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PORTS OF CONNECTION: MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES IN ELT

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PORTS OF CONNECTION: MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES IN ELT
BOOK OF ABSRACTS

Editor, Prof. Dr. Iryna Semeniuk Zümrütdal, Head of English Preparatory Department, Pîrî Reis University, Co-Editor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Selin Küçükai, Deputy Head of English Preparatory Department, Pîrî Reis University
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The content of this publication is arranged based on the alphabetical order of the authors.

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As the organizers of the first international conference “Ports of Connection: Multidisciplinary Perspectives in ELT”, hosted by the English Preparatory Department of Pîrî Reis University, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all colleagues and partners whose support and collaboration made this event possible.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our keynote speaker Prof. Dr. Birsen Tütüniş and invited scholars for generously accepting to be part of our conference and for sharing their valuable insights and expertise with our participants.

This event is kindly supported by the Equals Member Event Fund, for which we are sincerely grateful. We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to our valued sponsors, UES, Macmillan and Gordion Akademi, for their generous support and contribution to making this conference possible. Our appreciation also goes to the members of the scientific committee for their time, expertise, and commitment in reviewing submissions and contributing to the academic quality of the conference.

We would like to thank all presenters for their inspiring contributions, as well as the academic and administrative staff of the English Preparatory Department for their dedication and cooperation during the preparation process.

Finally, we warmly thank all participants whose interest, engagement, and enthusiasm make this conference a meaningful platform for academic exchange and collaboration.

Prof. Dr. Iryna Semeniuk Zümrütdal
On behalf of the Organizing Committee

Keynote Speaker

- **Prof. Dr. Birsen TÛTÛNİŞ**, English Language Teaching Department, İstanbul Kùltür University, Türkiye









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PORTS OF CONNECTION: MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES IN ELT

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|---------------|---|--|---|--|
| 08:30 – 09:30 | Registration | | | |
| 09:30 – 09:45 | Opening Ceremony | | | |
| 09:45 – 10:00 | Opening Remarks: Prof. Dr. Iryna Semeniuk Zümrütdal | | | |
| 10:00 – 10:45 | Plenary Speaker: Prof. Dr. Birsen Tütüniş | | | |
| 10:45 – 11:00 | Coffee Break | | | |
| | Concurrent Sessions | | | |
| | ALPHA (Room: A221-A222)  | BRAVO (Room: A205-A206)  | CHARLIE (Room: A215-A216)  | DELTA (Room: A217-A218)  |
| | Moderator: Oya ÖZGÜN | Moderator: Halil İbrahim FLİZ | Moderator: Burçin YAŞAR PAKKAN | Moderator: Duygu Nazime HARMAN |
| 11:00 – 12:30 | Tamari Dolidze Navigating Fluency: Using AI Tools to Improve ESP Speaking Skills in Maritime Education | Selin Demir Navigating between AI Placebos and Nocebos: Anchoring Teacher Critical AI Literacy in Classroom Judgment | Dandyson Michael Jaja Leading with AI: Transformative Educational Management in University Language Programs | Gamzegül Akça AI-Supported Learning Material Design with Differentiated Instructional Techniques |
| | Merve Aktaş How Multimodal Media Impact Gen Z Motivation and What This Means for ELT | Zeynep Oğul Akin Educators as Change Agents: Culture, Growth, and Global Classrooms | Merve Soydaş Corrective Feedback and Learner Uptake in English Preparatory Schools: A Study on Interactional Effectiveness and Student Perception | E. Uras Eren Cultivating Critical & Creative Thinking in Language Teacher Education |
| | Sema Yıldız-Huseynov Bridging the Gap: Applying Transactional Distance Theory to the Modern ELT Classroom | Arev Babahan From Silent Animation to Spoken Narrative: A Technology-Supported Approach to Developing L2 Speaking Skills | Siavash Bakhtshirin Beyond Outperformance: What Hologram-Delivered Grammar Instruction Reveals About Language Teacher Expertise | Özge Coşkun Aysal From Benchmarks to Blueprints: How Global Standards Architect Learning in ELT |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch Break - C Block | | | |
| | Concurrent Sessions | | | |
| | ALPHA (Room: A221-A222)  | BRAVO (Room: A205-A206)  | CHARLIE (Room: A215-A216)  | DELTA (Room: A217-A218)  |
| | Moderator: Gamzegül AKÇA | Moderator: Halil İbrahim FLİZ | Moderator: Merve SOYDAŞ | Moderator: Selin DEMİR |
| 13:30 – 15:00 | Javahir Aghayeva The psychological aspects of adopting English as a Second Language (ESL) in the context of artificial intelligence integration in language learning. | Burçin Yaşar Pakkan Accreditation as a Governance Technology: Re-conceptualizing Decision-Making, Managerial Reasoning, and Institutional Power in University Preparatory Programs | Kübranur Yılmaz Using AI-driven chatbots to enhance EFL students' ICC Levels: Turkish context | Kamila Ibragimova A Review of Language Learning Strategies and Learner Anxiety in the EFL Context |
| | Serra Kayadibli-Oğuz Bridging Bilingual Worlds: Experiences and Challenges of Turkish English Language Teachers Raising Bilingual Children in Türkiye | Murat A kbıyık Redefining 21st-Century Skills in the AI Era: A Conceptual Framework and Implications for ELT by | Rahim Sarı Extensive Reading with or without Tests? | Muhammet Selim Çabuk English Language Education Redefined: A Comparative Analysis of the Turkish Maarif Model, Singapore, and Finland |
| | Oya Özgün The Relationship Between University Students' AI Usage Patterns and Critical Thinking Dispositions | Saeedeh Gharakhany Enhancing 10th Graders' Emotional Awareness Through Reflection Journals in an EFL Classroom: An Action Research | Adesanya M. Alabi Language and Literature in ELT: Using Literary Texts to Teach English | Ghulam Sarwar Qadiry Reframing Technology-Enhanced ELT through Constructivist Theory: Integrating Piaget and Vygotsky in Digital Learning Environments |
| 15:15 – 16:30 | Bridge Mode: ON Ready for Command? Step beyond the classroom and onto the bridge. This Is Not a Presentation. This Is a Voyage. Think Like a Captain. Sail the Simulation! | | | |

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Ports of Connection, Multidisciplinary Perspectives in ELT,
April 03, 2026, Istanbul, Türkiye

Beyond Language Learning: Positive Psychology, Positive Discipline, and Metacognitive Growth in the 21st-Century Language Classroom

Birsen Tütüniş

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In the rapidly evolving landscape of 21st-century education, foreign language teaching is increasingly expected to address not only linguistic competence but also the broader developmental needs of learners. Traditional language instruction has often emphasized cognitive outcomes such as grammar mastery, vocabulary acquisition, and exam performance. However, contemporary research in applied linguistics and educational psychology suggests that successful language learning is shaped by a complex interaction of emotional, social, and cognitive factors. Effective language learning in the 21st century therefore requires attention to three interconnected dimensions: learners' emotional well-being, supportive classroom environments, and strategic awareness of learning. The first dimension, learners' emotional well-being, can be understood through the lens of positive psychology. Positive psychology focuses on the study of human strengths, flourishing, and positive emotional experiences. In language learning contexts, emotions such as enjoyment, curiosity, hope, and confidence play a significant role in shaping learners' engagement and persistence. Research has shown that positive emotions broaden learners' cognitive resources, reduce foreign language anxiety, and encourage greater participation in communicative activities. By fostering positive emotional experiences in the classroom, teachers can create learning conditions that promote motivation, resilience, and sustained engagement with the language learning process. The second dimension concerns the creation of supportive and respectful classroom environments. Here, the principles of positive discipline offer valuable insights for language educators. Positive discipline emphasizes mutual respect, encouragement, and the development of responsibility within the classroom community. Rather than relying on authoritarian or purely control-oriented classroom management approaches, it promotes collaborative problem solving, a sense of belonging, and constructive teacher-student relationships. In language classrooms that often operate within exam-oriented educational systems, such supportive environments are particularly important. When learners feel psychologically safe and respected, they are more willing to take communicative risks, experiment with language, and actively engage in interaction. The third dimension involves learners' strategic awareness of their own learning processes. Metacognitive strategies such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning enable students to regulate their learning more effectively. Through metacognitive engagement, learners become more aware of their strengths and challenges, set meaningful learning goals, select appropriate strategies, and reflect on their progress. Developing these skills fosters learner autonomy and empowers students to become active participants in their own language learning journey. This presentation explores how the integration of positive psychology, positive discipline, and metacognitive strategy instruction can transform foreign language classrooms into holistic and empowering learning spaces. Drawing on insights from applied linguistics and educational psychology, the presentation highlights theoretical foundations and practical pedagogical strategies that teachers can use to cultivate positive emotions, supportive classroom climates, and strategic learning awareness. By blending these complementary perspectives, foreign language education can move beyond traditional instruction toward a more human-centered model that supports both linguistic development and learners' long-term well-being and growth.

Keywords: Positive psychology; positive discipline; metacognition; foreign language teaching; learner autonomy.

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Biography:

Birsen Tütüniş is a Professor currently teaching at Istanbul Kültür University. She has received her PhD from University of Sussex, UK. She has worked at several universities in Turkey holding positions as English instructor, senior lecturer and administrator. She has conducted research on a variety of topics like; Computer Assisted Language Learning, Language Learning Styles and Strategies, 21st Century Skills in EFL classes, Artificial and Human Intelligence Balance in ELT. She has written articles and books on different issues related to TEFL. She has been awarded Istanbul Kültür University Scientific Award –BILSAP, 2022 and 2025. She has conducted TÜBİTAK projects. The published books she contributed are: "Learning Strategy Instruction in the Language Classroom" by Multilingual Matters, *Applied Linguistics in ELT classrooms*, "New Approaches in ELT", "Reconsidering the EFL Pedagogy with the Influence of Pandemic Conditions: Past-Present-Future", and *Theory and Practice of Teaching English to Young Learners*.

Prof. Tütüniş has taken part in international conference organizations and she has acted as the coordinator of Teacher Training and Education Committee (TTed SIG) of IATEFL.

