Language teacher development in digital contexts
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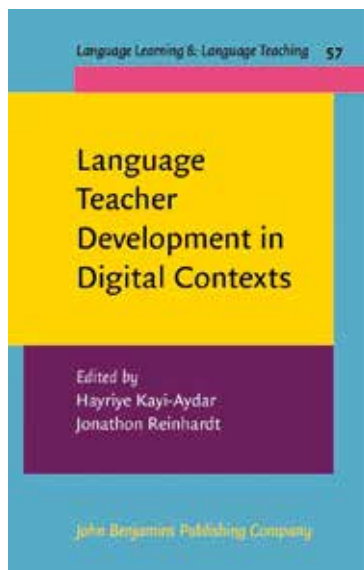
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The utilization of digital technologies has become increasingly prevalent among individuals for a variety of purposes (Lyapina et al., 2019). This happened as a result of the global circumstances, leading to a marked increase in the amount of time spent within digital environments (Frederick, 2017). Within the realm of second or foreign language teacher education, there is a growing recognition of the impact that technological hegemony has on the pedagogical approach of language teachers (Estaji & Ghiasvand, 2022). This integration of technology has now become a ubiquitous aspect of daily teaching practice. Despite the extensive body of literature that exists on the topic of language teacher development, there remains a dearth of resources specifically addressing the unique challenges, opportunities, and strategies associated with language teacher development in digital contexts. This book aims to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive overview of the subject, specifically focused on the digital contexts of synchronous and asynchronous online discussions, positioning theory, gameful learning, and virtual exchange. Written in a clear and accessible style, the book is comprised of nine chapters, designed to aid language teachers in the implementation of online language teacher education (OLTE) and computer-assisted language learning (CALL) initiatives.

In the Introduction, Kayi-Aydar and Reinhardt make a compelling case for the need for a comprehensive volume dedicated to language teacher development in digital contexts by emphasizing the transformative potential of online environments in shaping the identities of language teachers and negotiating existing pedagogical practices. The authors provide a cogent overview of each chapter, with a focus on the specific contributions made by each chapter towards the advancement of our understanding of language teacher development, learning, and identity construction in digital contexts. Through a rigorous examination of available digital environments, the editors aim to shed further light on the impact of digital experiences on the professional growth and development of language teachers.

In Chapter 1, Warren and Ward undertake a thorough analysis of asynchronous online forum discussion posts by pre-service teachers who self-identify as having a solid under-

standing of language teaching methodology. The study participants, who were enrolled in a university located in the Western United States, engaged in a process of teacher development that took a post-cognitive perspective. The authors document the participants' progress by examining their reflections on their own and others' experiences, and through the examination of discussions centered around topics such as linguistic identities, translanguaging, and the support of bilingual/multilingual students. The results of the study are presented in the form of extensive representative excerpts, allowing readers to gain a deep understanding of the pre-service teachers' epistemic stance towards equity-enriched pedagogies and practices. The findings of this study are of immense value in terms of enhancing our understanding of pre-service teachers' consciousness of the importance of creating an equal and inclusive teaching environment in their early professional development.

Chapters 2 to 5 are dedicated to a review of the central investigation of teacher identity in digital contexts. Chapter 2, authored by Steadman, presents an investigation into the reflexive and interactional positions of two teacher candidates in an online Master's program. The study is grounded in positioning theory and adopts it both as a theoretical framework and as a research methodology. The findings are based on a larger study that analyzed the identity construction of two pre-service teachers participating in an online methods course. The study followed the five-part positioning cycle, including pre-positioning, moment-to-moment practices, characterizations of practice, patterns of participation, and positional identities. The results of the study emphasize the crucial role of course design in shaping teacher identity in digital environments. This chapter serves as a noteworthy illustration of the utilization of positioning theory as both a theoretical background and a research method.

