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PREFACE

It is my pleasure to present this compilation of extended abstracts for Lightning Insights 2025, which showcases innovative and forward-thinking approaches in English Language Teaching (ELT).

The works featured here reflect the creativity, dedication, and scholarly rigour of educators and researchers committed to enhancing language learning. As ELT continues to evolve, I hope this collection inspires new ideas, meaningful dialogue, and practical application in classrooms around the world.

Thank you to all contributors and the editorial team for making this publication possible. May it spark continued growth and innovation in our field.

IR. TS. EDWIN GOH BOON HOE
Deputy Chief Executive (Academics)
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EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

Grammatical Error Analysis in Narrative Essays of Secondary Students in Perak: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

The results of the English SPM examination, a game-changing assessment for secondary students in Malaysia, indicated a notable decline in performance in the language, particularly in the extended writing section. This section included narrative writing, a genre praised for providing young minds a platform to express creativity in a safe and calm environment. Despite the advantages of narrative writing, students demonstrated a decline in this genre, which was attributed to inadequate language proficiency, especially in grammar. Previous research reported poor performance and provided limited insight into error types. Consequently, this study investigated the error types in narrative essays among students with high language proficiency, minimising the impact of first language interference, which had been identified as a primary cause of Malaysian students' grammar errors. A total of 180 narrative essays were collected from 60 Form Five students across four secondary schools in Perak, and the essays were analysed using the adapted Error Analysis framework. Four English teachers and Grammarly were used to analyse the essays for grammar errors. The results revealed that students struggled with correctly using determiners, vocabulary, prepositions, and tenses, challenging past research that identified subject-verb agreement as the main issue for Malaysian students. Both inductive and deductive teaching methods for these grammar components can significantly enhance students' writing, contributing to improved examination performance.

Keywords: Grammar errors, SPM English, narrative writing

INTRODUCTION

English, recognised as the second language in Malaysia, significantly influences many facets of Malaysians' lives due to its widespread use throughout the country. From employers aiming to hire capable employees to students striving for academic excellence across various ages, proficiency in the English language is an essential requirement. In recognition of its significance, the Malaysian Education Ministry has designated English as one of the core subjects for primary and secondary students in all types of Malaysian schools; achieving a passing grade in the Malaysian Certificate of Education (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia - SPM) English Language paper is crucial to obtain an overall pass for the examination (Wan Ibrahim & Othman, 2021). Without this overall pass, Malaysian students will be unable to further their education at the tertiary level, thereby impeding their academic journey.

The SPM English examination, divided into four papers, assesses listening, speaking, reading, and writing in each component. However, Malaysian students have been noted for their poor

performance in the writing section, which is examined in Paper 2 (Ahmad Ghulamuddin et al., 2021). The writing component is divided into three parts: testing students in email writing, directed writing, and extended writing. Past research indicates the inability of Malaysian students to perform well in extended writing (Chua, 2024), which requires them to write a 200-250-word essay in the form of a review, report, or narrative. Previous research also recorded the Malaysian students' inadequate English grammar knowledge, negatively affecting their English writing of any genre (Chandra Segaran & Hashim, 2022; Govindarajoo et al., 2022; Ong & Tengku Mahadi, 2022; Singh et al., 2017), including narrative writing (Jaafar Sidek & Ismail, 2021).

Narrative writing has been lauded as a space for students of all ages to demonstrate their creativity, and noted for its popularity among teenagers for allowing them to tap into any story of their preference; every person has a story to tell, and narrative writing allows the students to tell their story in a safe environment, alleviating students' performance anxiety in English writing (Mariano, 2025). Nevertheless, as reported earlier, Malaysian secondary students' substandard achievements in narrative writing invite closer investigation of their writing problems and errors. Britton (2023) averred that Malaysian students' main language problem was grammar, producing narratives that lacked impact. However, past studies scarcely provided insights into the students' grammar error types in narrative writing, which is significant for the teachers, students and the curriculum planners to overcome the problem.

Therefore, this study examined the grammatical errors in Malaysian secondary education students' narrative essays to address the gap in the existing literature about enhancing English writing. Exploring the grammatical errors will provide insights into the common mistakes students make, which can assist language teachers and curriculum developers in tailoring lessons to enhance students' English narrative writing.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

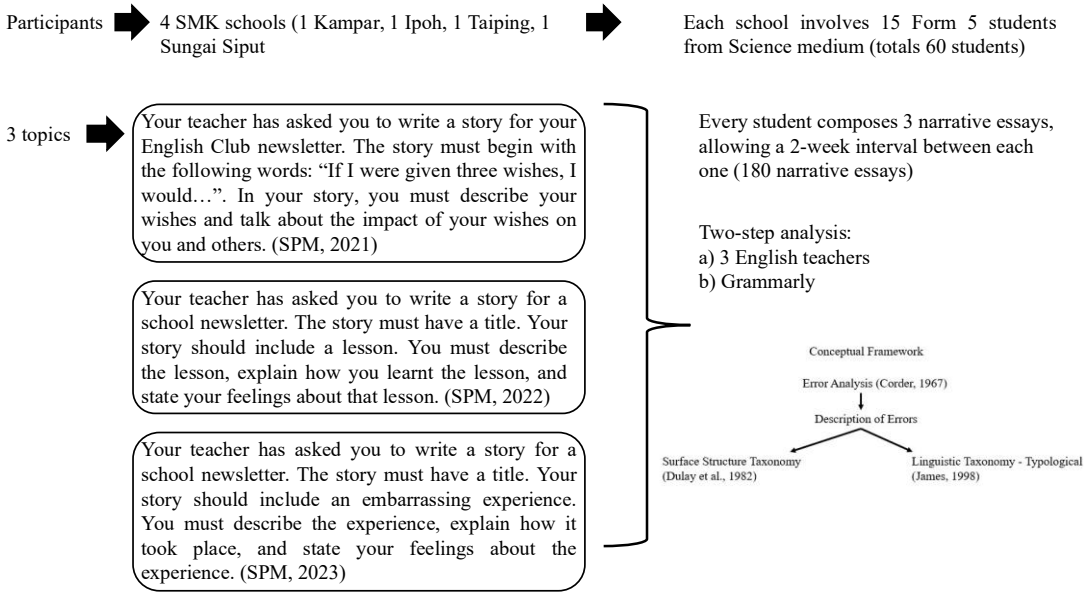

Figure 1 Pedagogical Approach Summary

Figure 1 captures the pedagogical approaches used to collect and analyse data for this research. This study involved sixty Form 5 students from four secondary schools in Perak who were enrolled in the Science medium at the point of data collection. The Science medium was targeted to create a homogeneous pool of participants in language proficiency, and the students of this medium were classified as the crème of the crop by each school. This purposive sampling allowed the researcher to focus on the errors made by even proficient Malaysian students, permitting insights into the lacunae in English grammar coverage in the Malaysian English curriculum. Additionally, the participants screened for high language proficiency minimised the factor of first language interference in grammar errors, which is cited as the most significant aspect leading to English grammar errors among Malaysian students (Govindarajoo et al., 2022; Mehat & Ismail, 2021; Nasrudin et al., 2023).

The participants wrote three narrative essays, with a two-week interval between each, as part of classroom activities. The topics were taken from the SPM English Paper 2 for 2021, 2022, and 2023. Their respective English teachers monitored the participants' work to ensure that their compositions were not influenced by discussions with friends, input from artificial intelligence (AI), or additional time to complete the tasks. Thus, 180 narrative essays were collected from 60 students for this research.

The data analysis was guided by the conceptual framework adapted from Azmi (2016), who proposed to extend the Error Analysis framework (Corder, 1967) that suggested describing the errors by including two more theories: Surface Structure Taxonomy (Dulay et al., 1982) and Linguistic Taxonomy (Plungyan, 2011). The Surface Structure Taxonomy explains the types of errors by grouping them into four categories: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering (Keumala & Idami, 2022). Meanwhile, Linguistic Taxonomy, especially typological classification, delineates structural features of languages, such as grammatical structures, word order, and vocabulary (Austin, 2021).

The narratives were analysed through two processes. The participants' English teachers, who willingly participated in the research, reviewed each essay for grammatical errors. Subsequently, the essays were typed and uploaded to Grammarly to identify any remaining grammatical errors, ensuring a thorough error analysis. This two-step process minimised human error (where teachers may have overlooked inevitable mistakes) and AI misinterpretations (where it might incorrectly flag a correct element as an error). The number of errors for each component was manually counted to identify the frequency of their occurrence in the narratives.

DISCUSSION

Table 1 Analysis of Errors

	Error Types	Frequency
Highest	Determiner (Det)	291
	Vocabulary (Vc)	163
	Preposition (Pre)	142
	Tense (Tn)	98
Lowest	Subject-Verb Agreement (SVA)	21
	Adverb (Adv)	11
	Pronoun (Pro)	4

Table 1 presents the most notable errors in data, categorised into those with the highest and lowest frequency counts. Determiners, particularly the articles (zero article, a, an, the), have proven to be a challenge for students, as they often omit or add them in incorrect places within their sentences. Vocabulary was also problematic for the participants in terms of choosing the right words and spelling to express ideas. Prepositions were used in the wrong order (especially in phrasal verbs) or context (flagged as misinformation). Another prominent error was in verb tense, with verb forms not compliant with the sentence's time context.

