

Proceedings of The Tashkent Forum

**Accelerating English Language Learning in Central Asia
(AELLCA)**

**AELLCA II: Contextualising English Language Pedagogy in
Central Asia: Building Sustainable Pathways through Localised
Innovation**

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3–4 March 2026

Organised by University of Portsmouth, U.K

and

Jizzakh State Pedagogical University, Uzbekistan

Funded by British Council English and Inclusion Partnerships



First published in Great Britain in 2026 by All Terrain Publishing.

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ISBN: 978-1-0682208-2-1 (eBook)

Foreword

It is a great pleasure to introduce this collection of short papers from the AELLCA II Tashkent Forum, held on 3–4 March 2026. AELLCA, Accelerating English Language Learning in Central Asia, has provided an important space for teachers, teacher educators and researchers to examine how English language pedagogy can be strengthened through locally grounded innovation. This volume was developed under the theme 'Contextualising English Language Pedagogy in Central Asia: Building Sustainable Pathways through Localised Innovation'.

The collection brings together practice-informed reflections, small-scale studies and pedagogical innovations mainly from English language educators working in Uzbekistan, while opening a wider conversation about English language pedagogy across Central Asia. Its value lies in the close attention given to real classrooms, real learners and real institutional constraints. The papers do not treat English language teaching as a fixed set of imported methods. They show how teachers interpret, adapt and reshape pedagogical ideas in response to local needs, learner profiles, assessment pressures, institutional expectations and available resources.

Several papers focus on the changing role of technology in English language learning. Shakhlo Urunova's paper on AI-powered English language teaching examines how tools such as ELSA Speak, Grammarly, ChatGPT, Quizlet AI and other platforms can support pronunciation, writing, feedback and learner autonomy in higher education. At the same time, the paper raises important questions about tool overload, digital access and the need for teacher preparation. Nafosat Komilova's study of podcast-based listening and vocabulary development offers another example of digital innovation, showing how intensive and extensive listening tasks can increase exposure to authentic spoken English while also requiring careful scaffolding for humour, speed and multiple-speaker interaction.

Writing development is another important concern in the collection. Nargiza Yaxshibayeva's paper on Cambridge-based Presidential Schools in Uzbekistan highlights the challenges faced by Grade 8 students preparing for IGCSE-level writing. By focusing on student and teacher perspectives, the paper draws attention to assessment practice, feedback and the difficulty of supporting writing development within demanding international curricula. This contribution is particularly valuable because it connects classroom writing difficulties with wider questions of curriculum transfer, learner readiness and assessment culture.

Teacher education and classroom pedagogy form a further strand of the volume. Javokhir Bakhromov's paper argues for the integration of TESOL approaches into Uzbek university curricula in order to better prepare future secondary school English teachers. The paper is especially important because it shifts attention from individual teacher deficit to the structure of teacher preparation itself. In a related but distinct way, Shakhodat Iskandarova's discussion of teacher-led instructional dominance examines why teacher authority remains significant in university EFL classrooms. Her paper does not simply reject teacher-led practice. It asks how structured guidance, professional authority and student reliance can be understood within local educational cultures and learner expectations.

The collection also includes papers that speak directly to the relationship between global methods and local adaptation. Mushtariy Akhmedova's paper on negotiating global and local approaches in English language teaching foregrounds teacher agency, translanguaging, digital tools and locally relevant materials. It shows that reform becomes meaningful through teachers'

situated decision-making. Nargiza Masharipova's paper on methodological minimalism offers a complementary perspective by examining how reduced teacher talk, simplified instruction and more student-led activity can support engagement and communicative development. Together, these papers show that innovation does not always mean adding more methods, more tools or more policy language. It can also mean making better pedagogical choices with clarity, restraint and contextual sensitivity.

Taken as a whole, the collection presents English language pedagogy in Central Asia as a field of active professional negotiation. The papers address artificial intelligence, writing development, TESOL curriculum reform, teacher authority, digital innovation, student engagement, listening development and methodological change. Across these different areas, a shared concern emerges: how can English language education become more inclusive, sustainable and responsive to the learners and teachers who inhabit its everyday realities?

A key strength of these contributions is their attention to local professional knowledge. The authors write from within their own teaching contexts and draw on the challenges, possibilities and constraints they encounter in practice. Their papers show that teachers are not passive recipients of reform. They are interpreters, designers and producers of pedagogical knowledge. This is one of the most important messages of the AELLCA II Tashkent Forum, and one we hope will carry beyond this volume into future collaboration, research and pedagogical innovation across the region.

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Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all colleagues, partners, contributors and participants who made the AELLCA II Tashkent Forum possible.

Special thanks go to Dr Peter Watkins and Tom Fleming for attending the Forum and contributing keynote talks. We are also grateful to Dr Ulugbek Jabbarov for his strong support with the venue arrangements and local logistics in Tashkent.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the British Council and the AELLCA team for supporting this work and creating a space where locally situated English language pedagogy can be shared, discussed and developed further.

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Chapter 1: Negotiating Global AND Local in English Language Teaching: Teacher Agency and Digital Innovation in Uzbekistan

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Abstract

This paper examines how English language teachers in Uzbekistan adapt global English Language Teaching (ELT) approaches to local educational realities through professional agency and digital innovation. Recent reforms promoting communicative and learner-centred teaching have encouraged the integration of digital technologies and international frameworks such as CEFR. However, differences in infrastructure, multilingual classrooms, and varying learner proficiency levels require teachers to contextualise these approaches. Using a qualitative, practice-oriented methodology, the study draws on classroom observations, reflective practice, and professional development experiences in secondary and higher education institutions in Jizzakh and Tashkent. The findings show that teachers use translanguaging, locally relevant materials, and accessible digital tools to create inclusive learning environments. The study argues that successful ELT reform depends not only on technology adoption, but also on teacher agency, contextual awareness, and sustainable professional development.

1. Context and Rationale

English Language Teaching (ELT) in Uzbekistan has undergone major changes due to educational reforms and increased international cooperation. Since the introduction of CEFR-oriented policies and national reforms promoting foreign language learning, communicative and learner-centred teaching methods have become increasingly important. International organisations such as the British Council, USAID, and UNESCO have also contributed to the modernisation of ELT through teacher training and digital education initiatives.

Despite these reforms, many teachers face challenges when implementing global ELT models directly in local classrooms. Multilingual learning environments, unequal access to technology, large class sizes, and traditional assessment systems often limit the effectiveness of imported teaching approaches. In rural schools especially, internet connectivity and access to digital devices remain inconsistent. As a result, teachers frequently adapt international methodologies to fit local linguistic, cultural, and institutional realities.

