THE RELEVANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF INNOVATIONS IN TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract:

Innovation is truly a confusing buzzword today. The traditional sources define 'innovation' as 'making changes in something established, especially by introducing new methods, ideas, or products'. In this turbulent but dynamic global community in which we live now, the waves of mega-trends and technological advances are creating rapid changes in a society demanding innovation in every field. Innovation isn't just important for business. By exploring new and better ways to educate the students and also teaching the skills, students will become innovators themselves. What and how we learn determines who we become as individuals and our success throughout our lives. It informs how we solve the problems, how we work with others, and how we look at the world around us. While many schools face challenges such as underfunding, unengaged students, and outdated curriculums, innovation offers a path forward. The adoption and exploration of innovative ideas in education will fill the significant gap between the potential of modern education and what many students are actually learning. Teaching the students about the benefits of innovative thinking using innovative teaching methods ignites a passion in them for learning and provides them with the tools they need to succeed in the innovation economy.

This paper deals with the importance of innovations in teaching English to fulfill the ever-growing demands of English and to meet the challenges before teachers. They should be able to cater to the practical needs of learners to make them competent enough to interact with one another and also to retrieve information all over the world. Today English is the most suitable and convenient tool for International Communication. The challenges before English language teachers demand them to shape up innovative methods to enable the students to communicate across the globe.

Keywords: innovations, teaching methodology, embodied learning, new technology, emerging trends, digital platforms, blended learning,

Innovation is the process of taking or creating useful and new ideas and new knowledge and implementing or converting them into useful products,   services or processes or methods of operation that meet market needs. Worldwide organizations have identified innovation as a key strategy for growth and sustainability in the current global economic environment. It is not only the fundamental source of growth in business and industry but also vital to the advancement of society. It will also increase the standard of living. It is pretty obvious that the twenty-first century has been a century of innovations. The world is changing rapidly with unrelenting pace. Technological innovations and start-ups with bright ideas are transforming the day-to-day life of man. Several things which seemed improbable some 10 or 20 years ago have now become part of modern living. Many innovations that improved our life drastically were witnessed in the 21st Century. Some of the major innovations of this century that significantly benefit human society are vast resources of knowledge through Internet, computers and other communication devices, rapid dissemination of this knowledge to the right people, education and learning, Knowledge sharing, new technology, globalization, sustainable development etc.. These innovations have immensely changed   almost all the aspects of our lives and contributed to the betterment of man's life. With the advent of the advanced technologies, the Earth looks small in size and with just one click the galaxy and stars can be seen.

The aura of education has drastically transformed in the 21st century. The emerging trends and latest innovations in education have led to the advent of spick-and-span technologies infused in curricula. Today educators and institutions have begun rethinking of all aspects of classroom elements. Learning objectives are categorized into levels of complexity and specificity and learning becomes project-based, team-oriented, interactive and approach-based learning. Teaching the skills needed for the 21st century requires a new, creative and innovative approach which will be a combination of methods, instruments, and experts from educational sciences, cognitive psychology, human-computer interaction, media studies, and learning analytics.

Education is at a critical juncture today. Acquiring the English language has become a predominant factor for the nation's as well as an individual's development. It is essential for workforce development and economic prosperity. Education in the 21st century revolves around the competencies young people need to be successful in a changing world. A series of qualitative methods and different learning tools like newspapers, media, movies, interpreting advertisements etc, are incorporated by the teachers in English language classrooms to improve students' communicative ability. They make the learning process interesting. Traditional methods cannot be written off from the classrooms at any point in time. The lecture method can be adopted along with some innovative ideas. Students are guided to do reference work and research to participate in teaching and the teacher's lecture will be complementary to students' comprehension. Apart

from it, some innovative methods developed and adopted by the teachers will make students focused on the learning process and contribute to their cognitive development. It can be done through the task and activity based teaching which will improve the problem-solving ability and lateral thinking skills of the students. De Keyser (1998) emphasized that the practice of using tasks would go beyond behavior and include various engaging activities that emphasize form-meaning, mappings for day-to-day communication. Teaching materials and techniques should be updated in order to provide the conditions similar to those present in first language acquisition. They should focus on meaning rather than form and should provide the opportunity to the learner to be engaged with meaningful use of that language in a relatively anxiety-free environment.

