



# Teaching English and Innovations at Schools

Nigina Misirova

Doctoral student, Education Discipline, Doctoral School of Social Sciences, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland.

Received: 15 Sep 2022; Received in revised form: 02 Oct 2022; Accepted: 07 Oct 2022; Available online: 11 Oct 2022  
©2022 The Author(s). Published by Infogain Publication. This is an open access article under the CC BY license  
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

**Abstract**— *The present study is an attempt to look for the place and role of using innovations in English language teaching (ELT) in schools. Teaching English to young learners as a second language at schools is one of the most significant steps in contemporary education. The researcher has provided some examples about different innovations throughout this article by referring to their different concepts of innovations: modern approaches, CLT method, games, interactive activities and new technologies in English language teaching. In addition, the researcher tries to explain the innovation term, the issue of innovations in education and some interactive activities which give the motivation and engagement for young learners to learn new language during language classroom. Young learners are children and they always prefer learning a foreign language in new ways and interesting ways. The use of these varieties of innovations in teaching English as a second / foreign language at schools brings the most effective results nowadays.*

**Keywords**— *innovation, innovations in English language teaching, teachers, young learners.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays teaching a second language at primary schools is one of the most pivotal and essential topics around the world. The role of the English language is also great because every learner intends to learn a second language from his/her childhood. Furthermore, the most essential component for educating young learners is the use of a new variety of methods, which is the role of methodology currently. “The teacher should be like the conductor of an orchestra, conduct but not play” (John: 1981). Good teaching is impossible without beneficial methods and that is why a considerable measure of distinctive approaches has been invented. Grammatical-translating method and strategy were initiated in the 50-60s of the most recent century, and then spoken technique came into existence in the 1970s-1980s. There are different sorts of methods in learning the English language. Teachers generally attempt to utilize distinctive methods in order to find the most productive and powerful one. In addition, Stakanova & Tolstikhina (2014) stated that interest in teaching English to young learners has been growing steadily in recent years. English is now offered in primary and even pre-school education. It should be remembered that every child has his own internal motivation to learn a foreign

language, and the task of the teacher is to develop this motivation. The development of motivation and interest is related to the use of innovations and innovative teaching methods, especially when teaching English to young learners. Therefore, today the role and place of using innovations in teaching English to young children in primary schools is very important and unique. As every person eager wants to learn something in a new way, there is no need to use old methods, approaches, strategies. As for innovation term, it has already become essential part of education in order to involve young learners to be active during the lessons. It is necessary for the teacher to effectively use these innovations during the lessons, especially when teaching English in contemporary primary schools.

## II. THE INNOVATION TERM AND ISSUE OF INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATION

As for the issue of innovations in language teaching process, it should be stated that ELT is significantly evolving under the influence of technology advances. Mobile devices, Edmodo, Piktochart, Kahoot, Multimedia technology, Minecraft, Linoit have gained popularity as

tools of teaching language and contributed to the current changes in the teaching process. To make it clear what innovation means for English language teaching, it is first necessary to lay the theoretical foundations of the concept of innovation. The concept of innovation as follows creating or introducing a new idea, method, or tool (Adair, 2007). According to Curtis & William (2006), innovation can be as creative as the introduction of a new toy, or it can be as advanced as the introduction of instantaneous imaging technology into photography. Innovation refers to use of electronic technologies to provide learning opportunities for learners, which is contrary to the traditional classroom model (Robinson & Schraw, 2008). Many academics find that innovation is defined as a change, or the other way round change may be described as the adoption of an innovation (Credaro, 2006, Rogers, 2003). Moreover, innovativeness has been intensively researched as a determinant of the adoption of innovations (Aldahdoh, 2020). Innovation can emerge as a new pedagogical theory, methodological approach, teaching technique, teaching tool, learning process, or institutional structure that, when implemented, leads to significant changes in teaching and learning, which and leads to better students learning in education (Serdyukov, 2017). Innovation may be a new of teaching course, or introduction of a new subject in the curriculum. Minoo Alemi & Parisa Daftarifard (2010) pointed that these following innovations: mind mirror project, critical thinking, the facilitative role of technology, games, use of multimedia projects, e-portfolio, e-pet scoring are the most productive and effective ways in teaching English language currently. Moreover, teachers face a great challenge-modern information and communication technologies (ICT). A new era sets the duties of a modern teacher. Teaching becomes more interesting and productive in terms of improvements, which is which traditional English teaching has changed with the introduction of technology (Kutyla, 2019). In addition, every language class usually uses some kind of technology. Clearly, information and communication technology is an important tool in the work of teachers, no matter what institution they are in (Marchlik, Wichrowska, Zubala, 2021).

