Image-Generating AI In ELT Material Development: High School Teachers' Perceptions and Support Needs

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study investigates how public high school in-service English language teachers perceive the role, challenges and the usefulness of AI tools when integrating image generation AI tools into their lesson material development practices. The research was conducted through semi-structured interviews with four female ELT teachers at a public high school in Türkiye using a seven-question protocol. The research data underwent Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) which used inductive data-driven coding methods to analyze the information. Iterative coding and constant comparison were also performed using theory-based techniques for improvement. The research findings indicated that teachers employed image generation to develop customized educational content, which they used to create visual learning materials and multi-media educational activities for their students. The participants also stressed that teachers need to keep their teaching authority because it helps students maintain their creative abilities and AI systems must operate based on teacher instructions. In addition, the participating teachers described their standard "trust work" which includes three tasks to verify content diversity, age appropriateness and to detect between real and fake images. They also pointed to workload issues, time-to-learn problems and their restricted ability to write AI prompts, their limited resource access and their uncertainty about institutional professional development programs' efficiency. Therefore, they stress their needs for in-service training that focuses on practical applications and complete ethical and policy guidelines to help them use classroom technology properly.

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INTRODUCTION

English language teaching (ELT) experiences a transformation through artificial intelligence (AI) since

AI tools now assist teachers with their work such as planning instruction, creating educational materials, student assessment and feedback activities. Previous

research on the application of artificial intelligence in English Language Teaching (ELT) has shown how AI technology supports educational advancements such as personalization and efficiency; however, teachers face challenges in integrating these tools into classroom work due to a lack of preparedness or knowledge regarding responsible use (Crompton et al.,2024). Hence, much of the current ELT-focused discussion and research has generally concentrated on text-based generative AI (e.g., large language models), leaving other forms of generative AI less examined such as image generation AI tools (Özçelik, 2025).

One emerging and relatively under-researched area is image-generating artificial intelligence technology, which includes tools such as DALL·E, Midjourney, Gemini, and Canva AI (Ringvold et al., 2024). These systems are used through text prompts to produce visual content which teachers can use for pedagogical purposes to create individualized educational images, visuals for vocabulary learning, creating speaking and writing classroom activities, and introduce intercultural content (Attygalle et al., 2025). The practical value of image-generating AI lies in its usefulness for teachers creating educational materials, as it helps them generate new content when suitable resources are unavailable or when they need to adapt materials to specific student groups and curriculum requirements.

However, AI-generated images do not receive automatic educational value for educational purposes. The implementation of generated visuals in ELT materials creates additional educational requirements which also raise ethical concerns because teachers must assess how well images depict both language elements, cultural aspects, their suitability for different age groups and their potential to display discriminatory or misleading content. Research on AI applications in educational environments shows that teachers need to conduct thorough evaluations of educational tools to make proper decisions which need institutional backing for achieving successful results (Crompton et al., 2024). This technology eases the burden on teachers somewhat for specific tasks, such as visual search or creating original content, but it also highlights the urgent need for comprehensive content assessment and pedagogically informed decision-making. Despite the practical and ethical aspects of image-generating AI tools, they have not received enough empirical study about how in-service ELT teachers use these tools for material development, particularly in public school contexts. This topic is important to investigate because teachers' beliefs and classroom practices determine how technology adoption occurs, how it is adapted to specific contexts, and how it remains active over the years (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2024; Kohnke et al., 2025; Crompton et al., 2024; Song et al., 2025).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Generative AI in ELT: affordances and persistent concerns

Generative AI (GenAI) proves its usefulness for language learning and offers feedback, differentiation and helps teachers manage their work better in the field of ELT. The research shows that GenAI delivers its best results when teachers use suitable educational methods and monitor some main potential drawbacks which stem from reliability, biased outputs, privacy risks and academic dishonesty (Crompton et al.,2024; Kessler (2018).