The innovative methods in the classroom provide motivation for the learners and are helpful to develop oneself on the process of language acquiring process. New and varied activities with innovative ideas used by English language teacher will empower the students to think and react proactively, innovatively and confidently. They will make the students develop a good rapport with teachers and fellow students which result in real communication even inside the classroom. The activities should be presented to the students as part of a lesson plan providing time to think, understand and perform according to their competence level. Teachers while conducting them should play a pivotal role in creating and stimulating interest among students to have a healthy and contextualized discussion from different angles.

The newspaper is a very useful tool and a good number of activities can be given using different items of the newspaper. Activities given for reading English newspaper will develop among the students the habit of reading English texts and help them improve their vocabulary and ultimately love for the language. Teaching and learning process will be innovative if the activities become an integral part of it. The tasks conducted with advertisements make the students learn the language implicitly. The awareness brought about through them about important concepts providing a scope of expansion and production of language. They can do activities on the language of the advertisements downloaded by them of their choice. English visual advertisements are glamourized with style and good pronunciation. Activities like identifying signature lines, headlines, captions, slogans, etc. are quite expressive for them to learn English instantly. They will be asked to enact a performance similar to the theme or concept of the chosen advertisement. With the teacher's assistance, each team should narrate the concept of the advertisement and then enact or narrate the team's self-made advertisement to the classmates. Ellis (1985) justified that teachers should play an active role in helping learners to stretch their resources and to build 'new' utterances types.   Even the clippings from the regional movies, students can be given language activities. With their interest and involvement in the movies, students can provide voice over to each character in the specified scene downloaded by them. When the scene is screened, screen-voice should be muted so that the team members can dub the scene to the class.

The use of technology in English language teaching is a means of the development of 21st-century competencies rather than a primary driver of change. With the introduction of technology in English language classrooms, they are undergoing a rapid transformation into innovative learning environments that are connected, flexible, and collaborative. Apart from enhancing instruction, the implementation of technology in English language teaching and learning has the potential to change education. The impact of its increasing role changed the learning environment and also challenged the educators to change teaching and learning in their classrooms as they develop strategic objectives using this technology that works best for varying scenarios.

English language teaching is constantly developing along with the advances in technology. The focus shifts from a teacher-centered approach to a learner-centered and learning-centered. Rapid changes have taken place in recent years in this direction when the internet becomes an invaluable source of information. Now the teacher is no more a knowledge transmitter but plays the role of a consultant, guide, coach, and/or facilitator. To suit the participants' needs involving them in deciding what to do in the classroom, English language teacher deals with the 'negotiated syllabus' today.

The use of internet has made English language classes digital platforms. Innumerable digital platforms are available today for different purposes and they are growing all the time. The Internet provides an overwhelming world of digital resources which will strengthen the teacher's resources and enable them for digital innovations such as creating activities, lessons, and courses from a range of digital tools. Digital Video, a multimedia manual by NikPeachey can help teachers navigate the complicated digital sources. As the Internet has become a continuous online professional development tool, English language teachers can now have access to information about the way language is used in authentic texts and speech through corpora. A huge global staffroom has formed with the advent of the internet and the growth of social media which has allowed teachers of English from all over the world to form online communities that act like Twitter and ELT blogging, Those who can spend time and have good ideas and contacts can offer them using this global staffroom. Teachers or students can simply search the words on Google to find the difference between 'trouble' and 'problem' and ' sleepwalked' and 'slept walk'

To practice British English, smartphones provide a huge variety of apps like WIBBU, podcasts etc. Teachers will hone their knowledge and skills by listening to podcasts like The TEFL Commute or by joining 50,000 teachers from more than 200 countries and watching webinars or video talks by TEFL teachers on EFL Talks. Using digital tools like WhatsApp and Padlet, language teachers help build channels of communication beyond the classroom...Skype lessons and online classes have opened up a whole new market for teachers to converse with

students face-to-face. Skype and similar tools have enabled students to meet and interact with others in English and develop the ability to communicate online with people outside the classroom.

The possibilities of the benefits of the internet for language learners as well as teachers are endless by the sudden widespread availability of authentic resources. Teachers have to use them skilfully to complement teaching and learning, Guided by the teacher, the learner can choose the right online materials also much content is available on the internet which is crucial for efficient and effective learning. TED talks will develop a pedagogically sound approach to language learning. Language Learning with Digital Videos shows (Cambridge University Press) how teachers can use online documentaries and YouTube videos to create effective lessons. The use of IWB in classrooms controls the classroom computer from the whiteboard, plays listening activities on the sound system, uses the screen as a slide for presentations, accesses the internet, and so on. Language teachers can develop a new way of looking at the lesson content through this new 'unplugged' approach which is a great chance for them to break free from self-contained language points and give more time and focus on student-generated language process.

