

Study Abroad for Pre-service and In-service Teachers: Transformative Learning on a Global Scale

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Book Review/Recension d'ouvrage

Study Abroad for Pre-service and In-service Teachers: Transformative Learning on a Global Scale

Edited By Laura Baecher

Routledge, 2021, 292 pages

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Baecher's edited volume, *Study Abroad for Pre-service and In-service Teachers: Transformative Learning on a Global Scale*, provides an overview of research being conducted in pre-service and in-service teacher study abroad programs worldwide, referred to throughout the book more simply as *teacher study abroad*. The 273-page book contains 18 chapters from 43 contributors. It is divided into three sections with Section 1 covering chapters 1-7; Section 2, chapters 8-14; and Section 3, chapters 15-18. As a study abroad researcher and former pre-service study abroad program director, I was eager to read this book, as study abroad in professional programs is understudied in comparison with study abroad in language learning contexts, therefore this book promised to shed light on findings unique to the profession of teaching.

Section 1 highlights the role of intentionality in instructional design in teacher study abroad toward goals of global competence, global citizenship, and global readiness. These goals are common among programs with strong structural analysis and strong intercultural foci (Shultz, 2010). In other words, the authors speak to the need for education to “engage students as critical thinkers able to understand the historical, cultural, and socio-economic processes and structures” and “learn how to engage in the relations that are surfaced in a globalized world... to transform these structures” (p. 16). Strengths of this section are its mix of outgoing (Chapters 1-4; 7) and incoming (Chapters 5-6) desti-

nations as well as chapters that highlighted different assessment tools (Chapters 1 and 4) and explored how to scale up programs (Chapters 3 and 4). The degree to which intentionality was realized in each program was investigated in each chapter.

Section 2's focus on implementation and introspection in teacher study abroad turned the discussion to experiential learning for the development of culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995). It includes examples of embedded activities for the purpose of reflection including open-ended or prompted journals, blogs, or focus groups. A strength of this section is again the variety of study abroad contexts represented: Fiji, Germany, Malawi, Botswana, Ireland, Costa Rica, and Ecuador. A common refrain in this section was the need for elements of preparation before the sojourn, supporting during, and meaningful critical debriefing upon return. Chapter 14 problematizes the loss of learning opportunity that can result from a lack of critical reflection. Since study abroad activities often involve reflection (Dressler, et al. 2018), this section shed light on the outcomes resulting from purposeful reflection in teacher study abroad.

Section 3, the smallest of the sections in the book, contains four chapters that are very different in nature, but share the goal of presenting unique innovations in study abroad. These innovations include *community-engaged service learning* (chapter 15), *virtual exchange* (chapters 16 & 17), and *field placements in Indigenous communities* (chapter 18). They represent emerging ways in which study abroad design is providing novel opportunities for reciprocal learning (Xu, 2019). In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, teacher study abroad has embraced virtual exchange as an alternative to international travel (Hilliker, 2020). Whether virtual or in-person engagement, teacher study abroad can be enhanced through efforts to authentically interact with the local community as illustrated through the service learning, arts-integration, and field experiences documented in these chapters.

In reflecting upon this book, I found myself desiring a conclusion chapter from the editors. Several chapters, especially 14 and 18) problematized aspects of teacher study abroad that could have been addressed in light of the collective body of knowledge in teacher study abroad. With the publication of this book in 2021, an acknowledgement of the potential changes to teacher study abroad brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and any possible permanent impact would have strengthened the collection. Additionally, as many of the teacher study abroad programs were examined by the program administrators themselves, insight into the rationale for set-up and design was insightful, but we (as I have studied my own program too) also need to acknowledge our own close involvement as a potential limitation. These critiques do not diminish the strength of the book but provide readers with a lens to aid in close reading.

I recommend this book for study abroad administrators and researchers, especially those in the professional programs such as teaching, nursing, and social work. Study abroad in these professional programs often have common goals and therefore readers would benefit, not only from knowing how these programs were designed toward those goals, but also what methods were used to investigate the programs. Secondly, administrators and researchers involved with language learning study abroad or interna-

tionalization of curricula would find this book contributes to their overall understanding through the perspective of teacher study abroad. This book provides a much-needed overview of teacher study abroad from a global perspective, documenting similar goals by means of a variety of methods, while emphasizing the importance of purposeful design to realize these goals.

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