



*El impacto de la creación de libros digitales en las destrezas productivas en el aula de EFL*

*The impact of digital book creation on productive skills in the EFL classroom*

*O impacto da criação de livros digitais nas habilidades produtivas na sala de aula de EFL*

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## Resumen

En una era educativa donde el éxito y la competitividad en un mundo globalizado exigen una gama cada vez mayor de herramientas, las habilidades y el dominio lingüístico de al menos un idioma extranjero son imprescindibles. Por lo tanto, es importante que los estudiantes posean suficientes conocimientos tecnológicos para contribuir a su propio aprendizaje, mejorar sus habilidades productivas en un segundo idioma y comunicarse de manera efectiva en cualquier situación y en cualquier momento. Además, en el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera, las tecnologías digitales pueden ayudar a los estudiantes a fortalecer sus habilidades de adquisición de una segunda lengua al crear oportunidades para crear sus propias historias, fomentar las interacciones entre pares y ser capaces de producir y expresar pensamientos e ideas de manera clara, concisa y eficiente. manera. El objetivo de este estudio fue investigar el impacto de la creación de libros digitales en las habilidades productivas de los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera de secundaria. Se aplicó un enfoque de método mixto siguiendo un diseño secuencial exploratorio que incluyó el uso de encuestas y diarios para documentar las interacciones en el aula mientras se trabajaba en libros digitales. Los resultados enfatizan los beneficios potenciales de la creación de libros digitales como estrategia para mejorar las habilidades de escritura y expresión oral y los desafíos que enfrentan los estudiantes en el uso de la tecnología en un entorno de propósito académico. Se hacen recomendaciones con respecto a investigaciones adicionales con un período de tiempo extendido para evaluar de manera integral el impacto en las habilidades de expresión oral y escrita de los estudiantes.

**Palabras clave:** Libros digitales; Habilidades productiva; Habilidades activas; Dominio del idioma.

## Abstract

In an educational era where success and competitiveness in a globalized world demand an ever-growing array of tools, abilities, and linguistic proficiency in at least one foreign language are a must. Therefore, it is important for students to possess enough technology knowledge to contribute to their own learning, enhance their productive skills in a second language, and communicate effectively in any situation at any given time. Furthermore, in the EFL classroom, digital technologies can aid learners to strengthen their second language acquisition skills by creating opportunities to create their own stories, foster interactions amongst peers and being capable to

produce and express thoughts and ideas in a clear, concise, and efficient manner. The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of the creation of digital books on the productive skills of high school EFL learners. A mixed method approach was applied following an exploratory sequential design that included the use of surveys and journals to document classroom interactions while working on digital books. The results emphasize the potential benefits of digital book creation as a strategy to enhance writing and speaking skills and the challenges students face in the use of technology in an academic purpose setting. Recommendations are made in regards to further research with an extended timeframe to comprehensively assess the impact on students' speaking and writing abilities.

**Keywords:** digital books; productive skills; active skills; language proficiency.

## Resumo

Numa era educacional em que o sucesso e a competitividade num mundo globalizado exigem um conjunto cada vez maior de ferramentas, as competências e a proficiência linguística em pelo menos uma língua estrangeira são essenciais. Portanto, é importante que os alunos possuam conhecimentos tecnológicos suficientes para contribuir para a sua própria aprendizagem, melhorar as suas competências produtivas numa segunda língua e comunicar eficazmente em qualquer situação e em qualquer momento. Além disso, na sala de aula de EFL, as tecnologias digitais podem ajudar os alunos a reforçar as suas competências de aquisição de uma segunda língua, criando oportunidades para criarem as suas próprias histórias, promovendo interações entre pares e sendo capazes de produzir e expressar pensamentos e ideias de uma forma clara, concisa e eficiente. maneiras. O objetivo deste estudo foi investigar o impacto da criação de livros digitais nas habilidades produtivas de alunos de EFL do ensino médio. Uma abordagem de método misto foi aplicada seguindo um projeto exploratório sequencial que incluiu o uso de pesquisas e diários para documentar interações em sala de aula enquanto se trabalhava em livros digitais. Os resultados enfatizam os benefícios potenciais da criação de livros digitais como estratégia para melhorar as habilidades de escrita e fala e os desafios que os alunos enfrentam no uso da tecnologia em um ambiente acadêmico. São feitas recomendações em relação a pesquisas futuras com um prazo estendido para avaliar de forma abrangente o impacto nas habilidades de fala e escrita dos alunos.