This paper explores how teachers in Uzbekistan negotiate the relationship between global ELT frameworks and local classroom needs. It focuses particularly on teacher agency and the role of digital innovation in supporting inclusive and sustainable language learning. The study



aims to show that meaningful educational change occurs when teachers critically adapt methods rather than simply reproducing global models.

2. Pedagogical or Professional Intervention

The study used a qualitative and practice-oriented approach involving classroom observations, teacher reflections, and professional development experiences in secondary schools and universities in Jizzakh and Tashkent. Fifteen English teachers with between five and fifteen years of experience participated in the research. The study focused on how teachers adapted communicative language teaching, learner-centred approaches, and digital tools within different educational settings.

Teachers reported that professional development programs organised by the British Council and other institutions played an important role in strengthening their confidence and instructional flexibility. Participants described using digital platforms such as Moodle, Padlet, Canva, ChatGPT, and offline mobile applications to improve student engagement and language practice. However, teachers did not apply these tools mechanically. Instead, they modified materials and activities according to student proficiency, classroom conditions, and cultural relevance.

For example, one secondary school teacher in Jizzakh combined communicative activities with Uzbek folklore and translanguaging practices to support low-level learners. Another university instructor in Tashkent integrated locally contextualised writing tasks into AI-assisted lessons using Grammarly and Moodle. Teachers also redesigned assessment methods by including presentations, collaborative projects, and oral tasks instead of relying only on traditional grammar-based tests.

The intervention highlighted the importance of reflective teaching and peer collaboration. Teachers shared digital resources through social media groups and professional networks, helping colleagues overcome technological and methodological challenges. These adaptations demonstrated how teacher agency can transform global ELT principles into context-sensitive practices that are more inclusive and sustainable for Uzbek classrooms.

3. Reflection and Implications

The findings demonstrate that teacher agency is essential for the successful integration of digital innovation and global ELT approaches in Uzbekistan. Rather than passively following imported methodologies, teachers actively reinterpret them according to local educational realities. This process helps create learning environments that are more responsive to students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The study also shows that digital technologies are most effective when combined with contextual awareness. While tools such as AI platforms, online learning systems, and mobile



applications increase student participation and autonomy, their impact depends on teachers' ability to use them critically and ethically. In resource-limited contexts, flexible and offline-compatible technologies were especially valuable.

Professional development emerged as a major factor supporting sustainable innovation. Training programs encouraged reflective practice, collaboration, and experimentation with new pedagogical strategies. Teachers who participated in these programs were more confident in adapting teaching materials and balancing institutional expectations with learner needs.

The implications of this study are relevant for both policymakers and teacher educators. Expanding access to professional development, particularly in rural areas, would support more equitable educational reform. Investment in affordable and accessible digital infrastructure is also necessary. Most importantly, reforms should recognise teachers not simply as implementers of policy, but as active professionals capable of shaping meaningful and locally appropriate ELT practices.

4. Conclusion

This paper has shown that successful English Language Teaching reform in Uzbekistan depends largely on teacher agency and contextualised digital innovation. Although global ELT models and technologies provide useful frameworks, their effectiveness increases when teachers adapt them to local classroom realities. Through reflective practice, translanguaging, collaborative learning, and flexible digital tools, teachers create more inclusive and sustainable learning environments. Professional development programs further strengthen teachers' ability to balance international standards with local needs. Future educational reforms should continue supporting teacher-led innovation, equitable access to technology, and context-sensitive pedagogy in order to improve English language education across Uzbekistan.

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Chapter 2: Integrating TESOL Approaches into Uzbek University Curriculum to Prepare Future Secondary School English Teachers

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Abstract

English language education in Uzbekistan has become increasingly significant in response to global communication and international collaboration. However, deficit-oriented narratives often portray Uzbek secondary school English teachers as insufficiently prepared, focusing on their lack of practical experience rather than the systemic limitations of existing teacher education programs. Traditional university curricula emphasize theoretical knowledge of linguistics and literature, while providing limited opportunities for hands-on pedagogical practice. This results in graduates entering classrooms with constrained abilities in lesson planning, classroom management, and the application of contemporary teaching methods.

This article proposes re-contextualizing English language pedagogy by integrating TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) approaches into undergraduate programs in ways that are inclusive, innovative, and responsive to local educational realities. Research-based methodologies such as task-based learning, content-based instruction, and collaborative learning offer a framework for developing teacher competencies that go beyond theoretical knowledge, equipping graduates to create engaging, effective, and contextually relevant learning experiences. By shifting the focus from deficits to capacities and contextual needs, this approach envisions a sustainable model for preparing future English teachers who can transform classrooms and respond proactively to the challenges of contemporary English language education in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: TESOL, inclusive pedagogy, innovative teaching approaches, curriculum reform, local educational contexts, teacher preparation, deficit narratives.

1. Introduction

The landscape of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Uzbekistan has undergone a paradigm shift. Since the landmark reforms initiated by presidential decrees aimed at improving foreign language learning, the focus has moved from translation-heavy methods to communicative competence. Yet, a significant gap remains. Graduates of pedagogical universities often find themselves well-versed in the history of the English language and classical literature, but ill-equipped to manage a classroom of thirty energetic teenagers or to design a lesson plan that fosters genuine interaction.

This gap has birthed a "deficit narrative," where the failure of the classroom is blamed on the teacher's supposed lack of skill. This article challenges that narrative, suggesting instead



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that the curriculum must be re-contextualized. By integrating TESOL approaches into the undergraduate programs of institutions like Jizzakh State Pedagogical University, we can transition from a "knowledge-about-language" model to a "knowledge-of-how-to-teach-language" model.

2. The Current Challenge: Theory vs. Practice

Traditionally, the Uzbek higher education system for philology and pedagogy has been "content-heavy". Students spend a majority of their credit hours on linguistics, phonetics, and theoretical grammar. While these are foundational, they do not equate to pedagogical proficiency.

When these students enter secondary schools, they face three primary hurdles:

1. Fixed Curricula: A struggle to adapt rigid textbooks to the varying levels of their students.
2. Classroom Management: Difficulty in maintaining engagement in an environment where English is seen as a "subject" rather than a "tool."
3. Assessment: A reliance on traditional testing rather than formative assessment that tracks actual communication skills.

