**T.C.**

**BAHCESEHIR UNIVERSITY**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT**

# EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF MICROSOFT TEAMS' READING PROGRESS TOOL ON THE SPEAKING PROFICIENCY OF ENGLISH PREPARATORY STUDENTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

**MASTER'S THESIS**

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**İSTANBUL 2024**

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**THESIS ADVISOR**

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## MASTER THESIS APPROVAL FORM

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This thesis was read by us, quality and content as a Master's thesis has been seen and accepted as sufficient.

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## ABSTRACT

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF MICROSOFT TEAMS' READING PROGRESS TOOL ON THE SPEAKING PROFICIENCY OF ENGLISH PREPARATORY STUDENTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Taylan Kaygısız
Master's Program in English Language Education
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This study investigates the effects of employing the Microsoft Teams' Reading Progress feature on students in an English preparatory program's speaking and delivering abilities in the language. The study examined the performance of a total of 40 students in two groups using a quasi-experimental design: the Experiment Group, which utilized the Reading Progress tool, and the Control Group, which did not. Pre- and post-assessments of speaking and delivery abilities were used to gather data as well as placement and proficiency tests to assess the students' proficiency levels. Compared to the Control Group, the results suggest that students in the Experiment Group significantly improved their speaking skill and delivery. These improvements demonstrate how well technology works to deliver individualized, interactive learning experiences that improve language acquisition. The study also shows that while conventional teaching strategies remain valuable, combining them with learning accelerators such as the Reading Progress may significantly improve student performance. These findings imply that technology may be strategically incorporated into language education to change teaching methods and increase student involvement, which would improve the efficacy and appeal of language acquisition. The study suggests further investigation into long-term impacts, larger demographic applications, and comparison assessments with other instructional

technology in light of the findings. By highlighting how technology may enhance conventional learning environments and enhance language proficiency in an increasingly digital educational context, this research contributes to the subject of language education.

**Keywords**: Microsoft Teams, Reading Progress, Learning Accelerators, Speaking Proficiency

# ÖZ

MICROSOFT TEAMS'İN READING PROGRESS ARACININ İNGİLİZCE HAZIRLIK ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN KONUŞMA YETERLİLİKLERİ ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİNİN ARAŞTIRILMASI: KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ÇALIŞMA

Taylan Kaygısız
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Bu çalışma, Microsoft Teams Reading Progress özelliğinin bir İngilizce hazırlık programındaki öğrencilerin konuşma ve dil becerileri üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmaktadır. Çalışma, yarı deneysel bir tasarım kullanarak toplamda 40 kişiden oluşan iki grubun performansını incelemiştir: Reading Progress aracını kullanan Deney Grubu ve kullanmayan Kontrol Grubu. Veri toplamak için konuşma ve aktarma becerilerinin ön ve son değerlendirmeleri ele alınmış olup, öğrencilerin yeterlilik durumlarının belirlenmesi için yerleştirme ve yeterlilik sınav verileri kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar, Kontrol Grubu ile karşılaştırıldığında, Deney Grubundaki öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini ve aktarımlarını önemli ölçüde geliştirdiklerini göstermektedir. Bu gelişmeler, teknolojinin dil edinimini geliştiren bireyselleştirilmiş, etkileşimli öğrenme deneyimleri sunmak için ne kadar iyi çalıştığını göstermektedir. Çalışma ayrıca, geleneksel öğretim stratejileri değerini korurken, bunların Reading Progress gibi öğrenme hızlandırıcılarla birleştirilmesinin öğrenci performansını önemli ölçüde artırabileceğini göstermektedir. Bu bulgular, öğretim yöntemlerini değiştirmek ve öğrenci katılımını artırmak için teknolojinin stratejik olarak dil eğitimine dahil edilebileceğini ve bunun da dil ediniminin etkinliğini ve çekiciliğini artıracağını işaret etmektedir. Çalışma, bulgular ışığında uzun vadeli etkiler,

daha geniş demografik uygulamalar ve diğer öğretim teknolojileriyle karşılaştırmalı değerlendirmeler hakkında daha fazla araştırma yapılmasını önermektedir. Bu araştırma, teknolojinin geleneksel öğrenme ortamlarını nasıl geliştirebileceğini ve giderek dijitalleşen bir eğitim bağlamında dil yeterliliğini nasıl artırabileceğini vurgulayarak dil eğitimi konusuna katkıda bulunmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler**: Microsoft Teams, Reading Progress, Öğrenme Hızlandırıcıları, Konuşma Yeterliliği

*Ozan Erdem'e…*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLES

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

This study investigates the dynamic relationship between language learning and digital tools in an era where technology is increasingly being incorporated into education. With their many features that aim to improve learning, virtual platforms such as Microsoft Teams have created innovative opportunities for language training. It is critical for language educators to comprehend how technology affects language competency as they work through the difficulties of preparing students for communication in both academic and professional contexts. With a focus on the Reading Progress tool specifically, this study explores the theoretical foundations and practical implications of using online tools. Its goal is to provide insightful information to the ongoing discourse in English Language Teaching (ELT) and to inform pedagogical practices in a rapidly changing educational environment.

In the broader context, digital tools have revolutionized education by offering flexible, personalized, and engaging learning experiences. Current trends in educational technology highlight the growing integration of AI-driven platforms, gamification, and interactive content, which significantly impact English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) learning globally. These tools offer facilitating better access to resources, real-time feedback, and collaborative learning environments, enhancing language acquisition and competency.

Speaking is a critical skill in foreign language learning as it directly affects students' ability to communicate effectively in real-life scenarios. Proficiency in speaking not only boosts academic success by enabling students to participate in discussions, presentations, and debates but also enhances their professional prospects by improving their ability to engage in meetings, negotiations, and networking. Therefore, mastering speaking skills is essential for comprehensive language proficiency.

Microsoft Teams, as a comprehensive virtual platform, offers various features that support language learning, including video conferencing, real-time collaboration, and integrated applications such as the Reading Progress tool. This tool specifically targets the improvement of reading fluency and comprehension by providing interactive and engaging exercises, immediate feedback, and progress tracking. Its unique features make it an ideal tool for enhancing speaking skills through repetitive practice and instant correction.

There exists a research gap concerning the impact of such “learning accelerator” tools on speaking proficiency. While extensive studies have been conducted on the effectiveness of digital tools in language learning, few have focused specifically on how tools designed for reading can also enhance speaking skills. This study addresses this gap by exploring the specific improvements and comparative advantages of using the Reading Progress tool in developing speaking proficiency among English preparatory students. Understanding this impact is crucial for developing effective pedagogical practices and integrating technology to meet the evolving demands of language education.

### 1.1 Theoretical Framework

This study is intended to evaluate the motivating, practical, and pedagogical features of integrating the Microsoft Teams' Reading Progress tool into an English preparation program holistically within an appropriate theoretical approach. The incorporation of three important frameworks — ARCS-V, Roblyer's Integrating Educational Technology into Teaching, and Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) — provides a holistic view through which to analyze this online learning accelerator's innovative potential.

The study smoothly integrates Roblyer's Integrating Educational Technology into Teaching, which provides practical insights into the stages of Entry, Adoption, Adaptation, Infusion, and Transformation (Roblyer & Doering, 2014). This paradigm, created by Susan J. Roblyer, guides the appropriate incorporation of educational technology into teaching methods. Roblyer's approach acts as a roadmap in the research,

indicating that the Reading Progress feature as a learning accelerator application is used in a way that matches with pedagogical aims and alters the learning landscape.

The TPACK framework adds to the study by stressing the interdependence of technical, pedagogical, and content knowledge (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). TPACK acknowledges the Reading Progress tool as a teaching resource that is closely interwoven with language content knowledge.

Finally, the study can also benefit from ARCS-V framework, which is a motivational paradigm that focuses on Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction, and Volition. This paradigm, created by John Keller, provides a view through which to understand student motivation and engagement (Keller, 1987). ARCS-V is useful in understanding how the Reading Progress tool attracts students' attention, develops relevance, and builds confidence through individual feedback. Receiving feedback not only provides students with the pleasure of their learning experience, but also can promote volition.

These frameworks' seamless integration creates a solid theoretical foundation that covers the motivating, practical, and pedagogical elements of technology integration. Roblyer's guides practical implementation, TPACK enables a convenient integration of technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge. ARCS-V offers the chance of designing the activity considering the following: a) how to attract the attention of students, b) how to relate the activity to what they are actually learning and using in their classes, c) how to increase the students' confidence in their language performance, d) how to provide student satisfaction through individual constructive feedback and e) how to keep students interested, willing and motivated to continue with the activity. This theoretical review sets the inquiry not only within known frameworks, but also within a wider discussion on new pedagogical techniques in English Language Teaching (ELT). As the research progresses, it hopes to provide nuanced perceptions into the transformational potential of Microsoft Teams' Reading Progress feature, as well as practical implications for educators, administrators, and policymakers involved in language preparatory programs.

The theoretical foundation also takes into account the importance of feedback in language competency. The study builds on formative assessment theories and the

relevance of constructive feedback in language development by utilizing a new tool to deliver focused feedback on accuracy and expressiveness.

The research questions are based on an investigation of this tool's transformational potential within the online learning environment, with an emphasis on its function in shaping language competency, particularly in the context of speaking abilities.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

English preparation programs are critical in providing students with the language skills needed for academic achievement (Arin, 2010). As educational environments develop, the utilization of online learning features becomes more common. Despite the increasing use of online tools in language instruction, there is still some confusion over how certain elements, such as Microsoft Teams application, contribute to speaking proficiency. This study seeks to bridge this gap by contrasting two groups of students: one using the Reading Progress tool with individualized feedback, and the other using traditional instruction techniques. The study seeks to determine the extent to which the tool accelerates improvement in speaking skills and whether it offers a transformative pathway to redefining traditional approaches to speaking proficiency assessment by examining the nuanced aspects of language skills, such as accuracy and expression.

Current challenges regarding teaching speaking in a traditional way in the target context include a lack of personalized feedback, limited opportunities for practice, and insufficient engagement from students. Traditional methods often rely heavily on teacher-centered instruction which can lead to student passivity and limited interaction. Additionally, the conventional classroom setting may not provide adequate opportunities for all students to practice speaking, particularly in large classes where individual attention is rare.

The importance of integrating technology into language learning cannot be overstated. Technology can provide numerous benefits, such as increasing student engagement, offering personalized learning experiences, and enabling real-time feedback. Integrating learning accelerators such as the Reading Progress tool can address the specific

limitations of traditional methods by providing interactive and engaging activities that promote active learning. These tools can offer tailored feedback to each student, helping them to improve their speaking skills more effectively.

Moreover, current methods often fall short in addressing specific issues such as lack of motivation, anxiety in speaking, and the difficulty of assessing individual progress accurately. The Reading Progress tool addresses these issues by creating a low-stress environment for practice, utilizing gamified elements to enhance motivation, and offering precise tracking of each student's progress. This allows for a more comprehensive and accurate assessment of speaking proficiency.

