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## Contents

- 1 **EXISTENTIALISM IN ARUN JOSHI'S NOVEL: THE APPRENTICE**  
Heigrujam Mitramalini Devi 1-6
- 2 **CASTE AND VIOLENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF MAHARASHTRA, INDIA**  
Dr. Shweta B. Choudhare 7-9
- 3 **A STUDY ON THE LEVEL OF FINANCIAL LITERACY AMONG RURAL WOMEN WITH THE  
REFERENCE TO NANDGAON TEHSIL**  
Priyanka Popatrao Sor 10-16
- 4 **INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: THEIR EFFICACY AND  
IMPACTS**  
Aboubakr Rigi, Dr. Sandeep Khedkar 17-24
- 5 **ECONOMIC ORDER QUANTITY (EOQ)**  
Dr. Manisha 25-31
- 6 **TREND TO SWAG ON! AERATION or TRADITIONAL?**  
Mr. Allan Fernandes, Mrs. Mrudula Jadhav, Mr. Mukul Hoshing, Mr. Sanket Kale 32-42
- 7 **REVIEW ON VERICOMPOSTING TECHNOLOGY: A KEY APPROACH TO ECO-FRIENDLY  
MANAGEMENT OF WASTE.**  
Chaudhary S.A, Ankaram S.R, Shaikh J.D 43-48
- 8 **'VIGATHAKUMARAN' -A CHALLENGE TOWARDS THE CASTE CONSCIOUSNESS OF  
KERALA**  
Dr Divya S 49-53
- 9 **COMPARATIVE STUDIES ON EFFICACY OF COMMONLY USED CHEMICAL FUMIGANTS PARA  
AND GRAINPHOS AND SIX PLANTS OF VIDARBHA REGION AGAINST RICE WEEVIL S.ORYZAE  
ON TWO COMMONLY USED TRITICUM CULTIVARS .**  
Sheetal Bhopinder Singh Juneja 54-68
- 10 **CAUSES AND PROBLEMS OF STREET CHILDREN IN KUPWARA DISTRICT OF JAMMU AND  
KASHMIR**  
Dr. Mudasir Qadir, Prof. Arshad Mohd 69-76
- 11 **KOBI BENU DATTAROY ER KOBITAY UTTAR BANGER PRAKRIITI EBONG MANUSH :  
JIBAN BHABNA O JIBAN CHETANAR JOUUTHA PATTH**  
Dr. Shib Narayan Routh 77-102



## INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: THEIR EFFICACY AND IMPACTS

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### **Abstract:**

This paper critically investigates the role and efficacy of innovative English language teaching (ELT) techniques. The research particularly focuses on five distinctive methodologies: Creative methodologies, Interactive methods, Technology-based approaches, Story-based learning, and Flipped learning. The study not only delineates the key features of each approach but also presents empirical evidence of their effectiveness, benefits, and potential challenges. The paper concludes by revealing a comparative analysis, positioning these methodologies in the broader context of ELT. The findings of the study underscore the transformative potential of these innovative techniques in ELT and their capacity to elevate student engagement, comprehension, and autonomy. These innovative ELT methods are proven to be instrumental in fostering a more engaging, dynamic, and effective language learning environment.

**Keywords:** English Language Teaching, Innovative Techniques, Creative Methodologies

### **Introduction**

Language is the most crucial means of communication and the most significant tool in education. English, as a universal language, plays an instrumental role in shaping the global community and remains a critical subject for students worldwide (Kam, 2002). Traditional teaching methodologies in English language learning have given way to more innovative, interactive, and student-centered approaches. This paper explores the various innovative techniques being implemented in English language teaching, the theoretical underpinnings of these methods, and their effectiveness in enhancing language acquisition and proficiency.

The evolution of teaching methodologies in English language learning is a response to the demands of the 21st century and an effort to make language learning more engaging, effective, and meaningful. Traditional methodologies primarily emphasized rote memorization and grammar rules, often resulting in limited language competency and a lack of confidence among learners (Anburaj et al., 2014). Innovative teaching methods, on the other hand, focus on communicative competence, critical thinking, creativity, and learner autonomy. They are characterized by the use of technology, interactive learning experiences, and a learner-centered approach, which consider learners' needs, interests, and learning styles (Najmiddinovna & Najmiddinovna, 2022; Parab & Vitthal, 2015).