ABSTRACTS

Ports of Connection, Multidisciplinary Perspectives in ELT,
April 03, 2026, Istanbul, Türkiye

Language and Literature in ELT: Using Literary Texts to Teach English

Adesanya M. Alabi

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As the West Germanic language that evolved at the beginning of the Medieval England, English has significantly risen to become an international language. In every society, language plays a crucial role in communicating meanings to people. It has the propensity to incite war and maintain peace depending on how it is used. Hence, English has been considered as a Language of Wider Communication (LWC) because it is used across borders and boundaries. For instance, many former British colonies use English as either their lingua franca or second language. Many countries across the globe now offer English as a foreign or second language at their schools. However, “[l]iterary works play a significant role in enhancing students' learning and English proficiency, offering a rich medium for language acquisition and critical thinking development. There are two primary ways to engage with literary works: reading the original texts and watching their film adaptations” (Trisnasari and Susiati, 2025:570). Additionally, it should be noted that language and literature have functioned concurrently. Literature cogently accentuates rigorous universal motifs such as love, ambition, social agency, politics and human experience. Many scholars have described language as the medium used to establish meaningful conversational exchange by humans. Accordingly, “the communicative approach “[i]s used to support learners in building communicative skills by employing functional language and authentic materials that reflect real-life situations”(Bist and Kandel,2025:2). This includes words arrangement and phrases that create logical sentences. So, literature in ELT forms a literary relevance that makes teaching and learning of English undoubtedly delightful. Incorporating literature into ESL develops students’ speaking and writing skills. In fact, “[t]he integration of literary texts into ESL (English as a Second Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms has garnered significant interest in recent years” (Vaishnav, 2024:539). While talking about using literary texts to teach English, one needs to consider the fact that its purpose is not to teach literature but using literature as a tool of teaching. Therefore, the students are made to understand that literary texts in English education includes fiction, non-fiction, fairytales, fables, myths, folklores, graphic novels, poetry and many more. These are the components that make a difference because they are authentic literary genres. Thus, “[l]iterary texts are significant in language classrooms because they offer engaging narratives, diverse cultural perspectives, and nuanced expression”(Taye,2025:1). The students are encouraged to read and internalise the storylines. Reading variety of texts makes them identify different styles each of the authors applies and even recognise the genres. It makes them understand that each of the authors creates his own characters appropriately and even the styles they use, such as simile, metaphor, rhyme, alliteration, or flashback are components for learning. They are all literary devices that make the students learn which texts are suitable for learning English. Furthermore, “[l]iterature circles have increasingly been utilised to enhance reading comprehension skills of second language”(Ma,2025:1). However, one must consider the levels of the students in order not to make the learning process difficult. Literature creates a kind of cultural awareness for students whose first language is not English. Drawing on qualitative approach, this paper mainly examines how literary texts such as novel, drama, short stories, novella and poems can be used as a tool to teach English in ESL and EFL classroom.

Keywords: Language, Vocabulary improvement, Teaching, Literary Texts, Cultural Awareness, Communicative Competence

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From Silent Animation to Spoken Narrative: A Technology-Supported Approach to Developing L2 Speaking Skills

Arev Babahan*

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This presentation describes a classroom-based implementation of a technology-supported digital storytelling task designed to support English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' speaking development. The activity involves transforming short silent animation films into voiced narratives through collaborative script writing and audio recording. Silent animations provide visual context without linguistic input, allowing learners to construct dialogue, interpret meaning, and practice language production in a low-pressure environment. Such multimodal input can support comprehension and retention by engaging both visual and verbal processing systems (Paivio, 1986; Jones & Miller, 2021). The task draws on principles of task-based language teaching and multimodal learning, encouraging learners to integrate visual interpretation, written language, and oral performance.

The activity was implemented in two different contexts within a university preparatory English program in Türkiye. In the first implementation, higher-proficiency students completed the task during class time within limited additional hours and used artificial-intelligence voice-generation tools to produce the final narration. Due to time constraints, some student-written dialogues exceeded the length of the scenes, and groups selected the most suitable lines through voting. The final script was created as a collage of contributions from different groups and converted into speech using text-to-speech software. In the second implementation, lower-proficiency students participated voluntarily in an extracurricular speaking club composed of learners from different classes. Building on the earlier experience, these students collaboratively evaluated dialogue options with closer attention to scene duration, clarity, and appropriateness. Participants proposed revisions, suggested shortening overly long lines, and discussed linguistic accuracy. While the teacher provided guidance and feedback, students occasionally rejected suggestions, arguing that certain scenes required no dialogue or that excessive verbalization might reduce narrative impact.

Classroom observations suggest that the task encouraged sustained language use, repeated rehearsal, and attention to pronunciation and intonation. Students frequently re-recorded lines to improve clarity, pacing, and emotional expression, demonstrating increased awareness of spoken language features. Similar benefits of voice-based digital storytelling for motivation and language development have been reported in previous studies (Hwang et al., 2020; Sampson et al., 2022). The collaborative process also fostered peer learning, as students negotiated wording choices and evaluated alternative formulations. In some cases, learners incorporated creative elements such as humor or culturally familiar expressions into their scripts, illustrating flexible use of formulaic language in context.

The extracurricular implementation highlighted the motivational benefits of voluntary participation and shared ownership of a tangible product. Students from different classes worked together despite differences in proficiency and prior familiarity, distributing responsibilities according to individual strengths. Viewing the completed video, which included participant credits, appeared to contribute to a sense of achievement and group cohesion. Post-activity reflections indicated emerging awareness of performance aspects such as timing and delivery. Silent visual narratives have also been noted for their potential to support empathy and intercultural understanding in language learning contexts (Smith & Callahan, 2023).

Overall, the experience suggests that silent animation voice-over tasks can provide an accessible and engaging way to support speaking practice while integrating technology in a manageable manner. Although digital tools facilitate production, the main learning opportunities appear to arise from collaboration, rehearsal, and active language use. The presentation concludes with practical considerations for adapting this type of task to different proficiency levels and instructional settings, including both classroom and extracurricular contexts.

Keywords: Multimodal Storytelling, Speaking Skills, Learner Agency, Classroom Practice, AI in ELT, Task-based Learning, Digital Pedagogy

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Ports of Connection, Multidisciplinary Perspectives in ELT,
April 03, 2026, Istanbul, Türkiye

Accreditation as a Governance Technology: Re-conceptualizing Decision-Making, Managerial Reasoning, and Institutional Power in University Preparatory Programs

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Accreditation has a long historical lineage and has been framed as the principal instrument of quality assurance, intended to raise standards, guarantee accountability, and represent legitimacy within higher education. Although now close to a ubiquitous feature in national systems and institutional types, (empirical) research has largely focused on measuring outcomes it has delivered such as teaching effectiveness, student achievement levels, curriculum coherence and faculty performance. However, its more structural and organizational-organizational implications regarding governance, authority, and managerial rationality are receiving relatively much less attention. This study aims to fill this gap by reconceptualizing accreditation as more than an evaluative tool, but rather a form of governance technology and actively remaking decision-making processes, power relations and institutional priorities in university English preparatory programs.

Our study is rooted in the Organizational Institutionalism and Institutionalization theory, it has been based particularly on some early works such as Meyer and Rowan (1977), DiMaggio and Powell (1983) or Scott (2008). These theories illustrate that formal organizational arrangements are not devices designed primarily to maximize efficiency; they function, rather, as institutionalized forms of legitimacy promoting consensual beliefs and normative expectations. The findings from this study suggest that accreditation initiates practices of embedding particular managerial rationalities in institutional micro-processes, often privileging standardization, documentation, metrics, and auditability over professional discretion, tacit expertise and context-based pedagogy.

Accreditation works on the basis of coercive, normative and cultural-cognitive mechanisms. Coercive pressures arise from regulatory structures, legislation, and funding schemes that condition the survival of institutions on meeting externally developed requirements. Normative pressures function through professional networks, disciplinary domain communities and quality assurance forums creating widely recognised notions of what constitutes appropriate practice. And over time, cultural-cognitive processes work to normalize audit-oriented managerial practices making them taken-for-granted or “natural.” Consequently, decision making becomes more and more removed from local, experiential knowledge: it is proceduralized, evidence-based and externally oriented. As a result, the dominant definitions of what constitutes effective management are increasingly defined in terms of measurable outputs, compliance metrics and centrally-driven audits rather than pedagogical rigour or academic autonomy.

This study extends our understanding of accreditation by positioning it within the context of an increasingly ubiquitous audit society, drawing on insights emerging from both institutional theory and scholarship in auditing, notably Power (1997) and Shore & Wright (2015). Accreditation produces organizational isomorphism, whereby institutions become more homogeneous as they draw together around common managerial templates, quality regimes and standardized accountability architectures yet with the potential for decoupling whereby compliance with rules exists in parallel to only marginal superficial change in everyday scholarly practice.

Reconceptualising the role of governance, this study shows how accreditation redistributes power away from academia and professionalization in favour of administrative and quality assurance personnel, reconfigures the priorities of institutions, and restricts practitioners’ freedom. As a constitutive governance mechanism, this study builds on higher education management literature by providing a theoretically integrated analysis of how contemporary accountability regimes work in producing institutional rationality and the logic of managerial practices in higher education institutions.

Keywords: Accreditation, Governance Technology, Higher Education, Institutional Theory, Organizational Institutionalism, Audit Society, Managerial Rationality, Accountability

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Leading with AI: Transformative Educational Management in University Language Programs

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Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly reshaping leadership practices in higher education, particularly within university language programs that sit at the intersection of pedagogy, assessment, student services, and institutional governance. As Schools of Foreign Languages respond to growing expectations for efficiency, accountability, learner support, and evidence-informed quality assurance, administrators are pressured to move beyond conventional management routines and develop AI-aware, ethically grounded, and human-centred leadership approaches. This study investigates how AI-enabled leadership influences administrative decision-making, teacher productivity, organisational trust, and institutional innovation in Turkish universities, while also examining the ethical and capacity conditions that determine whether AI adoption is experienced as empowerment or surveillance.

