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**NAVIGATING CULTURAL AWARENESS IN GENERATIVE AI-ASSISTED  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: INDONESIAN EFL TEACHERS'  
PERSPECTIVES**

**AKSENDRO MAXIMILIAN \*<sup>1</sup>**

**MOHAMMED HEJASH <sup>2</sup>**

**PURNAMA HANAN MUROD <sup>1</sup>**

**<sup>1</sup> UNIVERSITAS LAMPUNG**

**<sup>2</sup> ALBAYDHA UNIVERSITY, YEMEN**

\* [aksendro@gmail.com](mailto:aksendro@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** This study investigates Indonesian EFL teachers' perceptions of cultural awareness in GenAI-assisted English language teaching and explores the opportunities and challenges they perceive when addressing cultural awareness through AI-generated instructional materials. A quantitative survey design was employed involving 60 Indonesian junior high school EFL teachers who had prior experience using Generative AI applications for instructional purposes. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The findings indicate that teachers hold highly positive perceptions toward the importance of integrating cultural awareness into AI-assisted English language teaching. Participants emphasized that AI-generated cultural content should be critically evaluated before classroom implementation and that English instruction should integrate both Indonesian and global cultural perspectives. Teachers also perceived Generative AI as a valuable resource for creating culturally diverse instructional materials and enriching classroom learning. However, concerns were raised regarding cultural bias, inaccurate cultural information, limited representation of Indonesian local cultures, and students' overreliance on AI-generated content. The study concludes that the effective integration of GenAI into English language teaching depends not only on technological capability but also on teachers' intercultural competence, critical AI literacy, and pedagogical judgment.

**Keywords:** Generative Artificial Intelligence, GenAI, Cultural Awareness, English language teaching, Culturally Responsive Teaching

## **INTRODUCTION**

The increasing adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has transformed English language teaching (ELT) by shifting teachers' roles from adapting existing resources to designing AI-generated instructional materials tailored to learners' needs (Zerey, 2025). Through large language models such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude, teachers can efficiently create learning materials, assessments, and lesson plans, making GenAI a content-generation technology rather than merely an information retrieval tool (Kasneci et al., 2023; UNESCO, 2023). This transformation has expanded teachers' responsibilities as designers and evaluators of AI-generated content while offering significant pedagogical benefits, including reduced workload, enhanced lesson planning, differentiated instruction, authentic learning materials, and immediate feedback for learners (Kasneci et al., 2023; Kohnke et al., 2023). Consequently, current discussions on GenAI in ELT have primarily emphasized its potential to improve instructional effectiveness, teacher productivity, and students' learning experiences.

Contemporary English language teaching (ELT) extends beyond developing learners' linguistic competence to fostering cultural awareness and intercultural understanding, reflecting the role of English as an international language used across diverse sociocultural contexts (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993; Baker, 2015). In this context, teachers are expected not only to facilitate language learning but also to help learners critically engage with cultural diversity. The emergence of GenAI has expanded opportunities to generate culturally relevant learning materials, including narratives, dialogues, role-play scenarios, and visual content (Maximilian et al., 2026). However, because large language models generate content based on statistical patterns rather than genuine cultural understanding, AI-generated materials may oversimplify cultural practices, reinforce stereotypes, or present culturally inaccurate information, highlighting the need for teachers to critically evaluate and mediate AI-generated content before classroom use (UNESCO, 2023).

Teachers play a central role in AI-assisted English language teaching because, despite GenAI's ability to generate instructional materials rapidly, they remain responsible for evaluating whether AI-generated content is culturally accurate,

contextually appropriate, and capable of promoting meaningful intercultural learning (Maximilian et al., 2026). Accordingly, teachers must critically assess potential cultural bias, adapt AI-generated materials to local contexts, and ensure culturally responsive instruction.

Although existing research has demonstrated the pedagogical benefits of GenAI for language learning, lesson planning, assessment, learner engagement, and teachers' AI literacy, as well as highlighted ethical concerns such as academic integrity, algorithmic bias, and misinformation (Kasneci et al., 2023; Kohnke et al., 2023; UNESCO, 2023; Crompton & Burke, 2024), comparatively little attention has been given to its cultural implications in English language teaching (Byram, 1997; Baker, 2015; Maximilian et al., 2026). This gap is particularly important because language learning is inseparable from culture, and AI-generated materials inevitably reflect cultural assumptions that may shape learners' intercultural understanding. Unlike conventional ICT, which primarily supports the selection and adaptation of existing resources, GenAI enables teachers to create instructional materials through prompt-based interactions, making the cultural quality of these materials highly dependent on teachers' critical judgment and contextual adaptation.