**Palavras-chave:** livros digitais, competências produtivas, competências ativas, proficiência linguística.

## Introduction

For many, the hardest part about learning a second language is to communicate. In several cases, the language is learned by listening, grammar drills, vocabulary, all strategies that are indicated to acquire a second language. However, speaking and writing at a proficient level are skills usually left unattended and as a result, many learners become discouraged by not being able to express their ideas, needs and wants effectively. As research indicates, that “if we wish to master another language we need to become more communicatively competent” (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991, p.154). Having said this, it is believed that when learning a second language, much attention is given to the “input skills,” that is, listening and reading, which also known as passive skills, and not enough on “output skills,” that is, speaking and writing, where the EFL learner would need to produce the language to be able to communicate successfully. Merrill Swain (1985) mentions in her study done in a French immersion setting that “whatever knowledge they have of the language that is literacy-based is only weakly demonstrated in their oral performance because in general, they have had limited opportunity to use and practice their speaking skills in communicative exchanges that require a precise and appropriate reflection of meaning” (pg. 251). While learners may have more opportunities to practice written tasks, perhaps not enough is being done to upgrade their writing to an acceptable intermediate/high level.

While numerous studies have focused on second language learning by mastering grammar, listening, and reading using various techniques, not enough has been reported about the use of digital technology in relation to productive skills in EFL learners. A study conducted in Japan, concluded that “on the use of E-books in EFL Education, only a few studies have been conducted at the secondary level” (Rong, M., Chen, A., Hwang, J, 2021). Therefore, this study aimed to explore how the creation of digital books can have an impact on the language output skills in second language acquisition in 12 -13-year-old high school students in Cuenca, Ecuador.

### Research objectives:

- **General objective:** This research aims to explore the impact the creation of digital books has on the development of productive skills in the EFL classroom.
- **Specific Objectives:**
- To identify the impact digital books on the students’ speaking and writing.

- To determine the degree of influence of students' social interactions on their productive skills.
- To understand how technology can engage students to further develop their output skills.

### **Research questions & hypothesis:**

- **Research questions:** To what extent does the creation of digital books have an impact on EFL learners' productive skills (speaking and writing) in 12-13-year-old student at UE Santana?
- How does the creation of digital books engage students to further develop their output skills?
- **Hypothesis:** The use of digital books will have an impact on student's speaking and writing.

### **Theoretical framework**

In EFL learners much of the language is learnt through receptive skills: listening, reading, grammar. On the other hand, there are "output skills" or "productive skills" that are the means by which the learner is able to produce the language orally, or in a written form. It is important to mention that these skills must go hand in hand, since in foreign language learning, these skills cannot exist one without the other or else the process of language learning cannot be complete. An EFL learner acquires the language through the receptive skills followed by the practical application of the productive skills. In this study the focus will be on the productive skills.

This study identifies "digital books" as the independent variable, and thus a tool to create and promote the use the language, followed by "speaking and writing" as the dependent variables. Theories suggest that speaking and writing are active skills that are considered social-linguistics abilities needed to communicate effectively within a community.

In one of the theories proposed by Krashen referring to output skills, it is suggested that "the only role of output is that of generating comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1981), However, this theory has been refuted by Merrill Swain, who cites the findings of her studies of French Immersion students in Quebec. Swain states that "one function of output is that it provides the opportunity for meaningful use of one's linguistic resources." (Swain, 1985, pg. 248). This reiterates the

importance for EFL learners to continue working on the production of the language if they want to be able to communicate using the skills they already possess (input skills) by simply putting them into practice at every opportunity they get. This suggests it is important to promote communicative competence amongst EFL learners, reassuring their abilities and fostering confidence in what they know and how they express their ideas, opinions, needs and wants.

Learning a second language also means wanting to know more about a culture, people, and community; as Littlewood (1991) explains “a second language has social functions within the community where it is learnt, whereas a ‘foreign’ language is learnt primarily for contact outside one’s community” (Littlewood, 1991, p.2). Further developing the idea about a second language having a social function within a community, within a classroom there is a community composed of students learning and practicing; therefore, to create activities where the students can push themselves to practice by creating language exchanges is of paramount importance, because in these types of opportunities is when output skills can occur and applied by the students and teachers alike.

Lee and Vanpateen (2003) mention that” in language instruction, this refers to the learners who must produce language that communicates something - that has meaning- to someone else” (p. 170), which refers to the importance of output skills and the emphasis on communication and meaning of the messages. Hence, there is need to create opportunities to practice speaking and writing as production of the language they are learning.

