

Beyond the Conference: Insights, Reflections & New Perspectives



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Table of Content

Editor's Note	i
President's Remarks	ii
Conference Chairs Remarks	iii
AI for ELT: Enhancing Multilingual Classroom Feedback <i>Zeno Benjamin</i>	1-3
Humanistic Leadership in Digital Classrooms: Empowering English Language Learners <i>Mark Lyimo</i>	4-8
Translanguaging and Science Learning in Lower Public Secondary School Students in Tanzania <i>Frida Mbwafulu & Okoa Simile</i>	9-15
The Application of Technological Tools in Referencing and Citation Writing <i>Jamal Kipunde Yasin</i>	16-17
Enhanced Technology in Storytelling English Language Teaching <i>Aidan Jackson Maganza</i>	18-20
Beyond the Textbook: Reflecting on the Power of Practical Language Learning <i>Evarist Pekea Chewale</i>	21-22
Gendering Occupations in ELT Textbooks: Raising Critical Awareness <i>Zeno Benjamin</i>	23-26
Multilingual Approaches to English Teaching: Practical Strategies for Embracing Linguistic Diversity in the Classroom <i>Francisca Akinyi Otieno</i>	27-30
Sustainability and Greening ELT: Theory, Research and Practice <i>Samwel Ismael Nassary</i>	31-35
Icebreakers as Pedagogical Tools: Enhancing Motivation, Communication and Collaboration in Multilingual ELT Classrooms <i>Judith Kapinga</i>	36-39
AI in the Literature Classroom: A Global Teacher Testimony <i>Mwanaidy Ally Mwacha</i>	40-43

Editor's Note



Dear all,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this special issue dedicated to the experiences, ideas, and reflections emerging from the 7th TELTA Annual Conference, held on 27–28 June 2026 at Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Morogoro. Held under the theme, “Empowering Global Citizens: AI-Enhanced, Multilingual English Language Education,” the conference brought together

English language teachers, educators, researchers, teachers and policymakers, and other education stakeholders to share knowledge, research, innovative practices, and experiences. The conference provided a valuable platform for professional learning, networking, dialogue, and reflection on the changing landscape of English language education.

This issue moves beyond the conference halls to capture some of the ideas and voices that made the conference meaningful. It features articles on presentation topics and reflections from conference attendees and presenters. Through these contributions, readers can revisit important discussions from the conference while gaining new perspectives on teaching, learning, technology, multilingualism, artificial intelligence, and professional development.

As educators, conferences should not only be spaces where we present and listen; they should also inspire us to reflect, connect, experiment, and transform our practice. Therefore, we hope that the ideas shared in this issue will continue the conversations that began in Morogoro and encourage readers to consider how the knowledge gained can be translated into meaningful action in their own classrooms and professional contexts.

I extend my appreciation to the contributors who took the time to transform their conference experiences and presentations into articles for this issue. As you read through the pages of this newsletter, ***I invite you not only to read, but also to reflect, question, share and apply.***

Happy reading!

Irene Maganga
Chief Editor, TELTA



President's Remarks



It is my pleasure to welcome you to this special edition of the TELTA Newsletter, which provides an opportunity to revisit and appreciate the richness of the 7th TELTA Annual Conference 2026.

The conference, held on 27–28 June 2026 at Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Morogoro, brought together members of the English language teaching

community from different contexts and professional backgrounds. Under the theme, “Empowering Global Citizens: AI-Enhanced, Multilingual English Language Education,” the conference reflected the evolving demands of language education and the need for educators to remain responsive to emerging opportunities and challenges.

One of the greatest strengths of TELTA is the willingness of its members to share knowledge and learn from one another. The presentations, discussions, and professional interactions during the conference demonstrated the wealth of expertise within our association. This publication provides another platform through which that expertise can reach members who may not have attended particular sessions or who wish to revisit ideas presented during the event.

As we continue to navigate changes in education, including the growing role of artificial intelligence, multilingual approaches, and new forms of professional learning, our ability to learn collectively remains essential. TELTA will continue to provide spaces where teachers and other stakeholders can exchange experiences, develop professionally, and contribute to the advancement of English language education in Tanzania.

My sincere appreciation goes to the conference presenters, participants, authors, editorial team, and organising committee for their valuable contributions.

On behalf of TELTA, I wish you an enjoyable and enriching reading experience.

Together, let us continue learning, sharing, and strengthening our profession.

Ayoub Msuya

President, TELTA

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Conference Chairs Remarks



Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to reflect on the success of the Tanzania English Language Teachers' Association (TELTA) 7th Annual Conference, held at Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) in Morogoro on 27–28 June 2026. Under the theme "Empowering Educators for the Digital Age: AI-Enhanced, Multilingual English Language Education," the conference marked an important milestone for TELTA and the wider English language community in Tanzania. It provided a valuable platform for educators and researchers to exchange ideas, share experiences, and explore practical ways of responding to the opportunities and challenges presented by artificial intelligence and multilingual education. The success of the conference was made possible by the collective efforts of our presenters, delegates, reviewers, organizers, and partners. Our deepest thanks go to everyone whose commitment and hard work made these two days possible.

In the period leading up to the conference, 145 proposals were submitted, of which 80 were selected for presentations. Through the two days, the programme translated into a rich and varied schedule of sessions. Day One alone carried 40 sessions: 19 general presentations, 06 workshops, 05 research paper presentations, 03 teaching-tips sessions, 03 storytelling sessions, and 02 panel discussions, framed by two keynote addresses. Day Two shifted toward a more hands-on, practice-based format, with 31 sessions built around 14 workshops and 14 presentations, alongside two plenary addresses and one invited-speaker session. This mix of formats, from research papers and panel discussions to workshops and storytelling, gave delegates multiple entry points into the conference themes, whether their interest lay in scholarship, classroom practice, or professional dialogue.

A total of 530 teachers and more, student-teachers, researchers, and other stakeholders travelled from across Tanzania and beyond to participate in the conference. This strong participation demonstrated the growing interest in AI, digital transformation, and multilingual approaches to English language education.

The success of the conference was also supported by the dedication of those who worked behind the scenes. Ten reviewers dedicated five days to reviewing and assessing the submitted proposals, contributing significantly to the quality and integrity of the conference

conference programme. Behind them stood a Steering Committee that had already given months of planning before a single delegate arrived.

We were privileged, too, to host distinguished keynote and plenary speakers across the two days, each of whom challenged us to think critically about the future of English language education. On Day One, Dr. Nega Worku Debela, English Specialist, opened the conference with the morning keynote on AI tools and resources for English language teaching, making the case for their thoughtful use in the classroom. In the afternoon, Prof. Ernest Simon Kira of our host institution, Sokoine University of Agriculture, delivered the second keynote on innovative English language teaching and curriculum development. On Day Two, Dr. Lulu Luflenge, PhD, of Mbeya University of Science and Technology, opened proceedings with a plenary on raising emotionally intelligent learners, and Dr. Debela returned in the afternoon for a second plenary session. Together, their contributions helped us reflect on an important question:

"How should English language teaching evolve as artificial intelligence becomes part of everyday learning?"

As TELTA, this question calls us not only to embrace technological change, but also to consider how we can use AI responsibly, inclusively, and meaningfully to improve teaching and learning.

As we close this chapter, we ask only this of you: take what you learned in Morogoro back to your schools, colleges, and communities. Share it with your colleagues and with teachers beyond the English language classroom. Let the ideas, connections, and experiences gained at this conference translate into meaningful changes in our classrooms.

Thank you.

Kessia Kiwia & Dr. Onesmo Nyinondi
Conference Co-Chairs



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**7th TELTA
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AI for ELT: Enhancing Multilingual Classroom Feedback

Zeno Benjamin

ABSTRACT

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming increasingly useful in English Language Teaching, particularly in assessment, feedback, language practice, and developing teaching materials. This article explores how AI can support multilingual classroom feedback while highlighting responsible use, academic integrity, privacy, and the continued importance of teachers in the learning process. different programs, the chapter continues to drive excellence and innovation in English Language Teaching (ELT) across the region.

AI Is Already in Our Classrooms

AI is no longer a technology of the future. It is already being used by students in different learning activities. Students can use AI to answer questions, write essays, complete homework and assignments, and practise language.

At the same time, new AI tools are emerging rapidly. This can be difficult for teachers because it is impossible for teachers to learn and use every new tool. Instead of trying to master every tool, teachers can select a few useful tools and learn how to use them well.

Teachers should not see AI as something they have to compete with. They can use it as a teaching tool. However, every teacher should continue to provide the human support that learners need.

Challenges for English Language Teachers

One of the main challenges is the speed at which

AI is developing. New tools appear almost every week. Teachers cannot be expected to know all of them, and this is normal. What matters is selecting tools that can address genuine teaching and learning needs.

Another challenge is that students are becoming more familiar with technology. They expect teachers to use digital tools and make lessons more interactive.

Apart from the advantages of using AI, there are also risks. Students may use AI to complete their assignments without engaging meaningfully in the learning process. They may also become too dependent on AI. Other concerns include misinformation and the privacy of learners' information.

For these reasons, there is a need for teachers to educate their learners how to use AI carefully and responsibly. Generally, AI should help teachers teach better, not replace their thinking and judgement.

Building a Simple AI Toolkit

Teachers do not need a large number of AI tools. It is better to have a small number of trusted tools that can help with specific teaching activities.

