Innovations in English Language Teaching in Secondary Education in the Present Era

Deepa Nirmal

Assistant Teacher of English, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Government Inter College, Gonda,U.P.

.

.

ABSTRACT

Evidence-informed arguments and a formal structure highlight the necessity of innovations in English language teaching in secondary education. These innovations address 21st-century needs by reformulating curricular elements, which have become crucial for modern education systems. A new vision for English language education expands beyond communicative competence, incorporating (i) a multiliteracies perspective to develop diverse forms of literacy for active citizenship in a globalized, digital society; (ii) principles of universal design for learning to ensure equitable resource access and personalized support; and (iii) technology integration through tools familiar to students. As a result, these innovations are deemed essential and deserving of implementation.

Keywords: English language, communicative, multiliteracies, education.

Introduction

The need for innovative approaches to English language teaching stems from economic globalization and rapid advances in technology. The Internet, mobile communication, and multimedia resources have transformed 21st-century society and learning environments. Consequently, formal education must adapt to equip young learners with skills necessary for a complex and unpredictable world. Reforming English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching is vital, as English proficiency is essential for engagement in global issues and in higher

How to site this article (APA): Deepa Nirmal, "Innovations in English Language Teaching in Secondary Education in the Present Era, *International Journal of Educational Analysis and Global Research*,16-26,

16

education where English is the primary medium. English serves as a second language across various communication, business, and digital sectors, disseminated through numerous online platforms. The Government of India's National Education Policy, 2020, emphasizes harmonizing education with the skills of learners, preparing them for the various challenges faced in daily life globally and locally, and enabling them to play a productive role in society (Mahmood, 2014). Innovations in teaching English as a second language at the secondary level in India assume wider significance, as the system is viewed as a foundation for language learning, which has implications throughout the learners' academic journey. Such innovations respond to changes in learning, knowledge, pedagogy, educational infrastructure, teachers' functionality, the societal role of education, learners' characteristics, and students' necessities (Assalihee et al., 2019). To address these issues, this paper identifies the innovations in teaching English as a second language in secondary level schools; discusses the changing dimensions in society, knowledge, and pedagogy that underline the need for innovations; and presents implications for and challenges in teaching English as a second language at that level.

2. Theoretical Foundations and Pedagogical Shifts

Innovations in English Language Teaching in secondary education emphasize evidence-informed arguments, a structured approach, and clear communication on how contemporary practices meet the 21st-century needs. However, many secondary English language learners express dissatisfaction and a lack of engagement in their studies. Contextual factors, including faculty observations and relevant literature, highlight that current pedagogical methods are failing to adapt to societal, technological, and economic shifts. This has led to research questions focused on identifying current innovations in English instruction and assessing their alignment with contemporary educational goals. The goal is to describe innovations in Secondary English Teaching, exploring areas such as Communicative Competence, Task-Based Learning, Multiliteracies, Digital Literacies, Universal Design for Learning, and Inclusive Practices. These innovations must be grounded in effective theoretical, curricular, and methodological frameworks to enhance student outcomes. By examining multilayered methodologies that connect society, technology, and education, the study seeks sustainable improvements in pedagogical approaches that foster desired proficiencies and access to L2 materials. Addressing these challenges involves realigning existing curricula and pedagogical strategies to enhance meaningful engagement and better support English language learners. Teaching is framed as guiding learners toward relevant socio-cultural discourses through active engagement, while learning involves social and semiotic practices that help students construct knowledge collaboratively. Engaged discourse transforms student contexts, prompting collaboration and inclusivity. Messages exchanged among students, including visual and semiotic elements, clarify discourses and contribute to a shared meta-language. Each educational session impacts student understanding, emphasizing the relationship between language, context, and academic subjects within the learning process.

