

The Double-Edged Role of Artificial Intelligence in English Teaching: Teacher Preparedness, Pedagogical Shifts, and Professional Identity

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
Article history: Published: October 2026	This study critically examines the double-edged role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English language teaching, focusing on teacher preparedness, pedagogical shifts, and professional identity. Using a qualitative critical literature review, the study synthesizes peer-reviewed studies, conference proceedings, policy documents, and authoritative reports published between 2018 and 2025. The literature was analyzed thematically to identify major patterns, tensions, and gaps concerning AI integration in English language education. The findings revealed four interconnected themes: uneven teacher preparedness and digital literacy gaps; shifts from instructor-centered teaching toward facilitative and technology-mediated pedagogies; perceptions of AI as a threat to professional expertise; and opportunities for reconstructing teacher professional identity. Although AI enhances instructional efficiency, personalized learning, content generation, feedback, and opportunities for teachers to assume roles as facilitators, curators, evaluators, and mentors, inadequate training and institutional support can generate anxiety, resistance, and concerns about diminished professional authority. The study further demonstrates that AI integration is not solely a technological issue but a pedagogical and professional transformation shaped by teacher agency, institutional context, ethical considerations, and professional identity. The findings suggest that effective and sustainable AI integration requires targeted pre-service and in-service professional development, clear ethical and institutional frameworks, adaptive pedagogical practices, and assessment approaches that preserve human judgment and higher-order language skills. The study concludes that AI should be positioned as a complementary resource that strengthens, rather than replaces, the professional expertise and agency of English teachers.
Keywords: Artificial Intelligence English Language Teaching Teacher Preparedness AI Literacy Pedagogical Shifts Professional Identity Teacher Agency	

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought about significant transformations in contemporary education, particularly in the field of English language teaching. Over the past decade, AI-driven technologies have moved from experimental applications to mainstream educational tools, reshaping how language skills are taught, practiced, and assessed. In English education, AI is increasingly used to support personalized learning, automate routine instructional tasks, and provide immediate feedback, positioning it as a powerful force in both classroom and out-of-class learning environments (Williyan et al., 2025; Qi, 2025).

One of the defining features of AI integration in English education is the widespread use of language-focused digital tools. Automated grammar checkers, AI-powered writing assistants, and intelligent tutoring systems are now commonly employed to support learners' writing accuracy, vocabulary development, and syntactic awareness. These tools rely on natural language processing to analyze learner output and provide instant corrective feedback, a function that was traditionally dependent on teacher intervention (Williyan et al., 2025). As a result, AI technologies are often promoted as efficient supplements to classroom instruction, capable of enhancing learner autonomy and reducing teachers' corrective workload.

In addition to grammar and writing tools, conversational AI systems and chatbots have gained prominence in English language teaching. Educational chatbots are designed to simulate authentic dialogue, offering learners opportunities for language practice beyond classroom time. Studies suggest that such tools can enhance learner engagement and provide contextualized language exposure, particularly in speaking and listening activities (Education Sciences, 2025). The increasing accessibility of large language models, such as ChatGPT, has further expanded the scope of AI use, enabling both teachers and students to generate lesson ideas, draft texts, and explore language use in flexible and interactive ways.

Despite these pedagogical affordances, the rapid proliferation of AI and ICT has intensified expectations placed on English teachers to integrate these technologies into their professional practice. Educational institutions and policy frameworks increasingly emphasize digital innovation, often framing AI adoption as a marker of effective and modern teaching. However, this expectation frequently outpaces the availability of structured training and institutional support, leaving many teachers to navigate AI integration independently (Qi, 2025; Springer, 2024). Consequently, the pressure to adopt AI is not merely technical but professional, shaping how teachers perceive their competence and relevance in digitally mediated classrooms.

Teacher preparedness emerges as a central issue within this context. Although many English teachers express positive attitudes toward AI, research consistently highlights gaps in AI-specific digital literacy and pedagogical knowledge. Familiarity with general ICT does not necessarily translate into confidence or competence in using AI tools critically and ethically for language instruction (Springer, 2024). Without adequate professional development, teachers risk employing AI superficially, limiting its pedagogical value and reinforcing uncertainty about its role in effective English teaching.

The integration of AI also contributes to a broader pedagogical shift in English education, particularly in relation to teacher roles. Traditional models that position teachers as primary sources of linguistic knowledge are increasingly giving way to facilitative roles, where teachers curate learning experiences, guide critical engagement with AI outputs, and support higher-order language skills. While this shift aligns with learner-centered pedagogies, it also raises concerns about the erosion of professional expertise, especially when AI systems produce language outputs comparable to those of human experts (Aco et al., 2025).

Moreover, emerging literature points to the impact of AI on teachers' professional identity. Engagement with AI technologies can simultaneously empower teachers by expanding instructional possibilities and unsettle them by challenging established notions of authority, authorship, and expertise. Studies involving pre-service and in-service English teachers reveal ongoing negotiations of identity, as educators attempt to reconcile their professional values with the growing presence of intelligent systems in language education (Degruyter Brill, 2025). These tensions underscore the characterization of AI as a double-edged phenomenon—one that offers pedagogical promise while introducing professional and ethical complexities.

Against this backdrop, a critical examination of existing literature is necessary to understand how AI and ICT are reshaping English teaching. By synthesizing research on teacher preparedness, pedagogical shifts, and professional identity, this study seeks to illuminate both the opportunities and challenges associated with AI integration. Such an understanding is essential for informing teacher education, institutional policy, and sustainable practices that ensure AI enhances, rather than diminishes, the professional role of English teachers.

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite the rapid expansion of AI and ICT in English education, teacher readiness remains uneven and fragmented, creating a significant pedagogical and institutional challenge. While some English teachers demonstrate confidence and adaptability in integrating AI tools into lesson planning, assessment, and feedback, many others struggle due to limited exposure, inadequate technical knowledge, or uncertainty about pedagogical value. This disparity is often shaped by contextual factors such as access to infrastructure, prior digital experience, and institutional expectations, resulting in inconsistent classroom practices and unequal learning opportunities for students. Consequently, AI integration risks amplifying existing inequalities within English education rather than serving as a universally empowering innovation.