The research of the study is based on recognized language acquisition theories and educational technology frameworks, giving an expansive viewpoint to evaluate the possible benefits and limitations of incorporating the Reading Progress tool into the language learning curriculum. The findings of this study are expected to add valuable insights to the discussion in English Language Teaching (ELT), informing educators, administrators, and policymakers about the effectiveness of specific online learning accelerators in improving students' speaking abilities in the context of English preparatory programs.

### 1.3 Purpose of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to empirically investigate the potential impact of incorporating the Reading Progress tool within Microsoft Teams on English language proficiency, with a specific focus on speaking skills, among B1 level students enrolled in the English preparatory program at a private Turkish university. This research spans two modules – 16 weeks in total – with the experimental group engaging in a series of 10 Reading Progress assignments, supported with personalized feedback, over the course of the study. Control groups, drawn from comparable classes, will not be exposed to this technology-enhanced learning accelerator tool. The study involves a comparative analysis of the pre- and post-test scores of the experimental group against those of the control groups, aiming to determine any significant correlations between the utilization of the

Reading Progress tool and improvements in speaking proficiency and other facets of English language competence.

We hypothesize that the experimental group will show significantly greater improvements in speaking proficiency compared to the control group, particularly in areas such as fluency, accuracy, and confidence in speaking. Additionally, we expect that the personalized feedback provided by the Reading Progress tool will lead to enhanced self-awareness and self-correction abilities among the students which may lead to further enhancement in delivery. These anticipated outcomes are grounded in the interactive and engaging nature of the tool, which is designed to create active learning and continuous practice.

Through this study, we aspire to provide evidence-based insights into the effectiveness of technology-integrated language learning tools, thereby contributing to the continuous enhancement of language education within our academic institution. The findings of this research could have significant implications for program makers, suggesting the need for incorporating more digital tools into the curriculum to enhance language learning outcomes. For teachers, the study underscores the potential benefits of integrating technology in their pedagogical practices to provide more personalized and effective feedback. Furthermore, this research may inform policy decisions at the institutional level, promoting a more widespread adoption of innovative educational technologies to improve student proficiency and engagement in language learning.

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for the development of English Language Teaching (ELT) within preparatory programs because it provides a thorough examination of an online learning accelerator and its direct impact on students' speaking proficiency. The study not only fills a knowledge gap on the impact of certain digital technologies in language learning, but it also has the potential to indicate a path which may lead to modifying current teaching approaches. The research adds useful insights by diving into the subtle elements of language skills—accuracy and expression—that may enlighten educators

about the effectiveness of incorporating online learning accelerators into language preparation programs. These findings, drawn from a comparison of cohorts using the tool and those using traditional instructional techniques, have the potential to alter curriculum design and instructional approaches. The relevance of this research expands beyond the local setting as the data emerge, providing a transformational perspective on the increasing role of digital technologies in raising and redefining speaking competency within language education.

## 1.5 Research Questions

The study aims to be fulfilled by addressing the following research questions:

- RQ1: To what extent does the utilization of Microsoft Teams' Reading Progress tool impact the English language speaking proficiency of students in an English preparatory program?
- RQ2: How does the integration of the Reading Progress tool affect the students' delivery in speaking in comparison to traditional instruction, as evidenced by pre- and post-test scores?

## 1.6 Definitions

**1.6.1 Microsoft Teams.** Microsoft Teams is a platform for unified communication and collaboration that combines video meetings, file storage (including file sharing), workplace chat, and application integration. It was created by Microsoft Corporation. The service has extensions that may interface with non-Microsoft applications and is based on the Office 365 Groups subscription office productivity suite. Microsoft Teams facilitates both synchronous and asynchronous interactions among team members in order to enhance cooperation and communication in corporate environments (Microsoft, 2024).

**1.6.2 Reading Progress.** A feature in Microsoft Teams called Reading Progress is meant to assist teachers in assisting students in becoming more fluent. Students may use this tool to record their reading sessions directly inside Teams and develop their abilities.

A data-driven approach to literacy teaching is made possible by the program, which uses artificial intelligence to deliver insights (Microsoft, 2024).

**1.6.3 Speaking proficiency.** Speaking proficiency is defined as the ability of individuals to effectively communicate in a second language, specifically focusing on spoken language skills. A number of factors, including grammatical accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, lexical richness, relevance, formal correctness, and communicative efficacy, are assessed when speaking competency is assessed (Bannò & Matassoni, 2024).

# Chapter 2

## Literature Review

In this chapter, we explore a diverse array of theoretical frameworks, empirical studies, and pedagogical approaches that contribute to our understanding of language learning and teaching practices, with a particular focus on the integration of online learning accelerators, such as the Microsoft Teams' Reading Progress tool, into English language instruction. By critically examining the existing body of literature, this review aims to identify gaps, challenges, and opportunities in the field, thereby providing a theoretical and conceptual framework for the current study and guiding its methodology, analysis, and interpretation.

### 2.1 Language Learning and Technology Integration

The use of technology has become essential in the contemporary educational environment for improving language learning processes. Technology integration, according to Davies and West (2014), is the purposeful use of instructional technology to achieve desired learning outcomes. The rapid progression of digital tools and platforms has driven educators to investigate the possibilities of technology to help strengthen language proficiency among students. Demonstrating their integrative comprehension of the best reciprocal combinations of activities and technology for language learning initiatives, Gonzalez-Lloret & Ortega (2014) highlight how technology integration may have a transformational effect, and especially when used in conjunction with Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Müller-Hartmann & Ditfurth (2010) indicate the beneficial relationship between technology-based tasks and learning a foreign language. Similarly, Mavili (2018) offers strong proof of the effectiveness of technologically enhanced instructional designs, explaining how it supports language gains and encourages student participation. Understanding the nuanced nature of technology integration in language teaching is crucial as the educational landscape changes because it opens the door to innovative pedagogical approaches and richer learning opportunities.

Educators have always observed the rapid evolution of technology and the significance of computers in language education was often highlighted by researchers. Recent studies and research from decades ago mainly indicate a common trend which relates this tendency to the adoption of multimedia computing and the Internet. Warschauer and Healey (1998) indicated two primary focuses for computer assisted language learning in the future: a greater focus on electronic literacy and the incorporation of computers into educational settings. Their predictions include a move toward the development of electronic literacy skills, which are critical for success in the information age, and the integration of computer systems, which offer students individualized feedback and flexible learning opportunities. Their prospectus towards the 21st century, as a whole, sees language education as continuing to change, with an emphasis on using technology to improve language learning opportunities and get students ready for the digital age. A significant subject covered in the English language preparation programs of two higher education institutions in Erişken's (2007) comparative case study was the use of technology in language learning programs. The research emphasized how crucial it is to provide students the chance to study on their own in contemporary physical environments that are furnished with resources like computer laboratories, libraries, and audio-visual equipment. Furthermore, it was clear from the schools' mission statements that they placed a high priority on helping students become independent and autonomous learners through the use of cutting-edge technology and self-prepared materials. The organizations' tools were designed to help students grow academically and improve their language proficiency, in line with the goal of providing an engaging learning environment for teachers and students together. Additionally, the dedication to upgrading instructional materials on a regular basis to reflect the most recent techniques and technological advancements showed a proactive approach to using technology into language education to improve the standard of learning. The emphasis on utilizing technology to improve language learning experiences highlights the institutions' commitment to creating a vibrant and cutting-edge learning environment that supports students' academic achievement and language competency.

More than twenty years later than Warschauer, we can see the same progressive outcomes and discussions regarding the idea that technology integration in language

learning settings can result in a more dynamic, engaging, and productive learning environment, which may eventually boost student motivation and enhance language proficiency (Panagiotidis, Krystalli & Arvanitis, 2023). Panagiotidis states that incorporating technology into language learning environments can offer several potential benefits including enhanced motivation, personalized learning, access to authentic resources, collaboration and communication, flexibility and convenience, immediate personalized feedback, and enhanced language skills. Students' motivation levels might rise as a result of technology's ability to make language learning more dynamic and interesting. Mobile applications, multimedia material, and educational games are a few examples of tools that may make learning more dynamic and motivate students to take an active role in their language studies. Students may have learning experiences that are tailored specifically to their needs and interests and adaptive learning systems offer tailored help and feedback by modifying the speed and substance of lessons in response to students' performance. With the use of technology, students may receive immediate feedback on their language exercises, pronunciation, and grammar, enabling them to spot and fix mistakes in real time. Students' confidence might grow, and the learning process can be accelerated by this instant feedback. Applications and software for interactive language learning can focus on improving listening, speaking, reading, and writing in all language domains. Through the utilization of diverse multimedia tools, students can enhance their overall competency in the language. Technology makes it possible to access real language materials, including social media platforms, films, podcasts, and online publications. Students' language proficiency and cultural awareness can be improved by this exposure to language use in everyday situations and they may work together with classmates, instructors, and native speakers from all around the world. Language practice and cross-cultural contact are facilitated by social networking sites, video conferencing apps, online communication tools and even with the platforms which are operated by artificial intelligence.

Polat (2017) also indicates that in time, the emphasis on the use of technology in language instruction has moved from what students do on the computer to what they do with one another, which emphasizes the importance of interaction. This demonstrates a shift toward technologically enabled social and collaborative learning experiences.

Furthermore, the reach of CALL has extended beyond conventional desktop applications with the introduction of new technologies like computer-mediated communication, virtual learning environments, and online blogs. Furthermore, several educational philosophies, such as constructivism, behaviorism, cognitive psychology, and connectivism, have affected the pedagogical application of technology in language instruction. These theoretical frameworks have influenced how technology is incorporated into language instruction, highlighting various strategies to meet the requirements of different learners. Generally, increasingly interactive, conversational, and integrative methods that use technology to improve language teaching and learning experiences are reflected in the development of computer-assisted language learning.

Examining the effects of an online learning accelerator such as Microsoft Teams' Reading Progress tool in an online English class can be pertinent to the content analysis study by Başar and Şahin (2022) which also offers insightful information about the role of technology integration in teaching English as a foreign language. The study demonstrates the participants' positive views on technology integration and how it affects their motivation and proficiency in learning English as a second language. Researchers studying the impacts of an online learning accelerator can obtain insights on feasible research findings and effective research procedures by taking into account the trends and methodology found in the content analysis study, such as the usage of experimental designs. In addition, the paper emphasizes the value of investigating new technologies in language learning, which is consistent with the examination of a virtual educational accelerators in an online English course. Researchers may create extensive studies that offer in-depth insights into the impacts of technology integration, particularly further progressive tools, on language learning outcomes at the university level by utilizing the suggestions from this study.