Subject-verb agreement, adverbs, and pronouns recorded the lowest frequencies in the error analysis. The result for subject-verb agreement contradicts past research reports that labelled this grammar component as the most difficult for Malaysian students due to the high number of errors categorised under this label (Abu Bakar et al., 2007; Stapa & Izahar, 2010).

It should be highlighted that the teachers who marked the essays noted that these essays were average to above average overall, signifying that the grammar errors did not significantly impact the content value of the essays. Nevertheless, the teachers stated that avoiding these grammar errors would have placed the essays among the good pieces (eligible to score higher marks), reiterating the importance of grammar lessons in enhancing students' writing.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this research emphasise the importance of mastering English grammar, especially in writing. The high number of errors in narrative writing, a genre praised for its ability to calm writers during the writing process, is a concern that should be noted, as students may produce more errors when writing in other genres. Inductive or deductive teaching of these grammar topics during English lessons in classrooms will lead to noteworthy improvements in students' writing, enhancing their writing skills and overall language achievement.

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From Draft to Masterpiece: AI-Powered Self-Editing in ESL Writing

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the integration of Blackbox AI, an AI-powered writing assistant, into ESL (English as a Second Language) instruction to enhance students' professional writing skills, particularly in crafting effective cover letters. Recognizing the common challenges faced by ESL learners—such as grammatical errors, limited vocabulary, and lack of confidence—the project implemented Blackbox AI in a classroom setting with 30 technical college students. Through a structured, three-phase instructional approach, students were introduced to cover letter conventions, engaged with Blackbox AI for real-time feedback, and iteratively revised their drafts. The AI tool provided grammar and spelling corrections, tone adjustments, and rephrasing suggestions, fostering self-editing, critical thinking (Zakaria et al., 2025), and learner autonomy. Results showed significant improvements in writing clarity, structure, and professionalism, with 90% of students reporting increased motivation and confidence. The initiative highlights the transformative potential of AI in language education, promoting personalized learning and preparing students for real-world communication. The findings advocate for broader adoption of AI tools in ESL contexts to support inclusive and future-ready education.

Keywords: Blackbox AI, ESL learners, L2 writing

INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving educational landscape, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) tools has emerged as a transformative force, particularly in the realm of language instruction. As educators seek innovative ways to enhance student learning and engagement, AI-powered applications are increasingly being recognized for their potential to personalize and streamline the learning process. One such tool, Blackbox AI, has shown promise in supporting English as a Second Language (ESL) students, especially in the development of professional writing skills. This extended abstract focuses on the implementation of Blackbox AI as a writing assistant to help ESL learners craft effective and impactful cover letters. Cover letters are a critical component of job applications, serving as a candidate's first impression and a platform to highlight their qualifications and enthusiasm for a role. However, many ESL students face significant challenges in writing these documents due to difficulties with grammar, tone, vocabulary, and overall confidence in their language abilities. These barriers often result in generic, unclear, or ineffective letters that fail to capture the attention of potential employers. The project described herein aims to bridge this gap by leveraging the capabilities of Blackbox AI to provide real-time, personalized feedback. Through iterative editing and guided revisions, students are empowered to refine their writing, enhance clarity, and develop a more professional tone. This initiative not only improves writing outcomes but also fosters greater learner autonomy and confidence, aligning with broader educational goals of preparing students for real-world communication and employment success (Sun, 2023).

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

English as a Second Language (ESL) students often encounter a unique set of challenges when it comes to written communication, particularly in formal or professional contexts such as job applications. These challenges stem from a variety of factors, including limited exposure to authentic English usage, restricted vocabulary, and a lack of familiarity with the conventions of professional writing. As a result, many ESL learners struggle with grammatical accuracy, sentence structure, and the ability to convey their ideas clearly and persuasively. These difficulties are further compounded by low self-confidence, which can hinder students from fully expressing their strengths and experiences in writing. Traditional classroom instruction, while valuable, may not always provide the individualized attention or immediate feedback necessary to address these issues effectively. This is where AI-powered tools like Blackbox AI offer a compelling solution. Designed to function as a real-time writing assistant, Blackbox AI provides instant grammar and spelling corrections, tone adjustments, and multiple rephrasing suggestions tailored to the user's input. By integrating this tool into the writing process, students are given the opportunity to engage in self-directed learning and iterative improvement. They can experiment with language, receive immediate feedback, and make informed revisions—all of which contribute to a deeper understanding of English writing conventions. Moreover, the use of such technology promotes learner independence and builds confidence, as students begin to see tangible improvements in their writing. This rationale underscores the importance of incorporating AI tools into ESL instruction to better support diverse learner needs and enhance educational outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

The implementation of this project took place in a real-world classroom environment involving 30 ESL (English as a Second Language) students enrolled in a technical college. The instructional design was structured around a three-phase process aimed at gradually building students' writing competence and confidence. In the first phase, students were introduced to the concept and importance of cover letters in professional settings. They were guided through the basic structure, tone, and content expectations of a standard cover letter. Following this, students were tasked with drafting their own cover letters based on a simulated job advertisement relevant to their field of study.

In the second phase, students were introduced to Blackbox AI, an AI-powered writing assistant. A demonstration session was conducted to familiarize them with the tool's interface and features, including grammar correction, tone adjustment, and rephrasing suggestions. Students then uploaded their initial drafts into the platform and received real-time feedback. They were encouraged to explore multiple suggestions and reflect on the rationale behind each correction.

The final phase involved students revising their drafts based on the AI-generated feedback. Instructors provided additional support through one-on-one consultations and group discussions to clarify doubts and reinforce learning. The final versions of the cover letters were submitted for evaluation. Throughout the process, emphasis was placed on iterative learning, self-editing, and critical thinking (Zakaria et al., 2025). This methodology not only improved the technical quality of student writing but also fostered a sense of ownership and independence in their learning journey.

STUDENT CHALLENGES

Before the integration of Blackbox AI into the classroom, students exhibited a range of challenges that are commonly observed among ESL learners, particularly in the context of professional writing. One of the most prevalent issues was the frequent occurrence of typographical and spelling errors, which often disrupted the clarity and professionalism of their writing. Punctuation mistakes, such as missing commas or incorrect use of apostrophes, further contributed to confusion and reduced the overall readability of their cover letters.

Grammatical inconsistencies were another major concern. Students struggled with subject-verb agreement, verb tense usage, and sentence structure, leading to awkward or incorrect phrasing. These issues were compounded by a limited vocabulary, which often resulted in repetitive or overly simplistic language. Many students also lacked familiarity with the formal tone and structure expected in cover letters, leading to content that was either too casual or too generic.

Beyond technical issues, a significant barrier was the students' lack of confidence in their writing abilities. This often manifested in vague or overly cautious language, as students were hesitant to assert their strengths or tailor their content to specific job roles. As a result, their cover letters lacked the persuasive quality needed to make a strong impression on potential employers. These challenges not only hindered their ability to communicate effectively but also limited their opportunities for employment. Addressing these issues required a multifaceted approach that combined technological support with pedagogical guidance, which this project aimed to provide through the integration of Blackbox AI.

FEATURES OF BLACKBOX AI

Blackbox AI is a sophisticated writing assistant designed to support users in producing high-quality written content through a range of intelligent features. For ESL students, these features are particularly beneficial as they address common language challenges while promoting independent learning. One of the core functionalities of Blackbox AI is its real-time grammar and spelling correction. As students type, the tool identifies and corrects errors instantly, helping them recognize and learn from their mistakes. This immediate feedback loop reinforces grammar rules and improves accuracy over time.

Another valuable feature is tone and style adjustment, which allows students to modify their writing to suit formal or professional contexts. This is especially useful in cover letter writing, where tone plays a crucial role in conveying professionalism and enthusiasm. Blackbox AI also offers multiple rephrasing options, enabling students to explore alternative sentence structures and expressions. This not only enhances clarity and conciseness but also expands their vocabulary and stylistic range.

Additionally, the tool provides vocabulary enhancement suggestions, recommending more precise or impactful words to replace vague or repetitive language. These features collectively support iterative writing, where students can continuously refine their drafts based on AI-generated suggestions. Over time, this process cultivates a deeper understanding of language mechanics, improves writing fluency, and builds confidence. By functioning as a responsive and non-

judgmental writing coach, Blackbox AI empowers students to take control of their learning and develop essential communication skills that are transferable to academic and professional settings.

CLASSROOM IMPLEMENTATION

The classroom implementation of Blackbox AI was carefully structured to ensure maximum student engagement, learning effectiveness, and integration with existing curriculum goals. The process began with an introductory session where students were taught the significance of cover letters in job applications. The instructor highlighted common pitfalls such as vague language, poor structure, and grammatical errors, setting the stage for why AI assistance could be beneficial. Students were then provided with a sample job advertisement and asked to draft a personalized cover letter tailored to the position.

Once the initial drafts were completed, students were introduced to Blackbox AI through a guided tutorial. The instructor demonstrated how to input text, interpret feedback, and apply suggested changes. Students then used the tool independently to revise their drafts, focusing on improving grammar, tone, and clarity. The AI's real-time feedback allowed them to make immediate corrections and experiment with different phrasings, fostering a sense of autonomy and curiosity.