A central contributor to this uneven readiness is the lack of systematic, sustained AI-related professional development for English teachers. Much of the current engagement with AI occurs through informal, self-directed experimentation rather than structured training grounded in pedagogical theory and ethical considerations. Professional development initiatives, where they exist, frequently emphasize operational skills over critical understanding, leaving teachers ill-equipped to evaluate AI outputs, address bias, or align AI use with language learning objectives. This absence of coherent training frameworks not only limits meaningful pedagogical integration but also places an unfair burden on teachers to independently navigate rapidly evolving technologies, often without clear institutional guidance or policy support.

Compounding these challenges are deep-seated concerns about the erosion of pedagogical authority and professional expertise. As AI systems increasingly perform tasks traditionally associated with English teachers such as providing grammatical feedback, generating model texts, or simulating conversation teachers may perceive their professional role as being diminished or destabilized. This perceived displacement raises critical questions about authorship, assessment validity, and the value of human judgment in language education. Rather than merely a technical issue, this tension reflects a broader struggle over professional identity, where teachers must renegotiate their authority in classrooms mediated by intelligent systems. Without deliberate efforts to reposition teachers as critical designers, evaluators, and ethical mediators of AI use, the integration of AI risks undermining the very expertise it is intended to support.

1.3 Research Purpose

The primary purpose of this study was to critically examine and evaluate existing scholarly literature on the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English language teaching, with particular attention to its implications for English teachers. Rather than considering AI solely as a technological innovation, the study treated AI as a pedagogical and professional force that reshaped teachers' preparedness, instructional roles, and professional identity. Through a qualitative critical literature review, the research identified dominant trends, tensions, and gaps in existing scholarship, providing insights to inform more balanced and teacher-centered approaches to AI integration in English education.

Research Objectives

To achieve this purpose, the study addressed the following objectives:

- To examine the extent and nature of English teachers' preparedness for AI integration, as reflected in the literature, including levels of digital literacy, access to professional development, and institutional support.
- To analyze how the integration of AI contributed to shifts in pedagogical roles and practices in English language teaching, particularly the movement from traditional instructor-centered models toward facilitative and technology-mediated approaches.
- To explore how the use of AI influenced English teachers' professional identity, focusing on perceptions of authority, expertise, and professional value within AI-enhanced teaching environments.

1.4 Research Questions

Guided by the research purpose and objectives, this study addressed the following research questions:

How was English teachers' preparedness for integrating Artificial Intelligence represented in the literature?

This question examined teachers' levels of digital and AI-related literacy, access to professional development, institutional support, and perceived readiness to adopt AI in English language teaching. The findings revealed significant variability in preparedness, with many teachers demonstrating limited confidence and uneven engagement with AI tools.

What pedagogical role shifts in English language teaching were associated with the integration of AI, as reported in the literature? This question explored how AI use influenced instructional practices, teacher–student interactions, assessment methods, and the evolving role of teachers from content deliverers to facilitators and learning designers. The analysis indicated that AI prompted substantial shifts toward more student-centered and technology-mediated pedagogies, while also creating challenges in maintaining teacher agency and instructional oversight.

How did the integration of AI affect English teachers' professional identity, according to existing studies?

This question focused on issues of pedagogical authority, professional expertise, ethical responsibility, and teachers' perceptions of their role and value within AI-enhanced educational contexts. Findings highlighted a dual effect: AI both expanded teachers' instructional capabilities and introduced concerns regarding diminished professional authority and reliance on automated systems. Collectively, these research questions provided a structured framework for critically analyzing the literature on AI in English education, enabling the study to identify both pedagogical opportunities and professional challenges associated with AI integration. The results offered a nuanced understanding of how AI reshapes teacher readiness, instructional roles, and

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study was significant both theoretically and practically, as it provided a critical understanding of the implications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) integration in English language teaching. By analyzing existing literature, the research illuminated how AI functioned not merely as a technological tool but as a transformative force that shaped teachers' preparedness, pedagogical roles, and professional identity. The findings offered insights into both the opportunities and challenges associated with AI use, contributing to a more balanced and teacher-centered perspective on AI integration in English education.

From a theoretical standpoint, the study contributed to the scholarship on technology-enhanced language learning by highlighting the intersection of teacher cognition, pedagogical practices, and professional identity in AI-mediated contexts. It identified gaps and tensions in existing research, particularly regarding uneven teacher readiness, the need for systematic professional development, and the potential for AI to challenge traditional notions of teacher authority. These insights provide a foundation for developing more comprehensive frameworks that position teachers as active mediators of AI rather than passive users of technology.

Practically, the study offered valuable implications for teachers, teacher educators, and policymakers. It provided evidence that English teachers require targeted professional development and support to integrate AI effectively while preserving their pedagogical expertise. The research also informed the design of institutional policies and training programs by emphasizing the importance of balancing innovation with professional integrity. By identifying critical areas of challenge and opportunity, the study helped guide strategies for sustainable and equitable implementation of AI in English language classrooms.

2. Review of Related Literature

The preceding chapter established the context, purpose, objectives, and research questions of this study, highlighting the dual impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English language teaching (ELT). While AI promises to enhance teaching efficiency and personalized learning, it simultaneously challenges teacher readiness, instructional roles, and professional identity. This chapter critically reviews the current literature on AI integration in English education, focusing on three core themes: teacher preparedness, pedagogical shifts, and professional identity. The review also identifies gaps in the literature that informed the direction and scope of this study.

2.1 Teacher Preparedness for AI Integration

Teacher preparedness for AI integration is a recurring concern in current scholarship. Research indicates substantial variability in teachers' digital literacy, familiarity with AI tools, and institutional support, which directly impacts their readiness to integrate AI into English classrooms. Williyen, Ahmad, and Nurhadi (2025) emphasize that while some educators demonstrate strong technical proficiency and innovative practices, many lack confidence in using AI effectively, highlighting the uneven nature of preparedness. Qi (2025) similarly found that access to professional development is inconsistent, with many teachers relying on informal or self-directed learning to navigate AI technologies.

