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# Series Editor's Preface

**T**he *TESOL Voices* series aims to fill the need for expanding practical knowledge through participant research in the field. Each volume showcases the voices of students and teachers engaged in participant inquiry about language education. These inquiries of participants in various TESOL learning environments are told as insider accounts of discovery, challenge, change, and growth.

What constitutes TESOL classroom life and who is best positioned to research this unique ecology? Traditionally, there has been a hierarchy of credibility in TESOL encouraging the production of knowledge by credentialed “experts” in higher education who offer TESOL practitioners outsider understandings about teaching. In contrast, the *TESOL Voices* series presents insider accounts from students and teachers who are theorizing the practices of both learning and teaching for themselves. In other words, this series positions practice ahead of theory for understanding the complex phenomena of language teaching and learning. In short, the *TESOL Voices* series seeks to elevate the value of localized learning through classroom research.

In this unique series readers will discover relevant strands of theory extending from accounts of practice. The philosophical point of departure for the series is that enduring theory in TESOL is most likely to surface from participant inquiry that happens among the clutter of classroom desks and chairs. As participants tell their stories, reflective questions and implications for language teaching emerge that illustrate the practical theory practitioners use to make decisions as they experience classroom life.

The *TESOL Voices* series attempts to give readers a view from the classroom floor on the appropriateness of current policy, practice, and theory in language education. While the accounts in these books are personal reflections colored by particular contexts, teachers are likely to find parallels with their own situation. So as you read, listen carefully to discover what the murmurs, echoes, articulation, singing, humming, silence, cries, laughter, and voices that flow from each of the six volumes might teach you.

## Insider Accounts From Adult Education

This volume explores three Spheres of Influence in contemporary Adult Education. The first sphere of **Community** contains five chapters that take readers on a journey from indigenous learning, to drama, speeches, and program management. In the sphere of **Course Planning and Structure**, we learn the importance of things such as laughter, setting high expectations, and the use of first language. Chapters in the **Linguistics and Learning** sphere describe a variety of classroom-tested approaches for helping adult students develop English proficiency. Authors in this volume display four stages of awareness and professional knowledge development: seeker, discussor, user, and, finally, provider. The concluding chapter uses these four stages to highlight pertinent issues of theory and practice that emerge from the classroom stories in this volume.

*Tim Stewart, Kyoto University*