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The Changing Landscape of ELT:
Past Lessons, Future Visions

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Article information	
Abstract	The landscape of English Language Teaching (ELT) has evolved significantly over the past 75 years, marked by major shifts in theoretical, technological, and sociocultural approaches to language teaching and learning. From the dominance of behaviorist methods in the mid-20th century to today's innovations in digital, tech-mediated language learning, these transformations have created both opportunities and challenges for teachers. The rapid growth of technology, along with the changing status of English as a global language and the evolving goals of language learning, has further reshaped how languages are taught and learned. Yet, amidst these profound changes, the role of teachers remains central. Teachers are tasked not only with adapting evidence-based methods to address the diverse needs of students but also with fostering meaningful interactions, encouraging critical thinking, and maintaining high levels of student engagement. As ELT continues to advance, teachers are called upon to continually reflect on their practices, adopt new evidence-based approaches, and adjust their teaching methods to meet the evolving needs of their students.
Keywords	teacher roles, ELT evolution, AI-supported language teaching
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1. Introduction

Over the span of the last seven and a half decades, the landscape of second language teaching and learning has undergone a profound development, characterized by a series of distinct eras that have shaped our pedagogical approaches. Each era has introduced novel theories, methodologies, and technologies that have not only revolutionized the way we teach languages but have also redefined our understanding of the learning process itself. From the grammar-translation method to the communicative approach, and from behaviorism to constructivism, the evolution of language pedagogy highlights the continuous interaction between theory, practice, and the socio-cultural dynamics within the language classroom. These dynamics encompass the diverse social and cultural backgrounds of both learners and teachers, influencing how they approach and engage with the language learning process.

These changes have not only influenced classroom dynamics but have also extended to broader societal and technological shifts, such as the advent of online learning platforms, immersive virtual environments, and the effects of globalization. Social changes, including increased migration, multiculturalism, and the growing demand for English as a global language, have fostered diverse, multilingual learning environments. At the same time, the integration of digital tools has expanded access to language learning beyond traditional classrooms, enabling learners to engage with content from anywhere in the world. As we reflect on the past and present trends in English Language Teaching (ELT), it becomes evident that our understanding of language acquisition continues to evolve, driven by ongoing research, pedagogical experimentation, and adaptation to new technologies and global realities.

The purpose of this article is to reflect on some of the most distinct eras that many of us have witnessed in the past 75 years and share our thoughts on how key ideas from these eras have contributed to our understanding of what seems to work well (and what does not) in ELT. We also offer a glimpse into the exciting future where the use of technological tools can potentially transform the way English is taught in the classroom.

We begin by examining five distinct eras that have influenced the landscape of ELT, each with its own unique characteristics and contributions. We then

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