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ISSUE: 8

A SPECIAL THANKS to

-Everyone with a hand in this issue of ELT Magazine, everyone who have worked on it, and everyone who have taken the time to read it.

The summer is here, and with it the break between two distinct chapters of life. Summers always produces a point between progress, opportunity, and glimpses into the future of one's life. For this reason, this issue of ELT Magazine focuses on the past, present, and the future of our lives, of the world, and everything that surrounds us that every point in our lives and experiences: experiences that we have had, are having, and will have.

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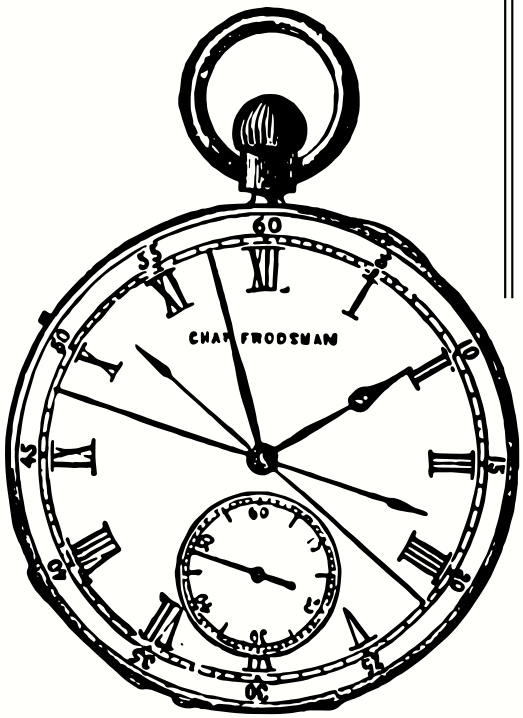

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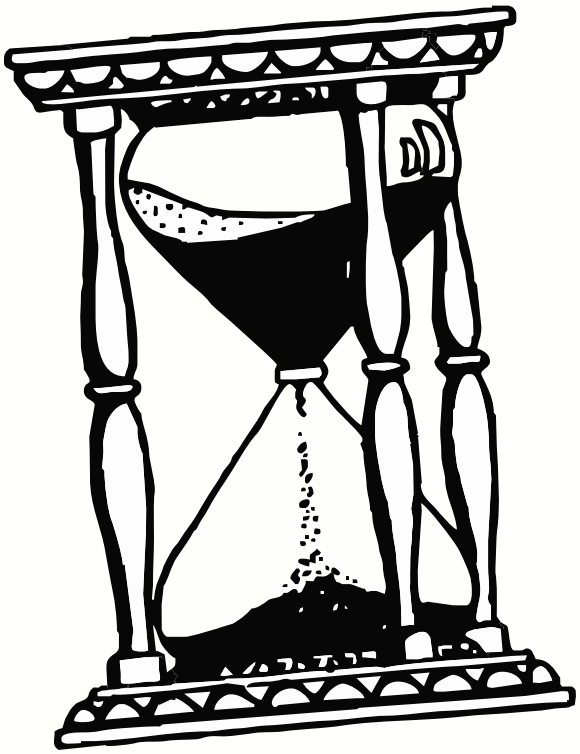


CULTURE

FESTIVALS OF HOPE

Why Ancient Traditions Matter for Our Future?

In a world that is becoming increasingly digital and fast-paced, we often find ourselves looking for a "reset" button. Interestingly, our ancestors found that button thousands of years ago. Festivals like **Nevruz** and **Hıdırellez** are not just dates on a calendar; they are powerful symbols of renewal, growth, and—most importantly—hope.

The Spring Awakening: Nevruz

Nevruz, meaning "New Day," marks the arrival of spring and the rebirth of nature. For a language learner or a teacher, Nevruz is a metaphor for a **"Fresh Start."** Just as the seeds push through the cold earth to find the sun, we as humans have an innate drive to overcome challenges and flourish. In the "Pathway to Future," Nevruz teaches us that no matter how long the winter (or a difficult semester!) lasts, spring is inevitable.

Wishes on the Water - Hıdırellez

Hıdırellez celebrates the meeting of the prophets Al-Khidr and Elijah on earth. It is a night of magic and manifestation. People draw their dreams—a house, a car, a diploma—on paper and bury them under rose trees or throw them into the sea. This tradition is the ultimate act of **goal setting**. In modern education, we call it "visualization," but our ancestors called it Hıdırellez. It's a reminder that dreaming is the first step toward creating the future.

Why Do We Need Them Today?

You might ask: "In the age of AI and space travel, why should we care about jumping over fires or drawing pictures under rose bushes?"