### III. INNOVATIONS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND TEACHERS

As for innovations in ELT, they include these concepts: modern approaches, CLT method, games, interactive activities and new technologies as well. Each of these concepts has focus and its priorities. CLIL (content language integrated learning) acronym is one of modern

approaches toward teaching English at schools. The term CLIL was coined by David Marsh in 1994. It is used by dual approaches; one is in learning language, second of learning subjects in English (Darn, 2020). It is one of the most innovative teaching approaches in contemporary schools. Teachers can use the different interactive activities, games through this method in the language classroom nowadays. Besides, Tursunova (2019) pointed out that project method is also the innovation in ELT to activate students in the process.

Communicative language teaching is generally well-known as a way to foreign language teaching (Richards & Rogers 2001). Thus, CLT reflects a particular model or research change or theory (Celce-Murcia 2001). It is based on the theory that the key function of language use is communication. Its main goal is to develop students' communicative competence (Hymes 1971) or, simply put, communicative ability. In other words, its purpose is to use real-life situations that require communication. In addition, communicative language teaching is an innovation in English language teaching. CLT appeared as a new teaching method in Britain in the 1970s. When it was first introduced in China in the 1990s, it met with considerable resistance (Liao, 2000). Overall, the important component in young learners' communicative approach is to confirm that there is a reason for doing a task rather than just practicing a language.

As Klimova (2015) noted, the game is a natural means for young learners to understand the world around them. Therefore, it should be part of their learning, including learning foreign languages. Using games is one of the innovative concepts in teaching English to young learners. Children like to play games by nature. Language games give children chances to do something with the language in an enjoyable and stimulating way. By playing games, children informally prepare to participate in games, and games also unconsciously incorporate language points that are meant to be practiced. Moreover, Martinson Barbara (2008) highlights the fact that any game that is played in the classroom should have three attributes: 1. It must be fun; 2. It must be age appropriate; 3. It must have some educational merit. She demonstrates that games can be used to review the spelling of words and vocabulary. They can be used to review concepts that prepare pupils for tests. In addition, Brown (2007) clarified that young learners love to have fun and their imagination is ready for games and activities, for they love imagining things, fantasizing, and playing with language sounds, imitating, and making funny noises. For instances, Game of Sudoku is a kind of number puzzle, as an ideal authentic context for practicing language functions (Ting, 2009). Hangman

is also a popular vocabulary game among language teachers of young learners at schools (Lorenzutti, 2016).

Interactive activities are used as the teacher's most important tools in the language classroom to motivate and engage young learners in language learning. An interactive activity is an activity that requires the participation of pupils. This participation can be done through class and small group discussions, as well as through the study of interactive activity materials provided in the digital classroom. The main challenge for any teacher is how to improve and support pupil learning (Du Plessis Anna E., 2019).

