

# INFLUENCE OF THE KEYNOTE E-BOOK ON THE EFL SKILLS OF THE A2 LEVEL STUDENTS AT UNIVERSIDAD IBEROAMERICANA DEL ECUADOR

## INFLUENCIA DEL LIBRO ELECTRÓNICO KEYNOTE EN LAS HABILIDADES DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA DE LOS ESTUDIANTES DE NIVEL A2 DE LA UNIVERSIDAD IBEROAMERICANA DEL ECUADOR

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## Resumen

Para desarrollar las habilidades lingüísticas de los estudiantes de la Universidad Iberoamericana del Ecuador (UNIB.E), era necesario cambiar el material de EFL por otro que ofreciera ideas innovadoras para que los estudiantes y profesores interactuaran más; y que no se limitaran a los métodos tradicionales de libros que principalmente están centrados en el uso de la gramática. Como consecuencia, se implementó el libro electrónico Keynote que funciona junto con la plataforma en línea Myelt. El uso del libro electrónico empezó a mostrar cambios significativos en las habilidades comunicativas de los estudiantes, por lo cual fue factible realizar un estudio sobre la influencia del nuevo método en habilidades de los estudiantes del nivel A2. Por esta razón, el objetivo de esta investigación es comparar el desempeño académico de los estudiantes en diferentes semestres y determinar la influencia del uso del libro electrónico en las habilidades del inglés como lengua extranjera en el nivel A2 de la UNIB.E. Es importante aplicar métodos acordes a la nueva era, ya que los métodos tradicionales no están relacionados con los tiempos de hoy. En el Ecuador se anima a los estudiantes a hacer preguntas en lugar de expresar sus opiniones y producir por sí mismos y utilizar el inglés en contextos reales; sin embargo, esto solo pudo ser logrado a través del uso de herramientas en línea para hacer que los estudiantes participen, interactúen y practiquen más y de mejor manera. Por lo tanto, mediante el uso de este libro electrónico y otras herramientas en línea, los estudiantes y profesores pueden crear un nuevo entorno de clase que permita a los alumnos comunicarse y desarrollar la fluidez. Se trata de una investigación cuantitativa en la que se aplicó la observación de las lecciones de inglés utilizando una evaluación de observación en el aula y el modelo de estimación pre-post y estadística comparativa sobre las evaluaciones y calificaciones obtenidas por los estudiantes en cinco semestres.

**Palabras clave:** libro electrónico, Keynote, profesor, alumno, inglés como lengua extranjera, habilidades.

## Abstract

In order to develop the EFL skills of students at Universidad Iberoamericana del Ecuador (UNIB.E), there was a necessity to change the EFL material for another that offered innovative ideas for the students and teachers to interact more and for them not to be limited to the traditional book methods that are mainly focused in the use of grammar. As a consequence, it was implemented the use of Keynote e-book that works with the Keynote online platform. The use of this e-book started to show meaningful changes in the students' communication skills, which is the reason why it was feasible to carry out a study about the influence of the new method on the A2 level students EFL skills. Therefore, the objective of this research is to compare the academic performance of the students in different semesters and determine the influence of the use of the e-book on the EFL skills of the students of A2 level at UNIB.E. It is essential to apply methods according to the new era, since the traditional methods are not related to the today's times. In Ecuador, students are encouraged to ask questions instead of expressing their opinions and producing by themselves and use English in real contexts, so this new method gave learners the opportunity to experience English in meaningful situations, however it only could be reached through the use of online tools to make students participate, interact, and practice better. Therefore, by means of the use of this e-book, students and teachers can create a new class environment that allows learners communicating and developing fluency. This quantitative applied the observation of the English lessons by using a classroom observation evaluation, the pre-post estimation model, comparative statistics about the evaluations and grades obtained by the students in five semesters as well.

**Keywords:** Keynote e-book, teacher, students, EFL, skills.

## Introduction

The Keynote e-book is a modern tool to teach English; it consists of several resources, such as: topics related to today's reality, videos, texts, conversations with useful expressions and photos about important contemporary topics. These resources allow students to get immersed in meaningful contexts. The use of technology implies the application of new teaching strategies (Ahmed, 2020); that is the reason why this research shows how the teachers' perspective has changed after using an e-book to teach English. As a consequence of this change from the traditional teaching to something innovative according to the new world, the teaching methodology changed.

The target study of this research was the English A2 level during 5 semesters in order to determine the improvement of the students. It is relevant to emphasize on the difference between the paper books and the e-books, because the last ones contain more features to practice the productive skills: speaking and writing. There was a meaningful change in relation to the other materials used during the previous semesters. Therefore, there was plenty of information for the research.

