

Language Teacher Education for a Global Society

A Modular Model for Knowing, Analyzing,
Recognizing, Doing, and Seeing

B. Kumaravadivelu

Language Teacher Education for a Global Society

“There is no other book like this for preparing more effective L2 teachers. All classroom teachers will benefit from reading it and giving careful consideration as to how their own practice in the classroom can be improved.”

Neil Anderson, Brigham Young University, USA

“Offering a wide-ranging and high quality conceptualization, the coverage is masterly, employing the profound reach of scholarship that the author has demonstrated in previous publications. This book could be a core reference in the field for years to come, one to which other attempts would be compared, and one on which other writers with more specific interests would draw.”

Julian Edge, University of Manchester, UK

The field of second/foreign language teacher education is calling out for a coherent and comprehensive framework for teacher preparation in these times of accelerating economic, cultural, and educational globalization. Responding to this call, this book introduces a state-of-the-art model for developing prospective and practicing teachers into strategic thinkers, exploratory researchers, and transformative teachers. The model includes five modules: Knowing, Analyzing, Recognizing, Doing, and Seeing (KARDS). Its goal is to help teachers understand

- How to build a viable professional, personal and procedural knowledge-base;
- How to analyze learner needs, motivation and autonomy;
- How to recognize their own identities, beliefs and values;
- How to do teaching, theorizing and dialogizing; and
- How to see their own teaching acts from learner, teacher, and observer perspectives.

Providing a scaffold for teachers to build a holistic understanding of what happens in the language classroom, this model eventually enables them to theorize what they practice and practice what they theorize. With its strong scholarly foundation and its supporting reflective tasks and exploratory projects, this book is immensely useful for students, practicing teachers, teacher educators, and educational researchers who are interested in exploring the complexity of language teacher education.

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**Dedicated to
those who teach and delight**

தாம்இன் புறுவது உலகுஇன் புறக்கண்டு

காமுறுவர் கற்றறிந் தார்

**The learned long for more learning not only because it
delights them but also because they can delight the world
with their learning.**

(*Thirukural*, verse 399, circa 100 A.D.)

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PREFACE

This book has been a long time coming. Eleven years, to be exact. I made the first formal presentation on the proposed modular model for language teacher education in March 2000, at the 34th Annual TESOL Convention held in Vancouver, Canada. I am writing this Preface immediately after I returned from the University of Aston, Birmingham, England where, in July 2011, I gave a plenary talk at the 7th BAAL (British Association for Applied Linguistics) Special Interest Group on Language Learning and Teaching—my last presentation on the model before I finally managed to place the manuscript in the hands of the publishers.

In between Vancouver and Birmingham, I have given plenary talks, keynote addresses or guest lectures on the model at the 4th International Conference on Language Teacher Education, University of Minnesota, USA (June, 2005), at Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong (April, 2008), at Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong (May, 2008), at the ESEA Conference in Singapore (December, 2008), at the 2nd biennial International Conference of the Australian Council of TESOL Associations, Gold Coast, Australia (July, 2010), at the 3rd International Seminar on Professional Development in Foreign Language Education in Medellin, Colombia (August, 2010), and at the Defense Language Institute, Monterey, California (February, 2011). This book is indeed the fruit of several years of reflection, review, and renewal.

While my thoughts on the model have evolved considerably over the years, what has remained constant, as the title of my March 2000 TESOL presentation—“KARDS for teacher education”—shows, is the acronym KARDS, standing for Knowing, Analyzing, Recognizing, Doing, and Seeing. The choice of dynamic verbs, rather than static nouns, to refer to the componential parts of the model is deliberate. So is the choice of the *modular* makeup of the model. My intention has always been to move away from traditional ways of designing linear, product-based,

transmission-oriented, discrete courses, and towards new ways of designing cyclical, process-based, transformation-oriented, holistic modules.