1. **Connection to Nature:** As our lives move behind screens, these festivals pull us back to the soil, the trees, and the cycles of the earth.
2. **Community Spirit:** These celebrations are "Social Media" in its original form—people coming together, sharing food, and wishing well for one another.
3. **Resilience:** They remind us that life is cyclical. After every ending, there is a beginning. For a student facing exams or a teacher designing a new curriculum, this is the ultimate motivation.

✨ **Did You Know? (Fun Facts)**

- **Fire Jumping:** In many cultures, jumping over a fire during spring festivals symbolizes "burning away" the bad luck and illnesses of the past year to enter the new year purified.
- **The Green Man:** The color green, central to these festivals, is scientifically proven to reduce stress and boost creativity. It is the color of the "Future."
- **The Power of Ritual:** Psychologists say that performing small rituals (like making a wish on Hıdırellez) helps the brain focus on long-term goals and reduces anxiety about the unknown.

As we build our "Pathway to Future," let's carry the seeds of these ancient traditions with us. Because a future without hope is like a spring without flowers.

Zebo Shakirova

(Nevruz Holiday at Buca Faculty of Education 15.04.2026)

🐾🐾 Campus Paws: A Day Through the Eyes of "The Professor" 🐾🐾

Most people think students and teachers are the owners of this campus. They are wrong. We, the four-legged residents, are the true deans of this university. My name is 'Professor Whiskers,' and this is how I see your world.

08:30 AM – The Morning Rush
The big bells ring. Hundreds of humans start running. They carry heavy bags and "magic glowing rectangles" (you call them phones). They look stressed. I sit on the warm hood of a parked car and watch. “Relax, humans,” I purr. “The sun is out, and the grass is soft. Why are you running?”

11:00 AM – The Grammar of Treats
I decide to attend an ELT class. I walk into the room, tail high. The teacher is talking about "Past Continuous." I don’t care about tenses; I care about the student in the third row who has a sandwich in their bag. I rub against their leg—the universal language for "I am hungry." Result: I get a piece of cheese. My communication skills are clearly better than their grammar.

02:00 PM – The "Study" Session
I find a group of students in the garden, surrounded by books and coffee cups. They look tired. One of them starts petting me. I feel their heart rate slow down, and their stress fade away. This is my job. I am not just a cat; I am a Campus Therapist. I provide the "silent support" they need to pass their exams.

05:00 PM – Sunset Reflection

As the campus gets quiet, I sit on the stairs of the library. I see the "Pathway to Future" posters on the walls. Humans are so worried about where they are going. Me? I am happy right here, under the stars, waiting for the night shift guards to bring me dinner.

Zebo Shakirova

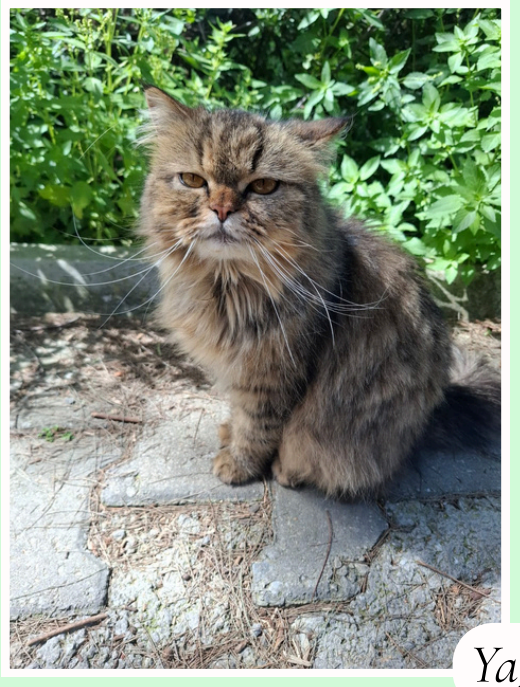
🐾 **Why Every Campus Needs "Paws"**

- **The Stress-Busters:** Studies show that spending just 10 minutes with a campus animal lowers cortisol (stress hormone) levels in students.
- **The Social Glue:** A campus dog or cat is often the reason two strangers start a conversation. They are the ultimate "ice-breakers."
- **Empathy Lessons:** Taking care of campus animals teaches us responsibility and kindness—qualities every future teacher must have.

