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ELENA SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND LANGUAGES  
PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN  
LANGUAGES**

**“Exploring Digital Engagement Strategy to Strengthen  
Interactivity in EFL Learners”**

**RESEARCH PROJECT**

As a prerequisite to obtain a:

**BACHELOR’S DEGREE IN PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL  
AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

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## **Advisor's Approval**

In my role as Advisor of the research paper under the title “EXPLORING DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY TO STRENGTHEN INTERACTIVITY IN EFL LEARNERS” by Mendoza Cedeño Santiago Andres and Tomala Aragon Romina Anabella undergraduate students of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major, at School of Educational Sciences and Languages at Universidad Estatal Peninsula de Santa Elena, I declare that after oriented, studied and reviewed the project, I approve it in its entirety, because it meets the requirements and is sufficient for its submission to the evaluation of the academic tribunal.

Sincerely,



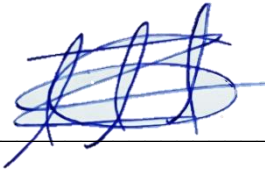
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## **Acknowledgment**

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**With deep affection, Tomala Aragón Romina Anabella.**

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**With deep affection Mendoza Cedeño Santiago Andres**

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this research to my family, especially my mother, Andrea Cedeño, and my grandmother, who would be happy with my progress and celebrate with me.

-Mendoza Cedeño Santiago Andres

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this research to my family, my boyfriend, and those I mentioned earlier in my acknowledgments, but above all to someone very special who always dreamed of seeing me as a professional. Sadly, life did not allow him to live this moment with me: my grandfather, Roman del Pezo Roca, who is in heaven. I know that from up there, you are very proud of me, and you know that I achieved it.

-Tomala Aragón Romina Anabella.

## Abstract

This research explored how digital engagement strategies can strengthen interactivity among EFL learners in virtual environments. This study considered a qualitative and phenomenological approach to get and analyze the experience and perception of the interviewees; therefore, the sample used was EFL teachers from Universidad Estatal Peninsula de Santa Elena (UPSE). The data was collected through open-ended interviews to find the challenges, opportunities, and perspectives when using digital engagement strategies in virtual classes. The results showed that teachers used tools like Padlet, Kahoot, Mentimeter, Canva, and Zoom breakout rooms to foster interactivity, motivation, and creativity among EFL learners. However, they also face challenges, such as poor motivation from EFL learners, resulting in low student interactivity, and different levels of English, which also harm student participation.

Results demonstrated that using digital strategies with meaningful purposes and teacher adaptation are key to improving their effectiveness. The previously mentioned aspects are supported by constructivist and social presence theories.

To conclude, digital engagement strategies are powerful ways to enhance interactivity and learning outcomes when applied to meaningful objectives. It is recommended that educators undergo continuous training. If possible, institutional support is a must to keep every educator up to date with the latest strategies and findings, so they can develop their classes with digital engagement strategies that promote interactivity, therefore authentic engagement.

**Keywords:** digital engagement, interactivity, online learning, constructivism, social presence.

## Resumen

Esta investigación exploró cómo las estrategias de participación digital pueden fortalecer la interactividad entre los aprendices de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) en entornos virtuales. Este estudio consideró un enfoque cualitativo y fenomenológico para captar y analizar la experiencia y percepción de los entrevistados; por ello, la muestra utilizada fue de docentes de EFL de la Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena (UPSE). Los datos se recopilaban mediante entrevistas abiertas para identificar los desafíos, oportunidades y perspectivas al usar estrategias de participación digital en clases virtuales. Los resultados mostraron que los docentes emplean herramientas como Padlet, Kahoot, Mentimeter, Canva y las salas de grupos en Zoom para fomentar la interactividad, la motivación y la creatividad entre los aprendices EFL. Sin embargo, también enfrentan desafíos, como la baja motivación de los estudiantes, que resulta en poca interactividad, y diferentes niveles de dominio del inglés, lo cual también afecta la participación estudiantil. Los resultados demostraron que el uso de estrategias digitales con propósitos significativos y la adaptación del docente son clave para mejorar su efectividad. Los aspectos mencionados anteriormente están respaldados por teorías constructivistas y de presencia social. Para concluir, las estrategias de participación digital son formas poderosas de potenciar la interactividad y los resultados de aprendizaje cuando se aplican a objetivos relevantes. Se recomienda que los docentes reciban capacitación continua. Si es posible, el apoyo institucional es fundamental para mantener a cada educador actualizado con las últimas estrategias y hallazgos, de modo que puedan desarrollar sus clases con estrategias digitales que promuevan la interactividad y, por ende, un compromiso auténtico.

**Palabras clave:** Participación digital, interactividad, aprendizaje en línea, constructivismo, presencia social.

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## Introduction

The constant growth of technologies in education has brought with it various changes, transforming teaching and learning, especially in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. Most virtual educational platforms offer teachers new opportunities to foster or, in some ways, encourage communication, interaction, and creativity. Despite this, many teachers continue to face constant challenges linked to low student participation, low motivation, and passive online learning behaviors. All these difficulties highlight the need for effective strategies in digital interaction that promote real interaction and provide students with meaningful learning experiences.

The main goal of this research is to analyze how digital engagement strategies enhance the interactivity of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, focusing on the diverse experiences of teachers in the PINE faculty at Universidad Peninsula de Santa Elena (UPSE). Through a qualitative and phenomenological approach, interviews conducted by PINE teachers identified some barriers, advantages, and perspectives on digital tools in virtual teaching. By connecting the findings with constructivism and social presence theories, the research highlights active participation and authentic communication. It decisively seeks to improve virtual teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) by highlighting strategies that encourage collaboration, motivation, and student-centered learning, offering practical insights for more dynamic and interactive English classes in virtual environments.

## **Chapter I**

### **The Problem**

#### **Research Topic**

Digital engagement strategy in teaching English.

#### **Title Project**

Exploring digital engagement strategy to strengthen interactivity in EFL learners.

#### **Problem Statement**

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching faces challenges in virtual learning. Some institutions require English language courses for students in multiple programs. During online English lessons, attention and participation levels decline among unengaged students. A problem that is observed in class when students do not interact, often not turning their cameras on, or not even answering when being asked. The previously mentioned issues are notoriously harming the learning process of non-English learners. Though educators use all their resources to try to engage students and motivate them to participate, their efforts are not reaching the learners (Li, 2022).

Addressing this problem is crucial to enhancing the learning process. However, as technology evolves, digital engagement activities have been improving, demonstrating that it is a key aspect to consider.

For instance, Han et al. (2024) showed that when using digital engagement activities, peers were more prone to positive changes in the three main aspects of engagement: affective, cognitive, and physical.

Therefore, digital engagement strategies must be approached carefully and with meaningful goals in mind to achieve their maximum potential in classes.

The application of these strategies with appropriate design attempts to improve interactivity and engagement among EFL learners, thus improving their overall performance in academic activities and even positively influencing their behavior with a boost in motivation.

Acknowledging this issue of engagement in classes goes hand in hand with success, motivation, and valuable language knowledge. Therefore, if online classes do not actively engage trainees, it can lead to low grades and poor use of foreign languages in specific cases. This research project aims to identify effective digital engagement strategies to provide teachers with exceptional tools for improved classes that motivate students in a learning environment with significant learning experiences.

### **Problem Question**

How do digital engagement strategies strengthen interactivity in EFL learners, considering teachers' experience?

### **Specific Questions**

- What are the primary institutional, technological, and pedagogical barriers that UPSE EFL teachers encounter when implementing digital engagement strategies in their classrooms?
- How do teachers believe digital engagement strategies contribute to, or hinder, promoting interactivity among students in EFL classrooms?
- What advantages and opportunities do digital engagement strategies provide based on teachers' experiences from UPSE?

### **General Objective**

To identify digital engagement strategies to strengthen interactivity among EFL learners, considering teachers' experience and relevant theoretical perspectives.

- To explore teachers' challenges and barriers when implementing digital engagement strategies.
- To analyze the advantages and opportunities digital engagement strategies provide to EFL teachers.
- To examine teachers' perspectives on using digital engagement strategies to promote interactivity in EFL classrooms.