A convergent mixed-methods design was employed. Quantitative data were collected via a structured survey administered to 278 English-language instructors and 22 academic administrators across five public and foundation universities in Türkiye. Survey constructs included AI leadership competence (strategic vision, pedagogical alignment, data literacy, and staff support), perceived teacher productivity (planning time, feedback quality, assessment efficiency, and professional learning), organisational trust, and institutional innovation. The quantitative strand used reliability and validity checks followed by multiple regression and moderation analyses to test predictive and interaction effects. To deepen interpretation and capture change-management processes, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected administrators and senior instructors; thematic analysis focused on perceived benefits, risks, governance practices, and professional-development needs.

Results indicate that AI leadership competence significantly predicts perceived teacher productivity and institutional innovation, suggesting that leaders who can articulate purpose, align AI tools with program outcomes, and invest in teacher capacity are more likely to realise operational and pedagogical gains. Ethical readiness—operationalised as transparent data use, fairness in evaluation, informed consent, and clear boundaries for monitoring—moderates the relationship between AI adoption and organisational trust. Interview findings converge with the statistical results by showing that trust rises when leaders communicate openly about what data are collected, why AI is used, and how human judgment remains central in appraisal and decision-making. Participants reported that AI is most positively received when framed as a supportive co-pilot for lesson design, feedback generation, and workload reduction, rather than as an automated evaluator of teacher performance.

Based on integrated findings, the study proposes an AI-Driven Transformative Educational Leadership (AI-TEL) Model that links four interacting domains—awareness, integration, ethics, and innovation—to guide sustainable digital transformation in language-program management. The study contributes an empirically grounded framework for leaders seeking to combine machine intelligence with empathy, professional autonomy, and responsible governance. Practically, it offers actionable guidance for policy development, staff training, and communication strategies that can help university language programs become more efficient, ethical, and future-ready while preserving a human-centred educational mission. Limitations include reliance on self-reported productivity and a Türkiye-focused sample; future studies should incorporate longitudinal analytics, student outcome measures, and cross-country comparisons to validate and refine the AI-TEL model.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence; educational leadership; language programs; teacher productivity; ethical AI; higher education

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Cultivating Critical & Creative Thinking in Language Teacher Education

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Cultivating critical and creative thinking is widely recognized as a central goal of contemporary language teacher education; however, substantial evidence suggests that these competencies do not develop automatically through language learning and instead require deliberate, explicit pedagogical support. Creative thinking, defined by Mulcahy (2008) as the capacity to rationally examine one's internal dialogue and thought processes in order to evaluate thinking in a disciplined manner, is widely regarded as an essential competency in educational contexts in the twenty-first century. However, when such evaluative thinking is enacted through a second language, research has shown that it can impose additional cognitive demands on learners, potentially limiting deep analytical engagement unless appropriate instructional scaffolding is provided (Floyd, 2011).

Beyond educational contexts, critical thinking is increasingly foregrounded as a key graduate attribute in response to twenty-first-century societal and labor-market demands, yet concerns persist regarding a mismatch between university preparation and professional expectations (OECD, 2017). At the same time, while curricula and policy documents frequently position creativity and critical thinking as core educational outcomes, they often provide limited pedagogical guidance on how these competencies can be systematically cultivated in classroom practice (Cruz et al., 2021). This persistent gap between pedagogical vision and enacted practice is particularly evident in language teacher education programs. In this sense, it becomes meaningful to examine how teachers' engagement in teaching for critical thinking contributes to the development of their own critical thinking skills and dispositions, and how these, in turn, inform and deepen their pedagogical practice (Omar, A., & Albakri, 2016).

Recent syntheses of the literature further highlight this concern. Yuan et al.'s (2022) systematic review of EFL teachers' engagement with critical thinking demonstrates that while many teachers acknowledge the importance of critical thinking, relatively little attention has been paid to how pre-service teachers are systematically prepared to teach it. Their review also points to the dominance of small-scale qualitative studies and the scarcity of practice-oriented, developmental approaches—such as action research—that explicitly model critical thinking pedagogy within teacher education contexts. Complementing this line of inquiry, Coşgun Ögeyik's (2025) action research study provides evidence that structured, iterative interventions can significantly enhance pre-service teachers' awareness of critical and creative thinking domains, particularly when these competencies are embedded into pedagogical practice rather than treated as abstract skills.

Responding to these gaps, the present study investigates how critical and creative thinking can be fostered through a design-based inquiry approach embedded within an undergraduate language teacher education course titled *Material Development in Language Teaching*. Rather than focusing solely on the production of instructional materials, the course positioned pre-service English language teachers as pedagogical designers engaged in an iterative inquiry cycle: *Ask* (Who are my learners?), *Explore* (What are their needs and contexts?), *Design* (What pedagogical materials can address these needs?), and *Reflect* (What worked, and what should be rethought?). This structure was intended to create a pedagogical space where critical analysis and creative action are mutually reinforcing.

The study involved 43 pre-service English language teachers enrolled in the course. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews and reflective journals, capturing participants'

evolving reasoning, design decisions, and professional self-awareness. Thematic analysis focused on how participants articulated critical reasoning, creative problem-solving, and reflective judgment as they navigated the interconnected processes of learner analysis, material design, and pedagogical reflection.

Findings indicate that design-based inquiry offers a pedagogically meaningful approach for translating abstract ideals of critical and creative thinking into concrete pedagogical practice. Participants demonstrated increased sensitivity to learner needs, greater willingness to question taken-for-granted instructional assumptions, and more innovative approaches to material design grounded in contextual realities. Consistent with prior research, the study suggests that explicitly modeled, practice-oriented pedagogies can support pre-service teachers in developing the dispositions and skills necessary for reflective, context-sensitive, and innovative teaching (Yuan & Stapleton, 2020; Coşgun Ögeyik, 2025). Overall, the study contributes to ongoing discussions on how language teacher education can move beyond curricular rhetoric and meaningfully cultivate critical and creative thinking through pedagogical design and reflective inquiry.

Keywords: Critical thinking in language teacher education; Creative pedagogical design; Creativity in language teaching, ELT, Higher Education, Pre-service language teachers

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AI-Supported Learning Material Design with Differentiated Instructional Techniques

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Common challenges in English language classrooms, especially learner's low motivation, teacher-centered delivery, and mixed language proficiency levels impede the productive learning environment. Studies indicate that the fixed instruction and failure to accommodate the needs of academically diverse learners lead to learner passivity and decline their active participation (Cohen et al., 2020; Dörnyei, Z., & Kubanyiova, M., 2014). These issues cause difficulty in promoting autonomous and self-paced learning environments that respect different learning styles in ELT setting. To address these obstacles, instructors deal with a huge workload of designing materials incorporating learner expectations and embedding them meaningfully into their classes. This study explores how AI-supported prompt frameworks facilitate instructors to design assorted learning materials using three Differentiated Instructional (DI) techniques: Station Rotation, Choice Board, and Tiered Assignments. DI emphasizes adjusting task complexity, modality, and pacing to support heterogeneous learner profiles (Tomlinson, 2014); and prior research indicates that DI enhances engagement, autonomy, and motivation, as well (Evans & Boucher, 2015; Bushie, 2015). The methodology for this study includes Copilot Agents trained for each three DI techniques as an AI-based material development tool to assist instructors to obtain a significant variety of learning materials to tailor the learner needs within a relatively short duration. Instructors received training in using AI prompts constructed for this study to generate learning materials built around one DI technique of their choice. The corresponding prompts of Copilot Agents helped create lesson design by offering clear task pathways, adapting learners' proficiency level, and ensuring alignment with multiple intelligences theory. As a final step, it is planned to administer structured interviews with the instructors to collect qualitative data regarding their experiences, perceptions of AI usefulness, learner reactions, task feasibility, and observed changes in engagement. Expected findings suggest that AI-supported material design aid the instructors in implementing DI more consistently by lessening preparation time and generating materials with lower cognitive loads. In accordance with DI research, instructors are expected to notify higher participation in choice board activities allowing autonomy and accelerated on-task behavior during station rotations due to clearer roles, collaborative and active transitions. Tiered tasks are anticipated to promote level-appropriate tasks, thereby mitigating the detachment caused by tasks which are too easy or too difficult. AI prompts are counted on supporting instructors in designing student-led lessons, providing structured scaffolding for classroom collaboration, which is likely to handle the free-rider and passivity issues. The implications of this study appear likely to contribute a Likert scale questionnaire inquiring the perceptions of instructors on AI-supported DI learning materials for ELT contexts. Besides, teacher training courses in AI prompt literacy and remodeling coursebooks could be organized to assist institutions to stimulate learning environments that cultivate autonomy, enhance motivation, and furnish more functional and fairer instructional design.

Keywords: differentiated instruction, AI-supported design, choice board, tiered assignment, station rotation, learner engagement

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The psychological aspects of adopting English as a Second Language (ESL) in the context of artificial intelligence integration in language learning.

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This study examines the psychological impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on learners of English as a Second Language (ESL), focusing on how AI-based tools influence motivation, confidence, emotional engagement, and perceptions of linguistic competence. It aims to explore AI not merely as a technological innovation, but as a deeply psychological factor that shapes how learners think, feel, and interact with the language. The study also argues that the effectiveness of AI in language learning depends on achieving a balance between technological support and human interaction.

The research adopts a qualitative approach based on learners' reflective experiences. Data is derived from personal narratives of ESL students actively using AI-based learning tools, and is analyzed through thematic analysis to identify recurring psychological patterns, including motivation, autonomy, emotional response, and perceived competence.

The findings reveal that AI has become an invisible yet powerful presence in the learning process. On the one hand, AI functions as a personalized and constantly available tutor, offering immediate feedback, adaptive difficulty, and opportunities for self-paced learning. This environment reduces anxiety, supports repeated practice, and fosters a sense of control, which strengthens learners' motivation and confidence. On the other hand, reliance on AI creates psychological tension. Learners often question the authenticity of automated feedback and may feel uncertain whether their progress reflects genuine linguistic competence or adaptation to algorithmic patterns.