The field of AI research in English language teaching has progressed past fundamental arguments because researchers now study GenAI operational mechanisms in educational environments and its usage patterns, implementation boundaries, teacher agency, classroom rules and environmental conditions that influence its deployment (Limiya & Kumar, 2025; Song et al.,2025).

Teacher readiness and AI-related competencies

Language education experts believed educational technology would establish permanent changes in language teaching methods which required teachers to develop adaptable teaching methods instead of learning particular tools (Kessler, 2018). Research indicates that teacher training for language education needs to focus on AI technology education through particular professional development programs which teach both educational value and correct technology usage techniques (Pokrivčáková, 2019).

Researchers who study AI literacy have developed competency models which explain the skills needed to work with artificial intelligence systems. The models function as proof which demonstrates that teachers need organized support instead of attempting new approaches by testing different methods by themselves (Long & Magerko, 2020; Crompton et al.,2024). The competency models which practitioners use to evaluate teacher GenAI readiness identify four essential skill areas which determine their ability to use GenAI responsibly which typically specify foundational, operational, critical, and ethical skills (Long & Magerko, 2020). The four elements of AI literacy which researchers have widely accepted include evaluating and creating with AI-based outputs, knowing and understanding, using and applying, and addressing ethical issues in AI use. This is beneficial in clarifying the specific skill set teachers need when integrating GenAI into learning tasks, rather than simply using it for convenience. (Ng et al., 2021).

What teachers do with GenAI

Research studies about teacher GenAI practice implementation show that teachers use these tools in different ways because they either use them for basic productivity tasks or they implement complete educational curriculum changes which depend on their risk assessment, school rules, available time and their teaching philosophy. A case study about GenAI technology adoption among teachers shows that teachers use the system while demonstrating how their human characteristics influence their technology usage between basic system functions and educational development (Song et al.,2025).

Research about language teacher education demonstrates that preservice teachers use GenAI to develop educational materials and lesson plans but they struggle with keeping their work genuine and stopping over-reliance on technology and maintaining correct content information. Such research data shows how in-service teachers develop educational resources which are either approved or questioned (Moorhouse & Kohnke (2024); Kohnke et al., 2025). In addition, teachers dedicate time to AI-enhanced tasks based on their students' attitudes regarding AI-mediated learning. Research studies conducted in AI-assisted English teaching environments demonstrate that student attitudes toward AI and their enjoyment of AI activities lead to better AI-related literacy and learning results which teachers can use as motivational tools. (Fan & Zhang, 2024).

Why image generation matters specifically for ELT materials

The educational community focuses most of its GenAI discussion about English language teaching on text-based applications yet image-generation tools introduce fresh educational problems because visual components in language materials affect students' comprehension of language material and their perception of cultural elements. Teachers can use AI-generated visuals to achieve four educational goals which include vocabulary and grammatical contextualization, speaking/writing prompt development, storytelling assistance and material adaptation for local content when commercial textbooks do not match the curriculum. These applications create various problems regarding exact information, biased content and appropriate material choice (Crompton et al.,2024; Pokrivčáková, 2019).

Research conducted in adjacent education fields reveals which elements make text-to-image operations unique from other processes. The image generation process requires multiple steps which start with a prompt followed by output production and then critique evaluation before creating a new prompt. The learning process in this field requires users to develop their prompt creation abilities and assess their generated content and understand what their system cannot achieve. Research on art/design education through studies shows text-to-image work follows a circular creative process while researchers emphasize that users require digital competencies and critical thinking abilities and ethical understanding to effectively use these tools (Ringvold et al.,2024).

Research conducted in Human–Computer Interaction (HCI) and learning development indicates text-to-image generation technology achieves its best results in memory and learning tasks through specific visual presentation methods which enable students to connect images to information. The research supports English language teachers who select visual materials

for vocabulary and communicative tasks, but it does not show how they select appropriate pedagogical visuals for classroom instruction (Attygalle et al., 2025).

