



Rethinking English Language Teaching (ELT) for the Future

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Abstract

English Language Teaching (ELT), like all educational disciplines, must continually adapt to global and societal transformations in order to fulfill its mission of providing opportunities for worldwide careers, fostering intercultural communication and preparing responsible citizens for a sustainable future. Due to the excessive exposure and use of smartphones and the Internet, young generations acquire English from very early age. This seems to imply the reasoning that young learners are able to communicate in English without having it as a school subject. It might also further question its relevance, directly influencing learners' motivation for studying English. However, ELT has to remain engaging and pertinent to learners because it includes teaching skills and competencies that require formal education. This paper examines the evolving role of ELT and traces its most significant developments since English emerged as a global lingua franca. It explores how this shift has reshaped the purposes and practices of ELT, particularly in response to societal change and the growing influence of digital technologies on learners. Building on this analysis, the study proposes recommendations for rethinking ELT in ways that advance global citizenship, inclusivity, and intercultural competence. The methodology combines a review of relevant literature with interviews conducted with English teachers and discussions with students of English Language and Literature at the South East European University (SEEU) in North Macedonia.

Keywords: ELT, approach, future, lingua franca, global

1. Introduction

1.1 The Changing Role of English in North Macedonia

The present status and role of the English language have considerably changed compared to its position when first established as a global lingua franca, after the Second World War. Approximately about two decades ago, in the early 2000s, in countries such as North Macedonia (NM), where English was taught as a foreign language (EFL), it used to be mostly

practiced in English classrooms in formal educational settings. Very rarely could students use it outside the classroom. Thus, in the obligatory state schools, the allocated two hours of instruction a week for English Language Teaching (ELT) were not enough for achieving communicative fluency. Many parents were aware of the benefits of good English proficiency for their children's future prospects and they provided supplementary English instructions in private language institutions. Unlike the crowded classrooms in state schools, these private courses worked with small groups and had better learning conditions in general. They usually employed young teaching staff who was not limited by following the state curricula and coaching learners to achieve good results on tests and get high grades. They were more creative and could concentrate on developing students' communicative competence - a quality that even then was highly esteemed for having more advanced professional careers.

The transition from traditional to communicative approaches has had a central focus in studying EFL in NM. English was introduced as a compulsory subject in the 1970s. At that time, there was a shortage of qualified English teaching staff as previously, French and Russian had been obligatory foreign languages. The available teachers had largely been trained in traditional methods emphasizing grammar and translation. As Babamova, one of the most prominent, pioneering methodology professor at the State University in Skopje observes, at that time, the introduction of the direct method as an innovative approach, in certain schools gave promising results (Association of English Teachers of the Republic of North Macedonia, ELTAM, 2024). However, its adoption remained partial, as many teachers continued to rely on traditional practices and frequently used the mother tongue alongside English instruction.

In the period that followed, the older generation of teachers was gradually replaced by younger colleagues who had more advanced educational backgrounds. International organizations, such as the British Council and the American Corner, had a huge contribution in modernizing ELT by organizing workshops, seminars, and other professional development events. Moreover, the emergence and global expansion of the Internet, followed by the rise and rapid development of social media platforms after 2000, significantly increased learners' exposure to English and enhanced opportunities for real communication.

1.2. New Realities and Emerging Challenges for ELT

At present, in NM, English is introduced from the first grade of primary education. By this stage, many children already possess basic communicative competence in the language, mainly acquired through the extensive use of mobile phones and various online applications. As they are growing up, their English competence is also progressing, parallel to the increased use of technological tools and networks. This trend creates a new reality and necessitates a rethinking of approaches because the position and role of English have shifted in response to both global and national developments.

Regarding the pedagogical implications, it would be useful to find out in what ways ELT approaches should be restructured to reflect the changing role of English. As far as the curriculum relevance is concerned, it is worth exploring how English curricula in NM can be adapted to remain relevant in contexts where learners acquire communicative competence outside the classroom.

1.3. Research Gap and Rationale

In recent years, in NM, the focus on ELT research has mainly remained on the teaching methods and the necessary shift from more traditional to contemporary teaching practices such as problem solving, blended learning, project based learning, etc. (Ivanovska, 2022; Serafimovska and Trajanovska, 2021; Koceva, 2024). No particular attention has been put on

strategies for creating more socially aware and responsible citizens and this is the area which this paper can contribute to.

