

11th Seminar for English Education
Effective Language Teaching: The Never-Ending Challenge
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One class, one improvement:
A case study of systematic incremental innovation

Abstract

There is an abundance of research on describing and evaluating single instances of innovation in language classrooms. Although innovations are not necessarily improvements, they are experiments that aim to result in improvements. There is, however, a distinct lack of literature discussing systematic innovation in the context of language teaching. In fact, teachers with many years of experience may opt to avoid new challenges and rely on their tried-and-tested techniques, but what this research aims to do is show that experimentation not only results in significant improvements in the quality of students' learning, but also boosts teachers' effectiveness, renews enthusiasm and enhances employability. This case study examines the systematic incremental innovations of one experienced teacher over one semester. One innovation was implemented each teaching hour. Each innovation was recorded on a grid detailing the problem, underlying cause and proposed solution. The innovations were classified and the teacher's tendency to focus on particular aspects was identified. The results of a cost-benefit analysis of the effects of innovations on the learners and the teacher will be shared.