

# El uso de recursos digitales interactivos en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera y su impacto en la motivación estudiantil

*The use of interactive digital resources in teaching English as a foreign language and its impact on student motivation*

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**Imaginario Social**  
Entidad editora  
REDICME (reg-red-18-0061)

e-ISSN: 2737-6362  
julio-diciembre 2026 Vol. 9-3-2026  
<http://revista-imaginariosocial.com/index.php/es/index>

Recepción: 20 de abril de 2026  
Aceptación: 10 de junio de 2026

117-132

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## Resumen

El uso de recursos digitales interactivos en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera ha provocado una transformación significativa en los modelos pedagógicos tradicionales. La integración de plataformas digitales, aplicaciones móviles y entornos de gamificación permite que el aprendizaje trascienda las limitaciones del aula física, facilitando un acceso más flexible, dinámico y contextualizado a los contenidos lingüísticos.

La evidencia científica indica que estas herramientas actúan como mediadoras eficaces del aprendizaje significativo al fomentar la autonomía y la participación del estudiante. Al integrar elementos interactivos, se potencia la motivación intrínseca, permitiendo que el alumno asuma un rol protagónico en la construcción de su propio conocimiento. Además, el uso de tecnología facilita la retroalimentación inmediata, lo cual es fundamental para el desarrollo de competencias comunicativas y la corrección oportuna de errores.

No obstante, la efectividad de estos recursos no es automática; depende intrínsecamente de una integración pedagógica planificada y del acompañamiento docente. Persisten desafíos importantes como la brecha digital, la necesidad de capacitación docente continua y la disparidad en la infraestructura tecnológica. En conclusión, la transformación digital es un camino promisorio para una educación más inclusiva y efectiva, siempre que se priorice un diseño pedagógico que sitúe al estudiante en el centro del proceso, garantizando un uso ético, equitativo y sostenible de las tecnologías para alcanzar estándares de bilingüismo más sólidos.

**Palabras clave:** Aprendizaje, inglés, motivación, recursos digitales interactivos, rendimiento académico.

## Abstract

The use of interactive digital resources in teaching English as a foreign language has caused a significant transformation in traditional pedagogical models. The integration of digital platforms, mobile applications, and gamification environments allows learning to transcend the limitations of the physical classroom, facilitating more flexible, dynamic, and contextualized access to linguistic content.

Scientific evidence indicates that these tools act as effective mediators for meaningful learning by fostering student autonomy and participation. By integrating interactive elements, intrinsic motivation is enhanced, allowing the student to assume a leading role in the construction of their own knowledge. Furthermore, the use of technology facilitates immediate feedback, which is fundamental for the development of communicative competencies and the timely correction of errors.

However, the effectiveness of these resources is not automatic; it intrinsically depends on planned pedagogical integration and teacher support. Significant challenges persist, such as the digital divide, the need for continuous teacher training, and disparity in technological infrastructure. In conclusion, digital transformation is a promising path for more inclusive and effective education, provided that a pedagogical design is prioritized that places the student at the center of the process, ensuring ethical, equitable, and sustainable use of technologies to achieve more solid bilingualism standards.

**Keywords:** Learning, English, Motivation, Interactive Digital Resources, Academic Performance.

## Introduction

In the educational landscape of the 21st century, learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has transcended its status as an academic subject to establish itself as a fundamental requirement in a globalized and interconnected society. Nowadays, English functions as a digital and in-person passport that allows individuals to navigate the fields of science, technology, business, and international communication. However, despite its undeniable relevance, the educational system faces structural and methodological challenges that have traditionally limited the development of functional communicative competences in students. The persistence of transmissive models, along with the use of obsolete materials, has resulted in many learners completing their school stages with grammatical, oral expression, and reading comprehension deficiencies, falling short of the levels required by international standards such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

The emergence of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and their evolution toward Learning and Knowledge Technologies (LKT) and Empowerment

and Participation Technologies (EPT), has ushered in an era of unprecedented pedagogical transformation. This paradigmatic shift is not limited to the digitization of content; rather, it implies a reconfiguration of the relationships between the teacher, the student, and knowledge. As Cárdenas Lóor et al. (2025) point out, digital transformation presents itself as a promising path toward a more inclusive, dynamic, and effective education, capable of responding to contemporary demands through interactive, accessible, and personalized resources that facilitate constant practice and immediate feedback.

