

Reimagining English Language Teaching in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

Clemira Levi Al Mapenzi¹
SMPBP Amanatul Ummah
alfirochmatin2@gmail.com

Submitted: August 2025

Accepted: November 2025

Published: January 2026

Abstract

The rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) has significantly transformed various aspects of education, including English Language Teaching (ELT). This conceptual article explores how AI reshapes pedagogical practices, teacher roles, and learner engagement in contemporary ELT contexts. Rather than focusing on empirical data, this paper critically examines theoretical perspectives and current discourses related to AI integration in ELT. Drawing upon constructivist learning theory, learner autonomy, and technology-enhanced language learning, the article argues that AI should not be perceived as a replacement for teachers, but as a pedagogical partner that enhances instructional quality and personalization. AI-driven tools such as adaptive learning platforms, automated feedback systems, and intelligent tutoring systems offer new opportunities for individualized learning, formative assessment, and continuous language exposure. However, this article also highlights critical challenges, including ethical concerns, digital inequality, over-reliance on technology, and the potential erosion of human interaction in language learning. The discussion emphasizes the need for pedagogically grounded AI integration, where human values, cultural sensitivity, and communicative competence remain central. This article concludes that effective ELT in the AI era requires a balanced approach that combines technological innovation with reflective teaching practices, professional development, and ethical awareness. The conceptual insights presented in this paper aim to support educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers in rethinking ELT frameworks that are responsive to technological change while preserving the human essence of language education.

Keywords: *English Language Teaching; Artificial Intelligence*

INTRODUCTION

English Language Teaching (ELT) has continuously evolved in response to social, cultural, and technological changes. From grammar-translation methods to communicative language teaching and task-based learning, ELT has adapted to meet the needs of learners in different eras. In recent years, the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) has introduced a new paradigm in education, offering both opportunities and challenges for language teaching and learning (Jiménez-García et al., 2024). AI technologies such as chatbots, automated writing evaluation, speech recognition, and adaptive learning systems are increasingly integrated into ELT classrooms across various educational levels. The growing presence of AI in ELT raises important conceptual questions. How does AI influence the role of teachers and learners? To what extent can AI support language acquisition processes? What pedagogical principles should guide the use of AI in ELT? These questions highlight the need for conceptual exploration beyond technical implementation. While many studies focus on the effectiveness of specific AI tools, fewer discussions address the broader theoretical and pedagogical implications of AI in language education.

From a theoretical perspective, ELT is deeply rooted in human interaction, social negotiation of meaning, and cultural context. Language is not merely a system of rules, but a medium of communication shaped by emotions, identity, and social relationships. Therefore, the integration of AI into ELT must be carefully examined to ensure that

technological advancement does not undermine the fundamental nature of language learning (Abrenilla & Redido, 2023; Baskara, 2023). This article positions AI as a transformative force that requires pedagogical reinterpretation rather than uncritical adoption. It argues that AI has the potential to enhance ELT by supporting learner autonomy, providing personalized learning experiences, and facilitating continuous feedback. At the same time, it acknowledges concerns related to ethical issues, teacher displacement, and unequal access to technology. By adopting a conceptual approach, this article seeks to synthesize existing theories and educational discourses to offer a holistic understanding of AI-enhanced ELT. The purpose of this article is to reimagine ELT practices in the AI era by proposing a balanced framework that integrates technological innovation with human-centered pedagogy. This discussion is particularly relevant for educators and institutions aiming to prepare learners for global communication in an increasingly digital world.

DISCUSSION

The integration of artificial intelligence into ELT can be understood through several key pedagogical dimensions: learner-centeredness, teacher roles, assessment practices, and ethical considerations. Conceptually, AI aligns with learner-centered approaches by enabling personalized and adaptive learning environments. AI-powered platforms can analyze learners' language proficiency, learning pace, and error patterns, allowing instructional materials to be tailored to individual needs. This personalization supports differentiated instruction, which has long been a challenge in traditional ELT classrooms. From the perspective of learner autonomy, AI offers tools that encourage self-directed learning. Intelligent tutoring systems and language learning applications provide learners with opportunities to practice language skills beyond classroom time (Lokare & Jadhav, 2024; Zhang et al., 2024; Zou, 2024). Immediate feedback on pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary use allows learners to monitor their progress independently. Such features resonate with constructivist theories, where learners actively construct knowledge through interaction and reflection.