The study further demonstrates that learners' motivation increases when AI is perceived as a supportive tool rather than a controlling authority. In such contexts, learners are more willing to take risks, experiment with language, and view mistakes as part of the learning process. However, the absence of genuine emotional interaction in AI systems can lead to feelings of isolation, as these systems lack empathy, personal understanding, and human warmth. As a result, learners often seek encouragement and emotional support from teachers, whose role remains central in providing meaningful interaction and maintaining psychological balance.

In conclusion, AI in ESL learning represents a complex interplay of opportunity and challenge, independence and reliance, and technological efficiency and emotional engagement. The study concludes that effective language learning requires the integration of AI tools with human guidance, as this balance not only enhances linguistic development but also shapes learners' self-perception within a rapidly evolving digital educational environment.

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Keywords: Cognitive load, motivation, engagement, emotional intelligence, learner autonomy, self-efficacy

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Using AI-driven chatbots to enhance EFL students' ICC Levels: Turkish context

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As the internationalization of higher education accelerates, Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) has emerged as a foundational outcome of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. Contemporary models of ICC conceptualize intercultural competence as a multidimensional construct encompassing affective dispositions (openness, curiosity, empathy), cognitive knowledge (cultural self-awareness and sociocultural understanding), and behavioral skills (adaptability and effective interaction). Developing these dimensions requires sustained engagement with cultural difference; however, many EFL contexts provide limited opportunities for authentic intercultural contact. In response to this gap, artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, particularly conversational agents, offer new forms of digitally mediated intercultural simulation. This study investigates the extent to which AI-driven chatbot interaction can support the development of ICC among EFL learners in a Turkish higher education context.

The research adopted a mixed-methods, quasi-experimental design involving 27 preparatory school students enrolled at a private university in Turkey. The Integrated Model of Intercultural Communication Competence (IMICC) scale was administered as a pre- and post- test to assess changes across affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions. The seven-week intervention required students to engage in bi-weekly, unstructured, text-based conversations with Mizou, a GPT-4o-powered chatbot programmed to simulate interlocutors from seven culturally diverse countries: India, China, the United States, Iran, Nigeria, Russia, and Germany. The chatbot was used not as a language tutor, but as an intercultural interlocutor designed to expose learners to multiple cultural perspectives. To complement the quantitative data, students produced reflective journals every two weeks, documenting their evolving perceptions, emotional responses, and communicative strategies.

Quantitative findings from paired-samples t-tests revealed a statistically significant increase in the affective dimension of ICC ($p = .003$), indicating enhanced openness, empathy, and confidence in intercultural communication. Although mean scores in the cognitive dimension increased, the change did not reach statistical significance. The behavioral dimension remained relatively stable during the intervention period. Qualitative thematic analysis provided deeper insight into these patterns, revealing a “friction-to-empathy” trajectory. Early journal entries frequently reflected surface-level generalizations, uncertainty, and implicit stereotyping. Over time, however, students demonstrated greater reflexivity, perspective-taking, and pragmatic sensitivity, suggesting the gradual development of critical cultural awareness.

The findings indicate that AI-mediated dialogue may function as a low-anxiety intercultural rehearsal space that facilitates affective readiness and reflective engagement. While short-term interventions may be insufficient to produce measurable behavioral transformation, the affective gains observed in this study highlight the preparatory role of AI in supporting intercultural growth. By providing structured yet psychologically safe encounters with cultural difference, AI-driven chatbots can complement traditional EFL pedagogy and contribute to broader goals of global citizenship education. The study thus contributes to ongoing discussions on digital mediation, intercultural learning theory, and the evolving pedagogical implications of artificial intelligence in higher education.

Keywords: Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), AI-Integrated ICC, AI-Driven Chatbots, Global Citizenship, AI-mediated interaction, Digital Pedagogy

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How Multimodal Media Impact Gen Z Motivation and What This Means for ELT

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Recent transformations in youth digital cultures have revolutionized the way Generation Z learners engage with English, which has challenged earlier assumptions about L2 motivation in EFL contexts. Traditional motivational theories in ELT emphasize instrumental, future-oriented goals to learn English, such as academic success or employment opportunities. However, Gen Z learners increasingly use English through multimodal, digitally mediated environments such as social media, gaming, streaming, and other virtual communities. English is presented in these platforms as a tool for expressing identity and experiencing belonging. The current study is a conceptual meta-synthesis that explores how multimodal media influence Gen Z motivation and considers the implications for the EFL classroom.

Guided by interdisciplinary perspectives from applied linguistics, media studies, and sociolinguistics, the study proposes a new understanding of motivation as a multidimensional and structurally conditioned construct. The theoretical framework integrates multimodality with Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005) and Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (2000) to understand the change in the motivational tendency of this generation of learners who are digital natives. L2MSS explains how multimodal engagement through digital platforms changes L2 identity, and SDT explains how motivation is sustained or discouraged through pedagogical conditions that may or may not meet learners' psychological needs.

From a methodological perspective, the study adopts a qualitative meta-synthesis approach with empirical studies, systematic reviews, and descriptive research from EFL contexts, particularly from digitally mediated learning environments. Among the recurring themes of motivation across the reviewed literature, the findings reveal that learners' motivation improves when multimodal EFL teaching aligns with Gen Z's multimodal meaning-making styles, which include visual, auditory, and textual modes. This alignment also improves learners' authenticity because it acts as a bridge between classroom English and lived English, changing learners' perception from seeing English as abstract knowledge to a means for meaningful communication.

Interpreted through the SDT model, the results suggest that the multimodal EFL environments have a positive effect on learner motivation because they meet the need for autonomy and relatedness. Studies show that learners are more likely to engage in English when they have a choice over the platform, the speed, and the mode in which they express themselves. Multimodal media gives them opportunities to successfully communicate in low-anxiety contexts while interacting with peers meaningfully. According to the L2MSS model, the motivational conditions provided by the multimodal EFL environments enable the actualization of the Ideal L2 Self due to the social visibility they offer, which makes future-oriented identities more tangible and personally significant to the student. In addition, the multimodal ELT environments enable the actualization of the Ought-to L2 Self by providing an instrumental meaning to external demands, such as the need to be recognized on a global scale and to have a job, while the L2 Learning Experience is actualized by the way students are emotionally engaged with their identity validated through the interactions across platforms. As a result, the traditional distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, as well as the distinction between instrumental and integrative motivation, is challenged by the multimodal EFL environments.

The synthesis identifies some tensions and risks that can be encountered during the implementation of the multimodal EFL environments, such as superficial engagement, cognitive overload, confusion of

registers, or even cultural alienation. Motivation can be sustained only if the multimodality is embedded intentionally and critically into classroom practices. The findings suggest that it is more accurate to explain motivational decline by a misalignment between EFL curricula, instruction, assessment, or policies, and contemporary learner needs or experiences. In conclusion, the paper argues for a need to adopt a view of L2 motivation based on participation and calls for institutional reforms to meet the demands of having digital natives as students. Accordingly, the present study suggests redesigning pedagogical practices to align language education with the current learner needs and interest accompanying the Gen Z cognitive characteristics and identity expressions.

Keywords: motivation, multimodality, Generation Z, digital native, identity, L2MSS, SDT, digitally mediated learning

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Corrective Feedback and Learner Uptake in English Preparatory Schools: A Study on Interactional Effectiveness and Student Perception

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Although Corrective Feedback (CF) has been an essential aspect of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research for many years, there is still much to learn about the multifaceted connection between interactional effectiveness and the learner's internal cognitive-affective state. This study provides a rigorous qualitative examination into the dynamics of CF and learner uptake in the exam-focused, high-intensity setting of a university English preparation school in Turkey. Built upon the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996) and the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990), the study particularly investigates the "recast paradox"; a concept highlighted by Lyster and Ranta (1997) in which the most common feedback type frequently brings about the lowest rates of student repair because it fails to include perceptual salience.

The core objective of this study is to analyze how learners process these interventions in real-time, extending beyond the basic categorization of feedback types. Recent research indicates that context-specific factors and individual variability may influence the effectiveness of CF instead of being universal (Sheen, 2011; Granena & Yilmaz, 2018). The psychological effects of feedback may be very different from naturalistic or immersion situations in the Turkish EAP (English for Academic Purposes) context, where students are exposed to intense academic pressure. The distribution of CF techniques (recasts vs. prompts), the interactional flow that enables or impedes student-generated repair (Swain, 1995; Lyster & Saito, 2010), and the learners' personal impressions are the three key components that this study concentrates on. Through analysis of these elements, the study intends to establish how students perceive feedback as either a communicative danger or a useful teaching tool (Nassaji, 2015).

The study applies a multi-methodological approach and uses an interpretive paradigm to elicit observable behaviors and unobservable mental processes (Seedhouse, 2004). Ten chosen instructors and nearly twenty pupils in the preparatory department of a foundation university will supply the necessary data. To ensure a thorough micro-analysis of classroom conversation, the methodology uses high-quality audio and video recordings of communication-focused classes. An observation technique tailored from the Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) framework (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995) will be applied to code these recordings.

The study utilizes Stimulated Recall Interviews (SRIs) to comprehend the "why" behind learners' reactions (Gass & Mackey, 2016). To obtain participants' quick psychological and cognitive reflections, this technique provides them with particular video clips of their own feedback sessions within 48 hours of the class. This phase is necessary for finding out how affective filters, like social face-saving concerns or language anxiety (Sheen, 2008), shape the impact of CF. Guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) methodology, a thematic analysis of these interviews will present an integrated perspective of the learners' emotional reactions and internal explanations (Loayon & Meugna, 2025). Through evidence-based guidance for enhancing feedback in Turkish higher education, this study pursues the goal of contributing to the gap between SLA theory and classroom realities.

Keywords: Corrective Feedback, Learner Uptake, Stimulated Recall, Classroom Interaction, Student Perception, Turkish EFL Context.

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Redefining 21st-Century Skills in the AI Era: A Conceptual Framework and Implications for ELT

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The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly generative AI systems, has fundamentally reshaped long-standing assumptions about knowledge production, cognitive labor, and skill development in education. While the discourse on 21st-century skills has traditionally emphasized the “4Cs” (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication), emerging AI technologies challenge the adequacy of this framework. In contexts such as English Language Teaching (ELT), where language production, feedback, and interaction are central, AI tools increasingly participate in processes once considered uniquely human. This study aims to reconceptualize 21st-century skills in light of AI integration and to propose a coherent conceptual framework outlining its implications for ELT.

