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SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH OF TODAY: ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES, AND PERSPECTIVES

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THE EVOLUTION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER IN THE EDTECH ERA

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The current stage of higher education development unfolds under conditions of total digitalization and a fundamental shift in students' cognitive profiles. Representatives of the digital generation (iGen and Gen Z) possess specific patterns of information perception, dominated by fragmented thinking, rapid attention switching, and a low tolerance for monotonous theoretical content. In the context of foreign language learning, this creates a clear demand for immediate practical utility (Immediate Utility). The traditional formula of learning aimed at a distant future no longer motivates students, as language is perceived not as an abstract system of grammatical rules for academic memorization, but as an immediate tool for solving specific life, communicative, and business tasks.

Changing cognitive demands require a radical transformation of the entire methodological system of foreign language teaching. Traditional approaches based on passive knowledge acquisition and repetitive exercises are giving way to flexible, functionally oriented strategies. Task-Based and Scenario-Based Learning have come to the fore, concentrating the educational process around simulations of real-world professional situations. Similarly, the principle of Microlearning provides information in concentrated modules with instant practical application. Special attention is drawn to the meaningful integration of generative AI technologies, transforming them from potential threats into personal practice tools for authentic speech development [2].

Given these transformations, the teacher's role and professional identity are undergoing fundamental changes. The instructor is no longer the sole source of knowledge or information broadcaster, but is evolving into a moderator and facilitator of the learning process. The primary task of a modern educator is to cultivate a psychologically safe digital environment, lower the affective filter, and overcome specific barriers such as the spotlight effect and screen fatigue (Zoom fatigue). Under these conditions, a teacher's professionalism is defined not merely by language proficiency, but by the capacity for continuous reconfiguration of methodological approaches in response to the challenges of the digital era.

The adaptation of a foreign language teacher to the new cognitive demands of the digital generation requires shifting from formal professional development to continuous immersion in the international methodological context (*Lifelong Learning*). A systematic analysis of modern professional growth vectors confirms that international certification programs, notably CELTA, DELTA [5, 6], and Trinity CertTESOL [8], serve as key instruments for resetting teaching practice. Completing these courses ensures a fundamental shift in classroom dynamics: transitioning from a

teacher-centered approach to a student-centered one (*Student-Centered Approach*), where Teacher Talking Time (*TTT*) is optimized, and the learning process is built around open-ended questions, critical thinking, and the simulation of authentic communicative situations [3].

An equally critical vector of growth is mastering *EdTech & AI in ELT* through specialized programs and internships hosted by international platforms such as NILE [7], FutureLearn [9], and the British Council [10]. Acquiring skills in generative artificial intelligence, interactive digital whiteboards, and scenario-based simulation tools allows the educator not only to automate routine lesson preparation but also to transform the interaction format itself, turning the lesson into a dynamic interactive space. Furthermore, deepening expertise in Business English and English for Specific Purposes (*ESP*) expands the teacher's methodological toolkit for working with demanding adult learners, teaching them to conduct rigorous Needs Analysis and design tailored courses for specific professional demands.

As a result of this multi-vector development, a comprehensive reconfiguration of the teacher's professional profile takes place. Mastering international methodologies and digital tools eliminates technological anxiety, transforming technology from a source of stress into an effective lever for boosting student motivation. The educator gains flexibility in facilitation, learns to manage students' psychological barriers (specifically lowering the affective filter and overcoming screen anxiety) [1], and evolves into a competitive, modern, and charismatic professional capable of delivering high-impact practical learning outcomes in the digital educational environment.

Thus, the modern professionalism of an English language teacher is determined not so much by the volume of accumulated academic knowledge or the level of language proficiency, but by the capacity for continuous self-development, adaptability, and effective facilitation of the learning process in a digital environment. Systematic participation in international internships, the mastery of EdTech tools, and the integration of artificial intelligence transform the educator from a traditional knowledge provider into a modern, charismatic professional who effectively leverages the challenges of the digital era into practical tools for achieving high educational outcomes.

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