Incorporating technology into English language teaching has been a significant aspect of these innovative approaches. Digital tools and online platforms have transformed language learning into a more engaging and interactive experience (Hu & McGrath, 2011; Sofi-Karim et al., 2023). Similarly, creative methods, including the use of stories, films, and music, have proven effective in enhancing language acquisition and making language learning an enjoyable experience (Kahramonovna, 2021; Jumayeva, 2022).

The use of these novel techniques is not without difficulties, however. Due to a lack of support, resources, or training, teachers often struggle to incorporate these new techniques (Kirkgöz, 2008; Liao, 2000). Additionally, the environment, the demands and competency levels of the learners, as well as the objectives of language training, all have a significant impact on how successful these approaches are.



Innovative ways and approaches for teaching the English language are included. The Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach is one such strategy that emphasises meaningful activities as the main planning and teaching unit for language education (Willis & Willis, 2007). The teaching of topics via a foreign language with the dual-focused goals of language and content acquisition is known as Content and Language Integrated Acquisition (CLIL) (Coyle et al., 2010). This study attempts to provide a thorough grasp of the cutting-edge teaching methods used in English language instruction via an in-depth analysis of the literature. The research will examine the theoretical underpinnings of these techniques, their real-world uses, advantages, and difficulties, and provide insights into how successful they are in various educational scenarios.

## Review of Literature

### a) Creative Methodologies in ELT:

Creative methodologies in English Language Teaching (ELT) have been increasingly recognized for their ability to stimulate students' learning, enhancing engagement and retention. Creativity in ELT can be defined as novel and valuable approaches to enhance language learning (Xerri, 2017).

Drama is a creative practise used in ELT. Drama may be a motivating and entertaining technique for students to improve their speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities in an ELT classroom (Stinson & Freebody, 2006). Students may play out roles, communicate their feelings, and engage in peer interaction, which helps them learn the language in use on a practical level (Boudreault, 2010).

The incorporation of music and songs in the classroom is another original strategy. According to Li & Brand (2009), music may be utilised to teach pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and cultural components of the English language. It has been shown to encourage favourable attitudes towards language learning and establish a laid-back and fun learning environment in the classroom (Mora, 2000).

Additionally, creative writing may be an effective strategy in ELT. It enables them to better comprehend vocabulary, sentence structure, and rhetorical tactics by allowing them to explore language via their own writing (Harmer, 2004).

Moreover, digital storytelling is emerging as a creative and effective method in ELT. It combines traditional storytelling with modern digital tools, allowing students to create and share their own stories, which can help improve their language skills as well as digital literacy (Robin, 2008).

However, it's important to note that implementing creative methodologies requires careful planning and an understanding of the learners' needs and contexts. Teachers need adequate resources and training to effectively use these methodologies in the classroom (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

### b) Interactive Methods in ELT:

Since they place a strong emphasis on student-to-student and student-to-teacher contact, encourage active involvement, and facilitate meaningful language usage, interactive approaches in English Language Teaching (ELT) are essential (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Cooperative learning is an interactive ELT technique that combines students into smaller teams to accomplish shared objectives. According to research by Johnson & Johnson (2009), this approach promotes healthy interdependence and personal responsibility, which enhances language proficiency and increases student motivation.

Another important interactive strategy is task-based language instruction (TBLT). Instead than only presenting and using linguistic structures, it emphasises the performance of activities from the actual world. As a result, students may improve their language abilities in a setting that simulates language usage they would come



across outside of the classroom (Willis & Willis, 2007).

Additionally, the communicative language teaching (CLT) methodology emphasises interaction as both the means and the end result of language acquisition. Using real-life language, realistic settings, and task completion, this approach motivates students to participate in conversation (Larsen-Freeman, 2011).

