

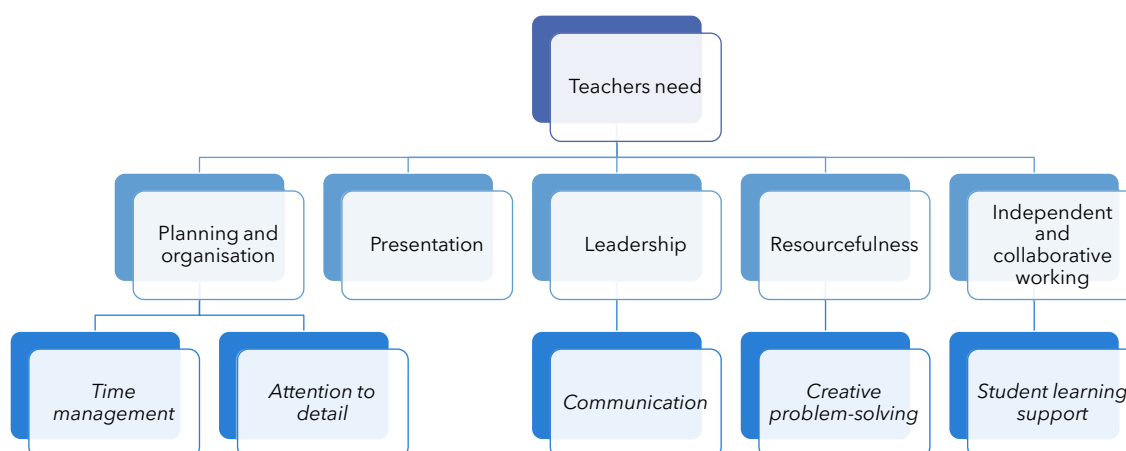
# Transferable skills for ELT teachers – thriving as a professional in changing times

Kirsten Waechter



1

## An English teacher's skill set




<https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/alternative-careers-for-teachers/>

2

Joseph Schumpeter's concept of **Creative Destruction**

*[krē-'ā-tiv. di-'strək-shən ]*

The dismantling of long-standing established practices to make way for improved, innovative methods.



Investopedia

Credit: Investopedia/Tara Anand

3

What skill set is required now?

Do you agree to this for ELT?

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

**Top 10 skills of 2025**

- Analytical thinking and innovation
- Active learning and learning strategies
- Complex problem-solving
- Critical thinking and analysis
- Creativity, originality and initiative

Type of skill

- Problem-solving
- Self-management
- Working with people
- Technology use and development

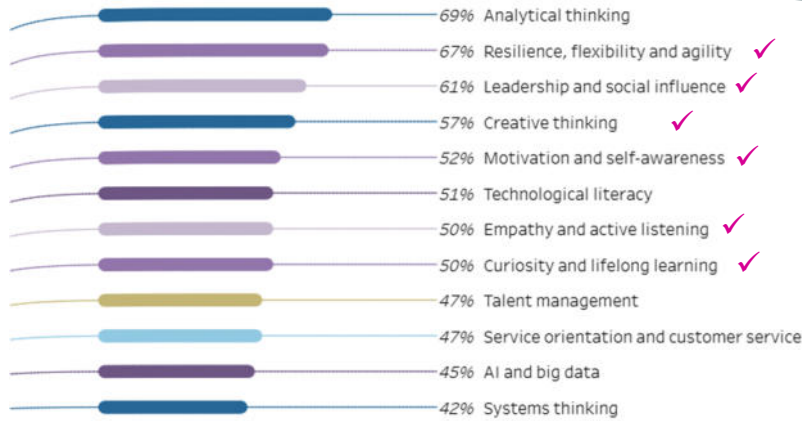
- Leadership and social influence
- Technology use, monitoring and control
- Technology design and programming
- Resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility
- Reasoning, problem-solving and ideation

prediction report from 2020, WEF

4

## Update on Skills in 2025

Your top 5 skills for ELT?



