IMPLEMENTING DEEP LEARNING IN THE EFL CLASSROOM: STRATEGIES FOR FOSTERING MINDFUL, MEANINGFUL, AND JOYFUL LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract: This article explores the application of the deep learning approach in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at the secondary school level, focusing on integrating mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning. This study uses a descriptive-analytical theoretical study method by reviewing literature from various scientific sources. The analysis results reveal that the basic principles of deep learning include deep cognitive engagement, contextual connections, and metacognitive reflection, which complement each other to create a deep and meaningful learning experience. In addition, the three learning concepts, mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning, contribute to a holistic approach to language learning, enhancing students' linguistic abilities and building emotional resilience and cultural awareness. The proposed adaptation strategies include the implementation of project-based assignments, gradual scaffolding with affective support, cross-curricular theme integration, and the use of responsive technologies. However, challenges such as exam-oriented curriculum, student resistance to reflective methods, and limitations in teacher training need to be addressed to support the effective implementation of this approach. The theoretical implications of this study pave the way for the recontextualization of constructivist theory and the development of holistic assessment models in language education. This article provides new insights into how innovative approaches can improve the quality of EFL learning and its relevance in facing the challenges of an increasingly complex global world.

Keywords: *deep learning, mindful learning, meaningful learning, joyful learning, EFL, high school.*

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and digitalization that continues to grow, the ability to speak English as an international language is becoming increasingly important. English is not only learned as a means of communication but also as a means of accessing knowledge, technology, and career opportunities worldwide. However, learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) often faces significant challenges, such as students' lack of motivation, monotonous teaching methods, and gaps between theory and practice in the classroom (Altomi, 2021; Liu et al., 2022). Many traditional approaches to EFL learning tend to focus on memorizing vocabulary and grammar without providing a deep understanding or meaningful learning experience.

On the other hand, the development of the 21st-century educational paradigm emphasizes the importance of deep learning, which is an approach that emphasizes conceptual understanding, critical thinking skills, and the ability to relate knowledge to real-life contexts (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014; Pan et al., 2023; Kovač et al., 2023; Jiang, 2022). This concept is in line with the principle of mindful learning (Fan and Cui 2024), meaningful learning (Bryce and Blown 2024), and joyful learning

(Cronqvist 2024), which is believed to create an inclusive and sustainable language learning environment.

During these challenges, deep learning emerged as a promising alternative approach. Deep learning is mastering in-depth content and developing critical thinking skills, creativity, collaboration, and self-reflection. Deep learning can help students understand language holistically, relate it to their life experiences, and use it in a real-world context (Feriyanto and Anjariyah 2024). This concept aligns with mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning, emphasizing the importance of awareness, relevance, and happiness in the learning process.

However, despite its great potential, implementing deep learning in the context of EFL, especially at the secondary school level, is rarely explored. Previous studies have focused on applying specific technologies or learning methods without thoroughly integrating deep learning approaches. The integration between the deep learning framework and the three concepts in the context of EFL has not been explored much theoretically. Previous research is also fragmented, with separate studies on deep learning in language education or implementing mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning as independent strategies. The synergy between these three aspects can be a catalyst to overcome the problem of low student participation and the inauthenticity of language learning experiences. In addition, adapting deep learning approaches in the secondary school environment, which is often constrained by strict curriculum, heterogeneity of student abilities, and national exam pressures, requires a strategic study that has not been fully answered in the language education literature. Therefore, an in-depth theoretical study is needed to answer the fundamental questions: What are the basic principles of deep learning in language learning? How can mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning be explained in language education theories? How can this approach be adapted in the context of EFL in secondary schools? Moreover, what are some of the challenges and theoretical implications that might arise?

This article aims to investigate and outline how deep learning approaches can be applied to learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at the secondary school level. Specifically, this article will 1). Identify the basic principles of deep learning in the context of language learning; 2). Explain the concepts of mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning through the lens of relevant language education theories; 3). Exploring adaptation strategies of deep learning approaches in the context of EFL in secondary schools; 4) Identifying challenges and theoretical implications in applying this approach.

This article uses a theoretical framework integrating deep learning with three main elements in language education: mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning. This theoretical framework is built on the principles of a holistic approach to language learning, which emphasizes the importance of immersive, meaningful, and enjoyable learning experiences.