As defined by Moeller et al., (1998) "Today, education is immersed in a technological revolution". This rapid rising and development of information technology has offered a better form to explore the innovative teaching model. As a result technology plays the ultimate roles which related to both assist and improve English language learning. Using new technologies in language teaching is one of the different types of innovations in contemporary primary schools. These below top platforms and issues are beneficial for teachers of the English language as they focus on developing pupils' all four learning skills. Moreover, the use of evolving technologies will help teachers to support oral speech, develop young learners' literacy and digital game-based learning (Mantoro, Fitriani, Wendi et al., 2017). In addition, technology and English language teaching are very closely related (Singhal, 1997). There are a lot of various types of new technology in the education nowadays. Teachers can use them as useful tools during the language classroom in order to motivate and engage their young pupils to learn a language at schools. For instances: Multimedia technology, Minecraft gamification, Kahoot and others. Using of multimedia technology in ELT is one of innovations in contemporary schools (Pun, 2013). Mobile applications or multimedia aids are teaching aids based on computer technologies using sight or sound to present information (Mayer, 1997). For example, movies, videos, motion pictures, slide projectors, language tapes, multimedia games, and more. Multimedia refers to computer-based systems that use different types of content, such as text, audio, graphics, animation, and interactivity. Therefore, the most important concepts on multimedia are 'computer-based' and 'interactive'. In addition, new approaches in the system of education also influenced the learning and teaching of foreign languages, as language is the major factor of a person's development. According to Cardenas-Moncada et al. (2020), Kahoot! can be used to improve vocabulary in English, not just in the adult group. Currently we can see that it is the best way to use Kahoot to engage young learners to learn English in the classroom.

Overall, Kahoot was admitted as an enjoyable, free, flexible, easy and fun game to learn English. As for Minecraft gamification, it is an innovation in ELT in contemporary primary schools. Using Minecraft game as an educational tool has many benefits for children. It is also a way to get young learners excited and motivated to learn a language (Westbrook, 2021). Nowadays teachers are using Minecraft as an educational tool found significant improvements in creativity, collaboration, problem-solving, and computational thinking skills in their pupils. Furthermore, Minecraft game helps primary school pupils to increase their oral speeches and memories to learn by heart easily new words in the foreign language. In addition, today's children are digital natives (Vachatimanount, 2021). They can learn a new language easily at home themselves through these digital applications platforms.

Teachers need to engage in professional speech and make a significant contribution to the development of educational policies and practices. Teaching is not an easy profession (Tonna & Michalek, 2018). Especially, teaching English to young learners in primary schools. Teachers need to try to use the innovative teaching methods in order to find the most productive and powerful one during their language classrooms. To implement innovative teaching methods in primary schools, you need, first of all, a teacher who is by nature an "innovator" who is not afraid of difficulties and is ready to improve pedagogical activities (Yuzuk O. P., Vysochan L. M & Grytsyk N. Y., 2019).

#### IV. YOUNG LEARNERS

As for young learners, their nature is very colorful; they best adapt new information through interesting and entertaining ways. To make them sit in one place, do exercises or understand a new topic without any movement or interactive activities is evidently useless. Young children tend to have a tendency to have lots of energy and a short attention span. Moreover, young learners are very much tied to their environment and are keen on being in physical and tangible movements than the moral and the theoretical activities. As Scott and Ytreberg (1990) point out, "their own understanding comes through hands and eyes and ears. The physical world is dominant at all times."

Young children learn a particular language. How a language can be defined? A language is normally described as a system of signs used by people to communicate with each other. Nevertheless, individuals can explain their thoughts and feelings to another person by language, so it is considered to be a means of communication. "A language is a system of

communication by written or spoken words which is used by the people of a particular country or area" (Dictionary of Contemporary English: 997). This quotation means that language is an integral part of everyday life. It is a complex structure, has the vocabulary, a sound system, a syntactic word-structure. Language offers people an opportunity to express their thoughts, ideas and simply communicate with other people (Clark, 2003). Later throughout life, our approach and attitude to learning evolve. People develop mentally and start improving their skills such as writing, reading, speaking and listening as well as they start developing the vocabulary range and grammatical awareness.

Slatterly and Willis (2001) split young learners into two types in their work which is devoted to some statements on several essential concerns connected to teaching English to young learners: Very young learners and young learners. As it was mentioned before, learners of different ages can do or be aware of various things. There exist several capabilities that learners are able to do at a specific level.