AI tools can support different areas of ELT, including assessment, language practice, content creation, audio and video production, and preparation of courses and presentations. For example, tools such as Quizizz, Kahoot, MagicSchool, Quizgecko, and other AI-supported platforms can help teachers prepare questions and assessment activities. Chatbots can give learners opportunities to practise English through interaction. Tools such as ElevenLabs can support speaking and listening activities through AI-generated voices and conversations.

Teachers can also use tools such as Canva and Gamma to prepare teaching materials and presentations.

The important thing is not how many tools teachers use; it is whether a tool helps them achieve their intended learning objectives.

AI for Assessment and Feedback

Assessment and feedback are important parts of language teaching. Learners need to know what they have done well and where they need to improve.

AI can provide teachers with additional opportunities to conduct formative assessment. For example, AI-supported quiz platforms can help teachers prepare questions and assess learners' understanding during or after a lesson.

Wayground, formerly known as Quizizz, can help teachers create different types of questions, including multiple-choice, gap-fill, and open-ended questions. It also provides features that can make assessment more interactive and engaging.

Kahoot can also be used to make classroom assessment more interactive. These tools can help teachers quickly identify areas where learners need more support.

Supporting Multilingual Learners

Many English language classrooms are linguistically diverse. Learners may have different first languages, varying levels of English proficiency, and diverse learning needs. This is common in Tanzania, where English is learned alongside Kiswahili and other local languages.

AI can also provide learners with additional opportunities to practise English and receive immediate feedback. Some AI tools can work with many languages, which can be useful for learners who are developing their English while using other languages in their daily lives.

However, AI should not replace the teacher. Teachers still need to determine what feedback is appropriate, which activities learners need, and how to respond to their individual learning needs.

AI can provide additional practice and feedback, but teachers provide something more: they provide understanding, encouragement, creativity, empathy, and human relationships. These factors remain very important in language learning.

Using AI Responsibly

The use of AI also requires teachers to change the way they assess learners. If AI can easily produce an answer, simply asking learners to submit a final answer may not show what they have actually learned.

Instead, teachers can ask learners to explain how they reached an answer, show the steps they followed, revise their work, compare different answers, or explain what they learned. In this way, assessment can focus more on the learning process rather than the final product.

Teachers also need to consider their own well-being. They should not feel that they must use every new AI tool. They can begin with one or two useful tools, learn them well, and share their experiences with other teachers.

What Does This Mean for English Language Teachers?

AI can support English teachers in several practical ways. It can provide more opportunities for formative assessment and feedback. It can support speaking, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar activities through different types of digital resources.

AI can also save teachers' time when preparing questions, adapting materials, and creating learning activities.

However, teachers should start with the learning needs rather than the technology. Before choosing an AI tool, they should ask, *"What do my learners need to learn, practise, or improve?"*

After answering this question, they can choose a tool that can help teachers achieve that goal.

Conclusion

AI should not be viewed as an enemy of English Language Teaching. It is a tool, and its value depends largely on how it is used. English teachers do not need to know every AI tool. They can choose a few useful and trusted tools and use them for clear teaching purposes.

AI can support assessment, feedback, language practice, and preparation of teaching materials. However, the teacher remains central to the learning process. AI cannot replace teachers' empathy, creativity, professional judgement, understanding of learners, and ability to build relationships.

Therefore, everyone should learn how to use AI responsibly while keeping the teachers and learners at the centre of education. We should continue sharing ideas, learning from one another, and working together through professional communities such as TELTA.

The goal is not to use AI simply because it is available. The goal is to use AI to support our learners in learning English more effectively.

Author

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Humanist Leadership in Digital Classrooms: Empowering English Language Learners



Mark Lyimo

ABSTRACT

This paper explores humanist leadership in modern English language classrooms. It highlights how teachers can balance digital innovation with empathy, ethical guidance, and meaningful connection. By examining humanist leadership models and practical strategies, the article reflects on effective teaching practices and suggests approaches to foster inclusive, learner-centered digital learning environments in language classrooms.

Introduction

As the world and the teaching profession undergo rapid transformations driven by digital technologies, several critical questions arise that educators and educational leaders must address to ensure a smooth transition from traditional classrooms to digitally enhanced learning environments. This transition requires a form of leadership that not only embraces technological innovation but also upholds humanistic values by supporting both teachers and learners.

The following questions are central to this discussion:

- What makes teachers indispensable in the era of digital learning?
- Is the rapid integration of digital tools in language education consistent with the principles of humanistic education?

- What type of leadership is most effective for expanding access to online and blended learning while maintaining educational quality?
- How can educational leaders promote learner autonomy while minimizing the risk of technology overshadowing meaningful human connections in the classroom?

These key issues were explored with a particular focus on humanistic leadership and its role in enhancing teaching and learning during the ongoing digital transformation of education. The discussion emphasized the importance of balancing technological advancement with empathy, collaboration, and learner-centered practices to create inclusive and effective digital classrooms.

Part 1: From Teacher to Humanist Leader

Teachers' roles have evolved over the past few decades with the integration of digital technologies into classrooms. Traditionally, teachers were viewed primarily as knowledge transmitters, classroom managers, and subject-matter experts. In today's digital learning environment, however, their roles have expanded to include those of facilitators, mentors, coaches, assessors, differentiators, and lifelong learners. More recently, teachers are increasingly expected to become humanist leaders who serve not only as mentors but also as community builders, ethical guides, and architects of meaningful learning experiences.

As humanist leaders in digital classrooms, teachers prioritize self-awareness, human dignity, well-being, personal growth, and ethical relationships rather than focusing solely on efficiency, authority, or measurable outcomes. Their leadership emphasizes respect for every learner, empathy, compassion, ethical decision-making, continuous professional development, collaboration, participation, and learner empowerment. By fostering these values, teachers create inclusive learning environments that enable students to achieve their full potential and realize both their academic and personal aspirations.



Figure 1: A student leader demonstrating how to use a computer ethically.

Part 2: Leadership Styles That Support Learners in Digital Classrooms

Goleman's work suggests that effective leadership in digital classrooms requires teachers to be flexible in adapting their leadership styles to meet learners' diverse needs and learning contexts. Several leadership styles can effectively support students' growth and success.

The **coaching leadership style** focuses on preparing students for the future by developing their skills, encouraging personal growth, and promoting long-term academic and personal success. This approach is particularly effective when students are motivated to improve their abilities and pursue continuous development.

The **pacesetting leadership style** is effective when teachers set high standards and lead by example. It works best with highly motivated, high-achieving students who can work independently and strive for excellence.

The **democratic leadership style** encourages students to participate in decision-making, particularly on matters that influence their learning and academic progress. This approach is most successful when teachers seek new ideas, encourage collaboration, foster a sense of ownership, and build commitment among learners.



Figure 2: Mboni students conducting the online session with the partner school

The **visionary (authoritative) leadership style** inspires students by providing a clear sense of purpose and direction. It helps learners adapt to change, embrace new opportunities, and work toward shared educational goals with confidence and motivation.

The **commanding (coercive) leadership style** provides clear instructions and expects immediate compliance. Although this style should be used sparingly, it can be appropriate during emergencies, crises, or situations involving serious disciplinary or safety concerns that require prompt action.

Finally, the **affiliative leadership style** emphasizes building positive relationships, trust, and harmony within the classroom. It is especially valuable for improving student morale, resolving conflicts and misunderstandings, strengthening collaboration, and rebuilding trust between teachers and learners.

Part 3: Challenges in Digital Classrooms

There are several challenges experienced in digital classrooms that teachers, as humanist leaders, need to address in order to motivate and empower English language learners.

The most prominent challenges include low student engagement, digital distractions, unequal access to technology, reduced interpersonal interaction, and overreliance on artificial intelligence and automated tools.

Addressing these challenges requires not only governments, communities, and educational stakeholders to work together and reach a shared consensus, but also teachers on the ground to become familiar with effective approaches that support the integration of digital tools while preserving humanistic values in learning.

A key question for English language educators remains: **How do we remain human-centered in technology-rich learning environments?** This question requires continued discussion and reflection.



Figure 3: A student from SFS Academy, India, demonstrating effective leadership skills in front of the classroom

There are several recommended leadership tools for empowering learners during the period of transformation in English language teaching and learning. Three major categories of tools are: **engagement tools, collaborative tools, and reflective tools.**

As classroom leaders, teachers must find effective ways to keep students actively engaged throughout the learning process. This includes creating opportunities for every learner's voice to be heard by using tools such as Kahoot, Mentimeter, and Nearpod.

Teachers should also promote collaboration rather than relying solely on directive instruction. Collaborative platforms such as Padlet and Google Classroom enable teachers and students to work together throughout the learning process.

Equally important is the use of reflective tools to gather learner feedback, as continuous improvement is difficult without understanding students' learning experiences. Tools such as Google Forms, Vocaroo, and Seesaw can support reflection and feedback, helping teachers improve both teaching and learning outcomes.

Part 4: Building an Inclusive Digital Learning Community

As humanist leaders, teachers are responsible not only for facilitating learning in modern classrooms but also for building inclusive learning communities where every learner feels a sense of belonging. Teachers play a pivotal role by encouraging multiple forms of participation during lessons. They should also celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity, foster respectful online communication, and promote collaborative learning environments where every student is visible and every voice is heard.