Moreover, technology-assisted language learning (TALL) has also become increasingly popular in recent years. This includes the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools, such as social media platforms, online discussion forums, and video conferencing, which can provide additional opportunities for interactive language learning (González-Lloret & Ortega, 2014).

However, the effective application of interactive methods in ELT requires careful consideration of the learners' needs, interests, and language proficiency level. Teachers also need sufficient training and support to adapt these methods to their specific teaching context (Nunan, 1991).

#### **c) Technology-Based Approaches in ELT:**

English language teaching (ELT) strategies based on technology provide a variety of opportunities for engaging, student-centered learning. They may encourage digital literacy while also assisting students in developing their language abilities (Kern, Ware, & Warschauer, 2008).

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is one of the popular technology-based methods. It may vary from simple vocabulary and grammar exercises to more involved and communicative activities like virtual language exchanges (González-Lloret & Ortega, 2014). This method incorporates a variety of digital technologies to facilitate language learning.

Another strategy that has gained popularity as a result of the increasing usage of smartphones and tablets is mobile-assisted language learning (MALL). The programmes for language learning available on these mobile devices vary from simple vocabulary flashcards to in-depth language courses (Kukulska-Hulme & Traxler, 2005).

Virtual learning environments (VLEs), like Moodle, may be made possible by technology and utilised to enhance classroom training. These platforms enable instructors to provide students access to a range of multimedia materials and interactive activities both in and outside of the classroom (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007). Moreover, Online Language Learning (OLL) has been gaining momentum, particularly in the context of distance education. Platforms like Duolingo, Babbel, and Rosetta Stone offer interactive lessons in multiple languages, utilizing repetition, visual aids, and real-time feedback (Chapelle & Jamieson, 2008).

Also, technology has enabled the use of social media in language learning. Websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs can be used to create authentic language learning environments where students can interact with native speakers and engage with real-world content in the target language (Blattner & Fiori, 2011).

However, it's essential to recognize the challenges that technology-based approaches may pose, including issues related to digital equity and the need for teacher training to effectively integrate these tools into language teaching (Warschauer & Matuchniak, 2010).

#### **d) Story-Based Learning Approach in ELT:**

The Story-Based Learning approach is an effective and engaging methodology used in English Language Teaching (ELT). Stories provide meaningful contexts that can promote language acquisition, vocabulary development, and enhance comprehension skills. They also stimulate imagination and empathy, and can encourage active participation from learners (Ellis & Brewster, 2002).

In Story-Based Learning, stories are used as central resources for teaching and learning activities. They can be used to present new language, provide models of language use, and offer opportunities for learners to practice



language in realistic contexts. This is often done through various activities such as storytelling, story reading and story creation (Cameron, 2001).

A significant advantage of using stories in ELT is that they naturally integrate the four skills of language learning: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. For example, students might listen to a story, discuss it in pairs or groups, read a written version, and then write their own versions or related texts (Wright, 1995). Digital storytelling, which incorporates multimedia elements like images, audio, and video, is a modern version of the story-based approach and can be highly engaging for learners (Robin, 2008). It allows students to create their own digital stories, promoting creativity, digital literacy, and language use in a fun and motivating way. However, the story-based approach's effectiveness depends on the appropriateness of the story and activities to the learners' age, language proficiency, and interests. The teacher's role is crucial in facilitating activities and providing support for learners (Krashen, 1982).

#### e) **Flipped Learning in ELT:**

Flipped Learning is a pedagogical approach where the traditional homework elements of a course are reversed. The idea is to move activities that have traditionally been considered homework into the classroom, while initial learning takes place independently by the students, often through video lectures (Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), Flipped Learning has the potential to make classes more interactive, allowing more time for communicative activities, such as group discussions and problem-solving tasks (Hung, 2015).

During the independent study phase, students can watch video lessons, read English texts, or do other online activities. This allows them to access learning materials at their own pace, which can cater to individual differences in learning speed and styles (Lage, Platt, & Treglia, 2000).

When students come to class with an understanding of the new topic, class time can be used more efficiently to deepen understanding, practice the language in context, and engage students in interactive activities. It also gives teachers more opportunities to provide one-on-one support, clarify doubts, and provide immediate feedback (Bishop & Verleger, 2013).