Deep learning is an approach that emphasizes deep understanding, active engagement, and applying knowledge in a real-world context (Mystakidis, 2021; Jiang, 2022). Research on deep learning has been widely conducted in various fields, including general education and cognitive science. However, the application of deep learning in language learning is still limited. Some experts explain that deep learning can improve students' ability to understand material holistically, not just on the surface (Grauerholz, 2001; Kovač et al., 2023). In the context of EFL, this approach can help students to develop their linguistic identity, which is important in

foreign language learning (Rahimi & Sevilla-Pavón, 2024; Jiang, 2022; Kim, 2020). Deep learning includes not only the mastery of vocabulary or grammar but also the ability of students to critically understand the meaning of a language, relate it to their life experiences, and use the language in authentic communicative situations. Thus, deep learning involves a process of self-reflection, collaboration, and knowledge transfer, all of which are relevant to language learning (Kovač et al., 2023; Rahimi & Sevilla-Pavón, 2024).

Mindful learning is a learning approach that encourages mindfulness of the learning process. Mindful learning involves students' ability to stay open to new perspectives, reflect on their learning experiences, and avoid automatic or mechanical mindsets (Wang et al., 2023; Pan et al., 2023; Karmini et al., 2025). The concept of mindful learning has been applied in various educational contexts, including language learning. In the context of EFL, mindful learning can help students to be more sensitive to the nuances of language, such as intonation, social context, and implicit meaning (Moafian et al., 2019; Al-Rashidi & Aberash, 2024).

Research has found that students with a high level of awareness of the learning process tend to be more successful in mastering foreign languages (Getie 2020); (van den Broek et al. 2022). In addition, previous studies have also shown that mindfulness-based learning strategies can help reduce language anxiety, which is often an obstacle in EFL learning (Skelly & Estrada-Chichon, 2021; Cheng, 2023; Gao, 2022; Fan & Cui, 2024).

Meaningful learning is a concept developed by Ausubel (1968), emphasizing the importance of connecting new information with students' knowledge (Bryce and Blown 2024). In the context of EFL, meaningful learning can be achieved when students can relate language material to their personal experiences, communicative needs, or other specific goals (Hezbollah & Rosli, 2022; Bryce & Blown, 2024). This ensures that language learning is theoretical and relevant to everyday life.

Ausubel (1968) emphasized that meaningful learning is more effective than memorization-based learning. In the context of EFL, Brown's (2007) research shows that students who relate language material to their personal experiences tend to be more motivated and successful in learning. This approach is also supported by the sociocultural learning theory of Vygotsky (1978), which emphasizes the importance of social context in language learning.

Joyful learning emphasizes creating a fun and supportive learning environment (Cronqvist, 2024; Feriyanto & Anjariyah, 2024). Cziksentmihalyi (1991), in his theory of flow explained that fun learning occurs when students are fully engaged in activities that are challenging but still appropriate to their abilities. In the context of EFL, joyful learning can be applied through interactive learning methods, such as language games, collaborative projects, and technology.

Fun learning can increase student motivation. Research has found that students who feel happy during the learning process tend to be more active and creative in using language (Porter et al., 2022; Shaddad & Jember, 2024). Additionally, using technology in EFL learning, such as gamification apps, effectively creates an enjoyable learning experience (Nenotek and Benu 2022).

The conceptual foundation in this article is based on four interrelated key principles that form the foundation of developing implementation strategies for deep learning in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at the secondary school level. First, the holistic principle in language learning emphasizes that the learning process must include cognitive, affective, and social aspects. This aligns with the

view of Vygotsky (1978) about the importance of social interaction in cognitive development and constructivist learning theories, emphasizing that students actively construct knowledge through experience and reflection. This principle can be supported by encouraging deep understanding, self-reflection, and student collaboration (Fullan and Langworthy 2014). Second, the importance of awareness and reflection is the basis of the approach to mindful learning, which is defined by Langer (2000) as a learning process that emphasizes full awareness of the context and new possibilities in the learning situation. In the context of EFL, students are invited to reflect on how they learn languages, recognize barriers, and find more effective and creative learning strategies. Third, the principles of relevance and connectivity are reflected in the meaningful learning approach developed by Ausubel (1968), which emphasizes that learning will be more meaningful if new information is associated with the knowledge already possessed by students. In the context of EFL, learning materials must be tailored to students' needs, interests, and life experiences to increase their engagement and understanding. Fourth, the motivation and sustainability aspects of learning are supported by joyful learning, which is rooted in the intrinsic motivation theory of Deci and Ryan (2000). They stated that a fun learning environment that supports students' basic psychological needs, such as autonomy, competence, and social connectedness, can increase motivation for ongoing learning. In the context of EFL, this can be realized through interactive, inclusive, and innovative learning strategies. These four principles are integrated into the basis for developing learning strategies that are not only effective but also student-centered and oriented to their contextual needs. The article also highlights the challenges that may arise in its implementation, such as limited resources, lack of teacher training, and resistance to changes in educational practices (Hargreaves and Fullan 2012).

