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**Methods, Methodologies, and Technology in English Language Teaching: An Evolving Landscape**

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the dynamic evolution of English Language Teaching (ELT) by examining the intricate relationship between teaching methods, educational methodologies, and the increasing role of technology. Historically, ELT has progressed from traditional methods such as the Grammar-Translation and Audio-Lingual approaches—focused on rote memorization and repetition—to more modern, learner-centered approaches like Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). These contemporary methods are rooted in constructivist and sociocultural theories, which emphasize interaction, critical thinking, and contextual learning. Methodology, representing the theoretical framework that underpins instructional decisions, is shown to play a vital role in shaping how language is taught and learned. The paper investigates how advancements in technology—particularly multimedia tools, online learning platforms, and artificial intelligence (AI)—are reshaping the teaching and learning experience. These technologies support interactive, personalized, and flexible learning environments, promoting both synchronous and asynchronous instruction. AI-driven tools provide adaptive learning paths, immediate feedback, and performance analytics, enhancing learner autonomy and engagement. Despite these benefits, the integration of technology also presents challenges, including unequal access, limited digital literacy, and the risk of over-reliance on automated systems. By synthesizing pedagogical theory with technological innovation, this study offers a comprehensive perspective on the transformation and future potential of ELT in a digital age.

**Key words:** English Language Teaching (ELT), language teaching methods, language teaching methodology, educational technology, multimedia tools,

**Introduction:** English Language Teaching (ELT) has undergone significant transformations over the past few decades, driven by evolving educational theories, technological advancements, and the changing needs of learners. Central to this evolution is the distinction between method and methodology, concepts that are pivotal to the design and

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implementation of language instruction. A “method” refers to the structured set of procedures or techniques used to teach a language, whereas “methodology” refers to the underlying principles and theories that guide the choice and application of those methods. Furthermore, technology has become an integral part of the ELT landscape, influencing both teaching methods and the overall methodology of language acquisition. This paper explores the relationship between method, methodology, and technology in English Language Teaching, examining how technological innovations have reshaped language instruction, as well as how they interact with traditional and contemporary pedagogical frameworks.

**The Evolution of Methods in English Language Teaching:** Historically, English Language Teaching has been dominated by several key methods, each of which emerged in response to particular educational and societal needs. The Grammar-Translation Method, prevalent in the 19th century, focused on teaching grammar rules and vocabulary, emphasizing translation exercises and rote learning. While this method was highly structured, it largely ignored the development of oral skills and communicative competence, focusing instead on written proficiency (Richards & Rodgers 10). In the mid-20th century, the Direct Method and later the Audio-Lingual Method became dominant. These methods emphasized the acquisition of speaking and listening skills through immersion and repetition. The Direct Method, which avoided the use of the learner's native language, encouraged spontaneous conversation and the natural acquisition of grammar (Larsen-Freeman 34). Similarly, the Audio-Lingual Method relied on drills and pattern practice to reinforce grammatical structures and pronunciation.

By the 1970s and 1980s, communicative language teaching (CLT) emerged as a response to the shortcomings of previous methods. CLT prioritized real-life communication and fluency over accuracy, encouraging learners to use the language in meaningful contexts (Canale & Swain 20). Rather than focusing solely on grammatical correctness, CLT emphasized interaction, problem-solving, and the development of communicative competence. This shift was informed by a more holistic view of language learning, which recognized that language is a tool for communication and not merely a set of rules to be memorized. The introduction of task-based language teaching (TBLT) in the late 20th century further refined the communicative approach by focusing on the completion of meaningful tasks, such as planning a trip or solving a problem, as the central unit of learning (Ellis 10). This approach shifted the focus away from abstract language forms toward practical language use in real-world situations.