**Justification of the Main Topic:**

As discussed, interaction is crucial when learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Today's digital world provides students with many opportunities to practice the language through online tools and platforms actively. This study explores various digital interaction strategies that can help increase participation and motivation among EFL learners. It also seeks to address some limitations of traditional teaching methods for real language practice. Conducting research in this area is important because it can make learning more motivating, relevant, and exciting by connecting it with modern digital interaction, making the overall experience livelier and engaging. For instance, some examples provided by Figueroa & Jung (2025) in their study, which involved the use of VR, students were excited to explore different countries in virtual reality instead of observing images on a screen, so by living this experience of common places and vocabulary, learners will perceive how significant the new vocabulary and expressions they learn in the classroom are, with the combination of the previous mentioned (immersive experiences & realistic context) motivation within peer increased, so did their active participation.

While there is some understanding of EFL's interactivity and the use of educational technology, a gap remains in the literature on implementing and perceiving digital strategies in classroom environments, research as Salih & Omar (2024) shows that digital tools provide motivational and engagement benefits. However, Salam et al. (2023) and Nadya et al. (2024) recalled, there is a shortage of information on EFL teachers' challenges when incorporating these techniques.

Therefore, this research emphasizes the need for more studies on how digital interaction methods can enhance interactivity in EFL teaching and learning. It aims to identify effective Strategies and offer practical advice for educators to make technology use more human by

examining. Challenges, analyzing barriers, and considering teachers' perspectives.

Hence our study will contribute intellectually by identifying the most common challenges teachers face when implementing digital engagement strategies, how they address them, and what strategies they use.

## Chapter II

### Theoretical Framework

#### Background and History

Researchers are exploring ways to apply modern technology to make teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) classes lively and captivating. By examining the numerous aspects of modern technology, they are trying to figure out how to make the learning experience more engaging. They have demonstrated that communication and student participation can be significantly improved with online and blended teaching methods (Johler, 2022).

Oral skill teaching to EFL students is an ability that has been practiced for a long time without the technology enhancing modern teaching methods. Vindyasari et al. (2022) showed that online teaching of speaking resulted in heightened student performance. Neiva Montaña & Neiva Montaña (2021) concluded that constructive online teaching frameworks can improve the learning experiences to a more engaging and human-centered level, which translates to higher participation and motivation from learners. Moreover, Tjalla et al. (2023) showed the impact of well-structured virtual interactions on collaborative learning and how it can significantly increase language proficiency through the comparison study.

Accounts from students provide additional support for the effectiveness of the improvements. For instance, a remote course evaluation indicated that many of the participants believe that digital spaces tend to be more personal and facilitate the acquisition of communication skills (Alshumaimeri & Alhumud, 2021). Additionally, students achieve more favorable learning outcomes when they participate in reflective exercises in asynchronous class sessions. The benefits of the collaborative approach to learning are apparent in studies that demonstrate the use of Google Docs enhances interaction and increases participation

(Purwaningtyas et al., 2023).

From an educational perspective, digital interaction is also important for improving various aspects. Yapici et al. (2023) establishes that digital interaction, specifically in virtual environments, depends on factors such as teaching strategies and digital literacy.

Teacher participation is important because it is linked to student participation in these environments. Alahmadi & Muslim Alraddadi (2020) offered additional information by stating that in-person classes provide much greater linguistic interactivity, which is often interrupted in other cases due to unstable internet connections.

During the health crisis, several studies mentioned that the specific design of videoconference classes significantly improved social presence and academic outcomes in the context of English as a Foreign Language.

Bailey (2022) followed through the results in multiple virtual groups and demonstrated that achievement in learning is enhanced through active videoconferencing instead of passive learning. Confirmed results of Don State Technical University, Radchenko & Pervukhina (2020) reinforced that well-organized digital frameworks fostered meaningful, task-oriented interaction in foreign language classes. From this, it can be said that purposeful digital environments significantly enhance communication and interaction in EFL programs, which improve teaching strategies.

## **Pedagogical Basis**

### *Constructivism*

This research is based on constructivism, a pedagogical theory that highlights that learning is a process that must remain active and that knowledge is formed from the experiences and interactions with students on a daily basis, in these circumstances the role of the teacher is in constant progress because they are not only linked to sharing knowledge with students but also teachers are responsible for creating learning environments that are meaningful and enriching for teaching of English as Foreign Language (EFL) (Jean Piaget, 1947).

Constructivism through technology provides us with strategic resources that have been shown not only to improve the quality of the teaching-learning process but also, through it, make the educational environment more interactive and, in this way, promote motivation and raise the academic performance of all students (Concepción et al., 2025).

### *Problem-based Learning*

Problem-based learning is a methodology that focuses on acquiring knowledge and developing skills through the resolution of authentic problems. For instance, according to Barros and Tamblyn (1980), a didactic approach is when students work collaboratively to investigate, analyze, and solve challenges while the teacher is only a mediator or facilitator of the process.

PBL creates an important gap in the teaching of English as a foreign language, since it puts students in real communicative situations where they are required to use English, and this can become somewhat challenging for them, the integration of PBL in digital environments can expand the teaching possibilities due to the use of interactive platforms, virtual simulations and games that help this process since these allow the creation of authentic situations or scenarios

that require the application and use of English as a means of communication, in this way the PLB strengthens interactivity and engagement (Orhan, 2025).

### *Gamification*

Gamification is a valuable and important tool in education, all due to the use of game elements such as earning points, badges, and challenges. By integrating gamification, we can encourage the motivation and interaction of students in this educational environment. Games in the educational environment maintain active learning where students are responsible for building their own knowledge. Several investigations have shown that when implemented in a structured way and with clear objectives, gamification is one of the most powerful strategies for teaching English; it improves English language proficiency and streamlines the process (Cevallos Veloz et al., 2025; Escalante et al., 2025).

When considering various digital methodologies, gamification stands out due to its noticeable results in increasing students' engagement, utilizing reward systems, and providing instant feedback (Shrestha et al., 2021). Research by Naidoo (2023) provides supporting evidence that motivation and retention are key factors in engaging undergraduates in digital, game-based learning environments. Coursework supported viewpoint participation, reinforcing the communicative paradigm emphasizing authentic interaction and situational practice.

Digital engagement tools in classes have greatly fostered interactivity among EFL learners. Canva is a perfect example; this platform is excellent for increasing participation, creativity, and collaboration (Sugiarni et al., 2024). In fact, Brugliera (2024) emphasizes that classes in virtual environments, such as Moodle and Canvas, are yielding positive results in aspects like academic performance and interactivity.

Different researchers emphasize that student engagement approaches must focus on designing a class that is both attractive and meaningful for learners. A study held in Northern Cyprus concluded that using both synchronous and asynchronous activities enhanced participation and interaction levels (Chinaza, 2020). Similarly, research from Canada that involved closing engagement gaps found that digital tools could offer more equitable participation opportunities (Rizk & Davies, 2021). Therefore, digital engagement strategies need to be incorporated into the design and development of EFL learning goals and objectives.

As a case in point, the use of e-learning transforms schooling not only to accommodate personalized learning but also aids socialization as well as the emotional growth of the learner. One of the research studies conducted on the changes occurring in the university learning environments notes that the use of digital technologies promotes self-governance, self-regulation, as well as critical self-reflective processes during learning (Kharchenko et al., 2024).

*Theoretical convergence for strengthening interactivity in EFL.*

The combination of gamification, constructivism, and problem-based learning makes a powerful pedagogical design for digital strategies, thus improving the interactivity of EFL learners. Constructivism supports that learning is an active and social process; gamification provides motivational dynamics that enhance engagement; and lastly, problem-based learning introduces the resolution of real problems as a mechanism of significant knowledge.

When integrating in digital environments, these theories create digital engagement strategies that not only maintain the attention of learners but also promote active participation, collaboration, and the development of communicative competence in English.

Hence, the previous pedagogy mentioned supports our Exploring Digital Engagement Strategy to Strengthen Interactivity in EFL learners, by demonstrating that digital interaction that is developed considering significant problems, paves an effective way to impel EFL learning.

## **Theoretical Basis**

### *Social Learning Theory*

This research is supported by the theory of social learning, which states that learning occurs in a social interaction context. This theory highlights the importance of collaboration and observation in developing new skills. In a virtual environment, the interaction between students and teachers can be strengthened with digital tools that facilitate communication and teamwork, which is essential for developing a sense of learning community and the comprehensive development of learners (Ramos et al., 2025).

### *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)*

CLT is a fundamental theory because of its primary objective, which is to develop communicative competence among peers. In this theory, interaction is the learning process's method and goal. Digital tools contribute by creating contexts in which authentic environments motivate students to use English to share ideas and information. This contributes to improving fluency and speaking accuracy (Armendáriz et al., 2024).