In Chapter 3, Vitanova et al. examine the construction of teacher identity through a video game. The study draws on the narratives of a teacher to shed light on their beliefs, identity, and agency perceptions. This chapter is particularly noteworthy because it approaches the use of video games in teacher education from the perspective of teachers, rather than from the students' point of view, as is commonly seen in the literature.

Chapters 4 and 5 adopt a micro-analytical and collective identity approach, respectively. Chapter 4, authored by Dooly, argues that technology-led pedagogical designs can play a significant role in facilitating language teachers' exploration of the quality of knowledge. The study draws on the examination of online meetings between student teachers in the United States and Spain, showcasing the potential of virtual exchange to enhance teaching skills. Chapter 5, written by Kulavuz-Onal, employs a corpus-driven discourse-analytic approach to explore the construction of collective identity among teachers in an online community. This chapter is significant in its integration of concordancing and discourse analysis in the teacher development process and provides valuable insights into the use of online communities in teacher education studies.

In Chapter 6, Green-Eneix and De Costa delve into the crucial aspect of affective considerations in language teacher development. Through an investigation of the experiences of novice in-service language teachers in an asynchronous course, the authors demonstrate the interplay between emotions, pedagogical choices, and teacher beliefs. The chapter underscores the importance of narrative-based activities, such as storytelling around a campfire, for fostering the cognitive and emotional growth of language teachers. Chapter 7 by Müller-Hartmann and Hauck examine the results of the Erasmus+ project to shed light

on the phenomenon of virtual exchange, also referred to as telecollaboration. Through a triangulated data analysis and well-designed tasks, the authors provide evidence of the role virtual exchange can play in the development of critical digital literacy and critical digital teaching competence in Polish and German pre-service English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers. This chapter demonstrates the effectiveness of utilizing critical incident analysis in virtual exchange and presents a valuable contribution to the field of language teacher development in digital contexts.

In Chapter 8, Karimi and Asadnia undertake a thorough examination of the professional development of second-language writing teachers in the context of Web-mediated writing. The authors demonstrate the critical importance of purposeful design of Web 2.0-based collaborative writing tasks to support the professional development of in-service second language teachers. The chapter constitutes a valuable exemplar of the application of the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework in the development of writing pedagogy for second-language teachers. Additionally, the study provides important insights into the challenges associated with teaching writing skills, both in face-to-face and online contexts, through the use of weblogs, further highlighting the significance of the professional development of writing teachers.

In the final chapter of the book, Reinhardt endeavors to establish the basis for fostering online language teacher identities. The chapter commences by introducing the concept of teacher cognition in the context of online language teaching and computer-assisted language learning (CALL). Building on the insights and findings of the preceding chapters, the chapter presents a comprehensive framework and illuminating perspectives on teacher development in digital environments. Drawing on interdisciplinary literature, the chapter provides considerations and recommendations for teacher development in online contexts. The chapter also highlights the key differences between face-to-face and online language use, the technological competencies required, the components of contemporary techno-identities, the role of the Internet in fostering translanguacultural awareness, and the significance of socio-collaborative learning in the development of online language teacher identities.

In conclusion, while this volume makes a valuable contribution to the field of language teacher development in digital contexts, there are some shortcomings that should be acknowledged. Novice readers may face challenges in understanding the technical terms and concepts related to professional development, which could hinder their full comprehension of the book's content. The editors could have addressed this issue by providing clearer explanations of the technical terms and their relevance to the overall objectives and themes of the volume. Also, there is limited attention to non-English language contexts and there is no focus on second language writing development. Despite this limitation, the book is commendable for its breadth of coverage, theoretical rigor, and methodological soundness. It notably operationalizes and conceptualizes key terms related to teacher identity in digital environments, and its emphasis on gaming, identity construction, competence, and performance constitutes a significant contribution to the field. As such, the book is recommended for language teachers, teacher trainers, digital material developers, and researchers who are already familiar with the technical aspects of professional development.

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