

BRINGING INNOVATION INTO ENGLISH CLASSROOMS: EXPLORING THE DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

This study explores the diffusion of innovation in the context of English Language Teaching (ELT). Using Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory as a theoretical framework, the research examines the factors that facilitate or hinder the implementation of innovative practices in English language teaching. Through an extensive literature review, English language teachers in different educational settings are highlighted to understand their perceptions, attitudes and experiences of integrating innovative teaching methods, technologies and materials. The findings show that the rate of adoption of innovations in ELT is influenced by a number of factors, including the perceived characteristics of the innovation, communication channels, time and the social system. Innovative teachers who act as early adopters play a crucial role in the diffusion process by modelling good practice and providing peer support. However, organisational culture, resource constraints and teachers' beliefs also emerge as significant barriers to the widespread diffusion of innovations. The study provides insights into strategies for promoting the successful implementation of innovations in English language teaching. It highlights the importance of creating a supportive environment that encourages risk-taking, provides continuous professional development, and fosters a culture of collaboration and shared learning among English language teachers. The findings have implications for educational policy makers, teacher educators and school administrators in their efforts to improve the quality of English language teaching through innovative approaches.

Keywords: *English Language Teaching, Innovation*

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving landscape of education, the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) stands at a critical juncture, facing both unprecedented challenges and exciting opportunities. As globalization continues to reshape our world, the demand for effective English language instruction has never been greater. The ability to communicate proficiently in English has become a crucial skill for academic success, professional advancement, and cross-cultural understanding in our increasingly interconnected global society. This heightened importance of English

proficiency has placed significant pressure on educational institutions and language teachers to adopt innovative approaches that can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of language instruction.

The concept of innovation in ELT encompasses a wide array of elements, including novel pedagogical approaches, cutting-edge technological tools, and creative methodologies that aim to transform the traditional language learning experience. These innovations range from the integration of artificial intelligence and adaptive learning technologies to the implementation of gamification strategies and the use of authentic, multimodal content. The potential of these innovative practices to revolutionize English language instruction is immense, offering possibilities for personalized learning experiences, increased student engagement, and improved learning outcomes.

However, the mere existence of innovative tools and methodologies does not guarantee their successful implementation in English classrooms. The process by which new ideas and practices spread within educational systems is complex and multifaceted, influenced by a myriad of factors at individual, institutional, and societal levels. This process, known as the diffusion of innovation, plays a crucial role in determining whether and how new teaching approaches and technologies are adopted and integrated into ELT practices.

Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation theory provides a valuable framework for understanding this process, outlining the stages through which an innovation passes from its introduction to its widespread adoption or rejection. There are five main factors that influence adoption of an innovation, and each of these factors is at play to a different extent in the five adopter categories. They are Relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, triability and observability (Rogers, 1983) these terms are further explained as follows

Relative advantage refers to the perceived benefits that an innovation offers compared to existing practices. The main aim of innovation is to create something better in teaching and learning conditions. That is why, in adapting innovations, there has to be a perception that the previous idea is not better compared to the new one.

Compatibility plays a crucial role in the adoption of innovations in English Language Teaching (ELT). It significantly influences how readily new teaching methods, technologies, or approaches are accepted and integrated into existing educational frameworks. To provide a comprehensive explanation of how compatibility affects the adoption of innovations in ELT, we need to consider its alignment with existing practices, curriculum, and student needs.

Complexity refers to the degree to which an innovation is perceived as difficult to understand and use. An idea must not be too complex to be implemented, otherwise it cannot be adopted. The easier it is to be understood the faster innovation will be adopted.

Triability refers to the extent to which an innovation can be experimented with on a limited basis before a full-scale implementation. In ELT, triability allows educators to test new methods, tools, or curricula in a controlled environment to assess their effectiveness and suitability for broader adoption.

Observability refers to the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible and apparent to others. In ELT, this translates to how easily the benefits and outcomes of new teaching methods or technologies can be seen and understood by educators, students, and other stakeholders.

The integration of innovative practices in ELT is not without its challenges. Teachers often face barriers such as limited resources, inadequate training, and institutional resistance to change. Moreover, the rapid pace of technological advancement can be overwhelming, making it difficult for educators to stay abreast of the latest tools and methodologies. These challenges underscore the need for a comprehensive understanding of the innovation diffusion process in ELT, including the identification of best practices and strategies for overcoming obstacles to adoption.