Vygotsky’s contributions to sociocultural theory cannot be ignored, since his theory stresses the fundamental role of social interactions in the development of cognition (Vygotsky, 1978). He believed strongly that community plays a central role in the process of “making meaning.” Vygotsky champions learners being engaged in challenging and meaningful activities, fostering opportunities for learning, and developing sociocultural skills. Therefore, when learning a second language, these moments of social interaction amongst peers propel the production of their language skills. Digital books are a peer activity since there will be interactions between pairs of classmates such as the sharing of ideas while creating their pages, discussion of the themes they are writing about. As a result, this activity provides space for the students to interact with one another while creating and writing in a second language their own stories based on their interests and experiences.

## **Literature review**

There are few studies that address the use of digital books and the impact on productive skills in high school students. The few studies on the use of digital books have been conducted in various parts of the world such as Indonesia, Czech Republic, India, Iran, United Kingdom, USA, China, and Korea, amongst others.

## **Digital books and the use of technology in EFL classroom**

Rong et al. (2021) have investigated the trends of top countries in the use of e-books in EFL classrooms, as well as the use of English as the top language learned. The authors mention the lack of studies done at a high school level on the use of e-books in EFL learners and how English is the target language of study. Perdana and Nerina (2022) found that e-books motivate literacy and the features that technology brings, make learning much more interesting and motivates learners. These claims are supported by Picton (2014) where the impact of e-books is prevalent in “literacy,” which is defined as the ability to read, write and speak. Urinboevne & Shamsitdinova mention that electronic resources aid the learning process of a foreign language and greatly stimulates the development of speech and active participation. Learners have stories to tell; they bring stories they have heard at home and in their community. What is particular about digital books is that they open space for story authorship, where a learner can expand creativity, vocabulary, storytelling participating in conversations (Kucirkova, N., 2018).

## **Writing-output skill and collaborative work**

Writing performance can be improved through small group cooperative interaction which leads to quality and quantity of input and output language opportunities (Saeideh, A., & Zarrin, S. 2014). Online interactive environments are much more appealing for EFL Learners where writing takes precedence over speaking, which makes collaborative technologies play a key role in shaping community and interactions (Razak et al., 2013). Interactions through writing and reading were pivotal in learners’ acquisition processes (Harklau, L. 2002). It has also been suggested that an instructional approach where oral input is supported with written input leads to better results (Amores, M. & Pladevall, E., 2014). The fact that the students see the written form first and its

construction helps them assimilate more effectively in order to produce them orally more accurately (Koumy, E., Harklau, L., 2002).

### **Speaking – output skill and writing go hand in hand**

Frequent oral practice enables students to have language mastery. Students should have conversational contributions since class syllabi focus on reading and writing. Students should be given freedom in their selection of expression in language learning for which the use of multimedia material can be effective for developing speaking skills (Mridha, M. & Muniruzzaman, S., 2020). Speaking and writing are output skills that in EFL learners are usually not given enough emphasis, there is a need to write and speak to be proficient in language acquisition (Kang, J., 2020). Productive skills such as speaking and writing are known as active skills that can be developed with engaging activities (Golkava, D., & Hubackova, S, 2014).

In the different studies mentioned there are various that are of importance to this study. Nisrina et al. (2022) claim their studies have confirmed that the use of e-books has made learning a second language much more dynamic and interesting. This research was done with 32 third semester students from the English Education Department of UNISKA Banjarmasin in the 2022/2023 academic year. The study was applied using a quantitative method where the rapport received from their students had been positive since the four language skills had improved using e-books. Although the emphasis of this study was focused on reading and writing skills, the results did confirm that most of the students had a positive perception towards the improvement of their literary skills. Also, a study conducted by Kurcikova (year) emphasizes the creativity component and the opportunities that are given to the students in becoming authors of their own stories when using digital books as a tool. “One relates to the creative and empowering experience of being positioned as makers who, through reciprocity, build their own belonging in the community of writers and negotiate their understanding of stories and texts by actively participating in their creation. (p. 87).” This study was conducted primarily for teachers working with children between the ages of 5 to 12 and states the parameters for children’s personalization of the digital books they create as the 5As: authorship of their own stories, autonomy in producing them, authenticity of their contribution, attachment to the final product and aesthetics in its creation. Within these parameters, speaking and writing skills are prevalent in the creation of digital books. Working collaboratively in writing assignments is sometimes better for those students who are insecure



