

## TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS FOR DEVELOPMENT SPEAKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

### Herramientas tecnológicas para el desarrollo de la capacidad de expresión oral en inglés como lengua extranjera

### Ferramentas tecnológicas para o desenvolvimento de habilidades de conversação em inglês como língua estrangeira

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#### ABSTRACT

Introduction: The change in modality in education has had a significant impact on both students and teachers, thus it is now vital to know about technology tools and their contribution to the teaching-learning process. Furthermore, English has become a globally recognized language, and the development of its four skills has been fundamental to its acquisition. Speaking is considered one of the most fundamental skills within the language, but also one of the most complex to develop. This study seeks to establish a technological tool to develop the ability to speak English in a private institution in Chone. Materials and methods: The technique employed was a mixed approach within a descriptive orientation method, with data acquired through field research that allows for a more direct record of the data with the topic of the study in question while applying the various approaches. We will collect data from high school students using questionnaires and observation sheets, as well as interviewing professors. Results and discussion: The findings imply that, the implementation of the ELSA SPEAK application to improve and develop speaking skills has generated a positive impact on students, improving their intonation, pronunciation and vocabulary in their dialogue activities. Conclusions: It can be concluded that English instructors should consider the ELSA SPEAK App as appropriate technology for teaching pronunciation skills.

**Key words:** Speaking, Technology, Education, Innovation, teaching-learning process.

#### RESUMEN

Introducción: El cambio de modalidad en la educación ha tenido un impacto significativo tanto en los estudiantes como en los docentes, por lo que ahora es vital conocer las herramientas tecnológicas y su aporte al proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Además, el inglés se ha convertido en un idioma reconocido a nivel mundial, y el desarrollo de sus cuatro habilidades ha sido fundamental para su adquisición. El habla es considerada una de las habilidades más fundamentales dentro del idioma, pero también una de las más complejas de desarrollar. Este estudio busca establecer una herramienta tecnológica para desarrollar la habilidad de hablar inglés en una institución privada de Chone. Materiales y métodos: La técnica empleada fue un enfoque mixto dentro de un método de orientación descriptiva, con datos adquiridos a través de una investigación de campo que permite un registro más directo de los datos con el tema de estudio en cuestión al aplicar los diversos enfoques. Se recolectarán datos de estudiantes de secundaria mediante cuestionarios y fichas de observación, así como entrevistas a docentes. Resultados y discusión: Los hallazgos implican que, la implementación de la aplicación ELSA SPEAK para mejorar y desarrollar las habilidades de habla ha generado un impacto positivo en

los estudiantes, mejorando su entonación, pronunciación y vocabulario en sus actividades de diálogo. Conclusiones: Se puede concluir que los instructores de inglés deberían considerar la aplicación ELSA SPEAK como una tecnología apropiada para enseñar habilidades de pronunciación.

**Palabras clave:** Hablar, Tecnología, Educación, Innovación, proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

## RESUMO

Introdução: A mudança na modalidade de ensino teve um impacto significativo tanto nos alunos quanto nos professores, por isso é fundamental conhecer as ferramentas tecnológicas e sua contribuição no processo de ensino-aprendizagem. Além disso, o inglês se tornou uma língua reconhecida globalmente, e o desenvolvimento de suas quatro habilidades foi fundamental para sua aquisição. Falar é considerada uma das habilidades mais fundamentais da linguagem, mas também uma das mais complexas de se desenvolver. Este estudo busca estabelecer uma ferramenta tecnológica para desenvolver a capacidade de falar inglês em uma instituição privada em Chone. Materiais e métodos: A técnica utilizada foi uma abordagem mista dentro de um método de orientação descritiva, com dados adquiridos por meio de pesquisa de campo que permite um registro mais direto dos dados com o sujeito de estudo em questão ao aplicar as diversas abordagens. Os dados serão coletados de alunos do ensino médio por meio de questionários e formulários de observação, bem como entrevistas com professores. Resultados e discussão: Os resultados indicam que a implementação do aplicativo ELSA SPEAK para melhorar e desenvolver habilidades de fala gerou um impacto positivo nos alunos, melhorando sua entonação, pronúncia e vocabulário em suas atividades de diálogo. Conclusões: Pode-se concluir que os instrutores de língua inglesa devem considerar o aplicativo ELSA SPEAK como uma tecnologia apropriada para o ensino de habilidades de pronúncia.