## 2.2 Frameworks Guiding Technology Integration in Language Learning Environments

The dynamic field of language instruction places great emphasis on the efficient integration of technology as a means of augmenting academic achievements and

cultivating student engagement. In this regard, theoretical frameworks offer educators crucial direction as they attempt to maximize the use of instructional technology in language learning. A foundation that provides a methodical way to integrating educational technology into language teaching methods while ensuring harmony with pedagogical aims and objectives is Roblyer's Integrating Educational Technology into Teaching (Roblyer & Doering, 2014). Susan J. Roblyer offered this foundation, which outlines phases for technology integration in educational contexts, from first introduction to final change. Teachers become acquainted with current technology and investigate their possible uses in language instruction starting at entry level. The next phases include implementing certain technologies, customizing them for educational settings, incorporating them into regular classroom routines, and, at the end, revolutionizing the processes of teaching and learning. Through careful consideration of these phases, teachers may use technology to improve language teaching, meeting the requirements of students with varying levels of proficiency and creating engaging learning environments.

Moving forward in the direction of a more thorough comprehension of the complex interplay among technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge in educational settings, Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) offers a more sophisticated approach that stresses the seamless integration of different areas to improve teaching and learning experiences, while Roblyer's framework gives systematic direction for technology integration. TPACK provides an organized method for successfully incorporating technology into teaching techniques and improving student learning in the classroom (Koehler et al., 2013). There are several real-world examples that show how TPACK may enhance instruction. To engage students and adapt to different learning styles, for instance, teachers might use interactive learning activities like instructional games and multimedia presentations. Additionally, by deploying educational applications and adaptive learning platforms, technology can be used to create individualized learning experiences that are catered to the requirements and interests of each individual student. Technology-enabled collaborative projects promote peer-to-peer learning and cooperation, and a variety of learning resources and materials enable individualized instruction. Technology also makes it possible to connect students to the actual world through online databases and virtual field excursions, which enhances their learning

through real-world experiences (Niess, 2011). A flipped classroom style maximizes class time for discussions and hands-on activities, while formative assessment technologies help teachers measure student knowledge and progress in real-time. Moreover, Hsu (2016) highlights that teachers may build dynamic, engaging, and individualized learning environments that promote student involvement, knowledge, and accomplishment by effectively implementing the TPACK framework. The study's conclusions can be used by language instructors to evaluate their own TPACK and pinpoint areas in need of improvement, to address the demands of a varied student body and adjust to the changing environment of language education by consistently enhancing their technical, pedagogical, and content expertise.

According to Bostan (2018), in order to successfully support students' usage of mobile learning technologies, English language teachers must improve their Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK). In order to enhance their pedagogical strategies and technological proficiency, educators must pursue professional development opportunities. By staying current with mobile learning tools and applications, educators can design engaging lessons that meet the varied needs of their students. Collaborating with colleagues facilitates the exchange of optimal methodologies and creative approaches for using technology into language instruction. For mobile learning technologies to be implemented successfully in the classroom, teachers must mentor and assist students in using them. Teachers may optimize the advantages of mobile learning technologies for language acquisition by designing a dynamic and interactive learning environment through continuous reflection, feedback-gathering, and practice adaption. English language teachers can enable students to interact with technology in meaningful ways to improve their language learning experiences by using these tactics within the frameworks guiding technology integration in language learning environments. The findings from Özdemir’s study (2022) also highlight how crucial it is for EFL teachers to be proficient in using Web 2.0 resources in order to successfully assist students' language development. This demonstrates the necessity of professional development programs that enable teachers to use technology to enhance language instruction procedures on an ongoing basis. Language instructors may create a dynamic and engaging

learning environment that meets the many demands of language learners in the digital era by integrating technology with TPACK concepts.

By exploiting the newly designed ways of teaching with the assistance of learning accelerators such as Reading Progress feature of Microsoft Teams, teachers may create exciting, inspiring, and student-centered online learning experiences that encourage active engagement, ongoing motivation, and successful learning outcomes by implementing the ARCS-V model's concepts into their lesson plans (Hamutoğlu, 2021). Uçar and Kumtepe (2019) explain how educators can use interesting multimedia, interactive exercises, and real-world examples at the start of the lesson to grab students' interest and curiosity. This can assist in keeping learners focused and motivated throughout the course. They can make the information relevant to students' interests, ambitions, and practical applications and connect the course material to their own experiences and future goals to highlight the significance and applicability of what they are learning. When it comes to confidence, teachers can give students opportunity to gain trust in their talents by providing instant, individualized and positive comments, setting attainable objectives, and adding activities that allow them to practice and exhibit their capabilities. They may encourage a growth mindset in students to assist them create a positive attitude toward difficulties throughout their learning. This also leads to a convenient way to support students' autonomy and self-regulation by providing options, encouraging intrinsic motivation, and developing a feeling of ownership in their learning, as well as encouraging them to create objectives, track their progress, and reflect on their learning experiences in order to improve their volitional abilities (Ucar & Kumtepe, 2019).

Hamutoğlu (2021) also discusses how volition may help with the assistance of newly designed technological tools, from different points of views. From the perspective of the learner, the complex nature of learners is discussed, taking into account psychological, neuro-physiological, and socioeconomic dimensions that influence their learning experiences. It is suggested that educators can create engaging and personalized learning environments that meet the diverse needs and preferences of individual students by focusing on factors like attitude toward learning, readiness to learn, self-regulation skills, and technology self-efficacy. From the point of learning environment, students'

overall learning experiences may be improved by employing techniques including assigning engaging assignments, giving prompt feedback, making sure the material is relevant, and encouraging learner autonomy. Teachers may create an environment in online distance learning settings that supports learners' active involvement, sustained motivation, and self-directed learning by creating learning environments that are tailored to each learner's unique learning preferences, styles, and levels. Finally, from the point of instructor, educators may think of adding variety to help their learners by giving them organized feedback, making instructions clear, and giving them pointers to boost motivation and confidence. Through the implementation of ARCS-V model-aligned teaching practices and an emphasis on learner-instructor interactions, educators may assist students in overcoming motivational obstacles, maintaining their intention to learn, and decreasing dropout rates. Using resources such as Keller's (2016) job aid for motivational strategy design and motivational interface design can help teachers create more stimulating and empowering learning environments for their students.

### 2.3 Tools and Platforms for Technology Integration in Language Learning

By effectively integrating technology into their teaching practices, modern English language teachers aim to improve language proficiency and deliver high-quality instruction (Barzani, Aslam & Aslam, 2021). They do this by utilizing technological tools such as online platforms to create dynamic and engaging learning environments for English language learners. Barzani and others (2021) state that educators employ technological instruments such as interactive boards, computers, tablets, and online learning management systems to support language acquisition through interactive teaching and visual aids. Additionally, these technologies provide students extracurricular activities and resources to participate in. By offering interactive and engaging learning experiences through multimedia presentations, interactive exercises, and real-time feedback, technology assists English language learners in improving their language proficiency. Additionally, the use of convenient technological devices provides additional resources for practice and self-study, regardless of the educational environment. The critical nature of COVID-19 emergency has expedited the use of online instruction in

language learning (Caramaschi, 2020). Schools now use digital tools and platforms for education and communication in order to swiftly adjust to distant learning environments. This encounter indicated results in a more long-term incorporation of online learning elements into language instruction. Barzani and others (2021) also mentioned that lack of experience or familiarity with the technology might cause technical difficulties for teachers and students using it for language learning. Teachers may, however, overcome these obstacles and successfully incorporate technology into their teaching techniques with the right guidance and assistance. Caramaschi (2020) also indicated the transition in language teaching from conventional, teacher-centered methods to more learner-centered ones. Instructors are becoming more than just material producers; they are becoming mentors who help students learn on their own and enhance their skills. It is anticipated that this trend will continue, encouraging student initiative and confidence. Therefore, schools now should use more digital tools and platforms for education and communication in order to swiftly adjust to distant learning environments. This experience could result in the longer-term incorporation of more convenient online learning elements into language instruction.

The use of contemporary applications and tools in language learning environments has grown in importance as a result of developments in educational technology. As the research by Eshankulovna (2021) points out, using technology effectively is essential for improving students' language skills, as well as their speaking abilities. Researchers may give students dynamic venues to practice and advance their oral ability by integrating mobile applications, video conferencing, and voice recognition technologies. Moreover, the focus on self-directed learning, instant feedback, and customized education via technology is consistent with the advice given to language teachers regarding the use of digital tools to promote speaking skills. In order to establish stimulating and productive learning settings, the study emphasizes the value of integrating communication laboratories, the internet, and speech recognition software into language training. The findings in the study highlight how crucial it is to include contemporary technology tools to help language learners become proficient speakers in a dynamic and engaging learning environment.

Regarding educational technology tools for language learning, the study conducted by Bailey et al. (2022) offers insightful information on how video conferencing platforms, especially Zoom, affect students' engagement and learning results. The study validates many hypotheses associated with the Technology Acceptance Model, emphasizing the noteworthy impact of perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness on students' intents to employ video conferencing tools for language acquisition. Furthermore, the study highlights the significance of user-friendly interfaces and functions in boosting students' adoption and use of video conferencing technologies by showing that perceived ease of use with the technology has a significant impact on its perceived usefulness and actual use. The results also imply that before video conferencing software is used in language learning contexts, teachers and students must get enough instruction on how to utilize it. Teachers can learn a lot about how to best use video conferencing platforms to create interactive and engaging language learning experiences that support student success and language proficiency by incorporating these research findings into the conversation about educational technology tools for language learning.

Video conferencing platform integration has become a critical element in improving language learning and communication abilities. Pal and Vanijja's (2020) study examines Microsoft Teams' usability as a reference platform by using the Technology Acceptance Model as a lens. Their findings highlight the critical role that user experience plays in enabling successful learning settings and highlight the relevance of perceived usability in encouraging the adoption of online platforms. Furthermore, Landrum's (2020) study highlights how crucial it is to provide students with a clear introduction to technology in order to expedite the online learning process and improve their performance. Instructors may use Microsoft Teams, Zoom and other video conferencing platforms to create dynamic language learning environments that encourage student engagement, teamwork, and language competency by using the lessons learned from these research. Video conferencing tools, like chat rooms, breakout rooms, and screen-sharing features, provide students with a variety of communication options that enhance their language learning experience. These include empowering students to participate in meaningful conversations and group projects, as well as providing interactive language practice.