To reinforce learning, the instructor facilitated group discussions where students shared their experiences using the tool. They compared original and revised drafts, discussed the rationale behind certain changes, and reflected on how the AI suggestions improved their writing. Peer feedback was also encouraged, creating a collaborative and supportive environment. This approach not only enhanced technical writing skills but also promoted critical thinking (Zakaria et al., 2025) and self-assessment. By embedding AI into the writing process, the classroom became a dynamic space for exploration, reflection, and growth, ultimately preparing students for real-world communication challenges.

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS

The implementation of Blackbox AI in the ESL classroom yielded highly encouraging results, both in terms of student engagement and measurable improvements in writing quality. Among the 30 students who participated in the project, 27—representing 90% of the class—responded positively to the intervention. This strong response highlights the tool's effectiveness in addressing the specific challenges faced by ESL learners. Students reported feeling more motivated to write and revise their work, largely due to the immediate and constructive feedback provided by the AI. The ability to see real-time corrections and suggestions helped demystify grammar rules and writing conventions, making the learning process more accessible and less intimidating.

In addition to increased motivation, students also demonstrated greater confidence in their writing abilities. Many who previously struggled with expressing themselves clearly began to take more initiative in refining their drafts. The iterative editing process encouraged them to experiment with language, explore alternative phrasings, and develop a more professional tone. Instructors observed significant improvements in the clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness of the final cover letters. Sentences became more structured, vocabulary more precise, and overall presentation more polished. The transformation was not only technical but also attitudinal students began to view writing as a skill they could master rather than a barrier they had to overcome. These outcomes

suggest that AI tools like Blackbox AI can play a pivotal role in enhancing both the competence and confidence of ESL students, ultimately preparing them for more effective communication in academic and professional settings.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The successful integration of Blackbox AI into ESL instruction offers valuable insights into the broader potential of artificial intelligence in education. This project demonstrates that AI tools, when thoughtfully implemented, can significantly enhance the learning experience by providing immediate, personalized feedback that traditional classroom settings may not always be able to offer. For ESL students, who often require more targeted support in mastering the nuances of English writing, such tools can serve as powerful allies in their academic and professional development.

One of the key implications of this initiative is the shift toward more learner-centered education. By empowering students to take control of their writing process, Blackbox AI fosters independence, critical thinking (Zakaria et al., 2025), and self-reflection. These are essential skills not only for language acquisition but also for lifelong learning. Furthermore, the tool's ability to adapt to individual writing styles and needs makes it a scalable solution for diverse educational contexts.

This project also underscores the importance of integrating technology into language education to bridge gaps in access and support. As AI continues to evolve, its applications in education are likely to expand, offering new opportunities for personalized learning across disciplines. Future implementations could explore the use of AI in other writing genres such as essays, reports, or creative writing, and extend access to students in rural or underserved areas. In conclusion, the use of Blackbox AI in ESL classrooms is not just a technological enhancement—it represents a meaningful step toward more inclusive, effective, and future-ready education.

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Enhancing English Language Teaching through Curipod: A Digital Pedagogical Approach

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ABSTRACT

Despite increasing efforts to integrate technology in English language education, many practitioners still face challenges in maintaining student engagement, differentiating instruction, and providing timely formative feedback in a diverse classroom setting. This paper explores the integration of Curipod, a digital interactive presentation and lesson design tool, in addressing these pedagogical challenges within the English language classroom. The study outlines how Curipod supports differentiated instruction, fosters student engagement, and facilitates formative assessment through real-time interactive elements such as polls, word clouds, and collaborative boards. English language practitioners reported increased student motivation and active participation, particularly in key areas such as vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and collaborative writing activities. Curipod's ready-made templates, along with its AI-assisted content generation features, enabled teachers to efficiently create personalized, visually engaging, and pedagogically sound lessons tailored to diverse learner profiles and language proficiency levels. Furthermore, the platform's interactive nature encouraged greater student autonomy and peer-to-peer learning, aligning well with communicative language teaching (CLT) principles. The findings suggest that Curipod can serve as a versatile and impactful digital tool, not only enhancing the effectiveness of English language instruction but also promoting a more dynamic, learner-centered, and technologically integrated classroom environment. The paper concludes by recommending broader professional development support for English teachers to fully leverage Curipod's capabilities in fostering meaningful and inclusive English language learning experiences.

Keywords: Digital interactive presentation, lesson design tool, active participation, students' engagement

INTRODUCTION

English language teaching (ELT) practitioners face ongoing challenges in ensuring student engagement, addressing diverse proficiency levels, and delivering timely formative feedback (Richards, 2006). In many multilingual and mixed-ability classrooms, students often differ in their linguistic backgrounds, learning preferences, and motivation levels. These differences often make it difficult for educators to apply a uniform teaching strategy that caters to all learners.

Although digital technologies are increasingly used in language teaching, many existing tools lack the necessary interactivity and pedagogical alignment with established ELT frameworks such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Warschauer & Kern, 2000). To be truly effective,

digital tools must support language development by fostering meaningful interaction, offering immediate feedback, and enabling differentiated instruction tailored to diverse learner needs.

Curipod, a digital interactive lesson design tool, offers several pedagogical benefits that address these challenges. By combining AI-powered content generation with real-time interactive features, Curipod empowers educators to design personalized, engaging, and student-centered lessons. Its capabilities promote active participation, support differentiated instruction, and facilitate ongoing formative assessment key elements of effective and inclusive language teaching. As such, Curipod serves as a valuable resource for enhancing classroom interaction, increasing learner autonomy, and aligning digital instruction with sound pedagogical principles in ELT contexts.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

Overview of Curipod

Curipod is an innovative digital lesson design platform that integrates interactive presentations, AI-generated content, and real-time student participation, offering English language teaching (ELT) practitioners a dynamic tool to address diverse pedagogical needs. Unlike traditional slide-based tools, Curipod's AI-powered content generation enables rapid development of instructional materials tailored to specific topics, objectives, and learner profiles. This function supports time efficiency while allowing educators to maintain alignment with curriculum goals and pedagogical frameworks (Johnson et al., 2023).

From a pedagogical perspective, Curipod aligns with key principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) by promoting authentic language use, interaction, and collaboration in the classroom (Richards, 2006). Its interactive features such as live polls, collaborative boards, open-ended questions, and word clouds actively engage students in constructing knowledge through meaningful communication. These interactive tasks reflect constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes student agency, exploration, and social interaction as central to language acquisition (Vygotsky, 1978; Sato & Loewen, 2022).

Moreover, Curipod facilitates differentiated instruction by allowing teachers to customize AI-generated content according to varying language proficiency levels, learning preferences, and classroom contexts. For instance, vocabulary exercises can be adapted for beginner learners, while critical thinking prompts can be designed for more advanced students. This flexibility supports inclusive teaching practices and addresses Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, which advocate for multiple means of engagement and representation in instruction (CAST, 2018).

Curipod's real-time assessment tools also contribute to formative assessment practices, providing immediate feedback to both students and teachers. Live quizzes, instant polls, and visual summaries enable educators to monitor student understanding continuously and make instructional adjustments accordingly. This immediacy fosters responsive teaching, enhancing student learning outcomes and supporting the development of metacognitive skills (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Hockly, 2021).

Additionally, Curipod promotes student autonomy and digital literacy, important components of 21st-century education. Through its user-friendly interface and collaborative features, learners can

engage in co-creating content, thereby developing critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills (Almarzooq & Ismail, 2022). Encouraging students to create their own interactive presentations can further enhance their sense of ownership and motivation in language learning.

In sum, Curipod embodies a learner-centered digital pedagogical approach, supporting key ELT goals such as engagement, differentiation, interaction, and continuous assessment. Its integration into classroom practice exemplifies how AI-enhanced educational tools can transform teaching and learning experiences in meaningful and inclusive ways.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Lesson Preparation

The implementation of Curipod in English language teaching classrooms began with a structured lesson preparation stage. Lecturers initiated the process by entering the lesson objectives and selected topics into the Curipod platform. Curipod's AI-driven engine automatically generated a variety of instructional materials, including interactive slides, vocabulary lists, comprehension tasks, and formative assessment activities such as quizzes and polls. This automated generation of content significantly reduced lesson planning time, allowing lecturers to focus more on pedagogical planning and learner differentiation. Once the content was generated, lecturers carefully reviewed and customized the materials to align with the specific needs, language proficiency levels, and learning styles of their students. This customization process ensured that lessons remained relevant, appropriately challenging, and supportive of inclusive learning practices.

Classroom Delivery

During classroom delivery, lecturers utilized Curipod's live interactive features to conduct lessons in a dynamic and student-centered manner. Lessons were projected or shared digitally, and students interacted with the content through their personal devices. Activities such as real-time quizzes, word clouds, open-ended questions, and collaborative boards enabled all students to participate actively and simultaneously, fostering a more inclusive and engaging classroom environment. These interactive elements allowed lecturers to facilitate immediate and meaningful communication among students, thereby reinforcing core principles of communicative language teaching. Moreover, the instant feedback provided through student responses enabled lecturers to adapt their instruction on the spot, addressing misunderstandings and adjusting lesson pacing or focus areas as needed to support better comprehension.

Post-Lesson Review

Following the completion of each lesson, lecturers revisited the lesson materials within Curipod to reflect on the effectiveness of the instructional strategies used. Based on classroom experiences and student interaction patterns, instant report generated from Curipod, lecturers refined the content to enhance its impact for future use. These revised and improved lessons were then saved within the platform, creating a repository of curated materials that could be adapted and reused in subsequent sessions. This iterative process of reviewing and refining not only promoted reflective teaching practices but also contributed to the continuous improvement of instructional quality in line with evolving student needs.