**Methodology: The Underlying Theories and Principles:** While methods represent practical teaching strategies, methodologies encompass the theoretical frameworks that inform these methods. Methodology is concerned with how language is learned, what constitutes language competence, and the most effective ways to facilitate learning. A key distinction in methodology is the approach to language acquisition: is it best understood as a natural process that should be supported by immersion and exposure, or as a cognitive process requiring explicit instruction and practice? Behaviorism, which dominated the 1950s

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and 1960s, heavily influenced methods like the Audio-Lingual Method. Behaviorist theory posited that language learning is a process of habit formation through repetition and reinforcement (Skinner 29). However, cognitive approaches that emerged later, such as the influential work of Noam Chomsky, argued that language learning is an innate capacity of the human mind, prompting a shift toward more interactionist and constructivist approaches in language teaching.

Constructivist approaches, informed by theorists like Vygotsky and Piaget, emphasize the role of the learner in constructing their own understanding through social interaction and engagement with authentic contexts (Vygotsky 42). In the context of ELT, this methodology encourages communicative and task-based approaches that integrate collaborative learning, critical thinking, and real-world problem-solving. Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is one example of a methodology rooted in constructivist principles, as it encourages learners to engage in practical language use through tasks that require critical thinking and problem-solving.

More recently, sociocultural theories have gained prominence in language teaching. These theories highlight the importance of social context and cultural interaction in language learning. According to sociocultural theorists, language acquisition is fundamentally tied to the social interactions in which learners participate (Lantolf & Thorne 25). This perspective supports methods like content-based instruction (CBI) and project-based learning (PBL), which seek to integrate language learning with broader cultural and academic content.

**The Role of Technology in English Language Teaching:** Technology has fundamentally transformed English Language Teaching (ELT), reshaping both classroom practices and pedagogical paradigms. It has introduced new dimensions of teaching and learning, offering tools that not only enhance instruction but also redefine the teacher's role, learner autonomy, and the structure of the learning environment. The integration of technology in ELT is not merely an addition to traditional methods; it is a paradigm shift that supports innovation, customization, and inclusion.

The role of technology in ELT can be broadly understood through three key dimensions: **multimedia tools**, **online platforms**, and **artificial intelligence (AI)**. These components, while distinct, often overlap to create a more immersive and flexible learning experience.

Multimedia tools—such as videos, animations, podcasts, digital storytelling apps, and interactive whiteboards—have enriched language instruction by enabling multimodal engagement. These tools provide diverse input formats that support the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in an integrated manner. For instance, the use of subtitled videos or authentic news reports can improve learners' listening comprehension and expose them to real-world language use and cultural contexts.

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Online platforms have redefined accessibility and scalability in education. Tools like Google Classroom, Moodle, and Microsoft Teams allow teachers to design and manage learning experiences that extend beyond the physical classroom. Synchronous technologies such as Zoom facilitate real-time interaction, while asynchronous tools enable self-paced learning, giving students more control over their language acquisition journey. Online platforms also support blended and flipped learning models, promoting continuous engagement through discussion forums, interactive assignments, and digital collaboration.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping the future of ELT by introducing intelligent tutoring systems, virtual assistants, automated assessment tools, and adaptive learning platforms. AI-powered apps like Duolingo, Grammarly, and ELSA Speak use natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning to provide personalized instruction, real-time feedback, and speech recognition capabilities. These technologies not only enhance efficiency but also cater to individual learner needs by analyzing usage patterns and tailoring content accordingly.

Moreover, technology supports **inclusive education**, offering accommodations for learners with diverse needs through speech-to-text tools, captioning, translation services, and mobile learning apps. It also fosters global learning communities, connecting learners and educators across cultures and geographies, thus enhancing intercultural competence.

However, it is essential to approach technological integration thoughtfully. The use of technology must be guided by sound pedagogical principles, ensuring that it complements, rather than replaces, human interaction and contextual sensitivity. Teachers must be equipped with digital literacy skills and ongoing professional development to effectively leverage technology in their instructional practice.

Technology in ELT is not just a tool but a transformative force that, when applied strategically, can create rich, engaging, and effective learning environments. It bridges gaps, expands opportunities, and continues to redefine what is possible in language education.