● Cognitive Skills
 ● Self Efficacy
 ● Working With Others
 ● Physical Abilities

WORLD  
ECONOMIC  
FORUM

● Management Skills
 ● Technology Skills
 ● Engagement Skills
 ● Ethics

Source: World Economic Forum, *Future of Jobs Report 2025*

Export View

5

Challenges  
we are  
dealing  
with now

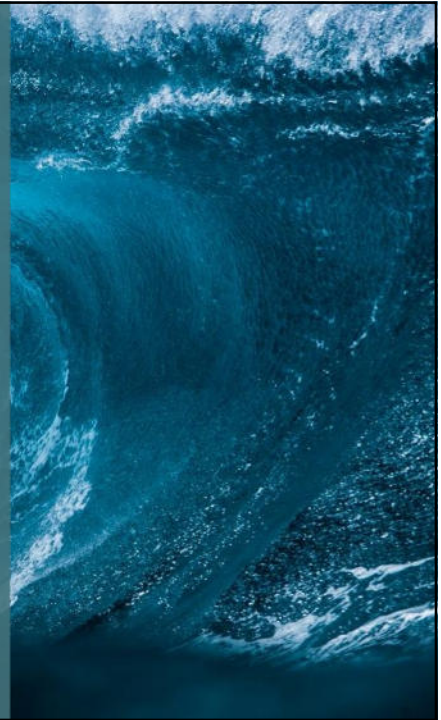
Large language models & generative AI  
 Personalisation & learner analytics  
 Hybrid/multi-modal/virtual classrooms  
 Changing business needs/globalisation/  
 remote work  
 Credentialing, CPD & lifelong learning  
 Market saturation/competition/platformisation

**When do we actually find time to teach?**

6

## What disruptions will we be facing?

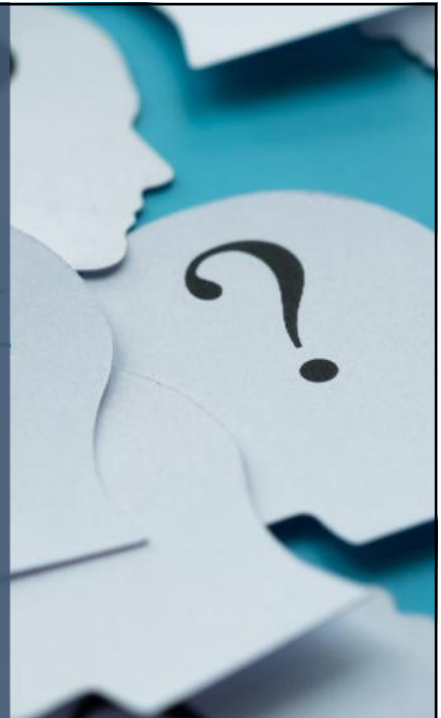
- 39% of workers' core skills to change expected by 2030
- Current uncertainty re long-term impact of GenAI
- Increased learning demands on employees to keep up pace
- Increased demand for agility, flexibility, and adaptability (e.g. BELF and multilingual classrooms)
- Better anticipate and manage future skill requirements
- Rapid growth of technological skills, but how do we learn and teach them?
- Increasing polarisation leading to more possible misunderstandings in communication



7

## Which direction are we heading?

- GROWth mindset: complex problem-solving strategies
- Resilience strategies: critical factor for success
- Our own learning skills: strong need for curiosity and lifelong learning
- Top skills on the rise:
  - leadership and social influence*
  - talent management*
  - analytical thinking*
  - environmental stewardship*



8



## Forecast of core skills & emerging skills:


9


### What we have already been doing


- Develop strong technological & AI literacy
- Focus on higher-order skills & soft skills
- Personalisation & needs analysis
- Diversify modes & delivery platforms
- CPD & credentialing
- Value-added roles: coaching, consulting, mentoring
- Build networks & collaboration

...even ChatGPT knows that

10

 Question 1: If we forecast, what is happening in our industry?

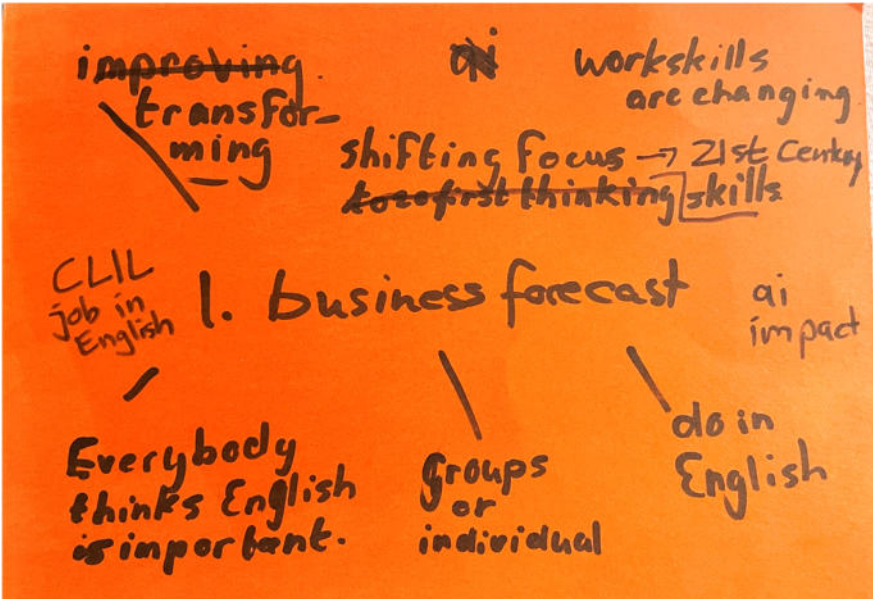
 Question 2: What do we bring to the table that helps us stay relevant and effective?

