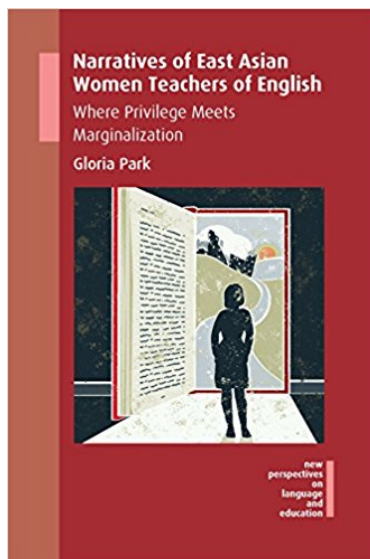


Book Review



Narratives of East Asian Women Teachers of English: Where privilege meets marginalization
Gloria Park. Multilingual Matters. 2017. 122 pp.
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Narratives of East Asian Women Teachers of English is an interesting exploration of the negotiated identities of East Asian women teachers of English compiled and composed by an East Asian woman teacher of English herself. The six personal accounts of the female immigrant English teachers in the United States, the writer's own included, have traversed geographical boundaries between there and their East Asian motherlands (Korea and China), as well as temporal horizons spanning almost two decades. The research has provided a platform that allows the negotiation of identities based on gender, class and ethnicity and begs the question of *where* privilege meets marginalization, as it seems that in all of the six narratives, the non-native English speaker (NNES) women teachers of English all acknowledged that they had in fact been simultaneously privileged and marginalized to various extents throughout their engagement with TESOL programmes.

The subjective qualitative approach to research employed in this study allows for more interactive, reflexive and dialogic interview processes which are conducive to more willing and genuine self-disclosure of participant perspectives especially when the researcher is personally involved in the project. The organization of the chapters ties in the voices of the participants seamlessly as excerpts of their personal reflective accounts are the threads weaving through the analyses and interlacing the similarities and differences of the experience of their situated identities.

There is much discussion about the dichotomy of imagined/real teacher and professional identities, privileged/marginalized female identities, along with empowered/entitled ethnic (minority) identities, but more analysis of the ‘mama scholar’ identity could have been included, especially as it was set out as one of the major areas of focus at the beginning of the book. In fact, as this project is a longitudinal account of the female immigrant teacher experience in the United States, it would have been interesting to find out in more details how being a wife and then a mother further changes female non-native teacher identity in academia.

Through recounting the six narratives, the writer incorporated, where relevant, a lot of multi-disciplinary academic concepts including but not limited to voice/silence, language relativity and language policies, touching on (cross-) social, (cross-) institutional, and (cross-) cultural dimensions. Such discussions, however, could have been further substantiated to give readers even more of a glimpse into how the different forces are at play.

All in all, the book is a gem encapsulating the essence of life as the Other in a foreign place, in subjugation the Other is still able to find empowerment tools, be they voice, or silence, or both. As the writer envisioned, the book is a tool that lends voice to silence so that the East Asian women teachers of English could employ it to chase their dreams, their own representation of the American dream.

About the reviewer

Carly Ng is a lecturer in the Centre for Applied English Studies at The University of Hong Kong where she teaches academic English and English-in-the-Discipline courses. She has also taught Translation at various universities in Hong Kong. Her current research interests are language identity, language teaching and learning, comparative literature, and internationalization of higher education.