The literature critically notes that superficial engagement with AI tools without understanding their pedagogical potential risks limiting instructional effectiveness. Teachers may adopt AI primarily for operational tasks, such as grammar checking or content generation, rather than integrating it into meaningful language learning experiences (Springer, 2024). This gap points to the need for systematic professional development programs that extend beyond technical skill acquisition to encompass pedagogical reasoning, critical evaluation of AI outputs, and ethical decision-making. Without such comprehensive preparation, AI adoption remains uneven and may inadvertently exacerbate disparities in classroom practice (Williyen et al., 2025).

Moreover, research suggests that teacher preparedness is not solely a matter of technical competence. Professional confidence, pedagogical agency, and familiarity with AI-mediated learning environments are equally critical (Qi, 2025). Teachers who perceive themselves as unprepared often hesitate to experiment with AI tools, which can hinder innovation and limit students' access to personalized learning opportunities. Thus, preparedness encompasses both capability and confidence, reflecting a complex interaction of skills, beliefs, and institutional conditions.

2.2 Pedagogical Shifts in English Language

Teaching The literature reveals that AI integration has initiated substantial shifts in pedagogical roles and classroom practices. Traditional instructor-centered approaches, where the teacher functions primarily as a transmitter of knowledge, are increasingly complemented—or in some cases supplanted—by facilitative, technology-mediated pedagogies (Aco, Liu, & Sari, 2025). Teachers

are increasingly acting as orchestrators of learning, guiding students in using AI responsibly, curating AI-generated materials, and scaffolding higher-order language skills.

While these pedagogical shifts provide opportunities for enhanced engagement and differentiated instruction, they also introduce challenges. For example, teachers must balance reliance on AI with the need to maintain instructional oversight, ensure assessment validity, and prevent overreliance on automated feedback (Education Sciences, 2025). The literature critically observes that AI can amplify both teacher efficiency and the potential for classroom management issues, as students may depend on AI outputs without sufficient guidance. Voices from the Flip (2025) further suggest that while AI facilitates interactive and personalized learning, it requires teachers to continuously adjust pedagogical strategies, rethinking lesson design, assessment, and feedback mechanisms. Critically, the literature also emphasizes that pedagogical shifts are closely intertwined with teacher beliefs and professional identity. Teachers who embrace AI as a complementary tool often adopt more learner-centered approaches, whereas those who perceive AI as a threat may resist integrating it meaningfully. This underscores the importance of aligning pedagogical frameworks with teacher attitudes, ensuring that AI adoption enhances rather than undermines instructional quality (Aco et al., 2025).

2.3 Professional Identity of English Teachers

A third theme emerging from the literature concerns the impact of AI on teachers' professional identity. Degruyter Brill (2025) highlights that AI can simultaneously empower and unsettle educators. On one hand, AI expands instructional possibilities, enabling teachers to focus on higher-order language skills, personalized guidance, and critical thinking. On the other hand, it introduces anxiety regarding diminished professional authority, particularly when AI systems generate outputs that traditionally reflected teacher expertise.

The literature indicates that teachers must navigate a dual tension: leveraging AI to enhance pedagogy while preserving their authority and professional judgment (Degruyter Brill, 2025; Aco et al., 2025). Teachers' professional identity is influenced by the degree to which they can exercise agency, evaluate AI outputs critically, and mediate ethical and pedagogical implications. When professional agency is compromised, there is a risk that teachers perceive AI as replacing rather than augmenting their expertise, which may lead to disengagement or resistance to adoption (Qi, 2025).

Furthermore, professional identity is closely linked to institutional culture and support. Research shows that teachers in schools with coherent policies, targeted training, and ethical frameworks for AI use experience less identity tension and are more willing to experiment with AI-mediated practices (Springer, 2024; Williyen et al., 2025). This suggests that professional identity cannot be studied in isolation; it is co-constructed through the interaction of teachers, learners, AI tools, and the institutional context.

2.4 Professional Identity Theory

Professional Identity Theory is a framework used to understand how professionals such as teachers construct, perceive, and negotiate their sense of self in relation to their work, roles, responsibilities, and social context. In education, it specifically refers to how teachers define themselves as professionals, including their beliefs, values, competencies, and sense of authority in the classroom.

Here's a more detailed explanation:

- **Definition** Professional identity is the self-concept and social perception of one's role as a professional, shaped by personal beliefs, experiences, and societal expectations. It answers the question: "Who am I as a teacher?" (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). In teaching, this identity includes not only knowledge of the subject and pedagogy but also professional values, ethical responsibilities, and authority in guiding students' learning.
- **Core Features in Education** Dynamic and Evolving: Teacher identity is not fixed; it develops through experience, reflection, collaboration, and exposure to new technologies or policies.

Influenced by Context: Institutional culture, student interactions, societal expectations, and educational technologies all shape identity.

Linked to Pedagogy and Expertise: Teachers' confidence in their methods, knowledge, and classroom authority is a key part of professional identity.

- **Professional Identity and Digital Contexts:** With the introduction of AI and digital tools in education, professional identity becomes more complex. Teachers face both opportunities and threats:

Opportunities: AI can expand teachers' roles to facilitators of learning, evaluators of AI outputs, and designers of personalized instruction (Degruyter Brill, 2025).

Threats: AI can challenge traditional authority and expertise, especially when automated systems perform tasks like language correction or content generation, potentially making teachers feel "replaced" or undervalued (Qi, 2025; Springer, 2024).

Professional Identity Theory helps researchers and educators understand these tensions and guide strategies for identity reconstruction supporting teachers to maintain agency, pedagogical authority, and professional confidence while integrating new technologies.

Professional identity in teaching is generally understood as the self-concept that educators hold regarding their roles, expertise, values, and responsibilities within the educational context (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). It encompasses both personal beliefs and professional norms, shaping how teachers interpret their work, interact with students, and make pedagogical decisions. In English language teaching, professional identity is closely tied to authority over linguistic knowledge, the ability to design and deliver effective instruction, and the capacity to assess and guide student learning. Literature emphasizes that professional identity is not static; it is dynamic and socially constructed, continuously negotiated in response to new policies, technologies, and classroom demands (Degruyter Brill, 2025; Aco, Liu, & Sari, 2025). This theoretical lens allows researchers to examine how teachers' self-conceptions evolve, particularly in response to emerging educational technologies such as AI.