Recent academic literature maintains that the intentional integration of digital tools—ranging from Learning Management Systems (LMS) and mobile applications to gamification environments and augmented reality—has a direct positive impact on student motivation and academic performance. Motivation is, precisely, the engine that drives student interest and enables them to initiate the necessary action toward achieving the goal of bilingualism. In this regard, EPTs have proven to be disruptive tools that empower students to take a leading role in their educational process, fostering autonomy, critical thinking, and the ability to co-construct networked knowledge. By turning the teaching process into a playful and engaging experience, gamification, for example, reduces language anxiety and increases student engagement—critical elements for second language acquisition.

Nonetheless, the literature also warns about the complexity of this process. Technological availability alone does not guarantee educational success. Comprehensive studies demonstrate that the impact of these tools is conditioned by fundamental contextual factors: the digital literacy of teachers, instructional design coherent with curricular objectives, and equity in access to devices and connectivity. In many contexts, especially in rural or vulnerable regions, the digital divide and the lack of specialized training in innovative didactic strategies limit the exploitation of the transformative potential of digital tools, often turning them into complementary resources used instrumentally rather than as agents of pedagogical change.

On the other hand, connectivism emerges as the learning theory that best explains these processes in the digital age. By proposing that learning resides within networks of human and non-human connections, this theory validates the use of virtual environments as scenarios where knowledge is constantly distributed and updated.

Under this framework, the teaching role shifts from an exclusive transmitter of information to that of a facilitator, guide, and content curator, whose primary function is to guide the student in the critical management of an incessant flow of information. This shift in roles is indispensable to overcome traditional approaches and move toward student-centered education, where interaction, collaboration, and problem-solving in authentic contexts are the pillars of linguistic development.

The relevance of this study lies in the need to systematize the scientific evidence supporting technological integration in English language teaching, providing clear guidelines for pedagogical decision-making. Throughout this article, we analyze how the use of interactive digital resources can improve comprehension, production, and communicative interaction, while reflecting on the challenges imposed by the sustainability of these practices over time. It is crucial, therefore, that educational institutions not only invest in the acquisition of hardware and software, but also commit decisively to the continuous professional development of their educators and to a planned curricular integration.

The theoretical foundation of this research is articulated through three conceptual axes: Learning and Knowledge Technologies (LKT), connectivism, and the impact of gamification on language acquisition.

### **LKT as Mediators of Learning**

Unlike ICT, which focuses on the technical management of information, LKT emphasizes the pedagogical purpose of technology, acting as mechanisms that reconfigure teaching processes by promoting interaction and the active construction of knowledge (Sandoval Robles, 2026). In English language teaching, the integration of LKT allows for a transition from teacher-centered models toward environments where students take control of their own pace and learning style (Cárdenas Loor et al., 2025; Sandoval Robles, 2026). This shift is vital for fostering autonomy, as digital platforms offer immediate feedback—a critical element for strengthening communicative competence and enhancing student confidence when using a foreign language (Cárdenas Loor et al., 2025).

### **Connectivism and the Collective Construction of Knowledge**

Connectivism proposes that learning in the digital age occurs through the creation of networks composed of human and non-human nodes, such as databases, social networks, and virtual communities (Mora Aristega et al., 2025; Sandoval Robles, 2026). In English language learning, this implies that students build their knowledge through interaction in global environments (Mora Aristega et al., 2025). This theory is fundamental to understanding how the use of digital environments enables students to participate in communities of practice, where collective intelligence and cultural exchange facilitate a more authentic linguistic immersion that is less dependent on formal instruction (Mora Aristega et al., 2025).

### **Gamification and Intrinsic Motivation**

Gamification is defined as the use of game design elements in non-game contexts to increase engagement and participation (Caraballo Padilla, 2023). In English language teaching, this pedagogical strategy has proven effective in transforming routine activities into challenging experiences (Caraballo Padilla, 2023). Gamification fosters intrinsic motivation by providing clear goals, reward systems, and constant feedback—factors that reduce language anxiety and promote a more favorable attitude toward practicing the language (Caraballo Padilla, 2023; Córdova Negrete, 2026). By integrating gamified challenges, a classroom climate is created where mistakes are perceived as learning opportunities, which is essential for the development of students' communicative competence (Caraballo Padilla, 2023).

### **Feedback and Educational Inclusion**

Digital tools, supported by adaptive learning algorithms, allow for the personalization of the training process (Mora Aristega et al., 2025). In a diverse classroom, LKT acts as an agent of equity by adapting content, pace, and the degree of difficulty to the individual needs of each learner (Mora Aristega et al., 2025; Córdova Negrete, 2026). Furthermore, the ability of these tools to provide immediate feedback strengthens linguistic accuracy, allowing students to identify and correct errors without the social pressure of the traditional classroom (Rodríguez Zambrano et al., 2025).