 Question 3: Which skills should be part of our long-term learning strategy?

## Group work: Future-proofing

11

## What is happening in our industry?



Handwritten notes on an orange background:

- improving transforming
- workskills are changing
- shifting focus → 21st Century
- to first thinking skills
- CLIL Job in English
- 1. business forecast
- ai impact
- Everybody thinks English is important.
- Groups or individual
- do in English

12

## What is happening in our industry?

**Overall trend:** *Transformation rather than decline.*

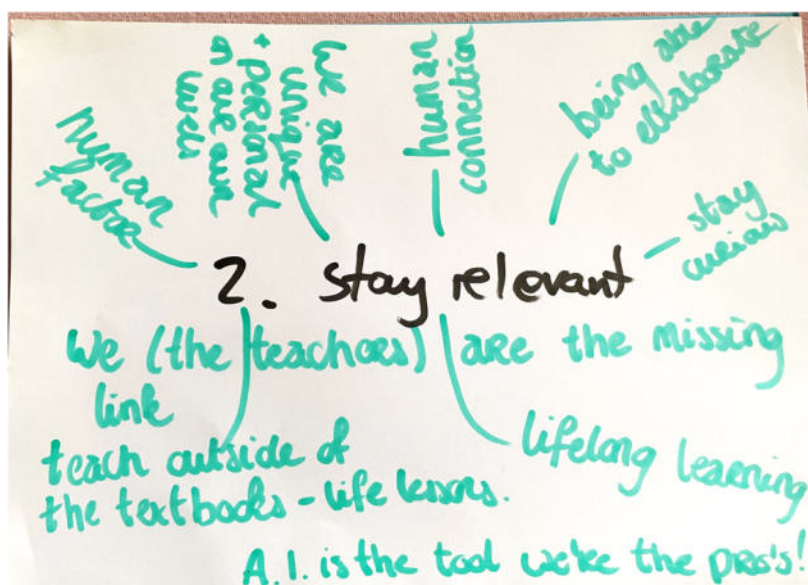
Global demand for English remains strong—especially in international business, tech, and academia.

However, **growth is shifting:** from traditional classroom teaching toward **corporate training, online coaching, and specialised communication skills** (e.g. cross-cultural communication, presentations, negotiations).

Teachers who **adapt to hybrid, personalised, and niche markets** will see opportunities grow; those relying on standard, grammar-focused courses may face contraction.

13

## What do we bring to the table that helps us stay relevant and effective?



14

## What makes us relevant?

**Human insight and empathy**—understanding learner motivation, emotion, and context.

**Intercultural and business communication expertise**, linking language to real-world performance.

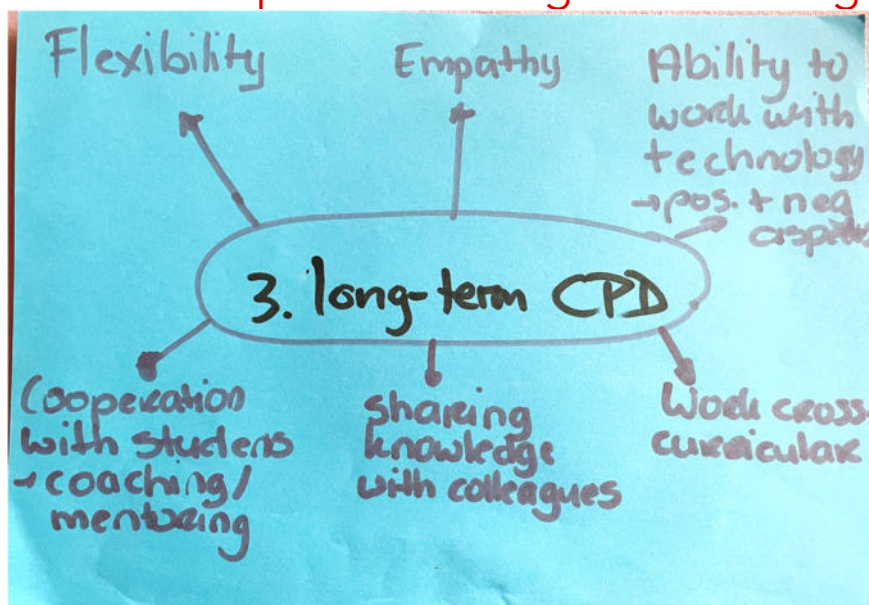
**Facilitation and coaching skills** that help learners apply English strategically in professional situations.