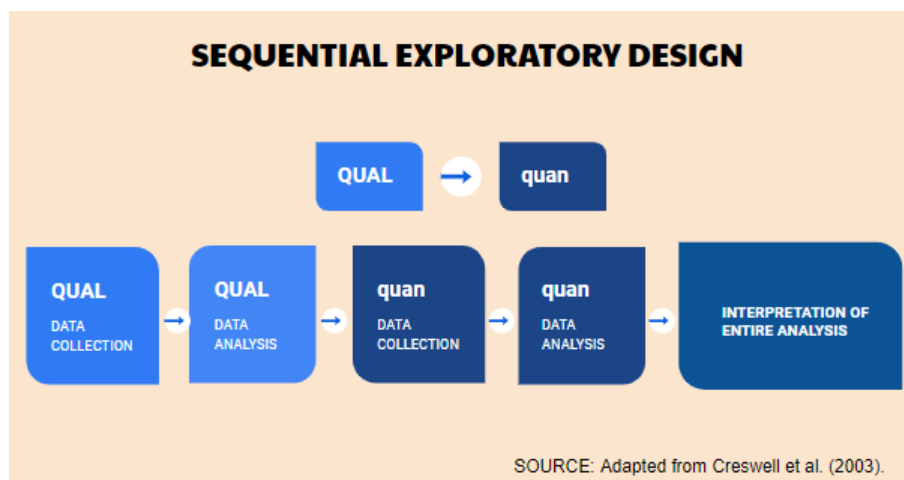
about speaking; hence, technology and the creation of digital books play a role in shaping community and interactions according to Razak et al. (2013). It is important to mention that speaking and writing are required skills to master a language. Additionally, writing a journal or diary is a strategy that can help develop vocabulary and express ideas much easier, and can then be turned into speaking activities (Golkova & Hubackova, 2014).

## Research methodology and procedures

### Research design and methodology

This study used a mixed method approach as it uses “the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research” (Creswell, 2003). The exploratory sequential design was followed because it is appropriate to implement in a classroom setting and straight forward to describe and report emphasizing on the qualitative findings (see Figure. 1).

*Figure 1: Sequential Exploratory Design*



This design followed a three-phase approach:

**Phase 1:** the researcher first gathers qualitative data and analyzes it.

**Phase 2:** the researcher uses the analysis to develop an instrument.

**Phase 3:** the instrument is then administered to a sample of a population (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

## **Research instruments**

### **Instrument 1: diary**

A diary was kept at all times to jot down observations during class activities which involved the creation of students' digital books. All the interactions were deemed to be of value for the study, since the exchanges amongst students, the problem-solving attitudes, comments, ideas, opinions, complaints are all indications of the level of engagement in the creation of the digital book and the use of the productive skills.

### **Instrument 2: Qualitative questionnaire**

For the study it was important to know how much the students know and are aware of digital books, as well as their perception in regard to the language skills and their preferences. This instrument contained a combination of open and closed questions that gave the researcher an idea of how much the students know and see themselves within their own learning of a second language.

This questionnaire, which was originally piloted with students of the same age, contained 10 questions in total about students' general knowledge on digital books. In the piloted questionnaire, the students were not clear what digital books were; as a result, and for better understanding, examples of digital books were added such as "audiobook," which helped students have a better idea to what the question was about and how they could answer it. Another question that had to be improved for the students to understand was one that asked them to name in order of preference the skill they like best. When piloted, the students did not understand how to answer that question; therefore, numbers were added as well as the words "least and most." Aside from these two questions, the rest of the questionnaire was easy for the students to understand and complete (See Appendix A)

### **Instrument 3: Quantitative survey**

Once the first questionnaire was piloted, it was clear that more information was needed to better understand how committed the students are learning a second language, the skill they were more interested in, whether their motivation is intrinsic or were there are other factors that influenced on their interest to learn a second language. This previously piloted survey consisted of 12 questions where students had to answer in a range of strongly agree to strongly disagree (See Appendix B).

## Participants

The participants of the study were students between the ages of 12 and 13 enrolled in the 8th grade, which is considered high school in Ecuador. The group was composed of 11 boys and 10 girls, for a total of 21 participants. Most students had an A2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). In the school where the study took place, most students had been there since their early years; hence, their exposure to EFL had been continuous and consistent right up to the time when the study was set to begin. However, a good number of students, especially those who came from other schools, had difficulties producing the language. Others lacked the affinity to learn a second language even though they had been in the same school since Kindergarten.

In this setting, students with learning disabilities were included since Universal Learning Design has to be applied in all the classrooms, as dictated by the Ministry of Education (2023). When the second instrument was applied, three of the students were absent, therefore, only 18 students participated.

## Data collection procedures

**Phase 1:** the qualitative instrument 1 “How much do you know about digital books? Was conducted among the 21 convenience sample of students. The initial authorization was granted by the school to work with this group and consent forms were received and signed by the parents authorizing the involvement of 21 students (out of the 22 in the classroom for this study).

The purpose of the questionnaire was to get information about their knowledge and exposure to digital books, as well as their interest in using their writing and speaking skills to create one.