Moreover, we live in times under the domain of technology and it involves solving problems through creative solutions (Nadrag, 2020). According to Srinivas (2019), we live in a globalized world where the communicative skills of the English language are very important for people to reach their objectives and goals, therefore it is important to apply methods according to the new era, since the traditional methods are not related to today's times. Teachers must adapt to the new technologies and resources, because it is not a good idea to continue applying strategies of a world that does not exist anymore and in the future these strategies and methodologies will be replaced as well; since we live in a changing world.

"Technological tools implement interactive and collaborative resources to create the e-activities that are appropriate to improve students' English pronunciation level and ability to perceive and produce English more accurately." Zhao (2019). Consequently, technological tools such as e-books allow learners to practice different EFL skills, especially if they are not living in an English-speaking country. Also, e-books allow them to have a better immersion in the foreign language, since this is one of the reasons why students do not learn English properly. In Ecuador, they are not used to practice outside the classrooms; hence, it is necessary that teachers help students get immersed in the foreign language. Immersion includes speaking and writing, which are the productive skills; and listening and reading, which are the receptive skills. All of them include sub skills such as: pronunciation, use of grammar, spelling, etc. In addition, it was noticed that teachers usually apply the transmission of models of education instead of proactive models of advocacy (Burgin, 2017), (see figure 1.); it means that they repeat traditional methods that are useful but most of the times should be adapted to the new world or contemporary methodologies should be applied and new methodologies should be created to reach the EFL teaching-learning goals nowadays.

The use of technology encourages learners to self-study and it facilitates the extensive learning, Buzarna (2019). Nowadays, technology has made it easier to learn on your own, it has broken many barriers. In the case of the English language, it has permitted the practice outside the classroom; however, most of the students do not feel motivated to do it; but the use of innovative online tools boosts their own learning. In regarding to this matter, it is worth pointing out that teachers are only guides but they must be qualified. Most students' learning depends on themselves with practice and dedication. Teachers are the guides and motivators.

The new material (e-book) was implemented in the semester September, 2018 - February, 2019; before that year the desertion was higher. The e-book belongs to an online platform by National Geographic, and it contains short TED conferences as the topic of the unit. These conferences

are about the lifestyles and achievements of the speakers; therefore, all the in-class discussions, debates, conversations, essays, and paragraphs are related to them.

## Research methods

- The observation of this quantitative research was applied by using a classroom observation chart and the pre-post estimation model and comparative statistics about the evaluations and grades obtained by the students in different semesters. The results were compared and contrasted.
- The documentary research was found online and comes from reliable websites and universities around the world.

### Objectives

- General objective: To show the influence of the Keynote e-book in the EFL acquisition of the A2 level students at UNIB.E.

**Specific objectives:** To analyze the change produced by the use of the Keynote e-book on the EFL skills; to describe the influence of the Keynote e-book in the EFL skills through the analysis of the students' performance during five semesters; to evaluate the influence of the Keynote e-book on the EFL skills through the comparison of the students' performance during five semesters.

## Outcomes and discussion

First of all, to obtain the results of this research, the English lessons were observed while the teachers were applying the new e-book acquired by the institution. At the beginning, the process was limited to getting familiar with the new material. There was a lot to discover about it and planning lessons required a change. The syllabus and methodology had to be created by teachers individually.

**Grammar sub-skill.** The e-book was different to the traditional books because it was not grammar focused, it invited students to develop critical thinking and implicit grammar was part of every applied activity; but students did not even notice that they were learning grammar. Teachers found it easier to explain in this way.

**Vocabulary sub-skill.** The vocabulary was related to the level but it was explained carefully through videos, sentences and exercises. Furthermore, the lexis was very useful for the real contexts and students could be asked questions about different activities that they do in real life.

**Pronunciation sub-skill.** Students were watching videos all the time and teachers asked them to repeat the useful expressions, ideas and vocabulary for them to practice their pronunciation. Teachers corrected kindly and students felt more confident to speak, because they are sometimes afraid of correction.

**Listening sk.** Students listened to dialogues related to the e-book topics, watched TED Talk videos and listened to people reading about the texts that were on the ebook. Therefore, students were able to understand about different topics and got familiar with English.

**Reading skill.** Students read interesting stories about people around the world. The texts were related to the unit topics and they were able to listen to people narrating these texts in order to learn pronunciation too. Teachers asked questions about reading and students developed critical thinking by giving ideas and comments about what they read.

