclusions and once again encourages the reader to look at how all the dimensions discussed in the book have proved meaningful for the author, in both professional and personal development.

This is a unique book; there are three reasons why it should not pass unnoticed. The most important argument for its exceptionality is the fact that it is not another of the numerous "how to" books bombarding us nowadays. Instead, this is a story of a teacher educator's professional development that makes readers (predominantly language educators themselves) consider their own work and contribution to helping teachers and reflect on TESOL in general. The book makes readers automatically reflect on their reasons for choosing the teaching profession, on their current approach to pursuing the job, and on their future professional ambitions. Any teacher educator can see his or her own journey of learning teacher education and, with the help of the CATRA acronym, assess their current position on that road. The book is made more compelling by absorbing narrative episodes. Thanks to this autobiographical voice, readers can better contextualize the message of the author and compare their own understandings of some of the ELT household expressions (e.g., context, affordance) against those suggested in the book.

Another laudable characteristic of the book is its structure. Highly original, adorned with the author's reinterpretation of the ancient myths and the philosophers' sayings, it starts and ends with pieces of a Western movie, and the dialogues about the book's intention and potential contribution echo Bakhtin's voices. These literary-like embellishments work as bridges linking the contents of the book, just as the constant return to the metaphors of "wings" and "roots" signals how far we can get and how much our background matters in this respect. Logical and clear though it is, the book does not lose anything in its personal aspect, and the structural choices deepen the book's messages rather than overpower them.

The last aspect, which I find the most valuable contribution to the profession, is Edge's deliberations, rarely raised in the literature. Some memorable examples of such thinking could be the following questions that I generated as inspired by him: What is the "final vocabulary" of a teacher educator? (p. 9), What is the influence of an experience on the teacher educator, not just the teachers he or she is supposed to help? (p. 46), Why is the word "tradition" in ELT usually thought of as something that has to be changed? (p. 50), How much do people change thanks to being in TESOL? (p. 51), What takes place behind the scenes of critical remarks in ELT publications? (pp. 157–161). These are new issues, oftentimes "carrying a shock of recognition" (Nunan's remark on the cover), and researching them in greater detail might well prove nourishing to the profession. They might also illustrate the quintessence of reflection as generated by a reflexive individual most teacher educators would aspire to emulate.

Being a teacher educator myself I have learned a lot from this book. It has inspired me afresh, reassured me regarding some aspects of pursuing the profession, and broadened my horizons. I will definitely recommend this book to language teacher educators as a seminal contribution to reflection-based teacher education.

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