The driving force behind these choices is the realization that merely tinkering with the existing system of language teacher education will not suffice to meet the challenges posed by accelerating economic, cultural, and educational globalization, and that what is surely and sorely needed is no less than a radical restructuring of language teacher education. This contention is premised upon five interconnected propositions that are as simple as they are straightforward: (a) any meaningful, context-sensitive pedagogic knowledge can emerge only from the classroom; (b) it is the practicing teacher who is well placed to produce and apply that knowledge; (c) current approaches to language teacher education are mostly aimed at preparing teachers to become consumers, not producers, of pedagogic knowledge; (d) the fast evolving global society with its incessant and increased flow of peoples, goods and ideas across the world is placing huge responsibilities on the shoulders of student teachers, practicing teachers and teacher educators; and therefore (e) we need to re-view and re-vision language teacher education if we are serious about helping language teaching professionals become strategic thinkers, exploratory researchers and transformative intellectuals.

Outline

The book is written in seven chapters. In the introductory chapter, I recall the tremendous strides that have been made in the last few years to advance the frontiers of knowledge in the field of TESOL language teacher education. However, an accumulation of insights in a disjointed fashion can only lead to a limited and limiting understanding. Therefore, I stress the need to pull together various strands of thought in order to design a cogent and comprehensive model for language teacher education. Accordingly, I present the rationale for and the essentials of such a model in terms of five global perspectives (postnational, postmodern, postcolonial, post-transmission, and postmethod), and three operating principles (particularity, practicality, and possibility). I contend that these fundamental perspectives and principles provide the conceptual underpinnings necessary for designing a model for language teacher education that is sensitive to global and local exigencies.

The next five chapters deal with each of the five componential modules: Knowing, Analyzing, Recognizing, Doing, and Seeing. In the chapter on Knowing, I express my skepticism about the pedagogic value of the bewildering array of labels and definitions for teacher knowledge one finds in the literature. Instead, I opt for a simpler frame of reference: professional knowledge, procedural knowledge, and personal knowledge. The first pertains to the intellectual content of a discipline produced and disseminated by experts, the second to the instructional management strategies needed to create and sustain a classroom environment in which the desired learning outcome is made possible, and the third to the individual teacher's sense of plausibility, a sense of what works and what doesn't. I stress the importance of helping teachers develop their personal knowledge.

The focus of the next chapter is on learner needs, motivation and autonomy. I point out how learner needs are shifting towards the development of genuine communicative abilities required to exploit the unlimited possibilities that the globalized job market has opened up. Also shifting are motivational factors that now render the traditional concept of integrative motivation inadequate because of the on-going cultural globalization and its impact on individual and national identities, and because of the Internetization of information systems. I note how researchers in the field of L2 motivation research are now turning to recent developments in cognitive psychology, to postmodern thoughts, and to critical pedagogy, and explain how these developments might shape teaching and teacher education.

Clearly, teachers' developing knowledge systems, and their awareness of learner needs, motivation, and autonomy can be effectively used only if they recognize the teaching Self that they bring with them to the practice of everyday teaching. In Chapter 4, therefore, I turn to the importance of recognizing teacher identities, beliefs, and values. I put these personal attributes in a broader philosophical, psychological, and sociological landscape by outlining the concepts of identity and identity formation, beliefs and belief systems, and values and value judgments. I then connect these general concepts to specific pedagogic imperatives drawing insights from general education as well as from the field of English language teaching. I also show how teachers can learn to interrogate their teaching Self using critical auto-ethnography as an investigative tool, and to draw a self-portrait connecting the personal, the professional, the pedagogical, and the political.

In the next chapter, I focus on how the doing of teaching, theorizing, and dialogizing are all closely intertwined, and that they nurture each other in a cycle of formation and transformation. Teaching is presented as a reflective activity which at once shapes and is shaped by the doing of theorizing which in turn is bolstered by the collaborative process of dialogic inquiry. The doing of teaching is marked by efforts to maximize learning opportunities and to mentor personal transformation. I explain how the construction of even a personal theory of practice has to be carried out collaboratively and dialogically. I also highlight the types of teacher research that can potentially help teachers theorize from the classroom.