**Writing skill.** Writing involved telling their own experiences related to the topics of the book in paragraphs, emails or comments. Teachers explained the writing strategies and the process to write each type of writing.

**Speaking skill.** Students were asked to watch videos about dialogues and TED Talks in order to perform improvised conversation by applying the new expressions, and also hold class discussions and debates about the TED Talks. This resource was very important to develop the communication skills because it motivated them to speak and teachers encouraged them to participate.

**Analysis of the change produced by the use of the Keynote e-book on the EFL skills.** To analyze the change produced by the use of Keynote e-book it was necessary to observe the English Lessons by evaluating the modifications in the teachers' methodology and their impact on the students' behavior, which involves: motivation to learn. In addition, teachers' felt more creative and motivated at the moment of teaching.

**Observation chart for the English Lessons with Keynote e-book.** According to the observation, the students feel more motivated to participate with the new material because the tasks are more meaningful and different from the old material. The teacher is creative and encourages the participation of the students. The lessons are well-organized. Every criterion was evaluated out of 10 marks through an observation chart. The analysis was carried out in 5 semesters: September 2017-February 2018, March-August 2018, September 2018-February 2019, March-August 2019, September 2019-February 2020.

During September 2017-February 2018, students' motivation got an evaluation of 48 marks out of 100. During March-August 2018 it got an evaluation of 60 marks out of 100. During September 2018-February 2019 it got an evaluation of 74 marks out of 100. During March-August 2019 it got an evaluation of 83 marks out of 100. September 2019-February 2020 got an evaluation of 93 marks out of 100. The application of the eBook demonstrated that, the application of the e-book increased the motivation and students were encouraged to keep learning the EFL, because it was more innovative and they could evidence the real application of the EFL, (see graphic 1).

During September 2017-February 2018 the accuracy of teachers' methodology got an evaluation of 70 marks out of 100. During March-August 2018 it got an evaluation of 77 marks out of 100. During September 2018-February 2019 it got an evaluation of 82 marks out of 100. During March-August 2019 it got an evaluation of 87 marks out of 100. September 2019-February 2020 got an evaluation of 92 marks out of 100. Consequently, the application of the e-book improved the teachers' methodology, because it was necessary to change and develop it in order to adapt to the new online material effectively; because it was something completely different to the traditional materials used before, (see graphic 1).

During September 2017-February 2018, interaction in the classroom got an evaluation of 40 marks out of 100. During March-August 2018 it got an evaluation of 60 marks out of 100. During September 2018-February 2019 it got an evaluation of 70 marks out of 100. During March-August 2019 it got an evaluation of 80 marks out of 100. September 2019-February 2020 got an evaluation of 90 marks out of 100. Therefore, the application of the e-book allowed a better teacher-student interaction and student-student interaction during the English lessons, which made them practice and apply the EFL meaningfully, (see graphic 1).

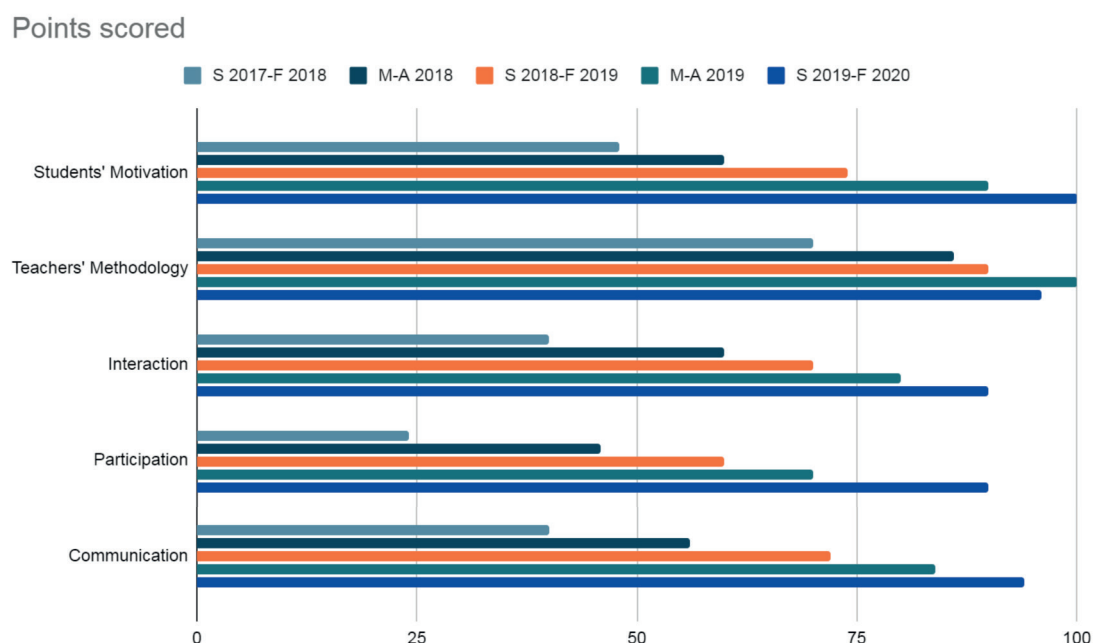
During September 2017-February 2018, students' participation got an evaluation of 24 marks out of 100. During March-August 2018 it got an evaluation of 46 marks out of 100. During September 2018-February 2019 it got an evaluation of 60 marks out of 100. During March-August 2019 it got an evaluation of 70 marks out of 100. September 2019-February 2020 got an evaluation of 90 marks out of 100. As a consequence, the application of the e-book increased the participation and students were encouraged to produce the EFL, which guarantees their better learning.