In recent studies from Türkiye, the importance of incorporating digital tools into language classes and the role that internet technologies play in the current environment of language teaching are often highlighted. Kızılarslan (2022) emphasizes the empowering potential of technology in language teaching by drawing insights from the viewpoints of both language teachers and students throughout the global shift towards online learning owing to the COVID-19 epidemic. The study's conclusions indicate how important it is to address students' demotivation and concerns about technological distractions while also highlighting the necessity for teachers to modify their pedagogical approaches in order create a new environment that is suitable for online learning. The study also emphasizes the benefits of online resources, such as their ability to give learners endless opportunity for practice, improve their language proficiency, and give them free access to a wide range of resources. EFL students were able to participate in group language activities and get practice speaking in an online setting by using an online tool for spoken interaction practices, in Yeşildağ's (2023) study. Students were able to engage synchronously on the platform, which allowed for immediate feedback and conversation. Furthermore, the students' speaking abilities improved as a result of the researcher's simultaneous observation of their online activities. Similarly, the study carried out by Ta et al. (2023) shown how using such a tool in speaking lessons improved students' speaking abilities and boosted their interest in English studies. All things considered, the usage of a technological online tool in Yeşildağ's study (2023) encouraged student engagement, improved peer communication, and gave them a platform to develop their speaking skills.

### 2.4 Microsoft Teams and Learning Accelerator Tools in Education

In educational use of Microsoft Teams, regardless of the location of the students, the application serves as a central location for all Microsoft apps, including One Drive and Sharepoint, enabling real-time communication and teamwork. It is emphasized as a technological tool that may be utilized in hybrid, online, and in-person courses, and that can be integrated with the school as a whole or with specific programs. Furthermore, Teams can be connected with the Learning Management Systems (LMS) of the educational institutions, saving teachers time by automatically creating teams for courses

that have been enabled (Poston, Apostel & Richardson, 2020). According to Alabay (2021), Microsoft Teams is a widely utilized video conferencing program for online education. The study's participants underscored the ease of use of Microsoft Teams, praising its interface, menus, and functionalities that facilitate collaboration, provide convenient access to course materials, and enable them to keep informed about ongoing activities. The program is presented as a useful resource that makes it easier for students and teachers to communicate, makes course materials easily accessible, and improves the online learning experience with features like instant chat and lecture recordings. As a result, we see that the main function of Microsoft Teams is to facilitate both synchronous and asynchronous communication between students using a variety of technologies that let instructors organize online courses and exchange files and other applications with members of either private or public work teams.

Microsoft Teams has been used both as an online video conferencing platform for conducting several studies, and as a tool to be tested for its own effects on varied subjects, especially in online learning after COVID-19 pandemic. Integration of technology in education, challenges and benefits, usability and effectiveness, and quality of online education have long been a matter of discussion (Stacy, 2003). Taghizadeh and Hajhosseini (2020) emphasized how important it is to employ online learning technology in English classes in order to improve training, make data use easier, create social connection opportunities, encourage personal activity, and make corrections easily. It was noted that in order to prevent isolation and to help integrate new information with existing knowledge to build new concepts, students engage with peers and the contents of online courses. The study stressed how important it is to use technology in online learning in accordance with suitable pedagogy in order to improve the interactive process between students and teachers. A study by Wichanpricha (2021) investigated how students felt about their education during and after COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges they had when utilizing Microsoft Teams to learn Academic English. Undergraduate students from a variety of faculties participated in the study by using Microsoft Teams to complete an Academic English course. According to the research, the platform served as a tool for students to participate in online conversations, presentations, and activities linked to their academic courses and the survey indicated that students found using Microsoft Teams for

learning to be easy, engaging, and helpful in developing their critical thinking abilities, and the platform was a useful and efficient tool for supporting synchronous online learning, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic's problems. Rababah (2020) studied students' attitudes toward using Microsoft Teams for learning English as a foreign language and found more positive themes than negative ones. Regarding convenience and time efficiency, without requiring transportation, students found Microsoft Teams to be handy as it enabled them to access lectures from any location and said that using Microsoft Teams for learning allowed them to efficiently manage their schedules and save time. They were also pleased with how fast and securely they could share and receive information, such as audios, movies, and other resources. On the other hand, regarding technical difficulties, when utilizing Microsoft Teams for learning, several students ran across technical difficulties, and they faced occasional challenges during their use of the platform and ran across difficulties with a few different sorts of activities. Overall, most students were in favor of utilizing Microsoft Teams to study English as a second language, noting advantages including time savings, ease, and shared learning materials. But there were also documented difficulties, such as technical problems and problems with certain workouts.

In addition to the review in the 1.3 *Educational Technology Tools for Language Learning* section, Kızılarslan (2022) also indicates that students preferred using Microsoft Teams for speaking practice, underscoring the platform's value in supporting language practice and skill development in online learning environments. Moreover, the consistent use of Microsoft Teams for speaking exercises suggests that students managed to overcome the difficulties created by the transition to distance learning and adjusted to a virtual setting for language acquisition. Students' speaking abilities were presumably improved by the platform because it promoted speaking opportunities, prompted active engagement, and allowed them to participate in insightful dialogues. According to a study by Rachelinda et. Al (2022), using Microsoft Teams helped students perform better when they spoke in online classrooms. Students' speaking abilities improved as evidenced by the post-test scores being higher than the pre-test results. In particular, after taking online speaking sessions using Microsoft Teams, the students' ratings in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension all improved. 9.09% was the average

improvement across each of these categories. Furthermore, students expressed satisfaction with Microsoft Teams' features that supported remote learning, including the ability to share information, create assignment forms, provide feedback, and save files. Overall, students felt that adopting Microsoft Teams for online speaking lessons was beneficial, despite some raising concerns about data usage and restrictions when using the web version to record sessions. These results imply that Microsoft Teams, which offer a platform that facilitates convenient teacher-student interaction, might be a useful tool for improving students' speaking skills in virtual learning settings. Because the online conversations in Huang's (2021) research gave the students engaging and collaborative chances to participate in discussions and presentations, they increased their confidence in speaking English. Through these exercises on Microsoft Teams as one of the video tools, students were able to practice speaking English in a virtual setting that was encouraging and their critical thinking skills and thought processes were enhanced and broadened by the discussions they had with their teachers and classmates. Furthermore, the students saw the teacher as a mentor who they could cooperate conveniently through Microsoft Teams and therefore helped them to think critically and develop their speaking abilities, which eventually helped them succeed academically and learn the language. Almutairi and Aljumah (2023) recommends Microsoft Teams as a tool for enhancing English speaking abilities among EFL learners. It has been observed that utilizing Microsoft Teams for online learning significantly enhances the learning environment for students and encourages positive relationships between students and teachers. While some research has demonstrated the benefits of using Microsoft Teams in educational settings, there are drawbacks as well, including concerns about meeting learning objectives in online learning environments and technological difficulties. The study highlights the need for more research in this field and stresses the need to resolve issues and optimizing the advantages of utilizing Microsoft Teams to improve students' speaking abilities.

Recently, Microsoft 365 Education has offered a new class of learning tools called Learning Accelerators (Microsoft Education, n.d.) that addresses student learning gaps, ensures ongoing comprehension of the course material, and even facilitates advanced understanding by streamlining the creation, review, and analysis of practice assignments and offering them real-time coaching along the way. With tools that support foundational

and future-ready skills, Learning Accelerators are able to help educators unlock different students' different potential. This means that educators can provide more opportunities for individual students to learn, practice, and receive targeted coaching instantly in a welcoming environment, all while supporting continuous improvement. The two main topics covered by learning accelerators are "foundational" and "future-ready skills". Emotional well-being, numeracy, and reading are examples of fundamental skills, and digital literacy (search) and presentation (speaking) are two future-ready skills.

To help instructors monitor progress and take appropriate action, Education Insights (Microsoft Education, n.d.) automatically gathers practice data from Learning Accelerators. Education Insights connects learning accelerator data with student engagement, assignments, and emotional well-being in a single application to provide each student a more comprehensive picture. Teachers can choose to provide students access to Education Insights to view their performance, and they can use the "Return to Student" function to personalize the feedback they give them. Instructors receive in-depth knowledge about the essential elements of fluency development for a particular skill.

When we research the efficacy of Microsoft Teams Learning Accelerators, we first see that Digital Promise, a global nonprofit that works with scholars, educators, leaders in technology, and the wider community to design, study, and expand innovations that empower learners (Digital Promise, n.d.), has awarded research-based design certifications to Reading Progress and Reading Coach (Microsoft Education, n.d.). A panel of experts in reading instruction called the National Reading Panel (NRP) was established to gather the best available data on reading instruction for young readers. It is acknowledged in a study by NRP that reading exercise leads to the development of fluency and NRP discovered that reading competency increases when a variety of well explained teaching strategies are used to promote repeated oral reading (National Reading Panel, 2000) – and Microsoft indicates that it is one of the studies which is behind the development of Reading Progress (Microsoft Education, 2023). In a recent study by Prasetya (2022) on the speaking and listening competence of EFL learners who used Reading Progress tool in Microsoft Teams, fluency has been identified to be a critical component that enhances EFL learners' overall speaking achievement. Fluency,

pronunciation, vocabulary, understanding, and grammar were shown to be strongly correlated in the study's multiple regression analysis of speaking achievement. Furthermore, each component of speaking ability's proportional contribution to speaking performance was 99.9%, demonstrating the importance of fluency in speaking abilities. Speaking fluently is being able to communicate ideas and feelings without pausing or hesitating and fluency is essential for both overall language competency and successful communication in the context of EFL learners. The study showed that fluency also helped EFL learners accomplish more when it came to speaking, along with other language abilities including grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and comprehension.

The literature review explores a comprehensive range of studies on the integration of technology into language learning and teaching practices. Internationally, scholars highlight the transformative potential of technology, particularly through Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and we see a forecast of the increasing role of electronic literacy and computer integration in education, a trend supported by recent studies which emphasize the motivational and personalized learning benefits of technological tools. Locally, case studies underscore the importance of providing technology-rich environments to create independent learning in higher education and stress the positive impacts of technology on language proficiency and collaborative learning. Further local studies discuss the necessity for EFL teachers to be adept with Web 2.0 tools and mobile learning technologies to support diverse student needs. Collectively, these studies from both local and international contexts reveal a consistent shift towards integrating technology to create dynamic, engaging, and effective language learning environments. The literature also reveals a consistent emphasis on the integration of technology in language learning, both locally and internationally. Globally, researchers highlight the transformative potential of digital tools and the anticipated growth of electronic literacy and computer integration in education. Locally, Turkish studies underscore the importance of technology-rich environments for independent learning and enhanced language proficiency. Collectively, these studies affirm the shift towards dynamic, engaging, and effective language learning through technological integration.

# Chapter 3

## Methodology

Through a comprehensive exposition of the research methodology, this chapter aims to provide clarity and coherence in the execution of the study, facilitating the interpretation and dissemination of findings that contribute to the broader discourse on language learning pedagogy and educational technology integration.

### 3.1 Research Design

This study examines the effects of incorporating the Microsoft Teams Reading Progress feature on students' speaking competency inside an English preparation program using a quasi-experimental approach with a control group. Depending on the English preparation classes they were assigned to, participants were placed in either the experimental or control group. The School of Foreign Languages allocated the researcher a group of B1-level students in the class that was used for the experiment. The school assigned students to classes based on their placement exam results from September, considering creating equivalency between the experimental and control groups. As a result, a variety of students with points designating them as B1 level students were present in each class.