### *Social Presence Theory*

Research on social presence theory emphasizes the value of creating an online community. A study by Bailey (2022) showed that people who participate in interactive video conferences tend to foster connections, increasing their social presence and, in turn, improving learning and participation. A similar study in Ecuador found that the way people interact through

online platforms enhances interaction, communication, and group cohesion in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom (Tjalla et al., 2023).

Research has confirmed these theoretical viewpoints on the role of interactivity in promoting the most beneficial language learning practices. They emphasize the need to create digital engagement activities based on the appropriate use of interactivity to enhance learning in EFL.

### **Legal Basis**

The articles that are mentioned below highlight the importance of education for every human being, as well as the way English should be taught in academic environments.

#### *Constitución de la República del Ecuador*

In the “*Constitución de la República del Ecuador*” (CRE.) the following articles are mentioned:

**Art. 16.-**Todas las personas, en forma individual o colectiva, tienen derecho a:

1. El acceso universal a las tecnologías de información y comunicación.

**Art. 17.-** El Estado fomentará la pluralidad y la diversidad en la comunicación, y al efecto:

1. Facilitará la creación y el fortalecimiento de medios de comunicación públicos, privados y comunitarios, así como el acceso universal a las tecnologías de información y comunicación en especial para las personas y colectividades que carezcan de dicho acceso o lo tengan de forma limitada.

(Constitución de la República del Ecuador, 2021).

**Art. 349.-** El Estado garantizará al personal docente, en todos los niveles y

modalidades, estabilidad, actualización, formación continua y mejoramiento pedagógico y académico; una remuneración justa, de acuerdo a la profesionalización, desempeño y méritos académicos. La ley regulará la carrera docente y el escalafón; establecerá un sistema nacional de evaluación del desempeño y la política salarial en todos los niveles. Se establecerán políticas de promoción, movilidad y alternancia docente (Constitución de la República del Ecuador, 2021).

**Art. 385.-** El sistema nacional de ciencia, tecnología, innovación y saberes ancestrales, en el marco del respeto al ambiente, la naturaleza, la vida, las culturas y la soberanía, tendrá como finalidad:

1. Generar, adaptar y difundir conocimientos científicos y tecnológicos.
2. Desarrollar tecnologías e innovaciones que impulsen la producción nacional, eleven la eficiencia y productividad, mejoren la calidad de vida y contribuyan a la realización del buen vivir (Constitución de la República del Ecuador, 2021).

## Chapter III

### Methodological Framework

#### Methods

This study focuses on a qualitative research approach and explores how digital participation strategies can strengthen interactivity and engagement among English as a foreign language (EFL) students. Qualitative research is appropriate for this study because it seeks comprehensive, descriptive information about teachers' experiences, focusing on how and why student participation is often lacking in virtual environments. We also explore what teachers are doing to change this and maintain engagement.

This applied study focuses on understanding the phenomenon and offers practical solutions so teachers can improve student participation in virtual classes and maintain engagement and interactivity.

In the area of language teaching, Nassaji (2020) argues that all reliability criteria, such as credibility, dependability, and confirmability, are essential to support the severity. Meanwhile, (Busaidi & Dydowicz, 2025) Said that qualitative research helps teachers to discover challenges and strategies that can improve the participation and interactivity of EFL students in virtual environments.

#### Type of Research

##### *Phenomenological Studies*

A phenomenological approach matches the type of research because it seeks to understand teachers' experiences and thoughts, which are very valuable for the outcome of studies (Badil et al., 2023). With this approach, the study focuses on interpreting participants' answers to questions based on the Digital Engagement Strategy. Therefore, it will provide

insights into the challenges, opportunities, and preferences when using the Digital Engagement Strategy to promote engagement and interactivity among EFL learners.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

#### *One-on-one interview*

According to Ribeiro dos Santos (2022) this type of interview is one of the most effective paths to gather qualitative information through face-to-face interaction with the researcher and the interviewee. As it attempts to know everyone's opinion and knowledge about a certain topic.

Due to the above-mentioned data collection technique, we consider it appropriate to fulfill our questions and objectives.

### **Instruments**

#### *Questionnaire*

Questionnaires in qualitative educational research are a valuable tool because according to questionnaires they facilitate the data collection process when dealing with large amounts of information, the use of this is advantageous due to the simplicity of its application and also because it offers a standardized framework that is responsible for improving the organization and analysis of the collected data, for these reasons the questionnaire in a qualitative study is considered a practical and versatile tool for researchers (Holmes, 2023).

In this study, the questionnaire consists of 8 questions for each interviewee. The purpose of the questionnaire is to explore the different engagement strategies teachers use in virtual environments, considering their experiences in the environment.

## **Type of question**

### *Open-ended questions*

Open-ended questions, due to their characteristics, give the interviewee the chance to explore more in their minds the answer they want to provide. Therefore, creating valuable information that's richer than yes/no types of questions. Hence, this type of question is one of the most used in qualitative research. Thanks to the previous aspect of freedom that Open-ended questions give to interviewees, the answers are more likely to provide useful information about experiences, behaviors, and points of view, thereby facilitating the approach of this study.

## **Population and Sample**

The relevant group to this study is teachers from “Universidad Estatal Peninsula de Santa Elena.” This university is in the coastal region of Ecuador. These teachers are part of the educational programs, more specifically in the field of pedagogy of National and foreign languages. Students learn in English language in different aspects that are made up of vocabulary, oral expression, grammar and, equally important, listening comprehension, taking into account that most of these classes tend to be shared in virtual environments.

The sample for this study, as such, is composed of five professors from the PINE program at the UPSE, who are currently teaching there; therefore, the sampling is entirely intentional, as participants are required to meet specific requirements, criteria, which are that they must have experience teaching English as a Foreign Language in a virtual setting and using Digital Engagement Strategies.

## Chapter IV

### Analysis of Findings

#### **Brief explanation of the findings.**

Based on interviews, it can be said that teachers use a combination of digital tools and collaboration strategies; both contribute to maintaining student engagement in virtual learning.

Some of the digital tools mentioned by the teachers interviewed are Kahoot, Padlet, Wayground, Mentimeter, Canva, Wordwall, Google Docs/Slides, and Zoom breakout rooms. The main importance of all these tools is that teachers can create spaces where interaction, collaboration, and creativity can be seen in a virtual environment.

One relevant strategy emphasized by teachers was collaborative learning. For instance, an interviewee said that with the breakout rooms Zoom provides, she can create group activities and integrate group tasks with Padlet, a strategy that promotes peer interaction and group responsibility. Identically, some argued about the importance of “keeping students busy working all the time” with the use of Padlet and Mentimeter, tools that allow students to share documents, vote in polls, and provide feedback. These strategies align with one theory that was not mentioned before, the social constructivist theory by Vygotsky, a theory that emphasizes the aspect of how learning is enhanced through the social process that comes with interaction.

Another strategy that had been mentioned before in this strategy was Gamification, a strategy that teachers pointed out in the interview. Using tools like Kahoot, Wordwall, Wayground, and Bamboozle, teachers can create competitive activities that are enjoyable experiences for learners. It was mentioned that the use of Wordwall could be at the beginning of a class to review vocabulary in an active way, also some described that quizzes and point-based challenges are a good way to motivate students to keep them focused on all the virtual classes.

This aspect is highly related to the meaning of gamified learning, in which elements such as competition and reward can improve interactivity and engagement.

The last important tendency between teachers was the use of visual and creative tools. It was suggested that Canva not only helps to maintain engagement but also to increase creativity.