2.1. Communicative Competence and Task-Based Learning

Language is an ever-evolving process of communication, best taught through the intelligent use of tasks (del Carmen Guerra Mera, 2014). Language acquisition occurs through the interaction of the speaker, the environment, and the audience. Communication involves the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Therefore, to teach the language, it is important to develop activities including the four skills. This is supported by the first task: two students were given a text to read; then they exchanged the text they had read and explained each paragraph. The second task consisted of listening to a presentation in which you needed to identify the information given. The third task was to write an advice column based on the articles read. The fourth task to continue deemed as out of task, the students majorly took this activity as writing which was not task stated. The fifth task in pairs consisted of identifying the adjectives learnt from a text and the last task was to design a poster. This range of activities aims to provide opportunities for fundamental language acquisition necessary for students' continued language development.

2.2. Multiliteracies and Digital Literacies

Multiliteracies and digital literacies frameworks highlight literacy's vital role in contemporary education, necessitating a focus on diverse modes of meaning-making across disciplines. Incorporating these literacies into the English curriculum supports learners' growth as global citizens and their navigation of 21st-century communication complexities. A model merging these concepts outlines five meaning-making dimensions and six pedagogical approaches. Effective strategies include exploring semiotic resources, engaging with varied texts, and encouraging cooperative composition, which can significantly broaden literacy initiatives. Multiliteracies facilitate motivation and clarification through constructs like addressing students' contexts, ensuring accessibility, integrating diverse texts and media, promoting substantive learning, allowing topic flexibility, fostering collaborative feedback, and encouraging work sharing. Digital tools now provide wider access to diverse, rich textual resources, enhancing critical text analysis and engagement. Global connectivity enables communication with broader audiences, while app-based resources and platforms support integrated, exploratory language tasks increasingly emphasized in modern curricula. (A. Swenson et al., 2006)

2.3. Universal Design for Learning and Inclusive Practices

The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework aims to create flexible and accessible learning environments that accommodate diverse learners. UDL has become a priority in education policies nationwide because it emphasizes assigning multiple means of engagement, representation, action, and expression to foster learner differences (D. Mavrovic-Glaser, 2017). Applying UDL to the teaching and assessment of English as an Additional Language (EAL) enables educators to structure learning experiences that are both responsive to injury and accessible to EAL.

At the system level, UDL supplies a conceptual framework for addressing curricular accessibility among students with limited access to EAL resources. UDL also supports classroom practices widely

recommended for multilingual education, elementary education, special education, and at-risk populations (Lee Smith Canter et al., 2017). Consequently, UDL enabler inclusion for EAL learners while helping educators meet both the letter and spirit of education policy.

3. Technological Innovations in the Classroom

Innovations in English language teaching in secondary education focus on evidence-informed arguments, structure, and clear articulation of practices that meet 21st-century needs. Communicative competence remains essential, as today's learners require attention to situational vocabulary and relevant content. Task-based learning involves pretext, task, and post-task dimensions to meet these needs. Pretext prepares learners with key elements, task focuses on authentic use, and post-task allows for output review and developmental choices. A presentation-once-more-task framework integrates language use through an input-output cycle; creating a presentation script serves as initial output, followed by a delivery. Multiliteracies broaden literacy to include various means and contexts of meaning-making. Frameworks for multiliteracy emphasize situated practice, instruction, framing, and transformed practice, fostering participation. Digital literacies encompass skills and dispositions for critical engagement with media. Frameworks include identification, reproduction, and circulation. Integrating digital literacies promotes awareness of language form, design, contextual relevance, and sustainability while expanding communication opportunities. Digital tools blend handwritten scaffolding with visual media, enabling learners to create multimodal texts like posters, videos, and hypermedia to share insights with diverse communities.

3.1. Digital Tools and Learning Management Systems

E-learning through a learning management system (LMS) enhances high school English curriculum by delivering content like quizzes and assignments and facilitating communication between teachers and students. Moodle, an open-source LMS, enables the creation of fully online or blended courses with various modules. In digital learning environments, roles shift, with teachers adopting flexible approaches and boundaries with students becoming less defined. This brings new challenges and strategies, such as personalized learning. The digital features allow for innovative language-proficiency assessments based on flexible evaluations. Research is essential to redefine theoretical frameworks for these models, focusing on the application of new technologies in ESL to explore methodologies. Studies highlight various approaches to integrating technology in language teaching, emphasizing the need for diverse media and resources to enhance learning and skill development. (MARAN, 2016)(Calle-Martínez et al.)