**Ethical judgment and adaptability**—curating reliable content, guiding responsible AI use.

**Personal connection and mentorship**, fostering learner confidence and accountability.

15

## Which skills should be part of our long-term learning strategy?



16

## My findings

**AI literacy and prompt design**—knowing how to use and teach with generative tools.

**Data-informed teaching**—interpreting learner analytics for personalized feedback.

**Instructional design**—creating engaging blended and microlearning experiences.

**Business and industry awareness**—staying aligned with emerging professional communication trends.

**Coaching and consulting skills**—positioning ourselves as strategic communication partners, not just language providers.

17

## How can we benefit from AI tools?

- GenAI useful to prepare long tasks like role plays
- Quality depends very much on input and prompting
- Not to be used solely, but as companion/tool
- AI is not the master
- Critical thinking is in danger
- Colleagues complain about poor quality of outcomes
- Useful as a resource for information
- Useful for improving writing

18

## Use of AI: Learn to master tools

### **Partial substitution, not full replacement.**

AI can automate routine tasks—grammar correction, vocabulary practice, feedback, simulations, even pronunciation modelling.

But it **cannot fully replace** human-led functions such as nuanced feedback, empathy, intercultural coaching, and real-time negotiation of meaning.

The teacher's role is shifting from **instructor to facilitator, coach, and consultant** who helps learners use technology effectively and apply language in authentic business contexts.

19

## We can benefit from tools that can do this:

**AI writing tools** (e.g. ChatGPT, Grammarly, DeepL Write) for generating models, prompts, and instant feedback.

**Speech and pronunciation tools** (e.g. Elsa, YouGlish, Natural Readers, voice recognition) for learner practice and assessment.

**Learning analytics platforms** to track progress and personalize instruction.

**Content creation skills**—using AI for slides, quizzes, simulations, and video micro-lessons.

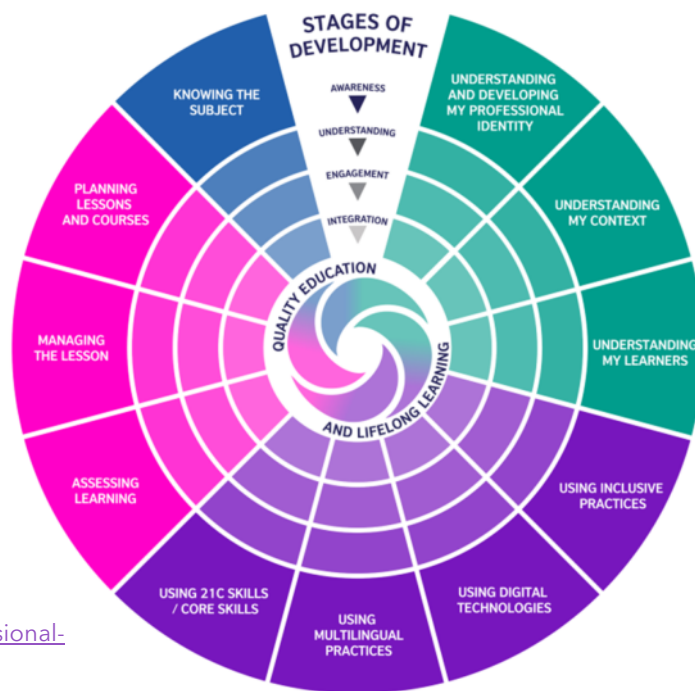
**Digital collaboration tools** (e.g. Miro, Zoom, Teams, Notion) to manage hybrid or global classrooms effectively.

