**Cambridge Element: Mediating Innovation Through Language Teacher Education, by Martin East**

**Video transcript**

A reality that confronts teachers across the globe in a wide range of contexts is that, when it comes to pedagogical practice, there is no avoiding change. The impacts of the global pandemic are one stark reminder of this. With the pandemic, for example, many teachers found themselves having to revolutionise their practices as teaching and learning were suddenly pivoted from face-to-face to online. Many teachers may be open to innovation and willing to try out new ideas, but there are other forces, such as elements of tradition, that can exert strong influence.

This Element tells something of my story as a language teacher educator charged with helping language teachers to embrace innovative practices. This Element uses as an example the pedagogical approach that has come to be known as task-based language teaching or TBLT.

In the Element that has been published just prior to my own, Daniel Jackson provides an excellent introduction to the phenomenon of TBLT. My own Element takes Jackson’s exploration of TBLT a step further.

Certainly from a research-theory perspective, innovations such as TBLT have a lot going for them. That said, it is evident that TBLT in practice faces many challenges. It seems that a crucial tension is that the theoretical justifications for TBLT, and also often the findings of empirical research into task efficacy, do not necessarily find their way into teachers’ thinking and actual practices. The essential problem is that TBLT appears to clash with established wisdom about the most effective ways to teach.

What I do in this Element is to consider language teacher education as a crucial component in helping teachers to embrace innovative practices like TBLT. The Element is framed by my own work as a language teacher educator. My own students were beginning teachers in New Zealand and they were charged with making a revised learner-centred and experiential curriculum for schools work at the level of real classrooms. In this Element I put my own work under scrutiny to explore what worked, what did not work and what might need to change for language teacher education to be an effective mediator of innovation.

In this Element, I use the process of self-study of teacher education practices or S-STEP to examine my own work as a language teacher educator. Two important issues arise from my reflections: what did I learn as a language teacher educator (and, by implication, what did I change in my own beliefs and practices)? And secondly, what are the implications for innovations like TBLT in practice?

The crucial question of course is: did my reflective approach to teacher education work in supporting beginning teachers with implementing innovation in language classes? I hope you will read the Element to find out. Thank you for watching.