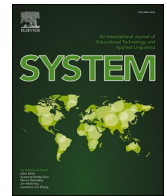




ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

System

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/system

Book review

Competency-Based Teacher Education for English as a Foreign Language edited by Amber Yayin Wang.

The edited volume entitled *Competency-Based Teacher Education for English as a Foreign Language* has caught our interest as we consider this is a valuable resource for any English teachers or any other groups where the issues of competency-based education becomes a predominant concern. During our experience as a pre-service teacher educator in an Indonesian university, the issues of competency-based education has become an interesting discussion among academics, especially in our circle.

The editor, Amber Yayin Wang, presents insights and perspectives from 16 contributors across three continents and divides the book into three sections: (1) theory, (2) research, and (3) practice. The theory section includes several chapters reviewing current competency-based education (CBE) literature on EFL teacher education, sociocultural theory regarding CBE, and the importance of teacher identity in competency-based language teacher education. The second section continues the discussion through several studies investigating teacher agency among EFL student teachers, examining diagnostic reading training for pre-service EFL teachers, evaluating a competency-based teacher education (CBTE) model with the support of school-university partnerships, and exploring the development of competency-based education in intercultural telecollaboration. The last section in this book provides clear examples of how to implement CBE and how to integrate global competence and real world issues into EFL teacher education.

The book is organized in reader-friendly manner in which readers may directly jump to the specific section based on their needs and their own interest. Readers may begin to read the theory section if they wish to discover more about the theories underlying the significance of competency-based education. However, researchers and policy makers who prefer to analyze recent empirical studies about CBE could freely start with any chapters in the research section. Moreover, EFL teachers and teacher educators who are interested in direct application of CBE may find the practice section beneficial.

The first chapter in the theory section provides important fresh insights into the current literature and its practical considerations for EFL teacher education, including the background and the reviews of CBE studies from 2010 to 2020. Through this chapter, the authors, Wang and Maa, elucidate that today CBE gives emphasis on academic abilities and lifelong learning skills which transfer knowledge to various contexts. In addition, CBE also provides new ways for learning and teaching which causes an impact on teacher training theories, teaching standards, assessment, and teacher roles. The next chapter deals mainly with the interaction between CBE and sociocultural theory. As a part of culture, discussion about language cannot be separated from the discussion about psychological functioning in the culture itself. This chapter reveals how a sociocultural perspective meets an interpretative view of reality and provides elements for the reconstruction and transformation of teaching practice. Particularly worthy of note in this chapter is that competence is considered more than just knowledge and skill. The ability to communicate effectively is a competency which may draw on an individual's knowledge of language, IT skills, and attitudes towards those with whom they are communicating (OECD, 2005), but current definition of competency goes beyond this view where the idea of transforming society becomes significant for students for their future in which they have to be able to create new values, reconcile tensions and dilemmas, and take responsibility (OECD, 2019). In sum, this chapter encourages teachers to integrate the cognitive aspects and social elements. Teaching should be understood as a dynamic process of practice reconstruction and transformation which may respond to local needs, so that innovation in the unpredictable nature of the classroom could happen. The last chapter in the theory section highlights the importance of language teacher identity for CBE. The authors of this chapter argue that there are two approaches for integrating competencies and identities. The first approach is to situate identity as a competence and the second one is to position identity and competencies as complementary. This chapter also points out the implications of integrating teacher identity into competency-based education which include a need to expand traditional teacher competency-based frameworks, variation in local implementation, and a call for further theorizing, innovation, and implementation.

Recent studies on competency-based teacher education (CBTE) are provided in the research section which is divided into four chapters. Each chapter presents novel empirical CBTE studies in Taiwan, focusing on methodological and analytical approaches. The first chapter examines 26 Taiwanese undergraduate EFL majors as curriculum makers who implement their understanding of educational purposes in curriculum works. This research revealed that the most popular topic designed by the participants was reading literacy, character education, multi-culture education, and human right education which are greatly influenced by sociocultural

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2022.102796>

Received 15 March 2022; Received in revised form 28 March 2022; Accepted 4 April 2022