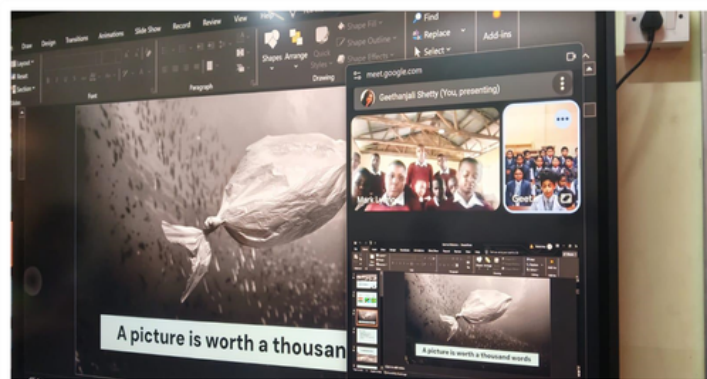


Figure 4: Students from Mboni secondary school and SFS Academy, India, sharing ideas through a Zoom Meeting

Reflection is equally important for teacher leaders. We should continually ask ourselves: Do my students feel heard? How much autonomy do I provide? Does technology support meaningful learning? What values guide my classroom decisions? These reflective questions remind us that leadership growth begins with reflection.

Conclusion

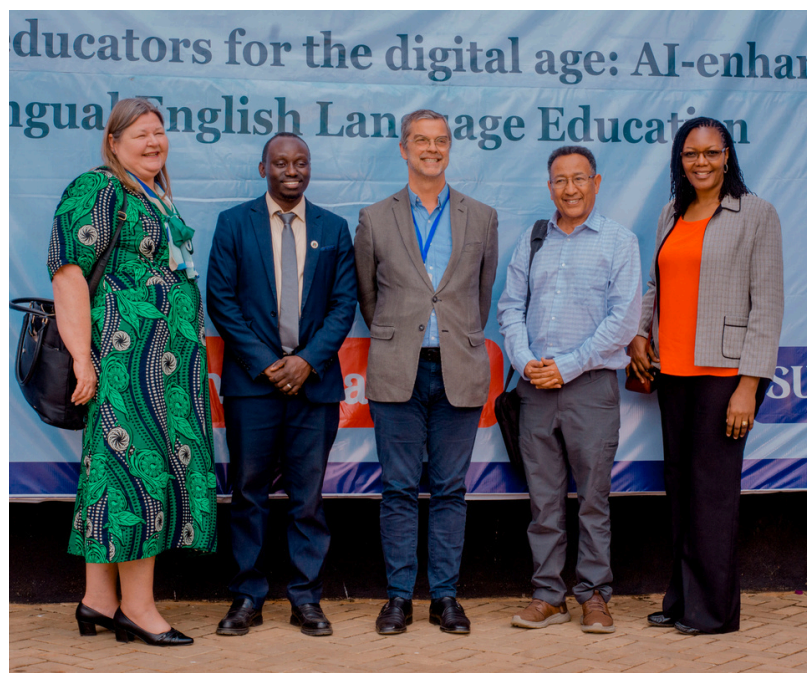
The future of language education is not defined by technology alone but by teachers who lead with humanity. This message, which aligns with the educational philosophies associated with Salman Khan, provides a foundation for action that can support teachers as humanist leaders in modern classrooms while empowering learners. The first priority is strengthening human relationships. The second is designing learner-centered experiences through effective pedagogical practices. The third is using digital tools intentionally and purposefully. Together, these priorities help teachers create digital classrooms characterized by ethical decision-making, learner empowerment, strong learning communities, and empathy.

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Translanguaging and Science Learning in Lower Public Secondary School Students in Tanzania



Frida Alfred Mbwaifu & Okoa Simile

ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study examines how translanguaging supports science learning among Tanzanian lower secondary students. It identifies motivations for bilingual practices and proposes strategies for English-Kiswahili integration in science classrooms.

KEY WORDS:

translanguaging; science education; multilingual classrooms; English-medium instruction; Tanzania

1. Background

Translanguaging has become an important perspective for understanding how multilingual learners make meaning. García and Li Wei (2014) define it as the flexible use of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire rather than movement between separate and self-contained languages. From this perspective, multilingual learners select linguistic resources according to the demands of communication and learning. Classroom alternation between Kiswahili and English is therefore not necessarily evidence of inadequate competence. It may constitute a purposeful strategy through which teachers clarify ideas, learners test understanding, and both groups construct knowledge collaboratively.

This position is especially relevant in Tanzania, where language policy creates a

demanding educational transition. Most learners receive primary education through Kiswahili and then encounter English as the principal language of instruction in secondary school. Rubagumya (2011) argues that African education systems often underestimate learners when they adopt instructional languages that do not reflect everyday linguistic realities. In Tanzania, Vuzo (2012) similarly shows that teachers and students use more than one language to manage the difficulties associated with English-medium instruction. The transition is particularly challenging in science because learners must develop English proficiency while also mastering unfamiliar concepts, technical vocabulary, definitions, and specialised forms of explanation.

Recent curriculum and textbook research confirms the scale of this challenge.

Barrett et al. (2024) identify a substantial discontinuity between the language demands of primary and secondary education in Tanzania. Biseko et al. (2024) further demonstrate that secondary textbooks impose considerable vocabulary demands at the point of transition. According to Mbunifu (2025), limited vocabulary knowledge can restrict reading comprehension among students entering public secondary schools. These studies indicate that difficulty in science learning does not arise solely from the conceptual complexity of the subject. It also emerges from the language through which concepts are introduced, discussed, read, and assessed.

Translanguaging can reduce this double burden. Li Wei (2018) presents translanguaging as a practical theory of language because it explains how multilingual speakers draw strategically on their available resources to solve communicative and cognitive problems. In science classrooms, learners may connect an English technical term to a familiar Kiswahili explanation, discuss a process bilingually, and then restate the concept in English. Such movement can support comprehension without abandoning the development of academic English. It can also widen participation by enabling students who understand a concept, but cannot yet express it fully in English, to contribute to classroom discussion. Nevertheless, multilingual classroom practice remains institutionally sensitive. English is expected to dominate

secondary education, while Kiswahili is frequently treated as evidence that teachers or learners have failed to meet the official standard. Mwaipape and Mapunda (2022) show that multilingual resources may enter Tanzanian classrooms informally even when policy does not openly recognise them. This tension can make translanguaging reactive, covert, and uneven. Existing research has established its potential benefits, but less attention has been given to the immediate motivations that lead science teachers and Form I students to use it. Understanding those motivations is necessary if translanguaging is to move from an improvised response to a principled pedagogical practice.

2. Problem Statement

The transition from Kiswahili-medium primary education to English-medium secondary education places many Form I students at a linguistic disadvantage. In science lessons, students are expected to learn new concepts and unfamiliar English terminology simultaneously. This mismatch may restrict comprehension, discourage questions, reduce participation, and compel teachers to repeat explanations without securing understanding. Although teachers and students appear to use Kiswahili and English informally to address these difficulties, the reasons guiding their language choices remain insufficiently documented. Without context-specific evidence, teacher education and curriculum guidance cannot distinguish purposeful translanguaging from unplanned language alternation.

This study therefore examines what motivates translinguaging in lower secondary science classrooms and how the practice supports the learning of scientific concepts.

3. Objective

Guided by Translinguaging theory, the study investigated the motivations that lead science teachers and Form I students to translanguage during teaching and learning, and examined how the practice supports scientific concept development in Tanzanian public secondary schools.

4. Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative case study design because the research required close attention to language use within its natural classroom setting. Participants comprised 10 science teachers and 40 Form I students from three public secondary schools in Dodoma Municipal Council. Schools and participants were selected purposively. The schools represented contexts in which students had recently moved from Kiswahili-medium primary education to English-medium secondary education. They also provided access to multilingual science lessons and permitted sustained observation.

Data were collected through non-participant classroom observations and focus group discussions. Observations documented naturally occurring language practices, the instructional situations that prompted translinguaging, and students' responses to teachers' language choices.

Focus group discussions enabled teachers and students to explain the reasoning behind practices observed in class. The combination of these methods supported methodological triangulation by comparing reported motivations with actual classroom behaviour.

The data were organised and analysed thematically. Repeated patterns were coded, compared, and grouped into broader themes concerning conceptual explanation, vocabulary, time, participation, prior knowledge, and policy. Translinguaging theory guided interpretation by directing attention to how participants mobilised an integrated linguistic repertoire for meaning-making. Credibility was strengthened through comparison across schools, participant groups, and 4 data sources. Participation was voluntary, confidentiality was protected, and identifying information was removed from the presentation of findings.

5. Findings

The analysis identified six closely related motivations. First, teachers translanguage to make complex scientific concepts intelligible. An English label often introduced the curriculum term, while a Kiswahili explanation unpacked the process it represented. For example, a teacher explained photosynthesis as *usanisinuru, yaani mchakato ambao mimea hutengeneza chakula chake kwa kutumia mwanga wa jua*, meaning the process through which plants make food using sunlight. Students who had initially remained silent showed understanding after the bilingual explanation. The practice therefore linked technical naming with accessible conceptual meaning.

Second, translanguaging clarified unfamiliar vocabulary. Teachers paired terms such as evaporation with *uvukizaji wa maji* and then explained the change from water to vapour. The value of the Kiswahili resource did not depend only on supplying a formal equivalent. Familiar paraphrases were sometimes more effective because they connected terminology to processes that learners could recognise. Translanguaging thus functioned as vocabulary mediation rather than simple translation.