DISCUSSION

The adoption of Curipod in English language teaching (ELT) contexts brought about several pedagogical benefits that positively impacted both teaching practices and student learning experiences. One of the most significant advantages observed was enhanced student engagement. The interactive features of Curipod such as live polls, collaborative boards, and instant quizzes encouraged active participation from students, including those who were typically reluctant to engage in traditional classroom discussions. These features provided multiple avenues for students to express their ideas and contribute to class activities, thus creating a more inclusive and stimulating learning environment. Research has shown that digital tools that promote active interaction enhance learner motivation and reduce classroom anxiety (Hockly, 2021).

Another important pedagogical benefit was the support for differentiated instruction. Curipod's AI-generated content could be easily modified to suit varying levels of language proficiency, allowing educators to tailor lessons that catered to both struggling learners and more advanced students. This adaptability ensured that instruction remained appropriately challenging for all learners, fostering equitable learning opportunities and helping students progress at their own pace. Such flexible instructional design aligns with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, which emphasize providing multiple means of engagement and representation to support diverse learners (CAST, 2018).

The tool also provided valuable support for immediate formative assessment. Educators were able to monitor student understanding in real time using Curipod's live assessment tools, including quizzes and polls. This capability enabled them to identify misconceptions quickly and adjust their instruction accordingly, promoting responsive teaching. Recent studies have highlighted the importance of real-time digital assessment tools in supporting metacognitive awareness and academic performance (Almarzooq & Ismail, 2022).

Additionally, Curipod contributed to time efficiency in lesson planning and delivery. The AI-assisted content creation reduced the time required for educators to prepare materials, allowing them to redirect their efforts towards instructional design, classroom interaction, and individualized support for students. This efficiency was particularly valuable in educational settings where time constraints often hinder the ability to provide personalized instruction.

Importantly, Curipod also aligned closely with the principles of communicative language teaching (CLT), a widely endorsed pedagogical approach in ELT. By facilitating student-centered interaction, authentic language use, and meaningful communication tasks, Curipod reinforced the core tenets of CLT. Digital platforms that support collaboration and learner autonomy have been shown to promote communicative competence and confidence in language learners (Sato & Loewen, 2022).

Variations Of Use

Curipod demonstrated versatility across different teaching models, offering flexibility in lesson delivery. One effective application was in the flipped classroom model, where interactive pre-class activities were assigned to students. These activities prepared learners for more in-depth, discussion-based tasks during in-person lessons, maximizing the value of classroom time for active

learning. Curipod's interactive elements ensured that students arrived prepared and ready to engage with the material.

In blended learning environments, where instruction combines face-to-face and online components, Curipod served as a valuable tool for maintaining continuity and engagement across modalities. Teachers incorporated Curipod activities both in physical classrooms and virtual settings, enabling a seamless transition between learning contexts. The platform's cloud-based access and real-time interaction features made it ideal for hybrid models.

Additionally, Curipod supported student-generated content, encouraging learners to create their own interactive presentations. This approach promoted learner autonomy, critical thinking, and creativity, as students took ownership of their learning process. By engaging in content creation, students practiced using language in authentic ways and developed digital literacy skills essential for 21st-century education.

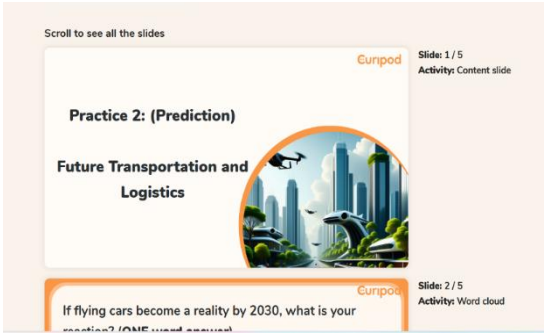
Limitations

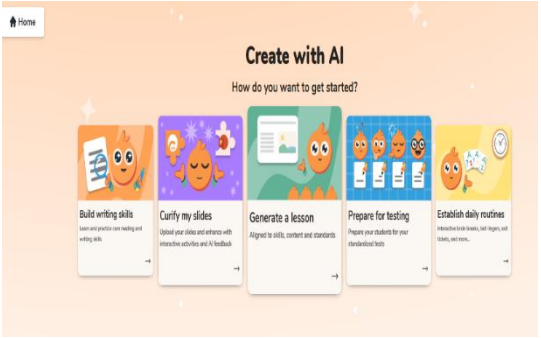
Despite its benefits, the implementation of Curipod was not without limitations. One challenge related to the depth of AI-generated content, particularly for advanced language topics. While the platform could generate general instructional materials efficiently, educators often needed to refine and expand this content to ensure depth, accuracy, and relevance for higher-level learners. This required additional time and pedagogical judgment to ensure that learning objectives were fully met.

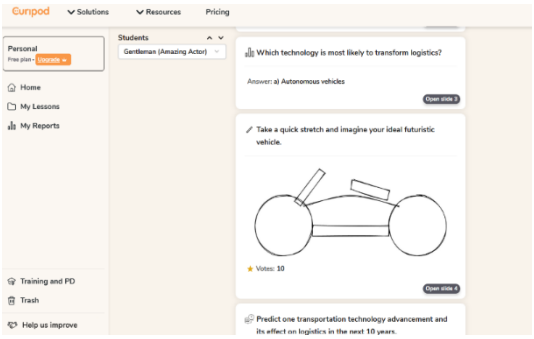
Another limitation concerned technology access. Full utilisation of Curipod's features required reliable internet connectivity and access to devices for both educators and students. In settings where technology infrastructure was limited, this posed a barrier to effective implementation, potentially affecting the consistency and quality of student engagement.

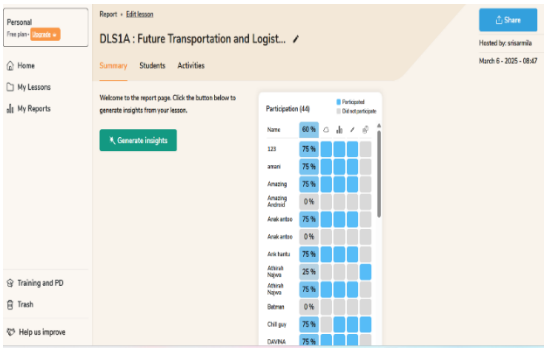
Lastly, while Curipod functioned effectively as a standalone tool, greater integration with Learning Management Systems (LMS) would enhance usability. Seamless integration would allow educators to manage assignments, track progress, and consolidate student data within a unified digital ecosystem. The lack of such integration meant that educators had to manage multiple platforms, which could be time-consuming and cumbersome.

Interface Of Curipods









CONCLUSIONS

Curipod presents a valuable digital pedagogical solution for addressing several persistent challenges in English language teaching (ELT) classrooms. By promoting active student engagement, supporting differentiated instruction, and enabling continuous formative assessment, Curipod fosters a more dynamic, inclusive, and learner-centered environment. Its interactive features, such as real-time polls, collaborative boards, and AI-assisted content creation, empower educators to design lessons that are not only engaging but also tailored to the diverse needs and proficiency levels of their students. This level of customization enhances learning outcomes and ensures that all learners are actively involved in the instructional process.

To fully realize the benefits of Curipod, ELT practitioners should approach the tool not simply as a presentation aid but as a pedagogical resource that can transform how lessons are delivered and how students interact with content. Teachers are encouraged to explore the platform's features in depth and adapt the AI-generated materials to align with specific learning objectives, language goals, and classroom contexts. This thoughtful integration ensures that technology serves pedagogical intentions rather than dictating them.

In addition, the role of institutions is crucial in supporting the successful implementation of digital tools like Curipod. Providing targeted professional development opportunities, technical support, and collaborative spaces for educators to share best practices can significantly enhance the effective use of Curipod in ELT settings. Institutional support not only builds educators confidence in using educational technology but also contributes to the broader goal of fostering innovative, technology-enhanced learning environments that can adapt to evolving educational needs.

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Smart Talk: Polite Negotiation through PhBL, a Finnish-Inspired Digital ELT Model for Business English Learners

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ABSTRACT

This extended abstract presents a phenomenon-based English language lesson for tertiary learners focusing on polite negotiation in workplace scenarios. Titled Smart Talk: Polite Negotiation Through PhBL, this lesson design integrates Finnish-inspired pedagogical principles and 21st-century digital tools to enhance learner motivation, communication fluency, and critical thinking in a Business English context. Targeting Diploma in International Business students (CEFR B1–B2), the lesson revolves around the real-world phenomenon: How can we handle professional conflict politely in English? Students engage in scaffolded, collaborative tasks using Padlet, Google Classroom, Google Lens, Google Form, YouTube, and speech-to-text tools to build vocabulary, explore polite modal grammar, perform recorded role plays, and conduct peer and self-assessment. Each stage is designed to strengthen digital literacy, workplace readiness, and authentic language use. This paper discusses how this structured yet flexible model fosters autonomy and engagement while demonstrating how simple tools can facilitate a meaningful ELT experience.