3. Integrating TESOL Methodologies

To address these challenges, the university curriculum should incorporate three core TESOL pillars that bridge the gap between theory and the classroom.

3.1. Task-Based Learning (TBL)

Task-Based Learning moves the focus from "learning the grammar to use it" to "using the language to complete a task." In a university setting, future teachers should not just study TBL; they should experience it.

Application: Instead of a lecture on "The Present Perfect," student-teachers should be tasked with designing a survey for their peers. By performing the task, they see how grammar emerges naturally. Integrating TBL into the curriculum teaches future educators how to facilitate student-centered learning where the teacher acts as a consultant rather than a lecturer.

3.2. Content-Based Instruction (CBI)

CBI is particularly relevant for Uzbekistan's goal of integrating English into other sectors (Science, Technology, and Business). By teaching English through specific subjects, we make the language relevant.



Application: University modules could be redesigned to teach pedagogical psychology or classroom management in English. This dual-purpose learning increases the "exposure time" to English while simultaneously building the professional vocabulary required for their future careers.

3.3. Collaborative Learning and Peer-Teaching

Traditional models are often hierarchical and solitary. However, the modern secondary school classroom thrives on collaboration.

Application: The "Practicum" element of the curriculum should be expanded. Micro-teaching sessions—where students teach a 15-minute segment of a lesson to their peers and receive immediate, structured feedback—should be a weekly occurrence, not a once-a-semester event. This builds "reflective practitioners" who are capable of self-correction.

4. Re-contextualization: Making TESOL Local

A common mistake in educational reform is the "importation" of Western methods without considering local culture. For TESOL to be effective in Uzbekistan, it must be inclusive of our social context. This includes:

Resource Management: Designing activities that work in classrooms that may not have high-tech equipment.

Cultural Sensitivity: Using examples and tasks that resonate with Uzbek values and local traditions, making the language feel "owned" by the students rather than foreign.

Multilingualism: Acknowledging the role of the L1 (Uzbek or Russian). Rather than banning the native language, TESOL training should teach future teachers how to use L1 strategically as a scaffolding tool.

From Deficits to Capacities: By shifting the curriculum toward these TESOL approaches, we change the narrative. We no longer see the teacher as "lacking" experience; we see them as a "facilitator of innovation." This sustainable model of teacher preparation ensures that when a graduate from Jizzakh State Pedagogical University enters a secondary school, they are not just a "subject expert" but a "pedagogical leader." They possess the tools to plan lessons that are engaging and the confidence to manage diverse learner needs.

5. Conclusion

The transformation of English education in Uzbekistan depends on the courage of universities to evolve. Integrating TESOL approaches is not merely about changing a syllabus; it is about changing the mindset of the next generation of educators. By prioritizing hands-on pedagogical practice and research-based methodologies, we can equip our future teachers to create classrooms that are not just places of study, but hubs of global communication.



The investment in curriculum reform today will yield a generation of students tomorrow who are ready to represent Uzbekistan on the world stage with fluency and confidence.

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Chapter 3: Teacher-led Instructional Dominance in University EFL Classrooms

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Abstract

In today's evolving field of global English Language Teaching (ELT), the growing emphasis on student-centered approaches is often seen as being in tension with more traditional, teacher-led practices. This study explores the continued dominance of teachers in university-level EFL classrooms across Central Asia, focusing on the institutional structures and psychological factors that help sustain this pattern. While current pedagogical debates frequently criticize high levels of Teacher Talking Time (TTT), this paper argues that teachers still play a crucial role as a professional anchor in the learning process. By combining current pedagogical theories with Uzbekistan's specific student reliance contexts, the paper examines how structured guidance serves as crucial support for students seeking professional inspiration and validation from experts. The results indicate that teacher-led dominance offers psychological security and effective assessment, which are key steps toward learner independence.

Keywords: Teacher-led dominance, EFL pedagogy, Central Asia, learner reliance, facilitative authority, sociocultural theory, inclusive education, Uzbekistan higher education

1. Context and Rationale

The educational landscape in Uzbekistan and the wider Central Asian region is built upon a deep culture of learning, a social contract where the teacher is seen not just as a facilitator but also as a source of moral leadership and intellectual inspiration. In university English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, this cultural framework creates a space where the teacher's authority is closely tied to their perceived expertise. Holliday (2005) proposes that "small cultures" are not isolated entities; rather, they reflect a societal framework that holds the teacher in high esteem as a crucial guide. Consequently, what an external observer might characterize as instructional dominance often represents both a professional obligation and a pedagogically responsive adaptation to the specific learning environment of the region.

Institutional reality also shapes this human dynamic. Educators often face the daunting task of managing large, vibrant classes with limited contact hours and rigid, fixed curricula. In such environments, the teacher's leadership acts as a stabilizing force, ensuring that every student remains on the path toward their goals. However, the most compelling reason for this structure is the psychological bond of reliance. Students in Uzbekistan often enter higher education seeking a professional facilitator. They value explicit explanation and corrective precision not out of passivity, but out of a deep desire for academic security. These students



may experience feelings of isolation and cognitive uncertainty if teacher guidance, which is frequently promoted in Western student-centered models, is abruptly reduced (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

In an environment where English is rarely heard outside the university walls, the teacher becomes the student's primary window to the world. They are the reliable voice that makes the unfamiliar familiar. In order to balance the teacher's esteemed position as a qualified professional with the contemporary demand for participatory, real-world problem-solving, this paper proposes that the actual task is not to undermine this authority but to elevate it. By understanding the teacher as a mediator of anxiety and a guide for creating a structural way for learning, we can see that their dominance is actually the scaffolding upon which student confidence is built.

2. Pedagogical or Professional Intervention

The intervention proposed involves a transition from authoritarian control to a model of facilitative authority. This approach recognizes that in Central Asian countries, students count their teachers as professionals who are highly skilled in their fields. The core of this intervention was the refined use of the Initiation–Response–Feedback (IRF) cycle.

In this approach, the instructor poses questions, the students respond, and the instructor provides evaluative comments right away. There are no constraints in this system. On the contrary, it establishes structure, order, and effective assessment.

The key is how the teacher uses this authority to offer practical solutions to student issues and to clarify difficult concepts that are challenging to understand through peer interaction alone. During the intervention, teachers were encouraged to maintain their role as professional mentors while introducing collaborative tasks. By participating actively under the teacher's guidance, students reported a significant reduction in their anxiety about speaking. This shows that students do not want the teacher to disappear; they want the teacher to lead them through interaction. This professional leadership ensures that the psychological needs of the students, specifically their need for inspiration and expert validation, are met.