Ethical and cultural risks

One of the reasons to study image-generation tools in ELT is because these tools can create and strengthen stereotypes which include cultural stereotypes and produce inappropriate default images that conflict with classroom diversity objectives. Text-to-image generation systems tend to demonstrate stereotypical depictions of different identity groups in their output which makes them inappropriate for educational content that includes cultural materials, human illustrations, professional and social identity representations (Jha et al., 2024). Research studies demonstrate methods to detect and measure text-to-image model biases which prove that bias exists as both quantifiable and prompt-dependent factors which impact teacher practice. The research demonstrates that teachers need to understand how small changes to prompts affect output results because these modifications can have pedagogical consequences (Chinchure et al., 2024).

In addition, ELT professionals should address three main ethical issues when using images in their teaching practice. The images used in ELT must show authentic cultural content without using stereotypes or exotic representations. The images used in educational settings must comply with local educational standards and student sensitivities. Teachers need to establish clear procedures for maintaining transparency and achieving accountability while dealing with copyright issues that may arise during their materials development work. The ELT-focused literature shows these problems as fundamental components which teachers need to handle correctly when they apply classroom solutions (Crompton et al., 2024; Ringvold et al., 2024).

Accordingly, this study investigates how in-service public high school ELT teachers perceive the role and usefulness of image-generating AI tools in lesson material development and what challenges and support needs they identify in relation to integration. Therefore, the research questions of the study have been generated as in the following:

RQ1: How do in-service ELT teachers perceive the role and usefulness of image generation AI tools in their lesson material development practices?

RQ2: What challenges and support needs do in-service ELT teachers identify when integrating image generation AI tools into their lesson material development practices?

METHOD

Research design

This study employed an interview-based qualitative design to examine how in-service public high school ELT teachers perceive the role and usefulness of image-generating AI in relation to lesson material development. The research design employed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) because this approach allows researchers to investigate participants' meaning-making in a given topic (Smith et al.,2022). The focus was not limited to teachers who already use image-generation regularly; rather, the phenomenon of interest was teachers' lived professional sense-making of use, trial, and anticipated use of image-generation tools for ELT materials, given that such tools are increasingly accessible through widely used platforms such as Canva, Gemini, Midjourney etc. and may enter teachers' workflows through experimentation or exposure to AI-generated materials online.

Context and participants

Participants were four in-service English teachers working in a Turkish high ranked public high school. The participants were selected through purposive sampling because they possessed knowledge about ELT material development and they either used or tested image-generation tools or they had experience with AI-generated content and teaching potential. In terms of exposure, participants' experience with image-generation AI varied (from very little use to more than one year), and their self-perceived AI competence ranged from low to moderate. The research design chooses participants who can experience the studied phenomenon instead of assuming universal adoption. The research design uses a suitable number of participants who work in a single professional setting at a high ranked public high school ELT because

this approach supports IPA's focus on individual cases before moving to comparative analysis (Smith et al., 2022).

All participants were female, and their ages ranged from 37 to 57 (37, 43, 45, and 57). Two participants held a Master's degree and two held a Bachelor's degree. The yeas of their teaching experience ranged from 15 to 33 years (15, 22, 22, and 33 years). All participants worked in a high ranked public Science High School (Grades 9–12), which means that the students in these schools are selected among the ones whose centralized high school entrance exam scores are much higher than those who are placed in other public or private Anatolian or Science High Schools.

Data collection instrument

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data through a seven-question protocol, which was prepared by the researcher. The research protocol required participants to answer these particular topics: reveal their work experience and their approach to developing educational content, show their understanding of image-generation tools and their current practice with these tools, assess the educational value and material development effectiveness of AI-generated content, assess how well AI-generated visuals represent linguistic and cultural content standards, share their opinions about how AI tools impact their work efficiency and their capacity to develop unique ideas, specify their primary challenges during using these tools and institutional oversight for their support needs such as training, resources and institutional guidance. The research method of semi-structured interviewing serves IPA studies because it generates detailed reflective responses which enable participants to develop their important examples and meanings (Smith et al.,2022).