1.4. Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of the paper is to examine the emerging focus of ELT that aligns with contemporary circumstances, ensuring its continued relevance within general education while also sustaining learners' motivation and interest in English. Our hypothesis is that adapting ELT to contemporary global and local circumstances will sustain and enhance its relevance within general education, and at the same time it will maintain learners' motivation, interest, and broader competencies. It seeks answering the following research questions: what should be the major change in the approach to teaching EFL so that it remains popular among students? How can the motivation for studying English be sustained in conditions where students enter English classes able to communicate in it? Which aspects of ELT are appealing to students and which are considered as not so relevant? The literature review in the next section considers the historical phases of ELT and emphasizes the need to advance toward a new stage of pedagogical thought, practice and development.

2. Literature Review

2.1. ELT Historical Development

English has been recognized as the dominant global lingua franca in the contemporary world. In the current 2026, approximately 1.5 billion people speak English either as their native or second language, placing it ahead of Mandarin Chinese, which has about 1.1 billion speakers, followed by Hindi and Spanish (Statista, 2026). The prominence of English as the primary language of trade and commerce expanded significantly after the Second World War, when countries such as the United States, Great Britain, and Canada which were less affected by war destruction, assumed leading roles in global economic cooperation. Later on, the rise of the computer industry and the widespread adoption of the Internet, both largely driven by developments in the United States, further contributed to positioning English as the universal medium of communication. Anthony (2018) highlights the increasing influence of English within academia, particularly as a result of internationalization and student mobility. In the present day, proficiency in English has become indispensable not only for securing employment but also for effective participation in social networking (Seraj et al., 2024).

Following the expansion of the use of English globally, its methodological approach has evolved as well. It began with traditional approaches such as the Grammar Translation Method, which emphasized rote memorization and the translation of texts. Subsequent innovations, including the Direct Method and the Audio-Lingual Method, offered greater opportunities for active language use. Later, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) shifted the focus toward developing learners' speaking skills and fostering meaningful communication (Vaishnav, 2024). Building on the principles of CLT, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) introduced tasks designed to promote language acquisition through engagement in real-life situations (Kumar, 2024). Technological advancements further transformed ELT by providing diverse tools to enhance learning, ranging from platforms that deliver immediate feedback to learning management systems (LMS) that support teachers in organizing instruction. More recently, artificial intelligence (AI) has begun to play a significant role in English learning, with interactive chat bots offering new opportunities for practice and communication.

2.2. The Social Turn in ELT

Since its emergence as an academic discipline, ELT has traditionally emphasized politically neutral topics such as travel, leisure activities, geographical knowledge, and holiday celebrations, in an effort to preserve its international role and maintain impartiality (Brown, 2023). Nevertheless, because English is taught within diverse political, sociological, and cultural contexts worldwide, it cannot remain completely isolated from these influences, some of which inevitably shape the curriculum. This suggests that language learning must involve critical engagement with cultural norms and values, thereby fostering learners' awareness of their social positioning (Brown, 2023, p. 500). Simultaneously with the rise of technological advancement and AI tools there has been a rise in ELT in "practices, which aim to honor linguistic and cultural diversity by balancing international benchmarks with local circumstances". (Kumar, 2024, p. 427).

It has become evident that the role of ELT must extend beyond simply enabling learners to communicate in English, toward a broader orientation that encompasses more than linguistic proficiency. This shift, which began in the 1990s, is commonly referred to in the literature as the social turn (Dafouz & Gray, 2022). It is distinguished by the integration of sociocultural dimensions into classroom practices and by the growing emphasis on fostering sociolinguistic sensitivity and awareness within instruction.

2.2.1. Intercultural Competence in ELT

One of the most influential developments in contemporary language education has been the increasing emphasis on intercultural competence. Byram (1997) argues that successful language users require more than linguistic proficiency; they also need the ability to understand, interpret, and interact appropriately with people from different cultural backgrounds. He conceptualizes the learner as an "intercultural speaker" who can mediate between cultures rather than merely imitate native-speaker norms.

The growing importance of intercultural competence reflects the realities of globalization, where communication increasingly takes place among speakers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Within ELT, intercultural competence involves developing openness, tolerance, empathy, and the ability to critically examine cultural assumptions and stereotypes. Consequently, English classrooms provide opportunities not only to learn about cultures traditionally associated with English-speaking countries but also to explore local, regional, and global cultural perspectives. This broader orientation aligns with the educational objective of preparing learners to participate effectively and responsibly in diverse societies.

