Call for Chapter Submissions: Transcultural Flows in English Language Education in Asia

In the current age of globalization, there are heightened demands for English throughout Asia, leading to transcultural flows that often dictate what happens in the classroom and in other related transcultural spaces. Pennycook (2007, p. 5) uses the term ‘transcultural flows’ to “locate the spread and use of English within critical theories of globalization.” He uses hip-hop as an example of how English language is moving across the world and being taken up, appropriated, and remade into new and hybrid forms that represent the local. Appadurai (1996) suggests that transcultural flows are a product of modernity and migration resulting in the need to reimagine and explore Diasporas within public spheres, while also being phenomena that impact groups, societies, and nations. Giddens (2000) examines these spaces of transcultural flows and re-imagination which result in exploration and transformation of groups, societies, and nations. Jenkins (2004) suggests that transcultural flows of popular culture inspire new forms of global consciousness and cultural competency.

Tsing (2005) coined the term “friction” to discuss the relations that result when cultures come together. As a starting point, this book investigates the “collision” or “synthesis” that occurs between people when cultures are shared and reconstructed in different contexts and result in hybridity. By focusing on transcultural flows we can acknowledge the hybridity in educational concepts and practices that emerge as a result of relationships and processes that occur inside and outside of the classroom as people and their cultures come together.

Scholars have argued that English is a global language because of the power that English speaking countries hold in the world. As a result, the spread of English has been examined as a form of imperialism and hegemony (e.g., Phillipson 1992; Tollefson 1991). While recognizing the power of English globally, and the impact that English has upon people’s lives locally, we also seek to examine the effects, movements, and actions that result from these transcultural flows, while also acknowledging individual and collective agency that is possible through English language education. We seek to examine how English is appropriated and reshaped through language and culture exchanges inside and outside of the traditional concepts of the classroom. Inside the classroom transcultural flows have the potential to result in take-up, exchange, and appropriation of language and cultural practices that can mean transcultural realities in terms of hybrid pedagogical and curricular exchanges and pursuits for teachers and students as English is implemented in the midst of dominant language and culture communities. Transcultural realities in the classroom can be pedagogical and curricular culminations where the meeting of East and West occurs as teachers and students "meet in the middle" and experience an English education that impacts society.

On these terms, English learning and teaching has the potential to go beyond the classroom and affect the multicultural realities of Asian societies. Asian societies often carry long histories and traditions that influence beliefs about identities which may be changing in our globalizing world. Understanding transcultural flows may also mean understanding what is happening outside of the classroom as transcultural exchanges lead to friendships and professional relationships, as companies embrace English and attempt to reach a global audience, as English is an access point for global interaction in cyberspace, and as the global politics of membership, recognition, and identity often confront the implications of English as a global language. On
these terms, for both English teachers and students, the impact of transcultural connections reaches far beyond the teaching and learning experience. In short, English connects people around the globe with the country or people even after they have finished their lessons or teachers have left the country.

To examine the transcultural flows that result from English learning and teaching in Asia, we need to ask some questions: What becomes of English when it is loosed from local, national, and regional spaces and re-realized through imagination? What are new forms of global consciousness and cultural competency? How is English as transcultural flows being rediscovered and reinvented in Asian countries where traditions dictate normative culture and change is resisted? How have English as transcultural flows affected concepts of authenticity, tradition, and the notion of ‘pure’ identities? To what degree are we being ‘globalized’? How are teachers and students taking-up and apprporiating English inside and outside classrooms? How has learning English affected social, political and business relationships? What are the relations between language and cultural exchanges?

To explore these questions, we are seeking chapter contributors to our edited book, Transcultural Flows in English Language Education in Asia. If you are interested in submitting a chapter to this book, please submit a 500-word abstract that includes your research, methods, and theoretical framework and summarizes your main findings by March 1, 2015 to:

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