This research is significant in language education, especially in the context of EFL. First, this research provides new insights into how deep learning approaches can improve the quality of language learning more meaningfully and humanely. Second, this study highlights the importance of integrating psychological and emotional aspects, such as mindfulness and happiness, in teaching and learning. Third, this research can be the basis for developing a more adaptive and inclusive learning model that pays attention to the needs and characteristics of students at the secondary school level.

Theoretically, this article contributes to developing a conceptual model that connects deep learning theory with humanistic educational philosophy, particularly in the field of EFL. A critical analysis of implementation challenges is also expected to discuss further the need to recontextualize global education theory into a local setting. This study's findings can guide teachers in designing project-based assignments, critical reflection, and authentic communicative context simulations. In addition, the resulting recommendations can encourage school policies to adopt a more holistic assessment system, accommodating affective and social aspects of language learning. Thus, this research seeks to advance the quality of EFL teaching and strengthen the role of language education in forming resilient, creative, and globally competitive learners.

METHOD

This research is a qualitative theoretical study with a descriptive-analytical approach. The method used is library research, which is carried out by studying and

analyzing various scientific sources relevant to the theme of learning English as a foreign language (EFL), especially at the secondary education level, namely Junior High School (SMP) and Senior High School (SMA). The primary focus of this study is to explore in depth the concept of deep learning in EFL learning, as well as its relationship with mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning approaches.

The data sources in this study consist of two main categories: (1) the primary literature from education and applied linguistics experts that discuss the concept of deep learning and pedagogical approaches in language learning; and (2) the results of previous empirical research relevant to the practice of deep learning in English teaching. Data was collected through documentation studies against scientific textbooks and journal articles in various academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, ERIC, ScienceDirect, and ResearchGate.

The data analysis technique used is content analysis. The analysis process is carried out through several stages, namely: (1) identifying the main concepts related to deep learning, mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning in the context of language learning; (2) classifying information based on its relevance to the context of English learning at the junior high and high school levels; and (3) synthesize theories and findings from various sources to formulate conceptual models and practical implications for the development of EFL learning. The analysis results are presented in the form of a systematic descriptive narrative to clarify the relationship between concepts and support the achievement of the objectives of this theoretical study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Basic Principles of Deep Learning in the Context of Language Learning

The analysis results show that identifying the basic principles of deep learning in language learning cannot be separated from Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where language learning requires social interaction and scaffolding to achieve meaningful understanding. A holistic and integrated approach is essential in the context of language learning, especially English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Therefore, this study seeks to explore the three key elements that extend the principles of deep learning in the context of EFL.

Profound cognitive involvement is one of the key elements in language learning. Activities such as critical text analysis or issue-based debate train linguistic skills and encourage students to think multi-dimensionally. For example, in a debate on environmental issues, students must use the correct vocabulary and sentence structure to understand multiple perspectives, analyze arguments, and build compelling counter-arguments. This aligns with the view of Hattie (2009), who emphasizes the importance of deep cognitive involvement in the learning process. This approach also addresses criticism of structural learning methods, which often ignore the cognitive complexity of honest communication. Nor & Rashid (2018) and Rousse-Malpat et al (2022) emphasize that language learning must involve deeper cognitive elements so that students not only become recipients of information but also actively participate in the learning process.

Contextual connections are also an important principle in deep learning. This principle adopts the theory of situated learning by Lave & Wenger (1991),

emphasizing that language learning must be tied to an authentic context. For example, in a negotiation simulation, students can practice using English in situations similar to real life. Students learn new vocabulary and understand the social and cultural nuances that exist in the context (Benu 2018). By involving students in real-life situations, learning becomes more relevant and meaningful. It is about mastering grammar and understanding the context in which the language is spoken. In other words, contextual connections encourage students to see language as a living, dynamic means of communication rather than just a set of rules to be memorized.

