

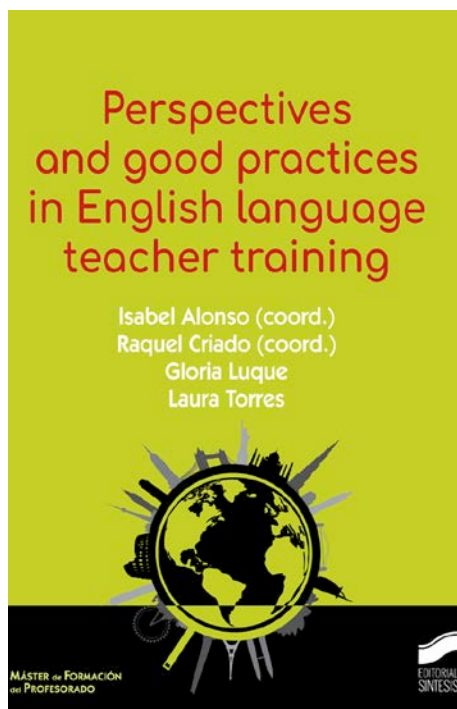
Perspectives and Good Practices in English Language Teacher Training.

Alonso, I., Criado, R., Luque, G., & Torres, L. (Eds.) (2022). Madrid: Editorial Síntesis, 180 pages, ISBN: 978-84-1357-163-8

LIDIA MAÑOSO-PACHECO

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30827/portalin.vi40.26806>



RESUMEN: This book review evaluates *Perspectives and Good Practices in English Language Teacher Training* by Isabel Alonso, Raquel Criado, Gloria Luque, and Laura Torres. This volume is a rich source for both pre-service and in-service teachers since it can provide practical guidelines for their professional development. This book includes current topics about EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teaching and contains valuable ideas and activities to promote meaningful learning. This review first offers an introduction to the scope and targeted readership. Then, the major points of each chapter are summarized, highlighting the timely contribution to the existing literature on this matter.

Pre-service teachers often lack confidence and experience in the classroom, and they are ill-equipped in terms of skills and resources required for classroom management in diverse educational settings (Fernández-Agüero & Garrote, 2019). In-service teachers, especially those in their first years of teaching, also tend to demand a wide range of practical

classroom strategies and a rich palette of activities to enhance the learning experience for their EFL (henceforth, English as a Foreign Language) students. This book tries to promote the professional development of teachers, with or without prior experience, by providing them with resources and tips and laying a theoretical foundation for adequate practical implementation. Thus, it offers “an integrated approach to the application of theory to practice” (p. 9). The materials for language learning were designed for the educational stages of Compulsory Secondary Education (*ESO*) and Baccalaureate, as well as for the Official School of Languages (*EOI*).

This book is divided into five chapters, the first of which, entitled “English as an International Language”, addresses the issues of World Englishes and EIL (English as an

International Language) in EFL teacher training. At present, English is the dominant language of communication across the globe, thus, it affects the way it is taught. This chapter reexamines some common pedagogical practices with respect to the EIL paradigm and offers recommendations for the development of good practices. Although the book is intended for both pre-service and in-service teachers, the first chapter provides a general overview of the matter that might be of greater interest to the former.

Chapter two on the development of cultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in the EFL setting examines the complexities of the pluricultural landscape that typically characterizes the school reality (Pozas et al., 2022). This chapter purports to assist educators in meeting the needs of students from diverse backgrounds and in equipping teachers with resources to develop ICC in the classroom. The section on the assessment of ICC is of valuable interest; however, more ideas and activities about how to handle cultural shock in the classroom should have been incorporated, especially considering the influx of migrants in recent years.

A special mention goes to the third chapter, which covers the introduction of literary texts into the EFL classroom. Using literature has been proven beneficial for learners as it promotes intercultural competence and literary texts can be integrated into the curricular contents of Secondary Education. This chapter gives teachers a series of criteria for assessing the suitability of the text material and an extremely rich repertoire of activities to exploit the potential of literary texts. Despite its relevance, this chapter is vaguely connected to the previous ones, breaking somehow the desired continuity of the book.

After an overview of the types of materials that can be used for second language attainment, chapter four introduces the concept of 'textbook evaluation' to avoid excessive reliance on the course book. Considering that the ideal textbook does not yet exist, teachers are encouraged to adapt the materials to better fit their students' needs. This chapter is complemented by the following one, which explores 'activity typology and sequencing in Foreign Language Teaching textbooks' following the main tenets of Skill Acquisition Theory (SAT). Among other issues, this chapter discusses the difference between meaning-focused and form-focused instruction in a detailed and accurate manner and how this distinction is reflected in textbook activities. Besides, readers will be acquainted with the evaluation of sequences of textbook activities from a critical angle. In our view, some of the activities aimed at the self-reflection of pre-service teachers that are proposed in this concluding chapter are ad hoc and can become difficult to implement.

Written by experts in the field, this book will appeal not only to teachers on the front lines of EFL instruction but also to researchers and advanced students interested in current educational trends. The authors have successfully gathered a fruitful collection of practical suggestions in each chapter to give a useful guide to scholars and teachers alike. The volume also establishes an easy-to-follow sequence in the chapters with food-for-thought activities, concise figures to clarify the points under discussion, authentic samples of material, and a self-assessment section at the end. This book may improve one's own teaching practice thanks to its precise and unambiguous indications about, for instance, how to select literary books or adapt textbooks to match specific classroom situations. Moreover, most of the activities are easily adaptable to the students' needs and may help educators to develop their critical thinking capacity. Thus, through this book teachers can refresh their methodology and feel more secure and well-trained to adapt the material set for an academic course and

then enrich their teaching-learning experience. Alongside many positive aspects, one drawback that can perhaps be observed is that the book is centered around four core themes: EIL, ICC, literature in EFL, and textbook evaluation, leaving aside other key issues in the field of education. One area that is promising these days and has been disregarded in this volume is the role emotions play in language education. Interest has grown recently in a set of positive psychological factors such as well-being, emotion regulation or resilience, and their potential to build foreign language teaching enjoyment, a positive emotion mirrored by learners (Derakhshan et al., 2022; Proietti Ergün & Dewaele, 2021; Wang et al., 2021). Despite this, this book is an excellent resource for both novice and experienced teachers interested in new approaches to EFL teaching.

REFERENCES

- Derakhshan, A., Dewaele, J-M, & Azari Noughabi, M. (2022). Modeling the contribution of resilience, well-being, and L2 grit to foreign language teaching enjoyment among Iranian English language teachers. *System*, 109, 102890. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2022.102890>
- Fernández-Agüero, M., & Garrote, M. (2019). 'It's not my intercultural competence, it's me.' The intercultural identity of prospective foreign language teachers. *Educar*, 55(1), 159–182 . <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/educar.985>
- Pozas, M., Letzel, V., Bost, N., & Reichertz, J. (2022). Confident, positive, but interested? Exploring the role of teachers' interest in their practice of differentiated instruction. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, 964341. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2022.964341>
- Proietti Ergün, A.L., & Dewaele, J-M. (2021). Do well-being and resilience predict the foreign language teaching enjoyment of teachers of Italian? *System*, 99, 102506. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102506>
- Wang, Y., L., Derakhshan, A., & Zhang, L. J. (2021). Researching and practicing positive psychology in second/foreign language learning and teaching: The past, current status and future directions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.731721>