3. Reflection and Implications

Reflecting on the outcomes, it became evident that teacher-led dominance is highly important for managing the emotional connection with students. As Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) suggest, the teacher's vision and professional identity are primary motivators for learners. In our case, students reported that they try to get their inspiration directly from their teachers.

The implications for English Language Teaching are profound, particularly regarding Inclusive Education. For education to be truly inclusive, the teacher must play a central role



in managing diverse learning speeds and providing a safe structure for all students. Without a strong teacher leader, students with higher anxiety or lower proficiency may feel lost. The challenge is to ensure that dominance does not mean silence for the students. Instead, the teacher uses their dominance to build a bridge between difficult concepts and the student's understanding. By maintaining an organized and detailed structure, teachers can effectively prepare students to solve real-world problems while keeping them psychologically supported.

4. Conclusion

Teacher-led instructional dominance in Central Asian universities remains a cornerstone of the educational system due to its ability to provide order, expert evaluation, and psychological security. This paper has argued that students rely on teachers as skilled professionals who clarify complex concepts and provide inspiration. While interaction is essential for real-world problem solving, it is the teacher's leadership that reduces anxiety and makes that interaction possible. Future development should focus on training educators to become facilitative experts who can maintain their professional authority while fostering an inclusive and communicative environment.

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Chapter 4: Methodological Minimalism in University EFL Teaching

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Abstract

This paper explores methodological minimalism in university English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and its influence on student engagement and language acquisition. The study focuses on reducing excessive teacher talk time and increasing student-led classroom activities to create a more interactive learning environment. Drawing on the Noticing Hypothesis, Focus on Form, and cognitive load theory, the paper examines how carefully structured minimalistic instruction encourages students to participate actively and develop communicative competence. Classroom observations, teacher reflections, and samples of student work were used to analyze the effectiveness of this approach. The findings demonstrate that students become more motivated, confident, and attentive when teachers simplify explanations and allow learners greater autonomy. The paper also discusses practical challenges, including teacher resistance to change and the difficulty of designing meaningful student-centered activities.

1. Context and Rationale

In many university EFL classrooms, teachers often dominate classroom interaction through long explanations, detailed grammar instruction, and continuous correction. Although this approach is usually intended to help students understand difficult concepts, excessive teacher talk may reduce student participation and limit opportunities for meaningful communication. Students frequently become passive listeners rather than active language users. In several observed lessons, students took detailed notes during grammar explanations but struggled to apply the same structures during pair discussions or speaking tasks. For example, some B1 students could correctly explain the rule for the Present Perfect tense yet hesitated when asked simple follow-up questions such as “Have you ever travelled alone?” or “What have you learned this semester?” This situation became especially noticeable in mixed-ability university groups where stronger students answered most questions while quieter learners avoided participation. During traditional lecture-style lessons, some students gradually lost concentration after long teacher explanations and switched to using their phones or speaking Uzbek with classmates. However, when lessons included short collaborative tasks and peer interaction, students appeared more attentive and willing to communicate.

Methodological minimalism offers an alternative approach that focuses on simplifying instruction and creating more space for student interaction. Instead of providing lengthy explanations, the teacher guides learners through carefully designed tasks that encourage



discovery, collaboration, and reflection. This approach is closely connected with Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis, which suggests that learners acquire language more effectively when they consciously notice linguistic features in meaningful contexts. It is also related to Focus on Form, where attention is directed toward language structures during communicative activities rather than through isolated drills.

Another important reason for implementing methodological minimalism is cognitive load theory. University students are often overwhelmed by excessive information, especially in foreign language classrooms where they process unfamiliar vocabulary and grammar simultaneously. This was particularly visible during reading lessons involving academic texts. Some students focused so heavily on translating every unfamiliar word that they lost the overall meaning of the text. Reducing teacher talk, simplifying classroom instructions, and dividing activities into smaller stages helped learners concentrate more effectively and participate with less anxiety. In the context of higher education in Uzbekistan, where many students are expected to develop both academic and communicative English skills, minimalistic teaching may provide a practical solution for increasing learner engagement and autonomy.

2. Pedagogical or Professional Intervention

The intervention described in this paper was implemented in several university EFL classes with B1–C1 level students. The primary objective was to reduce teacher-centered instruction and create more opportunities for active student participation. The teacher intentionally shortened explanations, limited unnecessary repetition, and replaced lecture-style teaching with collaborative activities. Instead of spending fifteen- or twenty-minutes explaining grammar rules, students analyzed examples, discussed patterns in pairs, and attempted to formulate rules independently before receiving teacher feedback.

One classroom activity involved short reading passages containing target grammatical structures. During a lesson on modal verbs of deduction, students worked in groups with short dialogues taken from everyday situations. Rather than explaining the grammar first, the teacher asked students to identify why speakers used “must,” “might,” or “can’t” in each context. One group discussed the sentence “She can’t be at home; the lights are off,” and students debated whether the speaker was expressing certainty or possibility. After several minutes of discussion, students themselves began explaining the difference between strong and weak assumptions. The teacher only clarified points that remained confusing.

Another activity required students to conduct peer discussions and mini presentations. In one C1 speaking lesson focused on technology and education, students prepared short group presentations about whether artificial intelligence should replace some classroom activities. Previously quiet students became noticeably more involved when speaking in small groups



before presenting to the class. One student who rarely volunteered during teacher-led lessons confidently explained her group's opinion and later continued the discussion after class in English with classmates.

Technology and visual materials were also used to support minimalistic teaching. Instead of lengthy PowerPoint presentations filled with text, lessons included short prompts, diagrams, pictures, and discussion questions. For example, during a vocabulary lesson on environmental issues, students were shown only four photographs related to pollution and climate change. Working in pairs, they generated vocabulary themselves before checking meanings collaboratively. This approach reduced dependence on teacher explanation and encouraged active recall. Students were also encouraged to reflect on their learning through brief journals and classroom discussions. At the end of some lessons, learners wrote short reflections describing which activity helped them understand the topic most clearly and where they still felt uncertain. Several students noted that discovering grammar patterns independently helped them remember structures more effectively than copying notes from the board. Teacher reflection notes were collected after lessons to evaluate which strategies promoted greater participation and understanding.

The intervention demonstrated that methodological minimalism does not mean reducing educational quality. On the contrary, it requires careful lesson planning and thoughtful activity design. Teachers needed to predict possible learner difficulties and create tasks that guided students toward independent discovery. For example, when students struggled to identify grammar patterns independently, the teacher prepared guiding questions instead of immediately giving direct explanations. The role of the teacher gradually shifted from information provider to facilitator and observer. This change allowed more classroom time for communication, problem-solving, and collaborative learning.