**Phase 2:** Once this initial data was gathered, it was evaluated whether to further develop or adjust instrument 2 “Survey-Motivation in EFL and the impact on Speaking and writing as the productive skills.” This was adapted according to the group and needs of the group who participated in this study.

**Phase 3:** the quantitative instrument 3 “Survey-Motivation in EFL and the impact on Speaking and writing as the productive skills” was also applied after completing various activities such as the creation of the digital book, and several writing journal entries, as well as speaking activities. This

instrument gathered information on their interest in improving their skills and how important learning a second language is to them.

### **Gearing up for digital book production**

Once the students were given the first introduction to what digital books are and how they would be creating their own as a “Journal,” they became much more interested in exploring and seeing what the proposal was. The Book Creator application was chosen to use for the purpose of the study because it was easy to access, all information is uploaded into a cloud and saved instantly and the tools and options are varied, including the possibility to record voice messages and videos. Overall, it was deemed an attractive application for students and teachers to use.

There were three sessions of 40 minutes to instruct the students about the use of the platform, the use of the different tools available, formats that they could use and finally the creation of their front cover. During this time, the students were given free time to be able to explore the application and become familiar with it. For some, it was easy to navigate through, while for others, more assistance was needed.

The initial activity was one of investigation about famous Ecuadorian scientists, where students had to choose one who caught their attention, write a short biography and explain why they chose that particular scientist. This activity was developed to evaluate their reading comprehension skills, writing skills, and critical thinking skills while creating their first entry. When they had their final product, they also had to present it to the class. After the completion of this first task, the students were much more comfortable with the use of the platform and the creation of their entries. For the following entries, the students were given the choice of topics and they had to write or produce a voice recording or video according to their interests based on their own experiences. The intervention took place over three months. However, it is a strategy that will continue to be used until the end of the school year.

### **Data Analysis**

Focused on the creation of digital books and how this strategy engages students to further develop their output skills, this data analysis aims to explain the findings collected from research on student participation, technological adaptability, and the correlation between digital literacy and academic performance.

### Knowledge of digital books and creation

Based on the questionnaire (see Appendix A), most answers show students had a general idea of what a digital book is or could be. Out of the 21 students, 3 did not know what digital books are and 1 student, did not answer. In regard to the knowledge of the types of digital books, most of the responses associate digital books to reading books on platforms and activities in the Cambridge English platform. It seemed that they did use another reading platform, but they could not recall the name. Also, there was a mention of audiobooks; however, the students did not give any additional information as to what type of audiobooks.

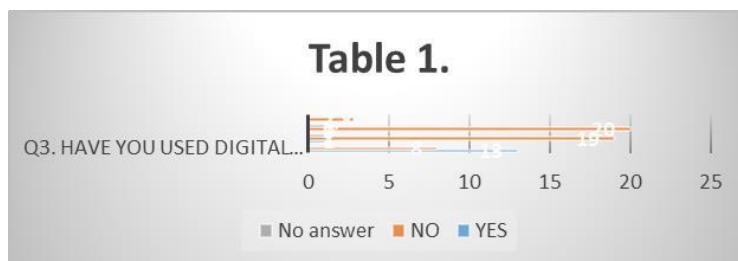
As per the creation of digital books, out of 21 students, only one responded affirmatively to have created a digital book in an app. The rest of the students have not created or remember creating one (See Table 1).

### Interest in creating a digital book

There were nine students who were eager to try something new; however, the majority were not interested in creating a book. As mentioned previously, not many students felt excited about using this strategy; nevertheless, there were a few students that were open to the idea and were willing to take a chance into something new, see Table 1.

The students' skill preference when learning a second language is presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

