Editorial:

Innovation and Identity in Indonesian EFL Education

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Innovation and identity are deeply interconnected in English language education. Innovative teaching practices not only transform classroom methods but also play a crucial role in shaping both teacher and learner identities. Conversely, the identities and agency of teachers and students influence the adoption and success of educational innovations. The dynamic link between innovation and identity in English language education is achieved through several interrelated processes. Innovative practices and identity development are mutually reinforcing, with each shaping and enabling the other through reflective practice, agency, collaboration, and context-sensitive approaches.

In Indonesia, the interplay between innovation and identity in English language education is especially important due to the country's linguistic diversity, cultural values, and global aspirations. Innovative approaches that respect and integrate local identity are crucial for effective, relevant, and empowering English education. Innovative pedagogy, such as English as an International Language (EIL), helps Indonesian students develop English proficiency for global communication while maintaining respect for their local culture and identity. This approach prevents the loss of Indonesian values and ensures students do not feel pressured to mimic native speakers, but instead use English as a tool for international interaction (Munandar & Newton, 2021; Setyawan, 2023)

In addition, Indonesia's vast archipelago and cultural diversity require context-sensitive, flexible, and creative teaching methods. Innovative strategies, such as differentiated instruction, technology integration, and project-based learning, help bridge resource gaps

and make English learning accessible and meaningful for all students (Hidayat et al., 2023). Nevertheless, there are serious concerns that English, as a global language, could erode local languages and cultural values. With an innovative, identity-conscious teaching, we are assured that English education supports, rather than undermines, Indonesian national identity (Munandar & Newton, 2021). Also, culturally responsive pedagogy and the use of local literature and examples help students see English as a means to express their Indonesian identity, not replace or introduce new ones.

With the aim of promulgating the above, this thematic issue of the Asia Pacific Journal of English Education (APJEE) brings together a diverse and timely collection of scholarly articles that illuminate the dynamic and evolving terrain of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education in Indonesia in terms of innovation and identity. As the country deepens its engagement with global academic discourses, this volume highlights the pedagogical innovations, contextual challenges, and critical reflections that characterise current EFL practices across a wide range of Indonesian educational settings. A recurring and significant theme across the contributions is the dynamic negotiation of teacher and learner identity, particularly in relation to writing, literacy, and reflective practice. Yusnita Febrianti (Universitas Negeri Malang), in "Building Audacity of Authorial Voice", offers an insightful analysis of how Indonesian writers develop scholarly voice, drawing from published exemplars. Complementing this, Sukirman (Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar) presents a reflexive narrative, "Crossing Boundaries to Become a Critical Writer", which foregrounds the emotional, cognitive, and disciplinary labour involved in becoming a critical academic in international doctoral contexts. Another central theme in this issue is the integration of digital technologies in EFL instruction. Daniel Ginting (Universitas Ma Chung), Rudi Hartono (Universitas Negeri Semarang), and Iskandar (Universitas Negeri Makassar) provide a forward-looking perspective on the role of Artificial Intelligence in English language teaching. Their article, "Navigating AI Integration in ELT", raises critical questions about automation, pedagogy, and professional development. Similarly, Fitrawati and colleagues (Universitas Negeri Padang), along with David Perrodin (Mahidol University, Thailand), evaluate the "Validity and Practicality of a Web-Based Self-Study Learning Platform", offering empirical insights into learner engagement in autonomous environments.

The digital turn is also explored by Putu Ayu Prabawati Sudana et al. (Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha), whose article on task-based e-learning materials for business English provides evidence for the effectiveness of contextualised online instruction. Several contributions explore the intersection of youth culture, literacy, and digital media. Irfan Rifai and M. Maria Tamarina Prawati (Bina Nusantara University) examine "Eudaimonic and Hedonic Tensions" in young learners' media consumption, revealing tensions between pleasure-driven and purpose-driven engagement, and its implications for reading and identity development in the digital age. The issue also includes voices and perspectives that are often marginalised in EFL discourses.

Mariana (SMPK Kolese Santo Yusup 1, Malang), in "Silent Voices, Loud Learning", examines the experiences of deaf students learning English, prompting necessary conversations around inclusivity, accessibility, and differentiated pedagogy. Lestari Setyowati and colleagues (Universitas Negeri Malang and Universitas Brawijaya) extend this discussion through "Short Story Projects and Social Awareness", which demonstrates how literature-based tasks can foster critical engagement with gender and social issues among learners.

Formative assessment and reflective teaching practices also feature prominently. Jhems Richard Hasan (IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo) discusses strategies for managing corrective feedback in writing classrooms, while Lavinia Disa Winona Araminta (Monash University) provides a self-study exploring critical-pragmatic approaches to teaching academic writing in Indonesian higher education. Other articles investigate foundational aspects of reading and vocabulary instruction. Afif Ikhwanul Muslimin (Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram) explores extensive and intensive reading strategies and their impacts on learner motivation and outcomes. Siti Muniroh and colleagues (Universitas Negeri Malang and UiTM Malaysia) present a correlational study that links vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, and critical literacy, contributing to a deeper understanding of text engagement in the EFL context. Contextual responsiveness is further underscored in studies addressing learner diversity and post-pandemic realities. Zadrian Ardi (Universitas Negeri Padang) explores speaking-related learning loss in the post-pandemic classroom, while Annisa Rohmadhani and Nur Giana Febrianti (Universitas Negeri Malang) provide a systematic review on speech acts in EFL classrooms, highlighting both pedagogical challenges and opportunities. Geographically, this issue spans Indonesia's educational spectrum, from Sumatra, Java, Bali, and Sulawesi, while also integrating international perspectives from Australia, Malaysia, and Thailand.

This regional breadth reflects a scholarly community that is locally grounded and globally engaged, committed to rethinking and reshaping EFL education through critical inquiry, innovation, and inclusive practice. As editors, we invite readers to engage with this issue not only as a collection of discrete studies, but as a collective reflection on how identity, technology, culture, and pedagogy are intersecting to shape the future of English language education in Indonesia and the Asia-Pacific region. We hope the contributions herein spark dialogue, collaboration, and further research that continue to challenge boundaries and expand the possibilities of English education.

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