The integration of digital tools and AI presents both threats and opportunities for the reconstruction of teacher identity. AI can challenge traditional markers of authority and expertise, especially when automated systems provide outputs that historically relied on human judgment, such as language corrections or content generation (Qi, 2025; Springer, 2024). Teachers may experience anxiety, perceived marginalization, or diminished professional autonomy, particularly if institutional support or pedagogical guidance is lacking. Simultaneously, the literature highlights that AI also offers opportunities for identity reconstruction, enabling teachers to focus on facilitation, critical evaluation, and the ethical mediation of AI-generated content (Degruyter Brill, 2025). In

digital contexts, professional identity becomes an active negotiation, where teachers balance efficiency and innovation with the maintenance of pedagogical authority. Critically, this dynamic suggests that professional development must address not only technical skills but also reflective practices that help teachers reconceptualize their roles in AI-enhanced classrooms.

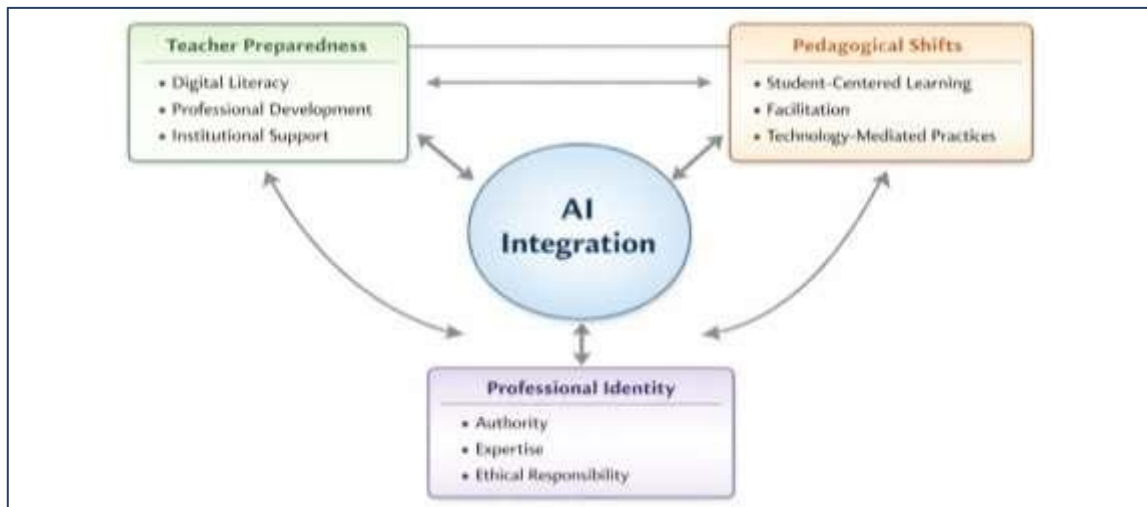
2.4 Gaps in Current Research

Despite the growing body of literature, several critical gaps remain. First, most studies focus on AI tools' technical affordances or their impact on student outcomes, with comparatively little attention to teachers' lived experiences and professional perspectives (Aco et al., 2025; Degruyter Brill, 2025). Second, there is limited longitudinal research examining the evolution of teacher identity in AI-integrated classrooms over time. Finally, while pedagogical shifts are frequently described, few studies provide actionable frameworks for integrating AI in ways that preserve teacher agency, ethical responsibility, and professional authority (Springer, 2024; Willian et al., 2025). Addressing these gaps is critical for designing professional development, institutional policies, and pedagogical frameworks that enhance the positive potential of AI while mitigating professional risks. Such research would enable English teachers to engage with AI as a complementary, ethically-informed tool rather than as a threat to their expertise.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter critically reviewed the literature on AI integration in English language teaching, focusing on teacher preparedness, pedagogical shifts, and professional identity. The review revealed both opportunities and challenges, demonstrating that AI is a double-edged phenomenon: it enhances instructional efficiency and personalization but simultaneously raises concerns about teacher readiness, authority, and identity. Gaps in the literature highlight the need for systematic professional development, ethical frameworks, and longitudinal research to ensure that AI adoption strengthens rather than undermines English teachers' professional expertise. The insights from this chapter provide a foundation for the subsequent discussion and analysis of how AI shapes contemporary English teaching practices.

2.6 Conceptual Framework



3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach, which is particularly suited for exploring complex phenomena such as teacher preparedness, pedagogical shifts, and professional identity in AI-enhanced English language teaching. Qualitative research allows for in-depth examination of experiences, perceptions, and professional practices, emphasizing context and meaning rather than numerical generalization (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In the context of this study, a qualitative approach enabled the researcher to critically synthesize multiple perspectives from diverse sources, capturing nuanced insights into how AI integration is reshaping English teachers' roles.

Complementing the qualitative approach, this study utilized a critical literature review methodology, which goes beyond summarizing previous studies to analyze, interpret, and evaluate the findings within a theoretical and contextual framework (Hart, 2018). Unlike a systematic review that may focus primarily on procedural rigor or quantitative aggregation, a critical literature review emphasizes conceptual depth, identifying trends, contradictions, gaps, and implications for theory and practice. This methodology was appropriate given the study's aim to examine AI not only as a technological tool but as a pedagogical and professional force affecting teachers.

3.2 Data Sources

The study drew on a wide range of secondary data sources to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Peer-reviewed journals formed the primary source, providing rigorously evaluated research on AI, English language teaching, and teacher professional development. These journals included publications in applied linguistics, educational technology, and teacher education.

In addition, conference proceedings were consulted to capture emerging trends and innovative practices in AI integration that may not yet be widely published. Conferences often report cutting-edge developments and pilot studies, offering insight into experimental pedagogical approaches and early evidence on teacher experiences.

Policy documents and reputable reports from organizations such as UNESCO and OECD were also included, as they contextualize AI integration within broader educational systems and professional standards. Such sources provide an authoritative lens on policy expectations, ethical considerations, and institutional frameworks for AI adoption in education. Together, these diverse sources allowed the study to combine empirical research, practical insights, and policy perspectives.