This research adopts a qualitative literature review methodology based on systematic document analysis. Drawing on recent empirical studies, conceptual papers, and international policy frameworks, the study synthesizes research on AI literacy, digital literacy, adaptive learning, teacher agency, gamification, self-directed learning, and structured AI integration models. Rather than generating primary data, the study employs thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, tensions, and emerging constructs in the literature comprised of empiric studies as well as international educational reports. Particular attention is given to how AI is framed either as a supportive augmentation tool or as a disruptive force that redefines pedagogical relationships, assessment practices, and learner autonomy.

The analysis reveals three major findings. First, traditional 4Cs-based frameworks are increasingly insufficient in AI-mediated learning environments. The literature consistently highlights the need for an expanded competency model that includes critical AI literacy, human–AI collaboration, algorithmic communication (prompt literacy), and ethical-cognitive regulation. Second, AI integration in ELT tends to remain either instrumental (e.g., automated grading, drafting assistance) or fragmented, lacking structured pedagogical alignment for the benefit of all stakeholders in education. Frameworks like scaffolded AI integration and curated augmentation approaches suggest that AI should function as a cognitive support system rather than a substitute for human reasoning. Third, teacher identity and professional agency emerge as central concerns. Studies emphasize that AI integration requires repositioning teachers as learning architects and ethical mediators who guide reflective and responsible AI use.

Based on these findings, the study proposes a conceptual redefinition of 21st-century skills as “AI-integrated competencies,” which move beyond individual cognitive performance toward human–AI co-regulation of learning processes. In ELT specifically, this shift implies rethinking writing pedagogy, assessment transparency, process-based evaluation, and dialogic speaking tasks that distinguish between AI-assisted preparation and human performance. The study argues that the critical question is no longer whether students use AI, but whether educational systems intentionally design environments that cultivate reflective, ethical, and cognitively engaged AI use.

By synthesizing multidisciplinary scholarship, this study contributes a structured conceptual framework that clarifies how 21st-century skills must evolve in the AI era. The implications extend to curriculum design, teacher education, assessment reform, and policy development. Ultimately, redefining competencies in AI-mediated education requires preserving the humanistic core of language learning and teaching while strategically integrating intelligent technologies to enhance, rather than replace, pedagogical relationships.

Keywords: 21st-century skills, artificial intelligence, AI literacy, ELT, human–AI collaboration.

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The Relationship Between University Students' AI Usage Patterns and Critical Thinking Dispositions

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The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies has caused a fundamental transformation in higher education, reshaping traditional learning paradigms. The abundance of AI tools raises critical questions regarding how students interact with these technologies, as effective implementation depends not only on technical competence but also on individual cognitive skills. Literature underscores that AI in education must be understood as a multidimensional case that has an impact on students' critical thinking, creativity, and academic performance, rather than simply as the adoption of a new tool. Students' interaction with AI varies significantly, shaped by their digital literacy and analytical filters. Using AI tools may come with risks such as producing hallucinations and biased outputs. Thus, students must put an analytical filter rather than accepting outputs unquestioningly. Recent studies (Lee et al., 2025; Melisa et al., 2025; Özer et al., 2025) noted that over-reliance on AI tools may reduce self-reflection, independent judgment, critical thinking effort, cause cognitive offloading, and weaken students' questioning abilities over time. Given this potential threat, the primary objective of this quantitative research is to investigate the relationship between university students' AI usage patterns and their critical thinking dispositions. Additionally, through demographic results, this study aims to provide essential insights for the relationship between university students' gender, faculty area, frequency of using AI tools, AI competence, purpose of using AI tools and their critical thinking skills. Clarification of the results will show whether students approach AI tools with blind trust or analytical scepticism. This study's findings will enlighten educators, policymakers, and educational institutions to develop more effective digital literacy curricula and ethical AI integration strategies for students. The research method of the current study is quantitative research method with correlational survey design. The target population of the research consists of higher education students studying at various universities in Türkiye during the year 2025-2026 academic year. In the selection of sample, the convenience sampling method will be preferred. Therefore, the sample includes Piri Reis University students consisting of undergraduate, graduate, and preparatory school students. The ethical approval was obtained from Piri Reis University Social Sciences and Humanities Ethics Committee on 12th of January with a report number 51. The data collection tools include personal information form including demographic questions such as students' gender, department of study, grade level, frequency of AI usage, and purposes of AI usage and critical thinking disposition scale developed at the University of Florida and adapted into Turkish by Ertaş Kılıç and Şen (2014) consisting of 25 items with three-factor structure. The data is being collected until the end of February 2026. The data analysis will be carried out using the SPSS 26.0 software package. The normality of the data will be checked by examining skewness and kurtosis values. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficients will be calculated for the reliability of the scale. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis will be applied to determine the

direction and level of the relationship between AI usage frequency and critical thinking scores. Further, ANOVA test will be conducted to determine whether the demographic variables influence critical thinking skills. Additionally, independent samples t-test will be implemented to reveal the gender differences.

Keywords: Higher education students, AI literacy, critical thinking disposition, AI usage patterns, GenAI, overreliance

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From Benchmarks to Blueprints: How Global Standards Architect Learning in ELT

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Global standards such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), international quality assurance frameworks, and accreditation criteria are commonly understood as neutral instruments designed to measure, compare, and validate learning outcomes in English Language Teaching (ELT). Within this dominant discourse, standards are treated as external benchmarks that manifest after learning has occurred, serving primarily evaluative and regulatory functions, rather than as a guiding function. This presentation challenges that assumption by proposing a conceptual shift: standards do not merely assess learning; they actively *architect* it. Rather than functioning as passive reference points, global standards operate as formative infrastructures that shape what learning can become, what forms of knowledge are legitimized, and what kinds of learners are ultimately produced.

In this presentation, the term *global standards* refers not only to language proficiency frameworks such as the CEFR, but also to international quality assurance principles and accreditation schemes that shape curriculum design, assessment practices, institutional organization, and pedagogical decision-making. As these frameworks circulate across contexts, they do not remain fixed; they are reinterpreted, adapted, and embedded within local practices. In doing so, they quietly reorganize expectations about what counts as progress, quality, and success—often long before any classroom activity takes place.

Drawing on interdisciplinary perspectives from curriculum theory, education policy, organizational studies, and learning design, this presentation reconceptualizes standards as *learning architectures*. These architectures do not simply describe proficiency or competence; they actively configure pedagogical realities. They influence how curricula are sequenced, how assessment is structured, what kinds of learning are made visible, and which forms of knowledge are valued.

This presentation further argues that policy alignment in ELT is not a technical or administrative task but a profoundly pedagogical one. When institutions adopt global frameworks, they do not simply comply with external expectations; they participate in the construction of learning realities. Standards function as design forces that shape what becomes visible, assessable, and actionable in everyday practice. Seen from this perspective, quality assurance is not merely a retrospective process of verification, but a prospective infrastructure that shapes the future of teaching and learning.

To make this argument concrete, the presentation draws on practice-anchored examples from contemporary ELT contexts, including CEFR-based curriculum mapping, outcomes-oriented assessment design, and accreditation-informed program restructuring. It also considers how emerging modular structures, micro-credential pathways, and stackable forms of certification are increasingly used to redesign learner progression, support persistence, and expand participation—further illustrating how standards do not simply evaluate learning, but actively shape its possible forms. Through these illustrations, the presentation shows how standards often guide pedagogical decisions more powerfully than explicit methodological commitments.

By reframing standards as learning architectures, this presentation invites ELT scholars, policymakers, and practitioners to move beyond compliance-oriented understandings of quality. It proposes a more reflexive and agentic engagement with standards as pedagogical infrastructures that can be interpreted,

negotiated, and redesigned. Ultimately, this perspective positions ELT not as a field governed by standards, but as one continually shaped by the architectures those standards create.

Keywords: Global standards; CEFR; quality assurance; accreditation; learning architectures; curriculum design; micro-credentials; ELT innovation

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EXTENSIVE READING WITH OR WITHOUT TESTS?

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This study investigated the role of testing in extensive reading (ER) programs within an intensive English language curriculum at the preparatory level of a boarding school. Adopting an experimental, method-comparison design, the research examined whether an ER program operating under a no-test policy would yield comparable or superior language proficiency gains relative to ER programs in which learners were regularly assessed through comprehension-based or information-based tests. The study further explored the differential effects of three distinct ER assessment conditions on overall English language proficiency development across a sustained instructional period.

Participants were 14- to 15-year-old students enrolled in an Intensive English program who were assigned to one of three groups: a group administered five regular comprehension-based tests, a group administered five regular information-based tests, and an experimental group that received no tests. All three groups followed the same coursebook curriculum and had equal access to a library of 60 graded readers provided by the institution. Instruction was delivered across 26 class hours of 40 minutes per week over a 30-week period, yielding approximately 500 hours of in-class English instruction for all groups. Out-of-class engagement with English varied across groups, ranging from 360 to 430 hours, with the no-test group accumulating the fewest total hours of English exposure overall (approximately 860 hours, compared to up to 950 hours in the tested groups). Language proficiency was assessed using three administrations of the Preliminary English Test (PET): a pre-test at the outset of the study (PET 1), a post-test administered four weeks before the conclusion of the experimental period (PET 2), and a final post-test at the end of the program (PET 3).

Analysis of raw post-test scores indicated that the comprehension-based test group achieved the highest PET scores, followed by the information-based test group, with the no-test group scoring lowest. However, these differences did not reach statistical significance. Critically, when proficiency gains were evaluated in terms of effect sizes, the no-test group produced the largest effect, indicating that its learners made proportionally greater gains relative to baseline proficiency than either of the tested groups. This finding is rendered more noteworthy when the additional time and administrative burden associated with test preparation, invigilation, and grading in the two assessed groups are taken into account. Furthermore, the motivational costs of testing - including the test anxiety documented in the ER literature as a potential inhibitor of reading engagement - were absent for the no-test group, suggesting that the effective advantage of the no-test condition may be greater still than raw effect size comparisons reveal.