These challenges are particularly relevant in culturally diverse countries such as Indonesia. As one of the world's most multicultural nations, Indonesia encompasses hundreds of ethnic groups, regional languages, local traditions, and cultural identities that collectively shape educational practices and learners' experiences. Such expectations align closely with culturally responsive English language teaching, which emphasizes meaningful connections between classroom learning and learners' sociocultural backgrounds (Gay, 2018). Accordingly, the integration of GenAI into Indonesian EFL classrooms should not only improve instructional efficiency, but also support culturally meaningful learning experiences that respect and represent Indonesia's cultural diversity.

Despite the growing number of studies on GenAI in English language teaching, several important gaps remain. First, existing research has predominantly investigated technological adoption, instructional effectiveness, AI literacy, and ethical considerations, while relatively few studies have examined cultural

awareness as a central pedagogical concern in AI-assisted English language teaching (Maximilian et al., 2026). Second, studies on culturally responsive English language teaching have traditionally focused on teachers' beliefs, multicultural pedagogy, and curriculum implementation without considering the emerging role of Generative AI as a source of instructional content. Consequently, the two bodies of literature, GenAI-assisted language education and culturally responsive English language teaching, have largely developed independently despite addressing closely related educational issues. Third, empirical evidence from Indonesian EFL contexts, particularly at the junior high school level, remains limited. Although Indonesian teachers have increasingly adopted GenAI in their professional practices, little is known about how they perceive cultural awareness when AI-generated materials are incorporated into English language instruction.

Responding to these gaps, the present study positions cultural awareness, rather than technological acceptance, as its primary focus. Instead of examining whether GenAI is useful for English language teaching, this study investigates how Indonesian EFL teachers perceive cultural awareness in GenAI-assisted instruction, as well as the opportunities and challenges of integrating AI-generated instructional materials into culturally responsive classroom practices. By emphasizing teachers' perspectives, the study acknowledges that meaningful cultural learning depends on teachers' pedagogical judgment rather than technological capabilities alone.

This study contributes to the existing literature in several important ways. First, it extends current research on Generative AI in English language teaching by shifting the analytical focus from technology adoption to the cultural dimension of AI-assisted pedagogy. Second, it conceptually connects Generative AI with culturally responsive English language teaching, two research domains that have rarely been examined within an integrated framework. Third, it provides empirical evidence from Indonesian junior high school EFL teachers, a context that remains underrepresented in international AI-in-education research despite Indonesia's rich cultural diversity and the rapid expansion of GenAI use in schools. Finally, the findings are expected to inform teacher education, curriculum development, and educational policy by offering practical insights into how Generative AI can be

integrated into English language teaching while maintaining cultural responsiveness, contextual relevance, and ethical responsibility.

Accordingly, this study aims to explore Indonesian EFL teachers' perspectives on cultural awareness in Generative AI-assisted English language teaching. Specifically, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are Indonesian EFL teachers' perceptions of cultural awareness in Generative AI-assisted English language teaching?
2. How do Indonesian EFL teachers perceive the opportunities and challenges of addressing cultural awareness while using Generative AI in English language teaching?

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employed a quantitative survey design to investigate Indonesian EFL teachers' perceptions of cultural awareness in Generative AI-assisted English language teaching. The participants were 60 junior high school EFL teachers selected through purposive sampling based on three criteria: they were actively teaching English, had experience using at least one Generative AI application (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, or Microsoft Copilot) for instructional purposes, and voluntarily agreed to participate. The participants are teaching in several provinces in Indonesia, including Lampung, Bengkulu, D.K.I. Jakarta, Jawa Tengah, D.I. Yogyakarta, and Kalimantan Selatan.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed from the concepts of cultural awareness in English language teaching (Byram, 1997; Baker, 2015) and recent literature on Generative AI in education (Kasneci et al., 2023). The instrument consisted of five-point Likert-scale items organized into the sections of teachers' perceptions of cultural awareness in GenAI-assisted ELT, and their perceptions of the opportunities and challenges of integrating AI-generated instructional materials. Prior to distribution, the questionnaire was reviewed by two ELT experts to ensure content validity and revised based on their feedback.