**Table 1:** Students' knowledge about the creation of digital books

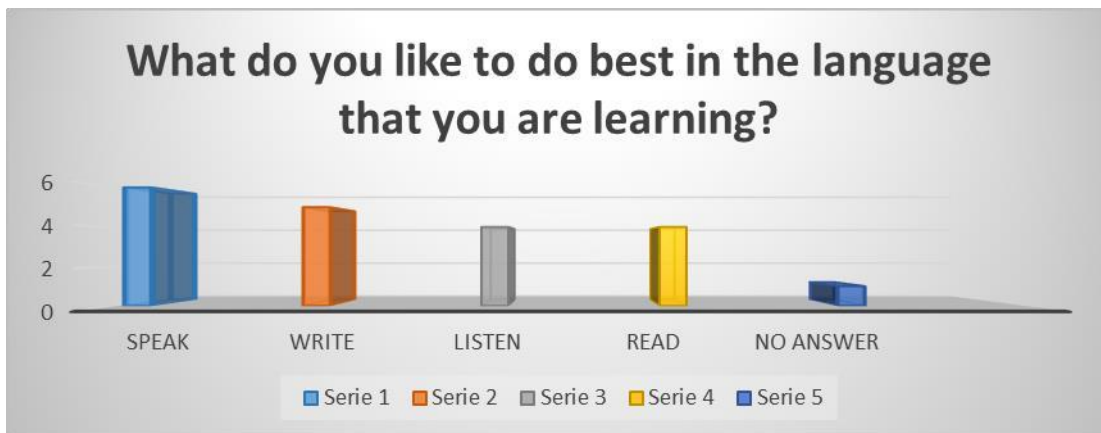


There was a total of 13 students who had used digital books, making reference to the Cambridge English platform and the form it presents to them. This association to this platform gives the understanding that they were not very familiar with the type of digital book that they were going to create and work on, hence the responses given to question number 5, where only one student

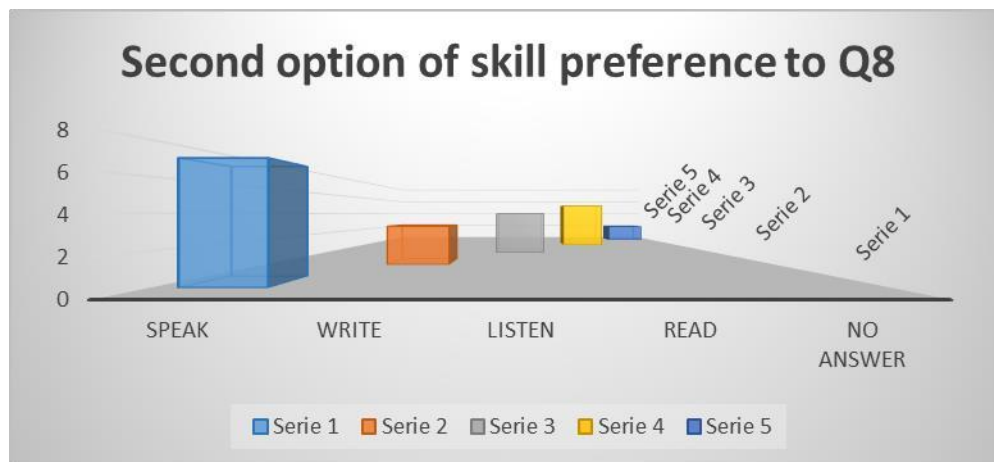
had created one and, as he mentioned, in the Kid A to Z platform. Finally, it was important to find out if the application they were going to use was familiar to them, and from the responses it was clear that they had not heard of the application Book Creator before, nor used it (For questions refer to Appendix A)

The results to the question about their preferred skill showed speaking and writing as the student's first choice (see Table 2)

*Table 2: Skill Preference in Language Learning*



*Table 3: Second Skill of preference in Language Learning.*



### Application of the Quantitative instrument 3

The instrument titled "Survey-Motivation in EFL and the impact on Speaking and writing as the productive skills," was applied a few months after the initial session of the creation of the digital

book. The students were able to work on several Speaking and Writing activities which were created in their “digital book” or journal as they call it.

### Analysis of Quantitative instrument 3

The information gathered from the survey was analyzed to determine if after creating their digital books, their motivation and stamina had changed and if the introduction of this learning strategy had had an impact on their productive skills. Three of the students were absent, therefore, these results are from 18 students, and not the 21 who originally took part in the first instrument (see Table 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8).

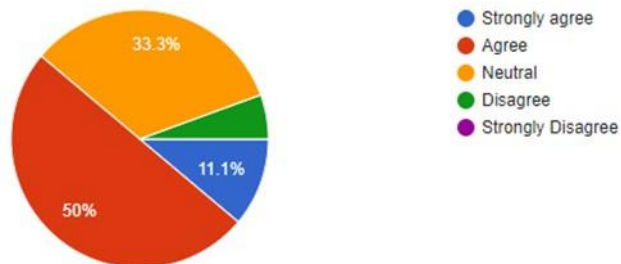
### Enjoyment and motivation of learning English

In Table 4, the enjoyment of learning English was analyzed.

*Table 4: Enjoy English*

1. I really enjoy learning English.

18 responses



The result from this first question is 61.1 % of the students are enjoying learning English as a second language and a small percentage disagree which are those students who have difficulties with the language. Also, 77.8 % of the students recognized their language learning responsibility outside of the classroom and are looking for other means to support their learning and practice the language. Another factor of motivation is geared towards the student’s academic and professional goals as shown by the response with a total of 55.6% for the need of the language for future academic and professional plans.