The intervention was carried out as the experimental group's instructor by integrating the Microsoft Teams Reading Progress feature into the language learning curriculum. Students in the experimental group completed five Reading Progress assignments (a total of 10 Reading Progress assignments) in Modules 1 and 2, reading passages and using the technology to record their voice. Based on the comprehensive data generated by the application, tailored feedback was provided, paying particular attention to aspects like fluency, emotion, correctness, and pronunciation.

The proficiency exam speaking section total scores for the experimental and control groups serve as the study's main outcome measures. These results, which included Language, Task Response, Vocabulary, Fluency, and Delivery, were determined by using the proficiency tests that were given in September 2023 and January 2024. With regard to

pronunciation and expression—significant aspects that the Reading Progress tool is intended to address—the Delivery component is especially noteworthy.

The Reading Progress tool was not used during the traditional teaching given to participants in the control group. They participated in language learning exercises that were comparable to those of the experimental group, but they were not given access to the recording and feedback tool. The investigator made certain that the procedures of the control group mirrored the standard classroom teaching in the English preparation program at the university.

### 3.2 Settings and Participants

The study was conducted at a private university in Istanbul, Turkey, housed within the School of Foreign Languages and a total of 40 students enrolled in the university's English preparation program participated in this study. The participants, who were between the ages of 18 and 21, had English proficiency levels between B1 and B2, based on results from a placement exam given in September 2023 by the School of Foreign Languages. There were 16 male and 24 female students among the participants, representing a mix of genders. Participants were assigned by the School of Foreign Languages, which placed students in classes according to the results of their placement exams. The researcher was given the task of teaching a particular course within the program and had no influence over the selection process.

There were initially 26 students in the experimental group, designated as Student E1, Student E2, and so on, while a corresponding number of participants formed the control group, designated as Student C1, Student C2, and so forth. However, the final analysis contained data from 20 students in both the control and experimental groups because of factors like absence, failing the B1 level, or students not taking the proficiency exam.

The focus of the research is on a B1 level class (the experiment group) comprising 20 students. This class was purposefully chosen due to its representation of an average proficiency level, as indicated by the placement and proficiency exams administered in

September 2023. The student's proficiency levels necessitated enrollment in the B1 level for the current academic year. For students enrolled in the English Preparatory Program, a modular structure (course system) is in place. The Academic Year is divided into five eight-week modules, and the curriculum includes four levels (A1, A2, B1, B2) and a Proficiency Exam Preparation Course (PREP-C). Before moving on to the next level, students must successfully complete each level. Students who participated in this study were placed at the B1 level for their first module in the English preparation program. They successfully completed the B1 level and were eligible to continue their studies at the B2 level in the second module. After completing the B2 level successfully in the second module, they were entitled to take the proficiency exam in January 2024.

Typically, student distribution to different classes occurs after each module; however, for the purpose of this research, the school administration has granted an exception, and the same class composition was retained for the following module to ensure consistency and enable the tracking of individual progress. The decision to maintain the same student cohort is in alignment with the study's design, allowing for a longitudinal examination of the impact of the tool used in the research.

## 3.3 Data Collection Instruments

**3.3.1 Pre- & post-tests: Proficiency exams.** Tests of proficiency were given twice: in September 2023, before the intervention, and in January 2024, following the intervention. These tests, which covered speaking, listening, reading, and writing, were intended to evaluate students' total language competency. This research was especially interested in the speaking portion of the tests as it provides a clear indication of students' oral English communication skills.

The Testing and Assessment Unit of the university's School of Foreign Languages created and delivered the proficiency tests. They ensured consistency and reliability in evaluation across all participants by adhering to a common framework and criteria. Examinees' proficiency in expressing ideas, opinions, and having conversations in English was assessed in the speaking section. Examiners supplied prompts or questions for each

speaking assignment that students had to answer during the proficiency tests. Predetermined criteria, such as task response, language correctness, vocabulary utilization, fluency, and delivery, were used to record and evaluate the students' replies. With respect to the goals of this study, the delivery component—which emphasizes pronunciation, intonation, and expression—was of particular significance. Four points were given to each of the following criteria which can be seen in Figure 1 below: task response, language, vocabulary, fluency, and delivery. The speaking portion of the proficiency examinations had a maximum score of 20 points. A thorough assessment of students' speaking ability was given by the total speaking score, where higher scores denoted stronger spoken English competence.

| TASK | LANGUAGE | VOCABULARY | FLUENCY | DELIVERY |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **4**<br>- Content meets the requirements of the question.<br>- Content is totally relevant<br>- Response well-expanded | **4**<br>- Wide range of appropriate structures<br>- No/minor grammatical errors which do not obscure communication | **4**<br>- Wide range of vocabulary<br>- Accurate and appropriate use of vocabulary | **4**<br>- Speech is fluent<br>- No/few hesitations | **4**<br>- No/minor pronunciation errors<br>- Appropriate intonation |
| **3**<br>- Content shows an attempt to fulfil the requirements of the question<br>- Content is mostly relevant<br>- Response mostly expanded | **3**<br>- Good range of appropriate structures<br>- Few grammatical errors which do not obscure communication | **3**<br>- Good range of vocabulary<br>- Mostly accurate and appropriate use of vocabulary | **3**<br>- Speech is mostly fluent<br>- Occasional hesitations | **3**<br>- Few pronunciation errors<br>- Good intonation |
| **2**<br>- Content shows very little attempt to fulfil the requirements of the question<br>- Content is somewhat relevant<br>- Response somewhat expanded | **2**<br>- Limited attempt to use appropriate structures<br>- Frequent grammatical errors which sometimes obscure communication | **2**<br>- Limited range of vocabulary<br>- Frequent inaccurate use of vocabulary<br>- Message may be unclear at times due to inappropriate use of vocabulary | **2**<br>- Speech is slow at times<br>- Frequent hesitations | **2**<br>- Frequent pronunciation errors<br>- Inappropriate intonation at times |
| **1**<br>- Content shows almost no attempt to fulfil the requirements of the question<br>- Content is mostly irrelevant<br>- Response mostly unexpanded | **1**<br>- No attempt to use appropriate structures<br>- Frequent grammatical errors which often obscure communication | **1**<br>- Very limited range of vocabulary<br>- Mostly inaccurate use of vocabulary<br>- Message is frequently obscured by inappropriate use of vocabulary | **1**<br>- Speech is mostly slow and disconnected<br>- Hesitations affect communication | **1**<br>- Frequent pronunciation errors which often obscure communication<br>- Almost no intonation |
| **0**<br>- Content fails to fulfil the requirements of the question<br>- Content is totally irrelevant<br>- Response not expanded | **0**<br>- Serious grammatical errors which totally obscure communication | **0**<br>- Almost no vocabulary<br>- Message totally obscured due to lack of vocabulary | **0**<br>- No concept of speech<br>- Hesitations obscure communication | **0**<br>- Pronunciation is totally incorrect<br>- No intonation |

* The Testing and Assessment Unit of the School of Foreign Languages provided the same rubric during the execution of both of the proficiency exams in September 2023 and January 2024.

*Figure 1. Proficiency Exam Speaking Part Grading Criteria*

One of the main outcome measures for the study was the data from the proficiency examinations, which made it possible to compare the speaking competence of the students before and after the intervention. The effectiveness of the intervention in enhancing students' speaking abilities was revealed by comparing the speaking scores of the experimental and control groups.

**3.3.2 Microsoft Teams and Reading Progress feature.** Microsoft Teams is a feature-rich platform for teamwork and communication created to support learning within educational environments (Microsoft Education, n.d.). It provides classrooms a central location where teachers and students may communicate, exchange information, and take part in a variety of educational activities. Microsoft Teams is a flexible and user-friendly platform for both synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences, with features including virtual meetings, file sharing, chat functions, and assignment management.

The Reading Progress feature in the Microsoft Teams platform is an effective tool for improving students' reading comprehension and fluency (Microsoft Education, n.d.). With a specific goal of tracking and assisting students with their reading, this tool offers insightful data on their comprehension, expression, accuracy, and fluency. Students record themselves reading texts which are assigned by the instructor by using the Reading Progress tool. The student's device camera and microphone are used to record audio-only or video content for these recordings. The application automatically processes the recordings when they are provided and evaluates multiple aspects of the reading performance.

Throughout the research, the Reading Progress function was a pivotal tool for gathering information on students' speaking ability. The instrument was used to record and evaluate students' speech fluency, accuracy, expressiveness, and pronunciation as part of the experimental intervention. For each of the two seven-week modules in the English preparation program, Modules 1 and 2, students in the experimental group completed five Reading Progress tasks, reaching a total number of 10 completed Reading Progress assignments. The assignments required them to complete readings of selected parts from the coursebook. The selection of these passages was done with care to ensure that they matched the curriculum and language competency requirements for every module.

The tool produced comprehensive evaluations that offered insights into a range of speaking proficiency-related topics for students. Metrics such as accurate words per minute, accuracy percentage, repetitions, self-corrections, omissions, insertions, punctuation, rushed readings, and extended pauses were all included in these reports. The tool's features made it possible to evaluate students' speech patterns in an innovative

manner and prepared instructors and students insightful feedback statements. By utilizing the comprehensive reports produced by the tool, the instructor gave students personalized feedback that concentrated on areas that needed work that the tool's analysis revealed. Particular pronunciation challenges, nuances in expression, problems with fluency, and general delivery were all addressed in the feedback. This individualized method was intended to improve learners speaking ability by focusing on their areas of weakness and highlighting their strengths.

The Reading Progress tool was carefully incorporated into the language learning course of study, enhancing conventional classroom training and giving students more chances to refine their speaking abilities. It was utilized to assign reading passages that corresponded with the weekly topics and ideas discussed in class, so guaranteeing coherence and pertinence to the students' learning objectives.