3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To maintain relevance and quality, clear inclusion and exclusion criteria guided the selection of literature. Publications were included if they were published between 2018 and 2025, ensuring that the review captured the most current developments in AI-enhanced English education. Studies prior to 2018 were excluded to avoid outdated technological perspectives, as AI capabilities and adoption have evolved rapidly. The review focused specifically on English and language education, including studies on EFL, ESL, and general language teaching contexts. Studies addressing teachers were prioritized over those focusing solely on learners, as the study's aim was to explore teacher preparedness, pedagogical roles, and professional identity. Research that discussed AI in education more broadly but without reference to teacher experiences was excluded. This ensured that the findings remained aligned with the research objectives and questions.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The literature search followed a structured database search strategy to identify relevant studies systematically. Key academic databases included Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, and Google Scholar, selected for their breadth of coverage in education, linguistics, and educational technology research.

Keywords were carefully selected to align with the study's focus and combined using Boolean operators to maximize search efficiency. Examples of search strings included: "Artificial Intelligence" AND "English teacher"; "AI integration" AND "language education"; "teacher professional identity" AND "digital tools"; and "AI AND pedagogy AND teacher preparedness". This approach ensured a comprehensive retrieval of studies relevant to AI in English teaching contexts, while Boolean operators helped refine results to minimize irrelevant sources.

After initial retrieval, titles and abstracts were screened against the inclusion criteria. Full-text review followed for studies meeting preliminary relevance, and data were organized using a reference management system (e.g., Zotero or Mendeley) to track sources, metadata, and coding notes systematically.

3.5 Data Analysis

The study employed thematic analysis, a widely used method in qualitative research for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns across data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Texts from selected literature were coded iteratively, allowing recurring themes to emerge related to teacher preparedness, pedagogical shifts, and professional identity.

The coding process involved open coding, where initial concepts were identified, followed by axial coding, which clustered related codes into categories and sub-themes. For example, sub-themes under teacher preparedness included digital literacy, access to professional development, and institutional support, while pedagogical shifts were categorized into student-centered approaches, facilitation, and technology-mediated practices. Professional identity codes captured authority, expertise, and ethical considerations. In addition to identifying themes, the analysis included critical comparison of perspectives across sources. Contradictory findings, context-specific observations, and methodological differences were evaluated, highlighting areas of consensus, tension, and gaps in the literature. This critical lens enabled the researcher to synthesize findings meaningfully, rather than merely summarizing previous studies.

3.6 Trustworthiness of the Review

The trustworthiness of this critical literature review was established through attention to credibility, dependability, and transparency. Credibility was ensured by selecting peer-reviewed and authoritative sources, systematically applying inclusion criteria, and documenting the search strategy. Triangulation of sources including journals, policy reports, and conference proceedings further enhanced credibility by cross-verifying findings from multiple perspectives.

Dependability was addressed by maintaining consistent coding procedures and iterative thematic analysis. The researcher regularly reviewed and revised themes to ensure they accurately represented the data. Detailed documentation of search strings, databases, and coding decisions supports the reproducibility of the review process.

Transparency was maintained by clearly describing the methodology, including search strategies, inclusion/exclusion criteria, and data analysis procedures.

4. Findings and Thematic Analysis

This chapter presents the findings from the critical literature review and organizes them according to the key themes that emerged from the analysis. The thematic analysis was guided by the study's research questions, which focused on teacher preparedness, pedagogical shifts, and professional identity in AI-enhanced English teaching. Drawing on peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, policy documents, and authoritative reports (UNESCO, OECD), four major themes were identified: teacher preparedness and digital literacy gaps, pedagogical shifts, AI as a threat to professional expertise, and reconstruction of professional identity. Each theme is discussed in detail, with critical interpretation of patterns, tensions, and implications.

4.1 Theme 1: Teacher Preparedness and Digital Literacy

Gaps: The literature consistently highlighted that teacher preparedness for AI integration remains uneven, reflecting disparities in digital literacy, access to training, and institutional support (Qi, 2025; Williyen, Ahmad, & Nurhadi, 2025). Many teachers lacked AI-specific professional development, with most training opportunities limited to generic digital skills rather than pedagogically oriented AI integration. As a result, self-directed learning became the dominant strategy, leading to fragmented and inconsistent understanding of AI tools, such as content generators, chatbots, or automated feedback systems.

The findings also revealed significant anxiety and resistance among teachers toward AI adoption. Educators expressed uncertainty regarding their ability to interpret AI outputs accurately and integrate them meaningfully into lessons (Springer, 2024). This unease often stemmed from fear of obsolescence or lack of confidence in navigating AI's technical complexities. Critically, this theme illustrates that preparedness is not solely technical but also psychological and pedagogical, requiring structured, context-sensitive support that addresses both competencies and professional confidence.

4.2 Theme 2: Pedagogical Shifts in English Teaching

The integration of AI was associated with notable pedagogical transformations. Teachers increasingly transitioned from traditional instructor-centered roles toward facilitative and orchestrative approaches, guiding students in navigating AI-generated content and fostering independent learning (Aco, Liu, & Sari, 2025). This shift redefined the teacher's function as an orchestrator of learning experiences rather than a sole transmitter of knowledge.

Despite the opportunities, literature emphasized tensions regarding AI as assistant versus replacement. While AI enhanced efficiency in content generation, grammar feedback, and lesson scaffolding, teachers expressed concern that overreliance could undermine their pedagogical input and creativity (Education Sciences, 2025). Pedagogical shifts also impacted lesson design and assessment, requiring educators to integrate AI outputs while maintaining learning objectives, fairness, and critical evaluation standards. The evidence suggests that AI does not replace teachers but reshapes pedagogical practice, demanding both adaptability and reflective planning.

4.3 Theme 3: AI as a Threat to Professional Expertise

A critical pattern identified was the perception of AI as a potential threat to professional expertise. Teachers reported fear of devaluation, especially when AI-generated content appeared comparable to, or even superior to, human-produced materials (Degruyter Brill, 2025). This perception affected confidence and willingness to integrate AI meaningfully, highlighting a psychological dimension of technological adoption.