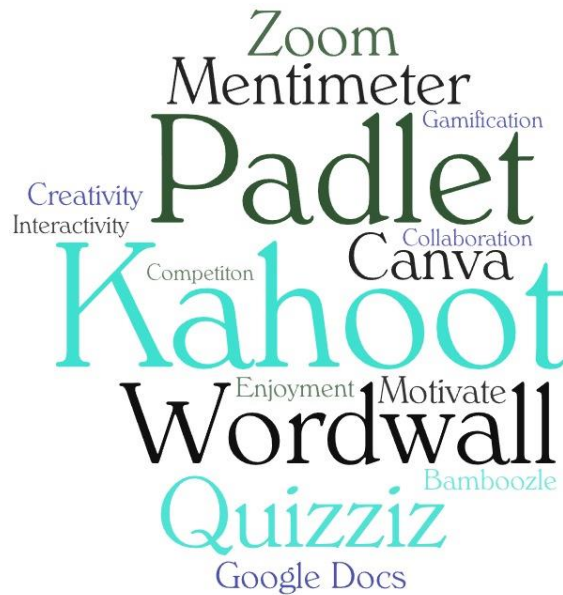
### **Interpretation of data from the interview aimed at teachers.**

*Question 1: Based on your experience, what strategies or tools have worked best for you in keeping students engaged in online English classes?*

For these questions, teachers had similar answers as to which tools have worked the best for them; some of them are: Padlet, Kahoot, Wordwall, Wayground, Mentimeter, Canva, Google Docs, Zoom breakout rooms, and Bamboozle. All mentioned tools are very valuable to teachers since with them they can maintain engagement effectively, as well as create environments that foster collaboration and interaction among peers, an aspect that is important to avoid having students feel isolated; instead, they group up with others and learn with them. For instance, activities in breakout rooms provided by Zoom or tasks on Padlet motivate students to share their knowledge and interact with others. Giving them a sense of community. To go further as to why these tools are important, we have some that highlight Gamification. These tools are Kahoot and Wayground, which can transform a simple activity into a competitive and fun activity, making them more motivated, thus keeping them engaged.

## Figure 1

### *Question 1 Keywords*



*Note.* Figure created by authors using WordArt

*Question 2: Considering your experience, what advice would you give to other teachers who want to use digital engagement strategies effectively?*

During the interviews, teachers advised that it is very important to choose certain types of tools that adapt to the needs of students, and in such a way as not to saturate them with the excessive use of platforms that could discourage or confuse students. The interviewees suggested that digital resources should be ensured so that they have a learning purpose and, in this way, adapt them to the student's context. Several of the teachers emphasized that activities should be interactive and not mechanical so that communication can be encouraged authentically in the language, teachers also highlighted creativity and flexibility as an important requirement because through these their colleagues are encouraged to create spaces or design tasks that allow students

to get involved not only because of the tool but also because of the learning challenge that is presented, through these tips teachers affirm that learning is more effective when students actively participate in classes either with meaningful tasks that can connect work in virtual classrooms with real life, teaching staff are aware that their work influences decision-making and moves from theory to practice.

## Figure 2

*Question 2 Keywords*



*Note.* Figure created by authors using WordArt

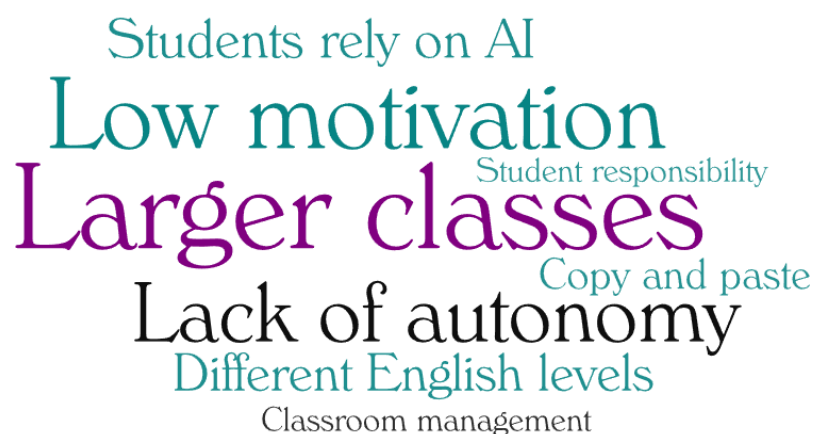
*Question 6: What pedagogical challenges have you encountered when trying to engage students with digital tools?*

Teachers talked about many pedagogical challenges. Most of them agreed that larger class sizes can make feedback less accurate and difficult to manage, but a teacher considers that

class sizes are not relevant when working with exercises since they're the same for everyone. Language level is another complication for teachers; many students in advanced semesters are not up to the proficiency that teachers expect, resulting in a disparity when activities are given to them to solve. Some resolve the activity without problems, but others can't without help, sometimes relying on AI to solve the activity. Motivation is also a concern among teachers, many of them argued that even when using some interaction tools students remain silent, often having their cameras off and not responding when called, interviewees propose that there is a several lack of autonomous work in students, often seeing as online classes are not that important compared to a face to face class, so students just put the minimum effort and therefore usually just copy and paste when working in activities. Hence, even if teachers put a lot of effort into searching for and applying digital tools and strategies, it's still necessary to have a good understanding of classroom management.

### Figure 3

*Question 6 Keywords*



*Note.* Figure created by authors using WordArt

*Question 8: What future opportunities do you see with the use of digital tools in teaching English?*

Most of the teachers interviewed emphasized the future integration of artificial intelligence into the teaching process, using immersive environments such as virtual reality or platforms that allow for more personalized learning experiences. Teachers also highlighted the potential of online cultural exchanges where teachers and students from other countries can interact in real time, making learning more authentic and motivating. On the other hand, several teachers also agreed that innovations could transform English language teaching. However, their comments emphasized the importance of guidance and critical use to avoid superficial or distracting applications. Finally, participants emphasized a vision of the future with more interactive classrooms geared toward students and with global connections that facilitate communication through technology, using exchanges, virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and other tools.

#### **Figure 4**

*Question 8 Keywords*



*Note.* Figure created by authors using WordArt

*Analysis and discussion of the interview versus the bibliographic review.*

In the middle of the interviews, teachers highlighted the use of several digital tools as the best to promote interactivity, collaboration, and communication between students. Among these tools were: Kahoot, Padlet, Mentimeter, Canva, Wordwall, and Zoom. The strategies mentioned by the teachers mostly coincide with all the material reviewed in the theoretical framework, where Cevallos Veloz et al. (2025) stated that gamification and other collaborative platforms also, according to Purwaningtyas et al. (2023) considerably improve the participation, interaction and motivation of students in virtual environments, the constructivist basis was also importantly highlighted, where it is defined that digital tools create interactive educational environments that allow students to build knowledge.

The teachers also stressed the importance of selecting digital tools that fit the needs of the students and avoiding, in every possible way, overloading them with too many platforms. Those interviewed advised that, as teachers, they should create meaningful and, above all, practical tasks, leaving out mechanical exercises, and this coincides with what Armendáriz et al. (2024) tells us in communicative teaching in languages that highlights the importance of authentic communication, and together with the studies of Rizk & Davies (2021), where it tells us about the need for equitable and purposeful digital interaction, then the point where practice supports the idea that technology must, in some way, be justified pedagogically, not simply adapted.

Within all the answers, educators highlighted the fact that larger class sizes, different language levels, poor motivation, and students' passive behavior (e.g., cameras off, not responding to calls) are significantly harming students' learning, all these problems resonate with key points of constructivism, which says that learning has to be active on engagement, otherwise meaningful learning cannot be achieved (Jean Piaget, 1947). Similarly, Communicative

Language Teaching (CLT) explains why having a variety of language proficiency levels reduces the opportunities for authentic interaction.

Instructors had a positive view on opportunities like AI and virtual reality, tools that will significantly enhance student engagement and interaction, aspects that align with what Figueroa & Jung (2025) had demonstrated about how powerful and important the immersion in virtual reality for education can be. Also, Kharchenko et al. (2024) emphasized the transformative role of digital technologies in education. A feature that will likely influence EFL teaching as it grows, because of the increasing tools for immersive and adaptive environments, but also considering that these tools have to be used with professional and pedagogical guidance.

## Chapter V

### Conclusions & Recommendations

#### *Conclusion*

Thanks to all the answers, it was revealed that many pedagogues face several challenges when applying digital engagement strategies in online classes. These challenges present a decrease in interactivity and meaningful learning that a class session can provide to students; some of the most common are: Low motivation, uneven language proficiency, and low interaction due to learners having their cameras off or not responding to calls. Based on a constructivist and social presence perspective, all these challenges harm collaboration and the creation of environments where learning is active among all peers. Hence, it is concluded that barriers come not only from using digital tools or strategies, but also from motivational and external factors that hinder student interactivity and engagement.

Educationists stressed that students' interactivity, collaboration, and creativity can be improved with digital tools such as Padlet, Kahoot, Mentimeter, Canva, and Wordwall. Thanks to the previous digital tools mentioned, professors have more room to design dynamic, interactive, and enjoyable classes, thus motivating learners and enhancing the learning process. The study concluded that the primary priority teachers must take into consideration is to combine technology with purposeful and meaningful objectives, as if the same tools are used repeatedly without a set goal, they may lose effectiveness. Therefore, only when authentic communication and collaborative problem-solving are implemented in digital engagement strategies does it become meaningful.