**Palavras-chave:** Fala, Tecnologia, Educação, Inovação, processo de ensino-aprendizagem.

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## INTRODUCTION

The necessity to adapt to technology breakthroughs and changing societal expectations drives the ongoing evolution of teaching and learning processes. Educational innovation occurs as a dynamic and planned response to these issues, including both creative and strategic components to improve educational quality and effectiveness (Carbonell, 2002; Salinas, 2004). In this context, integrating modern technical educational tools provides a chance to rejuvenate traditional teaching techniques, particularly in areas where major inadequacies have been recognized, such as the development of English-speaking abilities.

The teaching of English-speaking abilities is frequently hampered by conventional techniques that lack originality and fail to completely involve students in the educational process. This lack of desire, along with boredom and a resulting loss of confidence, is a considerable barrier to language competency advancement (Williams & Burden, 1999). The need to investigate and develop novel technology educational materials that solve these challenges and successfully enhance the development of English-speaking abilities is clear.

Sanches and Palmero (2014) note substantial changes in the style of teaching and learning, citing the revolution brought about by new technology tools in education. They emphasize that these changes are unimaginable in comparison to previous years, and that they may be related to how information is accessed, how teachers interact with students, the teaching methodologies used, or how assessments are conducted, and emphasize the importance of teachers adapting to and engaging with these transformations for the benefit of education.

This study is being undertaken at a private school in Chone, Manabí province. The college provides eight hours of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction each week, and the English language is prioritized in the students' entire education. However, upper middle school students commonly fail to express themselves in English and communicate their views with others due to a variety of challenges that impede the development of English-speaking abilities. Students may experience difficulties in developing their talents owing to a lack of technological tool implementations.

Williams and Burden (1999, p. 137) argue that "learning a universal language must fundamentally aim at developing communicative interaction" since "interaction and communication constitute essential functions of language" (Richards and Rodgers, 1998, p. 26). Language must thus be viewed as a resource for interacting and communicating with speakers from various nations.

According to Garcia and Garcia (2020), the importance of using innovative technologies in education resides in their ability to transform society, facilitate access to educational resources as they allow exploring and

developing pedagogical approaches and processes that harness the potential of technologies to enhance teaching, virtual course planning, assessment, the generation of didactic materials, and visible learning, adapting to crisis situations such as This encompasses computational thinking, ethical technology usage, digital literacy, and adaptability to virtual learning settings.

It is deemed important to do so because it is possible to create a technological tool to help students improve their speaking skills in English as a Foreign Language, and it is critical to collect essential information that aids in understanding the issues raised in this section using analysis techniques. Data gathering approaches such as teacher interviews, observation sheets, and surveys can help researchers understand the value of developing technology tools to improve speaking skills.

This study answers the following questions. 1. What teaching strategies can be used to use technological applications to help improve speaking skills? (Interview) 2. What kind of technological tools help improve speaking skills? (Observation sheets) 3. How do technological tools help improve speaking skills? (Survey). To contribute to the innovation of teaching-learning process of EFL in education by finding the elements that influenced the speaking abilities in EFL, the research begins to study with a review of the principals of (1) Technological tools, (2) Speaking skills as a foreign language. The purpose of this study is to establish a technological tool for development speaking skills in English as a Foreign Language.

This research is the authors original work illustrating that, while there may be comparable themes, the concept and scientific theories are separate because they strive to solve an issue that occurred in a specific Educational Unit in Chone, therefore improving and strengthening parts of English language acquisition and instruction.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The current study looked into the circumstances behind technological tools for development speaking skills in English as a Foreign Language by using an Analytic-Critic, comparative -prepositive method in a private school in Canton Chone, Manabí, Ecuador. The sample size was 65 students, 60% male and 40% female, aged between – to – years in 10th grade of high school. Validated with an interview which is is a flexible data collection strategy that allows for the use of several sensory channels, including verbal, nonverbal, speaking, and listening. It can be organized while yet allowing for spontaneity, and the researcher can use it to gather more information on the studied issue as well as to go deeper into more difficult or relevant content. (Cheron, Salvagni & Colomby, 2022). Meanwhile, an observation is a qualitative research approach that involves not only observation of participants but also ethnography and research. Avedian (2014) states that surveys are used to gather data from a sample in order to create quantitative descriptors of a larger population than the one that was sampled. They are also used to gather data that describes characteristics of a population that are desired but not directly observable.