The findings challenge the default assumption that assessment is a necessary or beneficial component of ER programs in school settings. Instead, the results lend empirical support to the view, advocated by Krashen (2004) and Day and Bamford (1998) among others, that extensive reading is most effective when preserved as an intrinsically motivated, pleasure-oriented activity, free from the evaluative pressures that formal testing introduces. Implications for ER program design in secondary education contexts are also discussed.

Keywords: extensive reading, self-selected reading, acquisition, tests

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Enhancing 10th Graders' Emotional Awareness Through Reflection Journals in an EFL Classroom: An Action Research

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This study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the impact of reflection journals and brief Emotional Intelligence (EI) activities on the emotional awareness of 10th-grade students in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Emotions such as anxiety, frustration, fatigue, and motivation significantly influence high school students' participation and performance. Although Emotional Intelligence is recognized as important for learning, emotional awareness is frequently neglected in language education. The research investigated the influence of EI-focused reflection journals on 10th graders' emotional awareness over a three-week period.

Eighteen high school students aged 14 to 16 participated in the intervention. The study adopted an action research approach and collected both qualitative and quantitative data over almost four weeks, starting on December 12, 2025. The three-week Emotional Awareness Integration (EAI) program comprised guided reflection journals administered before and after lessons, brief Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) mini-lessons focused on identifying and naming emotions, and emotional vocabulary tasks integrated into regular English lessons. Students reflected on their feelings, potential triggers, and any changes observed during class activities. Prompts and sentence starters were provided to facilitate participation.

Data collection methods included a Likert-scale emotional awareness questionnaire administered pre- and post-intervention, student reflection journals, and a teacher reflection log. The questionnaire measured emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence. Quantitative data were analyzed using Wilcoxon signed-rank tests. The results indicated no statistically significant differences between pre- and post-intervention scores across the three subscales. However, rank distributions demonstrated observable shifts in several students' responses, particularly in accurate self-assessment and self-confidence.

The qualitative findings indicated clear developmental progress. Initially, students produced brief reflections using vague terms such as "fine," "normal," or "tired," and frequently omitted explanations for their feelings. Many attributed their emotions to factors external to the lesson. Over time, students began employing more precise descriptors, including "motivated," "confident," "anxious," "proud," "relieved," and "calm." They increasingly identified classroom-related triggers such as group work, teacher support, task difficulty, and personal performance. Students articulated how their emotions evolved during lessons and demonstrated improved recognition and understanding of their feelings. These developments suggest enhanced emotional awareness and self-regulation.

The teacher's reflection log offered contextual insights into classroom dynamics. The teacher observed that factors such as late-day classes, exam-related stress, and student fatigue influenced student engagement and emotional states. These variables likely constrained the measurable impact of the short-term intervention. Nevertheless, both student reflections and teacher observations indicated consistent improvement in students' ability to label emotions and reflect on their experiences.

In summary, the findings indicate that short-term interventions may not produce substantial changes in standard emotional intelligence scores; however, reflection journals can facilitate the initial development of emotional awareness among young EFL students. The study underscores the value of incorporating structured emotional reflection into regular classroom activities to enhance emotional recognition, vocabulary, and reflective thinking. Although extended studies with larger samples are necessary for more robust evidence, this research demonstrates that practical classroom strategies can support emotional awareness in EFL contexts.

Keywords: Action Research, Emotional Intelligence, Reflection Journals, EFL, Emotional Awareness, 10th Grade.

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Navigating between AI Placebos and Nocebos: Anchoring Teacher Critical AI Literacy in Classroom Judgment

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Generative AI is rapidly entering language education through lesson planning, producing texts, feedback, and assessment support. Institutional guidance, however, often remains tool-centered, emphasizing platforms and prompting efficiency, while a more consequential issue is under-examined: how teachers judge AI-suggested content under real classroom constraints, and how those judgments are shaped by accountability pressures, policy ambiguity, and uneven access to verification practices. Teacher Critical AI Literacy (CAIL) is framed here as calibrated professional judgment situated within sociotechnical conditions, rather than as a stable attitude or individual competence (Long & Magerko, 2020; Veldhuis et al., 2024). As an analytic lens, AI placebo/nocebo dynamics are used to describe expectancy-shaped response tendencies. In clinical science, placebo and nocebo effects refer to beneficial and adverse outcomes, respectively, shaped by positive and negative expectations, communication, and contextual cues (Colloca & Barsky, 2020). In the present educational context, the terms are used non-clinically as shorthand for two contrasting judgment patterns: AI over-trust (treating AI-looking output as authoritative and minimizing verification) and AI over-rejection (treating AI as harmful and defaulting to blanket bans or punitive escalation). These patterns align conceptually with human-automation behaviors such as automation bias (overreliance on decision aids) and related omission/commission error tendencies (Goddard et al., 2011), as well as algorithm aversion (avoidance after observed errors) (Dietvorst et al., 2015). In the present study, a vignette-based qualitative design is employed to make teachers' judgments observable under realistic yet controlled conditions. Approximately 25-30 university EFL instructors complete an online vignette task (30-40 minutes) involving six scenarios, each featuring a plausible AI-suggested output with one dominant embedded risk: (1) questionable sourcing, (2) cultural stereotyping, (3) accent ideology and "native-like" norms, (4) detector-driven punitive assessment, (5) privacy-threatening feedback workflows, and (6) level-inappropriate lesson planning masked by professional jargon. These risks were selected because they recur in institutional AI guidance and represent high-frequency classroom decision points (assessment, bias, sourcing, privacy, and level appropriateness). For each vignette, participants (a) identify what is problematic, (b) justify why it matters (pedagogically, ethically, institutionally), and (c) propose a concrete 5-10 minute classroom move that turns the AI failure into a critical learning task. The analysis procedure follows a hybrid strategy: directed qualitative content analysis guided by CAIL dimensions (cognitive, ethical, pedagogical, sociotechnical) (Veldhuis et al., 2024), combined with reflexive thematic analysis to identify recurring reasoning patterns and value conflicts. Responses are coded first deductively using CAIL dimensions, then inductively refined through reflexive thematic analysis to identify emergent rationales and tensions. The study offers insights into how policy uncertainty and accountability pressures influence teachers' judgments, shifting them toward AI over-trust or over-rejection, and frames critical AI literacy as situated context-dependent decision-making that necessitates institutional support, reflective professional development, and context-sensitive policy design in EFL contexts.

Keywords: Critical AI literacy; teacher judgment; expectancy effects (placebo/nocebo); automation bias; algorithm aversion; vignette methodology.

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Bridging the Gap: Applying Transactional Distance Theory to the Modern ELT Classroom

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Many people think of "distance" in education as just a matter of location or time. However, Michael Moore's Transactional Distance Theory (TDT) describes distance as a psychological and teaching space, a kind of "transaction" between teacher and learner that can sometimes cause misunderstandings (Goel et al., 2012). This study looks at how Transactional Distance (TD) affects English Language Teaching (ELT) and suggests that TDT is a useful way to understand psychological distance in classrooms, even when teachers and students are in the same place (Wengrowicz, 2014). By exploring the main parts of TDT (Dialogue, Structure, and Learner Autonomy) this study aims to give ELT practitioners practical ideas to help students get more involved and succeed.

In ELT, Dialogue (D) is key for learning a language and means having clear, purposeful communication during lessons. Ekwunife-Orakwue and Teng (2014) show that more dialogue helps reduce transactional distance by allowing quick feedback and answers. Structure (S) is about how strict or flexible a course is. If a course is very rigid and every step is set in advance, it can make transactional distance greater by limiting chances for open conversation (Wengrowicz, 2014). Learner Autonomy (LA) is the student's ability to take charge of their own learning. When there is less dialogue and the structure is more rigid, students need to be more independent to close the gap (Goel et al., 2012).

When we use Transactional Distance Theory in physical classrooms, we see that just being in the same room does not mean students and teachers feel close. If the teacher is the only authority, this can make the gap between them bigger. Dockter (2016) says that a teacher's presence is shaped by relationships, not just by their role. In person, things like body language and quick interactions help students feel the teacher's presence more. Other factors, like how experienced the teacher is and how big the class is, also matter. Wengrowicz (2014) points out that experienced teachers usually feel less distance, but bigger classes can make the gap wider because it is harder to talk to each student.

To minimize transactional distance in ELT, practitioners should prioritize multiple forms of interaction. Beyond student-teacher dialogue, student-content interaction plays a significant role in shaping learning outcomes (Ekwunife-Orakwue & Teng, 2014). Balancing structured course design with flexibility for spontaneous adjustments enables teachers to address students' immediate needs. As technology becomes more prevalent, fostering learner-technology interaction is increasingly important, as students with higher readiness levels achieve deeper learning and experience reduced distance (Duan et al., 2024; Gan & Sun, 2022). Artificial Intelligence also contributes by offering personalized feedback and adaptive learning pathways (Mohd Amin et al., 2025). Recognizing transactional distance as a dynamic variable across educational contexts enables ELT professionals to foster more autonomous and effective language learning environments.

Keywords: Transactional Distance, ELT, Dialogue, Learner Autonomy, Physical Classroom, Teaching Persona, Course Structure.

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Bridging Bilingual Worlds: Experiences and Challenges of Turkish English Language Teachers Raising Bilingual Children in Türkiye

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In the multicultural landscape of contemporary Türkiye, a growing number of Turkish parents, particularly those with a professional background in English Language Teaching (ELT), are navigating the unique challenge of raising their children in a bilingual environment involving both Turkish and English. This phenomenological study explores the language environments created by ten Turkish ELT professionals to foster bilingualism in their children, shedding light on the strategies, successes, and socio-cultural challenges inherent in "intentional" or "non-native" bilingualism. The research specifically addresses how these educators bridge their professional expertise with parental roles to create sustainable "ports of connection" for language acquisition within a predominantly monolingual society.