An important prerequisite for meaningful teacher research to take place is the ability of teachers to *see* what happens in the classroom. Arguing that *seeing* has seldom received the kind of attention it really deserves and demands, I begin the chapter on seeing with a philosophical rendering of the concept, and go on to discuss three different forms of seeing: *seeing-in*, *seeing-as*, and *seeing-that*. I show that *seeing-that* is a higher form of seeing, one that is critically mediated by seeing and knowing, helping us forge new connections between our conceptual knowledge and perceptual knowledge. I then emphasize the importance of seeing the learner, teacher, and observer perspectives to derive useable insights about language lessons. I also present methodological procedures and illustrative examples that show how the *seeing-that* form of observation is capable of assisting participants to make the connection between seeing and knowing.

I try to put all these together in the concluding chapter. Highlighting the salient features of the modular model, I reflect on the prospects and problems of designing a context-sensitive model for language teacher education. I start with a brief note on the nature of models and modules and then consider possible ways of designing and delivering a model that is sensitive to local demands and responsive to global forces. I also discuss the challenge of change facing any innovative educational endeavor. I show how local practitioners can use the essentials of the model as broad guidelines to conceive and construct what they consider to be a locally relevant language teacher education program.

Readership

Given its scope, style and substance, the book is geared towards the needs of many players in the field of language teacher education. It is intended for student teachers who are being introduced to the field of language education, for practicing teachers who wish to enhance their knowledge and skill about teaching, for teacher educators who are looking for a cogent volume that can be used in pre-service as well as in-service programs, and for educational researchers who are interested in exploring the complexity of language teacher education. It is also intended to provide a necessary conceptual framework and practical strategies for those who might wish to design context-specific models of language teacher education. With its global focus that is sensitive to local exigencies, the book is aimed at a wide variety of national and international audiences. Although most of the illustrative examples are drawn from the field of *English* language teaching and teacher education, the book is written for those who are interested in language teaching and teacher education in general.

All the chapters except the last one end with (a) Rapid Reader Response; (b) Reflective Tasks; and (c) Exploratory Projects. The idea of Rapid Reader Response is adapted from the *One-Minute Feedback* strategy pioneered at Harvard School of Education. I have modified it to have a cluster of four textual questions that attempt to elicit a quick, stream of consciousness response from readers about the chapter that they have just finished reading. Therefore, the same four questions are repeated in all the six chapters. Unlike Rapid Reader Response, Reflective Tasks are designed to prompt extended and in-depth responses for specific questions that require critical reflection on the part of the reader. Exploratory Projects are meant to give opportunities for prospective and present teachers to conduct their own situated investigations aimed at relating the issues raised in a particular chapter to their specific learning and teaching context. I hope that these activities will facilitate the reader's deeper engagement with the text and the context thereby promoting a better understanding of the issues involved.

In writing this book, my aims have been, first, to present some of the latest scholarship about language teaching and teacher education in a coordinated and accessible way; second, to highlight the challenges as well as opportunities facing the

field of language teacher education in a global society that is impacted by the processes of economic, cultural and educational globalization; and third, to explore the essentials of a cogent and comprehensive model that has the potential to fundamentally transform the way we conceive and conduct language teacher preparation. This has been a long and complex pursuit.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have been greatly helped in this pursuit by a host of people who traversed my personal and professional life. First and foremost, I wish to thank all those (too many to name) who attended my talks delivered in five different countries, endured my still-evolving thoughts, and offered critical comments which have certainly enhanced the quality of my work. I am grateful to Naomi Silverman for her unending stream of professional care and personal kindness, and to Eli Hinkel for her unfailing faith in my abilities. Thanks also go to my external reviewers Professor Neil Anderson, Brigham Young University, USA, and Professor Julian Edge, University of Manchester, UK for their critical comments and helpful suggestions. I am thankful to Jean Shiota, Faculty Lab Coordinator at the office of Academic Technology, who was always ready and willing to help me with computer graphics.