Digital engagement strategies play a significant role in education, mainly in increasing interactivity and communication among EFL learners. Interviewees emphasized that

collaborative platforms, gamified tools, and creative tasks can help students feel motivated and part of a learning community. But just implementing technology does not guarantee interaction; tasks need to be meaningful and adapt to students' needs. Thus, digital engagement strategies must be carefully planned to be implemented; also, each teacher has to adapt the tools and resources available for better communication and interaction in English learning.

### *Recommendation*

Educational institutions are recommended to provide training and programs so that their teachers remain constantly aware of technology and its tools, on how to maintain interactivity, increase participation, social presence in virtual contexts, these programs should be professional development, containing different strategies where teachers can support each other and in this way encourage students to assume their role in what concerns the responsibility of their own learning with interactive and also reflective activities, with this it could help overcome low motivation and low participation in virtual environments.

It is recommended that teachers carefully choose their digital tools to avoid overloading students with platforms and preventing them from becoming confused by them. The tools they choose should be focused on learning objectives and adapted to student needs, ensuring that activities foster communication, cooperation, and interactivity as effectively as possible. It is also suggested that institutions organize hands-on workshops that foster knowledge sharing, improve teaching practices, and inspire students to create more effective digital strategies.

It is advisable that teachers be willing to design all kinds of digital activities that encourage problem-solving, teamwork, interactivity, and reflection, allowing them to apply English in real or simulated contexts. Combining gamification with communicative and collaborative approaches can help students maintain motivation and improve participation in virtual

classrooms. Educational institutions should promote flexible assessment systems to value student creativity, participation, and interaction. It should be noted that by reinforcing these elements, teachers will be able to have better learning experiences for all their students and ensure that interactivity remains an essential factor in online education of English as a foreign language.

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## ANNEXES

### Annexes A: Certified Anti-plagiarism System

La libertad, 29 de octubre de 2025

### **Certificado Sistema Anti-Plagio**

En calidad de tutor del Trabajo de Integración Curricular denominado “EXPLORING DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY TO STRENGTHEN INTERACTIVITY IN EFL LEARNERS” elaborado por el estudiante ROMINA ANABELLA TOMALA ARAGON y SANTIAGO ANDRES MENDOZA CEDEÑO de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, de la Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación e Idiomas, de la Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena, me permito declarar que una vez analizado en el sistema anti plagio COMPILATIO, luego de haber cumplido los requerimientos exigidos de valoración, el presente trabajo de investigación, se encuentra con 5 % de la valoración permitida, por consiguiente se procede a emitir el informe , para proceder a la revisión por parte del especialista.

Atentamente,



---

Lic. Rudy Jonathan Párraga Solórzano, MSc.

**TUTOR**



CERTIFICADO DE ANÁLISIS  
magister

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## **Annex B: Questionnaire**

### Exploring Digital Engagement Strategy to Strengthen Interactivity in EFL Learners

1. Based on your experience, what strategies or tools have worked best for you in keeping students engaged in online English classes?
2. Considering your experience, what advice would you give to other teachers who want to use digital engagement strategies effectively?
3. In your view, what should institutions do better to support teachers in applying digital strategies for interactivity?
4. From your standpoint, what difficulties have you experienced when implementing digital tools in your English classes?
5. According to your expertise, what kinds of technological limitations (such as internet access, platforms, or devices) have you experienced when interacting with your students?
6. What pedagogical challenges (e.g., student motivation, language level, class size) do you encounter when trying to engage students digitally?
7. What digital platforms do you use to maintain student engagement and interactivity in your classes? Explain how you use these platforms to encourage collaboration and active learning among your students
8. As per your understanding, what opportunities do you see for improving interactivity through digital tools in the future?

## **Annex C: Interview Transcripts**

Interviewee 1

**Based on your experience, what strategies or tools have worked best for you in keeping students engaged in online English classes?**

Okay. Well, there are many tools that we can use in classes. I think that the key to keeping students engaged is to have them busy working all the time. So with collaborative activities like **Padlet**, where they can share different documents, they can also interact. **Mentimeter**, for example, is used for polls or surveys. Other tools, like **Canva**, are used when they have to work with infographics. Puzzle when they have to answer some questions, or they usually see a video and answer some quizzes. Tools like things that can be interesting for students, using a lot of visuals, videos, I think that works.

**Considering your experience, what advice would you give to other teachers who want to use digital engagement strategies effectively?**

The advice that I could give to other teachers is to know the students, to know about their interest, know about what they like, know about the music that they like, movies, games, things that they like to use. What is trending? because that's what students like. And they get fun using this kind of games, for example, in class. So they enjoy this type of activities.

**In your view, what should institutions do better to support teachers in applying digital strategies for interactivity?**

I think that the institution should **provide technological resources, free digital**

**platforms**, for example, for teachers and for students, They shouldn't have problems of connectivity, so they should have a free internet, and they should have good connectivity and a lot of free resources so that teachers and students can use them.

**From your standpoint, what difficulties have you experienced when implementing digital tools in your English classes?**

Well, as I think that most of the digital tools are limited. So I think that's the limit that we have when we want to implement the digital tools. Well, that is something that we face. When we want to interact with the students, sometimes we use these tools, but they can be used only for a limited number of students. So not all the students can interact at the same time. So maybe if they were provided by the institutions, it could be different.

**According to your expertise, what kinds of technological limitations (such as internet access, platforms, or devices) have you experienced when interacting with your students?**

Maybe it could be that most of the students use their telephones when they are in class and maybe sometimes, depending on the activities, it is necessary to use other types of devices like laptops, for example. It could be better if they used their laptops because sometimes with telephones, it is difficult for them. to access or to complete the assignments effectively.

**What pedagogical challenges (e.g., student motivation, language level, class size) do you encounter when trying to engage students digitally?**

I think the greatest challenge is the class size, because we work with a large number of students, and sometimes 50 students, 60 students. So it is more **difficult to give appropriate feedback when working with a large class**. So we do our best. We have to use different types of strategies when we have large classes, maybe form groups. But even doing that, sometimes it

could be difficult because we can't give feedback to each of the students, which would be best. So we have to do it. We have to give feedback to groups, and maybe to the whole class, but not individually, because we don't have enough time to do that in class due to the number of students.

**What digital platforms do you use to maintain student engagement and interactivity in your classes? Explain how you use these platforms to encourage collaboration and active learning among your students.**

Well, for example, when I assign my students an activity, I usually use a Padlet so all the students can have access to the students' work. It is different because at the university, we have Moodle, but only the teacher can see all the assignments in Moodle. So I prefer them to work first in Padlet, for example, sharing the activity with the whole group and all the students, so they can always have access to the activities. And they can also comment on the other students' work. And I usually do that. First, they have to work in small groups, or maybe they have to work alone. And then they upload the activity in Padlet so all the students can see all the work, the different works that the students have done. And they can also comment on them. So that way, the students are giving feedback to their classmates, so that's one way, one strategy we can use to try to get to all the students, right? **Canva** is another tool that I like to use because it promotes creativity in the students, right? So they can show what they have learned through mind maps or infographics. And that helps them to **develop their creativity** in working with these types of tools.

**As per your understanding, what opportunities do you see for improving interactivity through digital tools in the future?**

Well, as technology is improving all the time, I think that in the future we will have other

types of tools that will help teachers and students to improve speaking, for example, so they can have a real-time conversation practice. So that's something that can help, especially students who are learning a new language. Students playing role-playing engaged in role-play **situations with instant feedback**. So we can use AI tools, for example, to have this because that's one of the difficulties teachers have, as I said before, because it is difficult to give feedback to each of the students. So with these types of tools, maybe they can help teachers a lot because using them will help them receive instant feedback. Maybe classrooms, if equipped with digital resources, will allow students to meet in **simulated spaces**, like if they were in other places, airports, or maybe other cities. So that could be something interesting, maybe to have in class, and I think that as technology changes all the time, there will be some time in the future when these types of tools are going to help a lot, students and teachers. And it could be exciting also to connect with learners from other countries, from different places around the world, and to have a cultural exchange could also be interesting.