The global spread of English has generated new perspectives regarding the ownership and use of the language. Traditional ELT approaches were largely based on native-speaker models originating from countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States. However, scholars associated with the Global Englishes movement argue that English is now a shared international resource used by multilingual speakers worldwide (Galloway & Rose, 2015).

From this perspective, the primary goal of ELT is no longer the achievement of native-speaker competence but rather the development of effective international communication skills. Learners need exposure to diverse English varieties, accents, and communication styles that reflect the realities of global interaction. Such an approach encourages greater linguistic inclusivity and acknowledges the legitimacy of localized forms of English. In multilingual contexts such as NM, a Global Englishes perspective may help learners develop confidence in using English while maintaining their own linguistic and cultural identities.

2.3. Critical Thinking as a Core ELT Objective

The integration of sociocultural elements into classroom practice necessitates the development of critical thinking skills (Shukra & Kumari, 2024). The concept of “teaching thinking” (Imreio et al., 2020, p. 3) points out the focus on developing critical thinking skills in the twenty-first century. Ennis (1985, p. 45) defines critical thinking as “reflective and reasonable thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do,” and advocates for its systematic incorporation into curricula by distinguishing between dispositions and abilities. According to him, dispositions include qualities such as open-mindedness, attentiveness to context, a commitment to seeking reasons, and the pursuit of being well-informed. Abilities, on the other hand, encompass skills related to clarity, inference, and structured decision-making, the latter often framed as problem-solving. Within this framework, the teacher’s role is to facilitate inquiry and discussion among learners, thereby fostering the conditions in which critical thinking can be actively practiced (Imreio et al., 2020).

2.4. Learner Motivation in Contemporary ELT

Motivation has long been recognized as one of the strongest predictors of success in language learning. Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model emphasized the importance of learners' attitudes toward the target language and culture, while more recent perspectives have considered the influence of globalization, identity, and future aspirations. Dornyei (2009) L2 Motivational Self System highlights the role of learners' visions of their future selves as competent language users.

The issue of motivation has become particularly relevant in contemporary contexts where learners are extensively exposed to English outside school through social media, online gaming, streaming platforms, and digital communication. While such exposure often improves communicative competence, it may also lead students to question the relevance of formal English instruction. For this reason, ELT curricula need to provide learning experiences that cannot be easily replicated through casual online exposure. Activities promoting critical thinking, intercultural understanding, academic literacy, creativity, and collaborative problem-solving may enhance learners' perception of the value of classroom-based English learning and sustain their motivation.

2.5. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the Future of ELT

AI has emerged as one of the most significant developments influencing education in the twenty-first century. Within ELT, AI-powered applications provide opportunities for personalized learning, immediate feedback, automated assessment, adaptive practice, and authentic language interaction through conversational agents and chatbots. These tools have the potential to increase learner autonomy and extend learning beyond classroom boundaries.

At the same time, researchers emphasize that the integration of AI requires careful pedagogical consideration. Teachers must guide learners in evaluating AI-generated content critically, using digital tools ethically, and understanding the limitations of automated systems. Rather than replacing teachers, AI is increasingly viewed as a resource that can support instruction while allowing educators to focus more on facilitating communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and intercultural learning. Consequently, digital literacy and responsible AI use are becoming essential components of future-oriented ELT curricula.

The reviewed literature suggests that ELT must move beyond its traditional focus on linguistic proficiency alone. Contemporary perspectives emphasize the importance of intercultural competence, Global Englishes awareness, learner motivation, critical thinking, digital literacy, and responsible use of artificial intelligence. Together, these developments indicate that

English language education can no longer be viewed solely as a means of acquiring communication skills. Rather, ELT has the potential to serve as a comprehensive educational framework that prepares learners to participate successfully in multicultural, technologically advanced, and globally interconnected societies. This emerging role forms the conceptual basis for the present study and its examination of how ELT can remain relevant and meaningful for future generations of learners.

3. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative exploratory research design aimed at examining perceptions of the changing role of English Language Teaching (ELT) among teachers and students. The research focused on the two principal actors in the educational process—teachers and learners—in order to gain insight into pedagogical and curriculum implications arising from the shifting role of English globally and locally. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with teachers and open-ended questionnaires administered to students. The combination of these instruments enabled the collection of rich descriptive data and facilitated comparison of perspectives across participant groups.

