

# Research on Identity Reconstruction of Foreign Language Teachers as Early Reading Ecology Builders in the Age of Digital Intelligence

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**Abstract:** In the context of the digital and intelligence age, there is a digital shift in early reading for school-age children. Foreign language teachers face multiple problems, such as insufficient digital literacy, confusion about their roles, and a lack of pedagogical innovation, leading to further challenges to their identity as teachers. As AI technology continues to be iteratively updated, the identity of the foreign language teacher is in dire need of reassessment. Foreign language teachers in the digital age need to gradually change their original concepts through technical training and policy support, and actively respond to the new educational ecology, from knowledge transmitters to guides, from classroom leaders to collaborators, from assessment implementers to multidimensional diagnostic analysts, from users of fixed teaching materials to dynamic resource integrators, and from implementers of standardised teaching to designers of personalised pathways, to achieve the reconstruction of the identity of foreign language teachers in the digital age.

**Keywords:** digital intelligence era; foreign language teacher; reconstruction of identity

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## 1.Introduction

Since the 1950s, teacher identity has emerged as a focal point in social science research. This issue has been central to the educational community, impacting areas such as teacher-student relationships, teaching effectiveness, and educational management. Research on teacher identity generally falls into two categories: the sociological perspective, epitomized by George Mead (Holland & Lachicotte, 2007), and the psychological approach, as exemplified by Erikson. The sociological perspective posits that identity is not confined to the self but is inherently socio-contextual. This view suggests that the construction of identity is intricately linked to the social roles individuals adopt during their interactions. (Pennington, 2016). As such, teacher identities exhibit characteristics of fluidity, complexity, and social connectivity. The identity of a foreign language teacher is not defined by a single factor; rather, it is dynamic and undergoes differential changes throughout the various stages of professional development. Within the societal context, the professional development of teachers is intrinsically linked to their interactions with surrounding individuals, including peers, colleagues, administrators, and students. Such interactions significantly have an impact on the formation of a teacher's identity (Kanno & Stuart, 2011). Furthermore, environmental factors significantly influence identity formation. These encompass macro-linguistic policies, the preeminence of English as a global language, and the promotion of foreign language instruction in educational institutions. Over time, teachers gradually shape new identities within their pedagogical practices and service training. (Kanno & Stuart, 2011). The advent and increasing sophistication of digital technologies has profoundly challenged the identity of foreign language teachers. The advent of the digital age necessitates a transformation in the traditional teaching paradigm, thereby demanding a redefinition of teachers' professional competence and identity perception. Within this digital environment, the role of teachers extends beyond that of mere knowledge transmitters; they also embody the roles of learners, researchers, and innovators. It is imperative for educators to continually update their knowledge base, restructure their pedagogical approaches, and refine their self-perception in order to adapt to the evolving educational landscape and cater to the diverse needs of their students. The integration of

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advanced technologies, particularly artificial intelligence, into foreign language instruction has ushered in unparalleled opportunities. However, this has concurrently presented novel challenges to the identity and role of foreign language educators. This paper endeavors to address the challenges faced by foreign language teachers in their transition into the role of early reading ecology builders. It further proposes an identity model tailored for these educators in the era of digital intelligence, offering a viable strategy for identity reconstruction.

## **2. Identity dilemma of foreign language teachers as early reading ecosystem builder**

The rapid proliferation of generative artificial intelligence presents unparalleled challenges to the profession of foreign language teaching. New AI tools play a vital role in foreign language learning. AI-driven oral interactions and digital reading offer significant support for foreign language education among school-age children. The evolution of foreign language teachers is shifting from the traditional role of lecturers to that of collaborative learning partners. The subsequent analysis explores the identity challenges presently encountered by these educators, assessing them across three dimensions: technological literacy, professional identity, and innovative capacity.

### **2.1 Insufficient digital literacy**

Within the epoch of digital intelligence, foreign language teachers, perceived as architects of early reading ecosystems, must not only cultivate a genuine zeal for education and possess robust language teaching abilities but also exhibit adeptness in contemporary educational technologies such as speech recognition and virtual simulated language environments. Some specific AI tools had been acquired by educators, but a few of teachers fail to effectively integrate these digital devices within the objectives, content, and methodologies of foreign language instruction. Their usage was still limited to superficial applications of generative AI, thus hindering the realization of technology-enhanced intelligent foreign language reading instruction, which restricts the variety and efficiency of pedagogical activities. Reading instruction for school-aged children requests that teachers combine flexibility with engaging strategies. However, educators often grapple with achieving even the most fundamental level of technology-enhanced instruction. What's more, educators are compelled to constantly refine their pedagogical approaches and acquire proficiency in novel technologies in a digital and intelligent environment. Nevertheless, the willingness and ability of teachers to undertake learning have emerged as pivotal elements in their digital evolution. Therefore, foreign language teachers' insufficient digital literacy constrains the reconstruction of their professional identity in the era of digital intelligence,.