3. Reflection and Implications

The results of the intervention showed several positive outcomes. Students became more engaged during lessons and participated more actively in pair and group activities. Many learners who were previously silent during teacher-centered lessons began expressing their ideas with greater confidence. In one observed B2 class, students who normally avoided speaking voluntarily extended a classroom debate beyond the planned activity time because they became interested in defending their opinions. Classroom observations also revealed that students paid closer attention to language forms when they discovered patterns independently rather than receiving direct explanations. Teacher reflection notes indicated that reducing teacher talk created a more dynamic classroom environment. Instead of waiting passively for explanations, students asked more clarification questions, negotiated meanings with peers, and attempted to self-correct mistakes during discussions. In some lessons, the classroom became noticeably noisier due to active interaction, which initially felt uncomfortable for teachers



accustomed to highly controlled environments. However, the discussions were generally task-focused and productive.

Additionally, the simplified lesson structure reduced anxiety for some learners because they were not overwhelmed with excessive information at once. One student commented in a reflection journal that shorter explanations helped her “focus on one thing at a time instead of worrying about many grammar rules together.” Another learner wrote that pair discussions felt less stressful than answering questions directly in front of the whole class. These observations support the principles of cognitive load theory, which emphasize the importance of managing the amount of information presented during learning. However, the study also identified several challenges. Some teachers initially felt uncomfortable speaking less because traditional educational practices often associate teacher authority with constant explanation. During early lessons, there was a tendency to interrupt students too quickly or provide answers before learners had enough time to think independently. Designing meaningful student-centered activities also required additional preparation time, especially when adapting materials for mixed-ability groups. Furthermore, some students were unfamiliar with autonomous learning and repeatedly asked the teacher to “just explain the rule directly” instead of discovering patterns themselves.

Despite these difficulties, methodological minimalism has important implications for university EFL teaching in Central Asia. The approach promotes learner autonomy, communicative competence, and critical thinking skills that are essential for modern education. In contexts where students are often accustomed to memorization-based learning, even small reductions in teacher talk can gradually encourage more independent thinking and classroom participation. Teacher training programs may benefit from including workshops on reducing teacher talk time, designing interactive activities, and using reflective teaching practices. Future research could investigate how methodological minimalism influences long-term language retention, academic writing performance, and student motivation across different proficiency levels.

4. Conclusion

Methodological minimalism represents a practical and student-centered approach to university EFL teaching. By reducing excessive teacher talk and encouraging active learner participation, teachers can create more engaging and effective classroom environments. The findings of this paper suggest that students benefit from opportunities to discover language patterns independently, collaborate with peers, and reflect on their learning. Classroom observations demonstrated that even quieter learners became more willing to participate when lessons focused on interaction rather than constant explanation. Although implementing minimalistic teaching requires careful planning and professional adaptation, it can significantly improve learner engagement, confidence, and communicative competence. The



approach may serve as a valuable direction for future English language teaching practices in Central Asia.

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Chapter 5: Challenges in Developing English Writing Skills in Cambridge-Based Presidential Schools in Uzbekistan

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Abstract

As an English teacher working at a Presidential School in Jizzakh, Uzbekistan, within the Cambridge curriculum, I have observed a range of challenges that Grade 8 students face when developing their English writing skills, particularly at the IGCSE level. This study draws on questionnaire data collected from both students and teachers across several Presidential Schools, including those in Jizzakh, Samarkand, Bukhara, and Andijan. The participants were Grade 8 students who were preparing for and taking their IGCSE examinations during the current academic year.

The study explores common writing difficulties experienced by these students, alongside the assessment practices and feedback methods used in their English classrooms. It aims to better understand how students and teachers perceive writing development and assessment at this stage of learning. Particular attention is given to whether current assessment practices support students' progress or, in some cases, make writing development more challenging, as well as to the role of teacher feedback in shaping learning outcomes.

By highlighting classroom-based challenges and existing assessment practices, this study seeks to offer practical ideas for improving writing instruction and assessment in Cambridge-based schools. With specific reference to Presidential Schools in four regions of Uzbekistan, the presentation shares suggestions for making language assessment more effective, inclusive, and more responsive to the needs of Grade 8 IGCSE students.

Keywords: English writing development, formative assessment, teacher feedback, IGCSE writing, Cambridge curriculum, practitioner inquiry, secondary EFL learners, writing difficulties, feedback practices, classroom-based research, qualitative study

1. Introduction

Developing writing in an additional language is often considered one of the most demanding aspects of language learning because it requires learners to manage ideas, organisation, vocabulary, grammar and audience awareness at the same time. In examination-oriented contexts such as Cambridge IGCSE, these demands may become even more visible, particularly when students are expected to produce extended written responses under time pressure.



In my own teaching context, I have repeatedly observed that many Grade 8 students struggle not only with language accuracy but also with idea generation, task response, confidence and understanding how writing is assessed. These classroom observations led to a small-scale inquiry into how students and teachers perceive writing difficulties and assessment practices in Presidential Schools.

This study is informed by the understanding that writing development is closely connected to feedback and assessment. Research has shown that formative assessment can support learning when it makes success criteria visible and helps learners understand how to improve (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Similarly, effective feedback has been found to influence achievement when it guides revision rather than merely evaluates performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). In second language writing, process-oriented approaches have also highlighted the importance of drafting, feedback and revision in developing writers (Hyland, 2003).

Within Central Asian school contexts, however, there is still relatively limited classroom-based research that explores how students themselves perceive writing assessment and feedback. This study seeks to contribute to that space through a practitioner-research lens.

Research Questions

This study was guided by three questions:

1. What writing challenges do Grade 8 IGCSE students perceive as most significant?
2. How do students perceive current assessment and feedback practices in supporting writing development?
3. What improvements do students suggest for strengthening writing instruction?

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study adopted a small-scale qualitative practitioner inquiry design. Although the questionnaire included some closed-response items, the study was approached primarily qualitatively, with emphasis placed on participants' perceptions, comments and recurring themes rather than statistical analysis.

2.2 Participants and Context

The study involved approximately 75 Grade 8 students from Presidential Schools in Jizzakh, Samarkand, Bukhara and Andijan. These students were studying within the Cambridge curriculum and preparing for IGCSE-level assessment.