Third, teachers used translanguaging to protect instructional time. Repeated English explanations sometimes prolonged a lesson without improving comprehension. A brief Kiswahili clarification enabled students to follow the subsequent English discussion, allowing the teacher to proceed. Efficiency, however, did not mean replacing English. Teachers used Kiswahili selectively at points where misunderstanding threatened the progress of the lesson.

Fourth, translanguaging encouraged participation. Questions delivered only in English were sometimes followed by silence, whereas Kiswahili reformulation prompted several responses. Students reported that the demand to answer exclusively in English made them afraid of grammatical errors. Permission to combine languages enabled them to express scientific ideas more fully. Their participation increased because the classroom became less linguistically punitive, not because the intellectual demand was reduced.

Fifth, translanguaging connected prior knowledge with new scientific terminology. Students entered secondary school with

concepts previously discussed in Kiswahili. Teachers drew on this knowledge before attaching an English label. During a lesson on osmosis, for instance, the teacher first described the movement of water molecules in Kiswahili and then introduced osmosis. This sequence enabled students to recognise conceptual continuity across the change in language of instruction.

Finally, teachers translanguaged as a pragmatic response to policy constraints. They recognised English was the official language of instruction and the language of examinations, yet considered exclusive English use ineffective when students lacked sufficient proficiency. Translanguaging was therefore described as a necessary pedagogical compromise. Teachers sought to secure immediate understanding while preparing students to use English terminology in later classroom work and assessment.

6. Discussion

The findings show that translanguaging in science classrooms is motivated by a connected set of pedagogical needs. It supports conceptual explanation, vocabulary development, lesson progression, participation, activation of prior knowledge, and negotiation of language policy.

This evidence strengthens Li Wei's (2018) account of translanguaging as practical theory.

Teachers and students did not treat their languages as sealed systems. They selected resources from an integrated repertoire to solve specific learning problems.

The study also qualifies interpretations of multilingual classroom practice as mere compensation for weak English. As García and Li Wei (2014) suggest, translanguaging can be

intellectually productive because it enables learners to reorganise knowledge across linguistic forms. In the observed lessons, Kiswahili did more than provide comfort. It supplied conceptual explanations through which students could interpret English scientific terms. English retained an important role as the language of disciplinary naming, textbooks, and examinations, while Kiswahili supported access to the meanings behind those forms.

The vocabulary findings are consistent with evidence that the transition to secondary education exposes Tanzanian learners to heavy lexical demands (Biseko et al., 2024; Mbawafu, 2025). However, the present study adds that formal translation alone may not resolve these demands. Learners appeared to benefit most when teachers used familiar Kiswahili paraphrases to explain relationships and processes. Effective translanguageing therefore depends on the pedagogical quality of the explanation, not simply the presence of two languages.

Participation emerged as both a linguistic and affective issue. Students' silence did not necessarily indicate an absence of scientific understanding. It sometimes reflected anxiety about expressing that understanding in English. By permitting bilingual responses, teachers separated conceptual knowledge from temporary limitations in English production. This interpretation supports Rubagumya's (2011) warning that instructional policy can obscure what learners know when it treats proficiency in the medium as equivalent to mastery of content.

At the same time, translanguageing operates within an unresolved policy and assessment tension. Mwaipape and Mapunda (2022) demonstrate that multilingual practices may be accepted informally while remaining marginal institutionally. The present findings suggest that this ambiguity places responsibility on individual teachers and encourages inconsistent practice.

Since examinations remain in English, unrestricted bilingual instruction could leave learners insufficiently prepared for formal assessment. Purposeful translanguageing should therefore function as temporary and carefully planned scaffolding. It should establish conceptual understanding, teach English terminology explicitly, and gradually increase learners' independent use of academic English.

7. Conclusion and Educational Implications

Translanguageing is a deliberate response to the linguistic and conceptual demands facing Form I science learners. It enables teachers to explain difficult ideas, mediate vocabulary, save time, increase participation, connect prior learning with new terminology, and manage the tension between classroom realities and official policy. These functions confirm that translanguageing should be evaluated by its pedagogical purpose and outcomes, rather than dismissed as evidence of linguistic failure.

Science teachers should introduce demanding concepts through planned bilingual explanation and then consolidate the relevant English terminology in speaking, reading, and writing.

Kiswahili support should be strongest when concepts are first introduced and should decrease as students gain control of the English forms needed for examinations.

Formative discussion may permit bilingual reasoning, while subsequent tasks require progressively fuller English responses. This staged approach protects conceptual learning and strengthens assessment readiness.

Teacher education programmes should prepare science teachers to plan translanguaging, select accessible explanations, identify appropriate moments for language support, and withdraw that support systematically. Curriculum developers should also acknowledge the transition burden faced by Form I learners and provide bilingual glossaries or guidance for key concepts. Such

measures would replace improvised language alternation with accountable pedagogy. Further research should examine how different translanguaging sequences influence both science achievement and independent English performance over time.

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The Application of Technological Tools in Referencing and Citation Writing

Jamal Kipunde Yasini

ABSTRACT

This article discusses the application of technological tools in referencing and citation writing. It explains the concepts of references and citations, common citation styles, and the role of digital tools such as Zotero, Mendeley, EndNote, Scribbr, and ChatGPT in improving the accuracy, efficiency, and consistency of academic writing. The session also highlights different categories of technological tools and demonstrates how they support researchers, teachers, and students in managing academic sources

Introduction

Reference and citation are essential components of academic writing because they acknowledge the original sources of ideas and information. Many writers find referencing challenging due to the different citation styles and formatting requirements. Technological tools simplify these tasks by automatically generating references, organising sources, and converting citations from one style to another.

Reference and Citation

A citation is a brief in-text acknowledgement that identifies the source of information used in a manuscript. A reference is the full bibliographic description listed at the end of the document, providing details such as the author, title, publisher, and publication year.

Common Citation Styles

- APA (American Psychological Association): Commonly used in education, psychology, business, and other social sciences.
- MLA (Modern Language Association): Commonly used in language, literature, and cultural studies.

Technological Tools

Technological tools include hardware devices, software applications, and communication technologies that help people perform tasks more efficiently. In academic writing, tools such as Zotero, Mendeley, EndNote, Scribbr, and ChatGPT assist users in searching literature, organising references, generating citations, and changing citation styles.

Benefits

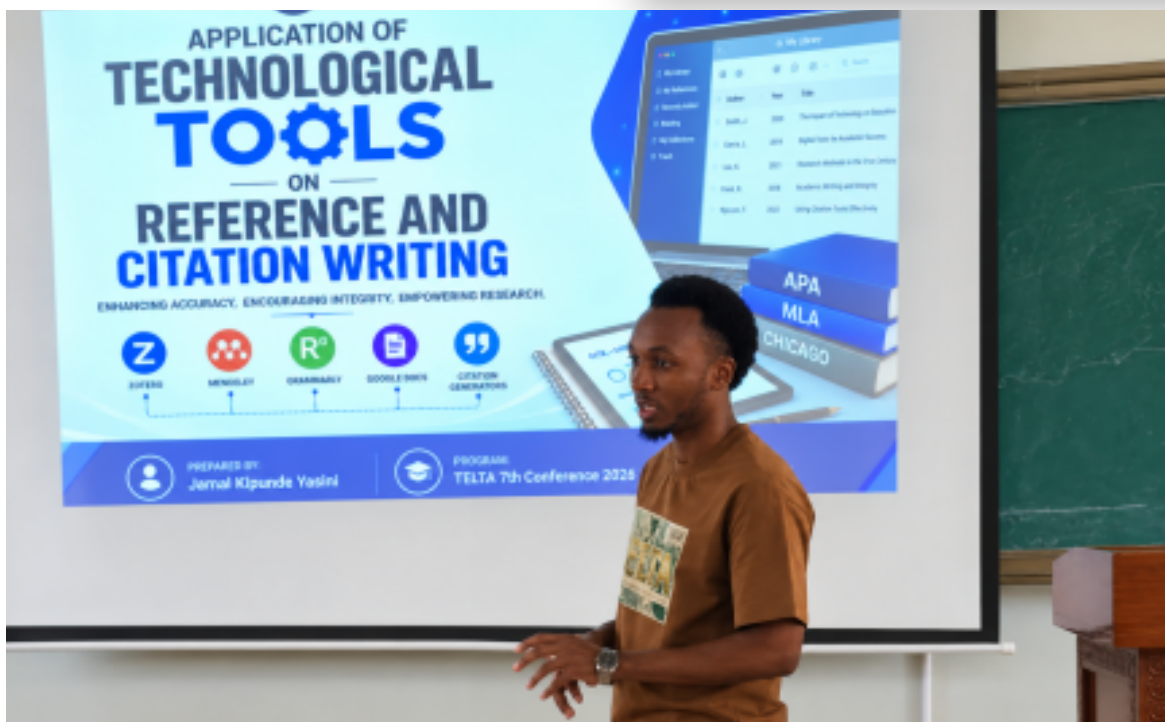
These tools improve accuracy, save time, reduce plagiarism, ensure consistency, and make academic writing more efficient.

Conclusion

The effective use of technological tools has transformed reference and citation writing by making the process faster, more accurate, and easier to learn. Students, teachers, and researchers are encouraged to adopt these tools to improve the quality of their academic work.