The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms over a three-week period through English teacher professional communities and academic networks.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in IBM SPSS Statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to identify patterns in teachers' perceptions. The score was categorized as follows: 1 means Strongly Disagree; 2 means Disagree; 3 means Neutral; 4 means Agree; 5 means Strongly Agree. Thus, for those categories, the maximum score might be represented by 5 and the minimum score is represented by 1. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained from all respondents, and participants' anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the study.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Teachers' Perceptions of Cultural Awareness in Generative AI-Assisted English Language Teaching**

The first research question explored Indonesian EFL teachers' perceptions of cultural awareness in Generative AI-assisted English language teaching. Overall, the findings indicate that teachers demonstrated a very positive perception toward the importance of integrating cultural awareness into AI-assisted English language teaching (Mean = 4.23, SD = 0.46). This finding suggests that teachers do not perceive GenAI as merely a technological innovation for improving instructional efficiency; rather, they recognize that cultural awareness remains an essential component of effective English language teaching regardless of the instructional technology employed.

The highest-rated item was teachers' agreement that AI-generated cultural content should always be critically evaluated before being used in the classroom (Mean = 4.61, SD = 0.49). This was followed by teachers' belief that cultural awareness should remain an integral objective of English language teaching (Mean = 4.56, SD = 0.55). Teachers also strongly agreed that English lessons should incorporate both Indonesian and international cultural perspectives (Mean = 4.42, SD = 0.58).

Conversely, comparatively lower scores were observed for teachers' confidence in the cultural accuracy of AI-generated materials (Mean = 3.79, SD = 0.67) and the adequacy of AI in representing Indonesian local cultures (Mean = 3.71, SD = 0.71).

Although these scores still fall within the "high" category, they indicate that teachers remain cautious regarding the reliability and inclusiveness of AI-generated cultural content.

These findings suggest that teachers clearly distinguish between the usefulness of GenAI as an instructional tool and the professional responsibility required to evaluate AI-generated materials. Teachers appear to acknowledge that while GenAI can facilitate lesson preparation, it cannot replace teachers' pedagogical judgment in selecting culturally appropriate learning resources.

The findings align with the perspective that language teaching extends beyond linguistic instruction toward fostering intercultural understanding and cultural awareness (Byram, 1997; Baker, 2015). Rather than viewing culture as supplementary content, participants considered cultural awareness a core component of English language teaching that should be preserved even when instructional materials are generated by artificial intelligence. This finding reinforces Kramsch's (1993) argument that language and culture are inseparable because communication inevitably reflects cultural meanings, identities, and social values.

Interestingly, teachers' relatively lower confidence in AI-generated cultural content demonstrates a critical awareness of the limitations of current Generative AI technologies. Instead of accepting AI-generated information unquestioningly, teachers recognized the need for human evaluation before classroom implementation. This perception reflects UNESCO's (2023) recommendation that AI-generated educational materials should be critically examined to ensure their accuracy, inclusiveness, and ethical appropriateness. It also supports Kasneci et al.'s (2023) argument that teachers' professional judgment remains indispensable despite the rapid advancement of large language models.

The findings further suggest that Indonesian EFL teachers increasingly perceive themselves as pedagogical mediators rather than passive users of AI technology. Although GenAI simplifies instructional material development, teachers remain responsible for contextualizing AI-generated content according to learners' sociocultural backgrounds. Such a perception reflects the principles of culturally

responsive teaching (Gay, 2018), which emphasizes that meaningful learning occurs when instructional materials acknowledge learners' cultural identities and lived experiences. Consequently, teachers appear to position GenAI as a supporting resource rather than an autonomous instructional authority.

### **Teachers' Perceptions of the Opportunities and Challenges of Addressing Cultural Awareness While Using Generative AI**

The second research question investigated teachers' perceptions of the opportunities and challenges associated with addressing cultural awareness while using Generative AI in English language teaching. Overall, the results indicate that teachers perceived both substantial opportunities and notable challenges, with an overall mean score of 4.15 (SD = 0.51).

Regarding opportunities, teachers most strongly agreed that GenAI enables the creation of more diverse instructional materials representing different cultural perspectives (Mean = 4.47, SD = 0.54). Participants also believed that AI-assisted learning encourages students to explore intercultural issues through authentic dialogues, stories, and classroom activities (Mean = 4.31, SD = 0.60). Additionally, teachers perceived that GenAI reduced preparation time while increasing opportunities to design culturally contextualized learning materials (Mean = 4.28, SD = 0.63).