Participants were selected purposively, as the study focused specifically on learners engaged in this educational context.

2.3 Data Collection

Data were gathered through questionnaires consisting of:

- background questions
- closed questions on writing challenges, assessment and feedback
- open-ended questions inviting students to explain difficulties and suggest changes in writing lessons

The open-ended responses were especially important in understanding learners' experiences in their own words.

2.4 Data Analysis

Responses were reviewed through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Recurring patterns were identified and grouped into themes related to:

- writing difficulties
- perceptions of assessment
- feedback experiences
- student suggestions for improvement

Rather than treating percentages as the focus, survey trends were used to support qualitative interpretation.

2.5 Results

Four major points emerged.

2.5.1 Writing difficulties extend beyond grammar

Although grammar and vocabulary were reported as areas of difficulty, students frequently identified generating ideas and writing under time pressure as major challenges.

Many open-ended responses suggested that difficulty in writing was not only linguistic but cognitive and procedural. Several students connected weak writing performance to not having enough ideas, difficulty organising thoughts, or struggling to manage time in examinations.

Comments such as:

“I don’t get enough ideas.”

and

“Time limits are my nightmares...”



reflect that writing challenges were often linked to planning and exam pressure rather than grammar alone.

This aligns with research suggesting L2 writing difficulties often involve both language resources and composing processes (Hyland, 2003).

2.5.2 Assessment criteria are not always fully transparent to students

Although many students reported that teachers often explain what is needed for high marks, responses also suggested that understanding of Cambridge assessment criteria was sometimes only partial.

This finding points to an important issue: assessment may be present, but assessment literacy may still need strengthening.

Some students appeared uncertain about how their writing was judged, which may affect confidence and performance.

This resonates with Black and Wiliam's (1998) argument that assessment supports learning when learners clearly understand expectations.

2.5.3 Feedback is valued, but revision opportunities appear inconsistent

Students reported receiving different forms of feedback, including marks, brief comments, written comments and verbal discussion.

A positive pattern was that many students indicated they read and use feedback.

However, responses concerning rewriting opportunities suggested inconsistency. Some students appeared to have regular opportunities for revision, while others indicated these opportunities were limited.

This matters because feedback is often most powerful when linked to revision.

As Hattie and Timperley (2007) note, feedback should help learners answer:

- Where am I going?
- How am I going?
- Where to next?

Without revision opportunities, this cycle may remain incomplete.

2.5.4 Students call for more practice, models and guided support

One of the strongest patterns in open responses was students' desire for:

- more writing practice
- stronger vocabulary support
- model examples



- time management guidance
- more opportunities to rewrite after feedback

Several responses emphasized practical support rather than simply more correction. Students did not appear to ask for easier writing tasks; rather, they asked for more scaffolding. This is a significant finding. It suggests learners may value supported independence rather than reduced challenge.

3. Discussions

The findings suggest that writing difficulties in this context should not be viewed narrowly as problems of grammar accuracy. Students' responses point to a broader picture involving idea generation, assessment understanding, time pressure and revision practices.

A notable insight is the relationship between assessment and confidence. When criteria are not fully understood or feedback is not followed by revision, assessment may be experienced as judgment rather than support.

This supports formative assessment perspectives that view assessment as part of learning rather than simply measurement (Black & Wiliam, 2009).

Another important point concerns teacher feedback. Students generally appeared receptive to feedback, which is encouraging. The issue seems less about willingness to use feedback and more about how systematically feedback leads into redrafting and improvement.

This has implications for writing pedagogy in exam-oriented contexts.

Even within high-stakes environments, there may be room to strengthen:

- modelling before writing
- feedback dialogue
- guided rewriting
- explicit teaching of planning under time pressure

These may be practical rather than resource-heavy changes.

The findings also reinforce the value of listening to student voice. Some of the most useful pedagogical insights in this study came from brief student comments rather than structured survey items.

Implications for Practice. Based on the findings, several practical implications emerge.

For writing instruction

Teachers may consider:

- giving more explicit support for idea generation before writing
- using model texts more systematically



- teaching timed-writing strategies directly
- integrating vocabulary work into writing tasks rather than teaching it separately

For assessment

Assessment may be strengthened through:

- clearer discussion of Cambridge criteria in student-friendly language
- involving students in analysing successful writing samples
- greater emphasis on formative use of assessment

For feedback

Feedback may become more effective when paired with:

- structured redrafting opportunities
- peer discussion around feedback
- reflection tasks after feedback

These suggestions are modest but potentially sustainable in school contexts.

4. Conclusion

This small-scale qualitative study explored Grade 8 students' perceptions of writing difficulties, assessment practices and feedback experiences in Cambridge-based Presidential Schools in Uzbekistan. The findings suggest that students' challenges in writing are shaped not only by language difficulties but also by idea generation, time pressure, assessment understanding and opportunities for revision.

The study also suggests that students value feedback and want greater support through practice, modelling and clearer guidance. Rather than viewing these challenges only as deficits, they may be seen as opportunities to strengthen context-responsive writing pedagogy.

As a practitioner inquiry, this study does not seek broad generalisation. Its contribution lies in offering classroom-based insights that may inform reflection and practice in similar educational contexts. Future research might explore teacher perspectives in greater depth or examine how structured revision practices influence student writing development over time.

This study has several limitations. First, it is small-scale and based on questionnaire responses from a specific educational context. Second, as a perception-based study, it focuses on reported experiences rather than direct analysis of student writing samples. Third, interview data might have allowed deeper exploration of some themes. These limitations also point to possible areas for future inquiry.



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Chapter 6: Integrating Podcasts for Listening and Vocabulary Development in EFL Classes: Combining Intensive and Extensive Listening Approaches

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Abstract

This paper explores the integration of podcasts into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction to enhance listening comprehension and vocabulary development. Conducted with 16 second-year students at the Urgench State Pedagogical Institute in Uzbekistan, the study addresses the limited exposure of learners to authentic spoken English in traditional classrooms. A six-week pedagogical intervention combined intensive listening through short, focused podcasts (*Chicken Shop Date*, BBC Podcasts – *Philomena Cunk*) with extensive listening using longer, multi-speaker episodes (*Call Her Daddy*, *On Purpose with Jay Shetty*) assigned as independent homework. Students completed structured tasks, including gap-fill exercises, note-taking, summaries, and reflective discussions. Classroom observations and self-reports suggested improvements in listening fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and learner confidence. Challenges included humor comprehension in satirical content and tracking multiple speakers. The study highlights the value of combining intensive and extensive listening with guided tasks to support authentic, engaging, and inclusive EFL learning.