3.1. Participants

The study was conducted at the English Department of the Faculty of Languages, Cultures and Communications at South East European University (SEEU), North Macedonia. Ten (10) English teachers participated in the study. Six held PhD degrees and four held MA degrees. All were teaching Contemporary English courses at the department, while four also taught General English courses at the University Language Center. All participants were female and had more than ten years of university-level teaching experience. They regularly participated in professional development activities, methodological workshops, conferences, and research projects.

The student sample consisted of eighteen (18) third- and fourth-year students of English Language and Literature. Fifteen participants were female and three were male, aged approximately between 21 and 23 years. Students represented Albanian, Macedonian, and Turkish ethnic backgrounds. They were selected because they belong to the generation that has experienced extensive exposure to English through digital technologies and social media and therefore could provide informed reflections on contemporary ELT practices.

3.2. Instruments

Data were collected using two instruments:

- Semi-structured interviews with teachers.
- Open-ended questionnaires completed by students.

Teachers were informed about the purpose of the study and were asked to discuss:

- changes in their teaching approaches during recent years;
- factors influencing those changes;
- their views regarding the future direction of ELT.

The student questionnaire included four reflective questions concerning:

- positive aspects of previous English classes;
- less successful aspects of previous English classes;
- desired areas of emphasis in current Contemporary English courses;
- aspects they consider less beneficial in current courses.

3.3. Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic content analysis. Interview recordings were transcribed and questionnaire responses were compiled into a single dataset. Analysis was conducted in three stages: category creation, frequency analysis and trustworthiness and triangulation.

3.3.1. Category Development and Frequency Analysis

Related codes were grouped into broader thematic categories, as illustrated in Table 1:

Table 1. Grouping of codes into thematic categories

Initial codes	Theme
technology integration, AI use, digital tools	technology enhanced ELT
communication, fluency, real life language use	communicative and task based learning
critical thinking, problem solving, soft skills	higher order competencies
repetition, grammar drills, test pressure	limitations of traditional instruction
Academic language, advanced vocabulary	Future curriculum needs

After themes have been established, the frequency of their appearance across participants was calculated to identify dominant trends. For the teacher interviews, all ten participants (100%) referred to the growing role of technology in ELT, while most participants discussed communicative and task-based approaches, critical thinking, and learner autonomy. Similarly, student responses revealed recurring references to communicative learning, meaningful interaction, reduced emphasis on grammar, and the need for more relevant contemporary topics. The use of frequencies did not aim at statistical generalization but rather at identifying patterns and the relative prominence of themes within the dataset.

3.3.2. Trustworthiness and Triangulation

To enhance the credibility of the findings, methodological triangulation was employed through the use of two different sources of qualitative data: teacher interviews and student questionnaires. The perspectives obtained from teachers were compared with those of students to identify areas of convergence and divergence.

Several themes appeared consistently across both groups, particularly: increased use of technology and AI; preference for communicative and task based learning; reduced reliance on traditional grammar focused instruction, and greater emphasis on critical thinking and practical language use.

4. Findings

The analysis of teacher interviews and student questionnaires generated five major themes: (1) technology-enhanced ELT, (2) the shift toward communicative and task based learning, (3) the development of higher order competencies, (4) dissatisfaction with traditional instructional practices, and (5) the need for more relevant and advanced curriculum content. Data from both participant groups were compared in order to identify patterns of convergence and divergence.

4.1. Technology-Enhanced ELT

Regarding the first theme, technology-enhanced ELT, findings suggest that technology integration emerged as the most prominent theme in the teacher interviews. All ten teachers

referred to the increasing role of digital technologies in the teaching process and emphasized a move away from exclusive reliance on textbooks toward the use of digital resources, online platforms, and artificial intelligence (AI). One teacher explained:

“Personally, I don't rely solely on books anymore; instead, I take full advantage of the tools that technology offers and incorporate them into my teaching.” (Teacher X1)

Another participant emphasized the growing importance of AI-supported learning and learner autonomy:

“Students should become more autonomous by using AI in order to help them learn. However, this requires intensive work and training that should be supported by the institutions.” (Teacher X2)

These responses suggest that technological competence is increasingly perceived as an essential component of contemporary ELT practice. Teachers viewed digital tools not merely as supplementary resources but as central elements of modern language instruction.