### **2.2 Role identity confusion**

As artificial intelligence technology becomes more prevalent in foreign language instruction, the role of teachers has transitioned from merely imparting knowledge to encompassing roles such as learning facilitation, curriculum design, and cultural interpretation. This role diversification and responsibility expansion has led many educators to confront an identity crisis. Nevertheless, the increasing diversification of roles and expansion of responsibilities has led many teachers to confront an identity crisis. In order to boost classroom efficiency and elevate engagement levels, it is imperative for educators to acclimate to a "human-machine collaboration" pedagogical model, wherein they distribute instructional duties with AI tools. Conversely, it is imperative to provide school-age children with heightened humanistic care and emotional interaction, thereby safeguarding the fundamental essence of education from potential distortions introduced by technology. This role tension creates confusion for teachers in defining their identity, as they must continuously keep pace with technological advancements while remaining steadfast in their educational philosophy of nurturing students. This duality leads to blurred identity and challenges in reconstruction.

### **2.3 Indeficiency in teaching innovation**

In the digital age, the responsibility is on foreign language educators to devise and execute data-driven, personalized instructional strategies that catalyze innovation and metamorphosis in pedagogical approaches.

Nevertheless, a significant proportion of these educators fall short in seamlessly merging technology with their teaching methodologies, grapple with the effective utilization of AI tools, and struggle to engage students in progressive pedagogical activities such as cross-cultural communication, virtual reality instruction, and intelligent assessment. These hurdles not only amplify teachers' emotional and workload pressures but also subject them to the likelihood of failure when endeavoring to innovate in their teaching practices. Such setbacks further exacerbate their professional identity dilemmas and sense of unease amidst the evolving educational landscape.

### **3.Reconstruction of foreign language teacher as early reading ecosystem builder**

In the era of digital intelligence, foreign language teachers confront many challenges and difficulties. To navigate this evolving landscape, they must undergo technical training and receive policy support to adapt their traditional methodologies. Additionally, they need to actively engage with the emerging educational ecosystem and reconsider the role and identity of foreign language educators within a digitally intelligent framework.

#### **3.1 Learning Facilitator**

In the context of the digital intelligence era, educators urgently need to transition from traditional "knowledge disseminators" to "learning facilitators". This shift is vital in addressing the impact of AI on education and redefining the role of teachers. In traditional teaching, educators often functioned as knowledge authorities, primarily conveying information unidirectionally. However, in intelligent educational environments, students have access to extensive resources through advanced platforms, challenging the teacher's traditional stance as the sole possessor of knowledge (Li Ronghua&Tian Youyi, 2018). As a result, educators must recalibrate their roles, transitioning from focusing on "what to teach" to "how to guide learning". The emphasis should now be on fostering students' deep understanding and higher-order thinking rather than merely covering content. Zhang Xilin(2020) observes that teachers should move beyond mere "knowledge transmission" to facilitate "deep learning and innovation". This involves creating problem-based scenarios, orchestrating inquiry-driven learning, and harnessing human capabilities for inspirational, emotional, and critical guidance in human-machine collaborative teaching settings. In essence, educators are no longer mere information providers but facilitators of children's learning journeys, emphasizing guidance in methodology, critical thinking, and values—thus establishing their irreplaceable educational identity in the era of artificial intelligence.

#### **3.2 Human-machine collaborator**

In the context of educational intelligence, foreign language educators are increasingly transitioning from the traditional role of "lecturers" to that of 'collaborators' in practical training. This shift necessitates an active effort from teachers to foster collaborative learning and practice environments through engagement with schools, colleagues, and students. It is imperative for foreign language educators to facilitate resource sharing, experience exchange, and collaborative growth by participating in or establishing "Professional Learning Communities" or virtual teaching and research rooms (Gao Yang et al, 2023). Professional communities not only help teachers enhance themselves across four dimensions—cognition, knowledge, skills, and competencies (Sun Tiemei, 2021)—but also foster collective strength in addressing the challenges of educational intelligence. During training, teachers transition from one-way knowledge disseminators to collaborative partners who engage with fellow educators in problem-solving, instructional design, and reflective teaching practices. This collaborative approach not only improves the efficacy and participation of training but also cultivates reciprocal trust and support among educators. It propels the comprehensive professional growth of foreign language instructors, thereby equipping them to better adapt to the requirements of an intelligent educational ecosystem for children's reading.