This research utilizes a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of the participants. The study cohort consists of ten Turkish parents (5 mothers, 5 fathers) in their 30s and 40s, all of whom possess degrees in ELT or Literature and have extensive teaching experience ranging from 7 to over 24 years. Collectively, these participants are raising 15 children. Data were primarily collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted via phone or video calls, allowing for a nuanced understanding of their motivations and practices. Furthermore, the study incorporated participant observation by analyzing public audio and video recordings shared by eight participants on online platforms, documenting their children's language proficiency. The data were transcribed and analyzed manually through thematic analysis to identify recurring strategies, challenges, and coping mechanisms. Trustworthiness was established through prolonged engagement and member checking.

The findings reveal a dynamic and flexible approach to bilingual upbringing. Interestingly, most participants did not engage in detailed pre-birth planning, emphasizing spontaneity and the child's enjoyment during English interactions. Methods of exposure varied, with half of the participants employing the One Person One Language (OPOL) method, while others used temporal language division or situational English exposure (e.g., using English only during one-on-one time). All participants highlighted the critical role of age-appropriate books, cartoons, and songs as essential tools for immersion.

Challenges identified include the high cost of quality English resources and occasional resistance from children. However, the participants maintained a "sailboat" metaphor—adjusting their strategies to the child's emotional "sea" rather than using force. A significant result is that 13 out of 15 children achieved high fluency, demonstrating the effectiveness of intentional bilingualism despite the parents being non-native speakers. This study offers valuable implications for educators and parents, proving that professional ELT expertise, when adapted with flexibility and child-centeredness, can successfully foster bilingualism in non-native contexts.

Keywords: intentional bilingualism, non-native bilingualism, early bilingualism, simultaneous bilingualism, artificial bilingualism, home immersion, mono-cultural family bilingualism

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Beyond Outperformance: What Hologram-Delivered Grammar Instruction Reveals About Language Teacher Expertise

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As artificial intelligence becomes increasingly embedded in language education, a growing body of research has examined the potential of AI-driven tools to support or supplement instruction (Adhami & Moore, 2026). Yet relatively little empirical work has directly compared AI-delivered and human-delivered instruction within the same lesson framework, and fewer studies still have used such comparisons to interrogate what constitutes the distinctive expertise of the human language teacher. This study addresses that gap through a comparative investigation of hologram-delivered and human-delivered grammar instruction with eight B1-level learners in one-on-one online English sessions. Both instructional conditions followed an identical test-teach-test sequence: each learner completed a CEFR-aligned pre-test generated by a GPT-based model informed by a detailed learner profile, received explicit instruction on the target grammatical form, and then completed a similarly generated post-test to measure immediate learning gains. The same AI-generated test instruments were used across both conditions to ensure comparability. In the AI condition, instruction was delivered by an AI-powered holographic system; in the human condition, it was delivered by a qualified and experienced teacher via an online platform.

Results indicate that the hologram condition produced more consistent delivery, more immediate corrective feedback, and more individually targeted error responses than the human-delivered condition. These findings are broadly consistent with the wider literature on intelligent tutoring systems, which highlights their capacity for timely, adaptive, and individualised feedback in language learning contexts (Adhami & Moore, 2026). However, the study extends beyond this performance comparison. Qualitative analysis of recorded lesson data revealed that hologram-based instruction was notably limited in situations requiring affective and interactional responsiveness. Moments in which learners hesitated, communication broke down, confidence appeared fragile, or the pedagogically appropriate response was not to explain further but to wait. In these instances, the human teacher drew on a form of professional judgment that cannot be reduced to content delivery: the capacity to read the emotional and interactional dynamics of the lesson and to respond in ways shaped by relationship, context, and accumulated experience (Borg, 2006). This kind of in-the-moment decision-making, knowing when to intervene, when to withhold correction, and when to allow a learner to struggle productively (Kapur, 2016), proved critical to supporting learning in ways the hologram system could not replicate.

The study argues that AI-driven advantages in grammar instruction do not diminish the need for human teachers but instead help clarify the distinctive nature of their expertise. Rather than competing with AI on accuracy and speed of content delivery, the paper proposes that ELT professionals should redefine and strengthen their competence around the dimensions of teaching that remain fundamentally human: the affective, the ethical, and the interactional (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). These findings urge teacher educators and programme leaders to move beyond the question of whether AI can replace teachers and toward a more urgent one: how to ensure that teachers are equipped to do what AI cannot.

Keywords: AI in language teaching, intelligent tutoring systems, AI-delivered instruction, holographic instruction, grammar instruction, test-teach-test, teacher cognition

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Navigating Fluency: Using AI Tools to Improve ESP Speaking Skills in Maritime Education

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In the maritime profession, clear and fluent communication in English is not only a professional requirement but also a critical safety factor. International maritime operations rely on standardized English communication to ensure safe navigation, effective teamwork, and accurate response to emergency situations. For this reason, the development of speaking fluency is a key objective in Maritime English courses within the framework of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). This presentation explores the use of artificial intelligence (AI)-driven strategies to support the development of speaking fluency among maritime ESP learners at Batumi State Maritime Academy (BSMA).

Recent advances in AI technology have created new opportunities for language instruction, particularly in specialized professional contexts such as maritime education. AI-supported tools offer learners targeted pronunciation practice, maritime-specific vocabulary development, and interactive fluency-building activities tailored to their individual needs. Through speech recognition and adaptive feedback systems, students are able to identify pronunciation errors, improve stress and intonation patterns, and gain greater accuracy in the use of Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP).

In addition, AI-generated prompts, dialogues, and simulations provide learners with authentic communicative tasks that closely resemble real-life maritime situations. These may include bridge communication, ship-to-ship interaction, emergency procedures, and port operations. Such simulations allow students to practice spoken English in a low-anxiety environment while engaging in meaningful, task-based communication relevant to their future professional roles. The possibility of independent practice outside the classroom further supports learner autonomy and continuous skill development.

The integration of AI technologies into the ESP classroom has been shown to enhance learner engagement and motivation. Personalized feedback and adaptive learning paths help students progress at their own pace, addressing individual weaknesses while reinforcing strengths. As a result, learners demonstrate improved pronunciation accuracy, expanded maritime vocabulary, increased fluency, and greater confidence in spoken interaction.

Overall, AI-based strategies effectively complement traditional instructional methods rather than replace them. When integrated thoughtfully, AI tools support instructors in creating dynamic, learner-centered environments and provide maritime ESP students with practical communication skills essential for their professional careers. The use of AI in Maritime English instruction therefore represents a valuable approach to preparing future seafarers for accurate, confident, and safe communication in international maritime settings.

Keywords: Maritime English, ESP, AI-assisted learning, speaking fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary development, personalized instruction

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Educators as Change Agents: Culture, Growth, and Global Classrooms

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In today's globalized English language classrooms, cultural diversity is not the exception—it is the norm. It is highly unlikely that any teaching and learning hub around the world is composed of learners of the same culture, community, background. This is one of the reasons shaping the changing role of teachers today and explains why it is essential for teachers to be equipped with the skills and knowledge to apply inclusive teaching approaches, making culturally responsive teaching an important capability for teachers. Culturally responsive teaching is an outgrowth of multicultural education, be it socially, financially or academically. It certainly challenges many conventional teaching and learning practices and assumptions about ethnically, racially, socially, and culturally diverse people by arguing that no ethnic group should have exclusive power over others even in case that is the majority in number. An important definitional dimension of culturally responsive teaching is multi-cultural competencies, or helping students learn more about their own and others' cultures, as part of their personal development (Gay, 2015). Culturally responsive teaching is centralized around students' cultural identities and recycles students' experiences as assets to teach them more efficiently. In a parallel positive approach, growth mindset teaching is based on the belief that people can develop and increase their skills, intelligence, and capabilities via effort, learning, and effective strategies. Failures are embraced as chances and obstacles are viewed as opportunities for growth (Suman, 2023). The highly valued cultural identities, experiences and perspectives of students in socio-culturally responsive teaching are the assets to be developed through persistence, effort and learning from one's mistakes in the growth-mindset teaching context. A stand-alone growth mindset approach may unintentionally sound like: "Keep working harder!" However, culturally responsive teaching approach will be enriching and supporting the learning experience giving the message: "You can grow, and your identity is an asset in that growth!". Therefore, incorporating these approaches into day-to-day English language learning classroom activities and curriculum design will definitely acknowledge the diverse cultural backgrounds of students as well as fostering resilience and a positive frame of mind towards challenges during students' learning journey. And this move reframes the teacher's role from authority to cultural mediator and growth facilitator. The key principles of culturally responsive teaching that each student is valued and of growth mindset that each student is capable nurture the sense of belonging, resilience and ultimately high achievement. This outcome is highly expected to have a notable impact on student retention, which is a major issue to be addressed in today's classrooms at all levels. To this end, this talk aims at signifying the changing role of the teacher in utilizing these approaches in the English language learning context with examples of hands-on activities for the audience to cultivate inclusivity, student engagement and retention within their own teaching practices.

Keywords: Socio-culturally responsive teaching, growth-mindset, changing teacher role, diversity, inclusivity, learner autonomy, retention

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POSTER PRESENTATIONS' ABSTRACTS

Ports of Connection, Multidisciplinary Perspectives in ELT,
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English Language Education Redefined: A Comparative Analysis of the Turkish Maarif Model, Singapore, and Finland

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In an increasingly globalized world, foreign language education has transcended beyond linguistic competence, evolving into a multifaceted process that involves cognitive development, cultural awareness, and character building. This study provides a comprehensive "compare and contrast" analysis of three distinct foreign language education models: the newly introduced Turkish "Century of Türkiye" Maarif Model (TYMM), Singapore's English Language Syllabus 2020, and the Finnish National Core Curriculum. The research specifically focuses on three pillars: learning approaches, grammar instruction methodologies, and the integration of values education within language acquisition.