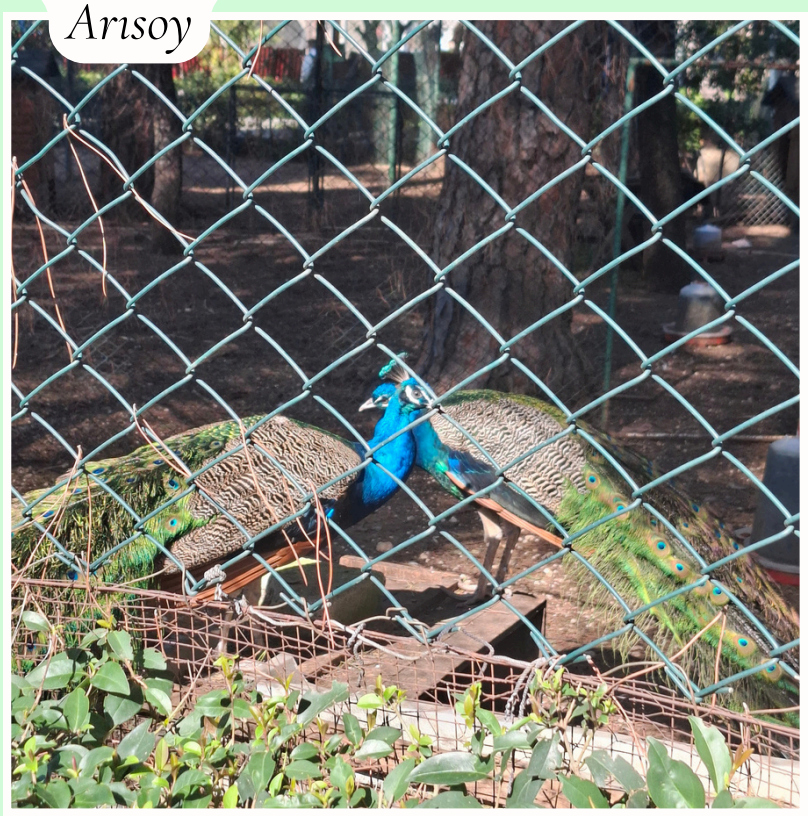
A Message from the Paws: > "We might not understand your English lessons, but we understand your hearts. Next time you see us, say 'Hi'—and maybe bring a little snack!"

These magnificent flowers are known for heliotropism, which means they turn their faces to follow the sun across the sky. This behavior serves as a powerful metaphor for staying positive and focusing on the light, even during difficult times.

SUNFLOWER



Yağmur Nisa Arısoy



Different colors represent different meanings:

White: purity and innocence

Yellow: joy, optimism and friendship

Pink: gentleness, love and romance

Blue: long-term loyalty and trust

Orange: happiness, joy, friendship, and warmth.

FAREWELL

As this is the last issue of the magazine before my graduation, it feels like the hardest one yet. Actually, I spent too much time trying to find a specific TV series to write about. I thought about everything I've watched, checked every platform, and wanted to recommend something unforgettable. Then, I realized that no matter what I chose, something would be missing.

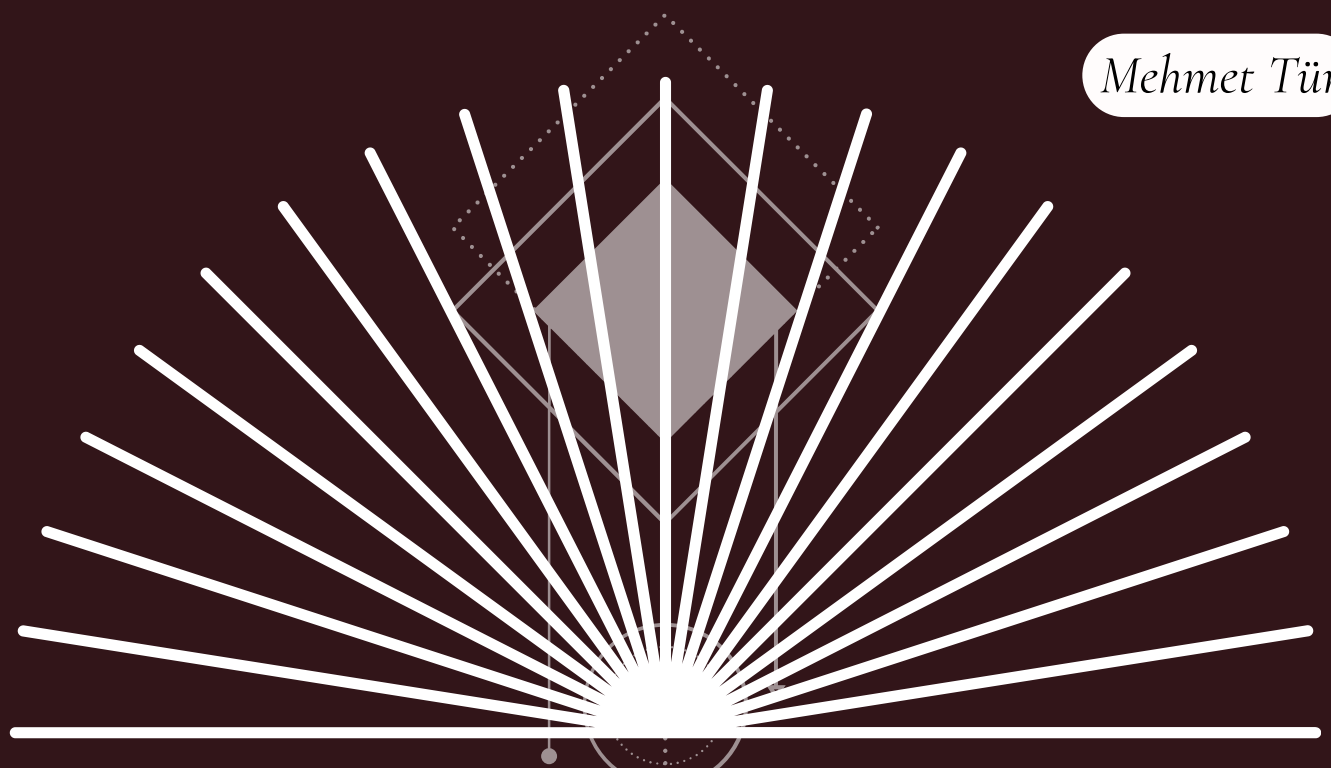
When you finish your favorite series, there's always that strange feeling. No more episodes. It's just over. And right now, I feel that same thing in every sentence I'm writing. Because, it feels like our story is ending. However, this is just the beginning of a new journey.