This study aims to explore the diffusion of innovation in English Language Teaching, examining how new teaching methodologies, digital tools, and pedagogical approaches are integrated into ELT contexts. By investigating the factors that influence the adoption and implementation of innovative practices, we seek to provide valuable insights that can inform policy decisions, guide professional development initiatives, and ultimately enhance the quality of English language instruction.

Our research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining extensive literature review with classroom observations and informal interview to gather data from English teachers across various educational settings. This comprehensive methodology allows us to capture both broad trends and nuanced perspectives on the innovation adoption process in ELT. The significance of this study lies in its potential to bridge the gap between theoretical understandings of innovation diffusion and practical applications in ELT contexts. By identifying the key factors that facilitate successful innovation adoption, we can provide educators and administrators with actionable insights for creating supportive environments that encourage risk-taking, foster collaboration, and promote continuous professional development. These elements are crucial for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of English language teaching through innovative approaches.

In the following sections, we will delve into the theoretical framework underpinning our study, outline our research methodology, present our findings on the factors influencing innovation adoption in ELT, and discuss the implications of our research for practice and policy. Through this comprehensive exploration of innovation diffusion in ELT, we aim to contribute to the ongoing evolution of English language teaching methodologies and practices, ultimately enhancing the learning experiences and outcomes of English language learners worldwide.

Result and Discussion

This section would be divided into three major sub-sections: *Comprehensive Overview of Innovative Practices in ELT*, *Barriers to Innovation Adoption in ELT* and *Strategies for Successful Innovation Diffusion in English Language Teaching*

1. Comprehensive Overview of Innovations in English Language Teaching in Indonesia

English Language Teaching (ELT) in Indonesia has undergone significant transformations in recent years, driven by technological advancements, pedagogical innovations, and the need to align with global educational standards. This overview examines the current state of ELT innovations in Indonesia, highlighting key developments, challenges, and their implications for language education.

English has been a mandatory subject in Indonesian schools since 1946, shortly after the country's independence. The approach to teaching English has evolved significantly over the years, influenced by global educational trends and local

educational policies (A Prayogo, 2022). Currently, English is a mandatory subject in Indonesian schools, as stipulated by Indonesian Government Regulation No. 19 Year 2005.

The national curriculum guides the planning, implementation, and assessment processes of English language teaching. Evaluative research using the CIPP model (context, input, process, and product) indicates that English teaching in both public and private schools is generally well-implemented (Mubarok, 2022). However, the field continues to evolve, with a strong emphasis on enhancing the professional and pedagogic competencies of English teachers to meet the demands of the 21st century

Based on extensive literature reviews, there are several keys Areas of Innovation

1. Technological Innovations

The integration of technology in ELT has emerged a dominant trend, particularly in the following areas:

a) Digital Technology and Online Learning:

A study involving Indonesian university students highlighted the positive correlation between online activities, skills, and perceived usefulness with improved experiences in learning English online. The ability to use various digital devices and applications was particularly noted for its strong correlation with enhanced benefits in online English learning. (Hidayat, 2022). Interactive learning platforms have transformed classroom dynamics by introducing gamification elements. These platforms have transformed classroom dynamics by introducing gamification elements: Kahoot, Quizlet, and Mentimeter for interactive quizzes and games. These tools increase student engagement and motivation, aligning with the preferences of digital-native learners

b) Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL):

Mobile learning applications have played a significant role in improving English language proficiency. The portability and accessibility of mobile devices allow for ubiquitous language learning, which has been found to be more effective than traditional computer-assisted language learning in terms of cognitive and affective outcomes. . (Hidayat, 2022)

c) Learning Management Systems (LMS) and Social Media:

Indonesian English teachers have effectively used social media and Learning Management Systems to enhance language learning. These platforms provide opportunities for students to practice writing and engage in collaborative learning activities, which are essential for language acquisition. . (Hidayat, 2022) Platforms like Google Classroom, Canvas, and Moodle facilitate course content organization and delivery, automating administrative tasks and allowing teachers to focus more on instruction.