Concerns also extended to content quality and ethical dilemmas. Teachers were wary of errors in AI outputs, plagiarism risks, and the broader implications of delegating pedagogical judgment to automated systems. Additionally, some educators felt that reliance on AI could lead to loss of authorship and creative authority, undermining the professional identity that is historically anchored in expertise, judgment, and knowledge mediation (Qi, 2025). These findings indicate that AI integration introduces both practical and existential challenges to teaching as a profession, reinforcing the importance of ethical frameworks, validation processes, and professional oversight.

4.4 Theme 4: Reconstructing Professional Identity

Despite challenges, the literature indicates that AI also creates opportunities for the reconstruction of teacher professional identity. Educators are increasingly positioned as curators, evaluators, and mentors, guiding students in the ethical and pedagogically sound use of AI tools (Degruyter Brill, 2025; Aco et al., 2025). Rather than diminishing teacher authority, AI integration allows for expanded roles that emphasize oversight, evaluation, and mentorship, highlighting professional expertise in new ways.

Negotiating authority in AI-supported classrooms emerged as a central concern. Teachers must balance the efficiency and assistance provided by AI with maintaining pedagogical judgment and ethical oversight, ensuring that learning outcomes and student development remain central. Literature suggests that professional identity in AI-enhanced contexts is dynamic and negotiated, where teachers reclaim authority through reflective practice, critical evaluation of AI outputs, and active guidance of students' interactions with technology. Critical Synthesis Across all themes, the findings reveal the dual nature of AI in English teaching: it is simultaneously a tool that empowers and a phenomenon that challenges professional norms. Teacher preparedness, pedagogical shifts, and professional identity are deeply interconnected. For example, gaps in digital literacy exacerbate anxiety over pedagogical transformation, which in turn affects perceptions of professional expertise. Conversely, structured support and reflective practice can mitigate fears, enabling teachers to harness AI as a pedagogical ally while maintaining authority and creativity.

Furthermore, the analysis underscores that context matters. Institutional policies, access to professional development, and the cultural understanding of teacher authority shape the way AI is adopted and experienced. International reports (UNESCO, 2021; OECD, 2022) indicate that schools with clear frameworks for AI integration and ethical guidance support teachers in maintaining agency and confidence. In contrast, in contexts with limited support, AI is often perceived as a threat, reinforcing resistance and uneven adoption. Another critical insight is the interdependence of technical, pedagogical, and professional dimensions. Preparedness alone is insufficient without reflective pedagogical strategies and a redefined professional identity. AI integration requires teachers to combine technical literacy, facilitative pedagogy, and ethical judgment, highlighting the complexity of teaching in AI-mediated classrooms. The literature also emphasizes the importance of identity reconstruction as an adaptive process. Teachers who embrace AI as a complementary tool often experience empowerment, taking on advisory, evaluative, and mentoring roles that extend traditional conceptions of expertise. This reframing aligns with Professional Identity Theory, which posits that teacher identity is dynamic, socially constructed, and responsive to technological, social, and institutional influences (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004).

Overall, the findings indicate that AI in English teaching is not a simple instrument for efficiency; it is a transformative agent that reshapes teacher practice and professional self-conception. The thematic analysis demonstrates that successful AI integration hinges on bridging gaps in preparedness, thoughtfully adapting pedagogy, and proactively reconstructing professional identity.

5. Discussion

This chapter interprets the findings presented in Chapter 4, situating them within broader theoretical and empirical contexts. It critically examines the dual impact of AI on English teaching, explores tensions identified in the literature, and discusses implications for pedagogy, professional identity, and institutional policy. The discussion integrates the four themes teacher preparedness, pedagogical shifts, AI as a threat, and professional identity reconstruction with established theoretical frameworks, including Professional Identity Theory and models of technology adoption in education.

5.1 Interpreting the Findings

The thematic analysis revealed that AI integration in English teaching simultaneously empowers and challenges teachers, aligning with Professional Identity Theory, which frames teacher identity as dynamic, socially constructed, and responsive to technological and institutional contexts (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). Teachers' preparedness, pedagogical practices, and perceptions of professional authority were deeply intertwined, confirming that technical competence alone is insufficient for meaningful AI

adoption. Digital literacy gaps and uneven access to AI-specific training, as highlighted in Chapter 4, reinforce the literature on teacher readiness, showing that professional confidence is as critical as operational skill (Qi, 2025; Willian, Ahmad, & Nurhadi, 2025). Contradictions in the literature emerged around teachers' experiences of empowerment versus marginalization. While some studies reported that AI enhanced teachers' ability to personalize instruction and facilitate student-centered learning (Aco, Liu, & Sari, 2025), others noted apprehension regarding professional devaluation, loss of authorship, and ethical dilemmas (Degruyter Brill, 2025). These tensions illustrate the double-edged nature of AI: it is simultaneously an instrument of innovation and a potential disruptor of established professional norms. This duality highlights the necessity of interpreting AI adoption not solely as a technological intervention but as a complex social and pedagogical phenomenon.

5.2 *AI as a Double-Edged Sword*

AI functions as a double-edged sword in English language teaching. On one hand, it empowers teachers by facilitating content generation, personalized feedback, and adaptive lesson design, thereby allowing educators to focus on higher-order pedagogical functions such as mentorship, critical evaluation, and ethical guidance (Education Sciences, 2025). Teachers acting as curators and facilitators exemplify the potential for professional growth in AI-mediated classrooms, reinforcing the dynamic conceptualization of professional identity proposed by Beijgaard et al. (2004).

On the other hand, AI can marginalize educators when reliance on automated outputs undermines teacher authority, reduces perceived expertise, or diminishes creative input. Chapter 4 highlighted concerns about content quality, ethical accountability, and professional erosion, echoing broader debates in the literature on automation in education (Springer, 2024; Degruyter Brill, 2025). Critically, this duality underscores that AI adoption cannot be treated as inherently positive or negative. Its impact depends on contextual factors such as teacher readiness, pedagogical design, institutional support, and reflective practice.