We are at a point in life that we have never experienced before. It's like the moment Rachel Green walks into Central Perk in her wedding dress, or when Captain Holt first steps into the precinct. There is a whole new adventure waiting for us. The future might feel uncertain, but at the same time, it might surprise us in ways we never expected.

In the first issue of the magazine, I recommended The Good Place, and it begins with a sentence: Welcome. Everything is fine. Now, we will continue on our path, and will change our destiny.

May we meet again.

Mehmet Tür



LITERATURE

The Sky Sheds Its Skin Finally CLEAN

Spring feels like a gentle spell cast upon the world, inviting everything that has been hidden to bloom again. Every spring tells the same story: nothing truly sleeps forever. After winter's heaviness, life returns gradually, reminding us that renewal is a process rather than a moment. This past March reflected that change perfectly. It began with an early eclipse that invited us to do some "spring cleaning" for our minds, letting go of old worries, and moved into the beautiful balance of the Spring Equinox-opening the way for fresh possibilities. What about **SUMMER'26?**

The Myth Behind the Sky: Algol and Medusa

As the gentle green of spring deepens into the warm days of June, the universe asks us to take our new strength a bit deeper. June brings a shift in energy. It may feel as if the foundations we once trusted are beginning to shake. Sudden changes or unexpected realizations could challenge what seemed stable. This energy intensity reaches its peak with the powerful Full Moon on **June 30**, bringing a moment of emotional release, truth, and transformation.

Between **June 23 and July 2, 2026**, the cosmic energy takes a sharp, dramatic turn as Mars and Uranus align directly with **Algol (known as Demon Star)**, a star historically feared as the most malevolent in the sky.

In ancient mythology, Algol represents the severed head of **Medusa,** held tightly by the constellation **Perseus**. (Spoiler Alert!!! we might take a deeper look at them in our upcoming issue - not a promise though.) While old stories paint Medusa as a monster who turned people to stone, her true myth is much deeper. It is actually a story of a woman who faced deep betrayal and unfair cruelty. Her transformation wasn't a choice, but it allowed her to evolve into a powerful symbol of raging protection. She used her cursed gaze to set an absolute boundary against the world.

The universe is using this intense energy to confront us with one powerful question: Are you building your life on truth, or merely on appearance? This is not a time for hiding behind appearances or comforting distractions. It is a moment to stand face-to-face with the fears that have controlled us for too long and to realize that buried beneath them is a strength far more powerful than we ever imagined.

The Transformation of Old Selves

By July and August, this grand cosmic shift reaches its peak. the ultimate turning point of the summer on **August 12**, a powerful Solar Eclipse will act like a giant, dramatic spotlight in the sky. This fateful moment is here to clear away false pride and surface layers, forcing a shift in how we lead our own lives. Right after that intense energy, a gentle emotional wave arrives wtth the Lunar Eclipse on **August 28**. It is a time for total release, deep healing, and letting tears wash away what no longer belongs, bringing us to true peace.

A Quiet Act of Courage

P.S. For all Swifties: the headline was inspired by Taylor Swift's Clean.