The learning styles across these three nations reveal diverging pedagogical philosophies. The Finnish model is characterized by its high degree of professional autonomy and flexibility, emphasizing "phenomenon-based learning" where students explore real-world themes through multidisciplinary modules. In contrast, Singapore utilizes the STELLAR model (Strategies for English Language Learning and Reading), which fosters 21st-century competencies such as critical inquiry and empathetic communication through a highly coherent and efficient infrastructure. Meanwhile, the Turkish Maarif Model introduces a unique tripartite hierarchy—Holistic, Semi-Holistic, and Inductive—structuring language skills into specific "Process Components". While Finland prioritizes student-centered flexibility and Singapore emphasizes outcome-based inquiry, the TYMM focuses on a systematic standard of cognitive stages, moving from basic perception to critical internalization.

Regarding grammar instruction, the models represent a shift from traditional deductive methods toward contextual and discovery-based approaches. Finland adopts a "linguistically responsive" approach, treating every teacher as a language teacher and integrating grammar naturally within communication. Singaporean education maintains a focus on accuracy through the use of "metalinguage," where students learn to talk about language structures at word, sentence, and text levels. The Turkish Maarif Model redefines grammar as a "Foreign Language Support Skill", employing a discovery learning method that guides students through automaticity, awareness, and conscious discovery. While Singapore emphasizes structural impact and Finland emphasizes communicative fluidity, the Turkish model focuses on the learner's mental capacity to "discover" rules from meaningful contexts.

The most significant area of contrast lies in the integration of values. The Finnish curriculum is built upon values of equity, equality, and multilingualism, aiming to develop a student's cultural identity. Singapore follows a "Character and Citizenship Education" (CCE) framework, fostering values like integrity, resilience, and harmony. The Turkish Maarif Model, however, establishes a holistic "Virtue-Value-Action" framework, explicitly weaving national and spiritual values such as justice, patience, and patriotism into the organic fabric of the foreign language lesson.

In conclusion, while all three models aim to develop the "whole person," they do so through different cultural and systemic lenses. Finland offers an egalitarian and flexible path, Singapore provides a disciplined and competency-based framework, and Turkey introduces a value-oriented, process-based

systematic approach. This comparative study offers valuable insights for educators and policymakers seeking to balance global standards with local educational needs.

Keywords: Turkish Maarif Model, Singapore Syllabus 2020, Finland National Curriculum, Comparative Education, ELT Methodology, Values Education.

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The Educational Impact of Simulation-Based Experiential Learning at Primary and Secondary School Levels: The Flight Hour Project Example

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The integration of educational technologies at the primary and secondary school levels is a critical element in supporting cognitive development processes. During these developmental stages, abstract concepts in physics and aviation principles can lead to conceptual misunderstandings when conveyed through traditional, lecture-based methods. This study aims to analyze the educational outcomes of an "Integrated Simulation-Based Learning Model," implemented within the scope of the Flight Hour Project. The model combines an original aviation-themed educational game, individual flight simulation, VR, and AI-supported sentiment analysis systems within a pedagogically integrated framework. The central research question investigates how to design how to design a safe, interactive and emotionally responsive learning environment learning that transforms students' curiosity into academic success.

The study is built upon Piaget's constructivist approach which emphasizes knowledge construction through active interaction with the environment, and Vygotsky's social cognitive development theory, which highlights the fundamental role of social interaction. Bandura's social learning framework, and John Dewey's learning by doing philosophy further support the experiential and interactive nature of the model. Considering the transition of primary and secondary school students from the "concrete operational" to the "abstract operational" stages, learning is defined as an active, concrete, and technologically mediated process. This simulation model transforms the student from a passive listener into an active subject in control of the aircraft.

The model is designed with a multimodal approach tailored to the developmental needs of the target age group. At the core of the application is a unique aviation game developed within the scope of the project. Through this game, students learn basic flight mechanics by experiencing them firsthand. The process is supported by individual flight simulators, VR drone applications, and AI-powered announcement systems. The most unique layer of the research is the AI-powered mood analysis system. These digital components are integrated with physical workshops to create an ecosystem addressing cognitive, sensory, and psychomotor domains simultaneously.

Findings derived from school-based implementations, observational data, and AI sentiment analysis reports show that simulation-based experiential learning has profoundly positive effects on students. Mood analysis results confirm that students' anxiety levels decrease and they exhibit high focus, especially during authentic game and simulation processes. Personalized pilot materials generated by AI help students develop career awareness and become emotionally engaged in the process.

In conclusion, the success of immersive technologies at the primary and secondary school levels depends not on the complexity of the tools used, but rather on a pedagogical architecture designed with constructivist principles and emotion-focused feedback mechanisms. It allows students to learn by doing and experiencing within an authentic context while maintaining high levels of motivation and emotional engagement. This model bridges the gap between theory and practice and equips students with 21st-century skills such as decision-making and problemsolving considering scientific data.

Keywords: Constructivist Education, Game-based Learning, AI-Powered Teaching, Emotional Monitoring, Educational Simulation, STEM, Constructivist Pedagogical Approach, Learning by Doing.

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Reframing Technology-Enhanced ELT through Constructivist Theory: Integrating Piaget and Vygotsky in Digital Learning Environments

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The rapid expansion of digital technologies has fundamentally transformed English Language Teaching (ELT), reshaping pedagogical practices, learner interactions, and the very nature of language acquisition in both formal and informal educational contexts. Despite this widespread adoption of digital tools such as AI-assisted learning platforms, online collaboration spaces, and adaptive learning systems, the theoretical foundations guiding technology-enhanced pedagogy remain insufficiently examined. In many contemporary classrooms, technology is integrated primarily for its novelty or administrative convenience rather than its alignment with principled learning theories, a tendency that risks undermining its educational value.

This paper examines how two major constructivist perspectives—Jean Piaget's cognitive constructivism and Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory—can inform the design, selection, and implementation of technology-enhanced language learning environments. Constructivism, broadly conceived, holds that learners actively construct knowledge through experience rather than passively receiving transmitted information. By situating digital pedagogy within this theoretical tradition, educators can move beyond surface-level technology integration toward deeper, more meaningful learning experiences.

Piaget's cognitive constructivism emphasizes the developmental stages through which learners progress, arguing that new information must be assimilated into existing cognitive schemas or accommodated through the reorganization of those schemas. In digital learning contexts, this framework highlights the critical importance of managing task complexity and avoiding cognitive overload. When AI platforms or interactive exercises present content that is misaligned with learners' current developmental stage or prior knowledge, they risk creating frustration rather than facilitating growth. Effective technology-enhanced ELT, from a Piagetian standpoint, demands careful sequencing of digital tasks and deliberate scaffolding that respects the learner's readiness to engage with new linguistic forms and structures.

In contrast, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory foregrounds the fundamentally social nature of learning and the role of mediated interaction in cognitive development. His concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)—the distance between what a learner can accomplish independently and what they can achieve with expert guidance or peer collaboration—provides a powerful framework for understanding how digital tools can extend learner performance. Collaborative platforms such as discussion forums, shared writing environments, and peer review tools create opportunities for socially mediated language learning that mirrors the kind of scaffolded interaction Vygotsky described. Similarly, AI-guided feedback systems can function as digital mediators, offering timely, personalized support that helps learners cross the threshold of independent ability.

Drawing on illustrative examples from secondary ELT classrooms, this paper argues that technology does not automatically produce constructivist learning outcomes. Rather, effective digital pedagogy emerges when technological tools are intentionally designed and pedagogically deployed to support both cognitive development and socially mediated learning. A chatbot, for instance, can either serve as a passive response machine or as a Vygotskian mediator—depending entirely on how it is integrated into classroom activity and instructional design.

The paper further contends that ELT practitioners and curriculum designers need a theoretically grounded lens through which to evaluate and select digital tools. Without such a framework, technology adoption risks becoming a superficial performance of modernity rather than a substantive enhancement of language learning. By bridging Piagetian and Vygotskian insights, this paper offers a coherent

constructivist rationale for technology-enhanced ELT that prioritizes learner cognition, social interaction, and pedagogical intentionality. The implications of this analysis are relevant not only for classroom teachers but also for teacher educators, educational technology developers, and policy makers engaged in shaping the future of language education.

Keywords: Constructivism, Technology-Enhanced ELT, Piaget, Vygotsky, Digital Learning, Zone of Proximal Development, Cognitive Overload, Scaffolding

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A Review of Language Learning Strategies and Learner Anxiety in the EFL Context

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Learner psychology has widely long been widely recognized as a crucial factor in second language acquisition; however, its role in shaping language learning strategy use still remains insufficiently explained. Emphasizing research on learner self-efficacy and foreign language anxiety, this study carefully investigates how these psychological factors directly influence learners' use of language learning strategies. This literature review systematically examines how learner self-efficacy and foreign language anxiety specifically relate to the use of language learning strategies and further contribute to differences in learner engagement.

Building on Oxford's comprehensive framework of language learning strategies and Griffiths's strong emphasis on learner individuality and strategic engagement, this study thoroughly explores the extent to which learners' beliefs in their own capabilities, as well as their levels of language-related anxiety, shape their strategic choices and overall behaviors. It also carefully investigates how learners actually implement these strategies in real-life contexts, including, importantly, various EFL settings.

A review of the relevant literature clearly indicates that higher self-efficacy is strongly associated with greater use of metacognitive and self-regulatory strategies, while elevated foreign language anxiety is consistently linked to reduced use of social and communicative strategies. Furthermore, the literature also highlights that affective variables can either facilitate or, alternatively, hinder strategy use, thereby supporting Griffiths's important argument that successful strategy implementation is ultimately psychologically grounded. The literature further suggests the need to move beyond purely frequency-based strategy research and to consistently consider learning psychology as a central and essential component in understanding strategic language learning.

Notably, individual differences among learners, including important factors such as age, prior language experience, and personality traits, can further significantly influence the overall selection and practical effectiveness of language learning strategies. Moreover, learners' use of strategies is highly dynamic and may gradually change over time as their self-efficacy continually develops and their varying levels of language-related anxiety naturally fluctuate.

Overall, integrating psychological perspectives into EFL teaching can significantly enhance learners' strategic competence and ultimately promote more effective, meaningful, and personalized language learning experiences.

Keyword: Language Learning Strategies, Self-Efficacy, Learner Anxiety, EFL, Metacognitive Strategies, Language Achievement

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Ports of Connection: Multidisciplinary Perspectives in ELT Set Sail for Knowledge