3.2. Mobile Assisted Language Learning and App-Based Resources

Mobile devices create constant connectivity and numerous opportunities for language learning. Smartphones and tablets act as personal engagement tools, facilitating participation in social networks, content sharing, and global connections. Learning enhancers link real-life experiences with formal education, providing a supportive learning environment. Numerous resources, including

dictionaries and YouTube tutorials, offer rich materials for learners. Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) involves mobile-based approaches, emphasizing collaboration and real-world task completion. Classifying mobile apps into categories like social networking and content generation helps users utilize them effectively. Understanding the purposes of these apps enhances their integration into teaching. MALL caters to learners' needs for personalized experiences and the application of formal knowledge in real contexts, while supporting vocabulary, listening, and speaking skills development. However, proper guidance for effective usage may be lacking.

4. Curriculum Design and Assessment Reform

While guidelines emphasize the need for reforms in classroom practices and attention to learning evidence, many pedagogical changes require shifts in curriculum design and assessment frameworks. The current framework focuses on contemporary global issues, 21st-century skills, and challenges learners face in a fast-changing world, emphasizing the link between curriculum design and assessment to effectively measure literacy progress. The 21st-Century Learning Framework has influenced global education reforms, with nations integrating its core competencies into their policies. Literacy, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication are recognized as vital 21st-century skills, with literacy serving as a foundation for language use—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—and essential for developing critical and creative thinking. The focus on collaboration reflects a growing trend toward teamwork across various sectors and professions, while communication includes multiple forms beyond just the English language. (Raymond, 2014)

4.1. Curriculum Alignment with 21st-Century Skills

The 21st century is defined by rapid developments in science and technology, globalization, and increasing interdependence among nations and cultures. Such changes have significant implications for education and language policy, and have advaced the roles and importance of English as a global lingua franca (Karmi, 2018). Thus, the direction of teaching English in the 21st century is inseparable from acquiring 21st-century skills—critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity (Assalihee et al., 2019) —that will prepare the learners for appropriate personal and social roles in the future. As custodian of English language education, the National Standard of Education in Indonesia has endorsed the integration of competencies and skills for the 21st century, such as literacy, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication in the Curriculum 2013 of the English Subject for Junior and Senior High School (Handayani, 2017).

4.2. Formative Assessment and Feedback Mechanisms

Assessment enhances instruction and processes by collecting information during learning, not solely about outcomes. Continuous feedback helps learners track their progress and adapt their efforts, while formative assessment reveals how learners evolve and indicates necessary instructional adjustments. It offers ongoing evidence of language growth, motivating students to establish explicit learning goals, as teachers tailor lessons to fulfill curricular and individual objectives. While many students aim to enhance conversation skills, they must also engage in reading, writing, and

audiovisual comprehension in the target language. Indicators like literacy levels and fluency guide the support provided and adapt to varying subject demands. Formative assessment seeks to address questions about progress, evidence gathering, and its practical interpretation. Efforts focused on learners often prioritize what students can do rather than merely what they know; however, educators usually collect data on linguistic or skill knowledge. Performance-based assessment is prevalent for evaluating learners' actual output. Many formative data reveal students' outputs, such as writing or speaking. Consequently, significant questions arise about learners transitioning from input to output and how specific inputs result in particular outputs. Progress in language, literacy, and subject learning is deeply influenced by the interaction and engagement between learners and the content. (WANG, 2015)(Afitska, 2014)(Zia et al., 2019)

4.3. Standards-Based and Performance-Oriented Assessment

Assessment is vital in teaching and learning, yet concerns persist about its validity and reliability in measuring achievements, especially in English. It should allow students to show their knowledge and skills. To align assessment with communicative competence and task-based learning, we need 21st-century standards that include (1) authentic performance tasks reflecting real-world applications and (2) shared rubrics that facilitate self- and peer-assessments. Internationally, clear rubrics with distinct performance levels enhance reliability, validity, and transparency while raising students' awareness of learning outcomes related to tasks. Performance assessments positively impact learners, enabling them to demonstrate knowledge and receive relevant feedback for their growth. (Fani Prastikawati, 2020)