### 3.4 Data Collection Procedures

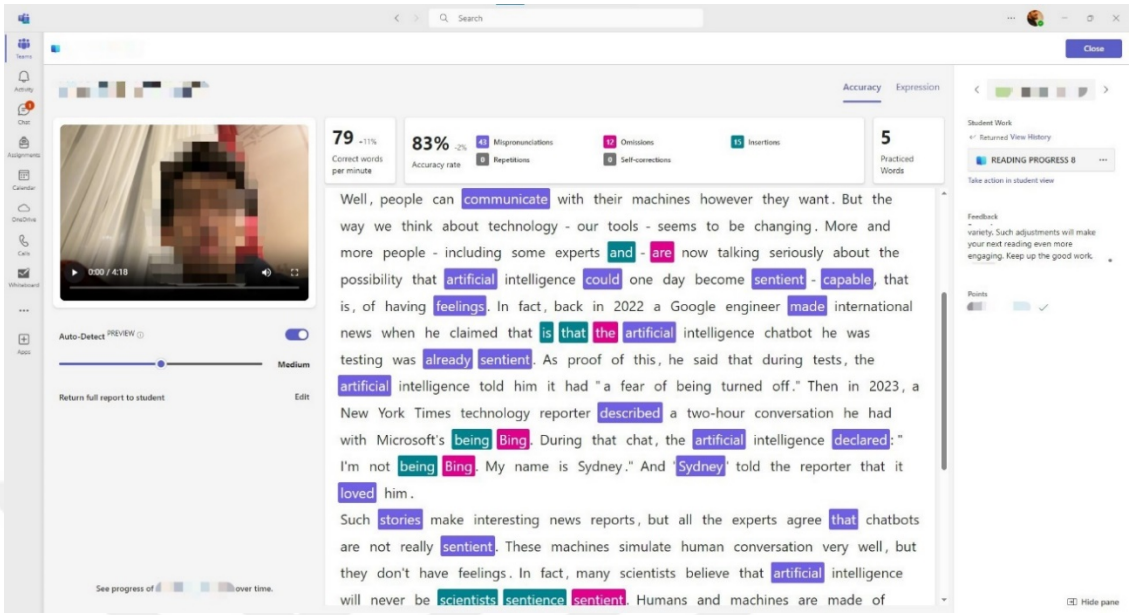
Data was collected before and at the end of the fall semester of 2023-2024 academic year. With the permission granted by the School of Foreign Languages management and subsequently from the Testing and Assessment Unit, the records for the speaking scores for September 2023 and January 2024 proficiency exams were provided in condition of keeping the students' personal data hidden. The scores were provided in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet format, showing the experiment group students with letters SE followed by a number from 1 to 20, and the control group students the same way but with letters SC.

The data to review with the aim of giving students individualized feedback and to keep records of their personal progress was run on Microsoft Teams. The researcher held an instructional session to demonstrate how to use the Reading Progress feature and complete the assignments without any problems to students in the control group. After students finish their Reading Progress assignment, Reading Coach, an integrated assistant inside the feature, provides them with a tailored review that includes challenging words. Using textual aids in Reading Coach, students may practice challenging words by either

listening to the word's right pronunciation or dividing the word into phonemes (Microsoft Education, n.d.). Students choose the work that their teacher created from their class team. They locate a link to the activity under the Assignments section or by following the notification sent by the teacher. In a few simple steps, students may record themselves while they read a chapter. On computers and mobile devices such as iPad, iPhone, and Android, recording of video and audio for Reading Progress is available (Microsoft Education, n.d.). Learners can benefit from useful tools like Immersive Reader, another feature of Reading Progress, which enables users to alter the font size, theme color, and word spacing before beginning to read aloud from their chapter. Following their reading of the passage, students have the options to listen and observe themselves, and examine the paragraph by themselves. If they want to try again, they can start over. When they feel ready, they can turn in their assignment to their teacher (Microsoft Education, n.d.).

Reading Progress employs autodetect to measure accuracy and speed of reading as well as the expressiveness (prosody) of the students (Microsoft Learn, 2024). By default, categories for *Accuracy* and *Expression* are part of the educator review process for an assignment. Teachers may observe and listen to each student read the material in the *Accuracy* section.

A screenshot from Microsoft Teams of what data and insights the educator is delivered after each student submission in Reading Progress for accuracy is shown in Figure 2. A similar report is also provided to the student after the educator evaluates the report by analyzing the data and provides individual feedback to the student on the same platform. Reading Coach, after each submission by students, detects the most challenging words in that specific assignment immediately and offers the student the opportunity to practice the words repeatedly. When teachers check the Reading Progress assignment, students' work from their Reading Coach practice sessions may be viewed. Teachers get access to a summary of the words that students have rehearsed, the number of tries they have made, and the tools they have utilized (Tholfsen, 2022).

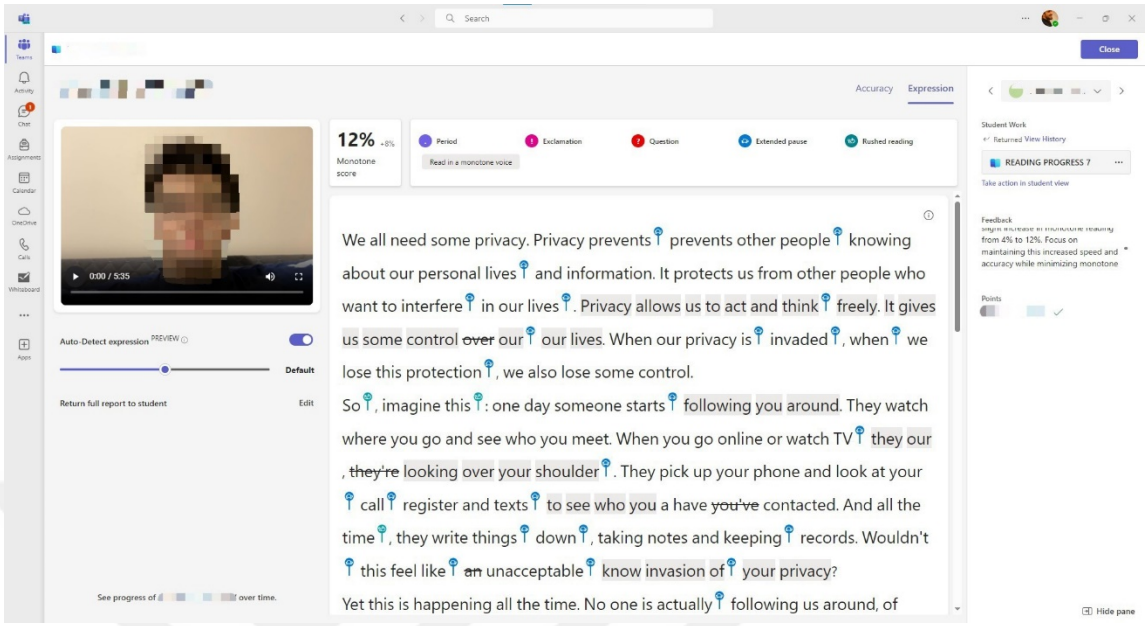



* Mispronunciations are highlighted in purple, as well as omissions in magenta, insertions in green, repetitions in blue and self-corrections in red color, if there are any (Microsoft Learn, 2024).

*Figure 2. Sample Report Image In Accuracy Section*

Teachers can also see the accuracy rate and reading speed (in words per minute) if they selected the options while creating the assignment. Mispronunciations, omissions, and insertions determine the accuracy rate in this autodetected system. Repetition and self-corrections are also tracked; however, they have no influence on the learner's accuracy rate. In the Expression section, teachers can assess the monotonality of the students' readings, mainly. Teachers can also check in the report if the students pause when there is a comma or a period, inflection on exclamation marks or question marks, if they pause more than necessary and if they rush in any part of their reading (Microsoft Learn, 2024).

Teachers have the ability to override the autodetect assessment of a student's reading ability. For instance, the teacher can manually pick the word and label it as accurate if a student reads it correctly, but it was mistakenly tagged as a mispronunciation (Microsoft, 2024).

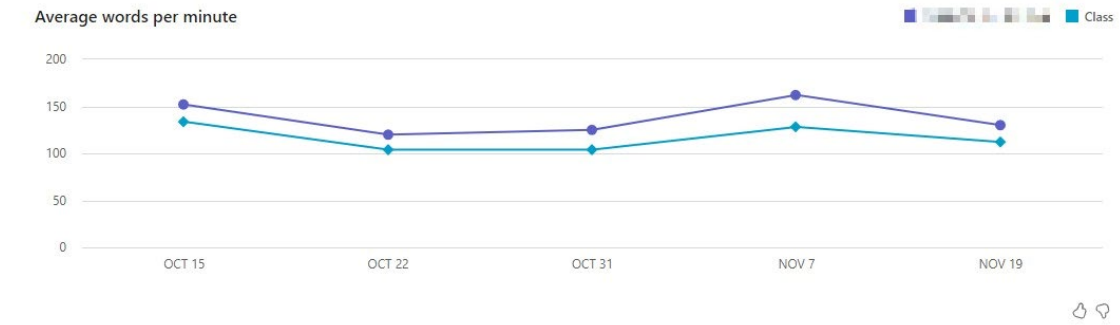



* The parts that are detected by artificial intelligence as read in a monotonous way are highlighted in gray, as well as the expected pace and intonation are shown with different pins with related symbols such as turtles for extended pauses and rabbit for rushed readings, and different colors (Microsoft Learn, 2024).

*Figure 3. Sample Report Image In Expression Section*

Based on the reading proficiency of their students, educators can adjust the pronunciation sensitivity settings in Reading Coach. Additionally, there is a standard setting in which all assignments are made by default and in this study, the researcher chose the default setting for each of the ten assignments.

Teachers can access an Insights dashboard for a particular category by selecting a card in the Accuracy and Expression sections. For instance, when the teacher chooses the *Words per minute card*, the learner's statistics are instantly shown on an Insights dashboard (Microsoft Learn, 2024) as it can be seen in Figure 4. This progress can be evaluated in each of the assignment reports, or in the *Insights* menu of the specific classroom on Microsoft Teams.




* Student's individual progress is shown with purple color while the class average is indicated in blue.

*Figure 4. Sample Words Per Minute Card*

When the educator clicks on the *View full report* button, a report page provided by the *Insights* feature is displayed and provides a detailed progress report for average words per minute, average accuracy rate, number of assignments the students have completed, a list of challenging words for the student (with an option to create a challenge assignment if necessary) along with class averages per assignment on reading accuracy and expression.

## 3.5 Data Analysis

In order to assess the effectiveness of the Reading Progress tool on students' speaking and delivery abilities, a series of ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) tests were conducted. These analyses were designed to evaluate the differences in performance between two groups of students (Experiment Group and Control Group) and within each group across two time points (pre-test and post-test).

**3.5.1 Within-group comparisons.** For each group, a paired ANOVA was used to compare the pre-test and post-test scores. This analysis helped in determining whether the Reading Progress tool (for the Experiment Group) or the time factor (for the Control Group) led to any significant changes in the students' performance in speaking and delivery.

**3.5.2 Between-group comparisons.** ANOVA was also employed to compare the results between the Experiment and Control groups at each testing time (pre and post). This comparison aimed to ascertain if there were any statistically significant differences in the performances of the groups that could be attributed to the use of the Reading Progress tool.

**3.5.3 Statistical significance.** The significance level was set at $p < 0.05$ for all tests. This threshold was chosen to ensure that the observed differences were statistically significant and not due to random chance.

**3.5.4 Data handling.** Data were checked for assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variances before conducting ANOVA. Where necessary, transformations were applied to meet these assumptions.

This comprehensive analytical approach allowed for a thorough investigation of the impacts of the Reading Progress tool, distinguishing between general improvements over time and specific improvements attributable to the educational interventions.