On the home front, I am indebted to my wife Revathi who has always been a source of solid support and a steady supply of green tea. She took upon herself extraordinary domestic responsibilities (in spite of her own professorial demands) especially in the last two months of my writing so that I could finish the project without asking for yet another extension of the deadline. My children Anand and Chandrika offered me more than their usual diversion this time. Anand pitched in to type the classroom transcripts I have used in this book, thereby saving me valuable time. His only comment was that I use the term *pedagogy* too much. Chandrika glanced through my last chapter and said, “it’s too cheesy.” Clearly, I still have much to learn.

1

(RE)VISIONING LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

A cartload of bricks is not a house;
we want a principle, a system, an integration.
(Michel Serres 2004: 2)

1.0 Introduction

Teacher education is not just about teachers and their education. It is infinitely more than the two put together. It is often called upon to tackle critical issues and questions that go far beyond their boundaries. In a comprehensive and authoritative report titled *Studying Teacher Education*, two leading American educationists, Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Kenneth Zeichner (2005: 2–3) make it abundantly clear that education and teacher education are social institutions that pose moral, ethical, social, philosophical, and ideological questions.

They caution that

there are not likely to be good answers to the most important questions about teacher preparation unless they are driven by sophisticated theoretical frameworks about the nature of good teaching and the nature of teachers' learning.

(*ibid.*: 3–4)

According to them, any sophisticated theoretical framework must necessarily take into account not only issues such as teachers' knowledge, skills, dispositions, cognition, and beliefs but also factors such as educational, social, cultural, and ideological movements as well as major swings in the political pendulum. To this long list, we now have to add global economic trends and global cultural flows.

2 Language Teacher Education for a Global Society

If there is a need for a comprehensive framework for teacher preparation in the field of general education, which has witnessed substantial exploration and expansion in the last fifty years, then, clearly, the need for such a framework in the relatively nascent field of second and foreign language (L2) teacher education is even greater. Following the lead given by general educationists, applied linguists have explored several aspects of L2 teacher education. Just in the last fifteen years, we have witnessed an impressive array of valuable work on topics as varied as teacher cognition (Woods 1996, Borg 2006), teacher research (Freeman 1998), teacher freedom (Brumfit 2001), teacher self-development (Edge 2002), teacher narrative (Johnson & Golombek 2002), teacher coherence (Clarke 2003), teacher values (Johnston 2003), teacher expertise (Tsui 2003), teacher experience (Senior 2006), teacher philosophy (Crookes 2009), and teacher reflection (Edge 2011). These investigations and interpretations have undoubtedly expanded our knowledge base. However, accumulation of insights in a disjointed fashion can only lead to a limited and limiting understanding. What is sorely missing in our field, as in general education, is a cogent, coherent and comprehensive model that pulls together various strands of thought in order to help student teachers, teachers, teacher educators and researchers see “the pattern that connects.”

What might constitute the foundational stones needed for constructing a comprehensive model for L2 teacher education? I discuss them under two broad categories: globalizing perspectives, and operating principles.

1.1 Globalizing Perspectives

In a concerted effort to respond to the impact of globalization on education and teacher education, ten leading institutions from ten different countries including Australia, China, Denmark, Singapore, the UK, and the USA have formed what is called “The International Alliance of Leading Education Institutes.” Founded at a meeting in Singapore in 2007, the Alliance acts as a think-tank aimed at generating ideas and identifying trends to serve as a collective voice on important educational issues. Appropriately, it took up the challenging issue of teacher education as its primary task. In its first report titled *Transforming Teacher Education*, the Alliance concludes (2008: 14):

Notwithstanding their origins, commonalities and differences, all systems of teacher preparation have to rethink their core assumptions and processes in the new global context.

What exactly is the new global context that confronts teacher education today? It seems to me that there are at least five inter-connected perspectives that can help us understand the fast-evolving global context. They are: postnational, postmodern, postcolonial, post-transmission, and postmethod perspectives. The first three are

related to broader historical, political, and sociocultural developments across the world while the last two pertain more narrowly to language teacher education.