**Multimedia Tools and Interactive Learning:** Multimedia tools, including videos, audio recordings, and interactive software, have become central to modern ELT practices. These resources support the development of the four key language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—through dynamic, interactive content. For example, platforms such as YouTube and TED-Ed allow learners to engage with authentic materials that are often more engaging and relevant than traditional textbooks (Richardson 81). Additionally, interactive platforms like Quizlet and Kahoot facilitate vocabulary and grammar practice through games and quizzes, making learning more engaging and interactive.

Language learning apps like Duolingo and Babbel have revolutionized self-directed language learning by offering bite-sized lessons that incorporate gamification elements, allowing learners to practice English on the go. These apps use technology to provide

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immediate feedback, track learner progress, and adapt lessons to individual needs, making learning more personalized and flexible (Godwin-Jones 62).

**Online Platforms and Distance Learning:** Online platforms have revolutionized English Language Teaching by enabling remote and flexible learning. Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Moodle, Canvas, and Google Classroom provide structured environments for lesson delivery, assessment, and feedback. These platforms support a variety of content types—videos, quizzes, forums, and assignments—allowing for multimodal learning. Synchronous tools like Zoom and Microsoft Teams facilitate real-time instruction, interaction, and collaboration, replicating the classroom experience virtually. Asynchronous tools (recorded lectures, discussion boards) offer learners the flexibility to engage at their own pace. This accessibility is particularly valuable in contexts where traditional classroom learning is not feasible due to geographical, economic, or health-related barriers. The shift to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted both the potential and the limitations of these platforms, emphasizing the need for digital literacy among both teachers and learners.

**Artificial Intelligence and Adaptive Learning:** Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming ELT through systems that offer personalized, adaptive learning experiences. AI-driven platforms analyze learner behavior to adjust content, pacing, and feedback in real time. Applications like Grammarly and ELSA Speak provide automated language feedback on grammar, pronunciation, and writing style. Natural Language Processing (NLP) tools enable chatbots and virtual tutors that simulate conversation practice. Additionally, AI enables intelligent tutoring systems (ITS) that adapt to individual proficiency levels, learning styles, and goals, fostering learner autonomy. While promising, the integration of AI also presents ethical concerns, including data privacy and the potential depersonalization of the teacher-learner dynamic.

**Challenges and Considerations:** Despite technological advancements, integrating technology into ELT poses several challenges. **Digital divide** remains a major barrier, with unequal access to devices, internet, and technical support. **Teacher readiness** is another critical issue, as effective use of technology requires ongoing professional development. There is also the risk of **tech-centric instruction** overshadowing pedagogical principles, where tools are used for novelty rather than educational value. Furthermore, **cultural and linguistic biases** embedded in AI systems can limit inclusivity. Finally, excessive reliance on automated systems may diminish opportunities for human interaction, a key component of language acquisition. Addressing these challenges requires a balanced approach that integrates technology thoughtfully within robust pedagogical frameworks.

**Conclusion:** The landscape of English Language Teaching (ELT) has witnessed a profound transformation shaped by the interplay of evolving methods, theoretical methodologies, and advancing technologies. From the rigidity of grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods to the communicative, task-based, and content-integrated approaches of recent decades, the

focus has progressively shifted toward learner-centered and context-driven instruction. This evolution reflects a deeper understanding of language not just as a system of rules, but as a dynamic tool for communication, interaction, and cultural exchange.

Methodology—the theoretical underpinning of teaching practice—continues to guide the choice and application of teaching strategies. It ensures that technological integration is not merely trend-driven, but pedagogically sound. Technology, particularly with the rise of digital platforms and artificial intelligence, has expanded the possibilities of instruction, offering greater accessibility, personalization, and engagement. However, these advancements must be tempered with critical awareness of potential challenges such as digital inequity, depersonalization, and the erosion of human interaction.

Ultimately, the future of ELT lies in striking a balance between tradition and innovation. By harmonizing robust methodologies with thoughtful use of technology, educators can create inclusive, adaptable, and effective learning environments that meet the diverse needs of 21st-century learners.

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