During September 2017-February 2018, communication in the classroom got an evaluation of 40 marks out of 100. During March-August 2018 it got an evaluation of 56 marks out of 100. During September 2018-February 2019 it got an evaluation of 72 marks out of 100. During March-August 2019 it got an evaluation of 84 marks out of 100. September 2019-February 2020 got an evaluation of 94 marks out of 100, (see graphic 1).

Therefore, the application of the e-book increased the level of communication in the EFL, students did not use to speak or keep normal conversations in the EFL because using Spanish was more comfortable, but the new strategies, activities, methodology and material made the learning process more experiential.

### Graphic 1.

Statistic results about the observation of the English lessons during 5 semesters.



Source: observation chart

**Description of the influence of the Keynote e-book on the EFL skills.** The benefit of the Keynote e-book on the EFL skills is produced because of the proactive incidence models applied through effective methodologies that involve students in the EFL. Students become active learners when not only accept what is said by the teacher but also when they discover and generate knowledge. In the past, students used to be told to ask questions if they did not understand; nowadays they must be encouraged to discover and learn by themselves. In this way, teachers give them the strategies and tools to make it easier to learn more and better. The methodologies applied are mainly the following ones:

**Flipped classroom.** The Flipped Classroom is replacing the traditional teaching method in which students are passive and many people consider that this is the reason why there is a deficit in the level of education (Aguilera, 2017). During the lessons of A2 level students at UNIB.E, learners are the protagonists in every lesson. They participate actively in the teaching-learning process. The teacher's role is to be a guide during each lesson while students do most of the work to acquire



the knowledge. For example, students were asked to carry out cooperative learning and analyze, understand and create tips to save money or spend quality free time. In flipped classrooms, students can work individually but it works much better if it is applied: collaborative or cooperative learning. The flipped classroom model seems to be adapted to the student's needs; on the contrary, the traditional model which is teacher centered, is less adapted to the students' needs (Torrecilla, 2018).

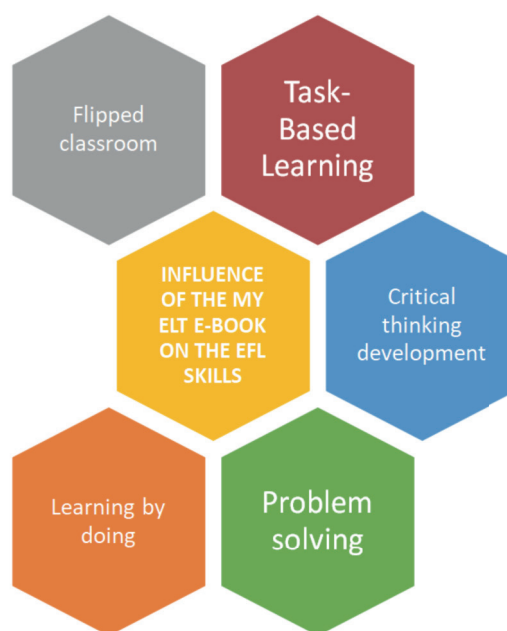
**Task-Based Learning.** The popularity of this approach has increased because teachers are more worried about developing effective communication, (Rodríguez, 2010). Learners are given tasks to analyze, problems to solve and discover by themselves. Teachers give the tasks and complement the information received by learners. For example, students were asked to analyze a criminal investigation through a game called Clueless and it permitted them to solve a problem. On another occasion they read a story online and they were asked to find a solution to the situation. In Task-Based Learning, teachers can apply the communicative approach too and work together with students to learn much better. "The TBL is focused on the real use of the EFL by means of meaningful tasks that allow students to speak, therefore its use contributes to the EFL teaching" Recalde (2019).