**Very young learners are the five to seven-year-olds:**

- acquire a second language through hearing and experiencing, in much the same way they acquire mother tongue
- learn things through playing; they are not consciously attempting to learn new words or phrases – for them it is accidental
- love playing with language sounds, imitating and making funny noises
- are not capable of organizing their learning
- not capable of reading or writing in the mother tongue, important to recycle language through talk and play
- their grammar will enhance gradually on its own when they are exposed to lots of English

**Young learners are the eight to ten-year-olds:**

- are learning to read and write in their mother tongue
- are developing as thinkers
- comprehend the difference between the real and the imaginary
- can plan and organize how best to carry out an activity
- can work with others and learn from others
- can be reliable and take responsibility for class activities and routines.

Ellis (2014) suggests a consensus for ELT professionals in defining the term young learner. According to her observation, there is still a misunderstanding about the definition of the term. She suggests adopting terms used in educational systems to which young learners belong (Ellis, 2014). Thus, the age group that includes children aged 6-

11 is called "young learners, kids, primary, juniors and tweens" (Ellis, 2014). In the conditions of the educational system of Uzbekistan, young students from 6, 7 to 11 years old are called "primary school pupils".

## V. EXAMPLES OF INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

There are many interactive activities in teaching foreign languages in education. They are made of colorful cards, papers, posters, natural fur toys, plastic toys, mini-projectors, computers, white-black boards and other classroom equipment. These interactive activities help children, young learners to engage, to motivate and concentrate their mental abilities to learn a new language easily. We know that most young learners (ages 7-12) are the kinesthetic and visual learners of the learning styles who attend at any foreign language or subject classroom. Finger puppet activity is one of the interactive activity concepts of innovations in teaching English as a second/foreign language at schools. This activity is very interesting and useful to develop pupils' oral speech. This activity can be used on a variety of topics. For examples, talk about emotions, family or any story due to finger activity. The teacher shows different faces drawn on people's face shape on his/her fingers and describes these people's feelings, or makes short funny stories to keep the young learners in the class active. Then the teacher asks each pupil to speak two or three sentences in English. This activity enables them to develop their overall communication skills. Teachers can also prepare other finger puppets to tell the story. For examples, any animals: (cat, dog), tree, house and other things. In short, this activity is one of the most productive and fun for young learners to teach English.

Below this example of interactive activities that have two usages: learning new vocabulary and telling stories based on the context in which they are used. For example, a teacher can use this activity to teach young students new words by first introducing them to the language classroom. Words such as *a boy, a dog, a tree, a lake, a forest, a wild bear, a house* are included according to their meaning.

As for the next example, it connects to tell a short story or a funny story in the language classroom for young learners. With these new words shown by teachers in the classroom, young learners can create their own funny stories as well.

For instance: *Once upon a time, there was a boy in the forest. His name was John and he was 8 years old. He had a dog. His dog's name was Woolf. He lived in a house in the forest with his dog. Sometimes he walked with his dog*

along a small beautiful lake in the forest. The small lake in the forest is surrounded by beautiful and many dark green trees and firs. One day when he was walking with his dog, he suddenly met a wild animal in the forest. At that

moment he was afraid of it, he ran away from wild animal with his dog Woolf. The wild animal was big brown bear. He ran home with his dog. The story is over. ....



Fig.1: Finger Puppet Activity.

According to the observations and researching, young learners prefer learning a new language through interacting, singing, imitating, hearing, and seeing materials based on visual aids and new technologies in education. As a whole, interactive language learning activities improve young learners' English-speaking ability (Siti Fatimah Omar et al, 2020).

