# The future of EdTech lies in collaboration between AI and educators



The global education market is poised to reach a staggering $10 trillion by 2030, reflecting its expansive growth and importance worldwide. Despite this impressive projection, investment in educational technology (EdTech) has sharply declined, hitting its lowest point since 2014 with only $2.4 billion recorded in 2024. This discrepancy raises important questions about the confidence and direction of EdTech in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

Roberto Hortal, Chief Product & Technology Officer at Wall Street English, explores the reasons behind this disparity and offers insights into the role of artificial intelligence (AI) within education. He argues that while AI has been integrated enthusiastically into education, its current focus on automation often sidelines the essential contribution of educators. Technology aimed at replacing traditional teaching methods, rather than enhancing them, risks undermining the quality of learning experiences.

Hortal emphasises that educators should remain central to EdTech developments, especially as AI becomes more embedded in classrooms. In his view, AI has significant potential when it enhances and extends the influence of teachers rather than displacing them. “AI is a powerful tool, but without the guidance and insights of experienced teachers, its impact is limited,” he explains. He observes that many AI-driven platforms fail to deliver meaningful learning due to a lack of human interaction, which remains crucial for fostering deep understanding and motivation among students.

An example highlighted is the use of AI-powered tutoring tools, which can help teachers identify students who struggle and offer targeted support. However, these tools often fail when implemented without educator involvement, leading to disengagement and diminished effectiveness. This underscores the necessity of integrating AI into education in ways that complement, rather than compete with, human expertise.

Hortal draws parallels with other fields where AI and humans coexist successfully, notably in chess. He references Garry Kasparov, the chess grandmaster who famously lost to IBM’s Deep Blue in 1997 and subsequently promoted “Advanced Chess,” a collaborative model where human intuition and AI computation combine to improve decision-making. This model exemplifies how, in education too, AI can support teachers by processing data and optimising learning paths, but only when guided by human context and emotional intelligence.

Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple, is also cited as a proponent of AI used as a collaborative tool rather than a substitute for human learning. Wozniak argues that genuine learning arises from engagement, curiosity, and critical thinking—qualities that machines alone cannot instil.

Addressing the challenges of AI-driven learning, Hortal points to recent survey data from Wall Street English revealing that 55.2% of users of AI-based language learning apps felt neutral or lacked confidence in their speaking skills post-course. While such apps offer convenience and accessibility, they often fall short in building real-world proficiency and engagement. He notes that gamified learning and constant notifications can contribute to psychological stress, with nearly one-third of users quitting due to anxiety or burnout. Furthermore, 28% of users reported feeling extremely unconfident in their language abilities despite extensive app use, signalling the limitations of AI platforms when not supplemented by human interaction.

The article anticipates the English Language Learning market to grow substantially—reaching an estimated $91.1 billion by 2031, driven in part by AI platforms providing real-time feedback and personalised exercises. However, Hortal stresses that true fluency is generally achieved through live teaching, coaching, and peer collaboration rather than AI alone.

For EdTech to effectively harness AI’s potential, Hortal suggests a multi-faceted approach:

* Involving educators at the inception of AI development to align tools with authentic classroom requirements
* Training teachers to integrate AI as a supportive partner rather than a rival
* Using AI to personalise learning pathways without diminishing student-teacher interaction
* Continuously gathering classroom feedback to refine AI applications

Hortal concludes by emphasising that the future of education technology depends on a collaborative partnership between AI and educators. AI can offer enhanced efficiency, scalability, and data-driven insights, but it is the human expertise that truly unlocks these benefits. Quoting Kasparov: “We’re not replaced; we’re being promoted,” he frames the challenge for EdTech companies as one of placing pedagogy at the heart of technological innovation.

By prioritising the integration of AI with human teaching, the sector aims to build an educational future that is not only technologically advanced but also fundamentally human-centred.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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