In addition, the reason why ethics and bias and appropriateness questions in the interview protocol included is because visual content in ELT teaching presents itself as representations which affect how students understand different social groups and their roles in society (e.g. cultural representations and occupational and identity and social role depictions). Text-to-image systems can generate stereotypical and contextually inappropriate results which depend on the input prompts and environmental conditions (Chinchure et al., 2024; Jha et al., 2024). Teachers who use these tools for pedagogical purposes such as material development face these risks and they should select the created educational material which matches student ages, maintains cultural values and supports individual learning needs (Crompton et al., 2024; Ringvold et al., 2024).

Data collection procedure and the analysis of the data

English teachers at the selected school were sent invitations via email to participate in the research. Following recruitment, interviews were conducted individually through an online platform, and audio-recorded with participant consent. The interviews lasted around 15-minutes and were conducted in English with all participants. The manuscript will use COREQ reporting items to present all interview study results in a complete and transparent manner (Tong et al. 2007).

The researcher conducted IPA staged idiographic analysis through four stages beginning with complete review of all interview transcripts then documenting all descriptive statements, linguistic elements and conceptual ideas which appeared in the data. The third step was to develop inductive codes through analysis of statements which each study participant provided and then the last step was to study each case separately to identify patterns before the comparison of matching and non-matching elements which existed between different cases (Smith et al., 2022). The research also used iterative coding and constant comparison to develop code definitions and enhance the consistency of cross-case theme boundaries (the researcher checked participant expressions of codes and themes to make appropriate label adjustments). No a priori coding framework was imposed; themes were derived inductively from participants' accounts in relation to the research questions.

FINDINGS

In this section, the interview findings were reported from four in-service public high school ELT teachers (T1–T4). The research design requires presenting the results through separate participant within-case summaries which maintain their authentic meaning

Table 1: Participant profiles and central interpretative tensions (IPA overview)

Teacher	Orientation to image-generating AI for materials	Central tension (interpretative focus)	Support needs
T1	Sees AI as a personalization/visualization tool for "tailor-made" materials and uses it to make learning tangible and to design visuals appropriate for the classroom.	Trust and cultural fit: believes that a linguistic approach is more powerful than culturally sensitive representations, and emphasizes the need to explain and understand what is produced by artificial intelligence.	Requests clear ethics/policy guidance ("borders"), including privacy and classroom appropriateness. Emphasized that a classroom is not a "testing space."
T2	Values AI for task-based engagement like story/animation workflows and believes artificial intelligence is most valuable when it supports the learning process rather than relying on ready-made products.	Agency and creativity protection: worries AI can reduce student creativity if outputs are "ready" and insists teachers must remain "in control."	Wants hands-on, practice-based training rather than theory-based and notes access/paywall barriers. Also emphasizes verification, especially for cultural accuracy.
T3	Interested but pragmatic; its usefulness is assessed partly based on student response and its applicability within the school context.	Potential vs feasibility: heavy workload and time scarcity reduce experimentation; technical learning demands compete with assessment duties.	Calls for broader institutional/ government support and capacity-building and highlights need for time and enabling conditions.
T4	Sees usefulness as conditional; achieved limited success so far; only perceives the benefits if the management skills and time improve.	Competence and identity tension: feels "old-fashioned" relying on coursebooks but frames it as realistic under workload; stresses appropriateness filtering.	Wants practice-based training, but shows low trust in institutional PD ("paper-only" training) and emphasizes the importance of filtering sensitive topics such as political, religious and 18+ before presenting AI image output in class.

Note. Participants are anonymized as T1–T4. Statements summarize participants' accounts and are elaborated through verbatim extracts in the thematic findings that follow.

construction (IPA), followed by cross-case superordinate themes refined through iterative coding and constant comparison. Table 1 below briefly summarizes each participant's orientation toward image-generating AI, their core concerns, and the support they need for responsible use. The subsequent thematic analysis presents the general themes along with explanatory quotations and interpretive explanations.