2. Pedagogical Innovations

Several pedagogical innovations have been implemented to enhance the effectiveness of ELT in Indonesia:

a) Personalized and Culturally Inclusive Teaching

This approach involves tailoring instruction to meet individual student needs, which can enhance engagement and learning outcomes. It is being explored as a method to cater to diverse student needs and learning paces. Culturally Inclusive Teaching connects subject matter to diverse cultural backgrounds, promoting inclusivity and engagement. Personalized Learning customizes the learning experience to fit individual needs and pace, often using technology to support adaptive learning. Artificial Intelligence has made significant inroads into ELT, offering personalized learning experiences and automated feedback. Specific examples include: Grammarly and PaperRater for real-time writing feedback, ELSA Speak for pronunciation and fluency improvement.

b) Communicative and Task-Based Approaches

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) continue to be influential innovative practices in ELT. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach focuses on enabling students to communicate effectively in real-life situations, emphasizing fluency over accuracy and using interactive classroom activities. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT): TBLT is gaining traction in Indonesia as it focuses on using meaningful tasks to promote language use in real-life contexts. This method helps students develop practical language skills by engaging them in activities that require communication and problem-solving

c) Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

CLIL, which integrates language learning with subject matter learning, is gaining popularity in ELT. This method provides opportunities for cross-curricular learning and engages students by connecting language learning with other subjects

d) Project-Based Learning

This method encourages learners to engage in meaningful tasks and projects, using language as a tool to solve real-world problems. PBL involves students working on real-world projects over extended periods, helping them develop problem-solving skills and practical knowledge

e) Collaborative Action Research:

Teachers in Indonesia are increasingly using collaborative action research to improve their teaching practices. This involves teachers working together to identify challenges, implement solutions, and reflect on the outcomes, thereby fostering a culture of continuous improvement. (Defianty, 2024)

f) Flipped Classroom and Self-Directed Learning

Blended learning models, combining face-to-face instruction with online components, are becoming increasingly prevalent in ELT. This approach offers flexibility and enhances learning opportunities beyond the traditional classroom setting. The flipped classroom model, where students review lecture materials at home and engage in hands-on activities in the classroom, is also gaining traction. The adoption of pedagogical models like the flipped classroom and self-directed learning has been facilitated by digital technologies. These models promote learner autonomy and allow students to engage with learning materials at their own pace, leading to improved language proficiency and confidence. (Hidayat, 2022)

3. Curriculum and Policy Innovations

The Indonesian government has implemented several curriculum and policy innovations to improve ELT:

a) Merdeka Curriculum:

A study conducted in Indonesian public Islamic secondary schools highlights the integration of the Merdeka Curriculum, which aligns with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This curriculum emphasizes student empowerment through learner-centered methods and the use of technology. These

schools have integrated the Merdeka Curriculum, emphasizing student empowerment through learner-centered methods and the use of technology. Despite challenges such as limited resources and exposure, teachers advocate for supportive environments to enhance English proficiency while preserving cultural identity (Balinas, 2024)

b) Teacher Professional Education (TPE) Program:

The Indonesian government has implemented programs to enhance teachers' proficiency in using technology for language teaching. The TPE program aims to improve teachers' English proficiency and internet technology skills, providing a hybrid learning platform for professional development. In Rural Schools in East Nusa Tenggara innovative teaching methodologies have been introduced to improve students' vocabulary acquisition in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. This innovation aims to create a better classroom atmosphere and enhance student performance (Djahimo, 2015)

3. Use of Social Media and LMS:

Some schools have successfully implemented innovative ELT practices using technology. For instance, the use of social media platforms to enhance students' writing skills and the adoption of LMS applications to promote learner autonomy are notable examples.