Keywords: PhBL, polite negotiation, Business English, digital tools, tertiary education, AR in ELT

INTRODUCTION

A key challenge in tertiary-level ELT is helping learners apply language meaningfully in real-world contexts, especially for workplace communication. Traditional methods often lead to disengagement and limited functional use. To address this, Phenomenon-Based Learning (PhBL), inspired by Finland's curriculum (Samutchaya, 2023), offers an inquiry-driven, interdisciplinary approach that fosters autonomy and relevance. This lesson, co-developed by IPK College lecturers, equips Business English learners with polite negotiation skills through structured, tech-integrated tasks. By anchoring learning in a workplace conflict scenario, the lesson promotes motivation, real-life application, and deeper comprehension, making language learning purposeful, reflective, and future-ready.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH / TECHNIQUE

2.1 Phenomenon-Based Learning (PhBL)

Phenomenon-Based Learning (PhBL) moves beyond isolated instruction, encouraging students to explore real-world issues through inquiry and cross-disciplinary learning (Johnson, 2021; Samutchaya, 2023). This lesson is framed by the guiding question: "How can we handle

professional conflict politely in English?" Polite negotiation, vital in global business, requires language proficiency, cultural awareness, and emotional intelligence. By grounding learning in this authentic challenge, students develop purposeful, confident communication skills while engaging meaningfully with English through real-life application.

2.2 Digital-Scaffolded Lesson Design

Delivered through a station-based model, the lesson builds progressively, with students completing tasks individually or in pairs and submitting evidence to unlock subsequent stations. This format fosters responsibility, self-pacing, and active learning. Padlet serves as the interactive hub for tracking progress, while Google Classroom is used for submissions. Each tool is chosen to reinforce specific learning outcomes and support a structured, blended experience.

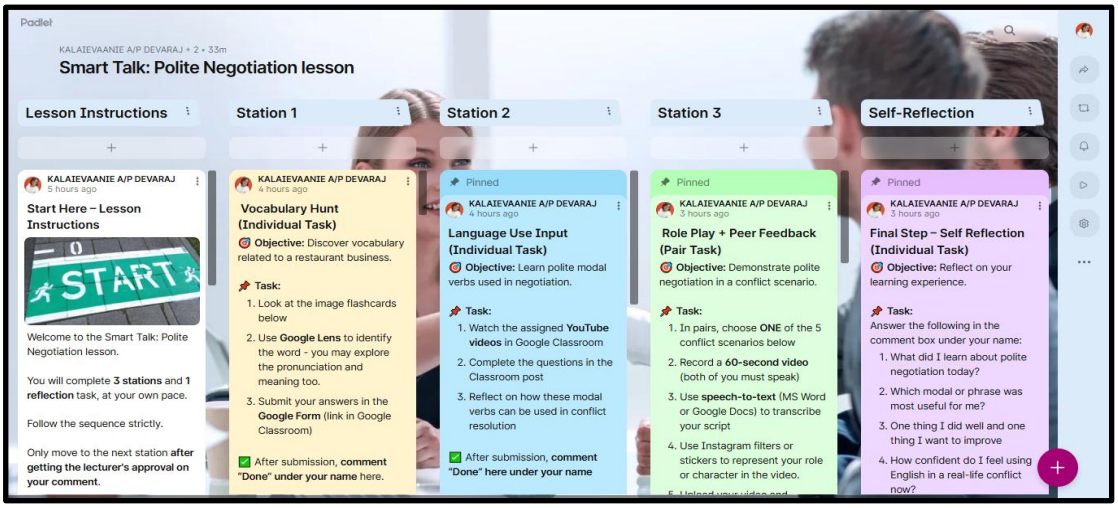

Figure 1 The Digital Hub - Padlet Structure

The session is structured into five key stages, each reflecting constructivist and communicative teaching principles:

2.2.1 Station 1 (Input – Vocabulary)

Students begin with a vocabulary hunt using visual flashcards shared on Padlet. Each flashcard includes image clues and cloze prompts, with detailed tasks completed via Google Form and submitted through Google Classroom. Using Google Lens, learners explore definitions, pronunciation, and example sentences. Some flashcards link to QR codes directing them to 360° business videos or native audio clips. While not full AR, this simplified model uses image recognition to boost engagement and memory (Sun, 2023; Syamsiyah & Ma'rifatulloh, 2023). An entry-ticket quiz ensures vocabulary is processed before proceeding to the negotiation-focused tasks.

Figure 2 Flashcard and Google Lens Result

Figure 3 QR Flashcard for Audio

Figure 4 QR Flashcard for Audio

Clue: "He listened with real e_ p _ t _ _." *Answer: Empathy*

2.2.2 Station 2 (Input – Grammar)

Students are individually assigned a curated YouTube video via Google Classroom featuring authentic business negotiation dialogues. Time-stamped questions are embedded to prompt critical listening and focus on grammar structures, particularly modal verbs and softening phrases commonly used in professional requests (e.g., Could we consider…, Would it be possible…, Might I suggest…). This stage supports grammar noticing and inductive learning, in line with Task-Based Learning (TBL) and Focus on Form pedagogy (Suseno et al., 2023). Students reflect on grammar function in real interaction rather than isolated practice.

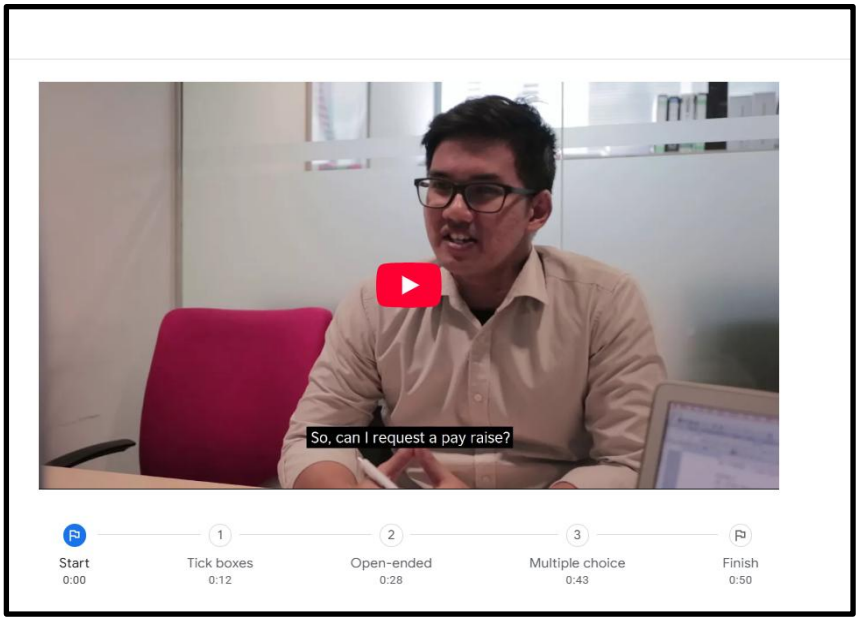

Figure 5 YouTube video with Embedded Questions

2.2.3 Station 3a (Output – Application)

This is the main application task, where learners collaborate in pairs to simulate a polite negotiation scenario in a restaurant business context. Five varied role-play prompts are provided, increasing in complexity. Students are encouraged to use Instagram filters or stickers to embody their character, adding creativity and personalisation. The 60-second video is recorded and then transcribed using speech-to-text tools (Google Docs voice typing or MS Word Dictate) (Li, 2025). Both the video and transcript are uploaded to Padlet.