4.2. From Grammar Based Instruction to Communicative and Task Based Learning

A second recurring theme concerned the transition from traditional grammar focused teaching toward communicative and task based approaches. Most teachers reported that their current practices place greater emphasis on communicative competence, real life language use, and student engagement. As one teacher noted:

“Early on, I focused a lot on grammar and vocabulary drills, but now I prioritize communication and fluency, helping students use language in real life situations.” (Teacher X3)

Student responses supported this finding. Many participants identified grammar heavy instruction, repetitive lessons, and excessive emphasis on testing as among the least effective aspects of their previous English classes. At the same time, they highlighted speaking practice, interaction, and meaningful communication as positive elements of their learning experiences. The convergence of teacher and student perspectives indicates a shared preference for communicative, learner centered, and task based models of language teaching.

4.3. Increasing Emphasis on Critical Thinking and Higher-Order Competencies

Most interviewed teachers referred to the growing importance of developing competencies that extend beyond language accuracy. These included critical thinking, problem solving abilities, emotional intelligence, learner autonomy, and other soft skills. One teacher described this shift as follows:

“I've also shifted to more task-based learning, and I have been paying more attention to emotional intelligence, soft skills, and critical thinking.” (Teacher X3) Similarly, another participant highlighted the broader educational purpose of ELT:

“My teaching is more research-oriented, incorporating critical thinking, project based learning, and real world applications.” (Teacher X4)

Student responses reinforced this theme. Several students explicitly expressed a desire for classes that involve critical thinking and engagement with contemporary issues such as ethical AI use and cybersecurity.

An important observation, however, was that although teachers frequently discussed critical thinking, none explicitly referred to intercultural competence or social responsibility as key objectives of ELT. This finding is noteworthy given the increasing emphasis placed on these dimensions in current ELT literature.

4.4. Perceived Limitations of Traditional ELT

Analysis of the student questionnaires revealed substantial criticism of traditional instructional practices as the fourth dominant theme. The ideas most frequently associated with dissatisfaction including repetitive lessons, excessive focus on grammar, limited opportunities for authentic communication, overreliance on tests, and insufficient student participation.

Students also reported that some teachers moved through content too quickly and placed insufficient emphasis on knowledge acquisition and practical application. Others mentioned feeling uncomfortable when mistakes were judged negatively.

These findings suggest that students value supportive learning environments characterized by meaningful interaction, engagement, and opportunities for active participation rather than passive reception of information.

4.5. Demand for More Advanced and Relevant Curriculum Content

A final theme emerging from the student data pointed out the need for more challenging, practical, and contemporary content. Students expressed interest in developing academic vocabulary, advanced language skills, writing competence, and opportunities for self-expression. Many also advocated for the inclusion of current topics that connect classroom learning with realities outside the classroom.

Participants further indicated that they derived limited benefit from repetitive grammar explanations and simple exercises covering material they had already mastered in previous stages of education. Several students suggested increasing the use of projects and practical applications instead of relying predominantly on essays and course reader exercises.

These responses indicate that advanced learners expect English classes to contribute not only to language development but also to their academic, professional, and intellectual growth.

4.6. Triangulation of Findings

Comparison of the two data sources revealed strong convergence across several themes. Both teachers and students emphasized the growing role of technology and AI in English language learning; a preference for communicative and task-based approaches over grammar-focused instruction; the importance of developing critical thinking and transferable skills, and the need for more relevant, practical, and contemporary curriculum content.

The consistency of these findings across independent participant groups enhances the credibility of the results and strengthens the conclusion that ELT must continue evolving beyond traditional language instruction toward a broader educational role that incorporates technology, critical thinking, learner autonomy, and preparation for participation in a globalized society.

5. Discussion

The hypothesis that adapting ELT to contemporary global and local circumstances will sustain and enhance its relevance within general education, and at the same time, it will maintain learners' motivation, interest, and broader competencies has been confirmed. If improving students' accuracy and grammatical knowledge were the major concern of the English classes until recently, now and even more in the future, the focus should be on upgrading their communicative competence in situations simulating personal and professional communication in real life settings. Instead of excessive drilling and grammar practice, there should be task based and problem-solving activities that require mastery of other skills besides the general

language knowledge. The need for building communicative competencies, including strategies such as interaction and mediation, comes as a result of the increased digital interaction, more and more replacing personal contacts with peers and friends. “At times, this interaction will be between teacher and learner(s), but at times, it will be of a collaborative nature, between learners themselves”. (Council of Europe, 2020, p.30). This is especially relevant for preparing learners for successful functioning in today’s diverse societies in which they should be encouraged to rely on the plurilingual and pluricultural repertoire in the construction of meaning. (Council of Europe, 2020).