I frame these global perspectives in terms of “posts” because we all live in a world of “posts.” The epistemology of the “post” has facilitated substantial knowledge production in the humanities and social sciences, and it offers a useful site to anchor one’s thoughts on broader forces that impact on education and teacher education. A common understanding of the term “post” is that it connotes something that comes “afterwards” in time. In the specialized field of cultural studies, however, it does not merely connote a progression in time, but rather a fundamental shift from one conceptual understanding to another, thereby marking a sustainable challenge to existing paradigms of knowledge. Consequently, the “post” produces a heightened awareness of historical, political, and cultural movements that shape and reshape human beliefs and behaviors. Thus, chronologically speaking, postmodernism comes after modernism. But, it stands for a more radical conceptualization and interpretation of the human condition than the one offered by modernism, as explained below. Clearly, the shift is more than temporal. Keeping such an understanding of “posts” in mind, let us briefly consider the five globalizing perspectives.

1.1.1 The Postnational Perspective

The idea of a nation-state emerged during the mid-eighteenth century when what is now called the modern period was in its relative infancy. It resulted from the decline of the European feudal monarchies and aristocracies, and the gradual ascent of liberal democratic systems. Ever since, the idea of a nation-state has had a tremendous hold on the affairs of the world and on the imagination of the individual; so much so that it is almost inconceivable now to think of the world without nation-states. Currently represented at the United Nations are 191 nations, each with its own national flag, anthem, government, and army. These independent sovereign states with demarcated geographical boundaries and distinct national identities carry out vital functions affecting the political, economic, social, cultural, and educational lives of their citizens. Nationalism is undeniably a force to be reckoned with. It is at once a facilitating force that brings people of a nation together and a debilitating force that pulls people of different nations apart.

The forces of nationalism and nation-states are now being severely challenged by the twin processes of economic and cultural globalization. As the *Human Development Report* (1999) by the United Nations points out, globalization is changing the world landscape in three distinct ways. One, Shrinking space: People’s lives are affected by events on the other side of the globe, often by events that they do not even know about, much less control. Two, Shrinking time: Markets and technologies operate at a tremendous speed, with what happens in a far flung place affecting people’s lives far away. Three, Disappearing borders: National borders are breaking down, facilitating movement of not only trade and capital goods but also ideas, norms, cultures, and values.

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The impact of cultural globalization on nation-states is astounding. As the UN report states (1999: 33):

Contacts between people and their cultures – their ideas, their values, their way of life – have been growing and deepening in unprecedented ways.

Cultural globalization is shaping the global flows of cultural capital, interested knowledge, and identity formation. Cultures are in closer contact now than ever before, and are influencing each other in complex and complicated ways. This development is creating a global cultural consciousness, and along with it, creative and chaotic tensions that both unite and divide people (see Kumaravadivelu 2008 for more details).

The impact of economic globalization on nation-states is even more astounding. Globalization of capital, labor markets, and trade is having an unflinching and unstoppable effect on the production, distribution and consumption of goods. More than ever, the global society is linked to global economic growth spurred by the increased consumption of goods. As Joel Spring (2007: 250) astutely observes:

this basic value of the industrial-consumption paradigm cuts across religious and political lines. Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Confucianists, pagans, dictatorships, communists, welfare socialists, representative democracies, monarchies, and authoritarian states all embrace the consumer model.

Problems and solutions facing these global transactions go beyond the level of nation-states. As a consequence, supranational economic institutions such as the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund exercise extraordinary powers over sovereign nations. As sociologists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2003: 109) rightly point out:

the era of globalization has not brought the end of the nation-state – nation-states still fulfill extremely important functions in the establishment and regulation of economic, political, and cultural norms – but nation-states have indeed been displaced from the position of sovereign authority.

Echoing a similar sentiment, and citing Benedict Anderson, historian Eric Hobsbawm observes (2007: 88):

the crucial document of twenty-first century identity is not the nation-state's birth certificate, but the document of international identity – the passport.

In short, the idea of a nation-state that was closely associated with the modern period has been weakened largely because of postmodern developments.