1. Context and Rationale

In many EFL classrooms in Uzbekistan, English teaching traditionally emphasizes grammar and controlled vocabulary, limiting exposure to authentic spoken English. At the Urgench State Pedagogical Institute, second-year students are expected to develop listening skills and a broad vocabulary base. However, reliance on textbook-based audio, which is often scripted and simplified, creates a gap between classroom learning and real-world communication. Students frequently struggle to understand natural speech, particularly with varied accents, informal expressions, and overlapping speakers. Listening is a fundamental skill in language acquisition that requires exposure to authentic input to develop effectively (Field, 2008). Vocabulary learned in isolation is often not retained or recognized in real listening contexts, limiting communicative competence. Short classroom listening tasks are commonly used, but they are insufficient for developing fluency. Extensive listening—exposure to longer stretches of authentic language—supports automaticity, comprehension speed, and vocabulary retention (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). Despite these benefits, extended listening is underutilized in many EFL contexts.

Addressing this issue is essential for preparing learners for real communicative environments. Integrating podcasts of varying lengths provides flexible, authentic input while supporting both detailed comprehension through intensive listening and global understanding through extensive listening, bridging the gap between classroom instruction and real-life English use.



2. Pedagogical Intervention

The intervention involved 16 second-year EFL students over six weeks. The approach combined intensive and extensive listening using authentic podcasts.

Intensive Listening. Short episodes of *Chicken Shop Date* and selected segments from BBC Podcasts – *Philomena Cunk* were used in class. Pre-listening tasks included prediction exercises about the guest or topic and vocabulary pre-teaching, including idiomatic expressions and slang. During listening, students completed gap-fill exercises, true/false comprehension questions, and highlighted humorous or ironic comments. After listening, students wrote short summaries, discussed their opinions in pairs, and created new sentences using the target vocabulary. These tasks focused on detailed comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and pragmatic awareness. Students noted that humor, particularly in *Philomena Cunk* segments, was challenging, with several reporting difficulty interpreting jokes, highlighting cultural and pragmatic complexity.

Extensive Listening. Longer podcasts, including *Call Her Daddy* and *On Purpose with Jay Shetty*, were assigned as homework. These episodes, 30–60 minutes long, involved multiple speakers discussing topics such as wellbeing, psychology, and celebrity lives. Students were instructed to focus on general understanding, main ideas, and key expressions, rather than understanding every word. Tasks included note-taking of main ideas, speaker tracking, and highlighting interesting expressions or phrases. Selected segments were later discussed in class through group discussions, summaries, and reflective exercises, allowing students to share insights, clarify vocabulary, and practice new language.

This structured combination of intensive and extensive listening was designed to develop listening fluency, vocabulary retention, learner autonomy, and engagement, while connecting independent learning to classroom practice. The teacher acted as a facilitator, providing guidance and support for students struggling with comprehension or humor.

3. Reflection and Implications

The 16 participants showed noticeable improvement in listening comprehension and vocabulary development. Based on classroom observations and self-reports, most students reported increased confidence in following long podcasts, compared to the start of the intervention. Intensive episodes (*Chicken Shop Date*, *Philomena Cunk*) helped students focus on detailed language and pragmatic features. Humor comprehension remained a challenge; several students had difficulty interpreting jokes and satirical comments, reflecting cultural and pragmatic complexity.

Extensive episodes (*Call Her Daddy*, *On Purpose with Jay Shetty*) improved listening fluency and tolerance for extended discourse. Tasks such as note-taking, speaker tracking, and highlighting expressions supported engagement and comprehension. Most students were able to accurately summarize main ideas and speaker contributions in follow-up tasks. Classroom discussions reinforced vocabulary, clarified ambiguous expressions, and promoted communicative competence. Students also reported using new expressions in speaking activities, reflecting integration of vocabulary from podcasts into active language use.



Reflection exercises encouraged students to evaluate their listening strategies and consolidate learning. Additionally, students reported enjoying the content, particularly when episodes aligned with personal interests, which likely contributed to motivation and engagement. The study demonstrates that combining intensive and extensive listening with structured tasks can enhance both micro-level comprehension and global listening skills, even within a small classroom sample.

These findings suggest that structured podcast integration not only improves language skills but also encourages learner autonomy and engagement. While challenges such as humor comprehension and multi-speaker tracking remain, scaffolding through tasks and guided discussion can mitigate these difficulties and enhance learning outcomes.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that integrating podcasts of varying lengths into EFL instruction can enhance listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. By combining short, intensive episodes (*Chicken Shop Date*, *Philomena Cunk*) with long, extensive multi-speaker podcasts (*Call Her Daddy*, *On Purpose with Jay Shetty*), learners develop both detailed understanding and listening fluency. Structured tasks such as summaries, gap-fills, note-taking, and reflective exercises support comprehension and encourage active engagement. Classroom observations and student self-reports indicate clear improvements in confidence, comprehension, and vocabulary use among the 16 participants. Future applications may include expanding digital listening resources across proficiency levels, integrating humor comprehension strategies, and further promoting learner autonomy. Podcasts represent a practical, engaging, and inclusive tool for EFL teaching.

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Chapter 7: AI-Powered English Language Teaching: Enhancing Learning Outcomes in Higher Education

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Abstract

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into English Language Teaching (ELT) in higher education offers new pathways for personalised learning, immediate feedback, and increased learner autonomy. This short paper describes a pedagogical intervention implemented at a Central Asian university where a wide range of AI tools – including ELSA Speak, Grammarly, ChatGPT, Replika, ETS Criterion, Speechace, MagicSchool AI, Diffit, Quizlet AI, Curipod, Duolingo, and Andy English Bot – were introduced into an integrated skills English course. Drawing on Warschauer (2011) and Ogata et al. (2000), the intervention aimed to accelerate speaking, writing, listening, and vocabulary outcomes. Reflective data from 48 undergraduate students indicate improved pronunciation accuracy, grammatical awareness, and conversational confidence.

1. Context and Rationale

Higher education institutions across Central Asia face increasing demand to accelerate English language learning to meet international academic and professional standards (British Council, 2019). At Andijan state technical institute, first-year economics students (CEFR level A2–B1) demonstrated persistent difficulties in pronunciation, grammatical accuracy, and spontaneous speaking. Traditional methods – teacher-fronted instruction, limited individual feedback, and scarce speaking practice – resulted in slow progress. Class sizes of 35–40 students made personalised pronunciation or writing feedback impractical. In a pre-intervention survey, 76% of students reported never having received individual speaking feedback from a teacher.