2. Addressing Challenges and Barriers in the diffusion of innovation

Despite the positive impacts, several challenges hinder the widespread adoption of these innovations:

1. Inadequate Resources and Infrastructure:

The successful diffusion of technology-enhanced practices in ELT is heavily dependent on the availability of robust technological infrastructure. In many educational settings, particularly in underfunded or rural areas, access to necessary technology—such as computers, high-speed internet, and interactive learning tools—may be limited. This lack of infrastructure can create significant disparities in the ability of educators to adopt innovative practices. Many schools in Indonesia lack the necessary resources and infrastructure to support innovative ELT practices. This includes insufficient access to technology, inadequate teaching materials, and poor classroom facilities (Bachtiar, 2024)

2. Teacher Reluctance and Professional Development:

Effective implementation of innovative practices often hinges on the availability of adequate training and professional development opportunities. Improving teacher quality and competency can be done through various strategies such as training and developing teacher professionalism. Professional teachers must have special abilities and expertise in the field of teaching so that they are able to carry out their duties well (Djafri, 2024). However, one of the most significant barriers to the diffusion of innovation in ELT is resistance to change among educators. Many teachers may feel comfortable with traditional teaching methods and may be hesitant to adopt new practices that require them to alter their established routines. This resistance can stem from a variety of factors, including fear of the unknown, concerns about the effectiveness of new methods, and a lack of confidence in their ability to implement these changes successfully. There is a notable reluctance among teachers to adopt new teaching methods, often due to a lack of confidence or familiarity with innovative practices.

This finding underscores the need for targeted professional development programs that not only introduce new methods but also address teachers' concerns and build positive attitudes toward innovation. Fostering a growth mindset among educators can facilitate more effective integration of innovative practices. This can be achieved through mentorship, peer collaboration, and showcasing successful case studies that highlight the benefits of innovation (Marzuki, 2024)

3. Limited Technological Skills:

The adoption of innovative pedagogical practices, such as personalized learning and technology-enhanced teaching, has been shown to promote student engagement and improve learning outcomes. However, successful adoption requires teachers to adapt their teaching methods to incorporate new technologies effectively.

Integration with existing practices is crucial for successful innovation adoption. Teachers often struggle to integrate new ideas with established pedagogical beliefs and practices. Effective integration allows teachers to blend new methods with their existing teaching styles, leading to more sustainable and meaningful adoption of innovations.

The challenges associated with integrating new practices into existing curricula and teaching methods can pose significant barriers to innovation diffusion. Educators may struggle to balance traditional approaches with new methodologies, leading to tensions and reluctance to change. Teachers often face challenges related to limited technical skills, which hinders the effective use of digital tools and platforms in ELT.

4. Large Class Sizes and Time Constraints:

Large class sizes present a considerable challenge for teachers attempting to adopt innovative teaching practices. When classes are overcrowded, individual attention to students becomes increasingly difficult, making it challenging for educators to implement student-centered approaches that require active participation and engagement. Innovations such as collaborative learning, differentiated instruction, or personalized feedback often rely on smaller group dynamics that facilitate interaction and discussion. In a large classroom, the logistical difficulties of managing group activities and providing individualized support can lead to frustration for both teachers and students, ultimately stifling the potential impact of the innovation.

In addition to the challenges posed by large class sizes, time constraints further complicate the diffusion of innovations in ELT. Educators often operate under tight schedules, with limited time allocated for lesson planning, professional development, and the implementation of new practices. When teachers are pressed for time, they may be less inclined to experiment with innovative methods that require additional preparation or adjustment to their teaching strategies. The urgency to cover a prescribed curriculum can lead to a focus on traditional instructional methods that are perceived as more efficient, thereby inhibiting the exploration of new ideas that could enhance student learning.

The combination of large class sizes and time constraints creates an environment that is often resistant to innovation. Teachers may find themselves caught in a cycle where the demands of large groups and limited time reinforce traditional teaching methods, making it difficult to break free and explore new approaches. To effectively diffuse innovations in ELT, educational institutions must recognize these barriers and work to address them. This may involve strategies such as reducing class sizes, providing dedicated time for professional development, and fostering a culture of collaboration among educators (Malik,2024)

5. Cultural and Linguistic Barriers:

Cultural barriers encompass the differences in values, beliefs, and practices that exist among various cultural groups. In ELT, such barriers can manifest as resistance to change among educators and learners. For instance, educators may be hesitant to adopt new teaching methods that deviate from traditional approaches, particularly if those methods conflict with established cultural norms. A student-centered teaching approach, which emphasizes collaboration and active participation, may be viewed with skepticism in cultures that prioritize teacher authority and rote memorization. This resistance can stifle the exploration of innovative practices that could enhance language learning.