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Enhanced Technology in Storytelling English Language Teaching

Aidan Jackson Maganza

ABSTRACT

The article addresses the contribution of storytelling in teaching English language through enhanced technology. The participants will gain knowledge on how stories can be used as a language learning technique, and the effectiveness of storytelling in teaching and learning processes. Also listeners will receive techniques that helps learners to master English language.

KEY WORDS: storytelling, teaching, and technology.

Introduction

Mastering English language skills has become difficult to many Tanzanian learners. This study addresses the value of storytelling in teaching English language through the help of technology to help learners to develop speaking fluency. It explains how storytelling helps the facilitation of teaching English language through technology for the aim of achieving teachers planned goals in Tanzanian classrooms environment. The study is grounded on narrative theory; where it proposes that using storytelling to teach English language help learners to improve their listening and speaking skills contextually through engaging them directly in the learning processes. The stories which are localized create interest

and helps learners to acquire the targeted vocabulary contextually rather than teaching things which are out of context. These stories need to be localized and technology needs to be included in the processes.

Challenges Arise in learning English language

The study has revealed many challenges English language learners face when trying to write and speak English confidently as many learners fail to express their ideas orally and share their experiences due to language difficulties. Since, learners do not have communicative English language, they need storytelling technique to help them to develop communicative English language competences.

The importance of storytelling and its effectiveness in teaching and learning English language

Storytelling develops language learning skills to learners through listening, speaking, reading and writing (Masanja, C., & Daudi, S., 2026). Moreover, Storytelling improves learners' grammar naturally as learners learn the grammatical structure of a language in natural contexts. Thus, be able to apply the language naturally in conversation (Okello et al., 2025). They further assert that Storytelling encourages interactive learning. This is done through the help of multimedia resources like videos, audio recordings, and digital picture books hence improving interaction among learners.

Available techniques for Mastering English Language Involves:

Storytelling, role-play, group discussion, and reading aloud. These techniques help learners to speak and write in English language. Despite the mentioned techniques, enhanced technology of digital storytelling tools allow learners to create and share their own stories by combining text, images, voice recordings, and music which later develops creativity and four language skills. Thus make English language teaching to be more interactive, collaborative, and learner centered.

Lessons learned

Learners master the language through involvement of technology. Whereas, the involvement of technology ease learners to master language skills like speaking, reading, writing, and listening (Werner, 2025). Technology makes learners being able to see, imagine and involve in speaking through the help of multimedia resources, like using videos, animations, audio recordings and digital picture books to make story more interesting and easier to understand for learners.

Recommendations

Teachers should use storytelling methods to teach language to learners. Storytelling allows learners to listen, watch and interact as it goes hand in hand with technological help (Masanja, C., & Daudi, S., 2026). Multimedia tools are essential to be included in teaching English language through storytelling. This increases desire for learners to learn and use English language communicatively.

Conclusion

Both learners and teachers need to incorporate various teaching techniques in teaching and learning English language. Techniques like role play, group discussion, reading aloud, and storytelling are essential in learning English language as they allow learners to be more interested in learning.

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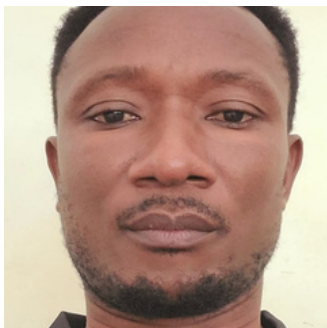
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Beyond the Textbook: Reflecting on the Power of Practical Language Learning.

Evarist Pekea Chewale

ABSTRACT

This article explores how a TELTA conference session inspired the development of “English 360: The Complete Communicator,” an initiative integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing through practical activities. It highlights authentic learning, student confidence, collaboration, and continuous teacher professional development.

Attending educational conferences is always an inspiring experience, but every so often, a single session stands out and fundamentally shifts how we view classroom dynamics. At the recent TELTA 7th conference, one session in particular left a lasting impression on me: a dynamic presentation centered on encouraging students to engage in practical, real-world activities to master the four core language skills- listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The session offered a refreshing reminder that language is a living, social tool, and not just an academic subject, language acquisition doesn't happen when students study a language rather when students use a language to accomplish something meaningful. The presenter showed how bridging theoretical concepts with hands-on practice transforms hesitant learners into confident communicators. Giving examples from his project, TIVO NEWSPAPER, where

students from different schools, under the guidance of their teachers shared various articles pertaining different disciplines illustrated how authentic projects can transform writing from passive task into an engaging, collaborative experience. I learned that students feel proud and confident once they find their work being published, being read by others also being part of the project.

Leaving the venue I felt an overwhelming sense of enthusiasm and purpose inspired by this approach, I collaborated with my head of department after sharing how this method is helpful in mastering the four language skills, we started some logistics and on 3/8/2026 we launched a project known as “English 360: The Complete Communicator” we have designed various activities that will encourage our students to master these skills. Under speaking, we have activities like Storytelling, debate sessions, topic discussions and Question and answer sessions.

Under reading, we have book reading and reporting (both oral and written), a reading - aloud hour, and a reading marathon, In listening we are planning to have news listening hour, podcast listening , and speech listening, lastly, in writing we have begun to emphasizes our student writing articles and stories, which we post on the school noticeboard every Tuesday, additionally we have started a school mini newspaper where student can air out their thoughts through poems, essays, and compositions from various discipline.

Attending different conference sessions to launch English 360: The Complete Communicator demonstrates a fundamental truth; teachers' professional development is the true catalyst for educational renewal. In an ever- evolving world where pedagogical strategies, student needs and technologies change rapidly, educators cannot rely solely on static methods of the past. Continuous professional learning empowers teachers to stay updated, challenge conventional routines, and bring fresh, dynamic approaches directly into the classroom.

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Gendered Occupations in ELT Textbooks: Raising Critical Awareness

Zeno Benjamin

ABSTRACT

This article examines an action research project investigating how occupational gender bias in ELT textbook images influences learners' career perceptions in Tanzania. It demonstrates how counter-discursive classroom activities can raise critical awareness and promote more gender-inclusive attitudes among secondary school learners.

Introduction

English language textbooks are important resources in our classrooms. They help learners develop vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, speaking, and other language skills. However, textbooks also communicate messages about society through pictures, stories, examples, and activities. These messages can influence how learners understand the roles of men and women.

English teachers need to look beyond the language in textbooks and consider the messages presented through the materials. One area that needs attention is the way men and women are represented in different occupations.

For example, when learners repeatedly see men as engineers, drivers, electricians, or plumbers and women as nurses, farmers, or people doing housework, they may begin to believe that some jobs belong to men while others belong to women. Such ideas can influence learners' career aspirations.

This concern led to exploration of how learners could be encouraged to look critically at gendered representations in English textbooks and think more openly about future careers.

Gender and Occupational Representation

Roell (2024) presents an example of Sandra, an experienced airline pilot, and Mike, a flight attendant. Some passengers are surprised because Sandra is the pilot and Mike is the flight attendant. The surprise comes from traditional assumptions that pilots are usually men and flight attendants are usually women.

The example shows how easily people can connect certain occupations with a particular gender. Similar ideas can appear in school textbooks.

In the English textbooks examined in this classroom intervention, women appeared more frequently than men in some representations, but their roles were often less professional. Women were shown in care work, housework, farming and nursing, while men were represented in

skilled occupations such as engineering, driving, electrical installation, and plumbing. The concern is not simply about the number of men and women shown in the textbooks. The main concern is the type of occupations associated with them. When these representations are repeated, learners may accept them as normal without asking whether the same occupations are open to every gender.

The second stage focused on awareness. I used simple questions and guided discussions to help learners examine the pictures more carefully. Instead of simply asking, “What can you see?”, learners were encouraged to ask questions such as:

- Why is the engineer a man?
- Why is the nurse a woman?
- Can a woman become an engineer?
- Can a man become a nurse?

These questions helped learners understand that pictures in textbooks are not always neutral. They can communicate ideas about what society considers normal.

Redesigning Textbook Pictures

After learners became aware of the stereotypes, they participated in a counter-discourse activity. They redesigned textbook pictures to show a society where occupations were not divided according to gender.

This activity allowed learners to create their own alternative representations instead of simply being told that the original representations were problematic. They used their creativity to show both men and women working in different occupations.

The learners' drawings provided clear evidence of this change. Some learners drew women repairing electricity and designing buildings. Others drew men cooking, selling fruit, and washing dishes. These pictures showed that learners were beginning to understand that occupations should not be restricted by gender.



Figure 1: Student artefacts including drawings of women repairing electricity, designing buildings, men cooking and selling fruit, and washing dishes, illustrating a shift in traditional occupational roles

Changes in Career Aspirations

Changes also followed the classroom activities in learners' career aspirations. Among the 30 girls, the number who selected nursing as a future career decreased from 12 to 5. At the same time, the number selecting medicine increased from 1 to 8, engineering from 0 to 4, and architecture from 1 to 3. This suggests that some girls became more open to careers that are often viewed as male-dominated.

Changes were also seen among the boys. The number choosing teaching increased from 2 to 4, while those choosing nursing increased from 1 to 4. Boys also showed interest in cooking and secretarial work.

These changes are important because they show that gender awareness can open learners' thinking about their future. Boys and girls can begin to see careers as choices based on interests, abilities, and opportunities rather than simply on whether a job is traditionally associated with men or women.