## **Interviewee 2**

**Based on your experience, what strategies or tools have worked best for you in keeping students engaged in online English classes?**

Okay, yeah, for online classes, I consider collaboration, like cooperative learning, and gamification, to be important. Cooperative learning, I apply it when I create some group work, group activities, and have follow-up activities on collaborative work. So if I have big or small classes, working with the groups on different tasks, I also help students, like helping students engage in these classes. I will usually work with groups of four to a maximum of six students on different topics. So sometimes when we are in the online class, in Zoom, for example, I would use breakout rooms in order for them to organize the activities and to work on the topics. And of

course, it helps them to be more active. Regarding the strategies for gamification, for example, I use **Kahoot and Padlet**. I was using a lot for collaborative work. And also, a word wall that this activity can be used sometimes at the beginning or the end of the class, or for practice. So, having these tasks, the visual aids keep students engaged.

**Considering your experience, what advice would you give to other teachers who want to use digital engagement strategies effectively?**

Well, I think it is first, the first important thing is to start or to choose tools that we are comfortable with. There is a **variety of tools nowadays**. It can be overwhelming, like so many tools that there are. So for that reason, it's important to choose a couple of tools for collaborative work, for practice, and for tests. a couple of tools, and keep using those tools. If like choosing the tools regarding the or related to the objectives, we can have like a more consistent idea of working and also like We can create meaningful activities if we know how to use like three or four tools specifically, rather than using lots of them and not knowing how to make it, to take the best of it. What else? Maybe for students to engage them in the class, maybe short quizzes also, yeah, may apply, or using like I use a word wall. So using a word wall for a short quiz can also be something useful to apply in class.

**In your view, what should institutions do better to support teachers in applying digital strategies for interactivity?**

Well, from the part of institutions, I would say it is important to **offer continuous training**, permanent training. It's important that institutions are able to provide technical support to teachers in case of technical problems or any issue that happens during this, but, of course, having like-friendly platforms in order for students and teachers to access different devices, to different things. One of the problems that we have is that most of the tools, website tools, or

applications, if we want to use more advanced options, require payment. So that is one limitation in using some tools. So maybe institutions can also provide some type of licenses in order to like in order for the teachers to use it. Yeah, to use better.

**From your standpoint, what difficulties have you experienced when implementing digital tools in your English classes?**

Well, first, yeah, one of my difficulties is when **choosing the tools**. As I said before, it can be overwhelming, like when there are so many tools that we can use, and every tool offers different features and different benefits. But still, these tools are like you need to subscribe, you need to pay. So if you are choosing several tools, you will have to **pay for several tools**. So that is one of the limitations. But also another one is learning how to use it. Yeah, learning like all the technical aspect for both for me as a teacher and also for the students, because it will It will need I will need to train myself how to use it. Yeah. And also train the students on how to use it. That is another difficulty. And also, I would say that another difficulty is balancing the use of technology with the language, the practice itself. because sometimes we assume that we need to use lots of tools in order to practice more, but it is not the amount of tools that we use, it is the amount of practice that we have in class.

**According to your expertise, what kinds of technological limitations (such as internet access, platforms, or devices) have you experienced when interacting with your students?**

Okay, yeah, here it goes, the technical problems that we have, especially when we have Zoom sessions. Yeah, the **connectivity**, yeah, internet access has been a challenge for everyone, especially, I would say, more commonly for students who are maybe in rural areas or students who don't have the tools. Yeah, the tools for online classes. So yes, that is one of the limitations

that I think is a big issue in online classes. When students are maybe, are not able to connect to the class in the different platforms or the devices for any reasons, internet connections, electricity or equipment, the lack of equipment, then it is a limitation for them because it will also make them like to stay behind what we are ready, what we are doing in class, how we are advancing, and that makes it difficult. Sometimes, also when students are working from their phones, yeah, and there are some applications that might require maybe some specific technical aspects. So if they want to do a task, maybe from the cell phone it doesn't work, but from the computer it does. So it can be one or another limitation regarding technology. The use of platforms. Sometimes platforms are not working correctly, so they can have low-end terms. So it makes it difficult. Yeah, it makes it difficult for students.

**What pedagogical challenges (e.g., student motivation, language level, class size) do you encounter when trying to engage students digitally?**

Well, first I would say because I am teaching English to students who will be future teachers, future educators, one of the difficulties I have found in my classes is the language level. Then, that in some way becomes a challenge because I cannot apply the same tool in a class with **language levels**. Because, of course, students who have a higher level of the language of English will participate more, and it will be easier for them to answer a question or participate. And students with a lower level, of course, will stay behind, like sometimes also waiting for the other students to participate or to provide the answer. So that is one. Yeah, one challenge. Another can also be motivation. Yeah, **motivation** because, of course, this is a challenge. Many, many students see online classes as like or the idea that we have about online classes is not the same as having in-person classes. So maybe another challenge of this can be also the like the lack of autonomous work, autonomy abilities, yeah, because autonomy from students, because

sometimes it is like online classes are less formal, or maybe it is assumed that because it is an online in class it is easier or because it is an online class I can I can be like I can connect to the class in Zoom but I can still be doing other activities other working um maybe doing other chores at home or anything like that so that is that is a real challenge okay.

**What digital platforms do you use to maintain student engagement and interactivity in your classes? Explain how you use these platforms to encourage collaboration and active learning among your students.**

So, yeah, of course, for the online classes, I use the **Zoom** platform for the delivery of the class itself. but also combined with other platforms like, for example, Padlet, in order to make collaborative work. So while we are checking or reviewing a topic, I will ask students to work in groups in some activity related to the topic, and then I will use the breakout rooms and get students to work also in a **Padlet** or even in **Google Docs**, like using **OneDrive**, for example, yeah, to develop an activity. So in that case, like if I also use **WordWall**, yeah, it's useful to review vocabulary, to practice maybe some grammar. So when using these platforms, I try to engage students by doing different activities. Let's see other platforms. Yeah, using other platforms also in order to create. Also, I engage students in using AI in order to practice speaking, for example. So I will make small groups of students so that they can insert the text on AI, in any tool for AI, and they can listen, and they can practice in pairs or in groups of three. They can listen to each other or listen to AI and keep practicing with that. Using Artificial intelligence is also something that I am now trying to integrate lately.

**As per your understanding, what opportunities do you see for improving interactivity through digital tools in the future?**

OK. I think this is about integrating artificial intelligence in learning, but also I see it can

be like it can be really helpful in many ways. Yeah. But still, it is necessary also to engage students in analyzing the tools that they are using, analyzing, yeah, the tools, analyzing the AI production that we have. And of course, it will be more, yeah, like when we are using online classes, digital engagement will be really important. So, using different tools with feedback, maybe virtual reality, or tools for immersive language. And actually, there are some tools for immersive language practice. So that can, I think that will be, that will, that is coming actually. Yeah. AI is already integrating into education and learning.

### **Interviewee 3**

**Based on your experience, what strategies or tools have worked best for you in keeping students engaged in online English classes?**

Okay, as a strategy, I think that at the moment that I work on the **think-pair-share strategy** is a good one because I work with the students in Zoom and they have these breakout rooms. So in the moment that I send the students to the breakout room, they are going to do the think, the pair, and the share activity. So they are going to get informed about the topic or any previous knowledge or just to review any topic before or reviewing the exercises. And then they come back to the general room. And in the general room, they start sharing. And that is one good strategy that has helped me. And as a tool, I use a lot of quizzes type of dynamic resources, type of games, challenges that are going to keep the students focused and concentrated and especially on real time. So I say only the students will have answered during this time, they will have some points. So it's a kind of motivation because that is going to keep them online and also engaged.

**Considering your experience, what advice would you give to other teachers who want to use digital engagement strategies effectively?**

First of all, if they are going to start using digital engagement strategies, they should pay for these resources, okay? They should really do an **investment** on this because the free accounts that they are offering, they are very limited. They have limited times in which you can upload information, limited creations that you do, but if you paid for any of these online or programs or whatever they are going to invest, they need to pay for that. That is my first advice. Second, to get a **real training** for that. So you need to specialize, maybe not only on general online digital tools or classes, but you need to actually take a course. It could be an online course, it could be a course directed with a teacher, but you need to specialize on that because it takes time, it takes practice, and it's going to be a failure at the beginning. But once you get to know the program, it's like the cell phone. You have a new cell phone, you need to work with a cell phone, right? And at the beginning, the cell phone is going to be complicated and you need to understand, ask people about the cell phone. It's exactly the same. You need to ask other teachers, you need to train yourself, and you need to invest for working on digital engagement strategies. Tools, I'm sorry, for the strategies. **try different strategies**, not only work on the first one or on the only one. So you have to try to adapt every strategy to different types of students, different types of classrooms. Even though you may have the same level, you have different students in each group. So you need to adapt this. Don't use the same exercise or the same PowerPoint presentation for everybody because it's not going to be effective. And finally, working with effectiveness, it means that you need to be **always updating** the information, okay? You're going to learn something new from your students, you're going to identify or find something different on the web, so you need to be updated. Your information, the information that you share with the students, also if you have created like a booklet, or if you have shared a set of slides, or if you have prepared a quizzes, you need to be constantly updating this information. Okay, those are my

advices.