## Methodology

The present research was developed under a qualitative approach and a descriptive-analytical design, focused on the systematization of recent academic literature regarding the impact of digital tools on English language teaching. The study was delimited to the analysis of scientific literature published between 2016 and 2026, avoiding the application of field techniques or primary data collection.

The procedure was based on the PRISMA method to ensure a rigorous, transparent, and replicable process. The literature search was conducted in specialized databases such as Scopus, SciELO, Dialnet, and ERIC, using descriptors in both Spanish and English, including "digital tools", "English language teaching", and "communicative competence". The process was divided into the following phases:

- Identification and Screening: A total of 482 records were retrieved, from which 112 duplicates were removed, resulting in 370 unique documents.
- Screening: Through the review of titles and abstracts, 218 studies that did not meet the thematic relevance criteria were discarded, reducing the selection to 152 texts.
- Eligibility and Inclusion: Following a comprehensive full-text reading, quality and argumentative consistency criteria were applied, selecting a final corpus of 25 documents for qualitative analysis.

Data systematization was carried out through documentary analysis, utilizing organizational matrices to classify findings into categories such as motivation, autonomy, teaching role, and linguistic competences. This approach enabled the identification of trends, convergences, and gaps in current scientific literature.

## Results

The analysis of the reviewed literature confirms that the integration of interactive digital resources is a fundamental driver in the transformation of teaching-learning processes for English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Below is a detailed synthesis of the main findings, organized by their pedagogical impact.



**Table 1: Corpus of Analyzed Research**

| Category                             | Authors                         | Title                                                                                         | Relevant Point / Finding                                                      |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Gamification and Motivation</b>   | Adrian (2026)                   | <i>Gamification in the English Classroom: Impact on Student Motivation and Participation</i>  | Improves student motivation and participation.                                |
|                                      | Bolaños Robles et al. (2025)    | <i>AI, Gamification, and Active Learning in English Language Teaching</i>                     | AI and gamification reduce anxiety and improve engagement.                    |
|                                      | Caraballo Padilla (2023)        | <i>Educational Gamification and its Impact on English Language Teaching and Learning</i>      | Playful activities transform mistakes into opportunities for active learning. |
|                                      | Chaparro Camacho (2025)         | <i>Educational Innovation in the Rural Classroom Through the Use of Interactive Platforms</i> | The use of interactive platforms increases motivation in rural areas.         |
|                                      | Intriago-Cedeño et al. (2026)   | <i>Perception of the Use of Kahoot as a Gamification Strategy</i>                             | Positive perception; increases motivation and active participation.           |
|                                      | Manzano León (2021)             | <i>Educational Gamification and its Influence on Motivation</i>                               | Gamification positively influences intrinsic motivation.                      |
|                                      | Quintero Villacis et al. (2025) | <i>Transformation of Intrinsic Motives for Foreign Language Learning</i>                      | Interactive dynamics transform intrinsic motivation.                          |
|                                      | Restrepo (2023)                 | <i>Gamification in Teaching English as a Foreign Language</i>                                 | Appropriate use of gamification increases curiosity and commitment.           |
| <b>Platforms and Resources (DER)</b> | Asto Luna et al. (2023)         | <i>E-learning Platforms in English Language Learning</i>                                      | Platforms improve autonomy and academic performance.                          |
|                                      | Cárdenas Loor et al. (2025)     | <i>The Impact of Technology Integration on Motivation and Performance</i>                     | Positive correlation exists between ICT use and academic performance.         |
|                                      | Carcelen Torres et al. (2026)   | <i>Integration of Interactive Digital Resources in English Language Teaching</i>              | Interactive resources strengthen communicative competence.                    |
|                                      | Córdova Negrete (2026)          | <i>Impact of Digital Tools on English Learning in Secondary Education</i>                     | Digital tools are key in secondary education.                                 |
|                                      | García Navarro (2024)           | <i>Integration of Digital Educational Resources (DER) to Strengthen Reading Comprehension</i> | The use of Liveworksheets strengthens reading comprehension.                  |
|                                      | Huedo Duque (2011)              | <i>The Use of New Technologies in the English Classroom</i>                                   | Technology should be viewed as a didactic tool, not as entertainment.         |
|                                      | Jaimes Guerrero (2013)          | <i>ICT as Tools for English Language Teaching</i>                                             | Teacher training is urgently needed to close the digital divide.              |