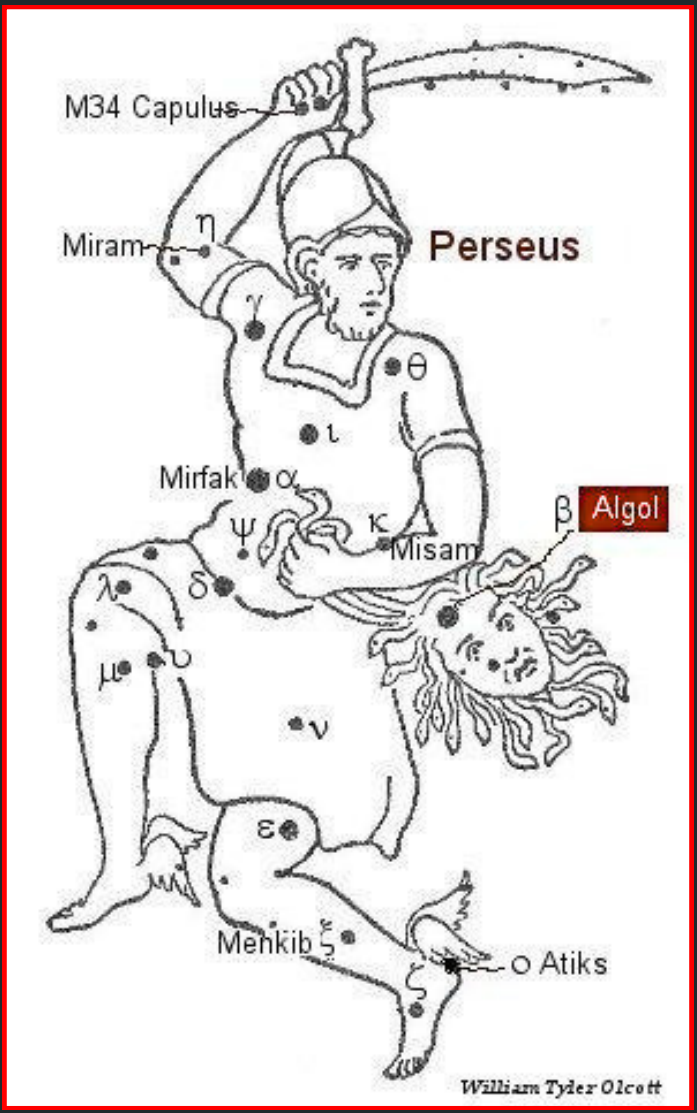
When I first listened to this speech by Taylor Swift, it instantly reminded me of Medusa. In the ancient stories we were all told, Medusa was painted as a terrifying, heartless monster whose very gaze turned men to stone. But the tragic truth beneath the myth is far heavier: Medusa was a victim of a brutal violation, a survivor of an assault who was met with profound betrayal instead of comfort. Unfortunately, no one believed her. The world chose to demonize her, choosing to see her as evil rather than acknowledging her pain and her stolen innocence.

Centuries later, Taylor Swift stood on a stadium stage in the pouring rain, reflecting on her own hard legal battles with SA and collective judgement, singing about the exact moment the mud finally washes away.

Both of these figures tell the same revolutionary story: you did not choose the armor or the trauma forced upon you, but you can take that pain, turn it into an unbreakable boundary of raging protection, and reclaim your absolute independence. Your identity is not your trauma!

The storm is passing. The sky is shedding its skin. And we are always coming out on the other side... CLEAN.