## RESULTS

Table 1 Data Triangulation of the three research instruments

Categories	Research Instruments		
	Interview	Observation Sheets	Survey
Technological tools	The incorporation of technological tools is essential during language acquisition, and gives a plus to its development.	Students are actively engaged when technological tools are used to help develop their speaking skills.	Students indicate that they like it when teachers implement technological tools in their classes.
Innovative strategies	The use of innovative strategies along with incorporation with technology has played a significant role in the student learning process.	Students show interest in English classes when the teacher uses something new in them.	Students comment that using innovative things makes them want to continue working and learning.
Speaking	Speaking is one of the most important and influential skills to acquire in the English language.	Students find it difficult to pronounce some words and do not have much vocabulary to express their ideas.	Students mention that pronunciation and vocabulary are difficult for them when they speak, but that they have improved in line with the incorporation of technology and strategies in the classroom.

Classroom environment	A good school environment fosters good learning.	A positive atmosphere is observed within the classroom and students respond actively to the activities scheduled within the classroom.	Students feel comfortable if the environment in which they work is positive.
Motivation	Motivation plays a fundamental role in a student's learning process.	Students are motivated to learn during their class lessons.	Students believe that being motivated by their teachers has made them more self-confident.

Source: results obtained from the interview with the EFL teachers, the observation sheet and survey carried out with the students.

In the category 1.- Technological tools. - The statistics demonstrate that using hand-held technology instruments in conjunction with creative tactics promotes language development and improvement. During the observation sheet, it was clear that students had a good attitude and a willingness to study themes in English using interactive platforms or technological tools, which was confirmed in the survey that utilizing these tools enhances the English language teaching-learning process.

In the category 2.- Innovative strategies. - The results collected using the specified instruments revealed that instructors felt that creative tactics are an important aspect of learning English. The observation sheet revealed that students respond actively to the implementation of new strategies as well as the incorporation of technological tools, which assists students in better understanding the topics, performing and developing their activities within their pedagogical process, as evidenced by the survey, in which they claim that their behavior during lessons improves when these teaching methods are used.

In the category 3.- Speaking. – One of the most significant and essential skills within the English language, is how the teacher defines it in the interview, in such a way that during the observation sheet, it was possible to notice that the students have certain problems to develop the ability to speak, confirming in the survey that the students indicate that they have certain problems to express their ideas because they do not have a wide vocabulary and that they fear making mistakes in the pronunciation.

In the category 4.- Classroom environment. – The atmosphere of a learning process is critical. A positive setting increases the likelihood of a smooth learning process. This is evident from the instructors' comments during the interview. The observation sheet indicated that the classroom setting is harmonious, allowing the cognitive process to improve greatly. The pupils affirm that they are comfortable with their peers and that they like working with them when the occasion comes.

In the category 5.- Motivation. - Motivation has consistently been an important aspect in the successful learning and growth of a language. Teachers believe it is critical to inspire students during their training. The data in the observation sheet shows that students are noticeably motivated when the teacher uses the technological tools in conjunction with dynamic strategies that facilitate the understanding of the language and incorporate resources within it, as well as what they say in the survey, which confirms that they are motivated and the environment is better when the teacher uses these types of strategies to enhance their skills, especially their speaking performance

### Pre and Post Test Analysis

In the first stage a Pretest was taken to the student in the group B Given this circumstance and the fact that speaking is one of the most important language skills and one of the most difficult to develop, researchers have used the technological tool ELSA Speak to assess the speaking proficiency of 10th year high school students. Through a post-test, it was possible to observe that the students had maximized their knowledge, identified their mistakes, and then improved their pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, and fluency.

This part addressed the research findings and the conversation. The study focuses on implementing the ELSA Speak Application to help students improve their pronunciation abilities. The findings were dropped from the classroom's learning activity cycles, and the final score was applied to the post-test. It was also backed by the findings from the interview and questionnaire. It appears in the table of pronunciation scores in the T-Test table.

Table 2. Students' Pronunciation Performance in Cycle One

	Accuracy in Vocabulary	Fluency	Pronunciation	Communication/Intonation
Preliminary C1	3	2	3	3

The preliminary investigation found a decrease in student performance throughout cycle one. To begin with, there were around five teaching and learning classes during Cycle 1. The lesson plan was created, produced,

and organized by the researcher. The researcher develops an activity called role play to analyze tenth-year high school students' speaking abilities and identify their areas of weakness in order to assist them in overcoming and enhancing their abilities. In light of this, the exercise was assessed, showing that the students struggled with language, intonation, and pronunciation in order to communicate their views succinctly and clearly. Prior to the post-test, the average pronunciation test results for 30 students were 50, with the highest score of 65.