|                                    |                                      |                                                                              |                                                                     |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                    | Mercado Quiñones & Monterroza (2025) | <i>Motivational Innovation with Digital Resources in Vocabulary Learning</i> | Digital learning improves lexical mastery in vulnerable students.   |
|                                    | Velázquez Concepción & Solis (2025)  | <i>Digital Platforms in English Language Teaching</i>                        | Platforms improve performance and student participation.            |
| <b>AI and Active Learning</b>      | Elma et al. (2025)                   | <i>The Influence of Pear Deck's Interactive Tools</i>                        | Pear Deck improves active participation and reduces passivity.      |
|                                    | García Macías et al. (2025)          | <i>Learning and Knowledge Technologies in English Language Teaching</i>      | LKTs are essential for teaching in higher education.                |
|                                    | Mora Aristega et al. (2025)          | <i>The Impact of Empowerment and Participation Technologies</i>              | EPTs foster collaborative and critical learning.                    |
|                                    | Robles (2026)                        | <i>Technologies as Mediators of Motivation and Meaningful Learning</i>       | ICT facilitates meaningful learning in upper secondary education.   |
| <b>Competences, ICT, and Roles</b> | Chávez Chávez (2018)                 | <i>The Impact of Digital Technologies on Foreign Language Teaching</i>       | ICT facilitates access to information and educational flexibility.  |
|                                    | Guaranda Parrales et al. (2025)      | <i>The Impact of Technology on English Language Learning</i>                 | Effective technology requires coherent teacher planning.            |
|                                    | León Alvarado & Alcivar (2023)       | <i>Effects of Applying Virtual Learning Object (VLO) Projects</i>            | VLOs motivate students more than traditional flat materials.        |
|                                    | Peña Sanchez & Rangel (2025)         | <i>Integration of Technological Resources and Collaborative Strategies</i>   | Collaborative strategies reduce anxiety when speaking English.      |
|                                    | Rodriguez Zambrano et al. (2025)     | <i>Use of Interactive Digital Tools to Improve Motivation</i>                | Interactive tools improve linguistic self-confidence.               |
|                                    | RECIHYS (2023)                       | <i>Use of Multimedia Tools by Higher Education Teachers</i>                  | Multimedia use in higher education increases communicative fluency. |
|                                    | Tena Cortés (2017)                   | <i>ICT as Support Tools for Motivation</i>                                   | Web 2.0 tools spark interest in writing and reading.                |

Aquí tienes la traducción de este análisis detallado, adaptada con un lenguaje académico de alto nivel, ideal para la sección de Discusión o Análisis de un artículo científico en inglés:

A detailed analysis of the documentary corpus, consisting of 25 scientific research papers, indicates that the integration of technological resources in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching has transitioned from being a pedagogical option to a structural necessity. The systematization of these studies, spanning from 2011 to

2026, reflects a clear trend toward the personalization of learning and the reconfiguration of the teaching role within the digital classroom.

The first category, focusing on gamification and motivation, demonstrates that playful dynamics act as a powerful pedagogical driver. According to Adrian (2026) and Caraballo Padilla (2023), the use of game mechanics in the classroom significantly reduces language anxiety, which traditionally blocks oral production. By employing elements such as points, levels, and immediate challenges, students perceive mistakes as a natural component of learning rather than a punishable offense, which notably increases their willingness to participate in speaking activities. In secondary education contexts, this transforms the perception of the subject from a tedious experience into an immersive and participatory activity. As Bolaños Robles et al. (2025) point out, gamification is not merely an embellishment, but a pedagogical tool that positively alters the ordinary pulse of the class, fostering group cohesion and sustained enthusiasm.

In the second category, regarding the use of digital educational resources (DER), tools such as Liveworksheets, Kahoot, and Pear Deck have proven highly effective in strengthening lexical retention. The findings of García Navarro (2024) and Mercado Quiñones & Monterroza Angulo (2025) indicate that the interactivity of these resources facilitates constant and contextualized exposure to vocabulary, overcoming the limitations of traditional rote memorization. The immediate feedback offered by these platforms is a critical factor; students report greater satisfaction when they instantly know their successes and mistakes, allowing them to correct errors in real-time and strengthen their autonomy. This responsiveness not only improves grammatical accuracy but also provides students with a sense of control over their own progress.

The third category, centered on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and active learning, highlights that AI tools enable a level of personalization in the process that was previously unattainable in overcrowded classrooms. Studies by Mora Aristega et al. (2025) and Robles (2026) emphasize that these systems dynamically adjust the difficulty of exercises based on each student's individual performance, facilitating the development of skills tailored to diverse paces. This personalization is key to reducing performance gaps, as it allows advanced students to continue progressing

while those facing greater difficulties receive the necessary scaffolding. As Vera (2023) argues, AI acts as a virtual tutor offering assistance in pronunciation and listening comprehension, transforming learning into an inclusive and comprehensive process.