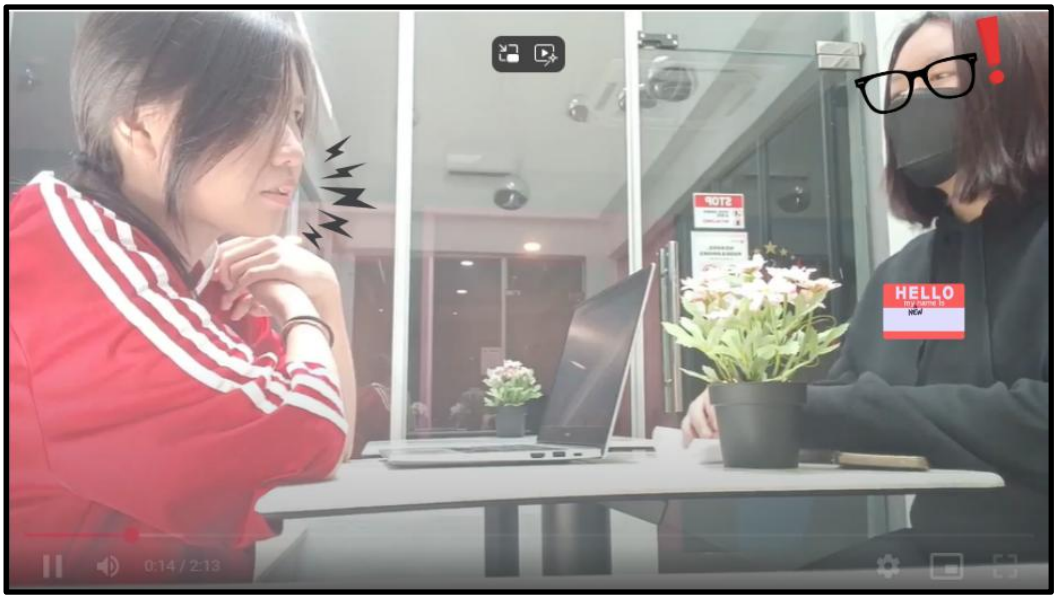

Figure 6 Students' Video Screenshot

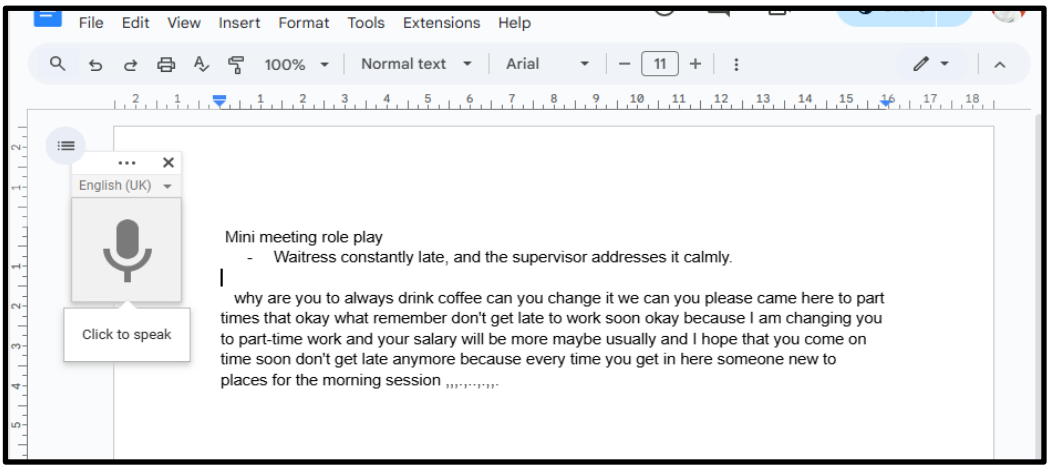

Figure 7 Students' Transcript Screenshot

2.2.4 Station 3b (Review – Peer Feedback)

Students watch two peer videos, evaluating language accuracy based on vocabulary and grammar from Station 1 and 2. They are guided to provide respectful, constructive feedback under each Padlet post using a checklist. This stage develops collaborative learning, critical thinking, and communicative accountability, while fostering empathy, a key component of polite negotiation.

2.2.5 Station 4 (Reflection – Self-Assessment)

Learners individually complete a self-evaluation, reflecting on their language performance, fluency, pronunciation, and comfort in navigating workplace conflicts. Prompts guide them to consider what they did well and what they aim to improve. Reflections are posted on Padlet. This stage encourages metacognitive awareness, tying back to the PhBL principle of deep learning through experience and reflection.

DISCUSSION

This lesson structure demonstrates a strategic alignment with Phenomenon-Based Learning (PhBL), where real-life relevance, inquiry, collaboration, and interdisciplinary integration drive student learning.

3.1 Anchored in a Real-World Phenomenon

Guided by the question "How can we handle professional conflict politely in English?", students engage with language, business etiquette, and communication strategies, reflecting PhBL's cross-disciplinary focus (Lonka, 2018).

3.2 Integrated, Thematic Learning

Rather than isolating skills, the lesson integrates vocabulary, grammar, speaking, and reflection around a single, authentic scenario, creating cohesive and meaningful language use.

3.3 Scaffolded Learning and ZPD

Each station builds on the previous, from vocabulary discovery via Google Lens to a role-play task. Padlet checkpoints ensure mastery before advancing, supporting Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and promoting learner autonomy (Yusi Rahmawati et.al, 2024).

3.4 Simplified AR for Accessible Engagement

Though not full AR, tools like Google Lens and QR codes offer a low-tech AR experience. Learners scan real-world images to access videos, definitions, or pronunciation aids, enhancing retention through visual-contextual learning (Syamsiyah & Ma'rifatulloh, 2023).

3.5 Collaborative & Reflective Practice

Pair-based role plays and peer reviews promote real-time negotiation and feedback skills. The final self-assessment encourages reflection and metacognition, core outcomes of PhBL (Fioravanti, M. L et.al, 2021).

3.6 21st-Century Skills & Digital Literacy

By using tools like Padlet, Google Classroom, and speech-to-text, students build not only language proficiency but also digital competence, equipping them for tech-driven workplace communication (Cheng, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The Smart Talk lesson demonstrates how Phenomenon-Based Learning (PhBL) can enrich tertiary-level English teaching by embedding language use in real-world workplace scenarios. Focused on polite negotiation, the lesson promotes authentic communication and practical skills. Learners engaged with vocabulary through simplified AR (Google Lens), grammar via video, and applied language using speech-to-text role play. This scaffolded, self-paced approach enhanced engagement, retention, and critical thinking. Reflection and peer feedback deepened language awareness. Co-developed by Ms Vaanie and Ms Shalini, the lesson presents a replicable, digital-integrated model aligned with PhBL principles: practical, engaging, and future-focused for ELT classrooms.

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Scaffolded Gamified Vocabulary Learning through ChatGPT and Quizizz Integration

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ABSTRACT

Many tertiary English as a second language (L2) learners struggle with limited vocabulary, which affects their ability to read, write, listen, and speak effectively. This paper introduces a simple yet highly accessible tool to help address this issue by combining three elements: the Oxford Word List, artificial intelligence (AI), and the Quizizz platform. The Oxford Word List serves as a guide to focus on high-frequency and useful vocabulary. AI tools are used to generate sample sentences, short stories, and exercises that help learners understand and use these words in context. These materials are then uploaded to Quizizz, where students can practise through fun, game-based quizzes that also provide immediate feedback. This approach is designed to be easy to administer for teachers and engaging for learners. While it has not been empirically tested, it is based on sound teaching principles such as repetition, context-based learning, and motivation through gamification. The paper suggests that ESL instructors can explore how this method works with students of different levels, how AI tools can support speaking practice, and how learning progress can be tracked using data. By combining a trusted word list, AI-generated content, and interactive quizzes, this approach offers a promising way to help L2 learners improve their vocabulary and overall English skills.

Keywords: Scaffolded vocabulary learning, artificial intelligence, Quizizz integration, Oxford 3000 and 5000, gamification.

INTRODUCTION

A robust vocabulary base remains the single best predictor of successful second-language reading and listening (Zhang & Zhang, 2022), yet most tertiary learners plateau well below the lexical thresholds that Nation (2006) identifies—approximately 9,000 word families for independent reading and 7 000 for comfortable listening. Even where ample classroom hours are devoted to English, learners' knowledge often remains passive and recognition-based. Productive control—being able to retrieve, combine, and tailor lexis in real-time communication—develops far more slowly (Zhong, 2018). Recent textbook audits confirm that many commercial courses recycle new words fewer than three times (Matsuoka & Hirsh, 2010), a frequency far short of the ten meaningful encounters recommended for durable retention (Webb, 2007).

Addressing this recognition-production gap requires an approach that is principled in its word selection, rich in contextualised practice, and efficient enough to fit real syllabus constraints. The present project therefore combines three complementary tools. First, the Oxford Word List (OWL) offers a corpus-derived inventory of high-utility items mapped to CEFR levels, ensuring that teaching time focuses on vocabulary with the greatest payoff for comprehension and fluency.

Second, generative artificial intelligence—in this case ChatGPT—rapidly produces varied, level-appropriate tasks that cover multiple aspects of word knowledge, from collocation to grammatical constraints. Third, the Quizizz platform delivers those tasks through game-based, spaced-retrieval cycles and returns analytics that help teachers target the right words at the right time. Together, these elements constitute a scaffolded pathway intended to move learners beyond initial exposure toward confident, accurate, and context-sensitive lexical use.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

To address the persistent issue of inadequate vocabulary among L2 learners, this paper introduces a scaffolded, tech-integrated vocabulary learning approach that draws on three interrelated components: the Oxford 3000 and 5000, generative AI (ChatGPT), and the game-based assessment platform Quizizz. This model is designed to support the transition from receptive to productive vocabulary knowledge through structured exposure, active practice, and meaningful engagement.

The first layer of the approach is the Oxford 3000 and Oxford 5000 word lists, corpus-based compilations of high-frequency words commonly encountered by English learners in academic and everyday settings (Oxford University Press, 2025). It assigns CEFR levels to vocabulary items, helping educators prioritise words appropriate to their learners' proficiency levels. According to Nation (2006), coverage of high-frequency vocabulary is essential for unassisted reading and listening comprehension, with estimates suggesting that learners require 8,000–9,000 word families for reading and 6,000–7,000 for listening comprehension. The Oxford word lists serve as a starting point for vocabulary selection, ensuring that instruction targets words with the highest communicative value.

The second layer incorporates generative AI tools, particularly ChatGPT, to automate and diversify vocabulary tasks. Using targeted prompts, as shown in Figure 1, teachers can generate definitions, L1 translations, sample sentences, and usage tasks aligned to each word’s meaning, form, and function. This AI-assisted content creation supports Nation’s (2001) framework of vocabulary knowledge, which emphasises multiple aspects of knowing a word, including collocations, grammatical patterns, and constraints on use. Moreover, this process aligns with Schmitt’s (2019) call to develop pedagogical strategies that explicitly scaffold learners from receptive to productive word knowledge. By generating materials that require learners to move from recognition to recall and use, AI integration addresses the vocabulary learning continuum outlined by Zhong (2018), which highlights the importance of productive word use in meaningful contexts such as sentence writing.