Cross-case themes (Superordinate themes and subthemes)

Theme 1. Making language "concrete": image-generation as personalization and visualization work
Across cases, teachers found image-generation AI

tools useful because it helped them convert abstract language into tangible content which they could use to create materials that matched their individual classroom requirements instead of using standard images. This theme captures teachers' meaning-making of AI as a resource for tailoring which helps them create individualized learning experiences that match their educational vision.

Subtheme 1.1. "Tailor-made" materials for specific learners

"I know my students… so it's not tailor made… AI… is absolutely good for tailor made materials… what is in my mind… in my imagination." (T1)

Subtheme 1.2. Engagement through multimodal task design (stories, scripts, speaking)

"When we read a story… we animate the characters… The students… write the scripts… and for vocabulary development it is essential." (T2)

Subtheme 1.3. Conditional usefulness when prompt competence is missing

"You can adapt… the visual… and create exactly the related material… Maybe if I know how to write the correct prompt… then I would have say more… but I am not at that point yet." (T4)

Theme 2. "Be the boss": safeguarding teacher agency and learner creativity

One of the central themes is that teachers want to keep their power to control AI deployment throughout all stages of the process to maintain their pedagogical decision making. It is stated that AI systems are not autonomous classroom authority but they need teacher oversight. It is also important for them to keep the student ownership during this process.

Subtheme 2.1. AI threatens creativity when it becomes "ready-made"

"AI sometimes can… kill the creativity of the students because it prepares everything for them… and they find everything ready." (T2)

Subtheme 2.2. Control as a professional requirement ("teacher-as-boss")

"You have to be the boss of the app or of the material that you… try to develop." (T2)

Subtheme 2.3. Co-production with image generation AI, but resisting "ordinary" agreement

"AI offers something different… we also produce together… I say… 'Please criticize me and offer me something different… I want to go out of my comfort zone.' but it always gives positive feedback." (T1)

Theme 3. Trust work: suitability, cultural accuracy, and appropriateness as screening routines

It is mentioned repeatedly that teachers must use control methods for every AI-generated image because they need to check both the appropriate content and accurate results when working with sensitive cultural materials. They were aware of their responsibility to review all AI-generated visual content before implementing it in educational settings and stated that they should not assume that AI is unbiased.

Subtheme 3.1. Cultural content is more precarious than linguistic content

"It is very good at… linguistic content but not very good at cultural content… it's not very accustomed to our cultural values." (T1)

Subtheme 3.2. Verification as an ongoing responsibility

"I need to check everything. I cannot completely trust AI and its products… especially… cultural ones." (T2)

Subtheme 3.3. Appropriateness as explicit filtering of sensitive topics

"The political, the religious… the issues that 18 plus… some bad habits, smoking etc." (T4)

Subtheme 3.4. Anxiety about indistinguishability and disclosure

"I can discriminate… AI created images and the real ones… But if… I cannot… discriminate… it scares me… real ones and AI generated ones should be discriminated… we should know it." (T1)

Theme 4. Readiness under constraint: time, access, competence, and the demand for practice-based support

Teachers' readiness follows a consistent pattern because their teaching abilities depend on factors such as their work schedules, available time, and learning environments, which in turn depend on the quality of their training and their access to educational resources. Teachers believe they need direct assistance for the effective integration of AI materials, as policy discussions alone will not be enough.

Subtheme 4.1. Workload makes "ready-to-use" materials rational

"I have 26 hours in a week, so I don't have enough time. I just use the course books." (T4)

Subtheme 4.2. Technical difficulty and time-to-learn as barriers

"Using them is my challenge… to learn them takes a lot of time for me… time is the most challenging." (T3)
"Evaluating… examinations… takes a lot of time… creating materials… needs a lot of time." (T3)

Subtheme 4.3. Support needs: practice-based training and policy/ethics guidance

"I would like to have… a booklet… a framework for ethics… I would like to know what are my… borders… the classroom is not a place of testing." (T1)
"The practice-based training would help." (T4)
"We manage to use it just formal information and it doesn't work… in government schools the things are only on the paper." (T4)

Subtheme 4.4. Identity work: shame, "old-fashioned," and desire to improve

"I feel that I don't have any ability for using image generation AI or AI in general… I am an old-fashioned teacher… I really feel ashamed… I will do my best and I will improve myself." (T4)

The thematic structure receives summary presentation through Table 2 which shows superordinate themes with corresponding indicative extracts for each theme.