In Table 5, the students’ motivation to improve writing and speaking was analyzed.

*Table 5: Motivated to improve active skills*

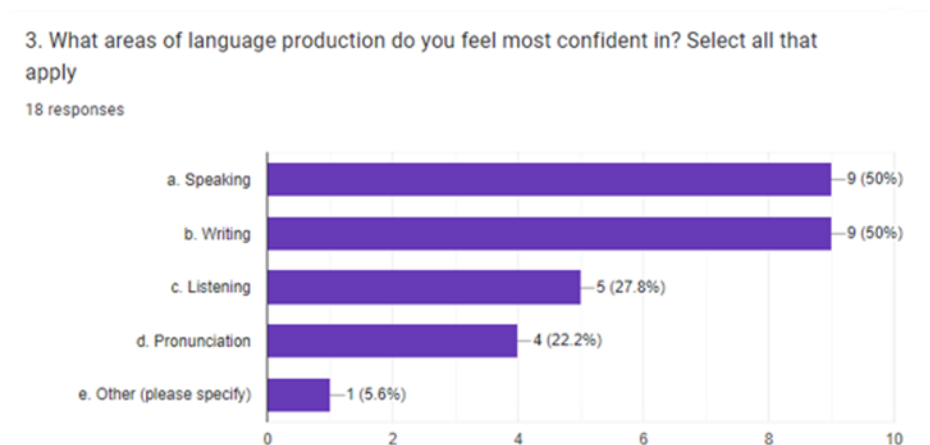


The results in speaking of 66.1% and in writing of 44.4% indicate that the students are motivated to keep working on their productive skills.

### Confidence and Improvement of the language

In Table 6 students' confidence about the language production was analyzed.

*Table 6: Language Confidence*



These results indicate that the students feel evenly confident in both speaking and writing skills. Table 7 explained the results of the importance of improving speaking and writing skills.



*Table 7: Important to improve*



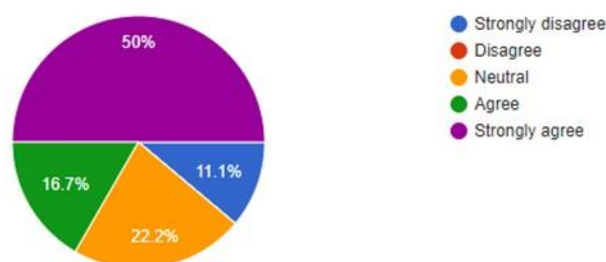
This indicates that 94.4% of the students know the importance of the improving productive skills and their proficiency.

### Parent's influence on EFL learners

Table 8 summarized the importance of parents' involvement when learning English.

*Table 8: Parent's involvement*

7. My parents have stressed the importance English will have for me when I leave school.  
18 responses



The response to this question about parent involvement, 66.7% of students surveyed said their parents exert influence on the importance of knowing English by the time they leave school. These results are similar to the responses obtained regarding encouragement given to students to practice English as much as possible.

## Discussion

The findings from the first questionnaire (Appendix A) shed light on the students' familiarity and experiences with digital books, making it evident that most participants possess a general understanding of what digital books entail. Remarkably, only one student among the surveyed cohort claimed to have created a digital book using an app. This scarcity in creation experiences hints at an untapped potential which can be an opportunity and an effective strategy not only to enhance writing skills, but also to foster speaking interactions as means to communicate and support one another in the creation of digital books and the use of technology. This result coincides with Argawati et al. (2020), who found that the inclusion of digital devices can encourage students to be more creative, get involved with the activities especially if something interesting is shown through a digital device and application as well as feeling motivated and learning effectively using digital applications.

One valuable observation made during the initial process was related to community support within the classroom. These interactions were important to foster security, communication, and trust, knowing that peers and the teacher were always willing to help in any way possible with whatever obstacle they may have encountered along the way. These moments of social interactions are supported by the theories of Vygotsky that contend community plays a central role in “making meaning” of these social interactions, thus making learning possible.

Most of the students relate digital books to a language learning platform such as Cambridge. They were not very keen in creating a digital book because of their lack of knowledge and exposure to this “new tool”, which made it difficult for them to become interested. However, previous studies support show the impact of e-books on literacy, defined as the ability to read, write and speak (Picton, I., 2014) and that of electronic resources on the learning process of a foreign language, thus greatly stimulating the development of speech and active participation (Urinboevne, K. & Shamsitdinova, M, 2019).