What Changed in the Classroom?

One important change was learners' ability to identify gender bias. Before the intervention, many learners accepted textbook representations without questioning them. After the activities, learners were able to notice gender stereotypes more quickly.

Learners also developed broader career aspirations. Both boys and girls became more confident that different careers could be open to them.

The activities also encouraged more inclusive classroom language. As a teacher, I became more aware of the need to examine the materials I use and to help learners question messages that may unintentionally reinforce stereotypes.

This experience shows that teachers do not have to reject textbooks because they contain stereotypical representations. Instead, textbooks can become useful materials for critical discussion.

Practical Implications for English Teachers

There are several simple ways that English teachers can promote gender-inclusive teaching.

First, teachers can ask learners to examine textbook pictures critically. Instead of only asking learners to describe what they see, teachers can ask questions about who is doing the activity and why that person may have been represented in that role.

Second, learners can redesign textbook pictures. This can be done through drawing, writing, role play, or digital activities.

Learners can change the occupations of the characters and create more balanced representations.

Third, teachers can discuss career choices with learners. Learners should be encouraged to think about their interests, talents, and goals rather than choosing careers because they are traditionally associated with their gender.

Teachers should also be aware that gender bias can be unintentionally reproduced by materials developers and textbook authors. Regular examination of teaching materials can help teachers identify such issues and address them in class.

Finally, teachers can share inclusive teaching practices with colleagues. Working together can help schools develop learning environments where all learners feel free to consider different educational and career opportunities.

Conclusion

English textbooks teach more than language. Through pictures, stories, and examples, they can also influence how learners understand society. When men and women are repeatedly shown in particular occupations, learners may accept these roles as normal and may limit their own career choices.

However, teachers can help learners question these messages. Simple activities such as guided questions, discussions, and redesigning textbook pictures can help learners identify gender stereotypes and develop broader ideas about occupations.

The experience with 60 learners at a Tanzanian Secondary School showed changes in both boys' and girls' career aspirations. Girls became

more open to careers such as medicine, engineering, and architecture, while boys showed greater interest in careers such as nursing and teaching.

Therefore, English teachers have an important role in creating inclusive classrooms. Teachers should not only teach learners what is written in textbooks. They should also help them think critically about the messages they receive from learning materials.

If teachers want learners to believe that every career is possible, their classroom materials should help them see that possibility.

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Multilingual Approaches to English Teaching: Practical Strategies for Embracing Linguistic Diversity in the Classroom

Francisca Akinyi Otieno

ABSTRACT

This article explores multilingual approaches to English language teaching, arguing that learners' home languages are assets rather than obstacles. Drawing on Translanguaging Theory and classroom-tested strategies, it offers practical guidance for building inclusive classrooms that accelerate English acquisition while affirming learners' linguistic identities.

Introduction

Classrooms across the East African region are home to learners who bring rich and varied linguistic repertoires with them each day. Yet, traditional English language teaching has often treated these home languages as a distraction, or worse, an obstacle to be suppressed in favour of English-only instruction (Cummins, 2007). This article argues for a different approach: one in which learners' multilingual resources are deliberately drawn upon to deepen understanding, build confidence, and validate cultural identity. It summarises the key ideas shared and outlines their practical implications for English language teaching and learning.

Why Multilingual Approaches Matter

Monolingual teaching methods frequently overlook the linguistic resources that learners already possess. Research indicates that when teachers deliberately draw on students' home languages, learners make deeper cognitive

connections, engage more confidently, and experience greater validation of their cultural backgrounds (Cummins, 2007; García & Wei, 2014). Three benefits stand out. First, enhanced learning occurs because students can connect new English concepts to knowledge already encoded in their first language. Second, cultural validation results when teachers acknowledge home languages, signalling respect for learners' backgrounds and lived experiences. Third, cognitive benefits emerge because multilingual thinking strengthens metacognition and heightens learners' awareness of how language itself works.

Understanding Translanguaging

Central to this approach is the concept of translanguaging. García and Wei (2014) explain that bilingual and multilingual speakers do not operate two or more separate, walled-off language systems; rather, they draw fluidly and strategically from a single, integrated linguistic

repertoire to make meaning. Reframed this way, a learner's home language is not "interference" with English acquisition but a genuine cognitive tool that can be harnessed in service of it. This reframing has direct implications for classroom practice: rather than policing language use, teachers can create structured opportunities for learners to move between languages purposefully.

From Theory to Practice: Addressing Teacher Concerns

Many teachers voice hesitation about adopting multilingual strategies, fearing that doing so might reduce learners' exposure to English, create confusion between languages, disadvantage English-only speakers, or complicate classroom management. The evidence, however, points in the opposite direction. Cummins (2007) found that the strategic use of home languages accelerates English acquisition, deepens conceptual understanding, builds metalinguistic awareness, and increases student engagement. Rather than diluting English instruction, well-structured multilingual scaffolding strengthens it.

Practical Teaching Strategies

The following four practical methods can help teachers make multilingual approaches successful in the classroom.

1. Multilingual Word Walls

Vocabulary displays that feature key terms in English alongside students' home languages validate linguistic diversity while building visible connections between languages.

2. Translation as Learning

Inviting students to translate short texts or compile bilingual glossaries develops deep linguistic awareness and clarifies subtle differences in meaning that a single-language approach might miss.

3. Language Comparison Activities

Explicitly comparing grammatical structures, idioms, or word origins across languages builds metalinguistic knowledge while celebrating the diversity present in the classroom.

4. Flexible Language Use

Allowing learners to discuss complex concepts in their home language before producing English output scaffolds understanding and reduces cognitive load during demanding tasks. Beyond these four foundational strategies, further evidence-based classroom activities can deepen multilingual practice.

Classroom Activities That Work

Heugh et al. (2024) document evidence-based activities tested in diverse classrooms worldwide. Three high-impact strategies emerged as immediately implementable.

i. Multilingual Brainstorming

New topics can begin by inviting students to share relevant vocabulary in any language they know, then mapping connections between terms across languages to build shared schema.

ii. Identity Texts

Students create bilingual stories, poems, or presentations about their own experiences. These affirm identity while developing English alongside the home language.

iii. Peer Language Experts

Designating students as "language experts" who explain concepts to classmates in a shared home language builds classroom community and validates learners' existing linguistic knowledge. These classroom-level activities work best when reinforced by a wider classroom culture that treats multilingualism as the norm rather than the exception.

Creating an Inclusive Environment

Beyond individual activities, four broader practices help establish a genuinely inclusive classroom culture.

- Display linguistic diversity: use posters, labels, and signs in multiple languages to show that all languages are valued in the classroom space.
- Model positive attitudes: express genuine interest in students' languages, learn basic greetings, and show curiosity about linguistic features.
- Build collaborative norms: establish routines where students support one another across languages, framing multilingualism as a shared classroom resource.
- Provide multilingual resources: offer bilingual dictionaries, translated materials, and multilingual digital tools to support independent learning.

Addressing Common Concerns

Teachers often raise practical objections to multilingual approaches, and each merits a direct response. Some worry that they do not speak their students' languages; however, teachers need not be multilingual themselves.

Students can be positioned as language experts, and translation applications, bilingual teaching assistants, or parent volunteers can support the process where needed. Others fear that using multiple languages will confuse learners. Hornberger and Link (2012) found that biliteracy practices clarify rather than confuse, and that making explicit connections between languages strengthens both. A final concern is curricular: many teachers work within English-only curriculum requirements. Here it is worth stressing that multilingual approaches function as scaffolding strategies in support of English learning outcomes, not as a replacement for them. UNESCO (2017) recognises such approaches as essential for equity and inclusion in education.

Implementation Steps for Practitioners

Teachers wishing to adopt these strategies can proceed through four manageable steps.

- Audit your practice: reflect on current attitudes towards home languages and identify opportunities to incorporate multilingual strategies into existing lessons.
- Start small: choose one strategy to trial for a fortnight, such as a multilingual word wall or a translation activity.
- Gather feedback: ask students how multilingual approaches affect their learning, and observe engagement levels and language development over time.
- Build capacity: share successes with colleagues and develop a community of practice around multilingual teaching within the institution.

Practical Implications for English Language Teaching

For English language teachers working in linguistically diverse contexts such as Tanzania and the wider East African region, the implications are immediate and actionable. Learners' home languages, whether Kiswahili, other national languages, or local mother tongues, can be treated as pedagogical assets rather than classroom management problems. Even small, low-cost adjustments, such as allowing brief home-language discussion before English writing tasks, or inviting students to compare an English idiom with an equivalent expression in their own language, can measurably improve comprehension, engagement, and learner confidence, all without displacing the ultimate goal of strong English proficiency.

Conclusion and Key Takeaways

Three key takeaways emerged and remain relevant for practitioners beyond the conference.

- Embrace linguistic resources: students' home languages are assets, not obstacles. Their strategic use accelerates English learning and builds deeper understanding.
- Start where you are: teachers do not need to speak multiple languages themselves to implement multilingual approaches. Beginning with one practical strategy builds confidence over time.
- Evidence supports change: decades of research confirm that multilingual approaches enhance learning outcomes, engagement, and equity for all students.

It is emphasised that every language present in a classroom is an asset, and every teacher, whether or not they realise it, is a language teacher.