5.3 *Implications for English Teachers*

The findings suggest several practical implications for English teachers navigating AI integration. First, there is a clear need for AI-specific pedagogical frameworks that guide the integration of technology while preserving learning outcomes and ethical standards. Such frameworks should encompass operational proficiency, curriculum alignment, and reflective evaluation of AI outputs, moving beyond superficial tool usage. Second, AI necessitates repositioning teacher expertise. As teachers assume roles as curators, evaluators, and mentors, professional authority is redefined rather than diminished (Aco et al., 2025). Educators must develop competencies in critical assessment, ethical mediation, and adaptive instruction, emphasizing judgment and oversight in AI-enhanced classrooms. Importantly, professional development initiatives should focus not only on technical skills but also on identity negotiation, helping teachers integrate AI in ways that reinforce, rather than erode, their pedagogical authority.

5.4 *Policy and Institutional Implications*

The study also highlights policy and institutional considerations crucial for sustainable AI integration. Comprehensive professional development programs are necessary to ensure that teachers gain both technical proficiency and pedagogical confidence. Structured training that emphasizes reflective practice, ethical reasoning, and curriculum integration can mitigate resistance and anxiety, fostering equitable adoption across diverse educational contexts (Willian et al., 2025; Qi, 2025).

Additionally, institutions must establish ethical guidelines and AI literacy standards. These policies should address issues of authorship, content accuracy, data privacy, and bias mitigation, ensuring that AI enhances rather than compromises educational quality. International organizations such as UNESCO and OECD have stressed the importance of governance frameworks that balance technological innovation with professional autonomy and accountability (UNESCO, 2021; OECD, 2022). Implementing these measures enables teachers to operate as informed agents of change, effectively mediating AI use while maintaining professional identity and instructional authority.

Critical Synthesis Across these discussion points, a central insight emerges: AI integration in English teaching is context-dependent and socially mediated. Technical tools alone do not determine outcomes; teacher attitudes, institutional support, professional identity, and ethical frameworks are equally decisive. The findings from Chapter 4, interpreted in light of theoretical frameworks, suggest that successful AI adoption requires a holistic approach one that integrates digital literacy, pedagogical innovation, identity reconstruction, and institutional policy.

Furthermore, the discussion highlights a dynamic interplay of empowerment and risk. Teachers who are adequately prepared, supported, and reflective are positioned to leverage AI to enhance learning, whereas those without guidance may experience professional marginalization. This underscores the broader implication that AI in education should be conceptualized not as a replacement for teachers but as a catalyst for professional evolution, demanding proactive engagement, ethical vigilance, and pedagogical creativity.

6. **Implications and Recommendations**

This chapter discusses the broader implications of the study's findings for teacher education, curriculum design, assessment practices, and future research. Drawing on the thematic findings from Chapter 4 and the critical discussion in Chapter 5, this chapter situates these insights within practical and theoretical contexts. It highlights how AI integration in English teaching reshapes professional competencies, pedagogical strategies, and teacher identity, and offers recommendations to support sustainable, ethical, and effective use of AI in language education.

6.1 *Implications for Teacher Education*

The findings indicate an urgent need to reform teacher education programs to address the growing role of AI in English teaching. Both pre-service and in-service training must extend beyond basic digital literacy to include AI-specific pedagogical skills, encompassing content generation tools, adaptive learning platforms, and AI-assisted assessment systems (Qi, 2025; Springer, 2024). Pre-service programs should prepare future teachers to critically evaluate AI outputs, integrate AI meaningfully into lessons, and

maintain pedagogical authority, while in-service programs should provide structured opportunities for professional development that target gaps in experience, confidence, and technical proficiency (Williyan, Ahmad, & Nurhadi, 2025).

Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of reflective and critical AI pedagogy. Teachers must be encouraged to examine how AI mediates classroom interactions, influences learning outcomes, and impacts their professional identity. Embedding reflective practices into training programs helps teachers negotiate authority, exercise ethical judgment, and adapt teaching strategies to preserve professional agency (Degruyter Brill, 2025). This aligns with Professional Identity Theory, which underscores the dynamic, socially constructed nature of teacher identity in response to technological and institutional changes (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004).

6.2 Implications for Curriculum and Assessment

AI integration also has significant implications for curriculum design and assessment practices. Traditional teacher-centered curricula must be adapted to accommodate AI-enhanced learning environments, emphasizing higher-order language skills such as critical thinking, creative writing, problem-solving, and evaluation of AI-generated content (Aco, Liu, & Sari, 2025). Rather than relying on rote learning or lower-order skills, AI tools can be leveraged to scaffold complex language tasks and provide differentiated feedback, allowing teachers to focus on deeper cognitive engagement.

Assessment practices require redesign to ensure that AI does not compromise validity, reliability, or fairness. Teachers need strategies to assess student learning while accounting for AI-generated outputs, emphasizing skills that cannot be fully automated, such as argumentation, creativity, and ethical reasoning (Education Sciences, 2025). Incorporating AI-aware rubrics, project-based evaluations, and reflective portfolios can encourage student autonomy while preserving pedagogical integrity. These curriculum and assessment adaptations underscore that AI should augment rather than replace human teaching, supporting meaningful learning experiences without eroding teacher authority.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

While the critical literature review provided extensive insights into teacher preparedness, pedagogical shifts, and professional identity, several gaps remain. Future research should include empirical qualitative studies, such as interviews, classroom observations, and narrative inquiries, to capture teachers' lived experiences of AI integration. These studies can provide nuanced insights into identity negotiation, pedagogical decision-making, and professional challenges that cannot be fully understood through secondary literature alone (Qi, 2025).

Cross-cultural comparisons represent another important avenue. The integration of AI in English teaching may differ significantly across contexts due to variations in infrastructure, policy, cultural attitudes toward technology, and teacher autonomy. Comparative studies can illuminate systemic barriers and enablers, offering insights into how institutional, cultural, and socio-economic factors shape teacher experiences and AI adoption.