Students can even be involved in the design of their e-textbook, by allowing them to make decisions on page layout and the clarity of text. Critical thinking skill is the ability to think and reflect that will enable the teachers and learners to take any innovation out there and make it work in their context. Though technological innovations are a vital part of education and especially English language teaching and learning, the innovations that come with useful teaching practices will stand the test of time as against those that wear out in the course of time.

There are many reliable mobile apps or mobile-friendly versions of these apps today available online which facilitate English Language Teaching and learning. One of them is Wordable, a game which turns vocabulary-learning into a fun. Teachers can guide their learners introducing Tri Pro English Website and Mobile Apps to practice their listening through free, high-quality recordings divided into levels and coupled with comprehension questions.

Embodied learning is a novel method to involve the learners emotionally, intellectually, physically and socially engaged in the learning process. There are several such game and courses available on an even more immersive scale. English language teachers and Learners will plunge into these games and courses to hone their language skills by negotiating, collaborating and building friendships across the globe. Courses such as Doodle Town (Macmillan Education) - visual, audio and hands-on activities to stimulate and inspire young learners to become creative and inquisitive, Orbit (Richmond)- a course to develop socio-emotional and cognitive skills among the young learners', Fast Track 5 (EF Education First Ltd) and Wider World, (Pearson with the BBC) courses with authentic video and audio content to bring the real world to teenage

learners will provide good practice for soft skills and communication skills needed to become part in the global communities of the 21st century. Perspectives (National Geographic) uses real-life stories and TED talks to motivate adult learners to think critically and creatively.

Some programmes and apps are content-creation tools allowing teachers and learners to produce their own content and share what they have created with others. Both teachers and students can create online games and play games that are shared by users from around the world using popular online sites like Quizizz andSocrative.Using websites like Canva teachers and learners can express their creativity through posters, social media memes, and banners. There are also mind mapping sites, comic-strip creation sites and movie-editing/movie-making sites. Learning Management Systems (LMSs) like Edmodo are increasingly popular providing learners an online way to find handouts, hold classroom discussions and submit homework. To communicate with parents and other stakeholders for getting a better overview of the curriculum, now there are some online sites.

The platform has built-in progress tracking tools, as well as numerous teacher's aides—like a curriculum builder and integration of homework assignments and student communication. It's both entertaining and innovative as part of tried-and-true English immersion.

For storing class materials, communicating with students and families and posting alerts, grades and assignments, Edmodo is a multifaceted application that creates a sort of "digital classroom". It is also an interactive space for students but with a closed, secure network just for teachers and students. Besides, it provides a place for students to participate in a natural part of the online chatting and posting they already do every day in polls, share events and have discussions together online. Edmodo can make English a natural part of the online chatting and posting which they do every day.

Students will have an actual audience in blogging and they can reflect on their own learning and get ideas from others. Similarly, they have a chance to read others' blogs. From blog comments or messages, students will learn how to give and receive constructive feedback. It is a pretty motivating form of self-expression, even for the students who aren't passionate about writing. Edublogs is a student community platform that's a part of the popular blogging site WordPress.For publishing calendars and assignment either individually or as part of forums, there is a typical group class free blogging site with easy access. Edublogs, a classroom writing community with its variety of features, including space for writing assignments, student portfolios and more.

Another excellent tool is Skype popular video chat program to give students real English conversation practice with native speakers. Through Skype conversations and exchange programs, students can re-listen to material and use it to notice and correct their mistakes. One

from the ESL world or even English-speaking friends and family can donate an hour or two for the class. Video games are a kind of alternative literature and a big help in getting the language. Apart from that competitive urge, the motivation to beat the game helps the students stay focused and gives them the drive to practice. They have usually a narrative structure with an introduction, rising action, climax, descending action and conclusion. A role-playing video game may be more motivating to some students who like more interaction.

Education is multi-dimensional. There's nothing wrong with teaching in quite traditional ways if it is balanced with other varied methods. It is pretty obvious that the integration of online technologies into the learning environment is one of the most emerging trends in education. Associate Professor Barbosa says, 'digital innovation is pushing the boundaries of the 19th-century paradigm, and teachers and teacher educators 'can't be doing things the same way anymore'. Since many of the students are now learning English to oil the wheels of communication in the worlds of business, trade, education, and tourism, teacher prefers blended learning to enable their students to become better communicators and help them communicate effectively in international settings. English language teachers that are why to pepper their everyday teaching with practical online activities which have the potential of incessant interaction between teachers and learners and exposure for language.

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