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Sustainability and Greening ELT: Theory, Research and Practice

Samuel Ismael Nassary

ABSTRACT

Environmental challenges are becoming part of everyday life, and schools cannot remain outside this conversation. This article explores how English teachers can bring sustainability into ordinary language lessons through meaningful topics, projects, discussion, and community action while helping learners improve their communication skills.

Introduction

Environmental problems are no longer distant issues that learners only hear about in the news. In many communities, people experience them directly through changing weather patterns, waste, water shortages, soil degradation, loss of trees, and pressure on natural resources. UNESCO (2021), for instance, emphasises that education should help learners develop the knowledge, values, and skills needed to contribute to a more sustainable future. Schools therefore have an important role in helping young people understand these problems and think about what they can do about them.

An English lesson does not have to be limited to grammar exercises or textbook questions. English Language Teaching (ELT) has a useful contribution to make reading passage about plastic waste, a debate about tree cutting, a report on water use, or a group project on school gardens. Whereas all these passages and/or texts can give learners a real reason to use English to study the environment as well.

In this way, language learning and environmental learning can take place at the same time. This is consistent with the global-issues approach to language education described by Cates (1990) and Jacobs and Cates (1999).

Understanding Sustainability

Sustainability is broadly understood as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED, 1987). While the concept encompasses environmental, social, and economic dimensions, this study focuses primarily on its environmental dimension. Specifically, sustainability refers to the use of English language learning activities to help learners develop communicative competence while exploring issues such as environmental conservation, climate change, waste management, biodiversity, and the responsible use of natural resources. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a useful framework for connecting English language learning with real-world social and

environmental concerns. In particular, SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 15 (Life on Land) can be incorporated into English lessons through reading, discussion, debate, writing and presentation activities. In this way, learners develop their communicative competence while also engaging with issues that affect their communities and the wider world can therefore be connected to broader concerns such as climate action, responsible consumption, equality, and community well-being (United Nations, 2015).

For schools, sustainability becomes meaningful when it moves from an abstract idea to something learners can see and discuss. Students can investigate the amount of waste produced at school, discuss how water is used, examine the importance of trees, or explore how farming practices affect the environment. English gives them a way to describe what they observe, ask questions, share opinions, and communicate possible solutions.

What is Greening ELT?

Greening ELT means bringing environmental and sustainability issues into English language learning. Hauschild et al. (2012) demonstrate how environmental education can be integrated into language instruction, while Jacobs and Cates (1999) assert that global and environmental issues can provide meaningful content for second-language learning. It is not about turning English teachers into environmental science teachers. Rather, it involves using environmental and sustainability issues as meaningful contexts for

language learning, allowing learners to develop their English while exploring issues relevant to their lives and communities (Jacobs & Cates, 1999; Moyana & Chimanikire, 2017; Kwee, 2021).

For example, a teacher might use a short article about conservation to teach reading skills and vocabulary, then ask learners to discuss the environmental situation in their own community. Another class might write persuasive letters about waste management or prepare short presentations on saving water.

This approach is especially relevant when teachers use local examples. Learners are more likely to participate when the topic is something they have seen or experienced. A discussion about a nearby river, a school garden, livestock grazing, litter around the school, or the loss of trees can be much more engaging than an unfamiliar example taken from a distant context.

Theoretical Foundations

Constructivist Theory

Constructivism views learning as an active process. Learners build understanding through experience, interaction, and collaboration rather than simply receiving information. Vygotsky (1978) highlights the importance of social interaction in learning. In a Greening ELT classroom, students can work in groups to investigate an environmental issue, discuss what they have found, and agree on a solution. The teacher guides the process while learners take an active role (Khalid et al. (2026)

Literature Review

The literature on Greening ELT suggests that environmental and global issues can provide meaningful, real-world contexts for language learning, enabling learners to use English to explore issues that are relevant to their lives and communities (Gursoy & Sağlam, 2011; Jacobs & Cates, 1999; Zahoor & Janjua, 2020). Moreover, Bourn (2015) emphasises learning that develops critical thinking, participation, collaboration, and a sense of responsibility towards wider social and global issues. Additionally, UNESCO (2021) places similar emphasis on knowledge, values, and action for sustainability. More recently, work has continued to explore ways of embedding sustainability in language education, including curriculum design, teacher preparation, and classroom activities (Yu et al., 2024).

Practical Classroom Strategies

There are many simple ways to begin Greening ELT without waiting for expensive equipment or a completely new curriculum. One can be through the use environmental topics in reading and speaking lessons. A short text about waste, climate, farming, wildlife, or water can be used to teach vocabulary and comprehension before learners discuss the issue in pairs or groups. Second, Project-Based Learning. Learners might conduct a simple survey of waste around the school, keep a record of water use, establish a vegetable garden, organise a tree planting activity, or investigate a local environmental problem.



Figure 1: A vegetable and Pawpaw garden at Nakwa Secondary School.

The English component can include writing reports, preparing posters, interviewing community members, and presenting findings. The project then becomes both a language-learning activity and a practical learning experience.

Debates, role-plays, storytelling, speeches, and presentations are also useful. A class could debate whether plastic bags should be restricted, role-play a community meeting about water use, or prepare speeches encouraging people to protect trees. These activities give learners repeated opportunities to use English for real communication.



Figure 2: Form V students at NAKWA sec.school are debating about plastic bags burnt.

Teachers can also model the behaviours they want learners to develop. Reducing unnecessary paper, keeping the classroom clean, reusing materials, saving water, and encouraging responsible waste disposal are small actions, but they help make sustainability visible in everyday school life.



Figure 3: Proper disposal. Encourage proper collection of wastes to enhance recycling and thus sustainable environment.

Teaching Materials and Digital Resources

Greening ELT does not always require specialised textbooks. Teachers can make use of newspaper articles, local stories, photographs, videos, podcasts, community information, and materials produced by environmental organisations. Moreover, local examples are often particularly effective because learners can relate them to their own experiences.

According to Moorhouse and Wong, 2025 and British council, 2024 assert digital tools and Artificial Intelligence can also support teachers with lesson planning, vocabulary activities, writing practice, and the development of discussion questions. However, technology should support not replace the teacher's professional judgement Khalid et al. (2026). At the same time,

teachers still need to check the accuracy, suitability, and relevance of materials before using them with learners. Additionally, UNESCO (2024) stresses the importance of preparing teachers and strengthening curriculum approaches to climate and sustainability education.

Challenges in Implementation

The idea of Greening ELT is attractive, but putting it into practice is not always easy. Some schools have limited teaching materials, poor internet access, or little access to digital devices. Teachers may also have heavy workloads and limited opportunities for professional development.

Curriculum pressure is another concern. When teachers are expected to cover large content, environmental activities may be useful. There can also be uncertainty about whether sustainability belongs in English lessons. For this reason, professional development is important. Teachers need practical examples showing that sustainability can be integrated into existing language objectives rather than added as a separate subject.

Recommendations

Teacher training should include practical ways of connecting sustainability with language skills. Teachers do not necessarily need expensive workshops; school-based professional learning communities can be used to share lesson ideas, materials, and classroom experiences.

Curriculum developers can also make sustainability easier to teach by including relevant environmental themes in reading passages, writing tasks, speaking activities, and

project work. Schools should make use of affordable local resources and encourage learners to learn from their communities. Partnerships with environmental organisations, universities, local authorities, and teacher associations can provide additional expertise and learning opportunities.

Conclusion

Sustainability is not only the responsibility of science teachers or environmental organisations. Every subject has a role to play, and English can make a particularly useful contribution because it gives learners a means of discussing problems, sharing ideas, and communicating solutions.

Greening ELT offers a practical way of bringing environmental learning into ordinary English lessons. Through reading, discussion, debate, project work, and community-based activities, learners can improve their English while becoming more aware of the world around them. The approach is supported by constructivist, communicative, ecological, and critical perspectives, as well as a growing body of research.

The main challenge is not whether Greening ELT is possible, but how to make it realistic in different school contexts. With teacher support, relevant materials, curriculum flexibility, and community partnerships, English classrooms can help develop young people who are not only better communicators but also more responsible citizens for sustainable development.

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Icebreakers as Pedagogical Tools: Enhancing Motivation, Communication, and Collaboration in Multilingual ELT Classrooms

Judith Kapinga

ABSTRACT

This article examines icebreakers as purposeful pedagogical tools in multilingual English language teaching classrooms. It draws on classroom tested activities and practical experience, explain how icebreakers build trust, reduce anxiety, enhance motivation and promote communication and collaboration. Offering teachers adaptable and practical framework for purposeful lesson design for group dynamics.

Introduction

Motivation, communication, and collaboration are widely recognised as the pillars on which successful English language learning is built, yet many classrooms still open with a silence that learners must overcome before genuine interaction can begin. Icebreakers short, structured warm-up activities offer a practical way to close that gap, transforming the emotional and social climate of an English language classroom before formal instruction even begins. Rather than treating icebreakers as peripheral entertainment, this article frames them as deliberate pedagogical interventions that lower affective barriers, build trust among learners, and create the conditions under which authentic language use can flourish.

Drawing on classroom tested activities and practical experience, this article discusses why icebreakers matter in the English language teaching (ELT) classroom, presented in the session put the underlying principles into practice, and considers what these ideas mean

for everyday teaching in multilingual and mixed proficiency settings.