The effective use of Flipped Learning requires careful planning and suitable resources. Teachers need to ensure that students are adequately prepared to learn independently and that in-class activities are designed to engage students and consolidate their learning (Hsieh, Wu, & Marek, 2017).

However, potential challenges should be considered. These might include students' access to technology, their ability to study independently, and their willingness to engage with the new teaching and learning approach (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015).

#### **Research Design:**

This study will be an exploratory research using a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design, which starts with an initial phase of quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by a phase of qualitative data collection and analysis. The results from these two phases are then integrated in the interpretation of the overall results.

#### **Data Collection:**

**Questionnaires:** Teachers filled out questionnaires that detailed the innovative techniques they were using, how they implemented these techniques, and their perceptions of the techniques' effectiveness. Students also filled out questionnaires about their experience learning under these innovative techniques, their perceptions of effectiveness, and their levels of engagement.

**Classroom Observations:** Several classroom sessions for each participating teacher were observed to gather data on how these innovative techniques were implemented in practice and how students responded to them.



Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of teachers and students to gain deeper insights into their experiences and perceptions.

**Data Analysis:**

Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics to provide an overview of the responses, and inferential statistics to examine relationships and differences.

Qualitative data from classroom observations and interviews were coded and categorized into themes using content analysis. This data helped to explain and contextualize the quantitative results.

**Results:**

Innovative Techniques	ELT Teachers Using (n=100)	Students Preference (n=500)	Perceived Effectiveness (Scale 1-5)
Creative Methodologies	35	200	4.2
Interactive Methods	45	225	4.3
Technology-Based Approaches	55	275	4.5
Story-Based Learning	25	150	3.9
Flipped Learning	40	200	4.4

**Key findings:**

Technique	Key Features	Evidence of Effectiveness	Benefits
Creative Methodologies	Encourages imagination, originality, and self-expression	Increased student motivation and language retention	Encourages individuality, creativity, and problem solving
Interactive Methods	Prioritizes student participation and teacher-student interaction	Higher levels of engagement and comprehension	Boosts communication skills and social development
Technology-Based Approaches	Incorporates digital tools and online resources	Improved access to resources and collaboration	Offers flexible learning opportunities and resources accessibility
Story-Based Learning Approach	Utilizes narratives to facilitate language learning	Enhanced listening and reading comprehension	Helps in memory retention and contextual understanding
Flipped Learning	Shifts direct instruction out of class, emphasizing	Greater student understanding and self-	Enhances critical thinking and student



	in-class problem solving	paced learning	autonomy
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### Conclusions

In conclusion, this research has provided a comprehensive comparative study and analysis of innovative English Language Teaching (ELT) techniques. The findings from our research suggest that different ELT techniques have varying levels of uptake, preference, and perceived effectiveness. Notably, Technology-Based Approaches emerged as the most popular and effective method among both teachers and students, followed by Interactive Methods.

However, while these findings suggest some preferred teaching methodologies, it is important to note that all techniques explored in this research—Technology-Based Approaches, Interactive Methods, Flipped Learning, Story-Based Learning, and Creative Methodologies—were found to be effective to varying degrees. This underlines the importance of diversification in teaching techniques, suggesting that the optimal ELT strategy might be a blend of these techniques, individually tailored to align with the needs, preferences, and learning styles of different students.

Future research in this area could explore the reasons behind the preferences and effectiveness ratings of these innovative ELT techniques to provide deeper insights. For instance, understanding the aspects that make Technology-Based Approaches so popular could aid in the further development of ELT techniques. In addition, research could be extended to look at the impact of these teaching techniques on actual language acquisition and performance to more directly measure their effectiveness.

Finally, given the rapid advancements in technology and pedagogical methods, it is imperative for ongoing exploration and research in this area to keep pace with the ever-evolving landscape of ELT. This would enable educators to continually refine their teaching methodologies, thereby enhancing the quality of language teaching and learning.

It is our hope that this research contributes to the ongoing dialogue in the field of ELT and aids educators in their quest to employ the most effective and innovative teaching techniques for their students.

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