Finally, longitudinal studies are recommended to explore how teacher preparedness, pedagogical practices, and professional identity evolve over time with sustained AI use. Such research can identify patterns of adaptation, resistance, and identity reconstruction, providing evidence to guide teacher education programs, curriculum development, and policy frameworks. Longitudinal insights are particularly critical given the rapidly evolving nature of AI tools and their potential to reshape the landscape of English education continuously. Critical Synthesis Taken together, the implications and recommendations highlight the interconnectedness of teacher education, curriculum, and research in shaping effective AI integration. Pre-service and in-service teacher training must address technical, pedagogical, and identity-based competencies simultaneously, ensuring teachers can leverage AI tools while maintaining professional authority. Curricula and assessment systems must shift toward higher-order cognitive skills and reflective evaluation, complementing AI's capabilities rather than succumbing to automation. Finally, future research should adopt empirical, context-sensitive, and longitudinal approaches to deepen understanding of AI's impact on teaching, learning, and professional identity. Collectively, these measures provide a roadmap for sustainable, ethical, and teacher-centered AI adoption in English language education.

7. Limitations of the Study

Despite the comprehensive approach employed in this study, several limitations must be acknowledged to contextualize the findings and inform future research. First, the study relied entirely on existing literature rather than primary empirical data. While the critical literature review allowed for in-depth synthesis of multiple perspectives, it inherently limits the ability to capture real-time, lived experiences of teachers in AI-enhanced classrooms. Consequently, the findings reflect reported perceptions and documented trends rather than direct observations, interviews, or longitudinal insights, which may provide richer, more nuanced understanding of teacher preparedness, pedagogical shifts, and professional identity reconstruction.

A second limitation concerns the potential for publication bias. The literature reviewed was drawn primarily from peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, and authoritative reports, which often favor studies with positive or significant findings. This bias may have influenced the representation of AI integration in English teaching, potentially underreporting studies that highlight failures, resistance, or negative outcomes. Furthermore, emerging research on AI in education, particularly from less-resourced contexts or non-English publications, may have been excluded, limiting the global generalizability of the findings.

Finally, the study is constrained by the rapid evolution of AI tools and technologies. The field of AI in education is highly dynamic, with continuous updates to platforms, content generators, and adaptive learning systems. Findings based on literature from 2018 to 2025 may quickly become outdated as new tools emerge or existing tools acquire enhanced functionalities. As a result, recommendations regarding teacher training, pedagogical strategies, and ethical frameworks must be interpreted as contextually and temporally bounded, emphasizing the need for ongoing research and iterative adaptation of practices in response to technological change. In summary, while the study provides critical insights into AI integration and its implications for English teachers, these limitations highlight the importance of empirical validation, cross-cultural examination, and longitudinal monitoring in future studies. Acknowledging these constraints ensures that conclusions are tempered, context-aware, and situated within the broader, evolving landscape of AI in education.

8. Conclusion

This study critically examined the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English language teaching, with a particular focus on its implications for teacher preparedness, pedagogical practice, and professional identity. Through a qualitative critical literature review of peer-reviewed studies, policy reports, and authoritative documents, the research identified four major thematic insights: gaps in teacher preparedness and digital literacy, pedagogical shifts toward facilitation and orchestration, the perceived threat of AI to professional expertise, and opportunities for reconstructing professional identity in AI-supported classrooms. These themes collectively reveal the complex, multi-dimensional impact of AI on English education and the professional lives of teachers.

A central insight emerging from the analysis is that AI functions as a double-edged sword. On one hand, it offers significant benefits, including enhanced efficiency, personalized learning opportunities, and new pedagogical roles for teachers as curators, evaluators, and mentors. On the other hand, AI poses risks of professional marginalization, anxiety, and devaluation, particularly when teachers lack targeted training, institutional support, or opportunities to critically engage with AI tools (Degruyter Brill, 2025; Springer, 2024). The study underscores that these benefits and risks are not inherent to AI itself but are mediated by teacher preparedness, pedagogical strategies, ethical considerations, and institutional frameworks.

The findings also highlight that teacher professional identity is dynamic and socially constructed, evolving in response to technological and institutional pressures. AI integration necessitates reflective practice, critical evaluation of AI outputs, and ethical decision-making, all of which reshape traditional notions of authority and expertise (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). In contexts where teachers receive adequate support and structured professional development, AI can enhance professional agency, repositioning educators as facilitators of complex, higher-order learning rather than simply content deliverers. Conversely, insufficient preparation or guidance can exacerbate anxiety and perceived threats to professional competence.

From a pedagogical standpoint, AI integration requires thoughtful adaptation of lesson design, classroom management, and assessment practices. Teachers must balance the efficiency gains offered by AI with the need to foster critical thinking, creativity, and ethical awareness among students. Similarly, curriculum and assessment frameworks should emphasize higher-order language skills and reflective engagement with AI-generated content, ensuring that AI complements rather than replaces human pedagogical input (Aco, Liu, & Sari, 2025; Education Sciences, 2025).

The study also points to institutional and policy imperatives. Sustainable AI adoption in English education depends on comprehensive professional development programs, clear ethical guidelines, and AI literacy standards that empower teachers to make informed pedagogical decisions. International frameworks, such as those proposed by UNESCO (2021) and OECD (2022), provide guidance for integrating AI responsibly while preserving teacher autonomy and professional authority. The findings reinforce the idea that institutional support and governance are critical in mitigating the risks associated with AI adoption.

Critically, this research reaffirms that AI is not merely a technological innovation but a pedagogical and professional force. Its dual nature simultaneously enabling and challenging teachers necessitates a balanced, teacher-centered approach. Educators must be at the center of AI integration efforts, supported by robust training, reflective pedagogical frameworks, and ethical oversight, allowing them to harness AI's potential while safeguarding professional expertise.

In conclusion, this study offers several key takeaways for English education stakeholders. First, targeted pre-service and in-service teacher training is essential to address gaps in digital literacy and AI-specific competencies. Second, pedagogical practices must evolve to integrate AI thoughtfully, prioritizing higher-order skills and ethical evaluation. Third, professional identity must be acknowledged and supported, with AI viewed as a complementary tool that enhances, rather than diminishes, teacher authority. Finally, policy and institutional frameworks must ensure that AI adoption is guided by principles of fairness, accountability, and sustainability.

Overall, the study calls for a nuanced, reflective, and context-sensitive approach to AI in English teaching. By embracing AI as a transformative yet carefully mediated resource, educators, institutions, and policymakers can maximize its benefits while mitigating its risks, ensuring that AI strengthens rather than undermines professional practice and student learning.

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