Introduction

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Colleagues at the Institute of Educational Technology at the Open University produce an annual report, *Innovating pedagogy*, now in its 9th edition, which looks at new and emerging approaches to teaching, learning, and assessment in a wide range of settings and subject areas. They highlight ten innovative pedagogies, and provide a research-informed summary of each one, as well as a list of further resources for those who want to find out more. Over the past few years, this has become an influential publication and we have long thought that it would be very useful to have a similar report that focused specifically on language teaching, learning, and assessment.

When Research-publishing.net announced their second *Give Back* campaign, we seized the opportunity and applied for the funding to produce this publication, which the editors kindly agreed to fund. We wanted the report to be crowd-sourced and, most importantly, we did not want to miss out any potential pedagogies that we might not be aware of. For this reason, we designed a survey asking language teaching practitioners to help us draw up a longlist of innovative pedagogies that they thought would have an impact on language teaching and learning. The survey was emailed to our networks of language teachers and researchers. In total, we received 42 responses from a range of practitioners. The majority of these (85%) were from the university sector, and the rest were from primary and secondary schools and further education. All respondents are involved in language teaching, mostly delivering teaching but also as teacher trainers and researchers, and have been teaching for at least six years (two thirds of respondents have been teaching for over 20 years). The respondents are located in a variety of international locations. A quarter of the respondents live in the UK and another quarter in Spain, which is unsurprising

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Introduction

given that our teacher networks are mostly located in those two countries. The remaining locations include France, Australia, Iran, Canada, the USA, Argentina, Mexico, Ireland, Hungary, Belgium, and Germany, although not every respondent indicated their location.

Participants in the survey were asked to propose up to three pedagogies that they thought should make it to the Innovative language pedagogies longlist. We emphasised that we were interested in pedagogies, approaches, and tools, and not necessarily exclusively in technologies, as some participants might have expected. We firmly believe that pedagogy, not technology, should be at the centre of what we do as teachers. A total of 106 responses were recorded, with considerable overlap as some respondents identified the same or very similar pedagogies. This list was condensed into 36 different topics, which were listed in a second survey to draw up the shortlist.

This second survey was again emailed to our networks of language teachers and researchers, and it was also shared on social media with hashtags relevant to language teachers to gain further exposure. Some 118 responses were collected. This time, the responses from the university sector represented 59% of respondents, which allowed more representation from other sectors. There was also a wider representation in terms of teaching experience, with 13.5% of respondents who have been teaching for 5 years or fewer, 17.8% between 6 and 10, 21.2% between 11 and 20, and 47.5% with over 20 years’ experience. We were very keen to produce a publication that appealed to teachers in schools, further education colleges, and higher education institutions, as we are very mindful that we need to bridge the gap between research and practice.

The shortlist vote identified some clear favourites, such as virtual exchange, gamification, the use of voice assistants, and interaction with bots, all of which are present in this report. There were a small number of pedagogies and tools such as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and flipped approaches that were also identified, but we felt these were already sufficiently well embedded into everyday practices to warrant a place in the final shortlist. Other pedagogies and tools elicited fewer votes, and as editors we selected those
that we considered most interesting to our potential readership. In total, 21 topics were shortlisted which cover a broad range of pedagogies, approaches, and technologies. We also decided to include a last chapter on innovative continuing professional development practices around TeachMeets, and we hope that it will encourage those practitioners who have never attended one to do so, maybe to present their own favourite pedagogy or tool.

We contacted experts in each of the fields selected and asked them to submit contributions of up to 1,500 words. Each contribution includes the timescale, potential impact, description, examples, benefits, potential issues with the pedagogy, a look to the future, and a list of references and resources that readers might want to pursue further. We stressed the fact that this is not a research publication and that we wanted clear, jargon-free informative pieces.

The topics presented in each of the chapters cover a wide range of pedagogies, approaches, and technologies, and we have endeavoured to arrange them in some sort of coherent order. However, we expect readers to dip in and out of the chapters in whichever order they want.

As 2020 has demonstrated to all of us, it is impossible to predict the future! However, we have indicated for each chapter what the potential impact of the pedagogy, approach, or tool would be (high, medium, or low) as well as the timeframe for its widespread adoption or implementation. Some of them are ongoing, in the sense that we believe they are already being implemented quite widely, but we believe they will be even more so in the next few years. Others we believe will be widely available in the next couple of years (short term), within the next three to five years (medium term), or in the longer term.

We have produced this book in 2020 and are very aware that in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, many institutions have substantially increased their online activity and their experimentation with new tools and technologies, and this has had an effect on language teachers, many of whom had limited experience of online teaching prior to the pandemic. This has highlighted how varied the knowledge of online pedagogies is across language teachers,
and provides evidence of the need for online teaching to be part of the teacher training curriculum.

This report explores new approaches to language teaching, learning, and assessment in schools, further and higher education institutions. It seeks to highlight and disseminate innovative pedagogical practices in the languages field in a clear, accessible way to inform and guide educators and policymakers to help regenerate and transform language learning. We hope everyone finds something inspiring and we would love to hear about which ones our readers try and how the experience goes.

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