**Learning by doing.** Learning by Doing Method enhances participation (Debebe,2020). Learners carry out activities that allow them to apply the EFL in meaningful contexts, such as: debates, class discussions, oral presentations related to true situations and cases. For example, students were asked to talk about their talents or abilities. This was a meaningful task related to the real life of the students. In learning by doing, realia can be applied and the involving of real-life experiences in order to generate meaningful contexts to learn as if students were living the EFL. It decreases the risk of forgetting what was learned because there exists the tendency to remember better what has been done through specific activities, Ruiz (2020).

**Critical thinking development.** Stimulating thoughts in the EFL makes students more conscious about the vocabulary that they already know, Harizaj (2017). Learners develop their productive skills: speaking and writing by means of commenting, participating, giving their opinions and discussing about a video, a podcast, storytelling, etc. For example, students were asked to watch a TED Talk video and discuss it, which allowed them to improve their speaking skills and critical thinking. Better said it permits them to think in English. In critical thinking development, students produce and the correction and feedback given by the teacher is polite and does not offend or reduce their self-esteem. Students understand that mistakes and errors are a normal part of learning and it does not affect their lives but improves their learning.

**Figure 1.**

Graphic representation of the teaching-learning methodologies.



Source: syllabus

**Evaluation of the influence of the Keynote e-book on the EFL skills.** Pre-postestimation model and Comparative Statistics

**Graphic 2.**

Statistic results about the evaluation of the influence of the Keynote e-book on the EFL skills.

	MATERIAL	DESERTION	FAIL	APPROVE
Sep 2017-Feb 2018	Paper book	50%	66%	34%
Mar-August 2018	Paper book	50%	52%	48%
Sep 2018-Feb 2019	E-book	36%	32%	32%
March-August 2019	E-book	27%	27%	46%
Sep 2019-Feb 2020	E-book	9%	14%	77%

Source: IDI data base

The chart compares 5 semesters, 2 semesters correspond to the use of another book and 3 semesters to the use of the new book from its implementation in September 2018 until February 2020.



The desertion decreased gradually from 50% to 9% from the semester September 2017-February 2018 to the semester September 2019- February 2020.

Furthermore, the failing students diminished gradually as well from 66% to 14% since the semester September 2017-February 2018 to the semester September 2019- February 2020.

The passing students increased gradually from 34% to 77% from the semester September 2017-February 2018 to the semester September 2019- February 2020.

## Conclusions

The use of Keynote e-book allows students to learn in meaningful contexts by means of their immersion in significant contexts.

The use of Keynote e-book consents students to acquire new skills in order to learn by themselves (self-study) and become more independent, which was impossible before.

The application of the activities on the Keynote e-book motivates students to practice by means of solving interesting and innovative tasks, which permit them to interact with the teacher and each other.

Teachers became more creative and assigned more meaningful tasks since the topics as well as the e-book offered new ideas and made them think about new ideas for the English lessons.

The interaction increased during the development of the activities in the English lessons because everybody could give opinions and make comments about the information given through the videos, texts, and interesting topics.

It was possible to practice several skills at the same time because the e-book is not grammar focused. Grammar was already implicit in the activities and tasks.

Students were able to draw their own conclusions on the English lessons through the guidance of the teacher and the use of the technology.

Students produced the EFL effectively, it does not mean that they spoke or wrote accurately all the time, but they got the habit of participation during the speaking activities.

The number of students dropping out diminished because their motivation to learn increased highly. Moreover, the number of failing students decreased as well, since the evaluation process changed together with the teaching methodology. Additionally, the number of passing students have increased meaningfully in the last semesters because students felt more motivated to apply the English language and complete the activities.

Technological and online resources as e-books influence on the students' EFL skills in a positive way because as the methodology enhances, the motivation raises and the teachers and students attitude improve.

Students felt more confident to communicate their ideas and opinions after applying the activities provided by the e-book and created by their teachers. The new methodologies encouraged them to apply the English language meaningfully.

## Recommendations

Teachers have the responsibility to use technology and online resources, for example e-books that have been created for the contemporary world and get adapted to them. Therefore, it implies opening their minds and searching for new methodologies, strategies and activities in order to improve learners' skills.

Moreover, students should avail the opportunity to use the Internet and all of the resources that can be found there, to develop their EFL skills.

Finally, more research about this topic can be implemented in the future to find useful information that contributes to the development of the EFL teaching-learning process around the world.

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