## VI. CONCLUSION

Innovations and the use of various innovative teaching methods play the most important role in teaching English as a second language to young learners in contemporary primary schools. Therefore, it is necessary for the teacher to effectively use interesting games, interactive activities, modern approaches, and new technologies that give the best results in teaching English. Even young learners can learn a new foreign language in a very easy and interesting

way. In addition, definitely teacher's role plays the ultimate in using different concepts of innovations in ELT at schools. The role and place of innovations in teaching English as a second language in schools depends on the modern approaches, interactive activities, various interesting games, CLT method and new technologies used by the teacher.

To conclude, the best way of teaching English language at school is the way which gives results. If teacher can correctly use the methods for his/her teaching young learners are able to get the maximum a new language. Once they get it is more practical way for them to use acquired one. Teacher's aim is to develop pupil into English-speaking person. To be kind, helpful for children during the lesson is the main and the most important for teacher. Teaching should become and be seen as a well-rewarded and highly valued role that attracts some of the

best graduates into teaching careers (Madalinska-Michalek Joanna & Misirova Nigina, 2020).

## REFERENCES

- [1] Aldahdoh Tahani Z. (2020). "Technology and Social Media usage in Higher Education: The influence of individual Innovativeness". SAGE Journal. January-March 2020:1-20.
- [2] Adair, J. E. (2007). Leadership for innovation. London Kogan Page Publishing.
- [3] Alemi, Minoo, & Parisa Daftarifard. (2010), "Pedagogical Innovations in Language Teaching Methodologies." Journal of Language Teaching and Research 1(6).
- [4] Brown, H. D. (2007). Principles of Language Learning and Teaching. New York: Longman
- [5] Cardenas-Moncada et al. (2020). Game-based student response systems: The impact of Kahoot in a Chilean vocational higher education EFL classroom. CALL-EJ, 21 (1), 64-78. [http://caliej.org/journal/21-1/Cardenas-Veliz-Veliz\\_2020.pdf](http://caliej.org/journal/21-1/Cardenas-Veliz-Veliz_2020.pdf)
- [6] Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language. 3rd Edition. Singapore: Heinle and Heinle, 2001
- [7] Clark E.V., (2003). First language Acquisition, Cambridge University Press.
- [8] Credaro, A. (2006). "Innovation and change in education". Online at [http://www.geocities.com/koalakid\\_1999/university/change/htm](http://www.geocities.com/koalakid_1999/university/change/htm). On August, 28. 2007.
- [9] Curtis, R. C., & William, W. W. (2006). Innovation : The five disciplines for creating what customers want. New York: Crown Business.
- [10] Darn Steve (2020). Content & language Integrated Learning (CLIL) A European Overview. Teacher Development Unit, School of Foreign Languages, Izmir, University of Economics, Izmir, Turkey.
- [11] Du Plessis Anna E., (2019). Barriers to effective management of diversity in classroom contexts: The out-of-field teaching phenomenon. International Journal of Educational Research. 93, pp. 136 - 152. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2018.11.002>
- [12] Ellis Gail, (2014). 'Young learners': Clarifying our terms. Elt Journal, 68(1), 75-78.
- [13] Hymes, D. H. (1972). On Communicative Competence, Baltimore, USA: Penguin Education, Penguin Books Ltd. (Eds.) Sociolinguistics, p.269-293, 1972
- [14] Klimova B. F. (2015). Games in the Teaching of English. Science Direct Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences 191 (2015)1157-1160. Available online at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)
- [15] Kutyla, E. (2019). Information, communication, technology, the Teacher Journal 3 (167) 2019, Technology Tips, pages 40-42.
- [16] Liao, X. Q.(2000). How Communicative Language Teaching Became Acceptable in China. The Internet TESL Journal. Vol. VI, No. 10, October 2000
- [17] Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2nd ed. (997 pages), 1987/1997.