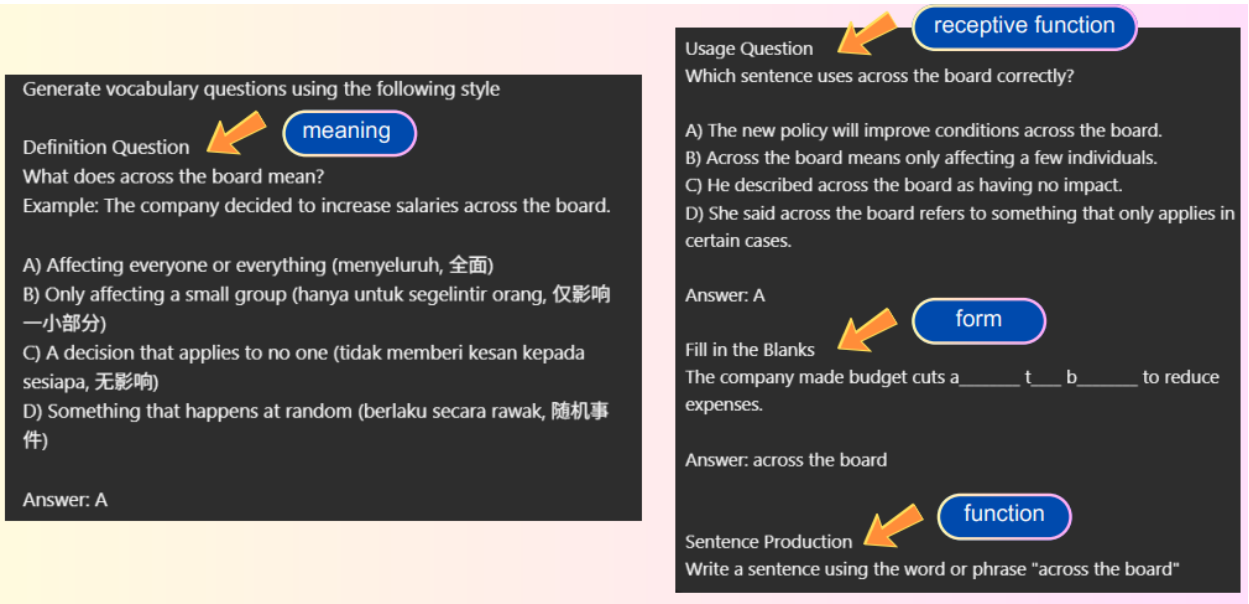

Figure 1 Prompts to generate vocabulary questions.

The third component, Quizizz, is used to deliver these AI-generated materials in an interactive and gamified environment. Quizizz allows for repeated exposure through low-stakes, game-based quizzes that reinforce learning via retrieval practice—an evidence-based strategy for enhancing long-term memory retention (Terai et al., 2021). Learners encounter vocabulary tasks such as spelling checks, definition matching with L1 translations, usage recognition, and sentence construction. These scaffolded activities mirror the progression from receptive to productive vocabulary outlined in the literature (Zhang & Zhang, 2022; Schmitt, 2019). Importantly, Quizizz provides teachers with analytics on learner performance, offering opportunities for data-informed instruction and targeted vocabulary recycling.

This tripartite model supports what Schmitt (2019) refers to as the need for vocabulary learning to be systematic, contextualised, and incremental. The approach enables teachers to spend less time on manual material preparation while ensuring that learners receive structured and meaningful practice across multiple aspects of vocabulary knowledge. It also addresses the practical gap noted by Schmitt and Schmitt (2014): while many textbooks do not systematically recycle vocabulary, this model allows teachers to easily generate and reinforce vocabulary in diverse contexts over time.

By combining corpus-based vocabulary selection, AI-powered content creation, and gamified delivery, the proposed approach offers a practical, replicable framework for enhancing L2 vocabulary learning in tertiary contexts. It not only bridges the gap between receptive and productive knowledge but also aligns with current pedagogical calls to integrate technology in ways that are both principled and learner-centered.

DISCUSSION

The integration of the Oxford Word List, generative AI (ChatGPT), and Quizizz offers a promising solution to a persistent problem in second language learning: the gap between receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge. As Schmitt (2019) notes, while learners often recognise words, the transition to confident and appropriate use in speaking and writing is much slower and more difficult. This approach supports that transition by scaffolding vocabulary learning through stages of meaning recognition, contextual usage, and productive application. By embedding activities that target multiple dimensions of word knowledge—form, meaning, function, and collocation—the approach reflects Nation's (2001) comprehensive model of vocabulary knowledge and addresses the need for learners to encounter and use words repeatedly across varied contexts.

The pedagogical significance of this approach lies in its accessibility, adaptability, and ability to promote learner engagement. Teachers can quickly generate contextualised vocabulary tasks using ChatGPT, tailored to their students' proficiency levels and lesson content. This reduces preparation time while increasing the depth and variety of vocabulary instruction. Furthermore, the use of Quizizz introduces an element of gamification, making vocabulary practice more enjoyable and less intimidating. The platform's built-in analytics also provide valuable feedback for both teachers and students, allowing for ongoing monitoring of progress and the identification of vocabulary items that require further reinforcement.

This technique is not limited to the context in which it was originally developed. It can be adapted for use with younger learners by simplifying the target words and examples, or for specific fields such as business, hospitality, or science by substituting the Oxford Word List with domain-specific vocabulary. For learners in multilingual classrooms, AI tools can generate bilingual or even trilingual support materials, making the approach more inclusive. In fully online or blended learning environments, where instructional time may be reduced, the self-paced nature of Quizizz activities and the ability to generate targeted tasks on demand provide a practical way to maintain vocabulary development outside the classroom.

The approach also encourages teacher autonomy and professional creativity. With even a basic understanding of prompt engineering, educators can produce a wide range of vocabulary tasks, from cloze activities to sentence-generation tasks, aligned to both curricular goals and learner interests. This flexibility addresses a well-known limitation in textbook-based instruction, where vocabulary activities are often disconnected from learners' actual needs and the language they are most likely to encounter and use.

However, for this approach to be implemented effectively, some support structures are necessary. Teachers need at least a working familiarity with AI tools and critical awareness of their limitations, particularly in checking for linguistic accuracy and potential biases in generated content. Institutional support in the form of shared repositories of OWL-aligned materials or sample prompts could greatly assist in ensuring consistency and reducing teacher workload. Although this approach has not yet been tested in a longitudinal study, its design reflects well-established vocabulary learning principles, including the importance of repetition, context, and meaningful use. As such, it provides a strong foundation for future empirical research on its long-term impact on vocabulary retention and productive use in written and spoken tasks.

In summary, this approach attempts to addresses real classroom challenges with practical, scalable, and learner-centred solutions. By aligning high-frequency word selection with interactive gamified practice, it not only enhances vocabulary learning but also offers a flexible model that can be adapted across educational contexts and learner profiles.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has introduced a scaffolded vocabulary learning approach that integrates the Oxford 3000 and 5000, generative AI (ChatGPT), and the Quizizz platform to support the development of both receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge among L2 English learners. The approach responds to a critical pedagogical gap identified in vocabulary instruction—namely, the difficulty learners face in moving from passive recognition of words to confident, accurate use in speaking and writing. Leveraging digital tools that are readily accessible, this model provides a practical and adaptable framework for vocabulary instruction in tertiary ELT context.

The practical implications of this approach are substantial. For teachers, it offers a low-preparation, high-impact method for creating contextualised vocabulary tasks that are aligned with learners' proficiency levels. By using AI to generate exercises and Quizizz to deliver them in an engaging, interactive format, instructors can provide learners with repeated and varied exposure to target vocabulary in meaningful contexts. The flexibility of the model also means that it can be adapted to suit different classroom formats—face-to-face, hybrid, or online—and varied learner needs, including English for Specific Purposes (ESP), exam preparation, or general proficiency development.

For ELT practitioners considering the adoption of this technique, several recommendations emerge. First, it is important to begin with a clear understanding of learners' proficiency levels and vocabulary needs, using tools like the Oxford Word List or other corpus-based word lists to select appropriate target words. Second, educators should take time to experiment with AI prompting, learning how to generate accurate and pedagogically useful content. Simple prompts that request definitions, example sentences, and usage questions can yield rich materials that are immediately usable in class or for self-directed practice. Third, the use of Quizizz or similar platforms can enhance learner motivation and offer valuable feedback. Teachers are encouraged to gradually build a personal or institutional bank of AI-generated quizzes to support consistent recycling of key vocabulary across lessons and units.

Finally, while this approach offers clear benefits, its success depends on thoughtful implementation. Teachers should remain critically aware of the limitations of AI-generated content and be prepared to edit or adapt materials as necessary to ensure linguistic and cultural appropriacy. Collaborative sharing of best practices among educators, especially in the form of prompt templates, vocabulary sets, and instructional guides, can further enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the approach. It should also be pointed out that while generative AI and Quizizz are great tools, errors may occur in the generation stage and instructors ought to audit the output for any potential errors prior to publishing the Quizizz.

In conclusion, this model represents a step forward in vocabulary pedagogy—one that bridges research-informed principles with practical classroom realities. As English language teaching continues to evolve in the digital age, integrating tools like ChatGPT and Quizizz in principled ways offers not just innovation for its own sake but meaningful improvement in how learners acquire, retain, and use the vocabulary they need to succeed.