DISCUSSION

This research examined how prospective English teachers working in public high schools use AI-powered image generation tools to create educational materials, the obstacles they encounter, and the assistance they need. The four accounts show that image generation served mainly to help teachers personalize their work through visualization which supported their creation of class-specific materials and their implementation of multimodal learning activities. Teachers indicated that they needed to maintain control over teaching methods because they wanted AI systems to function under their direction while students should continue their creative activities. The third essential pattern required professionals to perform screening and verification procedures which validated both the appropriate content and accurate representation of all visual materials especially those containing culturally

Table 2: Superordinate themes and indicative extracts (T1-T4)

Superordinate theme	What it captures (brief)	Indicative evidence (short excerpt)	Teachers	RQ link
Theme 1: Personalization & visualization	Image generation as a way to create class-specific visuals/materials and make language content concrete	"AI… is absolutely good for tailor made materials… what is in my mind…" (T1)	T1 (echoed across cases)	RQ1
Theme 2: Teacher control & learner agency	Responsible use requires teacher direction; students should remain creative producers rather than receiving "ready" products	"You have to be the boss…" (T2)	T2 (supported by others)	RQ1
Theme 3: Verification, cultural fit & appropriateness	Screening AI visuals for accuracy, cultural representation, and age-appropriateness before classroom use	"I need to check everything… especially… cultural ones." (T2)	T2 (supported by T1/T4)	RQ1
Theme 4: Constraints & support needs	Workload/time-to-learn, prompting competence, access issues; need for practice-based training and ethics/policy guidance	"I have 26 hours in a week… I just use the course books." (T4)	T4 (supported by T3)	RQ2

sensitive information. The readiness of teachers depended on their workload and their learning time and their ability to prompt students and their access to resources and their distrust of institutional training programs which resulted in demands for practice-based education and ethics and policy guidance.

Research in language-teaching technology shows that educational value emerges from teacher decisions about instruction rather than from using specific tools (Kessler, 2018). The research study defined usefulness through particular classroom applications which teachers used to establish value connections with their teaching approaches. Teachers in this study defined value through their ability to match educational content with their students' knowledge base and through their development of activities which enable students to use language during scripted activities, storytelling and speaking tasks.

The teachers' emphasis on keeping the control shows a teaching readiness element which exceeds what can be tested through tool proficiency evaluation. The participants defined responsible use through teacher-established limits which determined AI output entry points in classrooms. The ELT technology research confirms this result because it demonstrates teachers must direct technology implementation through their educational experience and language teachers require training to effectively use AI tools and to determine which tools work best for their educational settings (Kessler, 2018; Pokrivčáková, 2019). The focus on student creativity and ownership indicates teachers see AI tools as having two possible effects on education because they enable new design possibilities yet they might reduce essential learning activities when students rely on them for easy solutions.

The study also clarifies why ethics and "accuracy" become central in teachers' meaning-making of image-generation tools. Teachers treated verification and screening as essential duties which they performed for all educational materials including culturally sensitive content and materials suitable for different age groups. Teachers needed to determine if the professional work was appropriate and accurate through their own evaluation process instead of using the tool's pre-installed assessment functions. The research design supports ELT discussions about teaching students to evaluate information critically through their learning process of bias recognition and context-dependent decision making when using AI tools (Crompton et al.,2024). The daily classroom activities of teachers become the actual space where they experience their professional concerns according to their reported experiences. Teachers must determine which content to display while they need to protect cultural values from potential misinterpretation and they must select appropriate material for their students. The research results establish responsible image-generation practices as an assessment method which depends on organizational settings and professional duties instead of personal views about technology.

