Peer Feedback and its Effect on Speaking Skills Using Bubbly

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Abstract

This study explores the role of peer feedback through a microblogging voice application, in the development of EFL students’ speaking skills. The name of the app is Bubbly and the sample involved 22 senior year students with a B1 level of English in a private high school in Guayaquil. Learners had to develop six speaking tasks about different topics, which they had to post in Bubbly and then they received peer feedback for each task in the same app. The instruments applied were a pre and post-test with a speaking rubric as well as students’ learning logs and interviews to analyze the quality of feedback and the students’ perspectives towards the innovation. The findings showed an increase in the mean between the pre-test and the post-test of 1.11 with a large effect size (1.90) and a $p$ value of 0.00001. Furthermore, results show that students perceived peer feedback as a useful tool to enhance their speaking skills. The implications and challenges of using peer feedback as a strategy in EFL learning are discussed. Since peer feedback was found to be beneficial, EFL teachers may find the results and discussion of this research useful for its implementation in class.

Keywords: peer feedback, speaking skills, microblogging voice app., EFL learning, high school level
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

Resumen
Esta investigación explora el rol de la retroalimentación entre pares con una aplicación de microblogging por voz, en el desarrollo de las habilidades orales de los estudiantes de Inglés. El nombre de la aplicación es Bubbly y la muestra involucró a 22 estudiantes con nivel B1 de inglés en el último año de estudios de un colegio particular de Guayaquil. Los estudiantes desarrollaron seis actividades orales que luego publicaron en Bubbly para recibir retroalimentación de un compañero. Los instrumentos aplicados fueron una evaluación inicial y final utilizando una rúbrica oral, así como registros de aprendizaje y entrevistas para analizar la calidad de la retroalimentación y las perspectivas de los estudiantes sobre la innovación. Los resultados mostraron un incremento en la media entre la evaluación inicial y la final de 1.11 puntos, con un tamaño del efecto grande de 1.90 y un valor de p de 0.00001. Adicionalmente, los resultados demuestran que los estudiantes percibieron la retroalimentación como una herramienta útil para mejorar sus habilidades orales. Se discuten también las implicaciones de usar la retroalimentación entre pares como estrategia para el aprendizaje de inglés. Debido a que la retroalimentación entre pares resultó ser beneficiosa, los docentes de inglés podrían encontrar los resultados y discusión de esta investigación útiles para su implementación en clase.

Palabras clave: retroalimentación entre pares, habilidades orales, aplicación de microblogging por voz, aprendizaje de inglés como lengua extranjera, nivel de secundaria.
A primary concern of EFL teachers worldwide has always been the development of their students’ speaking skills to be able to communicate effectively. One of the biggest limitations in EFL teaching and learning in countries such as Ecuador is that there are not enough opportunities to use the language outside the classroom. Additionally, in EFL classrooms many times there are big classes that exceed the ideal number to practice speaking (Urrutia & Vega, 2010).

Along with the limitation for the development of speaking skills, the use of technology in education is now an essential tool since teachers need to be updated with the technological knowledge that their students have (Richards, 2014). Education First (2018) published the English Proficiency Index (EPI) for the year 2018, and they reported that access to the internet and technology has a positive correlation with a better English level. This means that in countries in which students have more access to technology, English levels are also higher. Besides this, the EPI for the year 2018, after applying the EF English Standard test, positions Ecuador in place 65 out of 88 countries, which represents a low English proficiency level. In addition, Hubbard (2009) added that computer applications provide language learners with access to many materials which help support their learning. Thus, now it is not a question for the teacher whether to use technology in the class or not, but which tech tools are the best for the context of their students. Regarding the use of technology for improving speaking skills, Combe and Codreanu (2016) concluded that students engaged more and had more oral interaction in EFL with the use of vlogs on YouTube. Additionally, Minalla (2018) showed that students who used Whatsapp for voice messages improved their verbal interaction.

In the last years, there has been an increasing amount of literature on the use of technology in the classroom in different subject areas as well as about students’ perspectives. Kee and Samsudin (2014) reported that teenagers have a positive perception towards using
mobile devices in performing ubiquitous learning, and that they perceived that mobile
devices could be used for gaming and entertainment as well as for learning because they are
very convenient, give fast responses, and are easy to use to access information. Also, Iino and
Yabuta (2015) concluded that EFL university students showed significant improvement in
fluency by using video conferencing as a synchronous tool.

Many studies have also pointed out the importance of formative feedback to enhance
students’ learning, and this includes not only feedback from the teachers but also peer
feedback and self-assessment. Wiggins (2012) mentioned that if the student receives
feedback and then has the opportunity to use that feedback; this process will improve the
student’s performance and learning. Given the relevant role that feedback has in learning,
teachers need to be aware of its use when designing their activities. However, giving
frequent, quality feedback to each student can be a difficult task (Liu & Carless, 2006).
Feedback given by peers may be a solution to increase its frequency and help students learn
(Gielen, Peeters, Dochy, Onghena & Struyven, 2010).

There are several studies on the use of peer-feedback for enhancing oral skills, which
have concluded that peer feedback improves the quality of speaking performance such as
Chaqmaqchee (2015); Colthorpe, Chen, and Zimbardi (2014); McGarrell (2010); Toland,
Mills, and Kohyama (2016); and, Safari and Koosha (2016). However, there are very few
studies about peer feedback at the high school level such as Kayacan and Razi (2017);
Kurihara (2017); Rotsaert, Panadero, Schellens, and Raes (2018); and, Sloan (2017).
Although many studies such as the ones mentioned above, concluded that peer feedback
enhances speaking, there are others that question such claim. For example, Murillo-
Zamorano and Montanero (2018) concluded in their research that peer assessment with a
rubric is insufficient to generalize any improvements in oral presentations unless there are
enough sessions. Also, Wichmann, Funk, and Rummel (2018) stated that peer feedback alone might not be sufficient to make successful changes and improve language skills.

It is important to mention that there is little research about the use of technology to improve speaking skills in the reality of Latin America and Ecuador. The only study found in Ecuador by Tenelanda and Castelo (2016) analyzed the use of mobile phones through audio and voice recordings to improve pronunciation and intonation. They concluded that students felt more confident working at their own pace by means of listening to audios in English.

On the other hand, the exit requirement for the English level of high school students according to the Ministry of Education in Ecuador is B1. However, most students do not reach this level by the time they finish their studies. This is the situation at a private bilingual high school in the city of Guayaquil in which students in their senior year are expected to have a B1 level at the moment of graduating from high school. Nevertheless, on the Cambridge PET test taken at the beginning of the school year 2018, only 34% of students reached the B1 level, and one of the lowest skills was that of Speaking.

It is evident that there is a gap in research in the use of technology with computers and mobile phones for peer feedback in our country and at the high school level. Thus, the current study will provide further data for improving speaking skills and teaching practice in Ecuador. That is why this action research study focused on how a group of EFL learners could have more opportunities to improve their speaking skills with peer feedback using Bubbly, a voice microblogging mobile and computer application (see Appendix A) that permits users to create, post and share 90-second voice messages with other users as well as comment on others.

This study focused on one aspect of spoken production, the sustained monologue, which, according to the Council of Europe (2018), includes description and narrative. A level B1 learner, “Can reasonably fluently relate a straightforward narrative or description as
a linear sequence of points” (p. 70). Besides that, this feature is related to the Ecuadorian In-
Service English Standards of speaking production in the Level B1, to “sustain straightforward
description of a subject or a variety of matters within the personal, educational, public, and
vocational domains rather fluently, presenting it as a linear sequence of points” (Ministerio de

Therefore, there are three principal research questions for this study:

1. Do EFL students using Bubbly, a voice microblogging application, as a tool for peer
feedback show a significant improvement in their speaking skills?

2. What is the quality of peer feedback?

3. What are the students' perspectives about peer feedback using technology through a
mobile and computer application in class?

**Literature Review**

This research involved improving EFL speaking skills development through peer
feedback using Bubbly, a voice microblogging mobile and computer application. The
learning-teaching approach involved CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) principles
and it was necessary to explore concepts of speaking, peer feedback, and students’
perspectives towards its use.

This study focused on the aspect of spoken production that refers to sustained
monologue. Therefore, it was essential to analyze what Second Language Acquisition (SLA)
theory mentions about the value of output. Ellis (2005) in his set of principles of instructed
language acquisition mentions the importance of the role of output in acquiring a language.
He mentions that it is useful in automatizing existing knowledge and in giving students
opportunities for improving discourse skills such as producing long runs, which is the
objective of this innovation. Also, Lessard-Clouston (2018) discusses the importance of
output pointing out that it refers to language that has a communicative purpose.
The theory that supports this innovation is Social Constructivism since it emphasizes learning through group work and pair work, as well as the teacher’s and students’ feedback. Vygotsky (as cited in Woolfolk, 2016) mentions that students’ cognitive development is stimulated by the interactions with people who have better skills or know more, such as peers, parents, or teachers. Vygotsky also believed that cultural tools, which could include computers, internet, and mobile devices, have a relevant role in cognitive development. For this innovation, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which is based on constructivism, will be used. Kasumi (2015) mentions that CLT is a method that focuses on engaging students in communication so that they can develop their communicative competence.

CLT principles will be considered in the design of the lesson plan for the innovation. Richards (2006) states that CLT is a group of principles about the objectives of language teaching, about how students acquire a language, about the types of classroom tasks that best help in the learning process, and the role of teachers and students in the classroom. Similarly, Jabeen (2014) mentions “communicative language teaching is strongly associated with activities such as group work, pair work, open dialogues, role-playing, etc.” (p. 68). Likewise, Richards (2006) mentions that one of the objectives of CLT is to develop communicative competence and that it is fostered by designing activities in class in which students are allowed to use communication strategies and negotiate meaning. Therefore, these are the types of activities that the researcher had planned for the application of this action research.

Bubbly is a Voice Microblogging Application, which is known as the Twitter for voice. It lets you create voice posts with pictures and filters and share them in other social networks (Altruist Group Co., 2015). There is only one study on the use of Bubbly for the development of oral production skills in EFL but at the university level in Japan, made by
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

Renaud Davies. Davies (2015) concluded that the use of voice microblogging tasks in Bubbly raised the students’ level of motivation, engagement, and confidence and also improved their spoken production skills.

The focus of the current study is the development of speaking skills in EFL students. Concerning this topic, Molina and Briesmaster (2017) mention that speaking can be one of the hardest skills to improve, but it is also frequently the principal objective of every language learner. For this reason, communicative competence is often the main purpose of learning a language. Furthermore, Hughes (2013) indicates three levels and fields of research into speech and conversation. One is organization and behavior, which includes discourse analysis; the second one is structure, which includes grammar and vocabulary; and the third one is sound, which includes pronunciation. The researcher has considered these three components in the speaking rubric that was used in this study.

About those three components, Hughes (2013) mentions that discourse analysis studies are interested in how speakers interact, and how talk is organized (coherence) over long stretches of language (fluency). In addition, The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) states in its band descriptors that fluency and coherence refer to the capacity to speak with a regular continuity and rate as well as to connect and sequence ideas to produce coherent speech (2016). Similarly, Saville-Troike (2007) adds that discourse refers to the ways to link sentences and organize ideas. The second field of speech mentioned by Hughes is grammar, which as she states, involves a variety of constructions commonly used by speakers, which do not fit into norms of traditional grammar. In spoken discourse, grammar structures are usually shorter, simpler, and more informal. Therefore, grammar is an important descriptor to take into account when practicing speaking skills and it goes together with vocabulary use.
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

The third field mentioned refers to sounds and pronunciation, which as Brown (2001) states, is crucial to gaining complete communicative competence. Along the same line, Nunan (1999) points out that with the spread of communicative approaches, the teaching of pronunciation not only focuses on differences in individual sounds, but also on the importance of stress, rhythm, and intonation.

The present study aims at understanding if peer feedback can have a positive effect in the development of the speaking skills mentioned before. On this subject, Shute (2008) mentions that formative feedback denotes information communicated to the student that is aimed at changing the learner’s thinking or behavior with the objective of improving learning. In the same vein, Wiggins (2012) states that feedback is not the same as advice or praise because effective feedback requires that students have an objective, take some actions to achieve it, and receive information related to that goal. Therefore, it was important for the application of this action research to make sure that students understand how to give quality peer feedback.

Along the same lines, Wiggins (2012) mentions that students need information that tells them if they are headed in the correct direction. Furthermore, they also need opportunities to use that feedback to reshape their performance and be able to achieve their goal. Ritchhart (2015) emphasizes that feedback has to use specific and informative language so that it tells the student what they did and indicates what they could do differently to improve. Moreover, Brown and Hudson (1998) mention some advantages of peer assessment such as the direct participation of learners, the stimulation of autonomy and increased motivation.

On the other hand, Joo (2016) reviewed several studies about peer assessment in speaking, and she mentions that self and peer assessment practices can enhance speaking skills if four conditions are met: clear task-related criteria, sufficient training, considerations of the learners’ characteristics, and a strong integration with the curriculum. In addition, the
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

National Research Council (2000) states that the use of technology can help teachers to provide learners with feedback and for students to check their work.

However, there are two important aspects to consider about peer feedback, as Smith (2017) mentions. One aspect is that giving high-quality feedback represents an important demand of teaching time, especially in classes with many students. The second aspect is that not every student has the same level of motivation to provide the best feedback, which would be a drawback for the students that could receive a weaker feedback. In the same way, McGarrell (2010) mentions in his study some concerns that students have about peer feedback, which include the lack of confidence in their capacity to give quality feedback, and the fear of offering good feedback without affecting their relationships.

Innovation

The innovation consisted of using peer feedback facilitated by Bubbly to improve speaking skills. It took place as part of a regular learning unit in which all four language skills were used. It lasted 30 teaching hours (5 weeks): During the five weeks, the participants were provided with useful vocabulary and language as well as communicative activities aimed at speaking. The innovation was planned using an innovative instructional design for the unit (See Appendix B). Students uploaded six task-based voice posts using Bubbly, and received peer feedback in the form of comments posted to their speaking recordings in Bubbly.

The purpose of using backward design was to lead all the activities in the unit to the transfer of learning. For this purpose, the teacher designed the unit having in mind the desired results. Then, the teacher decided how to assess learning and finally planning all the learning experiences directed to the goals and supporting transfer, meaning making and, in this case, speaking skills acquisition. As Wiggins and McTighe (1998) mention, in this way, the teacher can focus on all students, and their learning preferences and by making a good
design of activities first, students can really be able to transfer what they learn to other circumstances in real life.

At the beginning of the innovation, students were taught how to give quality peer feedback in the first sessions with the help of a feedback rubric for self-assessment (Appendix C). During the first week of the innovation, students also learned how to use the speaking rubric (Appendix D). Also, students practiced giving good peer feedback, by comparing different appropriate models of quality feedback with the feedback rubric. The following weeks, students were introduced to the content of the unit through listening, reading, speaking, and writing activities as well as group and pair work. Later, they posted their speaking tasks on Bubbly and got peer feedback as an activity at home.

The speaking rubric (Appendix D) was used by students to give feedback on the following aspects: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management (length, organization of ideas, fluency, and cohesion) and pronunciation. Students also used the feedback rubric (Appendix C) for self-assessing the feedback they were providing to their peers. Additionally, students completed three learning logs for self-assessment and metacognition to help them reflect on the actions they had to take to improve their speaking tasks using the feedback given.

**Methodology**

This study is an action research because the author is involved in the study. The research design is mixed since it analyzed quantitative and qualitative data. According to Ferrance (2000), action research is a set of steps in which the ones who participate examine their teaching practice in detail using research techniques. The action research project was carried out at a private bilingual high school in Guayaquil.

**Participants**
The convenience sample was 22 students in their senior year of high school. According to Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016), a convenience sample is a type of non-random sample in which participants have been included because of easy accessibility or availability. In the case of this research, the participants were the ones assigned to the teacher doing the action research at the beginning of the school year. The ages of the participants ranged between 16 and 18 years old, four males and eighteen females (See Appendix E). The study took place over the course of 30 hours in a Language Arts class. The students had mixed English levels (A2: 56%, B1: 34% and B2: 10%) according to the Common European Framework classification of English levels. These results were obtained through the application of a mock PET test at the beginning of the year.

This study aimed at finding conclusive results for the research questions stated as the purpose of the study. Therefore, the expectation was to obtain higher results in the post-test of speaking skills, in the final assessment of quality feedback, and a positive perspective from the students toward the use of peer feedback to improve speaking as well as about the use of technology and the mobile application Bubbly to enhance EFL learning.

**Ethical considerations**

Howe and Moses (1999) state that “both quantitative and qualitative research warrant strict scrutiny, and researchers need to be aware that particular research methods bring certain ethical issues to the fore” (p.56). Therefore, when conducting research, decisions need to be taken related to how to address and deal with ethical issues.

An important ethical issue has to do with confidentiality. It is important to keep the anonymity of the subjects as well as decide and consider which personal data is going to be collected as well as its security, retention, and disposal when the study is finished. For this purpose, each participant was identified by the same number instead of their name in all the data collected. Besides that, the researcher explained the participants the purpose of the
research and was responsible for using the data only for this study. Also, the school signed a letter of consent for the development of the research.

A final important ethical issue is objectivity. The researcher needed to be careful not to be biased in the observations and collection of data. It was also important to be careful not to lead results to what the researcher expects to find. This consideration is very important to make sure that objectivity is part of this study. For this reason and for ensuring objectivity and inter-rater reliability, a second evaluator, who did not know the students, used the speaking rubric to score the students’ speaking pre and post-tests.

**Instruments and Data Collection**

The instruments were designed to collect relevant information to answer three research questions: 1) Do EFL students using Bubbly, a voice microblogging application, as a tool for peer feedback show a significant improvement in their speaking skills?; 2) What is the quality of peer feedback?; and, 3) What are the students' perspectives about peer feedback using technology through a mobile and computer application in class? For the purpose of the study, the independent variable is peer feedback using Bubbly as a tool and the dependent variable is speaking, specifically the sustained monologue.

To answer the first research question, the teacher and a second evaluator used a speaking rubric adapted from Cambridge B1 level assessment scales (Appendix D). The speaking rubric considered three descriptors or variables: Grammar and Vocabulary; Discourse management, which included fluency, cohesion and length; and Pronunciation. Each descriptor was scored over 10 points, and then the results were averaged. It was expected to have grades, which were above six at the beginning and then seeing an improvement of at least one point above their first speaking task with the application of peer feedback. For scorer reliability using the speaking rubric, a second evaluator, who was trained in the use of the speaking rubric, assessed the first and the last speaking task.
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

separately and then the researcher averaged the results of both evaluators. Scorer reliability as Brown (2001) states is the consistency of scoring by two or more scorers while validity refers to the degree to which a test assesses what it is meant to assess. For validity of the speaking rubric, the Cambridge B1 level speaking assessment scales were adapted (Appendix D). Then, it was evaluated by three EFL teachers using a format for evaluation (Appendix F), and later it was tested with the participants in the first sessions.

The second research question about the quality of peer feedback was answered using the rubric for feedback (Appendix C). The researcher assessed the peer feedback given by students in the first task and the peer feedback given in the last task using the feedback rubric to analyze the progress and improvement on the quality of feedback. After that, the results were contrasted through the analysis of the peer feedback posted in Bubbly as comments by looking for patterns or emergent themes in the answers to group data. Wiggins (2012) mentions seven keys for effective feedback, which can be summarized by saying that feedback has to be precise, actionable towards a goal and timely. For this reason, the feedback rubric included those three aspects.

The third research question is related to the students’ perspectives towards the use of peer feedback mediated by Bubbly. For this purpose, the researcher interviewed eight students who were chosen considering students with the highest speaking scores in the post-test, students in the middle and students with the lowest scores in order to have perspectives from students with different levels of progress and be able to improve the innovation in the future. The interview protocol proposed questions related to the categories chosen for qualitative analysis in this research: students’ feelings towards the use of Bubbly and technology in the EFL class as well as the students’ perspectives about the quality of the feedback received and given (Appendix G). Interviews were particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant’s experiences. McNamara (1999) mentions that through
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

interviews, the interviewer can obtain in-depth information about an issue and get further information about answers. Furthermore, the researcher analyzed the three learning logs each student answered throughout the intervention. They included the categories of students’ feelings about the use of technology in the class and their perspectives of the quality of feedback received and given (Appendix H).

Results

To answer the first research question: Do EFL students using Bubbly, a voice microblogging application, as a tool for peer feedback show a significant improvement in their speaking skills?, basic descriptive statistics of means and standard deviations were determined as well as the p value and the effect size.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Speaking Pre-test and Post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRE-TEST</th>
<th>POST-TEST</th>
<th>p value</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>&lt; 0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>8.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.631</td>
<td>0.533</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= Sample. M= Mean. SD= Standard Deviation. MD=Mean difference d=effect size

Table 1 shows the global values of the pre-test and post-tests. The mean difference (N=22) is 1.11, which shows an increase in the scores of the post-test. The values of the standard deviation in both the pre and post-test indicate that the scores are quite closely clustered around the mean of the test. The p value with an alpha of 5% is less than 0.05, which means that there is a strong evidence for stating that the improvement is due to the innovation. Also, the effect size (d) is 1.90, which means there is a large effect size. In other words, the difference between means in the pre and post-test is significant, and thus the
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

innovation results are educationally meaningful. Figure 1 visualizes the mean of both the pre and post-tests.

*Figure 1. Mean Comparison of Speaking Pre-test and post-test*

![Figure 1. Mean Comparison of Speaking Pre-test and post-test](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>PRE-TEST</th>
<th>POST-TEST</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>p value</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>7.18</td>
<td>8.18</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 0.05</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourse Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>6.64</td>
<td>8.36</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 0.05</td>
<td>2.266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>7.64</td>
<td>8.23</td>
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<td>&lt; 0.05</td>
<td>0.765</td>
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<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.69</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= Sample. M= Mean. SD= Standard Deviation. MD= Mean Difference. d= Effect Size

Table 2 shows the values for each descriptor of the speaking rubric in the pre-test and post-test. The second construct, Discourse Management, is the one that shows more improvement with an increase in the mean (N=22) from 6.64 to 8.36. The standard deviation indicates that for all variables, the scores were not farther away from each other than between
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

0.501 and 0.849 points. The $p$ value with an alpha of 5% for the three constructs is less than 0.05, which means that the correlation between the variables is significant. Also, the effect size ($d$) for the three constructs is 1.700, 2.266 and 0.765, which means there is a large effect size for all of them. In other words, the differences between means in the pre-test and post-test for each construct is significant, and thus the innovation results are educationally meaningful. Figure 2 visualizes the comparison of the mean of each variable in the pre and post-test.

Figure 2. Comparison of the mean of each variable in the Pre-test and Post-test of speaking

For the second research question: What is the quality of peer feedback?, the teacher assessed the peer feedback given by the students in the first and in the last speaking task using the feedback rubric. The results of the assessment of feedback at the beginning and at the end are as follows:
Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test of Quality Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRE-TEST</th>
<th></th>
<th>POST-TEST</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>p value</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7.09</td>
<td>0.692</td>
<td>7.70</td>
<td>0.797</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.817</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= Sample.  M= Mean.  SD= Standard Deviation.  MD=Mean difference  d=effect size

Table 3 reveals that the quality of the peer feedback given by the students improved by the end of the innovation. The $p$ value with an alpha of 5% is less than 0.05, which means that the correlation between the descriptors is significant. In addition, the effect size ($d$) is 0.817, which means there is a large effect size. In other words, the differences between means in the pre and post-test are significant and thus the improvement in the quality of feedback given by students is meaningful.

Additionally, the peer feedback given in Bubbly was carefully read in order to connect the scores of the quality of feedback assessment with the peer feedback posted by the students in Bubbly about their partners’ speaking tasks. Peer feedback was given by students in a total of 109 comments in Bubbly. Students gave feedback on the three areas of speaking mentioned in the speaking rubric: Discourse Management (48), followed by Grammar and Vocabulary (37) and finally Pronunciation (24) (See Appendix I). The emerging patterns in the feedback given by students show that students focused most of their feedback on Discourse Management, especially in things related to the length of the post, the organization of ideas and the use of connectors. On the other hand, comments about grammar and pronunciation mistakes were more general.
With respect to the third research question: What are the students' perspectives about peer feedback using technology through a mobile and computer application in class?, an analysis of data, which included extracts from the students’ learning logs and the eight interviews, reveals perceived improvement in the students’ performance. An analysis of the data also revealed the students’ positive perceptions towards the use of peer feedback to improve speaking skills and towards the use of Bubbly. For example, these are some extracts from the learning logs, which show that:

“The peer feedback has helped me because they told me I sounded nervous and in the following speaking tasks I could listen to myself and improve that” (S. 29)

“Peer feedback has been useful to improve my ideas, speak more fluently and without pauses and express myself better in the audios” (S. 18)

“Each peer feedback posted in my speaking post was useful because I could see my mistakes and in my next task I could improve…” (S. 9)

The analysis of the interviews and learning logs shows that although some students felt uncomfortable giving comments and feedback to peers, they recognized in the end its benefits. By identifying mistakes in their classmates’ speaking tasks using the rubric, they helped each other identify errors in their own task and this prevented them from making the same mistakes again. For example, in some extracts of the students’ learning logs they mention the following:

“I consider that I was clear, honest, and brief with my feedback. However, I tried to give her some advice and motivation for her next speaking task” (S. 5)
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

“I think my feedback was good because I tried to give her tips to avoid mistakes and solve them, such as about the way of speaking, the pauses, etc.” (S. 10)

“I gave good feedback because before commenting, I listened to the post several times to write down mistakes… so they could improve the next time” (S. 16)

This is supported by the students’ perspectives mentioned in the interviews about the quality of the feedback they gave. For example, some extracts from the participants’ responses mention:

“I think it was useful….because I tried to take it seriously listening to the posts several times… For example if they made many pauses or things like that” (S. 21)

“I think it was useful because I tried to tell them each of their mistakes in detail and how to solve them. For example, to pause less, if they had problems with a word, to look for a synonym that they know, to try to be clearer in their ideas, etc.” (S. 8)

“In each comment I always tried to motivate my partners and give them suggestions… without criticizing” (S.2)

Therefore, most students interviewed considered that the use of peer feedback was a good experience and a helpful tool to improve their speaking skills in a creative and fun way in which they could interact with others in the same way they use a social network. For example, some students’ perceptions taken from the interviews were the following:

“It was very useful because you had to be creative and think quickly…” (S.17)
“I think using Bubbly was useful to have more fun and to have a more entertaining and interesting class…” (S.23)

“It was very useful because we could interact with other people” (S. 10)

“We can interact to other people, speak in another language and listen to other people who have the same interests” (S. 22)

“It was a great tool because it was similar to a social network and as we are used to using social networks, so the app was familiar for us” (S. 5)

Only one student considered that the peer feedback was not helpful because her peers were too general in their comments. Also, only one student found the use of Bubbly difficult due to some problems in the application at the moment of uploading the posts.

**Discussion**

Concerning the first research question: Do EFL students using Bubbly, a voice microblogging application, as a tool for peer feedback show a significant improvement in their speaking skills?, results are positive. Considering the differences between the pre and post speaking tasks scores, peer feedback permitted an improvement in the speaking skills. Looking at this contribution from the aspect of peer feedback, the results indicate similarities with the relevant literature: McGarrell (2010); Colthorpe, Chen and Zimbardi (2014); Chaqmaqchee (2015); Toland, Mills, and Kohyama (2016); Safari and Koosha (2016). These studies also reveal in their findings improvement through the application of peer feedback.

The results of the analysis of the pre-test and post-test showed that the area of speaking which improved the most was discourse management, which included length, organization of ideas, fluency and coherence and which had an increase of 2.27 points in the mean when compared to the pre-test (See Table 2). This result is consistent with the peer feedback given by students because that was the area about which participants gave more feedback according
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

to the summary of peer feedback shown before (See Appendix I). Also, researcher class observations revealed that students were more worried about improving in this area of Discourse Management because during class this was the area about which they expressed more questions and interest. Furthermore, students avoided mentioning specific grammar or vocabulary mistakes probably because of being unsure about how to solve them.

For the second research question: What is the quality of peer feedback?, the quality of the feedback given improved from the first task to the last task. The scores in the final assessment of the feedback reveal an increase of 0.61 points in the mean, with a large effect size of 0.817, which means that the improvement in the feedback given by students is significant. This improvement in the quality of feedback may be due to the training given to the students during the whole intervention. This finding is similar to the one mentioned in the studies of Hojeij and Baroudi (2018), and Xu and Yu (2018) who found that through appropriate training, the quality of feedback improves in the consequent tasks.

With respect to the third research question: What are the students' perspectives about peer feedback using technology through a mobile and computer application in class?, in general, the analysis of the quality of the peer feedback given demonstrated that students were very encouraging of their partners’ work, trying not to criticize their task harshly. The times learners identified difficulties or areas for improvement, they tried to use gentle words. This is similar to what Yu and Wu (2011) identified about their study on peer assessment, in which they found that levels of negative feedback were not found when students used their names instead of being anonymous. Also, McGarrell (2010) mentioned students’ concerns about affecting their relationships due to the peer feedback given. In addition, most students felt that the quality of the feedback they gave to their peers was good and useful for their partners.
Furthermore, the use of peer feedback in this study emphasized the importance of the formative character of feedback to help each other improve their speaking. Students perceived both benefits and challenges from the peer feedback they received in Bubbly. Perceived benefits included that they were able to improve by trying to avoid the same mistakes in their next tasks. What is more, the majority of participants had a positive perception about the use of Bubbly and found it creative, interesting, and useful.

Also, the social use of Bubbly and the interaction through peer feedback linked to technology seemed to have a positive effect on speaking skills’ development. These emerging social functions are consistent with the finding of studies on students’ perceptions towards the use of technology and social networks in class (Kee & Samsudin, 2014; Minalla, 2018; Tenelanda & Castelo, 2016). In particular, learners showed positive perspectives toward peer feedback on Bubbly. They valued this social practice, the interaction and having classes that are more interesting.

Despite its benefits, peer feedback requires effective instruction and training as noticed by the researcher in her field notes due to the time required to teach the participants to give quality feedback before starting the speaking tasks. This goes in accordance with what was mentioned in the literature review (Joo 2016, Smith 2017).

**Conclusions**

This study aimed to find out how peer feedback enhances EFL speaking skills. The findings indicated that students did better after receiving peer feedback in Bubbly after each speaking task. It can be concluded that utilizing peer feedback for speaking tasks using Bubbly, is an effective technique in improving EFL students’ speaking skills. Moreover, the students expressed their approval and showed a positive perception toward it and they benefitted in their spoken production, both individually and collaboratively.
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

The researcher observed that the participants could express themselves freely without the typical anxiety and fear of committing mistakes because someone is looking at them. Being able to talk and share with their peers ideas about a topic of interest was perceived by participants as an effective and meaningful way to practice and enhance speaking skills. However, one student’s perceptions were affected by technical problems she had with the application when posting her audios. Students’ perspectives showed that peer feedback was beneficial for both the student who received the feedback and for the student who gave it. The students giving the feedback had to learn and reflect about the feedback given and in this way, they were also more aware about their mistakes whereas the students receiving the feedback could improve on their next speaking post due to the recommendations given by their peers.

The researcher also observed the important role of appropriate training to the students before applying peer feedback as a strategy to ensure its good quality. Giving feedback was a completely new activity for students, so it is important to note that the time given to training students in giving feedback was essential for the effectiveness of the innovation. It is essential to emphasize that the use of technology (Bubbly) for the peer feedback proved to be more motivating for the students since the similarities of this app with a social network appeals to the students in a better way than by just using paper.

The benefits outnumbered the difficulties of using peer feedback facilitated by technology and it proved to be an effective tool to raise students’ self-awareness and collaborative work to improve their speaking skills.

Limitations and Recommendations

Due to the small number of participants (22), the results of this research should be interpreted with caution. Bigger samples in different educational contexts (school, high school, university) and for longer periods of time would be necessary to test the results.
These kinds of studies would contribute to the understanding of the benefits and use of peer feedback through technology for speaking skills’ improvement. Training students in giving quality feedback is essential for the effectiveness of peer feedback. Further research in this area would be useful for understanding the best strategies for training students before implementing peer feedback.

Using technology for speaking through tasks can have a positive effect on students’ performance. Moreover, as Bubbly is a social network, it could be a good idea to add extra activities for outside the classroom. Voice microblogging is an interesting new area of research, which opens new opportunities into the future of mobile learning. The researcher hopes that the results of this study may be useful as a reference for future research into voice microblogging and in particular into peer feedback in EFL learning.
References


PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS


Appendix A

Bubbly home page and posts
Appendix B

Backward design of the innovation

Research Topic:
Peer feedback and its effect on speaking skills using Bubbly, a voice microblogging application

Design from Your Goals¹

Instructional design of units for transfer of learning to real life contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution:</th>
<th>Unidad Educativa Bilingüe de La Inmaculada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year of study:</td>
<td>Senior year of high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student description:</td>
<td>In this course, there are 22 students: 18 girls and 4 boys. They are in their senior year of Higher Education. It is a mixed level course, 60% A2, 35% B1 and 5% B2. Their ages range between 16 and 18 years old and they have very similar backgrounds. They are all Ecuadorian and although they have similar interests, they have different learning styles and learning paces. Some of them have had additional EFL instruction at English Academies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(include English Level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor:</td>
<td>María Cecilia Espinoza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit title:</td>
<td>Units 6 and 8: Food and health and Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeks:</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours:</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I. Transfer Goal (Stage 1)
Standards the unit will work with:
Ecuadorian in-service English Standards: - (Level B1 – senior year of high school)

Speaking Production: Sustain straightforward description of a subject or a variety of matters within the personal, educational, public, and vocational domains rather fluently, presenting it as a linear sequence of points.

¹ This unit design process was adapted from the Guillot Design Process worksheet (2017) Design from Your Goals based on Wiggins-McTighe Backward Design.
Goal:
I want my students to improve their oral fluency and pronunciation integrating new vocabulary so that in the long term and on their own they can reasonably and fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within their field of interest, presenting it as a linear sequence of events (CEFR Companion, p. 68 Sustained Monologue level B1).

Breakdown of transfer goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. If we see and hear them do this, they CAN transfer this learning.</th>
<th>B. If we see and hear them do this, then they CANNOT (yet) transfer:</th>
<th>C. What I will commit to doing differently in my classroom to ensure my results look like Column A.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give quality feedback to their peers using Bubbly and a rubric.</td>
<td>Students cannot provide feedback.</td>
<td>Help students give quality feedback about speaking using a rubric for feedback and Bubbly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students use appropriate vocabulary and grammar structures to communicate ideas</td>
<td>Students are afraid of speaking in class.</td>
<td>Give students practice in speaking, listening, reading and writing to review the necessary vocabulary, expressions, and linking words for the topics that they will later use in their speaking tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students use strong arguments and details for communicating ideas.</td>
<td>Students hesitate a lot when speaking.</td>
<td>Use technology as a tool for feedback about their speaking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students sustain monologue on topics of their interest.</td>
<td>Students show lack of vocabulary and expressions to communicate ideas.</td>
<td>Create an environment where students are motivated to speak and are not afraid of making mistakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students show a clear organization of ideas.</td>
<td>Students’ ideas are difficult to follow, not connected or not relevant to the topic.</td>
<td>Provide students with opportunities for expressing their ideas and opinions freely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students have good pronunciation.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide students with vocabulary and expressions to help them give a better speech.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. Summative Performance Assessment Task (Stage 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Present an oral presentation to communicate ideas effectively</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>You are the President of the Student Council of your school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>The authorities of your school and peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation</td>
<td>Find out the issues that are considered important by your school community and prepare an oral presentation about one school issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>Your presentation has to persuade the authorities of your school to focus on that problem and you have to convey the point of view and feeling of the school community about that issue. Use any resources and media you want for making your presentation effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards</td>
<td>Your presentation will be assessed with the following descriptors: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management (extent, fluency, relevance, coherence) and pronunciation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. Knowledge and skills the students need to succeed in the assessment. (Stage 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What students will need to know</th>
<th>The skills students will need to be able to do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Vocabulary</strong> related to talking about imaginary situations in the present, imaginary situations in the past, someone you admire, laws in your country.</td>
<td>• Reflecting on work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Grammar</strong> related to Simple Past, Present Perfect, Past Perfect, Conditionals, Modals, cohesive devices.</td>
<td>• Use a speaking rubric effectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Pronunciation</strong> related to syllables, word stress and sentence stress.</td>
<td>• Giving good quality feedback to partners’ speaking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interacting with peers in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Connecting ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Essential Questions (Stage 1)

Essential questions support the transfer goal, signal inquiry, guide instruction, and can be asked over and over throughout the unit without reaching a final answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNDERSTANDINGS</th>
<th>ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will understand that:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Using the correct choice of words and expressions is important to communicate effectively.</td>
<td>• What is quality feedback?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Receiving feedback from peers improves oral skills and helps gain confidence.</td>
<td>• How can feedback from peers help improve speaking skills?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Using strong arguments and relevant information are important things to consider when speaking.</td>
<td>• What makes a presentation effective?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How can I reduce anxiety and fear in order to speak with confidence?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Learning Activities

Transfer goal: I want my students to improve their oral fluency and pronunciation integrating new vocabulary so that in the long term and on their own they can reasonably and fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within their field of interest, presenting it as a linear sequence of events (CEFR Companion, p. 68 Sustained Monologue level B1).

Abbreviated Performance Task: Oral presentation as the president of the school Council persuading authorities to focus on a school problem.
## Learning Activities
(from student’s perspective)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intention</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WEEK 1 (5 HOURS)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1 and 2 (1 hour)</td>
<td>HOOK</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of the topic by the teacher by telling a personal story about a public speaking experience (funny or serious). The story contains something I learned about myself as a result.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask students to form groups of three to share difficulties they may have experienced or felt when speaking in English and then discuss their answers.</td>
<td>INITIATING</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3 (4 hours)</td>
<td>DEVELOPING</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students watch two oral presentations given by the teacher as examples. Students check the speaking rubric (Appendix D) to determine the expressions, skills, phrases used. Then, They give feedback on the presentations given self-assessing the feedback they give with the feedback rubric (Appendix C). Students also analyze different models of quality feedback given by the teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WEEK 2 (5 HOURS)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students work on the unit “Food and health”. They work integrating the four skills through watching videos, reading, listening, collaborative work about: illnesses, accidents, injuries, food and nutrition, conditionals, expressing likes and dislikes, pronunciation of specific sounds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Formative Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEVELOPING</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Speaking task pre-test and assessment by 2 evaluators using the speaking rubric (Appendix D) without peer feedback.

**WEEK 3 (5 hours)**

During the development of the unit, students post the following posts in Bubbly:
- 1. pros and cons of home cooked food
- 2. the most effective way to stay healthy
- 3. advantages and disadvantages of joining a gym
- 4. accidents and injuries at school

Students give peer feedback after each speaking task and before doing the next one. Students analyze the feedback they get, write two learning logs, one after the second task and one after the fourth task, to help them identify their weaknesses and
PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

strengths and take action for the next speaking task.

WEEK 4 (5 hours)
After checking feedback given in the four tasks, the teacher reinforces and review the use of the speaking rubric and the feedback rubric. Students watch the speech “I have a dream” and practice giving feedback and compare in pairs.

Students are given post it notes and are asked to write down what they have learned about communicating ideas effectively. They should put one idea per sticky and stick it up on the board as they leave the classroom.

WEEK 5 (5 HOURS)
Students work on the unit “School life”. They work integrating the four skills through watching videos, reading, listening, and collaborative work about: school life, school/college subjects, comparatives and superlatives, asking/giving advice, word stress.

During the development of the unit, students post the following posts in Bubbly:
  5. Regrets at school
  6. What can teenagers do to choose correctly
Students give peer feedback after each speaking task and before doing the next one. Students analyze the feedback they get, write the third and last learning log to help them identify their weaknesses and strengths and take action for the final speaking task.

Students are given post it notes and are asked to write down what they have learned about communicating ideas effectively. They should put one idea per sticky and stick it up on the board as they leave the classroom.

**Last assignment:**

**PERFORMANCE TASK (Post-test)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES (Not in class hours)</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Learning process: A = Acquisition, M = Meaning Making, T = Transfer |
| Intention: Hook, formative assessment, initiating, developing, review, closure, research, other. |
| Indicate Week 1, 2, etc. and number of hours. |
VI. On-going Self-Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As I reflect on student learning, what will I do if my plan is not yielding my expected results?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Include examples, models and patterns of good feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train students in using the rubric.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help students during the process of preparing their presentation through the integration of skills and giving them vocabulary and grammar structures they need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check for pronunciation difficulties.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C

Feedback Rubric for teacher assessment of quality of peer feedback

Research Topic:
Peer feedback and its effect on speaking skills using Bubbly, a voice microblogging application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of focus</th>
<th>Inadequate (6)</th>
<th>Some aspects of 6 and 8 (7)</th>
<th>Average (8)</th>
<th>Some aspects of 8 and 10 (9)</th>
<th>Very good (10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Precise and Specific</td>
<td>Feedback is disconnected from specific evidence, generalized or absent. Feedback is vague.</td>
<td>Most feedback is linked to specific evidence and general impressions are used infrequently.</td>
<td>All feedback is based on specific evidence using the rubric. General impressions are avoided. Feedback is objective.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actionable</td>
<td>There are no actionable next steps or recommendations.</td>
<td>Feedback includes one actionable next step. Feedback may solicit reflection but does not actively promote it.</td>
<td>Feedback includes multiple recommendations. Feedback effectively engages student’s reflection in multiple areas of practice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely</td>
<td>Feedback was given after the next speaking task or it was not given at all.</td>
<td>Feedback is given the previous day or the same day of the next speaking task.</td>
<td>Feedback is given on time (some days before the next speaking task).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Appendix D**

**Speaking Rubric**

**Research Topic:**
Peer feedback and its effect on speaking skills using Bubbly, a voice microblogging application

**SPEAKING RUBRIC**
(adapted from Cambridge B1 level Assessment Scales)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>6 points</th>
<th>8 points</th>
<th>10 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar and Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>• Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms (Present and Past Tenses)</td>
<td>• Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms (Present and Past Tenses)</td>
<td>• Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms (Present and Past Tenses, Perfect Tenses, Conditionals, modals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control / range / appropriacy</td>
<td>• Does not use new words from the unit which are appropriate to the specific topic.</td>
<td>• Uses some new words from the unit which are appropriate to the specific topic.</td>
<td>• Uses many new words from the unit which are appropriate to the specific topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discourse Management</strong></td>
<td>• Produces responses which are characterized by short phrases and frequent hesitation.</td>
<td>• Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite some hesitation.</td>
<td>• Produces extended stretches of language with little hesitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent / relevance / Coherence / Cohesion</td>
<td>• Sustained monologue is between 0 and 29 seconds in total)</td>
<td>• Sustained monologue is between 30 and 60 seconds in total.</td>
<td>• Sustained monologue is between 61 and 90 seconds in total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Repeats information or deviates from topic.</td>
<td>• Contributions are mostly relevant to the topic, but there may be some repetition of ideas.</td>
<td>• Contributions are relevant to the topic with little repetition of ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does not connect ideas with cohesive devices.</td>
<td>• Sometimes connects ideas using only some basic cohesive devices.</td>
<td>• Frequently connects ideas using different cohesive devices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
<td>• Is mostly intelligible but individual sounds are frequently not articulated clearly.</td>
<td>• Is mostly intelligible and individual sounds are sometimes articulated clearly.</td>
<td>• Is always intelligible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress / individual sounds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E

Demographic information table

Research Topic:
Peer feedback and its effect on speaking skills using Bubbly, a voice microblogging application

Demographic Information

Age: __________
Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )

Ethnicity: __________

Social-economic class:
( ) low-income ( ) middle class ( ) high-income

Language(s) Check all languages that apply to you:
Spanish ( ) English ( ) Quichua ( ) Other ( )

English learning background:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Special needs: _____________________________________________________________

Other skills: ______________________________________________________________

Access to computers: Yes ( ) No ( )

Access to a smart phone: Yes ( ) No ( )

Access to technology from: Home ( ) School ( ) Municipality ( ) Other ( )

Confidence level using technology Beginner ( ) Intermediate ( ) Advanced ( )
Appendix F

Validity of speaking rubric

VALIDATION INSTRUMENT FOR SPEAKING RUBRIC

Direction: This tool asks for your evaluation of the speaking rubric to be used in the data gathering for the investigation stated above, to establish its validity. You are requested to give your honest assessment using the criteria stated below; please check only one from the selection.

SCALE:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>VERY ACCEPTABLE</th>
<th>ACCEPTABLE</th>
<th>LESS ACCEPTABLE</th>
<th>NOT ACCEPTABLE AT ALL</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VALIDATORS' ASSESSMENT:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATORS</th>
<th>SCALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The indicators in the rubric consistently and accurately measure speaking skills.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rubric has the ability to gather factual data, eliminating biases and subjectivity.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rubric is capable of generating data that will be of value and practical use to English teachers.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rubric is clear and coherent.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Validator’s name:
ID #:
Position:
Appendix G

Interview Protocol

Peer feedback and its effect on speaking skills using Bubbly, a voice microblogging application

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

PART I. INSTRUCTIONS
Good morning (afternoon). The purpose of this interview is to get your perceptions about peer assessment using Bubbly and its effect on your speaking skills. There are no right or wrong or desirable or undesirable answers. I would like you to feel comfortable with saying what you really think and how you really feel.

RECORER INSTRUCTIONS If it is okay with you, I will be recording our conversation. The purpose of this is so that I can get all the details but at the same time be able to carry on an attentive conversation with you. I assure you that all your comments will remain confidential. I will be compiling a report which will contain all students’ comments without any reference to individuals.

PART II.
1. What aspects of speaking English do you find more difficult for you?

2. Describe how you felt about the peer feedback you received after each task? Did it help you take some actions for improving your speaking in the next task? Was it useful?

3. How do you feel about the use of Bubbly for speaking? In what ways was it useful? Why wasn’t it useful?

4. What do you think about the peer feedback you gave? Was it useful to your partner? To you? How? Did it improve?
Appendix H

Learning Log

Peer feedback and its effect on speaking skills using Bubbly, a voice microblogging application

STUDENTS’ LEARNING LOG

Take some time to reflect on the speaking tasks you have posted on Bubbly and the peer feedback you received, and answer the questions:

1. How would you describe the quality of the feedback that you received from your peer(s)?

2. How would you describe the quality of the feedback that you provided to your peer(s)?

3. What actions can you take to improve your next task based on the feedback you received?

4. What aspect of the peer assessment contributed most to your learning?
### Appendix I

**Summary of the quality of peer feedback given in Bubbly**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking rubric descriptors</th>
<th>Peer feedback extracts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Grammar and Vocabulary (37) | “You used some new words from the unit which are appropriate to the specific topic”  
“Your vocabulary was appropriate and also I listened to new words”  
“You used grammar correctly but you should improve vocabulary”  
“I think you had to use a more complex vocabulary if you want to improve the next time”  
“You had some errors in the use of verb tenses”  
“In the first part, I could hear that you said If I could the opportunity instead of If I had the opportunity”  
“I suggest you to practice more the grammar to speak better on your next speaking task”  
“I liked the way you expressed yourself since your vocabulary was fluid”  
“you have to try not to repeat the words because that is a little confusing” |
| Discourse management (48)  | “On your next speaking task try to sound more confident and fluent”  
“I recommend you not to make pauses”  
“You sound confident and this is good because you aren’t afraid to give your opinion about anything”  
“I feel that you got a little bit nervous because in the last part you got stuck with a word”  
“You spoke clearly and fluently”  
“You spoke very slowly and it seemed like you were reading, for the next post try to talk faster”  
“I liked your examples and conclusions”  
“However, you lack more fluency to speak”  
“I could understand but I think you need to try to avoid to repeat the same ideas”  
“You made some pauses and you didn’t give much information”  
“I suggest you to think more about what you are going to talk before you record your post”  
“You forgot to finish the idea”  
“Your argument was good”  
“Your recording has coherence with the topic” |
### PEER FEEDBACK AND SPEAKING SKILLS

- “I liked the way you introduced and explained your ideas using linking words”
- “You gave very interesting details”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronunciation (24)</th>
<th>“Your tone of voice was very clear”</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I suggest you to improve your pronunciation more, because I couldn’t understand some of your words”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Your voice is clear and loud”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“You should speak up because I could not listen very well”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Your tone was good, but I didn't understand the message because I heard some words with a strange pronunciation”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“You need to pronounce the words clearly”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Your pronunciation is better in this post”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix J

**Research Timetable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>SEPTEMBER 2018</th>
<th>OCTOBER 2018</th>
<th>NOVEMBER 2018</th>
<th>DECEMBER 2018</th>
<th>JANUARY</th>
<th>FEBRUARY</th>
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<tr>
<td>First draft elaboration</td>
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<td>Instruments design</td>
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<td>First draft submission</td>
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<td>Validation of instruments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation of BD plan of innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-depth Literature review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collecting data (rubrics, learning logs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysing data</td>
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<td>Consolidating results</td>
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Guayaquil, Agosto 15 de 2018

M.Sc.
Sra. Estanía Ormaza Rosado
Rectora
Unidad Educativa Bilingüe de La Inmaculada
Ciudad

De mis consideraciones:

Con un saludo cordial me permito informarle mi intención de realizar la implementación de una innovación educativa con el apoyo de la tecnología. Este proyecto es la culminación de la Maestría en Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros con Mención en Enseñanza de Inglés, que he realizado en la Universidad Casa Grande. El tema de investigación es “Bubbly, a Voice Microblogging Application, and its Effect on the Development of speaking fluency”. Por este motivo, solicito su autorización para iniciar el proyecto en este mes de agosto del presente con las siguientes actividades:

- Efectuar observaciones en el lugar de estudio
- Realizar registros anecdoticos sobre los comportamientos y desarrollo académico de los estudiantes.
- Documentar en forma gráfica la participación de los estudiantes en el proceso
- Aplicar mi innovación educativa
- Administrar entrevistas y encuestas para obtener datos cuali - cuantitativos

Los participantes de la innovación serán los estudiantes de Tercero Bachillerato Técnico, quienes reciben la materia de Language conmigo en el presente año lectivo. La información que se recoja será confidencial y no se usará para ningún otro propósito fuera de los de esta investigación. Los datos serán procesados para escribir el artículo de investigación correspondiente y para informarle los resultados como autoridad de la institución.

Agradezco de antemano su gentil acogida a la presente.

Atentamente,

[Signature]

Ing. María Cecilia Espinoza, M.Sc.
Guayaquil, 15 de agosto de 2018

M.Sc.
María Cecilia Espinoza
Ciudad

Estimada María Cecilia,

En mi calidad de rectora de la Unidad Educativa Bilingüe de La Inmaculada, la autorizo a usted a desarrollar con los estudiantes de Tercero de Bachillerato Técnico en la asignatura de Language que usted imparte, el Proyecto de investigación denominado “Bubbly, a voice microblogging application, and its effect on the Development of speaking fluency”.

La autorización incluye la recopilación y uso de información a través de observaciones de clase, listas de observación, encuestas, entrevistas y evaluaciones del grupo de estudiantes participantes teniendo en cuenta que la información recopilada será solo para los fines investigativos solicitados.

Le auguramos éxitos en su trabajo de investigación.

Cordialmente,

M.Sc. Sor Estanislida Ormaza
Rectora
Appendix L

Portfolio link (Wix)

https://macespinoza77.wixsite.com/my-e-portfolio