

FOREWORD



During the past 15 years, the nonnative speaker (NNS) movement has created a notable impact in the field of teaching English as a second language. The large number of publications on the topic of NNS teachers, both research-based and of a descriptive nature, has contributed significantly to the impact of the movement.

But, what has been absent from the scene are longitudinal descriptions of English teachers that include their first acquaintances with the English language, their apprenticeships as English teachers, and their growth into professionals in the field. Now, Icy Lee and Paul Sze have fulfilled this long felt need, with the publication of *Voices from the Frontline: Narratives of Nonnative English Speaking Teachers*.

As my colleagues at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, I have known Icy and Paul for nearly 20 years. Beloved by their students, esteemed by their colleagues, they are well known teacher educators in Hong Kong. Icy is also an internationally recognized expert on second language writing. In the NNS movement, she is remembered for her energetic and innovative Chairing of the Nonnative English Speakers in TESOL (NNEST) Interest Section of the TESOL International Association in 2011-12. Paul has over 25 years of experience in second language teacher education, and has mentored generations of NNS teachers in Hong Kong, Macao and China.

Both Icy and Paul are eminently suitable for the task they have undertaken. They grew up and were schooled in Hong Kong as second language speakers of English, chose to become English teachers, obtained the highest academic qualifications in their field, and became award winning teachers. Along the way, they earned the gratitude of thousands of teachers for whom they have been an inspiration.

Now they have chosen to narrate their stories. The narratives, because they come to us in their own voices, are immediate and powerful. We see their struggles with a second language that is starkly different from their mother tongue, their doubts and hesitations as they face the challenges of teaching English, how they connected with students, and what they did well in the classroom and what they didn't. Theirs are honest voices, capable of motivating readers to reflect on their own.

Icy and Paul have empowered and inspired thousands of teachers in Hong Kong. Now, with their book, they are able to empower and inspire many thousands more.

George Braine
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