However, participants simultaneously expressed considerable concern regarding several challenges. The highest-rated challenge involved the possibility that AI-generated materials might contain culturally inaccurate or misleading information (Mean = 4.58, SD = 0.47). Teachers also identified cultural bias (Mean = 4.39, SD = 0.55), insufficient representation of Indonesian local cultures (Mean = 4.34, SD = 0.60), and students' tendency to trust AI-generated information without critical evaluation (Mean = 4.26, SD = 0.66) as major concerns.

These findings indicate that teachers simultaneously recognize the instructional potential and pedagogical risks associated with GenAI. Rather than adopting either an optimistic or pessimistic stance, teachers appear to adopt a balanced perspective in which technological innovation should be accompanied by critical evaluation and

professional responsibility. This balanced perspective is consistent with recent discussions concerning responsible AI integration in education. Current research increasingly argues that GenAI should function as a collaborative teaching partner rather than as a substitute for teachers' expertise (Kasneci et al., 2023; UNESCO, 2023). The present findings similarly suggest that teachers value AI for its efficiency and creativity while remaining aware that cultural learning requires human interpretation and contextualization.

One particularly noteworthy finding concerns teachers' concerns about the limited representation of Indonesian local cultures. Although GenAI can generate a wide range of cultural examples, teachers perceived that AI-generated content tends to emphasize globally dominant cultural narratives rather than Indonesia's rich local diversity. This finding has important implications for English language teaching because culturally responsive pedagogy encourages teachers to connect classroom learning with learners' own cultural identities (Gay, 2018). Consequently, Indonesian teachers may need to supplement AI-generated materials with locally relevant examples to ensure balanced cultural representation.

Another important implication relates to teachers' emphasis on verifying AI-generated information before classroom use. This finding suggests that teachers increasingly recognize AI literacy as extending beyond technical competence. Effective AI integration also requires critical evaluation, source verification, and ethical decision-making. Such competencies are particularly important when instructional materials involve cultural topics that may influence learners' perceptions of different communities and identities.

Taken together, the findings indicate that Indonesian EFL teachers generally hold positive attitudes toward integrating Generative AI into English language teaching while maintaining a strong commitment to cultural awareness and pedagogical responsibility. Rather than perceiving technology as replacing teachers' professional expertise, participants regarded GenAI as a resource that can enrich language instruction when accompanied by careful evaluation, cultural sensitivity, and culturally responsive teaching practices. These findings suggest that the future integration of Generative AI into English language education should prioritize not

only technological training but also professional development focusing on cultural awareness, AI literacy, and ethical pedagogical decision-making.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study explored Indonesian EFL teachers' perspectives on cultural awareness in Generative AI-assisted English language teaching. The findings indicate that teachers regard cultural awareness as an essential component of English language education that should be preserved despite the increasing use of AI. Although Generative AI was perceived as a valuable tool for supporting lesson planning, material development, and culturally enriched learning activities, teachers emphasized that AI-generated materials must be critically evaluated to ensure their cultural appropriateness, contextual relevance, and educational value. They also recognized both the opportunities and challenges of GenAI, including its potential to provide authentic and diverse cultural content alongside concerns about cultural bias, inaccurate information, limited representation of Indonesian local cultures, and students' overreliance on AI-generated materials.

This study contributes to the growing literature by shifting the focus of AI-assisted English language teaching from technology adoption to the cultural dimension of pedagogy. It highlights the importance of integrating cultural awareness into discussions of Generative AI and provides empirical insights from Indonesian junior high school EFL teachers, a context that remains underrepresented in AI-in-education research. The findings further suggest that effective implementation of GenAI depends not only on technological capability but also on teachers' professional judgment, intercultural competence, and critical AI literacy.

The findings have practical implications for teacher education, professional development, and educational policy. Training programs should combine AI literacy with culturally responsive pedagogy, emphasizing the critical evaluation, verification, and contextual adaptation of AI-generated content. While the study is limited by its relatively small sample size and reliance on self-reported questionnaire data, it provides a foundation for future research employing

qualitative or mixed-methods approaches to examine teachers' classroom practices. Overall, the study concludes that culturally responsive and ethically informed teacher agency remains essential to ensuring that Generative AI enhances, rather than diminishes, the cultural dimension of English language teaching.

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