20

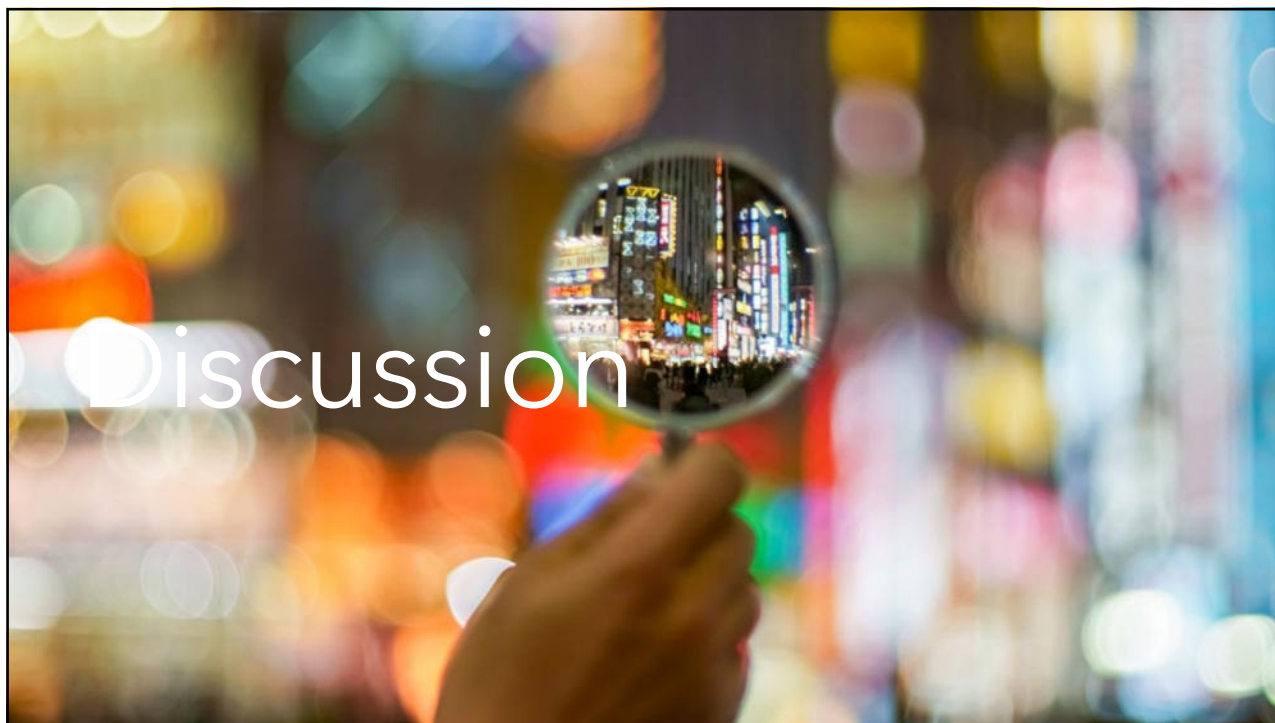
## And for English teachers?

The CPD Framework of the British Council

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers>



21



22

## Forecast 1

### **Generative AI & Large Language Models**

Tools like ChatGPT, Bard, etc., will become more powerful at generating texts, conversation simulations, giving feedback, doing grammar correction, etc. This could reduce demand for certain traditional teacher tasks or force a shift in what human teachers are expected to do more of.

### **Personalisation & Learner Analytics**

Learning platforms and EdTech will collect much more data about learners: their progress, strengths/weaknesses, learning styles, so they will expect more personalized content & feedback. Students will increasingly expect tailored instruction, adaptive tasks, just-in-time feedback.

### **Hybrid / Multi-modal / Virtual Classrooms**

Physical + online + VR/AR environments + asynchronous materials. The concept of "classroom" will be more fluid: sometimes face-to-face, sometimes entirely virtual, sometimes mixed, possibly immersive VR / "metaverse" business simulations.

23

## Forecast 2

### **Changing Business Needs / Globalisation / Remote Work**

The nature of business communication is changing: more remote teams, cross-cultural communication, digital communication (emails, Slack, video calls), rapid changes in what "business English" is needed (new industries, tech domains). Also increased use of translation tools.


### **Credentialing, Micro-credentials, & Lifelong Learning**

Employers and learners will value flexible, bite-sized credentials, certificates, continuing professional development. The idea of "one course, one level" will be less relevant; learners will want credentials that map to specific skills or outcomes.

### **Market Saturation / Competition / Platformisation** (bonus disruption)

More platforms that provide business English content, more MOOCs, more tutors globally, often at lower cost or even free / freemium. Teachers will compete not only locally but globally and may find their role shifting from content delivery to curation, mentoring, coaching, facilitation.

24



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"I think AI is really interesting, and I think it is going to change the world. And, at the same time, I hate the hype cycle so much that I really don't want to go there."  
 Linus Torvald

25

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26