Why Icebreakers Matter in the ELT Classroom

Icebreakers matter because language learning is, at its core, a social act, and several interconnected functions explain why. First, they build trust and connection among learners who may not know one another, which is particularly important in language classrooms where learners must take interpersonal risks to speak in a non-native language. Second, they help teachers and classmates recognise the diversity of the learner group, surfacing different backgrounds, experiences, and personalities early in a course. Third and central to the case made here icebreakers are linked directly to increased learner engagement and motivation, both of which are recognised in the language-learning literature as strong predictors of sustained progress.

Icebreakers also reduce anxiety and shyness, two affective barriers that frequently prevent learners from participating orally. Finally, they encourage participation and set a positive tone for the remainder of the lesson or course, establishing classroom norms of openness and mutual respect from the outset. Taken together, these functions position icebreakers not as a warm-up formality but as a deliberate first step in building the classroom conditions that language learning depends on.

Icebreaker Activities in Practice

The principles above translate into concrete classroom practice through three activities that have proved effective across different learner groups and proficiency levels.

Two Truths and a Lie invites each student to share three statements about themselves, two true and one false, while classmates attempt to identify the lie. As a classroom activity, it works well as an effective way for learners to get to know one another while practising spontaneous spoken production and listening comprehension in a low-stakes, game-like format.

The Scavenger Hunt Game asks students to search their environment for items or ideas matching prompts such as a symbol of inclusion, something representing teamwork, an unfamiliar word written on the board, or a health-related word they can explain. This activity combines physical movement, vocabulary work, and collaborative meaning-making, and it encourages learners to interact with classroom space and with one another in an unstructured, exploratory way.

The Emoji Feelings Check-In displays a range of emojis representing different emotional states, from confusion and sleepiness to happiness and frustration, and asks students to select the emoji that best reflects how they feel that day before explaining their choice. This is a quick, visually accessible tool for surfacing learners' emotional states, giving the teacher useful diagnostic information while also providing a low-pressure speaking prompt tied to personally meaningful content.

Lessons from the Classroom

My own classroom experience has shaped how I think about these activities, and three insights stand out. Real, lived classroom experience often carries more instructive weight than theory alone. Icebreakers measurably improve participation and classroom energy. And when these activities are used consistently, students report feeling seen and valued as individuals rather than as anonymous members of a group. This experiential grounding lends practical credibility to the theoretical claims made throughout this article and reinforces the broader argument that affective and relational factors are inseparable from cognitive and linguistic ones in language learning.

Designing Effective Icebreakers

Choosing or designing an icebreaker is a deliberate instructional design decision rather than an improvised or purely recreational choice. Before selecting an activity, teachers should weigh the specific objective of the activity, the time available within the lesson, the physical environment of the classroom, the proficiency level of the students, the existing social

their own specific teaching contexts, including large classes, mixed-proficiency groups, or culturally diverse learner populations such as those commonly found across African English language classrooms.

The emphasis on emotional check-ins, such as the emoji activity, also points to a broader implication for formative assessment and learner wellbeing. Regularly inviting students to name and share their emotional state offers teachers real time insight into class morale and individual learner needs, which can inform pacing, grouping, and instructional decisions throughout the lesson. This aligns icebreaker practice with growing interest in socio-emotional dimensions of language education, where learner wellbeing is treated as integral to, rather than separate from, academic achievement.

Finally, the reflection that experience often teaches more than theory is a useful reminder for practitioners: while frameworks such as Vygotsky's sociocultural theory provide valuable conceptual grounding, practitioner generated, classroom tested activities remain an essential and complementary source of pedagogical knowledge. For English language associations and teacher-training bodies, this suggests value in continuing to create platforms, such as conference presentations and proceedings, through which practising teachers can share tested classroom strategies alongside more formal theoretical scholarship.

Conclusion

This article has made a clear and practically grounded case for the deliberate use of icebreakers in English language classrooms. By building trust, reducing anxiety, and increasing motivation and participation, well designed icebreaker activities such as “Two Truths and a Lie,” the “Scavenger Hunt Game,” and the “Emoji Feelings Check-In” can meaningfully shape the communicative and collaborative climate of a lesson. When selected with attention to objective, timing, learner level, group dynamics, and cultural context, icebreakers function not as marginal warm-up routines but as purposeful pedagogical tools that support both the social and linguistic goals of English language teaching and learning.

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AI in the Literature Classroom: A Global Teacher Testimony

Mwanaidy Ally Mwacha

ABSTRACT

Literature fosters empathy, critical thinking, and socio-cultural awareness, yet many classical and post-colonial texts are marginalized or absent from modern curricula. This paper explores how Mindgrasp AI can serve as a “cognitive bridge” between contemporary learners and complex literary texts, integrating snapshot literary analysis with AI-assisted pedagogy to make classical themes accessible and relevant.

Introduction

The Silent Loss of Literary Voices

Literature in the language classroom is more than a tool for grammar acquisition; it provides students with a mirror to explore human conflict, morality, and identity. Despite this, teachers frequently face challenges engaging modern digital-native students with dense or historical texts. Works that once sparked critical consciousness from Chinua Achebe’s post-colonial critiques to Shakespearean tragedies are often perceived by learners as distant, archaic, or irrelevant.

Reflection prompt:

"Think of a book you once read that is no longer taught in schools today. What lesson or image from it has stayed with you?"

This reflection highlights a central paradox: while curricula may move on from certain books, the cognitive and emotional impact of great literature remains. The challenge for modern language educators in Tanzania and

globally is not whether these texts still hold value, but how to build pedagogical bridges that bring students across the gap from confusion to clarity.

1. Re-Engaging Powerful Voices

A Literary Snapshot

To demonstrate the enduring power of classic literature, the following are the key snapshots across global, African, and Western traditions. Each text delivers a timeless lesson on society, ethics, and human nature:

- Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (1958): Captures Okonkwo’s despair and the collapse of traditional society under colonial force ("The white man is very clever... Now he has won our brothers..."). It serves as a profound study in cultural conflict and systemic collapse.
- Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960): Through Atticus Finch’s courtroom defense, students encounter an enduring lesson on empathy and moral courage ("You never really understand a person... until you climb into his skin and walk around in it").

- **William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603/1992):** Hamlet's inner conflict ("*To be, or not to be...*") captures universal human struggles with doubt, existential anxiety, and decision-making.
- **Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* (1966) & Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *The River Between* (1965):** These works address disillusionment with post-independence political corruption and the delicate balance between tradition and modern education.
- **George Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945):** The famous revision—"All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others"—provides a sharp political satire on propaganda, language manipulation, and betrayed promises.
- **William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (1597/1992):** A tragic exploration of youth, rash emotion, and generational conflict, warning against the costs of unexamined passion and prejudice.

2. Practical Use of Mindgrasp AI in the Classroom

Artificial intelligence should not replace reading; rather, it acts as a scaffolding tool that helps learners cross from initial resistance to deep engagement (Holmes et al., 2019; Luckin et al., 2016). Mindgrasp AI functions specifically as a cognitive and digital bridge by processing full literary PDFs, audio recordings, or text excerpts, allowing teachers and students to interact with complex material

in multi-modal ways (Mindgrasp AI, 2024; Zhai, 2022). The practical use can be divided into the following phases:

Phase 1: Input & Scaffolding

Document Upload and Multi-Modal Analysis

In this phase teachers or students upload PDF copies of literary works or scanned text pages directly into Mindgrasp AI. The tool automatically generates context summaries, key theme breakdowns, and customized vocabulary banks (e.g., explaining Elizabethan English idioms in *Romeo and Juliet* or post-colonial terminology in *Things Fall Apart*).

Phase 2: Guided Reading

Interactive Question Answering

During reading sessions, students use the Mindgrasp AI Q and a search bar to ask targeted questions:

- "*Why did Okonkwo feel betrayed by his clan in Chapter 20?*"
- "*What does the balcony scene represent in terms of family loyalty versus personal desire?*" Mindgrasp responds strictly using the uploaded text, guiding students back to specific page numbers and quotes to support evidence-based writing.

Phase 3: Formative Assessment

Automated Quiz and Flashcard Generation

Teachers instantly generate diagnostic quizzes and study flashcards based on specific chapters or scenes. Mindgrasp outputs multiple-choice and open-ended critical thinking questions focusing on character motivation and literary devices.

Phase 4: Synthesis and Discussion

Creative Application & Cultural Parallels

Students utilize AI prompts to translate Shakespearean dialogues into modern conversational styles to analyze underlying emotional intent, or ask the AI to identify similarities between classic themes and modern societal conflicts.

3. Practical Implications for Language Educators

Integrating AI as a literary scaffold offers several immediate benefits for English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms:

- **Differentiated Learning:** Lower-level language learners can utilize AI to summarize dense chapters or explain complex idioms before entering whole-class discussions.
- **Interactive Critical Thinking:** Instead of asking students to memorize plot points, teachers can ask them to critique AI-generated character analyses or challenge an AI's interpretation of a literary quote.
- **Resurrecting Neglected Texts:** Teachers are no longer restricted to simplified coursebook excerpts; AI tools allow educators to reintroduce rich, full-length texts into the syllabus with lower cognitive friction for students.

Conclusion

Literature provides the emotional and ethical foundation of language education. By pairing timeless literary voices, such as Achebe, Ngũgĩ, Lee, Orwell, and Shakespeare, with emerging

technologies like Mindgrasp AI, educators can create dynamic learning spaces. AI does not render classic literature obsolete; when used purposefully, it ensures that these powerful, forgotten voices continue to speak clearly to the next generation.

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