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Vivaai Framework: Revolutionizing Interview Readiness in ELT Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

The VIVAAI Framework is a tiered, AI-powered system designed to enhance students' mock interview performance, oral fluency, and employability readiness within English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms. By integrating tools such as ChatGPT, Google Docs Voice Typing, Yoodli AI, Mockmate, and Google Interview Warmup, the framework offers scalable, cost-effective mock interview coaching adaptable to both low-resource and high-tech environments. Tier 1 supports basic spoken practice with AI-generated questions and real-time transcription. Tier 2 incorporates data-driven feedback tools for deep performance analysis, enabling learners to reflect, revise, and improve. Developed by Shuhasyini Balan and recognized with national accolades, VIVAAI empowers educators to revolutionize speaking training through accessible, AI-supported platforms, thus promoting student autonomy, engagement, and communication confidence.

Keywords: AI in ELT, mock interview, oral fluency, employability, tiered framework

INTRODUCTION

One of the most pressing challenges in English Language Teaching (Brown, 2007; Harmer, 2015) (ELT) today is not just helping learners achieve grammatical accuracy or pass standardized tests, but ensuring they can confidently communicate in real-world professional settings. While many institutions succeed in developing students' academic reading and writing skills, there remains a critical gap in spoken fluency, self-confidence, and performance under pressure (Dörnyei, 2009)—particularly during high-stakes interactions such as job interviews.

In polytechnic and TVET (Le & Nguyen, 2022) (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) settings, this problem becomes even more pronounced. Students are expected to transition smoothly into the workforce, yet many face barriers when it comes to articulating their thoughts in English, especially in formal or evaluative scenarios. Mock interviews, although highly effective (Nguyen, 2022) for preparing learners, are underutilized in many ELT classrooms due to several constraints such as time limitations for one-on-one feedback, large class sizes, lack of trained evaluators, and limited access to tools for personalized support.

As a result, students often complete their studies with minimal exposure to authentic speaking practice, particularly in the form of structured, scenario-based simulations that mirror professional expectations. This results in low confidence, unpreparedness, and poor performance during actual interviews—not because they lack knowledge, but because they lack practice, feedback, and support.

To address this significant gap, the VIVAAI Framework was developed as a practical, accessible, and AI-powered coaching solution for ELT classrooms. The acronym stands for Visual, Interactive, Voice-Activated Artificial Intelligence, and it integrates a series of free and advanced AI tools to deliver a tiered, scalable mock interview experience. The design of VIVAAI centers on three core needs: accessibility for low-resource institutions (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019) and students with basic internet access; automation for instant feedback and minimal instructor burden; and autonomy for students to reflect, improve, and build communication confidence independently.

By bridging the gap between classroom fluency and workplace readiness, the VIVAAI Framework promotes not only linguistic competence but also 21st-century skills (Trilling & Fadel, 2009) such as self-regulation, adaptability, and digital literacy. It reimagines how mock interviews can be delivered—not as a luxury for elite learners, but as a fundamental right for every student seeking to succeed in an increasingly competitive, English-driven job market.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

The VIVAAI Framework is structured into two distinct yet complementary tiers to accommodate diverse learning needs, technological capacities, and English proficiency levels among students. This dual-tiered approach provides both inclusivity and flexibility, allowing educators to implement the technique in a variety of educational settings, from low-resource classrooms to high-tech digital labs.

Tier 1 is designed (Godwin-Jones, 2018) for beginners or students with limited access to advanced technology. It utilizes ChatGPT to simulate real-world interview questions, allowing learners to generate and rehearse personalized responses. Students engage in oral practice by responding to these questions using Google Docs Voice Typing, which transcribes their spoken words into written text in real time. This visual feedback helps learners identify grammatical errors, vocabulary gaps, hesitation markers, and sentence structures. They are encouraged to highlight repetitions, underline incomplete ideas, and revise weak vocabulary using color-coded strategies. This step not only builds oral fluency but also raises awareness of their speaking patterns and areas for improvement. The simplicity of the tools and the self-directed structure make Tier 1 highly accessible and easy to replicate without the need for advanced software or instructor supervision.

Tier 2 is designed (Lee, 2020) for advanced users or institutions with better access to digital infrastructure. It introduces platforms like Yoodli AI, Google Interview Warmup, and Mockmate, which offer a comprehensive feedback ecosystem. These tools assess a wide range of speaking features (Warschauer & Healey, 1998) such as tone, fluency, use of filler words, and relevance of content. Yoodli provides visual reports on pace, hesitation count, and confidence metrics. Google Interview Warmup uses keyword analysis to evaluate if responses align with industry expectations. Mockmate simulates employer-style interviews, enabling students to experience pressure-free yet professional practice sessions. Learners are then required to document their experience in structured self-assessment logbooks, noting down AI-generated feedback, personal reflections, and future goals. They also use detailed rubrics to evaluate their performance on parameters such as grammar, vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation, and delivery.

The VIVAAI technique not only promotes consistent and reflective learning but also encourages learners to take ownership of their progress (Schunk, 2012). It reduces dependency on instructor time, promotes digital fluency, and transforms passive classroom activities into engaging, interactive experiences. The structured cycle of speaking, feedback, reflection, and tracking ensures long-term improvements and prepares learners for authentic workplace communication. Supporting materials such as logbook templates, rubrics, and demo videos can be accessed via a QR code for easy adoption by other educators.

DISCUSSION

The VIVAAI Framework has demonstrated significant impact in diverse English Language Teaching (ELT) contexts, particularly within polytechnic and TVET (Le & Nguyen, 2022) environments in Malaysia. By aligning mock interview preparation with the use of accessible AI tools, the framework has enabled students to improve their oral fluency, build confidence, and experience authentic professional communication scenarios. Its implementation in real classrooms has not only boosted student participation but also earned national recognition (Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020), including awards for educational innovation.

One of the most compelling strengths of the VIVAAI Framework is its adaptability. The two-tier system is intentionally designed to cater to the wide spectrum of student readiness and institutional capabilities. For example, institutions with limited digital infrastructure can confidently use Tier 1 to introduce AI-driven mock interview practice through simple, free tools like ChatGPT and Google Docs Voice Typing. In contrast, institutions with more resources and higher student digital literacy can implement Tier 2 for a more in-depth, data-driven coaching experience using Yoodli AI, Mockmate, and Google Interview Warmup. This dual structure ensures no learner is left behind, and every classroom—regardless of budget or bandwidth—can benefit from the framework.

Educators have reported multiple benefits from adopting the VIVAAI Framework. It significantly reduces their workload by shifting routine practice and feedback to automated AI platforms. Instead of monitoring every student individually, teachers can now focus on high-impact mentoring and targeted interventions. The use of rubrics and logbooks also allows for systematic tracking of student progress, supporting data-informed instruction (García-Peñalvo, 2021). Educators appreciate the clear structure and the ability to customize activities according to their classroom context.

For students, the benefits are multifold. They gain regular speaking practice in a low-pressure environment, helping them overcome fear and hesitation. The real-time visual transcription and AI-generated feedback make language learning more engaging, reflective, and purposeful. The rubric-based evaluations and logbooks foster ownership, as students are encouraged to set their own learning goals and monitor their progress over time. This framework nurtures not only communication skills but also autonomy, resilience, and self-awareness.

The framework has also proven effective in workshops, competitions, and peer learning sessions, where students presented their recorded mock interviews and reflected on their development

journeys. This further validates its scalability and potential for institutional integration.

Overall, the VIVAAI Framework stands out as a modern, meaningful solution to a longstanding challenge in ELT classrooms. It transforms interview preparation from a one-time, instructor-led task into an ongoing, learner-driven process. Its structured, tiered design ensures flexibility, while its reliance on free and widely available tools ensures inclusivity. As both students and educators benefit from its practical, real-world focus, VIVAAI represents not just an innovation—but a movement towards more equitable, empowered, and employability-focused English language education.

CONCLUSIONS

The VIVAAI Framework is not merely a pedagogical technique, but a transformative tool that redefines how speaking practice and interview preparation can be conducted in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms. Its structured, tiered design makes it highly practical and inclusive, offering both low-tech and high-tech pathways to develop students' oral fluency, confidence, and job readiness. By integrating artificial intelligence tools into the classroom environment, VIVAAI empowers learners to experience real-time feedback, engage in authentic practice, and take charge of their personal learning journey.

For students, the value of the framework lies in its ability to create a safe space for trial and error. Through repeated exposure to AI-simulated interviews, learners become more fluent, more aware of their weaknesses, and more confident in their strengths. The use of rubrics and self-assessment logs encourages deep reflection and helps students track tangible progress over time. As a result, students are not only better prepared for job interviews, but also develop communication skills that are critical for lifelong success (Luxton, 2016).

For educators, VIVAAI offers a sustainable solution to the common challenges of large classes, limited feedback time, and unequal access to coaching resources. It reduces reliance on one-on-one assessments and introduces a modern, data-informed approach to language teaching that aligns with 21st-century learning goals. Teachers can adapt the framework to suit their own curriculum and student needs, making it a highly flexible and customizable instructional strategy.

Ultimately, the VIVAAI Framework enhances classroom engagement, nurtures learner autonomy, and promotes equity in education by bridging technological gaps. Its proven effectiveness, adaptability, and relevance to employability make it an essential innovation in contemporary ELT practice. By embracing this framework, educators can equip students not just to pass interviews—but to excel in them, opening doors to brighter academic and professional futures.

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