Once the first phase was applied and the creation of digital books were underway, there were several drawbacks. Since the students of this generation are considered “Digital Natives” (born during the digital age), it was previously thought that these students would be tech savvy; however, the reality has been another. Yes, they are tech savvy, but only with things that are of immediate gratification and easy use, hence social media. When it was time to use technology in an academic

manner, most of the students were not prepared to deal with those norms. Purcell et al. (2013) have noted the manner in which students are using writing in informal way is the downside of the use of technology; however, teachers can focus on this drawback and channel them into academic writing. They also note that students are communicating in the written form via technology. So, in the day-to-day journey, it proved to be challenging to get a start on the creation of the digital book, especially when the students were not familiar with the application, how to use different tools within the app, how to search for trustworthy information when investigating, and finally try to get their thoughts or ideas written in their journals. The hope is as time progresses and with continued use, they will become more familiar with the app and at ease with what they are willing to write. It is also worth mentioning the meaning the students give to “writing.” In general conversation with the students, they do not really consider texting to be writing; rather, they consider writing when they must write something for school purposes. This was an interesting distinction made by the students participating in this study, which is also supported by Purcell et al. (2013), who found that “Most [students] define writing as something their teachers MAKE them do. While they do see it as necessary in academics (and even sometimes in life), few see the value and purpose in practicing writing” (p. 17).

Furthermore, upon analyzing the outcomes related to the quantitative survey, it is interesting to note that the productive skills, specifically speaking and writing, emerged as the primary choices. This revelation signifies a substantial interest among students in polishing these skills. Consequently, strategies to further develop these skills must be in place to take advantage of their intrinsic motivation to further develop their active skills. It is important to consider the results to the second option as preference since the responses reiterates the student’s interest to progress “speaking” as an important skill to further develop.

Responses were consistent with the interest in the upkeep of productive skills. The students felt confident in putting into practice their speaking and writing skills while participating in the study. It is worth mentioning that a positive classroom climate can support a student’s learning environment (Danuta & Gamara, 2016) and “a positive classroom environment as a situation in which learning becomes interesting and stimulating for learners” (Brown, 2001, p. X).

In addition, parental influence is evident in the responses given by the students. Young (1994, p. 85) asserts this “refers to some of the many ways in which parents exert this attitudinal influence, such as ‘through discussion, by encouraging participation in foreign language programs, helping

the child with homework, encouraging the child to read material written in the foreign language.” Parents who have an active role in their child’s life are always keen to promote the learning of a foreign language by stating the benefits and rewards that they may be able to access in the future if they have a good level of English.

### **Limitations and recommendations**

All things considered, it is evident that the creation of digital books holds promise for having an impact on students’ productive skills, as a result, the use of this strategy comes with benefits and challenges alike.

One of the benefits is that by encouraging collaboration and mutual support within the classroom can nurture a favorable environment, promoting speaking and trust among peers. Vygotsky's theory on social interactions corroborates the significance of these social interactions and the support in facilitating learning. Another benefit is the students’ interest in polishing their productive skills which emphasizes the use of “digital books” as a learning strategy to implement engaging activities and motivate the students to keep practicing and improving their skills. This is supported by Kurniawati et al. (2018) where they stated that they obtained a positive response when the students had access to technology in the classroom online and offline, and students agreed that with the use of technology they can help them learn and develop the four language skills. In addition, digital books give students the opportunity to create and write their own stories, “What is particular about digital books is that they open space for story authorship, where a learner can expand creativity, vocabulary, storytelling participating in conversations.” (Kucirkova, N., 2018).

Some of the challenges comes with use of technology, despite being labeled "Digital Natives," students need to make the distinction between using technology academically as opposed to using technology in social media. It is quite easy for students to use technology as tools for entertainment, but it becomes quite challenging when they need to investigate or write something formally expressing their own ideas and using their own words. Overcoming this hurdle requires guidance, familiarization with the norms of formal and informal writing, distinguishing between writing for school purposes and casual texting. Also, time constriction to obtain much more meaningful results after the investigation has been applied for a longer period of time. It seems that a few months is not enough to get sufficient information on the real impact digital books may have on productive skills.

At the present time, the students who participated in this study have become much more familiarized with the use of digital books as a tool, and it has created communicative opportunities for them to exchange information or seek help with something, while writing and creating their entries. This indicates that the creation of a digital book could be a great strategy to help students develop their writing and further their speaking interactions while creating one. Moreover, creating a positive classroom environment is crucial in stimulating students' interest in learning, as well as parental involvement in encouraging language acquisition.

In conclusion, while there exist challenges such as technological readiness and time restrictions due to the article's deadline, the findings highlight that the creation of digital books can have an impact on the students' speaking and writing skills and it's a strategy that can enhance their language acquisition. To finalize, there is a possibility for further research and it is recommended to allot more time for the study to take place in order to evaluate the impact on the students' productive skills.

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