Zeynep Gülcan Şencan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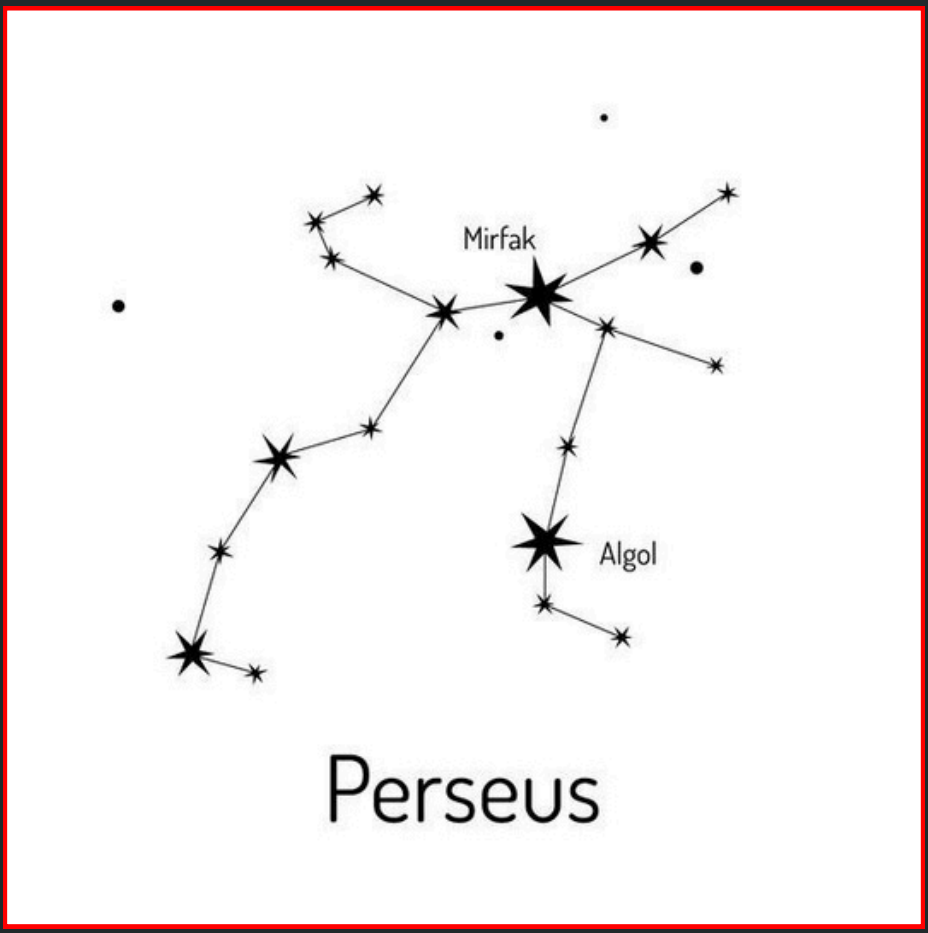

Mirfak
Algol
Perseus

Oh to be a blank sheet of paper.
Am I an empty map hiding treasure?
Can I fold into a plane, follow my path?
Or will I carry the words of a letter?
Maybe I am the start of a painting.
Unaware to how different I'll be,
from the first strikes of a brush or a sketch without meaning.
Would my painter be in a rush?
Will they let me take the rein?
Can I get out of my picture?
Or am I destined to paint a unique frame?
Sure I'll feel anxious, maybe hollow,
for a future that's unknown
But it's crucial that I ask, rather than follow.
To find myself, first I must wallow.

Ayşegül Aynacı

EDUCATION

🧠✨ The Incredible "Language Brain" 🧠✨

Have you ever wondered what actually happens inside your head when you learn a new language like English? It's not just about memorizing words; it's a total workout for your brain! Here are some mind-blowing facts:

- **The "Anti-Aging" Effect:** Science shows that being bilingual can delay the onset of Alzheimer's and dementia by up to 4 to 5 years. Learning a language is like a "fountain of youth" for your neurons!

- **Brain Plasticity:** When you learn new vocabulary, your brain actually grows! The Grey Matter (the part of the brain responsible for processing information) becomes denser, especially in the areas related to memory and attention.

- **Decision-Making Mastery:** Studies suggest that when people think in a second language, they tend to be more rational and less emotional. Your "English Brain" helps you make more calculated and better decisions.

- **The Music Connection:** Did you know that the same part of the brain that processes music also handles language grammar? That's why singing along to your favorite English songs is one of the most effective ways to learn!

- **Multitasking Superpowers:** Bilingual people are better at switching between tasks and filtering out irrelevant information. Your brain becomes an expert at "focusing" because it is constantly choosing the right word from two different languages.

You aren't just learning a language; you are upgrading your hardware. Every new word you learn is a new connection in the most complex machine in the universe!

Zebo Shakirova

Lady Banks's Rose

This flower symbolizes purity, devotion, and everlasting love. In Western cultures, it is often associated with romance. In Chinese culture, it represents the purity of heart and soul. It also has a strong scent to it.

FACTORS AFFECTING ELT FRESHMEN'S WILLINGNESS TO SPEAK ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Aybüke Ezgi HASDEMİR

Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Teaching Division, English Language Teaching Department, Buca, İZMİR

Aybükeezgi.hasdemir@ogr.deu.edu.tr | ORCID ID: 0009-0004-3230-7573

ABSTRACT

This study aims to gauge factors affecting students' eagerness to speak English in the classroom. A quantitative study was conducted with 50 ELT freshmen. Findings revealed that motivation was the strongest factor, while speaking anxiety was moderate. Although highly motivated, students' concerns held them back, and their self-perceived competence did not match their willingness to communicate. A supportive, anxiety-free environment is essential for confident speaking.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a pivotal skill in English Language Teaching, functioning as a primary tool for both careers and daily life. During their professional development, teacher candidates may feel anxious about speaking in public despite having strong motivation. Fear of peer humiliation can negatively affect their drive, hindering the effective use of the target language. This study examines the factors affecting students' eagerness to speak English in classroom settings and explores potential gender differences.