5. Pedagogical Approaches in Practice

Focusing on pedagogy grounds evidence-informed instruction in theories of language learning. Emphasizing learner-centredness and inclusion enables equitable access to English for diverse learner identities and needs. Different competency areas in teaching rely on a continuum of support, including scaffolding. Students navigate dynamic continua of home language, proficiency, and interests. Effective English lessons promote agency through inquiry cycles co-designed with students, allowing for varied developmental paths and personal relevance in learning. These pedagogical approaches enhance learning theories, highlighting that teaching fosters functional communication skills intertwined with literacy, digital literacy, and multiliteracies. Text types, such as summaries linking form to function, help in understanding writing conventions across genres, while comparing academic versus realistic literature explores writing modalities. Engaging students with inquiry questions and varied task formats facilitates functional communication involving diverse participants, from experienced instructors to first-time learners. (Mahmood, 2014)

5.1. Inquiry-Based and Learner-Centered Approaches

Inquiry-based and learner-centered approaches revolutionize secondary English teaching by prioritizing student engagement and shifting the educator's role from knowledge transmitter to facilitator. An inquiry cycle fosters active exploration of questions relevant to learners' experiences,

promoting further inquiry into high-interest topics. For instance, students may investigate personal relationships through a film trailer, women's roles in Arabic poetry via an infographic, or cross-cultural dance differences through a website. Inquiry cycles allow students to choose and pursue their own questions. Educators provide prompts to identify intriguing themes and suggest articles and videos for broader understanding. After discussions, each learner formulates a personal question based on their interests, relevant readings, and future goals. Students research the question, present findings, and propose additional related questions for further exploration. (Mahmood, 2014)(Guadalupe Villacís Villacís & Soledad Hidalgo Camacho, 2017)

5.2. Content and Language Integrated Learning in English

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) refers to an approach to providing instruction that combines the learning of a disciplinary subject and a second language. While CLIL generally encompasses all subjects taught in a non-native language, the approach can vary in scope and complexity. English as a Foreign Language can be taught in parallel with the content subjects of Art and Music, Health and Physical Education, Information Technology, and Mathematics, as well as Science subjects such as Biology, Chemistry, and Physics (Pavón Vázquez & Ellison, 2013). Rather than equating CLIL with Second Language Learning, it is viewed in CLIL as largely an academic language, with its own set of specialised vocabulary and teaching and learning strategies. It further recognises the value of a well-articulated Language Objective in conjunction with the Content Objective linked directly to the Learning Outcome, and of CLIL Professional Development that supports teachers in their efforts to align CLIL instruction with the school-wide adopted approaches already in use for Content subjects (Piacentini et al., 2018).

6. Equity, Access, and Differentiation

To promote equity and access in the English classroom, it's essential that every learner engages and progresses based on their specific needs and goals. This applies to language development and integrated complex tasks. Supporting diverse learners involves adapting language input and interaction according to individual proficiency, ensuring multilingual learners, students with special educational needs, and at-risk students receive appropriate support. Scaffolding facilitates access to the common curriculum while enhancing English proficiency. Culturally responsive teaching maintains students' cultural references in language and literacy, while culturally sustaining pedagogy integrates broader curricula that reflect students' societies and issues. Effective teaching practices must also consider assessment language and evaluation criteria. (Raj Devkota, 2018)

6.1. Supporting Diverse Learners in English

The effective use of English as a second language is a key focus in secondary education. Ensuring learners become competent communicators in a multilingual environment is essential, yet many achieve only low competence. To improve English proficiency, attention must be given to three groups: EAL or EAD learners, those with special educational needs, and at-risk students. Integrating English language support into subject learning helps multilingual learners understand content

better and enhances their language skills. Support should involve scaffolding meaning, language, and cultural knowledge and ensure access for all. EAL and EAD learners need language support that considers the lingua franca features, while CLIL principles can aid subject learning in diverse dialects. Special strategies for learners with disabilities, emotional issues, or academic struggles should prioritize comprehension and adjust L1-L2 interactions. Lastly, language development for all proficiency levels requires strategic changes in interaction and collaborative group work.