The research shows that ELT material development through image-generating AI systems needs teachers to select educational content but they encounter multiple challenges during this process. Teachers described a need for an adoption model which requires them to keep their teaching authority while creating activities that let students maintain control of their work and establishing effective methods to check if students are suitable for the program and represent diverse backgrounds. The research investigates teacher perceptions about image-generation AI in ELT materials through a setting-specific analysis which shows that teachers value the educational potential of this tool based on their assessment methods for visual materials in their public-school teaching (Kessler, 2018; Pokrivčáková, 2019; Crompton et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study explores how in-service public high school English teachers perceive the role and usefulness of AI-powered image generation tools to design ELT materials. The findings revealed that the participants understood how the technology could be utilized to generate ELT materials which were both knowledge and media catered to individual learning needs and therefore helped students to learn and make use of English in a more multi-modal manner. The participants appreciated the functionalities of the technology, while maintaining their own instructional control and their students' learning autonomy in their classroom. They also emphasized the importance of checking the

cultural representation of AI-generated images and their appropriate legal content for students. However, structural barriers appeared to hinder the effective integration and use of AI-generated materials in English language teaching for the teachers; these barriers included workload, the time required for students and teachers to develop their input material production skills, and limited institutional support. By emphasizing teachers' interpretative perspectives, this study enhances emerging research on generative AI in English Language Teaching (ELT) by shifting focus from text generation to the pedagogical assessment of AI-generated visual materials. In general, the results show that using image-generating AI in ELT in a responsible way depends not only on the technology being available, but also on the teacher's knowledge, awareness of the context, and support from professional and institutional structures.

IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several implications can be drawn for classroom practice, teacher education, and institutional policy in relation to the responsible use of AI-generated images in ELT materials.

Implications for classroom practice

Teachers may benefit from a basic screening process which they can use multiple times to evaluate AI-generated images through four evaluation points. The screening process should evaluate how well the image supports lesson goals and tasks, its language and conceptual content, its depiction of different cultures and its possible stereotypical elements and its suitability for the students' age group and learning environment. The established routines enable critical use of technology through teacher-friendly operations which do not need them to learn technical skills and they should match the decision-making processes which teachers from this study described through their informal practices.

Implications for teacher education and professional development

The participants stressed the need for practice-based learning which indicates that PD programs should

shift their focus from showing tools to teaching participants three essential skills. These skills for PD programs should include teaching participants to use prompting as a pedagogical specification for requesting images that support learning aims to evaluate image suitability, cultural representation and to design tasks which maintain student autonomy. The direction follows teacher education requirements which need language teachers to receive training about AI technology implementation through suitable educational methods (Pokrivčáková, 2019).

Implications for institutions and policy

The teachers asked for "borders" and particular guidelines because they required policy-based definitions which would demonstrate their proper usage of AI-generated classroom visuals (they needed to know which information to display, which content to select and how to manage inappropriate results). The guidance system may enable schools to reduce their uncertainty because it creates uniform procedures which all educational facilities need to implement. The public school environment needs this approach because teachers working in these settings should adhere to established rules and accountability structures within the public school environment (Crompton et al.,2024). Similarly, Kurshumova (2024) also emphasized the importance of structured training and institutional support for teachers to adopt AI technologies.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The research draws its data from four in-service teachers who work in a specific context to generate results which maintain their connection to that particular context. Findings rely on interview accounts rather than direct observation of classroom implementation or artifact analysis of the AI-generated materials. Future studies could combine teacher interview data with three different sets of information which include the collected prompts and automatically generated images, AI visual-based lesson plans and classroom activities and student feedback about their involvement and content suitability to achieve triangulation. In addition, research should study how educational organizations

use their policies together with their professional development programs to develop teacher expertise with generative AI tools including image-generation tools from their early teaching days until retirement (Kessler, 2018; Pokrivčáková, 2019).

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