**In your view, what should institutions do better to support teachers in applying digital strategies for interactivity?**

Okay, in my opinion, institutions not sure but they can help teachers with some providing some certain time for training because as teachers we need free time and I think that as an institution they **can provide these training hours** or the separated training programs okay in order to support teachers because I understand that it's not In all the cases, not all the schools will have the technology or they will have the money to invest on that. But maybe if you invest on the teachers training, teachers are going to find a way to apply this either with school sources or individual sources.

**From your standpoint, what difficulties have you experienced when implementing digital tools in your English classes?**

Well, one of the first difficulties that I had was the **lack of support for authorities**, as I said. They don't understand that we need some **training**, some time to prepare, and they just I think that it was because of the COVID pandemic that was just, no, do it right now. Whatever it comes, you should apply because we don't have another chance. Now that we don't have that rush, I think that another difficulty that a teacher may have is that the teacher considers that maybe you can use an Instagram account or a TikTok account. But you need to actually be prepared for using Excel programs, Excel formulas, Word documents, creating different types of, how would they call it, PowerPoint presentations, but dynamic PowerPoint presentations, or using any other programs that are actually new, okay? Those are the difficulties. To actually learn how to implement them correctly. Another difficulty will be **internet access**, because obviously, we don't know exactly what is in our society, in our country. We don't have a stable

internet connection. We don't even have stable electricity. Okay, so we don't know exactly when it's going to happen, sometimes it's going to be a shortcut or whatever. So in those cases that I have faced the lack of internet, the lack of good connection, the lack of electricity or any other basic source, I think that we should always plan for a plan B to have like a paper worksheet, to have like an extra activity, always to support this because this is a big difficulty. What is going to happen when you don't have technology? What happens if your computer is lost? What happens if that school is going to close for one week and you have prepared everything in line? So you need to have an extra markup for that because mostly it's not the resources, it's the way of working with these resources that is going to fail. So you must be prepared for that.

**According to your expertise, what kinds of technological limitations (such as internet access, platforms, or devices) have you experienced when interacting with your students?**

OK. In the case of technological limitations, if we talk about university students here in UPSEN, we understand that the economic situation of the students, the financial situation of the students, is not ideal for applying technology. We have the problem of internet access because students do not have access to the internet freely. They have to pay if they don't pay, they don't join the class, and they don't do homework. So, internet access. Second, on the platforms, I think that we are okay. Everybody knows and understands that we have a good platform and devices. That is a problem. Sometimes a **cell phone is limited** and cannot do exactly what we ask for. And sometimes we do not understand our students and say, I don't care. That's my problem. You are working online, and you were supposed to have everything. Yeah, we should say that. But we know that behind that student, there might be only one cell phone for the whole family. for elementary school students, for the other kid who is a teenager and is in high school, and for the

other student who is in university, and maybe from her mom or his dad who needs that for work. Okay, so the number of devices per family group is one problem. Mostly, those are technological limitations that I have faced with that.

**What pedagogical challenges (e.g., student motivation, language level, class size) do you encounter when trying to engage students digitally?**

Okay, in my case, I consider that class size is not a challenge. When we are working in we are working in online classes or engaging with students digitally. You can have one student or you can have 100 students, and the feedback and the real-time of the exercises will be exactly the same for everybody. So I consider that it's not a matter of classes. What is important is the **language level together with the student's motivation**. Sometimes the student is not motivated, not because of the teacher's efforts, but because the student doesn't want to work. The student just goes to the internet, looks for the answers, and copies and pastes. Okay, so in those cases, I can say that the teacher is willing to do lots of activities, lots of exercises, provide many different alternatives of learning to the student, but it is not, in my case, a case of a pedagogical challenge. It's more than the student's responsibility and compromise actually to learn from digital sources.

**What digital platforms do you use to maintain student engagement and interactivity in your classes? Explain how you use these platforms to encourage collaboration and active learning among your students.**

Okay, what I really like, and you have seen one of my favorites, is Quizzes, and now they have a different name. Okay, Quizzes has been sold to a bigger company, so I don't remember the name right now, but you can still join Quizzes, but it is another thing. yeah, it's a problem in which I can play in different forms. I can work as a lesson. I can work as a warm-up activity with previous knowledge. I can work with a review at the end of the class. I can work in individual

scenarios. One student is going to answer according to their thoughts. I can work teacher-placed. So I am going to dedicate the time, and you're going to answer according to my timing. Or you can work in groups, okay, like a challenge. So we can play that as a game, as a **collaborative work**. Everybody has to work together in order to get to the first place. So that is one of my favorites. Another one that I use is Google Slides or any of the types of Word and Excel documents, but they are the collaborative ones, the ones that are online, because at that moment, students can create their own presentations. I use a lot of Canva as well to have all of these concept maps, mind maps, or presentations, as well as posters, so they can work collaboratively at the same time. Or for writing, for example, I use a lot of these Google Slides. So I set one slide for the student, and the student is going to work in that slide. So I have all the slides, one assigned per student, so I can see in real time that they are having the input of the information while they are writing. Those are my favorites.

**As per your understanding, what opportunities do you see for improving interactivity through digital tools in the future?**

Well, digital tools in the future will undergo a big change because, besides being used for educational purposes, they will be created by themselves. With AI, we have all of these search engines that we are feeding with our information. So there will be a moment in which they are just going to reproduce all the information that we had them as an infant. So in this case, using this information, this background that we are feeding into AIs, they are going to be transmitted into the program. So there's not going to be like a direct student collaboration, but mostly it's going to be from AI productivity; the scenarios that were inserted previously by your students were going to be linked to their results. For that, it's a **big responsibility of the teacher to first teach students how to do these inputs correctly**, because they are the students, they are making

mistakes, and they are uploading information that is not correct. So later, when they are going to grab all of this information for their presentations, it is going to be incorrect. So there must be a filter from the teacher to check, and the student needs to do. They are really understanding of that, so they can continue uploading and having these inputs with correct information, and that is the. That is the real responsibility of the teacher. To have all of this information for the students, correct them, that there is no AI, there is no digital tool that is going to do that for the teacher. Only the teacher with his experience is going to be able to do that human intervention and correction. And once the students really understand, they have all of this information created correctly, they can start creating more information and even having an input on their lives, on their AIs, because everything is going to be outloaded in the future that is going to happen with education. So it's our mission to have the expertise of the teacher intervene with the critical thinking of students to create information that is actually good and reliable to be included on all of these chatbots. That's it.

#### **Interviewee 4**

**Based on your experience, what strategies or tools have worked best for you in keeping students engaged in online English classes?**

Well, I think, and also I have found that variety is crucial and key. We use the breakout rooms for small group discussions, to keep the students active while they are interacting with the interactive. We make them use **Padlet**, and we make them use **Bamboozle**. This is one that I usually use in my classes. Also, there is another, Jeopardy Labs. So these make participation, or students' participation, in a more dynamic way. So I also try to integrate polls or collaborative tasks. So students don't just listen, but they are constantly involved in building this community for learning together. OK.

**Considering your experience, what advice would you give to other teachers who want to use digital engagement strategies effectively?**

Okay, so my advice is to keep the activities **simple, but also purposeful**. I mean, we can choose one or two tools that are aligned with our lessons or with the lesson goals, rather than overwhelming students with too many platforms. So I always try to make time to guide them on how to use the tools because, perhaps, they don't know how to use them. So also it make feel them comfortable with technology, right? Because it can also affect students' participation. Suppose they don't know how to manage the tools, which can affect their participation. So I think that this is important to keep it simple as well as purposeful.

**In your view, what should institutions do better to support teachers in applying digital strategies for interactivity?**

Okay, so I think that institutions should provide this professional development, not only one-time workshops. So teachers need **spaces to share experiences, to experiment, and also to reflect on this type of practice**, I mean, digital practices. So also having a reliable infrastructure, like different platforms on where technical support, it is essential. So teachers can focus on pedagogy instead of these difficulties for not having the access to different resources.