Another aspect of concern is metacognitive reflection. In deep learning, self-reflection is essential to help students identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning process. Through activities such as study journals, students can reflect on their experiences, evaluate strategies used, and plan for next steps. Shekh-Abed (2024) shows that metacognitive reflection increases students' self-awareness and encourages them to become more independent learners. By better understanding their learning process, students can be more effective in overcoming the challenges faced in language learning. This shows that deep learning in EFL is not just about cognitive mastery but also involves a holistic social and reflective dimension.

This study's findings confirm that applying deep learning principles in EFL must involve combining these three key elements. Profound cognitive engagement, contextual connections, and metacognitive reflection complement and enrich students' learning experiences. Thus, language learning becomes a mechanical process and an immersive and meaningful experience. This paves the way for developing more innovative and effective teaching methods, which can facilitate better learning for students in the context of EFL.

The aspects of profound cognitive engagement, contextual connections, and metacognitive reflection that have been put forward show that deep learning in language learning is not just a cognitive approach but also involves a holistic social and reflective dimension. By understanding and applying these principles, educators can create a more supportive and effective learning environment, facilitating language mastery and developing students' critical and reflective thinking skills. Therefore, educators and researchers need to continue to explore and apply these principles in their learning practices to produce more meaningful and sustainable learning in the context of EFL.

Mindful, Meaningful, and Joyful Learning through the Lens of Language Education Theory

In-depth analysis shows that these three concepts are interrelated and contribute to a more holistic approach to learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). First, the concept of Mindful Learning, as described by Lin (2020) and Zeilhofer (2023), invites students to become more aware of their thought processes. In practice, Mindful Learning encourages students to focus on the result and the journey they take in the learning process. For example, the mindful listening technique proposed by Zeilhofer (2023) can help students to be more engaged in listening. In the context of EFL, when students have difficulty understanding English conversations, they are invited to reflect on the experience. Instead of seeing mistakes as failures, they learn to take them as opportunities to explore more effective listening strategies. In this way, students improve their listening skills and develop a positive attitude towards continuous learning.

Furthermore, Meaningful Learning is rooted in the theory of subsumption proposed by Ausubel (Bryce and Blown 2024). This theory emphasizes that to understand new material, students must be able to relate it to pre-existing knowledge. In the context of EFL, this approach can be applied through project-based assignments that connect language to students' interests. For example, students may be asked to create a travel blog about their dream destination. These activities introduce them to new vocabulary and structures and allow them to use the language in a relevant and meaningful context. In addition, the input hypothesis theory put forward by Krashen (1982) supports this principle by emphasizing that contextual and relevant input is essential for effective language learning. Thus, students learn language mechanically and understand how to use language in real and meaningful situations.

Finally, Joyful Learning, influenced by the broaden-and-build theory of Fredrickson (2001), highlights the importance of positive emotions in the learning process. Positive emotions such as curiosity or happiness can expand students' cognitive capacity, allowing them to learn more creatively and innovatively. In the context of EFL, Joyful Learning can be realized through gamification, such as interactive quizzes on digital platforms, or creative activities, such as short plays in English. For example, when students engage in a fun language game, they learn new vocabulary and practice speaking and listening in a supportive setting. These activities make learning more enjoyable and increase student motivation and engagement, which in turn can speed up the learning process.

The integration of these three concepts strengthens the argument that language learning is about linguistic competence and building emotional resilience and cultural awareness. By adopting this more holistic approach, we can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for students. Through mindful learning, students learn to become more aware of their learning process; through meaningful learning, students can relate new knowledge to their personal experiences; and through joyful learning, students can find happiness in the learning process. The three deep learning concepts, mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning, are important elements in developing effective language learning strategies. By integrating these three concepts in EFL practice, we not only help students master the language but also equip them with the skills necessary to meet challenges in this increasingly complex world. Successful language learning can build linguistic skills, emotional resilience, and cultural awareness, all of which are critical in today's global interactions.

