

## Chapter 3

# Exploring Innovation in Second Language Writing Teaching: A Teacher's Perspective

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### **ABSTRACT**

*A general aim of the present study is to address the issue of what constitutes the concept of innovation from teacher cognition in the context of second language (L2) writing. This study presents a qualitative exploration into the innovative teaching practices of six Vietnamese EFL teachers coming from three emphases of L2 writing teaching instruction: L2 writing teaching with an emphasis on (1) language skills development, (2) reading text comprehension, and (3) focused textual features. Employing constant comparative analysis into finding interpretations, this study sets the focus on exploring the teaching background of the participants and the dimension of how teacher self-efficacy has an influence on teacher implementation of innovative L2 writing teaching practices. Findings from the study suggest patterns of teacher concerns and teacher thinking of in their L2 writing teaching practices. Further implications are discussed in line with future research and teaching development.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

From the nineties up to date, there are numerous concerns about how to advance innovation in English language teaching (ELT). A brief review on the history of ELT innovation demonstrates the integration of innovation with theoretical concerns about implementation (Ferguson, 1993; Waters and Vilches, 2001; Lee, 2013) and change (Hutchinson, 1991; Todd, 2006; Waters, 2009). In response to implementation and change, investigating the dimension of teacher cognition of innovation centralizes practical concerns about methodology (McDonough and Shaw, 2012; Muller et al., 2014) and technology (O'Hara et al., 2013; Stockwell, 2013). Apart from the continuum from theory to practice, innovation also denotes attitudinal concerns with its attributes to the context of ELT. More often, the attitudinal concerns are found in issues with resistance and reluctance to methodological and technological innovations (Pacek, 1996; Timucin, 2006). These attitudinal factors come from factors such as the lacks of teaching and learning supports and the limitations of teacher perspective.

Even though there are efforts to resolve resistance and reluctance to innovations, they overlooked in suggesting what should be done to diminish these counter-productive effects of methodological and technological innovation on ELT. For instance, Pacek (1996) conducted an evaluation of former participants in the INSET program on the practicality of implementing communicative language teaching in teaching English in Japan. In response to the semi-satisfactory evaluations for the program, the suggestion for the course improvement in Pacek (1996)'s study had a view over the differences between Britain and Japanese culture and education. Another example is derived from Timucin (2006)'s investigation of the implementation of CALL in Turkey. On an account of explaining the transition from initial reluctance to agreement in the change process, Timucin (2006) suggested the preservation of traditional teaching should not be abandoned in the handling of changes for current teaching practices. As found from the above suggestions, the foci on explaining more often ignored the dimension of exploring factors that caused teacher resistance and reluctance.

In an effort to explain negative attributes of innovation in ELT, the motivation to find out the reason why teachers had in mind resistant and reluctant attitudes could result in ambivalences in interpretation of findings for some reasons. First, researchers may fail to encounter the contextualization of innovation at different layers. For instance, that teachers are not able to adapt technology perfectly well into their classrooms does not mean they do not have any ideas on how to innovate own their teaching methodology. Second, interpretations of resistance and reluctance in innovation may be affected by the positive attributes of innovation. The prevalent frequency of technology-based classrooms on literature reviews of teaching

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