

PREFACE



In *Voices from the Frontline: Narratives of Nonnative English Speaking Teachers*, we share openly about our careers as non-native speaker (NNS) educators in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and reflect on our teaching by recollecting our own experiences as learners, teachers and teacher educators. In recounting our experiences, we include not only our own stories but also those of pre-service and in-service teachers with whom we have come into contact. Through teachers' stories that address multifarious issues about teaching and learning, the book provides a source of inspiration for both native speaker (NS) and NNS professionals in the field, encouraging them to examine issues that are central to their career and to reflect on their own practice critically.

The books hitherto published in our field on nonnative English speaking teachers are all edited volumes with contributions from different authors, except Braine's (2010) single-authored book *Nonnative English Speaker Teachers*. While the books, including Braine's (2010), add to our knowledge of the nonnative speaker movement in TESOL and enrich our understanding of the various challenges faced by nonnative English speaking teachers worldwide, none of the anthologies present personal and highly contextualized teachers' stories to reflect the lived experiences of nonnative English speaking teachers in the field. What makes our book distinctive is the focus on how narratives can be used to help TESOL professionals reflect

on teaching. In second language teacher education, teachers' stories are now considered crucial in "articulating and legitimizing teachers' way of knowing" (Golombek, 2009, p. 158). As such, they provide a valuable source of insights into teachers' professional development.

The stories included in the book emphasise personal experiences, teacher learning and reflection, as well as teachers' pedagogical journeys that represent what they know and how they know, providing a valuable source of insight into teachers' professional development. The fact that our experiences are primarily Hong Kong-based makes the book particularly useful to TESOL professionals working in similar EFL or Asian contexts, though we believe that our book will have resonance even for those working in very different contexts (as many of the stories address core issues about teaching and learning). Through inspiring and generating reflection for both NS and NNS teachers in TESOL, the book makes a unique contribution to the literature on nonnative English speaking teachers and second language teacher education.

The book covers four themes, beginning with "Being Non-native Teachers and Learners of English," which sets the scene for the book and brings out salient issues in the native speaker and nonnative speaker debate. It is followed by themes that address core issues in second language teacher education, including reflective practice and teacher learning (as the cornerstone of teachers' professional development), connecting with our students (as a factor that mediates teaching and learning), and excellence in teaching (as the ultimate goal of TESOL professionals). Except for our own names, pseudonyms are used in the book.

The book presents different cases about a range of issues faced by NNS teachers in TESOL, providing a useful springboard for discussion to help teachers and teacher learners grasp a deeper understanding of the major issues that inform the NS and NNS debate in TESOL, as well as other issues pertinent to teaching and learning.

Each part of the book begins with an introduction that highlights the salient issues addressed, followed by a number of stories that illustrate the issues. At the end of each part, there are a few discussion questions that provide pointers to further stimulate thinking on the issues raised, which are useful for self-study and/or seminars and tutorials on second language teacher education courses.

Teaching English and training teachers of English as nonnative speakers have been challenging but enjoyable and rewarding. We hope that our professional experiences can strike a chord with the readers and that they will find our stories inspiring and thought-provoking.

Icy Lee and Paul Sze