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research design was adopted, recruiting 50 first-year university students on a voluntary basis. Data was collected via a 32-item, five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The survey measured four main constructs: willingness to speak, speaking anxiety, self-perceived competence, and motivation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Most participants were female (68%), and 54% considered themselves at an Upper-Intermediate level. About 92% reported participating in classroom communication 'often' or 'sometimes'.

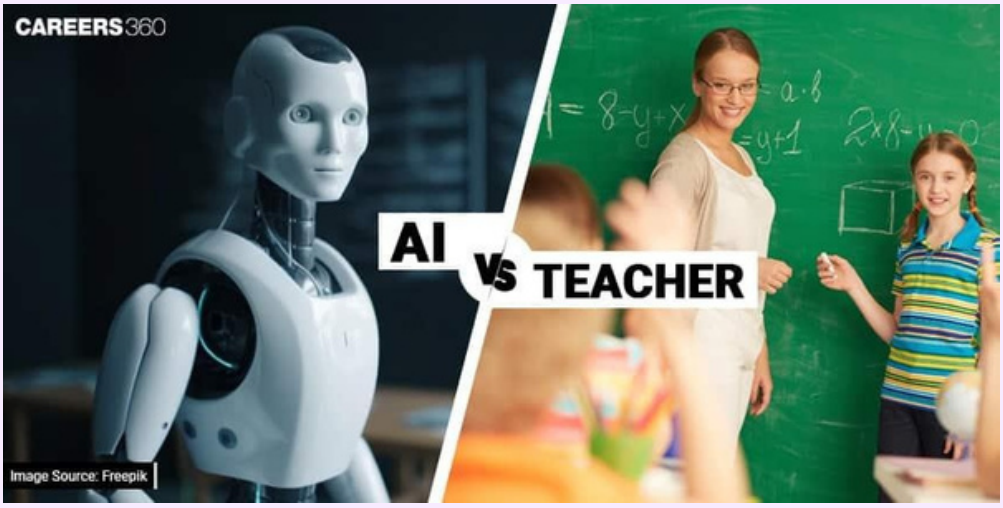
- **Motivation:** Emerged as the strongest factor (M=4.46). Students view English as a professional prerequisite rather than a hobby, which enhances their drive to communicate efficiently.
- **Willingness to Speak:** Also high (M=3.77), showing strong enthusiasm to join speaking activities when given the chance.
- **Self-Perceived Competence:** With a mean score of 3.63, students showed a realistic view of their skills, recognizing a need for continuous improvement.
- **Speaking Anxiety:** Ranked lowest (M=2.02), though students still harbor moderate concerns centered around making mistakes and facing peer judgment.

CONCLUSION

Pre-service English teachers are highly motivated to use the target language, but their self-perceived competence and fear of peer criticism occasionally hinder their readiness. Teachers hold a great responsibility to create a warm, proficiency-enhancing climate. When students feel secure and safe from immediate, judgmental correction by peers or instructors, they become naturally prepared to use the target language efficiently and confidently.

"Human" Teacher or AI?

In an era dominated by Artificial Intelligence, instant translation apps, and sophisticated algorithms, a provocative question echoes through the halls of education: **"Will robots eventually replace teachers?"** While technology can provide data, information, and even personalized exercises, there is one thing it cannot replicate: the human soul. As we navigate the "Pathway to the Future," the role of the teacher is not disappearing; it is evolving into something more profound.



Information is everywhere, but wisdom requires a mentor. A machine can correct a student's grammar, but it cannot see the frustration in a teenager's eyes or the hesitation in their voice. Human teachers possess **emotional intelligence (EQ)**—the ability to provide a "safety net" for students. When a student struggles, a teacher doesn't just offer a solution; they offer encouragement, patience, and a belief in the student's potential. This emotional bond is the "secret sauce" of effective learning that no software can simulate.

Teaching English is never just about vocabulary; it is about culture, nuance, and global citizenship. Human teachers serve as cultural ambassadors. They share personal stories, explain the "why" behind social norms, and teach students how to navigate the complex world of human interaction. Furthermore, teachers act as a **moral compass,** helping students develop critical thinking and ethical values—skills that are essential as we step into an automated future.

We all remember that one teacher who changed our lives. It wasn't because they had the best slides or the fastest computer; it was because they sparked a fire in us. These "Aha!" moments—where curiosity meets discovery—are sparked by human passion. A robot can be efficient, but only a human can be inspiring.

Crocuses

Throughout history, crocuses have symbolized rebirth and joy. In Victorian floriography, they represented youthful gladness, while in Persian culture, they were linked to happiness and divine blessings. In Asia, Buddhist monks wore saffron-died robes.