The rationale for introducing diverse AI-powered tools is strongly supported by international research. Baker (2021) argues that AI systems can tailor instruction to individual learners by analysing learning patterns and providing adaptive tasks, which increases engagement and accelerates proficiency. Mark Warschauer & Xu Ying (2024) frame AI as mediational technology that empowers learners through authentic language use, simulating human-like interaction. Kessler (2022) demonstrated that AI-mediated conversational agents can provide contextualised tasks and real-time feedback, supporting communicative competence in ways traditional classrooms cannot. Furthermore, Godwin-Jones (2022) notes that generative AI offers low-stakes environments for experimentation, essential for developing fluency without fear of embarrassment. Kukulska-Hulme A., Norris, L., &



Donohue, J. (2015) add that mobile-assisted AI tools are particularly valuable in under-resourced contexts as they leverage devices students already own.

Without such innovation, the gap between learning outcomes and labour market demands will widen. Inclusion is also critical: AI can scaffold varied entry levels without singling out weaker learners, enabling differentiated instruction at scale.

2. Pedagogical Intervention

The intervention ran for 10 weeks in an integrated English skills course (4 contact hours/week) with 48 undergraduate economics students. The following tools were integrated across different skill areas, with each tool used for 15–20 minutes per weekly session:

Speaking & Pronunciation: ELSA Speak and Speechace provided real-time phoneme-level pronunciation feedback, fluency scoring, and accent training. Students practiced target sentences (e.g., “I’d like a cup of coffee”) for 10 minutes daily outside class and received immediate visual feedback showing tongue placement and stress patterns.

Conversational Practice: ChatGPT and Andy English Bot simulated restaurant dialogues, job interviews, and travel scenarios. Replika served as a personal conversation partner for free, low-anxiety speaking and writing practice. Students interacted with AI as customers, waiters, or travel agents, completing two 15-minute role-plays per week.

Writing & Grammar: Grammarly Premium offered instant grammar correction, style suggestions, and vocabulary enhancement. ETS Criterion provided automated essay scoring and feedback on organisation and coherence. Students submitted four short essays (150–200 words) during the intervention.

Listening & Comprehension: Duolingo modules (adaptive difficulty) and Curipod-generated interactive listening tasks exposed students to multi-accent recognition (British, American, Australian) and transcription practice.

Teacher Support & Content Generation: MagicSchool AI generated lesson plans, quizzes, and differentiated vocabulary lists. Diffit adapted authentic texts from BBC and Simple English Wikipedia to A2–B1 reading levels, automatically producing comprehension questions. Quizlet AI created flashcards and adaptive vocabulary tests for weekly revision.

Assessment & Reflection: Teachers used ETS Criterion for baseline and final writing assessment, Curipod exit tickets for student reflection, and MagicSchool AI for quick formative quizzes every two weeks.

The pedagogical cycle followed a blended learning design: (1) Teacher-led warm-up (Curipod word clouds), (2) AI-assisted vocabulary input (Diffit, MagicSchool AI), (3) Controlled practice (Duolingo), (4) Pronunciation training (ELSA Speak, Speechace), (5) Conversational AI practice (Replika, Andy Bot, ChatGPT), (6) AI-supported writing



(Grammarly, ETS Criterion), and (7) Reflection (Curipod exit tickets). Students logged all AI interactions in a shared digital portfolio. As Baker (2021) emphasises, adaptive feedback increases engagement because learners receive just-in-time guidance matched to their skill level. Similarly, Kukulska-Hulme et al. (2015) note that mobile AI tools support autonomous learning beyond the classroom.

3. Reflection and Implications

Outcomes were assessed via pre-intervention (week 1) and post-intervention (week 10) tests (speaking: IELTS pronunciation band 0–9; writing: analytic rubric scoring task achievement, grammar, vocabulary, cohesion) and anonymous surveys. Mean pronunciation accuracy measured by ELSA Speak improved from 62% to 78%, representing a gain of 16 percentage points. Grammatical errors per 100 words (tracked via Grammarly data on submitted essays) dropped from 12.4 to 6.1, a reduction of over 50%. On a five-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree), students rated two statements highest: “AI helped me practice speaking without anxiety” (mean 4.6) and “AI feedback was faster than teacher feedback” (mean 4.7). However, 29% reported feeling overwhelmed by the number of tools – termed “tool overload” – leading to superficial use where students switched rapidly between applications without deep engagement.

Challenges included three main areas: (a) ethical concerns – some students questioned whether AI chatbot conversations constitute “real” communication, expressing worry about developing unnatural interaction patterns; (b) digital divide – 8 students lacked reliable smartphones for ELSA Speak’s microphone-dependent exercises, requiring the university to loan devices; (c) teacher training – instructors needed 12 hours of self-directed learning to master all twelve tools, which proved unsustainable. Consistent with Dizon’s (2023) warning, 31% of students occasionally accepted AI corrections without understanding the underlying grammar rule.

Inclusion implications are positive but conditional: ELSA Speak and Replika supported weaker speakers who were typically silent in whole-class settings, yet stronger students found Duolingo’s A2-level exercises too easy. Differentiation was successfully achieved using Diffit to create three text levels from the same source material. As Zhumashova & Ismailov (2024) argue for Central Asia, “AI tools are not culturally neutral – their application must respect local pedagogical values, including teacher authority and collaborative learning” (p. 67). Future interventions should reduce tool variety, focus on 4–5 core tools (ELSA Speak, Grammarly, ChatGPT, Diffit, Quizlet), integrate explicit AI literacy training, and provide device loans for equity.



4. Conclusion

This short paper demonstrates that a diverse set of AI-powered tools – when pedagogically integrated – can accelerate English learning outcomes in higher education. The intervention, directly drawing on tools from the AELLCA project (ELSA Speak, Grammarly, ChatGPT, Replika, ETS Criterion, Speechace, MagicSchool AI, Diffit, Quizlet AI, Curipod, Duolingo, Andy English Bot), improved pronunciation, grammar, writing coherence, and speaking confidence. However, tool overload, digital access, and ethical concerns require careful management. For sustainable implementation, we recommend selecting a smaller, scaffolded toolset, training teachers in prompt engineering and analytics interpretation, and designing tasks that require critical comparison of AI and human feedback. Future development includes longitudinal research on learner autonomy and culturally adapted AI chatbots for Uzbek students.

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