6.2. Language Development Across Proficiency Levels

Language development among pupils varies; therefore, suitable input, output, and interaction should be aligned with each student's proficiency. Too often, learners face a higher level of language than is appropriate for their proficiency (Mahmood, 2014). High-proficiency students get to grips with nuances of language, for nuance is required in the English language in Pakistan. Newly enrolled students converse in English but struggle with reading and writing academic English (Paropcar. Ramcharan, 2009). Reading comprehension and essay writing are requisite for formal examination, yet teachers continue to ignore these pivotal skills.

6.3. Culturally Responsive Teaching in English Education

Culturally sustaining pedagogy aims for a stop of the perpetuation of language and cultural inequalities through formal education. Such a practice chooses linguistically and culturally diverse texts with care; equally, summative assessment needs to be fair by building on the knowledge students bring from their homes (Colarusso, 2010).

7. Professional Development and Teacher Training

Educators urgently need to stay updated on the evolving English language and global shifts impacting its teaching while engaging in collective professional learning due to rapid changes. Diverse professional development forms respond to innovations discussed. Teachers collaborating on mutual interests can better reflect on and modify their practices compared to working alone. Ongoing interactions among teachers, often supported by a coaching model, can occur through formal, informal, or online channels. The necessity for professional development extends to teachers in training; well-structured pre-service programs yield lasting impacts when followed by support in school contexts. Supporting novice teachers is crucial and can be enhanced through participant-driven communities of practice. ((Singgih) Widodo, 2004)(Li, 2011)

8. Policy Implications and Future Directions

Educational innovations enhancing 21st-century skills improve English language teaching in secondary education, drawing from reforms in other nations. Each innovation fosters learner autonomy, promotes educational equity, and encourages active engagement for meaningful learning, benefiting all students. Governance and resource allocation significantly influence educational innovation, shaping policy mandates, budget priorities, and agency frameworks. National and state authorities guide curricular and pedagogical changes through directives, instructional materials, and training mandates. Policy consistently aims to develop 21st-century competencies, focusing on

literacy, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication. Funding mechanisms affect resource availability and teacher development, with budgetary commitment being crucial for adopting and sustaining innovations. (Mahmood, 2014)(Assalihee et al., 2019)

8.1. Policy Mandates and Resource Allocation

The communicative approach to language education focuses on helping learners acquire both formal language skills and communicative functions for real-life use. Task-based language teaching operationalizes this approach by designing pedagogical tasks that foster meaningful communication in the target language. A pedagogical task is a plan requiring learners to exchange meaning and organize information to enhance communicative competence, while producing spoken or written text as proof of completion. Communicative tasks involve using language meaningfully, distinguishing them from mechanical practices, and allowing learners to communicate ideas effectively. Typical tasks include role plays, picture descriptions, poster creation, letter writing, and story completion. Various task formats align with several task-based approaches. The following activities, suitable for senior high school A2-level students, illustrate methods from Prabhu, Pica, and Nunan, adapted for computer-assisted language learning within a digital environment. (B. Baldauf Jr. et al., 2011)

8.2. Innovative Models for Scale-Up

A large-scale expansion of innovations requires strategic partnerships to leverage resources, technology, and expertise, alongside monitoring plans. Collaborations among government, private sectors, and NGOs can enhance training, resources, and coaching. Partnering with educational universities grants access to teacher educators who can advise on large-scale training and online course development. Engaging communities of practice—local, national, and online—further extends support to teachers. Evaluation measures should assess the quality and relevance of support, alongside changes in teachers' practices and student learning opportunities. A formal approval process for English teaching has clarified curricular goals, materials, and assessment. Publicly accessible documentation outlines proposed changes, allowing instruction to meet broader learning needs. Addressing curriculum differentials between English and integrated languages enhances vocabulary and supports English language skills. Emphasizing rigor at all levels promotes the equal treatment of English alongside other content subjects. (Fenyiwa Amonoo-Kuafi, 2019)(Mahmood, 2014)