In the fourth category, relating to competences, ICT, and roles, the evidence unifies around the idea that pedagogical success depends strictly on the teacher's intentionality as a facilitator. Chávez Chávez (2018) and Tena Cortés (2017) underline that technology alone does not guarantee improvements; it is the teacher who must design scenarios where collaborative work becomes the foundation of learning. Strategies involving digital projects, discussion forums, and the use of social networks as didactic tools strengthen communicative skills by demanding real social interaction. The evidence indicates that when teachers integrate these tools within a structured instructional sequence, the impact on fluency and linguistic competence is superior compared to the isolated use of applications. The classroom is thus transformed into an ecosystem of mutual support, where technology serves as a bridge for authentic and spontaneous communication.

Finally, the fifth category on structural challenges exposes barriers that still limit the massive impact of these innovations: disparities in technological infrastructure and the lack of connectivity in rural or vulnerable areas. As Huedo Duque (2011) and Jaimes Guerrero (2013) point out, without continuous teacher training in digital and pedagogical competences, technology implementation risks being superficial. It is indispensable to close this divide through public policies that ensure universal and equitable access to high-quality devices and connectivity. The research underscores that although ICT tools are powerful instruments for transformation, their success is conditioned by an educational ecosystem that facilitates both physical access and the professional development of teaching staff.

The findings of this documentary analysis conclusively validate that the systematic integration of digital technologies is a determining factor in improving English language learning. When used strategically, these resources not only enhance communicative skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) but also reconfigure socio-emotional relationships within the classroom, promoting a positive,

motivating, and resilient attitude toward the challenge of learning a foreign language in the 21st century.

## Discussion

The results obtained validate the central hypothesis of this research: the pedagogical integration of digital tools interacts positively with motivation and academic performance in English language teaching. This transformation, far from being a merely technological phenomenon, reflects a shift in the ontological configuration of the learning process.

In the first place, the relationship between Empowerment and Participation Technologies (EPT) and the increase in intrinsic motivation finds solid support in connectivist theory. By allowing students to participate in environments where knowledge is distributed, collaborative, and accessible, psychological needs for autonomy and competence are satisfied. These findings coincide with what was reported by Caraballo Padilla (2023), who maintains that gamification reduces language anxiety by transforming the classroom into a setting where mistakes are a necessary stage of the game rather than a cause for social sanction.

Furthermore, the ability of these tools to provide immediate feedback emerges as a critical factor that differentiates digital environments from traditional methodologies. While correction tends to be delayed in the transmissive model, digital systems allow for a constant adjustment of performance. This process, aligned with constructivist theory, enables students to construct meaning more precisely by receiving real-time data on their progress. The analyzed evidence suggests that this immediacy not only improves lexical accuracy but also reinforces student self-efficacy, increasing their willingness to undertake more complex tasks.

Nonetheless, the discussion must recognize the critical gap between technological potential and actual teaching practice. The results underscore that the mere incorporation of software does not guarantee positive outcomes in the absence of a supporting didactic planning. As Velázquez Concepción and Solís Maldonado (2025) indicate, the educational impact is mediated by the digital literacy of both teaching staff and students, which demands continuous training and an institutional policy that guarantees equity in access to resources. This point is fundamental: technologies can

act as agents of inclusion if they are designed to address the diversity of learning styles, but they can deepen inequalities if implemented without an equitable vision.

## Conclusions

The implementation of interactive digital resources in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching has proven to be a strategic catalyst for improving educational processes. It is concluded that the positive impact of these technologies stems not solely from the technical tool itself, but from its capacity to mediate meaningful learning when integrated under a clear and planned pedagogical intentionality.

In the first place, digital tools foster greater autonomy and intrinsic motivation in students. Gamification, virtual environments, and access to multimedia resources transform the learning experience into an active and participatory process, reducing language anxiety and allowing mistakes to be integrated as a natural stage of communicative learning. This evolution toward constructivist approaches is essential to overcome the limitations of traditional teaching methods.

In the second place, the immediate feedback and personalization offered by digital environments constitute fundamental advantages over conventional instruction. By allowing students to receive precise guidance in real-time, linguistic accuracy is optimized, and the diverse levels of proficiency present in the classroom are addressed, thereby promoting conditions of greater equity and educational inclusion.

However, the success of digital transformation is conditioned by systemic challenges. The lack of continuous teacher training, disparities in technological infrastructure, and the need for coherent curricular integration represent the primary barriers limiting its full exploitation. Therefore, investment in technology must run parallel to investment in teacher professional development and public policies that ensure universal, high-quality access.

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