Deep Learning Adaptation Strategies in the Context of High School EFL

The third objective of this study is to explore deep learning adaptation strategies at the secondary school level. In an increasingly complex educational context, contextual challenges such as rigid curriculum and student heterogeneity are issues that need to be addressed. Therefore, this study proposes several strategies that can be implemented to improve the effectiveness of learning in secondary schools. These strategies aim to improve students' understanding of the material and create a more meaningful and enjoyable learning experience.

One of the proposed strategies is the implementation of Project-Based Hybrid Tasks. In this approach, students are expected to combine project-based learning with elements of reflection and healthy competition. For example, students may be asked to make a video documentary about social issues relevant to their

environment. This project encourages students to collaborate and share ideas, increasing their motivation and vocabulary retention. Studies conducted by Al-Ahdal & Alharbi (2021) and Li (2025) show that collaborative projects can increase student engagement in the learning process. Allowing students to express their creativity and contribute to projects that have a social impact will motivate them to learn and actively participate in the classroom.

Furthermore, the gradual scaffolding with an affective support strategy is critical to help students cope with complex tasks (Dominguez and Svihla 2023). Teachers divide tasks into small, more manageable steps in this strategy while providing motivational feedback. For example, when students speak in front of the class, teachers can praise their courage, boosting students' confidence and creating a positive learning environment. This approach aligns with Dörnyei (2001) theory of motivational scaffolding in language learning, emphasizing the importance of emotional support in learning. In this way, students learn new concepts and develop important social and emotional skills.

Integrating cross-curricular themes is also a strategy that can enrich students' learning experiences (Tai 2024). For example, in an English as a foreign language (EFL) lesson, teachers can use history or science texts to provide a deeper context for the material. By associating language learning with other disciplines, students will feel their learning has greater meaning. This strengthens their understanding of the language and helps them develop critical thinking and analytical skills. For example, when discussing historical texts, students may be invited to analyze the influence of an event on the development of today's society, which can improve their speaking and writing skills.

In addition, using Responsive Technology in learning is also very important to create an inclusive learning environment. Platforms like Flipgrid or Padlet can facilitate reflection and collaboration outside class hours. This is especially beneficial for shy students, who may feel less comfortable speaking in front of the class. Students can share their ideas and opinions without the same pressure as in a physical environment by giving them a space to express themselves online. It also allows teachers to provide more focused and personalized feedback to each student, increasing their engagement in the learning process. These strategies are designed with time and resource constraints often encountered in high school. Although the national curriculum has specific demands that must be met, it is important to find ways to accommodate the diverse needs of students. By implementing these strategies, it is hoped that the learning process in high school will become more fun and meaningful for students.

Exploring deep learning adaptation strategies at the secondary school level shows that various approaches can be implemented to address existing contextual challenges. Through implementing Project-Based Hybrid Assignments, Gradual Scaffolding with Affective Support, Cross-Curriculum Theme Integration, and the Use of Responsive Technology, teachers can create a more inclusive learning environment and holistically support student development. Thus, it is expected that students will not only be able to meet the demands of the curriculum but also gain valuable skills and experience for their future.

Challenges and Theoretical Implications

The research findings reveal several significant challenges hindering an effective, well-rounded learning process. The first challenge that needs to be

considered is the existence of an exam-oriented curriculum. In many education systems, there is intense pressure to achieve the curriculum targets that have been set. This is often at odds with the principles of deep learning that focus more on the process than the result. For example, a study conducted by Sama et al. (2021) found that many teachers tend to ignore essential reflection activities in learning. They prefer to spend time teaching the material to be tested, thus sacrificing opportunities for students to engage in a more in-depth learning process. In this context, reflection is not just an additional activity but an integral part of learning that helps students understand and internalize their acquired knowledge. Thus, the pressure to achieve good test results can create a learning environment that does not support the development of critical and reflective thinking.

The second challenge is the student's resistance to reflective methods. Students accustomed to a passive learning approach often perceive mindful learning activities, such as journaling reflections, as unimportant or uninteresting. For example, in a class that applies reflective methods, students may feel reluctant to express their thoughts and feelings because they are not used to doing so. This shows that there is a need to change students' mindsets so that they can appreciate the importance of reflection in the learning process. By gradually integrating reflective activities and providing explanations of their benefits, it is hoped that students can be more open and involved in the process.

The third challenge faced is the limitation of teacher training. Many teachers are not used to integrating affective dimensions, such as the joyful aspect of language learning. In many cases, the training received by teachers focuses more on cognitive and methodological aspects without paying enough attention to how to create a fun and supportive learning environment (Sims et al., 2023; Adiguzel et al., 2023). This can impact teachers' ability to implement learning strategies that facilitate a more immersive learning experience for students. For example, a teacher who does not have training in creating a pleasant classroom atmosphere may have difficulty actively encouraging students to participate in discussions or reflective activities. Therefore, providing teachers with comprehensive training is important to develop the necessary skills to create a positive and productive learning environment.

Connecting these three challenges, we can see a close relationship between exam-oriented curriculum, student resistance to reflective methods, and the limitations of teacher training. When the curriculum focuses too much on exam results, it can reduce opportunities for students to engage in a more in-depth learning process (French, Dickerson, and Mulder 2024). A lack of support and understanding from untrained teachers can exacerbate students' resistance to reflective methods (Mirzaei, Phang, and Kashefi 2020). Therefore, to address these challenges, there needs to be a holistic approach involving curriculum changes, improved teacher training, and efforts to change student mindsets.

In conclusion, the challenges faced in applying more in-depth learning methods are complex and interrelated. Exam-oriented curriculum, student resistance to reflective methods, and limitations in teacher training all contribute to the difficulty in creating practical learning experiences. Educators, policymakers, and students need collaboration to overcome these challenges. By making the necessary changes, we can create a learning environment that focuses on test results and supports the development of critical and reflective thinking, ultimately resulting in more meaningful and well-rounded learning.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of this study are significant. First, the expansion of constructivist theory is one of the main points. Integrating deep learning and joyful learning is an innovative teaching method and a means to enrich Vygotsky's theory (Vygotsky 1978). Vygotsky, known for the concept of proximal developmental zones, emphasized the importance of social interaction in learning. By incorporating a positive psychology perspective, this research offers a new dimension previously underexplored in EFL pedagogy. For example, in classroom practice, when students engage in fun and meaningful activities, they learn the language cognitively and experience deep emotional growth (Cents-Boonstra et al., 2021; Sulis, 2022). This creates a more inclusive and supportive learning environment where students feel valued and motivated to learn.

Furthermore, the reinterpretation of the role of affectivity in the learning process is also an important aspect revealed in this study. These findings support the argument of Shao et al (2020) that positive emotions are not just supportive but are a core component of language mastery. In the context of EFL, positive emotions can significantly affect student motivation. For example, when students feel happy and engaged in the learning process, they tend to be more open to participating in discussions, practicing speaking, and exploring new vocabulary. This shows that creating a positive learning atmosphere can improve the overall effectiveness of language learning. On the other hand, the challenges in implementing this model also need to be considered. While this approach is promising, many educators may struggle to adapt this new method to their existing curriculum. For example, in many educational institutions, assessments still focus on quantitative cognitive tests (Murphy, Little, and Bjork 2023). The holistic assessment model proposed in this study, which includes portfolio, participation, and reflection, may require significant changes in how teachers assess student progress. This can be a challenge in itself, especially for educators who are familiar with traditional assessment methods.

Speaking of a new paradigm in assessment, this model offers a more comprehensive and in-depth assessment system. Student evaluation becomes more holistic by integrating portfolios as evidence of meaningful learning, student participation in joyful learning activities, and reflection as part of mindful learning. For example, a student who actively participates in class discussions and shows progress in his or her portfolio will get better grades than those who rely solely on cognitive test results. This approach evaluates students' knowledge and learning process, reflecting a complete understanding of learning progress. However, the challenges in implementing this assessment system cannot be ignored. Many educators may feel unprepared or lack the resources to implement this holistic assessment effectively. Therefore, educational institutions must provide adequate training and support for teachers in adopting this approach. Thus, they can better understand and apply new principles in teaching and assessment.

This study has identified challenges and theoretical implications of integrating deep learning and joyful learning in EFL education. From the expansion of constructivist theories that enrich our understanding of learning to the reinterpretation of the role of affectivity that demonstrates the importance of positive emotions in language mastery, these aspects suggest that this new approach has great potential to improve learning effectiveness. However, challenges in

implementation, especially in terms of assessment, must be overcome for this approach to be widely accepted and applied. With the proper support, we can create a more adequate learning environment where students learn a language and thrive as whole individuals.

Synthesis: Answering Research Objectives

The four research objectives were answered through the following synthesis. The principles of deep learning in EFL are a blend of cognitive engagement, contextual connection, and metacognitive reflection. In this context, cognitive engagement refers to the active mental processes when students interact with the learning material. For example, when students learn English, they memorize vocabulary and engage in meaning analysis, use it in different contexts, and apply it in real-world situations. Contextual connections emphasize the importance of the relevance of the material to the student's life experience. For example, using texts related to local cultures or global issues close to students' lives can enhance their interest and understanding. On the other hand, metacognitive reflection encourages students to think about their learning process, identifying effective strategies and areas for improvement. Thus, these three elements complement each other and create a dynamic and productive learning environment.

Mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning are affective pillars that enrich language education theory by balancing cognitive and emotional dimensions (Grauerholz 2001). Mindful learning invites students to be fully present in the learning process, reduce distractions, and improve focus. For example, in an English class, teachers can apply mindfulness techniques such as a short meditation before starting a lesson, which helps students to be better prepared to receive new information. Meaningful learning focuses on the relationship between new and existing knowledge, ensuring that students can see the material's relevance. For example, when students learn about everyday expressions in English, they can be invited to share relevant personal experiences, making learning more meaningful. Joyful learning emphasizes the importance of fun in learning, where students feel motivated and engaged. Fun activities like language games or creative projects can make learning more engaging and effective.

Adaptation strategies should be flexible, leverage authentic projects and technology, and involve teacher training. Flexibility in adaptation strategies allows educators to tailor their approach according to the needs and characteristics of students. For example, in situations where students have diverse cultural backgrounds, teachers can integrate authentic projects that reflect those variations. This project could be a collaboration with local communities to create relevant learning materials. In addition, technology can expand the scope of learning, such as using language learning applications or online platforms that allow interaction between students from different parts of the world. Teacher training is also essential, as well-trained teachers will be better able to implement effective and innovative strategies in their teaching. Thus, the combination of these three elements can create a responsive and adaptive learning environment.

The main challenges are systemic (curriculum, culture of learning), while the theoretical implications pave the way for the recontextualization of constructivist theory and holistic assessment. Systemic challenges often stem from rigid and inflexible curriculum structures, which can hinder creativity and innovation in

teaching. For example, if the curriculum focuses only on grammar mastery without leaving room for exploring social and cultural contexts, students may lose interest and motivation. Existing learning cultures can also be a barrier, mainly if students are accustomed to more traditional and less interactive teaching methods. The theoretical implications of this study suggest that the recontextualization of constructivist theory can provide a solution to the challenge. By adopting a more holistic constructivist approach, educators can create a more relevant and engaging learning experience for students.

The synthesis of the four objectives of this study shows that a holistic and integrated approach is essential in developing effective English teaching methods. Educators can create a more engaging and productive learning environment by combining cognitive engagement, contextual connections, and metacognitive reflection in deep learning principles and applying affective pillars such as mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning. In addition, flexible adaptation strategies and adequate teacher training will help address existing systemic challenges, paving the way for the recontextualization of constructivist theory and holistic assessment. Thus, this research makes a significant contribution to developing the theory and practice of English language education and opening up opportunities for further innovation in this field.

CONCLUSION

This literature review shows that the integration of the deep learning approach with the principles of mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in secondary school offers a new paradigm that is more holistic, reflective, and student-centered. This approach not only encourages conceptual and in-depth mastery of the material but also pays attention to students' affective, motivational, and awareness dimensions in the learning process. Thus, language learning is no longer just a transfer of linguistic knowledge but a process of internalizing meaning that is continuous and contextual. However, implementing this approach faces several challenges, such as limited time in the curriculum, pressure on academic achievement, and a lack of teacher training related to reflective and fun learning. Therefore, it is necessary to support education policies that encourage pedagogical innovation, provide continuous training for teachers, and develop teaching materials that follow deep learning principles.

As a recommendation, researchers and education practitioners must actively develop EFL learning models that integrate the three principles in an adaptive and inclusive learning context. Further research is also needed to examine the effectiveness of this integration implementation in a real-world context and its impact on student motivation, learning outcomes, and engagement. With joint efforts, the transformation of EFL learning towards a more meaningful and sustainable approach can be realized.

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