9. Conclusion

Innovations in secondary English language instruction are driven by globalization and educational reform, creating 21st-century learners skilled in English for both local and international communication, while integrating digital competencies. These advancements enhance learning and equity in multilingual, underserved settings, ensuring English classes significantly impact students' academic and social achievements and increasing public interest in education and student welfare. Upcoming changes in Thai language and education policy—new curricula and teaching guidelines—align with national goals for the next decade, preserving unique national characteristics and

supporting seamless integration into existing systems to improve language instruction. (Mahmood, 2014)(Assalihee et al., 2019)

10. References

- Mahmood, S. (2014). Teaching English to Engineering Students through Innovative Techniques.

- Assalihee, M., Boonsuk, Y., Bakoh, N., & Lamine Sano, I. (2019). RECONCEPTUALIZING THE 21ST CENTURY ENGLISH PEDAGOGIES FOR ISLAMIC SCHOOL TEACHERS IN ASEAN.

- del Carmen Guerra Mera, F. (2014). Enhancing spoken production on B1 Teenagers at Pucesa through Task-Based communicative activities.

- Swenson, J., A. Young, C., McGrail, E., A Rozema, R., & Whitin, P. (2006). Extending the Conversation: New Technologies, New Literacies, and English Education.

- D. Mavrovic-Glaser, K. (2017). Teacher Knowledge and Use of Universal Design for Learning.

- Lee Smith Canter, L., H King, L., B. Williams, J., Metcalf, D., & Rhys Myrick Potts, K. (2017). Evaluating Pedagogy and Practice of Universal Design for Learning in Public Schools.

- MARAN, R. (2016). Using e-learning via an online-learning Management System (Moodle) to supplement the high school English curriculum- exploring the possibilities and potential..

- Calle-Martínez, C., Dolores Castrillo de Larreta-Azelain, M., & Pareja, A. (). To Innovate or not to Innovate in the Didactic Second Language Scenario (and How) – that Is the Question?. Lora.

- Raymond, L. (2014). A Theoretical Evaluation of English Communication Objectives Set for Japanese Senior High School Students.

- Karmi, K. (2018). Integrating 21st Century Skills into Language Teaching Curricula.

- Handayani, N. (2017). Becoming the Effective English Teachers in the 21st Century: What Should Know and What Should Do?.

- WANG, xinyan (2015). Application of Formative Assessment in College English Teaching.

- Afitska, O. (2014). Formative use of language assessment:Supporting learning through the medium of a second language.

- Zia, F., Sarfraz, S., & Mufti, N. (2019). Students' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Formative Assessment and Feedback for Improvement of the English Writing Composition Skills: A Case Study of Secondary Level ESL Students of Private Schools in Lahore, Pakistan.

- Fani Prastikawati, E. (2020). EFL Learners' Responses on the Use of Performance-based Assessment.

- Guadalupe Villací-s Villací-s, W. & Soledad Hidalgo Camacho, C. (2017). Learner-centered instruction: An approach to develop the speaking skill in English.

- Pavón Vázquez, V. & Ellison, M. (2013). Examining teacher roles and competences in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).

- Piacentini, V., Raquel Simões, A., & Marques Vieira, R. (2018). What students tell teachers about practices that integrate subjects with english in a lower secondary school in Portugal.

- Raj Devkota, K. (2018). Navigating exclusionary-inclusion: school experience of Dalit EFL learners in rural Nepal.

- Paropcar. Ramcharan, A. (2009). Language proficiency and academic performance : the case study for secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal..

- Colarusso, D. (2010). Teaching English in a Multicultural Society: Three Models of Reform.

- (Singgih) Widodo, S. (2004). Professional Development Programs for Teachers of English.

- Li, D. (2011). Confucius, constructivism and the impact of continuing professional development on teachers of English in China.

- Baldauf Jr., R., B. Kaplan, R., Kamwangamalu, N., & Bryant, P. (2011). Success or failure of primary second/foreign language programmes in Asia: What do the data tell us?.

- Fenyiwa Amonoo-Kuafi, E. (2019). Best Practice for Scaling Up Efforts to Improve English Language Skills.