English teachers have to use the opportunity of being closer to the international community and other cultures because of the nature of the subject and influence their students’ sense of belonging to the local and wider community. In this way, they can contribute to making learners become more socially and culturally aware. No other school subject treats so many different topics, including major global challenges that require raising awareness and active engagement from the youngest age. Similarly, no other school subject mentions so many different cultures with their customs and traditions such as the English. This advantage must be used to the maximum level in today’s globalized, yet diverse world.

In the current international circumstances, learners need to be exposed to both positive and not so positive practices and advised on how to evaluate them. Teaching critical thinking is crucial in this approach especially in multicultural societies. Through integrating teaching critical thinking skills, English teachers should guide their students how to understand individual and cultural differences and treat them. English teaching programs require focusing on further advancement of these skills through work on activities, tasks and projects that include knowledge and use of more advanced, academic genre. With their poorer than before reading habits (Ku & Vasquez, 2024) and the colloquial English from social media (Baloch & Rao, 2023), this work will contribute to promoting learners’ general intellectual abilities and literacy needed for their professional life.

Teaching EFL in the future necessitates excessive use of technology. This requires teachers with advanced technological knowledge matching students’ reliance on technology in all spheres of their everyday life and functioning. School and state officials should also recognize this need and offer continuous training for their staff but also invest in conditions that will enable integration of digital tools in teaching. Constant and stable access to Internet and computers for every child are necessary prerequisites.

5.1 Practical Implications

To ensure that the proposed rethinking of ELT translates into meaningful educational practice, curriculum reform should be accompanied by concrete classroom applications, assessment innovations, and systematic teacher development. English curricula can incorporate project based and inquiry based learning focused on authentic global and local issues such as environmental sustainability, digital citizenship, ethical use of artificial intelligence, media literacy, intercultural communication, and community engagement. For example, students may collaborate on projects that analyze online misinformation, compare cultural practices across communities, design multilingual awareness campaigns, or investigate local social challenges and present solutions in English. Such activities simultaneously develop language proficiency, critical thinking, communication, and civic responsibility.

Assessment practices should also move beyond a predominant focus on grammatical accuracy and standardized testing. Greater emphasis can be placed on formative and performance based assessment through presentations, portfolios, reflective journals, digital projects, collaborative tasks, and problem solving activities. These approaches enable teachers to evaluate learners’

ability to apply language in authentic contexts while also assessing competencies such as creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and intercultural awareness. Self assessment and peer assessment can further encourage learner autonomy and reflective learning.

In addition, the successful implementation of a broader ELT agenda depends on continuous teacher professional development. Training programs should support teachers in integrating technology and AI tools responsibly, designing task based and project based learning experiences, promoting critical thinking, and facilitating intercultural dialogue in the classroom. Professional learning communities, mentoring programs, international collaboration projects, and regular workshops can help teachers remain responsive to emerging educational and societal challenges. Investment in teacher development is therefore essential for transforming ELT from a subject focused primarily on language acquisition into a powerful vehicle for preparing learners to participate effectively and responsibly in a rapidly changing global society.

5.2 Limitations

Despite providing useful insights into contemporary ELT trends, this study has several limitations. First, the sample size was relatively small, consisting of only ten teachers and eighteen students from a single university department. Consequently, the findings cannot be generalized to all educational contexts in North Macedonia or internationally.

Second, the study relied primarily on self-reported perceptions rather than direct classroom observation. Participants' responses may have been influenced by personal experiences, memory, or social desirability factors.

Next, all teacher participants were female and all had extensive university-level teaching experience. Different findings might emerge from a more diverse sample that includes male teachers, novice teachers, and practitioners from primary and secondary education. Furthermore, the research adopted a qualitative design and did not include quantitative measures that could provide stronger statistical evidence regarding the prevalence of identified trends.

Finally, the study focused on perceptions of ELT rather than measuring actual learning outcomes. Future research could combine interviews, classroom observations, surveys, and achievement data to investigate how emerging ELT approaches influence student performance, motivation, intercultural competence, and critical thinking development.

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