**From your standpoint, what difficulties have you experienced when implementing digital tools in your English classes?**

Okay, well, sometimes the main challenges can be for both teachers and students, because having difficulties with **technical issues** can interrupt the sequence of a lesson or, I mean, the flow of a lesson. So not all students are equally comfortable with digital tools. So another difficulty can be balancing the time, but we have to take this as a challenge to keep engaged, to keep our students engaged. But without overwhelming them with a lot of tasks.

**According to your expertise, what kinds of technological limitations (such as internet access, platforms, or devices) have you experienced when interacting with your students?**

I think that definitely **internet connectivity** is the biggest. So this is the biggest issue. Many students join from mobile phones with a stable connection, so it can limit their ability to participate in certain activities. In addition, not all students have **access to updated devices**, so I have had to adapt the task to make them lighter and also more inclusive.

**What pedagogical challenges (e.g., student motivation, language level, class size) do you encounter when trying to engage students digitally?**

Well, the first thing that I think is **the motivation**. This can be a challenge, especially when students feel isolated behind the screen. Also, **mixed prophecy levels** can be another issue because waker students may disengage more quickly online. So, large classes also make it harder to monitor everyone or everyone's participation. So, I often try to rely on group work and also to ensure that all voices are heard. I encourage them to participate, to share their ideas once they come back from the breakout rooms to the main room. All right. And also, I encourage them to personalize learning, thinking about their sociocultural context and their own interests.

**What digital platforms do you use to maintain student engagement and interactivity in your classes? Explain how you use these platforms to encourage collaboration and active learning among your students.**

Well, mainly we use this tool. We use **Zoom** for this live interaction when we distribute them in the breakout rooms and for small group participation and small group collaboration. We can also use **Google Docs** to make sure that they are working together, all right? So it is great for real-time writing, peer feedback, because we also encourage peer review. So I mentioned before

that you also use **Padlet** to collect ideas, to collect reflections, and to have them write sentences. I am monitoring them. and each makes everyone's contribution visible. So another tool, such as **Kahoot or Quizziz**, allows students to build this together, to construct the knowledge together instead of just receiving it from the teacher.

**As per your understanding, what opportunities do you see for improving interactivity through digital tools in the future?**

Well, I think that the future lies more in personalized and **immersive experiences**. All right. So nowadays we come with artificial intelligence. So there are AI platforms, this driven platform that can adapt content to individual needs, all right? Also, in the future, this virtual and augmented reality could create this interaction. I mean, highly interactive learning environments. And at the same time, I see different opportunities for greater interaction between classroom learning and a student's real-world digital practice. like the social media, social media projects, and also a community-based online collaboration.

#### **Interviewee 5**

**Based on your experience, what strategies or tools have worked best for you in keeping students engaged in online English classes?**

Actually, I can talk more about the tools. For example, some of the tools that I used in my classes are **WordWall**, which is a tool that has lots of dynamic activities to start. For example, with warming up, you need to show some vocabulary. And there are a lot of vocabulary activities that you could use in your classes. And well, that tool has helped me a lot to start with all my classes, so I will always rely on WordWall. Another tool that I use but not regularly is quizzes for the reason that after I explain something, I start with a short quiz at the moment of getting to

know if it was clear or not for the students. I tend to use that tool more when I am in virtual classes, but not when I am in face-to-face classes.

**Considering your experience, what advice would you give to other teachers who want to use digital engagement strategies effectively?**

Something that I could give to you is that after you have your training, because most of the interrupted tools are given training, but training, well, in most cases, not in all cases, after you have given a certain training, you need to prove it yourself as a student. If there is any kind of problem, you will know exactly how to solve it as a student. But if you don't know, the one who will look back in front of your student is the teacher, right? Yes or no? So in this case, try to prove it yourself as if you were the student. For example, I have one example. The Jinso AI is a pilot program that we have been testing for around 5 weeks. I am enrolled in that as a student, and I have been solving all the lessons that the AI has given me. And well, there were certain problems, and once I have those problems, I need to report them to the people who are programming that AI. So that's the advice I could give to you. Try it yourself as a student.

**In your view, what should institutions do better to support teachers in applying digital strategies for interactivity?**

**Training**, always training, because there are some tools that are proven in all classes, but sometimes there are some limitations with us as teachers, and we don't know exactly how to solve them, which is why there is such a big lack of training. And besides, there are other limitations, like sometimes **we cannot afford all of them so well**, and there are some versions that are free, and we cannot take advantage of all the sources and benefits that they can provide to us. So that's what I could say.

**From your standpoint, what difficulties have you experienced when implementing**

### **digital tools in your English classes?**

Difficulties. I cannot say the lack of motivation, for the reason that in my classes, throughout my whole experience, I have been catching most of the motivation of all the students. What I can say about the difficulties is the **internet connection**. Not everyone has this tool with ease. And well, any other thing that I could think of is that everyone does that with... Sorry, I cannot think about anything else. The only thing I can think of is the internet connection. Because in my experience, I haven't had any other difficulty. Yeah, that's one limitation. Yeah.

### **According to your expertise, what kinds of technological limitations (such as internet access, platforms, or devices) have you experienced when interacting with your students?**

Besides the internet, maybe when some of the students are not capable of self-regulating, we are going to always send autonomous work; some of the students cannot **afford all of the platforms** because, as I mentioned to you before, it's not free. Sometimes they need to pay a little money to enroll in these classes. What do I mean in this case? I have my class of English 3 for the third semester, and we use a platform, the Person Platform. But this platform is not free. This one must be used through a book, and this book must be bought, right? And the price of this book is \$70. So not everyone can afford this book. Now, I have been reviewing some of the... assignments that I have been sending, and I can see that not everyone has sent these assignments. So in this case, the big limitation that I could see is the money, the money that not everyone can afford.

### **What pedagogical challenges (e.g., student motivation, language level, class size) do you encounter when trying to engage students digitally?**

Among the pedagogical challenges that I could find was the **language level**. Because

when someone is a professor of the languages major, you will find that you are going to find some of the students with a high level, but that's not the case. I could see even that in 8th grade, I mean, in the 8th semester, there are some people who don't speak English at all. And you could evidence yourself, right? And that's such a big limitation, that when someone is expecting to work with something that has been prepared, you can see that they don't possess the required language level to complete or accomplish that task. So I can say that language level is such a big limitation.

**What digital platforms do you use to maintain student engagement and interactivity in your classes? Explain how you use these platforms to encourage collaboration and active learning among your students.**

Well, we already have Zoom. The **Zoom** platform is the reason that every time I am in my English classes, I need them to do some collaborative work, I mean, work in groups. Because that group is massive. There are 55 students in total. So it's necessary for me. And I can do my work when I command them to work in groups. And it's easy to work with Zoom for the reason that we can generate the breakout rooms, and they can start working. But one thing that I could say is that it's not only commanding the groups, because you need to be monitoring those groups. Because if you don't do it, then they will not do anything at all, right? I need to be working on that. I need to be monitoring that for the reason that if I don't do it, then only one person from the group is going to do the whole work. So that's not fair, guys. That's not fair. And well, another platform that I used to use before was **Padlet**. Yes, Padlet. In this case, I commanded the groups to write their thoughts, to do some brainstorming, to write their personal information when it comes to teaching basic English, and they introduce themselves with Padlet. It's something that you need to work with, and you will know how to manage it. And well, those are the

collaborative ways that I use Zoom and Padlet. And I just remember that I use Canvas as well. Every time they use Zoom to work in groups, they use Canvas as well. Every time they need to do a presentation, they have to prepare, and they need to separate every part of the work, and they are going to be working on their respective slides.

**As per your understanding, what opportunities do you see for improving interactivity through digital tools in the future?**

There are a lot of opportunities, but the big challenge that I can see is that it's not mandatory. And we need to regulate that for the reason that if we do not oblige our students to practice online, then they will put their free time into other activities that are not the required ones. So some of the opportunities that I can think of are **improving your English level**, your speaking skills. I do it so well for the reason that every time I use ChatGPT, I do it while I speak. Because when I command something, I say, ChatGPT, could you do something for me? Could you help me with a lesson plan? Could you help me with some research, with some data? Okay, that's one advantage that you can speak. Another advantage is that I don't know if you have worked with the Cambridge platform; there's one extract of it, which you need to write an essay, and the Cambridge platform is going to correct you in order to tell you whether you are at a level B2, B1, C1, or maybe C2. Another opportunity that I can think of is improving your skills. It's improving your skills. But take into account the limitations of the regulation. Sometimes it needs to be mandatory.