## 3.6 Limitations

Forty students served as the fixed sample size for the investigation. Although this quantity permits preliminary statistical analysis, it could not offer the level of accuracy needed for generalizing the results to a larger population.

While the design of the study made an effort to maintain homogeneity between the Experiment and Control groups, the methods of this study did not allow for the control of all external variables that could have an impact on the outcomes, such as the motivation of individual students or external learning possibilities.

Specific score criteria were used to evaluate speaking and delivery abilities, which may not have adequately captured the complexity of spoken language ability. The reliance on these measures introduces a degree of subjectivity and potential bias in the evaluation process.

The intervention's brief duration of 14 weeks could not adequately illustrate the Reading Progress tool's potential long-term advantages. More conclusive results could come from an extended intervention period.

Moreover, the use of ANOVA is appropriate for comparing means across groups and times; however, it assumes normality and equal variances across groups. Potential deviations from these assumptions were addressed through data transformations, but these can introduce their own limitations.

These methodological considerations are critical for interpreting the study's findings and should be addressed in future research to enhance the validity and applicability of the results.

# Chapter 4

# Findings

This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of data collected through the administration of pre-test and post-test assessments to two distinct groups of students: the Experiment Group, which utilized the Reading Progress tool, and the Control Group, which did not. The data were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to compare the performance within each group over time and between the two groups at two different testing times. The results reveal insights into the efficacy of the Reading Progress tool in enhancing students' speaking and delivery skills. By examining these findings, we aim to draw conclusions about the impact of this learning accelerator on students' language proficiency and identify potential areas for further research and application in educational settings.

## 4.1 Analysis of Speaking Scores

In this section, we examine the changes in speaking scores for both the Experiment Group (EG) and Control Group (CG), comparing their performance from pre-test to post-test and between the groups at both testing times. The analysis is supported by detailed ANOVA tables that have been prepared based on the collected data.

**4.1.1 Within-group analysis.** In order to compare the speaking scores for the experiment group in the pre- & post-test, a single-factor Analysis of Variance was performed and is shown as Table 1 below:

Table 1

*Pre- & Post-Tests Speaking Scores of the Experiment Group*

Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY

| *Groups* | *Count* | *Sum* | *Average* | *Variance* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EG Pre-Test Speaking | 20 | 199 | 9.925 | 4.00723684 |
| EG Post-Test Speaking | 20 | 287 | 14.325 | 9.92828947 |

ANOVA

| *Source of Variation* | *SS* | *df* | *MS* | *F* | *P-value* | *F crit* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 193.6 | 1 | 193.6 | 27.7851006 | 5.6756E-06 | 4.09817173 |
| Within Groups | 264.78 | 38 | 6.96776316 | | | |
| Total | 458.38 | 39 | | | | |

As it is clearly seen in Table 1, the analysis between pre-test and post-test scores within the Experiment Group (EG) demonstrated a significant improvement in speaking performance ($F(1, 38) = 27.79$, $p < .00001$). This suggests that the intervention using the Reading Progress tool effectively enhanced the speaking abilities of the students, as evidenced by the significant increase in the mean scores from 9.925 to 14.325. The results underscore the effectiveness of the Reading Progress tool in improving key aspects of spoken language proficiency.

Table 2

*Pre- & Post-Tests Speaking Scores of the Control Group*

Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY

| *Groups* | *Count* | *Sum* | *Average* | *Variance* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CG Pre-Test Speaking Score | 20 | 208 | 10.4 | 4.77894737 |
| CG Post-Test Speaking Score | 20 | 255 | 12.75 | 4.40789474 |

ANOVA

| *Source of Variation* | *SS* | *df* | *MS* | *F* | *P-value* | *F crit* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 55.225 | 1 | 55.225 | 12.0226296 | 0.00132139 | 4.09817173 |
| Within Groups | 174.55 | 38 | 4.59342105 | | | |
| Total | 229.78 | 39 | | | | |

In the Control Group, the ANOVA comparing pre-test and post-test speaking scores also demonstrated significant improvements ($F(1, 38) = 12.02$, $p < .002$). This result indicates an increase in the mean scores from 10.4 to 12.75. Despite the absence of the Reading Progress tool intervention in this group, the observed improvement suggests that factors other than the experimental tool contributed to the enhancement of speaking skills. This finding emphasizes the need to explore additional variables that could have influenced the learning outcomes in the control setting.

### 4.1.2 Between-group analysis.

Table 3

*EG and CG Pre-Test Speaking Scores*

Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY

| *Groups* | *Count* | *Sum* | *Average* | *Variance* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EG Pre-Test Speaking Score | 20 | 199 | 9.925 | 4.00723684 |
| CG Pre-Test Speaking Score | 20 | 208 | 10.4 | 4.77894737 |

ANOVA

| *Source of Variation* | *SS* | *df* | *MS* | *F* | *P-value* | *F crit* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 2.25625 | 1 | 2.25625 | 0.51359042 | 0.47797048 | 4.09817173 |
| Within Groups | 166.9375 | 38 | 4.39309211 | | | |
| Total | 169.1938 | 39 | | | | |

The comparative ANOVA of pre-test speaking scores between the EG and CG did not reveal statistically significant differences ($F(1, 38) = 0.514$, $p = .478$). Both groups started with comparable baseline scores, with the EG averaging 9.925 and the CG averaging 10.4. This similarity in initial speaking abilities provides a foundation for assessing the impacts of subsequent interventions, ensuring that observed post-test differences can be attributed more directly to the interventions rather than initial disparities in skill levels.

Table 4

*EG and CG Post-Test Speaking Scores*

Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY

| *Groups* | *Count* | *Sum* | *Average* | *Variance* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EG Post-Test Speaking Score | 20 | 287 | 14.325 | 9.92828947 |
| CG Post-Test Speaking Score | 20 | 255 | 12.75 | 4.40789474 |

ANOVA

| *Source of Variation* | *SS* | *df* | *MS* | *F* | *P-value* | *F crit* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 24.80625 | 1 | 24.80625 | 3.46064889 | 0.07059831 | 4.09817173 |
| Within Groups | 272.3875 | 38 | 7.16809211 | | | |
| Total | 297.1938 | 39 | | | | |

The comparative ANOVA of post-test speaking scores between the Experiment and Control Groups did not demonstrate statistically significant differences ($F(1, 38) = 3.461$, $p = .071$). The Experiment Group achieved an average score of 14.325, while the Control Group scored an average of 12.75. Although the Experiment Group exhibited higher scores, suggesting a positive influence of the Reading Progress tool, this difference did not reach statistical significance. The results highlight the potential for the intervention to impact speaking skills, yet suggest that further research with possibly larger sample sizes or additional controls might be necessary to conclusively determine the effectiveness of such interventions.

### 4.2 Analysis of Delivery Scores

In this section, we analyze the delivery scores of both the Experiment Group (EG) and the Control Group (CG) across pre-test and post-test periods, and between the groups. This analysis aims to determine the specific effects of the Reading Progress tool on the students' ability to effectively deliver spoken content.

#### 4.2.1 Within-group analysis.

Table 5

*Pre- & Post-Tests Delivery Scores of the Experiment Group*

Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY

| *Groups* | *Count* | *Sum* | *Average* | *Variance* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EG Pre-Test Delivery Score | 20 | 38 | 1.9 | 0.14736842 |
| EG Post-Test Delivery Score | 20 | 59.5 | 2.975 | 0.45986842 |

ANOVA

| *Source of Variation* | *SS* | *df* | *MS* | *F* | *P-value* | *F crit* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 11.5563 | 1 | 11.55625 | 38.0617551 | 3.3342E-07 | 4.09817173 |
| Within Groups | 11.5375 | 38 | 0.30361842 | | | |
| Total | 23.0938 | 39 | | | | |

The analysis of delivery scores within the Experiment Group, which used the Reading Progress tool, revealed significant enhancements ($F(1, 38) = 38.06$, $p < .000001$).

The mean delivery scores improved from 1.9 to 2.975, showcasing an impact of the intervention on the students' ability to deliver spoken content effectively. This marked improvement supports the efficacy of the Reading Progress tool in supporting key delivery skills essential for effective communication.

Table 6

*Pre- & Post-Tests Delivery Scores of the Control Group*

Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY

| *Groups* | *Count* | *Sum* | *Average* | *Variance* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CG Pre-Test Delivery Score | 20 | 43 | 2.15 | 0.26578947 |
| CG Post-Test Delivery Score | 20 | 50 | 2.5 | 0.36842105 |

ANOVA

| *Source of Variation* | *SS* | *df* | *MS* | *F* | *P-value* | *F crit* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 1.225 | 1 | 1.225 | 3.86307054 | 0.05669963 | 4.09817173 |
| Within Groups | 12.05 | 38 | 0.31710526 | | | |
| Total | 13.28 | 39 | | | | |

The analysis of delivery scores within the Control Group did not show statistically significant improvements ($F(1, 38) = 3.86$, $p = .057$). The mean delivery scores increased slightly from 2.15 to 2.5, which does not demonstrate a statistically significant impact.

This finding contrasts with the Experiment Group where the Reading Progress tool was used, highlighting the tool's potential effectiveness in enhancing delivery skills. The absence of significant change in the Control Group underscores the importance of targeted interventions like the Reading Progress tool for improving specific communicative competencies.

### 4.2.2 Between-group analysis.

Table 7

*EG and CG Pre-Test Delivery Scores*

Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY

| *Groups* | *Count* | *Sum* | *Average* | *Variance* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EG Pre-Test Delivery Score | 20 | 38 | 1.9 | 0.14736842 |
| CG Pre-Test Delivery Score | 20 | 43 | 2.15 | 0.26578947 |

ANOVA

| *Source of Variation* | *SS* | *Df* | *MS* | *F* | *P-value* | *F crit* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 0.625 | 1 | 0.625 | 3.02547771 | 0.0900619 | 4.09817173 |
| Within Groups | 7.85 | 38 | 0.20657895 | | | |
| Total | 8.475 | 39 | | | | |

The analysis of pre-test delivery scores between the Experiment and Control Groups did not reveal statistically significant differences ($F(1, 38) = 3.025$, $p = .090$). The Experiment Group had an average score of 1.9 compared to the Control Group's average

of 2.15. This close starting baseline indicates that both groups were relatively similar in their initial delivery skills, providing a balanced foundation for assessing the effects of the Reading Progress tool and other variables that might influence changes observed in the post-test assessments.