Fun Facts for the Future-Proof Teacher:

- **The 85% Rule:** Research suggests that 85% of job success comes from well-developed "soft skills" (communication, empathy, leadership), which are best learned through human interaction.

- **Neuroplasticity:** Social interaction releases oxytocin and dopamine in the brain, which actually makes it easier for students to retain new information compared to isolated screen time.

- **The "Un-Googleable" Skills:** Creativity, critical thinking, and complex problem-solving are currently the hardest skills for AI to master—and these are exactly what human teachers cultivate.

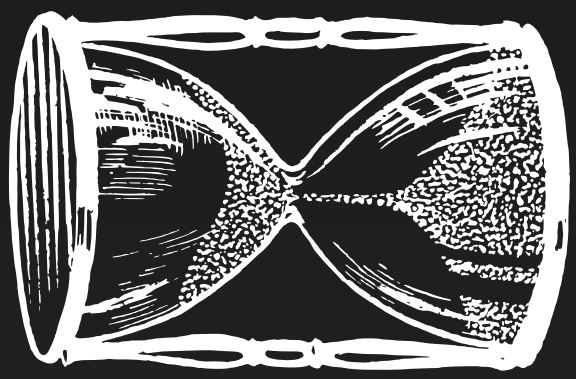
As a conclusion, the future of ELT is not "Human vs. Technology"; it is **"Human empowered by Technology."** As we look toward the horizon, the classroom of tomorrow will be high-tech, but its heart will remain high-touch. We aren't just delivering lessons; we are building futures.

Teachers' biggest advantage over AI is that they are human,
AI's biggest advantage over teachers' is that it isn't human. (Nik Peachey-Pedagogical Director)

Zebo Shakirova

⏳ The English Classroom Time Capsule: 1926 vs. 2126 ⏳

If we could jump into a time machine and visit an English classroom from a century ago, or peek into one a hundred years from now, would we even recognize them? Let's open the "ELT Time Capsule" and see how the journey of learning English has transformed—and where it's headed.



📜 1926: The Era of Ink and Rules

A hundred years ago, the English classroom was a place of strict discipline and "Grammar-Translation."

- **The Tools:** No tablets or YouTube. Students used heavy, leather-bound books, inkwells, and slate boards.
- **The Method:** Learning was about memorizing long lists of vocabulary and translating complex literary texts from Dickens or Shakespeare. Speaking was rarely the priority; accuracy was everything.
- **The Vibe:** Silence was golden. The teacher was the absolute authority, and "learning" meant repeating sentences until they were perfect.

📱 2026: The Digital Bridge (Today)

Today, we sit in the middle. We have AI assistants, gamified apps like Duolingo, and global classrooms where a student in Türkiye can speak to a peer in Brazil via Zoom. We focus on **communication**—it's not just about being "correct," it's about being "understood."

🚀 2126: The "Matrix" Classroom?

Fast forward a century. What will "Pathway to Future" look like in 2126?

- **Neural Learning:** Forget vocabulary lists. We might see "Neural Downloads" where basic grammar patterns are uploaded directly to the brain's language center (though the human element of practice will still be vital!).
- **Holographic Immersion:** Instead of reading about London, students will step into a 3D holographic simulation. You won't just learn the word "restaurant"; you will sit in a virtual London café and order tea from an AI-generated waiter that reacts to your emotions.
- **Universal Fluency:** English might evolve into a "Global Hybrid Language," incorporating more diverse structures from across the world, making it truly the planet's shared tongue.

The Comparison Through the Ages

Feature	1926	2026	2126
Main Tool	Fountain Pen & Slate	Laptop & Smartphone	Neural Link / VR
Focus	Translation & Poetry	Communication & Apps	Instant Immersion
Teacher Role	The Lecturer	The Facilitator	The Experience Designer

Even if the pens change to holograms and the paper changes to pixels, one thing remains constant: the human desire to tell a story and be understood. The "how" changes, but the "why" stays the same.

Zebo Shakirova

CREDITS

Prof. Dr. Fatma Feryal Çubukçu (ELT Head of Department)
Zebo Shakirova (Writer)
Yağmur Nisa Arısoy (Writer)
Mehmet Tür (Writer)
Zeynep Gülcan Şencan (Writer)
Ayşegül Aynacı (Writer)
Aybüke Ezgi Hasdemir (Writer)
Merve Koch (Writer, Editor)
Ayşe Nur Beşiktepe (Writer, Editor)
Sevgi Küçükaltay (Design Lead, Cover)
Pınar Erbektaş (Design)
Rıdvan Eroğlu (Website)
Umut Ceylan (Editor)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING