

AUTHENTIC TOURISM TASKS + AI SPEAKING STUDIO: A SCALABLE MODEL FOR FLUENCY, INTELLIGIBILITY, AND TRANSFER

TAREAS DE TURISMO AUTÉNTICO + ESTUDIO DE HABLA CON IA: UN MODELO ESCALABLE PARA LA FLUIDEZ, LA INTELIGIBILIDAD Y LA TRANSFERENCIA

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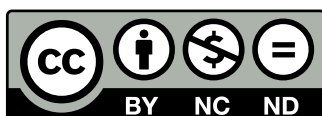
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Resumen

Este artículo presentó el diseño e implementación inicial de un ciclo de seis semanas de Aprendizaje Basado en Tareas (TBLT) integrado con un ‘Speaking Studio’ asistido por IA para estudiantes de tercer semestre de Turismo Sustentable (n=20; 10 horas/semana) en Palenque, México, en colaboración con el Hotel Misión Palenque. El objetivo fue mejorar la fluidez, inteligibilidad y transferencia del inglés a interacciones reales de servicio. La intervención combinó tareas auténticas (un pitch de conserjería de 90 segundos y un microartefacto bilingüe) con una rutina semanal de práctica deliberada (imitar–grabar–reflexionar) apoyada por ChatGPT para modelado de géneros, bancos de frases, detección de problemas de claridad y generación de micro-quizzes de repaso. Se planificó una evaluación formativa continua (salidas rápidas, bitácoras de errores) y una sumativa con rubrica de cuatro bandas para inteligibilidad, fluidez, adecuación e interacción, complementada por métricas derivadas de transcripciones (palabras por minuto, longitud media de enunciado y variedad léxica), valoración del socio comunitario y una escala breve de ansiedad. Los resultados esperados incluyeron aumentos en ritmo con precisión estable, mejoras en acentuación y movimientos discursivos de servicio, mayor confianza para atender visitantes y adopción de al menos un artefacto por parte del hotel. El modelo demostró ser escalable, de bajo costo y reproducible, aliviando el cuello de botella de retroalimentación sin sustituir el juicio docente.

Keywords: turismo sustentable, TBLT, práctica deliberada, inteligencia artificial, oralidad

Abstract

This article reported the design and early implementation of a six-week Task-Based Language Teaching cycle integrated with an AI-assisted “Speaking Studio” for third-semester Sustainable Tourism students (n=20; 10 hours/week) in Palenque, Mexico, conducted in partnership with Hotel Misión Palenque. The aim was to improve fluency, intelligibility, and the transfer of classroom English to authentic service encounters. The intervention combined two authentic deliverables—a 90-second concierge pitch and a bilingual micro-artifact—with a weekly routine of deliberate practice (shadow–record–reflect) supported by ChatGPT to generate genre models, phrase banks, clarity checks, pronunciation targets, and retrieval micro-quizzes. Continuous formative assessment (exit tickets, error logs) and a summative four-band rubric (intelligibility, fluency, appropriacy, interaction) were planned, complemented by transcript-derived analytics (words per minute, mean utterance length, lexical variety), partner evaluations, and a short speaking-anxiety scale. Expected outcomes included faster speech with stable accuracy, improved stress and service-move control, higher confidence when engaging visitors, and the adoption of at least one student-produced artifact by the hotel. The model proved scalable, low-cost, and replicable, easing the feedback bottleneck without replacing teacher judgment.

Keywords: sustainable tourism, TBLT, deliberate practice, artificial intelligence, speaking

Introduction

Tourism undergraduates in public universities often face a misalignment between classroom tasks and the language demands of real hospitality settings. Teachers also struggle to deliver timely, individualized speaking feedback at scale. This study addressed both challenges by merging a community-partner task sequence with an AI-supported practice routine. The article explains the pedagogical motivation, situates the design in current TESOL discussions on Task-Based Language Teaching, deliberate practice, and formative assessment, and states the objective: to develop and evaluate a scalable model that strengthens fluency, intelligibility, and transfer to authentic service encounters at a local hotel.

Objective: to evaluate whether the integrated model improves speaking performance and perceived confidence while remaining feasible within regular course hours.

To clarify two of the key authentic outputs mentioned in this study, it is important to note that the term ‘90-second concierge pitch’ refers to a brief, realistic oral simulation in which students assume the role of a hotel concierge to assist a tourist in English. This micro-interaction, limited to one and a half minutes, aims to develop fluency, intelligibility, and service-oriented discourse moves such as greeting, suggesting, clarifying, and closing the exchange. It provides an ideal benchmark for measuring intelligibility and confidence under realistic time constraints.

Similarly, the term ‘bilingual micro-artifact’ designates a small-scale communicative product (e.g., signage, service script, or bilingual information card) co-created by students and hotel staff. Each artifact responds to an authentic need of the partner institution and must be fully functional in both Spanish and English. It links language learning with real-world impact, allowing for immediate adoption by the hotel and reinforcing written functional competence in tourism contexts.

Materials and methods

Design: classroom-based practice with a quasi-experimental, pre/post within-group design. Participants: n=20 third-semester Sustainable Tourism students (10 hours/week). Setting: University campus in Palenque, Mexico; community partner Hotel Tren Maya Palenque. Intervention (6 weeks): co-designed tasks culminating in a 90-second concierge pitch and one bilingual micro-artifact (e.g., signage or script). Weekly ‘Speaking Studio’ routine required students to shadow a model, record a one-take response, set three micro-goals, and submit transcripts for AI-assisted feedback. Instruments: four-band speaking rubric; transcript-derived metrics (words per minute, mean utterance length, type–token proxy); partner evaluation form; short speaking-anxiety scale; exit tickets and personal error logs. Data analysis: descriptive statistics for all measures and comparative pre/post tests where applicable; qualitative coding of reflections for perceived transfer and confidence.

Results and discussion

At the time of submission, baseline diagnostics and partner briefings had been completed and the full cycle scheduled. The design is expected to yield measurable gains in fluency and intelligibility and to increase the authenticity of oral output. Discussion centers on how combining TBLT with AI-supported deliberate practice addresses two persistent constraints: limited contact hours and feedback bottlenecks. The partner’s role is pivotal for motivation and genre realism, while the AI

tool accelerates noticing and repetition without inflating teacher workload. Anticipated challenges include device inequality, over-scripted speech, and potential variability in ASR-based feedback; mitigations include rehearsal stations, required spontaneous segments, and human-scored rubrics guiding final judgments.

Conclusions

An integrated community-partner TBLT cycle with an AI-assisted Speaking Studio offers a practical, low-cost pathway to improve speaking performance and transfer for Tourism undergraduates. The model is replicable in similar contexts and aligns with institutional goals of community engagement and employability. Formal evaluation will document learning gains and feasibility to inform scaling.

Recommendations

Secure a standing memorandum with at least one hotel partner; standardize consent and data-privacy procedures; time-box AI use to short, regular bursts; and archive high-quality artifacts as open models for subsequent cohorts. Future research should compare this model against traditional conversation classes and isolate which components (partner tasks vs. studio drills) drive the largest gains.

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