Reframing Global Poverty in Language Education: Global Insights from EFL Textbooks and Teachers in Germany: Book Review

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Reframing Global Poverty in Language Education: Global Insights from EFL Textbooks and Teachers in Germany, By Roger Dale Jones, Palgrave Studies in Educational Media, 2026, 355, ISBN. 978-3-032-13928-3, e-ISBN. 978-3-032-13929-0 book link: https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-032-13929-0

INTRODUCTION

The book entitled "Reframing Global Poverty in Language Education: Global Insights from EFL Textbooks and Teachers in Germany " written by Roger Dale Jones examines how global poverty is represented and taught in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, particularly through textbooks and classroom practices in Germany. Jones (2026) analyzes how poverty is framed in educational materials and how teachers interpret and teach the topic, using both quantitative and qualitative analysis of textbooks and teacher interviews. The book argues that poverty is often presented in simplified and moralistic ways that overlook its structural complexity, which may shape students' perceptions of global inequality. The objective of the book is to critically evaluate these representations, identify gaps between educational goals, especially those related to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education and classroom practice, and propose more nuanced and interdisciplinary approaches to teaching global poverty in language education.

The first part establishes the theoretical and conceptual foundation of the book. It explains how global poverty education can be integrated into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching. The author connects language education with broader international agendas such as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education (GCE) promoted by organizations like the United Nations and UNESCO. The chapters discuss the political and institutional motivations behind poverty education, particularly how the UN Sustainable Development Goals influence national educational curricula in Germany. The author also analyzes key concepts related to poverty education and emphasizes that poverty
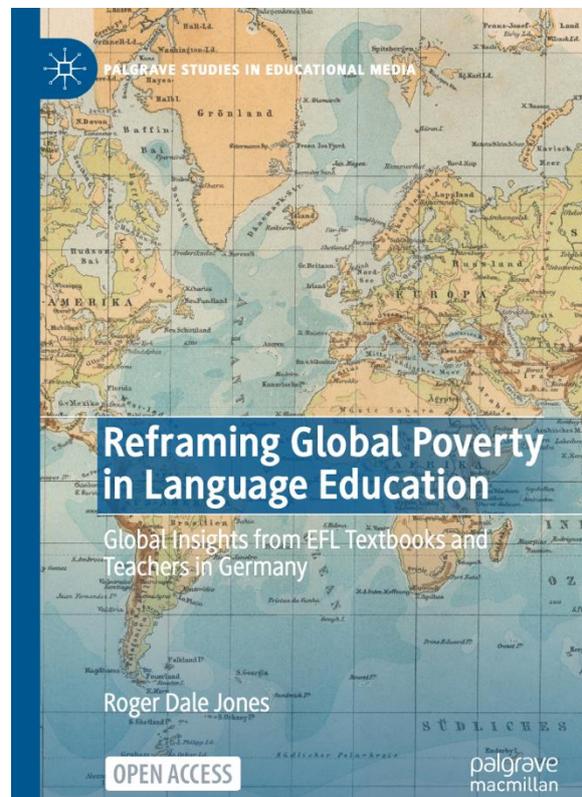
should be understood as a complex social issue involving economic, political, and cultural dimensions. This section is conceptually strong and provides a comprehensive theoretical framework linking language education with global social issues. The interdisciplinary approach drawing from sociology, economics, and education strengthens the argument that poverty education should not be treated superficially. However, the discussion occasionally becomes overly theoretical, and some conceptual explanations (e.g., ESD and global education) appear repetitive. The section would benefit from clearer synthesis to help readers more easily grasp the practical implications for language teaching.

The second part presents the empirical core of the book. It analyzes how poverty is represented in German EFL textbooks and how teachers interpret and teach the topic in classrooms. The research uses a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative textbook analysis with interviews of EFL teachers. The findings reveal that poverty is frequently portrayed in simplified and moralistic ways in textbooks, often focusing on individual stories rather than structural causes of poverty. The teacher interviews further show that many educators feel uncertain or uncomfortable addressing poverty in class, partly because the topic is complex and politically sensitive. This creates a gap between the intended educational goals of ESD and actual classroom practice. This section is the most valuable contribution of the book because it provides concrete empirical evidence about how global poverty is framed in educational materials. The combination of textbook analysis and teacher interviews offers a comprehensive perspective on both curriculum content and classroom realities. Nevertheless, the research is limited to the German educational context, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Expanding the comparative perspective to other countries could strengthen the broader implications of the study.

The final part synthesizes the findings and discusses their implications for global education. The author argues that current representations of poverty in textbooks often distort the complexity of the issue by framing it primarily as a moral problem rather than a structural one. The analysis also identifies several cognitive and narrative biases such as moral interpretation bias and negativity bias that influence how poverty is presented in educational materials. Based on these findings, the author proposes recommendations for improving poverty education in language classrooms, including adopting more interdisciplinary perspectives and promoting critical thinking about global inequality. This section effectively connects the empirical findings to broader educational debates. The discussion of cognitive biases and ideological framing is particularly insightful, as it highlights how educational materials shape students' perceptions of global inequality. However, some of the recommendations remain relatively general and could benefit from more concrete pedagogical strategies for teachers and textbook developers.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Reframing Global Poverty in Language Education by Roger Dale Jones offers an important and timely contribution to discussions on the intersection of language education and global social issues. By combining theoretical analysis with empirical research on EFL textbooks and teacher perspectives in Germany, the book reveals how global poverty is often framed in simplified and moralistic ways that overlook its structural complexity. The study successfully demonstrates the gap between the ideals of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and the realities of classroom practice. Despite some limitations such as its strong focus on the German educational context

and the relatively general nature of its pedagogical recommendations, the book provides valuable insights into how educational media shape students' understanding of global inequality. Overall, the work encourages educators, researchers, and policymakers to adopt more critical, interdisciplinary, and reflective approaches when integrating global poverty issues into language education.

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Jones, R. D. (2026). *Reframing Global Poverty in Language Education Global Insights from EFL Textbooks and*. Palgrave Studies in Educational Media. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-032-13929-0