Innovation and Change in English Language Teaching: Theory and Practice

Ken Hyland & Lillian L. C. Wong (eds.), *Innovation and Change in English Language Education*. London: Routledge, 2013. pp. xvi + 284. Paperback, £29.99, ISBN 9780415826877.

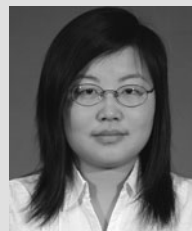Reviewed by Chen Ou, Ningbo Institute of Technology, Zhejiang University

The book is an edited collection of 18 chapters written by a total of 21 authors from around the world. Chapter 1, which serves as an introduction, outlines the book's structure and scope. The editors, Ken Hyland and Lillian L. C. Wong, define the book's purpose as 'to offer readers a range of different ways of thinking about innovation in English language education, and different methods of investigating the impact of innovation' (p. 2). The remaining 17 chapters, which are divided into four sections, discuss a range of topics including theoretical frameworks for education, teacher training, curriculum development, and teaching practice.

Section 1 (Chapters 2–5) deals with the broad subject of concepts and contexts of innovation and change in language education. In Chapter 2, Chris Kennedy uses the case study of a project conducted in Tunisia to illustrate three models for guiding the implementation of change in English language teaching (ELT). In Chapter 3, Numa Markee discusses contexts for innovation in language education by reviewing related work in applied linguistics and academic literature, and by demonstrating how to employ an ethno-methodological approach to analyze curricular innovation. In Chapter 4, Yafu Gong and Adrian Holliday tackle cultures of change. Through a case study of recent research into the attitudes of rural Chinese secondary school students to English language textbooks, the authors talk about 'revising the cultural content of Chinese secondary school textbooks and research to establish what might be meaningful and authentic innovation for students' (p. 44). In Chapter 5, Alan Waters and Maria Luz C. Vilches address the subject of change management in language education by presenting key academic concepts from this field and by then illustrating their practical application in managing an ELT project conducted in the Philippines.

Section 2 (Chapters 6–9) focuses on the subject of teacher education and training. In Chapter 6, Karen E. Johnson explains how to develop expertise in novice teachers by introducing authentic micro-teaching simulations into the methodology of TESL training courses. In Chapter 7, Anne Burns explores key concepts of Action Research (AR) and cites a case study conducted in Australia to illustrate how AR can be effective in promoting innovation in teaching practices. In Chapter 8, Kathleen M. Bailey and Sarah E. Springer describe reflective teaching as an example of an educational innovation. They define some key constructs in reflective teaching and innovation, and explain why they see reflective teaching as innovative by drawing on the teacher development models of Wallace (1991), the reflective teaching model of Zeichner and Liston (1996), and relevant survey data and case report data. In Chapter 9, Donald Freeman explores teacher thinking, learning and identity in the process of change. He introduces three organizational concepts that frame change, examines three interrelated constructs, and cites examples from a case study of British secondary school teachers (Kelly, 1980).

Section 3 (Chapters 10–13) addresses the subject of language education curriculum. In Chapter 10, Joseph Lo Bianco explores a range of possible innovations to English teaching approaches and related educational policies on a global scale. In Chapter 11, Beverly

CHEN OU is a Lecturer in the School of Foreign Language Studies, Ningbo Institute of Technology, Zhejiang University, China. Her recent publications have appeared in journals such as Child Language Teaching and Therapy, First Language *and* Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*. She is the leader of about 10 research projects on language education and acquisition. The review is part of the project "An Empirical Study of English Learners' Pronunciation Acquisition" sponsored by Ministry of Education, China (Grant No.14YJC740069). Her research interests are phonology, applied linguistics, and language education. Email: ocean79ou@163.com*

Derewianka highlights change and innovation in primary education, discussing the design, implementation, and criteria for successful language education curricula at the primary level in Australia. In Chapter 12, David Carless and Gary Harfitt examine the structure and content of the New Senior Secondary Curriculum (NSS) as it was implemented in a recent example of curriculum reform in Hong Kong, and offer a critical analysis of its implications for teaching, learning, and assessment. In Chapter 13, Denise E. Murray tackles higher education constraints on innovation. She discusses the effect of context on innovation and change, and provides two examples of specific institutional contexts in the United States and Australia which demonstrate the importance of context in the development and adoption of curricula innovation.

Section 4 (Chapters 14–18) is about teaching practice – that is, classroom management, development of teaching materials, and optimal use of teaching technologies. In Chapter 14, Brian Tomlinson elaborates on the specific features and qualities of effective language learning materials and reports on recent findings from two case studies. In Chapter 15, Ken Hyland reveals the potential of corpora for innovation in language education, and introduces *Check My Words* (Milton, 2006), an online concordancer, as a way to encourage and develop autonomy in second-language writers. In Chapter 16, David Nunan takes an in-depth look at the theories and applications of teaching English to young learners (TEYL) and finds useful examples of innovation in this field in his analysis of an online program developed in North America by MyEnglish organization and a pilot study in South Korea. In Chapter 17, Lillian L. C. Wong writes about the role of information technology (IT) in the professional development of teachers as observed in case study participants in Hong Kong. She describes the challenges of introducing technological innovation in language teaching and argues that success is closely related to the opinions, attitudes, and pedagogical experience of individual teachers. In the final chapter of the collection, Chapter 18, Chris Davison introduces Assessment for learning (AfL) as a guide for innovation in learning assessment and cites a comparative study of AfL as implemented in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Brunei in her discussion of new directions in research, policy, and practice.

A particular strength of this book is its clear and readable format. Although each chapter focuses on a different area of innovation in language education, the presentation is both consistent and coherent. Each chapter begins with an introduction that informs readers what they can expect to learn by reading the chapter, followed by a review of relevant ideas and concepts. The chapters also present numerous case studies that illustrate the authors' perspectives on specific educational practices. Each chapter concludes with a list of recommended resources for further reading to guide readers in exploring and researching related subjects.

In summary, this book presents a wealth of the best TESOL scholarship from around the world. Together, the 21 experts who were commissioned to write specific chapters in this collection offer readers a remarkable synthesis of the existing knowledge base on recent innovations in English language teaching in their respective domains. It should prove to be a valuable resource for undergraduate and graduate students, in-service teachers, researchers, and administrators in the areas of linguistics, language education and TESOL, and anyone interested in learning more about recent trends in English language teaching.

References

Kelly, P. (1980). 'From innovation to adaptability: The changing perspective of curriculum development.' In M. Galton (ed.) *Curriculum Change*. Leicester: Leicester University Press, pp. 65–80.

Milton, J. (2006). 'Resource-rich web-based feedback: helping learners become independent writers.' In K. Hyland & F. Hyland (eds.) *Feedback in Second Language Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 123–139.

Wallace, M. J. (1991). *Training Foreign Language Teachers: A Reflective Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zeichner, K. M. & Liston, D. P. (1996). *Reflective Teaching: An Introduction*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.