#### **3.3 Qualified evaluator**

In the digital and intelligent era, teachers would make a transition from being traditional single-score evaluators to becoming "multi-dimensional evaluators", thereby establishing a more holistic, scientific, and forward-thinking

student evaluation system. Consider the English reading course as a case in point. Traditionally, evaluation methods have predominantly centered on exam scores and standardized tests. When it comes to personalized evaluation, the emphasis has been on teachers' subjective observations of classroom participation and homework completion, revealing an absence of scientifically robust and effective assessment techniques. English reading is foundational to foreign language learning, and considering the intricate and varied nature of reading content, there is a significant challenge for teachers to design instructional tasks that seamlessly blend knowledge, engagement, and pedagogical value. The task of monitoring nuanced teaching outcomes for each student is particularly daunting. Nevertheless, the advent of artificial intelligence offers novel avenues for educational evaluation. For instance, learning analysis technologies can capture real-time learning behavior data, while intelligent assessment systems facilitate automated grading and feedback for assignments (Aoun, 2017).

Teachers strive to assume the roles of designers, interpreters, and integrators in the process of assessment facilitated by intelligence tools. The evaluation of teachers should be multifaceted, encompassing not only the supervisory control of reading but also qualitative assessments such as traits of thinking, values, and emotional attitudes. Zhang Xilin(2020) emphasized the importance of teachers acting as warm, emotional interactors within the realm of evaluation. A multidimensional evaluation should not solely focus on the content acquired by students, but rather on their method of learning and their ability to apply and innovate. This approach encourages a shift in evaluation from being a mere screening tool to a mechanism for growth and development. Moreover, it aligns with the true objective of education: fostering learning and nurturing individuals through assessment.

### **3.4 Resource integrator**

In their daily pedagogical practice, foreign language teachers must adapt to the characteristics of school-aged children, transitioning from conventional, mono-disciplinary methods to a more holistic utilization of educational resources. This necessitates a dynamic role adjustment wherein teachers proactively become "resource integrator." It is imperative for these educators to possess not only interdisciplinary knowledge and integration capabilities but also the agility to leverage a diverse array of teaching resources and technological tools. Such an approach facilitates profound integration of foreign language education with other domains, including humanities and technology. In practical application, educators can amalgamate both digital and traditional resources, create curriculum clusters across various subjects, and develop intelligent platforms—for example, weaving elements of aesthetic education such as music and art into language courses. Concurrently, they can deploy interdisciplinary content and digital tools in curriculum design and cultural dissemination, adeptly coordinating and optimizing resource allocation to embody their role as "collaborators." Consequently, evolving into resource integrator is not merely a novel prerequisite for foreign language teachers in the digital era but also a crucial avenue for their professional renewal and growth.

### **3.5 Personalized customizer**

The evolution of artificial intelligence enables teachers to devise and execute personalized teaching strategies, transitioning their role from mere disseminators of knowledge to "customizers of personalized learning." With the advent of educational transformations driven by technologies such as generative AI, educators are compelled to harness intelligent tools, like big data, to facilitate multi-level diagnostics and provide differentiated support for students (Yang Xianmin et al, 2017). For example, in instructional settings, intelligent agents can be designed based on the cognitive attributes of school-aged children. These agents are trained using vocabulary, complex sentences, dialogues, and related materials through an intelligent agent platform, fostering cohesive language development between classroom instruction and extracurricular practice. By examining the usage records of these agents, educators can discern students' language proficiency levels, cognitive styles, and interest preferences. Consequently, they can craft customized teaching objectives, content, and activity pathways, thereby realizing tiered guidance in language education.

In the era of digital intelligence, personalized teaching for educators does not contradict traditional standardized

instruction. Personalization serves as a complement to unified, standardized teaching models. This shift not only requires teachers to master data-driven instructional decision-making capabilities but also underscores their irreplaceable role as "educators of human beings." Ultimately, by coordinating human-machine collaboration and integrating educational resources, teachers establish a balance between scaled education and personalized growth, achieving a paradigm shift in foreign language education from a "uniform model" to an "individualized approach."

#### 4. Conclusion

In the age of digital intelligence, foreign language teachers, pioneers in establishing early English reading ecosystems, must harness the power of intelligent educational information technology to drive innovation and reform across all teaching dimensions: pedagogical philosophy, instructional design, teaching implementation, and assessment practices. They should actively shift their educational perspectives to become facilitators in students' learning journeys, participate in practical training to become practitioners of human-machine collaboration, integrate high-quality educational resources to provide personalized instruction and precision teaching, and establish multidimensional student evaluation systems. This will ultimately lead to a comprehensive redefinition of the role of the foreign language teacher.

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