However, the rise of AI also necessitates a reconceptualization of the teacher's role. Rather than being primary knowledge transmitters, teachers become facilitators, designers, and critical evaluators of AI-supported learning experiences. Teachers are responsible for selecting appropriate AI tools, contextualizing content, and guiding learners to use technology meaningfully. This shift requires continuous professional development and digital literacy among ELT practitioners. Assessment is another area profoundly influenced by AI. Automated writing evaluation and speech analysis tools offer efficient formative assessment, reducing teachers' workload and providing consistent feedback (Lee et al., 2024; Rukiati et al., 2023). Nevertheless, these tools often prioritize linguistic accuracy over communicative effectiveness, pragmatics, and creativity. Conceptually, this limitation underscores the importance of human judgment in language assessment. AI should complement, not replace, teacher-led evaluation that considers discourse, interaction, and cultural appropriateness.

Despite its benefits, AI integration in ELT raises critical ethical and social concerns. Issues of data privacy, algorithmic bias, and unequal access to technology must be addressed. Learners from under-resourced contexts may face disadvantages if AI becomes central to ELT without adequate infrastructure. Furthermore, excessive reliance on AI risks reducing authentic human interaction, which is essential for developing communicative competence. Therefore, a pedagogically sound approach to AI in ELT requires balance. AI

should be used as a supportive tool that enhances exposure, practice, and feedback, while teachers maintain control over instructional goals and values. Language learning remains a social and cultural process that cannot be fully automated. Conceptually, AI-enhanced ELT should prioritize meaningful communication, critical thinking, and intercultural awareness.

CONCLUSION

This conceptual article has examined the role of artificial intelligence in reshaping English Language Teaching in contemporary educational contexts. AI presents significant opportunities to enhance personalization, learner autonomy, and assessment efficiency in ELT. When aligned with sound pedagogical principles, AI can support learners in developing language skills through adaptive learning, continuous feedback, and extended practice opportunities. However, this article emphasizes that AI is not a pedagogical solution in itself. Language learning is inherently human, involving social interaction, emotional engagement, and cultural understanding. Therefore, the integration of AI into ELT must be guided by educational values rather than technological enthusiasm alone. Teachers remain central to the learning process as facilitators, mentors, and ethical decision-makers.

Conceptually, effective ELT in the AI era requires a human-centered framework that balances innovation with reflection. Institutions should invest not only in technology, but also in teacher training, curriculum redesign, and ethical guidelines. By doing so, AI can function as a pedagogical partner that enriches, rather than diminishes, the quality of language education. In conclusion, reimagining ELT in the era of artificial intelligence involves rethinking roles, practices, and priorities. A balanced and critical approach ensures that ELT continues to foster communicative competence, critical awareness, and global citizenship in an increasingly digital world.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to acknowledge educators, scholars, and practitioners in the field of English Language Teaching whose critical reflections and innovations have inspired this conceptual work. Appreciation is also extended to the academic community that continuously explores the intersection of pedagogy and technology, providing valuable insights into the evolving landscape of language education. This article is dedicated to teachers and learners who strive to adapt, reflect, and grow in the face of technological change while maintaining the human essence of education.

REFERENCES

- Abrenilla, E., & Redido, C. (2023). The next chapter of ELT: Embracing AI-infused pedagogies and evolving educational strategies in the post-pandemic landscape. *Multijournals.Org*, 1(5).
- Baskara, FX. R. (2023). AI-Driven Dynamics: ChatGPT Transforming ELT Teacher-Student Interactions. *Lensa: Kajian Kebahasaan, Kesusastraan, Dan Budaya*, 13(2). <https://doi.org/10.26714/lensa.13.2.2023.261-275>
- Jiménez-García, E., Martínez, N. O., & López-Fraile, L. A. (2024). Pedagogy Wheel for Artificial Intelligence: adaptation of Carrington's Wheel. *RIED-Revista Iberoamericana de Educacion a Distancia*, 27(1). <https://doi.org/10.5944/ried.27.1.37622>
- Lee, S., Jeon, J., & Choe, H. (2024). Enhancing Pre-Service Teachers' Global Englishes Awareness with Technology: A Focus on AI Chatbots in 3D Metaverse Environments.

TESOL Quarterly. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.3300>

- Lokare, V. T., & Jadhav, P. M. (2024). An AI-based learning style prediction model for personalized and effective learning. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 51. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2023.101421>
- Rukiati, E., Wicaksono, J. A., Taufan, G. T., & Suharsono, D. D. (2023). AI on learning English: application, benefit, and threat affiliation: Language, communication, and tourism department. *Jlrc*, 21(1).
- Zhang, C., Liu, Z., Aravind, B. R., & Hariharasudan, A. (2024). Synergizing language learning: SmallTalk AI In industry 4.0 and Education 4.0. *PeerJ Computer Science*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj-cs.1843>
- Zou, C. (2024). Revolutionizing machine learning: Harnessing hardware accelerators for enhanced AI efficiency. *Applied and Computational Engineering*, 47(1). <https://doi.org/10.54254/2755-2721/47/20241256>