Available online 8 April 2022

0346-251X/© 2022 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

factors, curriculum guidelines, and trainings on innovative teaching methods. Therefore, the design of lesson plans could reveal teachers' agency, expertise, experience of and beliefs in English teaching and learning. The second chapter in this section examines the implementation of competency-based reading specialist training for pre-service English language teachers and to address how they were trained, what assessment tools used for reading clinics and student teachers' reflections after clarifying issues of assessment. From the perspective of reading specialist training, the author strongly recommends that course developers consider providing student teachers field experience with upper-level primary school students in order to provide them a chance to work with learners on reading comprehension. The third chapter discussed in this section incorporated a competency-based approach in the teacher education courses in Taiwan. It clearly states that CBE design could be implemented as an effective means to develop teacher competencies. The result shows that the student teachers' competency improved significantly based on the analysis using EFL-TPACK (Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge) in EFL settings. In addition, Positive feedback was obtained from the interview with the experts, pupils, English teachers, and student teachers after the CBTE courses. The last chapter is focused on the discussion of virtual intercultural exchange environment over three continents (Brazil, Spain, France, and Taiwan) with the main purpose of developing teachers' competencies. This chapter emphasizes the idea that intercultural telecollaboration is considered as a challenge in the context of competency-based teacher education and as an opportunity for the development of teachers' repertoires in intercultural communication. Particularly worthy of note in this section is that the readers are reminded to always be aware of teacher competencies which are dynamic and evolving.

The last section of this book would be a valuable resource for educators since it offers several examples of real practice in the field of competency-based teacher education. The first chapter of this section mainly focuses on intercultural telecollaborative environments which are impactful on ELF learners' communicative competencies. Five Taiwanese graduate students', participated in this study, shows significant improvement of their intercultural competencies influenced by different settings of telecollaboration. This chapter is also valuable in revealing how to prepare pre-service EFL teachers to design issue-centered English instruction. The next chapter investigates a designed course for pre-service teachers focusing on CBE as a conceptual framework in developing curriculum. During a course with 26 credits equivalent, 44 pre-service teachers who had never participated in such a program before, proved to be successful in solving and reflecting the CBE curriculum and instruction problems. The third chapter responds to the integration of global competence into elementary school pre-service teacher education of English language in Taiwan. A group of pre-service teachers were trained to develop a lesson plan aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) curriculum aiming at synergizing their local and global knowledge which was expected to be effective in preparing the next Taiwanese generation to be respectful to local values and at the same time able to deal with global issues. Moreover, this section also provides a chapter highlighting the positive impacts of mind mapping in developing teaching competencies of pre-service EFL teachers. The last chapter provides a brief explanation on how pre-service teachers using intercultural telecollaboration develop their pedagogical competences on content and language integrated learning (CLIL) during their 10 weeks training. Finally, while this section has provided several examples of how CBE in teacher education are successfully implemented for pre-service teachers, the sample used in some of the research may not be representative in other contexts.

Overall, the book has several commendable parts which support each other in providing insightful knowledge about competency-based teacher education for English as a foreign language. The overall structure of the book is particularly appealing, with detailed explanations of the theories behind competency-based education, then several significant studies related to EFL and competency-based education, and finally evidence of implementation in the field of competency-based teacher education. All of them make this book as valuable resources and literature for EFL teachers, pre-service teachers, researchers, practitioners, and policy makers.

References

- OECD. (2005). *The definition and selection of key competencies. Executive Summary*. OECD. <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/35070367.pdf>. (Accessed 5 February 2022).
 OECD. (2019). *OECD Future of education and skills 2030. Concept Note*. OECD. https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/teaching-and-learning/learning/transformational-competencies/Transformational_Competencies_for_2030_concept_note.pdf. (Accessed 5 February 2022).

Sayid Ma'rifatulloh*

Universitas Hasyim Asy'ari, Tebuireng Jl. Irian Jaya No.55, Cukir, Kec. Diwek Kab, Jombang, Jawa Timur, 61471, Indonesia

Fikri Yanda

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Jl. Dr. Setiabudi No.229, Isola, Kec. Sukasari Kota Bandung, Jawa Barat, 40154, Indonesia

E-mail address: fikriyanda@upi.edu.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: sayid.unhasy@gmail.com (S. Ma'rifatulloh).