Additionally, cultural contexts shape how innovations are perceived and interpreted. An innovation that is beneficial in one cultural setting may be misunderstood or deemed irrelevant in another. This misinterpretation can lead to a lack of engagement with the innovation, preventing educators from fully realizing its potential benefits. Furthermore, psychological factors, such as fear of failure or lack of confidence, can contribute to the difficulty of adopting new practices. Educators may feel apprehensive about implementing methods they are not familiar with, especially when these approaches challenge established educational norms.

Linguistic barriers also play a significant role in the diffusion of innovations in ELT. The diverse linguistic landscape of Indonesia, with over 700 local languages, presents a unique challenge in standardizing English language instruction. This diversity can lead to inconsistencies in language proficiency and teaching quality across different regions. Language proficiency varies among educators and students, affecting their ability to engage with new ideas. If educators are not proficient in the language of the innovation—such as a new teaching resource presented in English—they may struggle to implement it effectively. Additionally, innovations often come with specific terminology that may not be easily translatable or understood across different languages. This can create confusion and hinder the adoption of new practices, as educators may be unable to fully grasp the concepts being introduced.

3. Strategies for Successful Innovation Diffusion in English Language Teaching

The innovations in English Language Teaching (ELT) in Indonesia present several important implications for the future of language education in the country. One of

the primary requirements is the need for continuous professional development for teachers to ensure they are proficient in utilizing technology for language teaching and can effectively implement innovative pedagogical approaches. Additionally, there is a pressing need for significant investment in educational infrastructure to equip schools across Indonesia with the necessary resources and facilities that support innovative teaching practices. By leveraging these innovations effectively and addressing the existing barriers, Indonesia can significantly enhance the quality of English language education, better preparing its students for the global stage (Standford, 2015).

Supportive policies also play a vital role in driving these innovations forward; developing policies that encourage the integration of new teaching methods and provide incentives for schools and teachers to adopt such practices is crucial for the advancement of ELT. As technology becomes increasingly integral to ELT, there is a need to focus on developing digital literacy skills among both teachers and students, ensuring that all participants in the educational process can effectively engage with modern tools and resources. While it is important to adopt global best practices, adaptation to local contexts is essential, as innovations must be tailored to fit the unique cultural and linguistic environment of Indonesia. Finally, ongoing research and evaluation of the impact of these innovations on learning outcomes are necessary to continuously refine and improve ELT practices, ensuring that they remain effective and relevant in meeting the needs of students and educators alike. By prioritizing these areas, Indonesia can foster a robust and responsive language education system that prepares learners for the challenges of the future.

Innovation diffusion in English Language Teaching (ELT) is a complex process that involves the adoption and integration of new teaching methods, tools, and technologies. The successful implementation of these innovations is crucial for enhancing teaching effectiveness and improving student outcomes. One of the fundamental strategies for successful innovation diffusion is engaging early adopters within educational institutions. These individuals, who are typically more open to new ideas, can serve as champions for innovation and help influence their peers.

By identifying and supporting these early adopters, institutions can create a supportive environment for change and accelerate the adoption process. These

champions can demonstrate the benefits of new practices, share their experiences, and provide practical insights to their colleagues, thereby reducing resistance and encouraging wider acceptance of innovations.

Effective communication strategies are essential for promoting the adoption of innovations in ELT. This involves clearly articulating the benefits of the innovation, addressing concerns, and providing continuous feedback to stakeholders. Strategic communication helps in building understanding and buy-in among educators, administrators, and other relevant parties. It is crucial to emphasize how the innovation aligns with existing educational goals and how it can address specific challenges faced in language teaching. By maintaining open channels of communication, institutions can ensure that all stakeholders are informed and engaged throughout the innovation diffusion process.

In conclusion, successful innovation diffusion in English Language Teaching requires a multifaceted approach that combines engaging early adopters, providing comprehensive professional development, creating a supportive environment, implementing effective communication strategies, leveraging opinion leaders, and addressing cultural and institutional barriers. By employing these strategies in a coordinated manner, educational institutions can enhance the adoption and integration of innovative practices, ultimately improving the quality of English language teaching and learning outcomes. The key lies in recognizing that innovation diffusion is not a one-size-fits-all process, but rather a dynamic journey that requires ongoing support, adaptation, and commitment from all stakeholders involved in the educational ecosystem.

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