- [18] Lorenzutti Nico (2016), "Vocabulary Games: More than Just Wordplay", English Teaching Forum, 2016. [americanenglish.state.gov/english-teaching-forum](http://americanenglish.state.gov/english-teaching-forum)
- [19] Madalinska Michalek Joanna & Misirova Nigina, (2020). The development of school education in Uzbekistan: Education policy priorities, "Studia Pedagogiczne. Problemy społeczne, edukacyjne i artystyczne", t. 36/37, pp. 5-22.
- [20] Mantoro, D Fitriani, U Wendi, (2017), „The Use of Emerging Technologies by EFL Teachers in Primary Schools". Advanced Science Letters 23 (2), 764-767, 2017
- [21] Marchlik, Wichrowska, Zubala, (2021). The use of ICT by ESL teachers working with young learners during the early COVID-19 pandemic in Poland, Education and Information Technologies (2021) 26:7107–7131
- [22] Martinson Barbara E., and Sauman Chu. (2008). "Impact of Learning Style on Achievement When Using Course Content Delivered Via a Game-based Learning Object." In Handbook of Research on Effective Electronic Gaming in Education, edited by R. E. Ferdig, Pennsylvania: IGI Global, 2008.
- [23] Mayer, R. E., (1997). Multimedia Learning: Are We Asking The Right Questions? Educational Psychologist. 32(1): 1–19. [19]
- [24] Moeller, A. K., Corl, K. A., Ricaurte, R., and Abrate, J., (1998), Celebrating Diversity in the Language Classroom. Selected Papers from the 1998 Central States Conference, (National Textbook Company).
- [25] Pun Min. (2014). "The Use of Multimedia Technology in English Language Teaching: A Global Perspective." Crossing the Border: International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies 1(1).
- [26] Robinson, D. H., and Schraw, G. J. (2008). Recent Innovations in Educational Technology That Facilitate Student Learning. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Pub.
- [27] Rogers, E. (2003). Diffusion of innovations, 5th edition. New York: Free Press.
- [28] Richards, J.C. and Rogers T.S.,(2001). Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [29] Serdyukov Peter (2017). "Innovation in Education: What Works, What Doesn't, and What to Do about It?" Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching & Learning.
- [30] Singhal, M. (1997). The Internet and foreign language education: Benefits and challenges. The Internet TESL Journal, 3(6). Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Singhal-Internet.html>.
- [31] Siti Fatimah Omar & Haslinda S., Shahdan T., Mee, Wong M., Pek, Lim S., Yob, Fatin S., (2020), Interactive Language Learning Activities for Learners' Communicative Ability. International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education, v9 n4 p1010-1016 Dec 2020
- [32] Scott, Wendy, and Ytreberg, Lisbeth, (1990). Teaching English to children. London: Longman.
- [33] Slattery, M., and Willis, J.,(2001). English for Primary Teachers. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- [34] Stakanova E., & Tolstikhina E. (2014). Different Approaches to teaching English as a Foreign Language to Young Learners. *Science Direct Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 146 (2014) 456-460. Available online at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)
- [35] Ting Teresa (2009), Learning to Hypothesize with confidence through Sudoku game plays. Number 1. *English Teaching. Forum.* Y.L.2009.
- [36] Tonna, M. A., & Michalek, J. M. (2018). *Teacher Education Policy and Practice- International Perspectives & Inspiration.* Foundation for the Development of the Education System, Warsaw 2018. ISBN: 978-9949-29-023-9
- [37] Tursunova, F. T. (2019). Innovative Approaches in the Teaching. *Scientific Bulletin of Namangan State University.* 1, (2019).
- [38] Vachatimanont Pam (2021), "Sekolah Enuma, A digital application for young learners". *Innovations supporting student-centred learning.* Pp.72-78, Learning to build back better Future for Education.
- [39] Westbrook Carolyne (2021). "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em: encouraging students to use technology in the language classroom", *International Conference NATE UMBRELLA "Rethinking ELT in Russia: theory and practice"* Kolomna, October 29-31, 2021.
- [40] Yuzuk O. P., Vysochan L. M. & Grytskyk. N. Y., (2019), "Innovative teaching methods in higher education institutions of Poland and Ukraine", *Publication: ISSN 2082-7016; eISSN2450-5552.* 2019. nr11