For starters, in Cycle two, it had around various classes. The researcher developed, prepared, and arranged the lesson plan, and utilized the ELSA Speak App to learn how to pronounce. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was the approach employed for instruction. During the preparatory phase, activities included greeting students, confirming their presence, and describing instructional materials and objectives. Indeed, brainstorming should always be done before the primary activities to involve students in the learning process. The average pronunciation test score for 30 pupils was 65, with the highest score of 80.

The researcher provided the materials to be read regularly before the pupils uttered them. Furthermore, role-playing was used once more with the same group of kids in order to examine the process and growth, moving beyond traditional instruction to one in which the use of technology is essential. The researcher next demonstrated the ELSA Speak Application, which could be downloaded from a smartphone, and explained the benefits, functionalities, and features accessible on the app for learning to pronunciation.

To assess students' pronunciation skills, the researcher had them read the material aloud one by one before utilizing the ELSA Speak app. In the midst of studying, it came time to use the app. The researcher provided training and instructions for running ELSA Speak. Students may also choose the degree and stages of skill development and customize them according on their pronunciation ability. The researcher watched all students' activities while using ELSA Speak in class. The children were engaged and determined to study. They have the opportunity to learn about flaws and inaccuracies in sounding words based on app system answers. The adjustment and feedback were quickly provided. The pronunciation assessment took into account correctness in grammar, vocabulary, fluency, appropriacy, and comprehensibility. Each has various estimate ratings.

## DISCUSSION

This fits to the (Sarmita Samad & Aminullah, 2019) research, which concluded that the ELSA Speak app was appropriate for learning to pronounce. Many of the accessible material categories were good, such as programs based on English competency level. Indeed, elements like as vowel and consonant sounds, diphthongs, syllables, and word stress can serve as learning references.

Table 2. Students' Pronunciation Performance in Cycle Two

Preliminary	Accuracy in Vocabulary	Fluency	Pronunciation	Communication/Intonation
C1	3	2	3	3
C2	4	3	4	5

The key differences were the learning exercises performed while utilizing the ELSA Speak App. The table above indicates considerable improvement in pupils' pronunciation skills. It arose from the second cycle's scores. Students were enthusiastic about using the ELSA Speak App to improve their pronunciation. The attitude toward learning may be influenced and managed. They can learn by themselves. This remark was reinforced by the (Haryadi, S., & Aprianoto, 2020) study, which found that pronunciation apps can provide certain benefits and have a favorable influence on individual learning and classroom involvement.

The results presented suggests that the ELSA Speak App can provide greater stimulation and input to kids who are learning to pronounce and speak. Students will find it highly useful and handy to use in the classroom. This new software offers a variety of functions, including student grades in English, ranging from beginner to advanced. The instructor can utilize it at any moment to help with pedagogical design.

## CONCLUSIONS

The results and discussion in the previous section indicate that the ELSA Speak application can increase students' pronunciation abilities and motivation. This was demonstrated by the pupils' performance and the results gained. Students can hear and replicate sounds just like they would in their original language. Students' voice recordings can be promptly received in the system and corrected as good.

The study emphasizes the need of a student-centered pedagogy that uses technology to enhance involvement, cooperation, and authenticity in language acquisition. While there are variations in the availability of electronic resources among educational institutions, there is a strong desire and potential among students and instructors to employ technological tools in the English learning process. However, more integration and reflection on how to properly use technology in the classroom, as well as appropriate teacher training in its deployment, are necessary. To ensure successful and efficient learning, relevant app selections for language skills should be considered before employing them in teaching and learning.

English teachers cannot ignore their own English skills. Successful language instruction relies on the teacher's pedagogy and classroom management skills. Furthermore, teachers should understand their pupils' wants and desires. Finally, English instructors should consider the ELSA SPEAK App as appropriate technology for teaching pronunciation skills.

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### **Conflict of interest**

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

### **Declaration of authorship responsibility**

We, the authors of the aforementioned manuscript, DECLARE that we have directly contributed to its intellectual content, as well as to the genesis and analysis of its data; therefore, we are in a position to take public responsibility for it and accept that their names appear in the list of authors in the order indicated. In addition, we have complied with the ethical requirements of the aforementioned publication, having consulted the Declaration of Ethics and Malpractice in Publication.

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