Table 8

*EG and CG Post-Test Delivery Scores*

Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY

| *Groups* | *Count* | *Sum* | *Average* | *Variance* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EG Post-Test Delivery Score | 20 | 59.5 | 2.975 | 0.45986842 |
| CG Post-Test Delivery Score | 20 | 50 | 2.5 | 0.36842105 |

ANOVA

| *Source of Variation* | *SS* | *df* | *MS* | *F* | *P-value* | *F crit* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 2.25625 | 1 | 2.25625 | 5.44797458 | 0.02497856 | 4.09817173 |
| Within Groups | 15.7375 | 38 | 0.41414474 | | | |
| Total | 17.9938 | 39 | | | | |

The comparative ANOVA of post-test delivery scores between the Experiment and Control Groups showed statistically significant differences ($F(1, 38) = 5.448$, $p = .025$). The Experiment Group achieved a higher average score of 2.975 compared to 2.5

in the Control Group, highlighting the effectiveness of the Reading Progress tool in enhancing delivery capabilities. This significant result corroborates the tool's potential impact on improving specific aspects of students' communicative proficiency, particularly in how they deliver spoken content.

### 4.3 Conclusion

The comprehensive ANOVA analyses across pre-test and post-test evaluations for both the Experiment Group (EG) and Control Group (CG) reveal a nuanced picture of the effects of the Reading Progress tool on students' speaking and delivery skills. There were significant improvements in both overall speaking scores and delivery scores from pre-test to post-test within the EG, suggesting that the Reading Progress tool effectively enhances speaking abilities, particularly in delivery. While the CG also showed improvements in speaking scores, these changes were not as pronounced as in the EG, and no significant improvement was noted in delivery scores, indicating the specific impact of the Reading Progress tool in the EG.

When comparing the EG and CG, there were no significant differences in pre-test scores for both speaking and delivery, establishing a comparable baseline. Post-tests revealed significant differences in delivery but not in overall speaking scores, suggesting that while general speaking improvements could be attributed to various factors, specific gains in delivery are more directly associated with the Reading Progress tool.

These findings suggest that the Reading Progress tool contributes significantly to enhancing delivery aspects of speaking, a critical component of effective communication, more than general speaking skills alone. Further studies may explore the precise mechanisms through which such tools affect communication skills and whether these improvements extend over longer periods or under different educational conditions.

# Chapter 5

## Discussions and Conclusion

Examining how the usage of a learning accelerator affects English language speaking and delivery capabilities among students in an English preparation program, this chapter explores the implications of the findings reported in Chapter 4. The discussions are organized in a way that closely corresponds with the two primary research objectives of the study. This allows for a thorough examination of the tool's efficacy in terms of general proficiency in speaking as well as particular delivery features when compared to conventional training techniques. This chapter also considers the pedagogical implications of incorporating these digital tools into language learning curricula, presents findings from the analysis, and suggests future research paths that will expand our understanding of the role that technology plays in language teaching.

### 5.1 Discussion of Findings for the Research Questions

**5.1.1 Discussion of findings for RQ1: To what extent does the utilization of Microsoft Teams' Reading Progress tool impact the English language speaking proficiency of students in an English preparatory program?** The results of the analysis in Chapter 4 show that students in the Experiment Group who used the Reading Progress tool improved their speaking ability significantly. The significant improvement in their post-test scores over their pre-test scores indicates a remarkable improvement, which aligns with the findings of current pedagogical research that highlights the transformational power of technology in language acquisition. For example, Panagiotidis, Krystalli, and Arvanitis (2018) highlighted how incorporating technology into language learning environments can increase student motivation considerably and create a dynamic, productive learning environment, which potentially leads better progress and is in line with the findings of this study.

Less noticeable gains were shown in the Control Group's pre- and post-test scores as compared to those who did not utilize the program. The findings of Polat (2017), who

observed that the use of technology in language instruction has evolved from what students do on computers to what they can achieve with one another through technology, are supported by this contrast as well, underscoring the added value of interactive and collaborative learning experiences. Furthermore, although encouraging, the Reading Progress tool's efficacy raises the possibility that its effects might be altered by a number of variables, including students' starting skill levels, how they interact with the tool, and the particular educational approaches used in conjunction with it. This discovery is consistent with the research conducted by Eshankulovna (2021), which emphasizes the need of efficiently utilizing technology to enhance students' language proficiency, especially in speaking.

Therefore, even while the Reading Progress tool has a great deal of promise to improve speaking proficiency, its ultimate efficacy depends on its careful integration into comprehensive educational frameworks. This requirement is consistent with the wider academic discussion on the optimization of language learning outcomes through the integration of technology and strategic pedagogical techniques, as explored in current research.

**5.1.2 Discussion of findings for RQ2: How does the integration of the Reading Progress tool affect the students' delivery in speaking in comparison to traditional instruction, as evidenced by pre- and post-test scores?** The hypothesis that the inclusion of Microsoft Teams' Reading Progress feature considerably improves the delivery elements of speaking in English language learners is highly supported by the analysis of the data reported in Chapter 4. This is particularly noticeable when compared to traditional educational approaches employed within the Control Group. The Experiment Group demonstrated significant gains in delivery scores from the pre-test to the post-test while using the Reading Progress tool, highlighting the tool's usefulness in improving students' spoken language delivery.

The specific features of the Reading Progress tool contribute to the significant improvement in delivery capabilities that was shown in the Experiment Group. The application offers an interactive and user-friendly platform that facilitates repeated

practice and real-time feedback—two essential components for developing difficult language abilities like delivery (Panagiotidis et al., 2023). With the use of this technology intervention, learning becomes more immersive and successful as students are able to actively engage with the subject, practice their pronunciation and intonation, and receive immediate feedback on how they are doing.

On the other hand, insignificant gains observed in the Control Group—which remained within standard teaching techniques—highlight the shortcomings of traditional approaches to language training, which frequently include interactive and adaptive learning elements. Conventional approaches might not offer the same degree of interaction or instant feedback that is essential for enhancing speaking delivery, which could result in less noticeable gains in delivering abilities.

Additionally, the Reading Progress tool's integration is in line with modern teaching methodologies that stress the value of utilizing technology to improve the educational process (Başar and Şahin, 2022). Compared to conventional methods, the tool's capacity to replicate real-world interactions and offer a platform for ongoing practice facilitates the development of delivery skills.

Thus, the use of the Reading Progress tool not only enhances the spoken delivery but also underscores the potential of technology to alter conventional educational paradigms. The way language education is approached and provided is changing as a result of technology tools like the Reading Progress tool, which make language learning more interactive, engaging and effective.

### 5.2 Pedagogical Implications

A learning accelerator's notable improvements in students' speaking and delivery skills highlight the value of interactive technology in language learning. Similar technologies that enable repeated practice and provide real-time feedback should be considered by educators. This method not only keeps students involved, but it also makes the learning process more dynamic and tailored to each student's requirements. Additionally, these technologies can adapt to the individual learning paces of students,

offering personalized feedback that targets specific areas of improvement, which traditional methods might overlook.

The study demonstrated the benefits of the Reading Progress tool while simultaneously demonstrating the relevance of conventional approaches. Teachers should strive for a mixed learning environment in which technological tools complement and improve conventional pedagogies. This combination can accommodate a range of learning styles and increase the reach of language teaching outside of traditional classroom settings. For instance, incorporating interactive digital exercises can supplement face-to-face interactions, providing a more holistic learning experience. This blend of methods ensures that students can benefit from the structure and social interaction of traditional classrooms while also enjoying the flexibility and personalization offered by digital tools.

The Reading Progress tool has an extensive impact on students' delivery abilities; thus, language teachers should give these instructional components a high priority. Pronunciation, intonation, and fluency are examples of delivery skills that are important for effective communication but are sometimes challenging for learners. The integration of technology that helps in these areas might be beneficial for the language curriculum. Furthermore, using advanced speech recognition and analysis software can provide students with detailed insights into their speaking patterns, helping them make precise adjustments and track their progress over time. This detailed feedback is often more comprehensive than what can be provided in a traditional classroom setting alone.

The ability of the instructor to successfully incorporate technology tools has an important effect on its efficacy. To ensure that educators are up to date on the latest teaching techniques and technological advancements, educational institutions should offer continuous professional development opportunities and training. To guarantee that these technologies are utilized to their greatest potential, this training need to concentrate on the educational uses of these resources. Moreover, institutions should create a culture of ongoing learning and collaboration among educators, encouraging them to share best practices and innovations in technology use. This collaborative approach can lead to more effective implementation and a deeper understanding of how to leverage technology for optimal educational outcomes.

Lastly, the Reading Progress tool's beneficial effects suggest that technology can promote autonomy for the students. By employing technology as a facilitator, educators should create activities that empower students to take ownership of their education. These activities help students become more independent and confident in addition to improving their language abilities.

## 5.3 Conclusion

The effect of the Microsoft Teams Reading Progress tool on the delivery of English language learners in a preparation program and their speaking competency has been methodically investigated in this study. The results validate that the incorporation of technology, especially those that offer interactive and feedback-focused learning opportunities, significantly enhances the language skills of learners as well as their confidence and involvement in the educational process. Moreover, the tool's ability to provide immediate, individualized feedback helps students identify and work on their weaknesses in real-time, creating a more responsive and adaptive learning environment.

Comparing the EG with the CG, the study found that students who used the Reading Progress tool showed significant gains in their general speaking abilities as well as in certain delivery skills. The statistical significance of these advances highlights the effectiveness of using certain technology solutions in language teaching. These findings are particularly noteworthy as they suggest that the integration of digital tools can bridge the gap between theory and practice, providing students with practical, hands-on experience that enhances their theoretical knowledge. Crucially, the research showed that while conventional teaching strategies remain relevant, their effectiveness is greatly increased when combined with the right digital resources.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes how important it is for teachers to accept technological innovations as improvements to the classroom rather than as a substitute for outdated teaching methods. Educators are encouraged to view technology as a complementary asset that enriches the learning experience, making it more interactive and student-centered. This perspective shift can lead to more innovative teaching practices and

better learning outcomes. This study shows that technology may be carefully included to make the traditional language learning environment more dynamic, engaging and advantageous for students.

To sum up, the application of a learning accelerator such as the Reading Progress tool of Microsoft Teams in language instruction is a progressive method of teaching and learning languages. In addition to supporting the current educational goals, it adds a new level of customization and engagement that is essential for learners in the twenty-first century. The tool's ability to cater to diverse learning styles and paces ensures that all students, regardless of their proficiency level, can benefit from a personalized learning experience. The incorporation of these technologies is expected to be crucial in determining how language learning may be made more efficient, interesting, and inclusive as it develops. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, the integration of such technologies will likely become increasingly vital in preparing students for the demands of the modern world, equipping them with the necessary skills to thrive in a globalized and technologically advanced society.

### 5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

Longitudinal studies to assess the tool's long-term effects on language competence and expand participant demographics to include a range of educational backgrounds and skill levels might be beneficial for future study. The relative efficacy of the Reading Progress tool might be evaluated by comparing it to other educational technology. Deeper insights may also be obtained by examining how these technologies affect instructional strategies and figuring out what obstacles prevent technology adoption in language learning. These areas of additional research will improve our knowledge of how technology is integrated into classrooms and improve instructional techniques and student results in a changing digital environment.

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