

PLATAFORMAS DIGITALES PARA LA DIFUSIÓN CULTURAL Y SOCIOECONÓMICA: UN ENFOQUE CONTEXTUALIZADO PARA EL APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA EN CONTEXTOS RURALES ANDINOS

DIGITAL PLATFORMS FOR THE CULTURAL AND SOCIOECONOMIC DISSEMINATION: A CONTEXTUALIZED APPROACH TO EFL LEARNING IN RURAL ANDEAN CONTEXTS

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RESUMEN: El presente estudio tuvo como objetivo diseñar una plataforma web interactiva para la difusión cultural, turística y socioeconómica de nueve parroquias rurales del cantón Guano, concebida como un recurso micro curricular para la enseñanza del inglés en contextos rurales. La investigación adoptó un enfoque mixto, donde el enfoque cualitativo predomina, complementado por componentes cuantitativos descriptivos. Entre los principales hallazgos, se identificó la base cultural común que comparten las nueve parroquias, entre ellas las prácticas agrícolas, el páramo diverso, celebraciones, gastronomía, y socio dinámicas, que constituyen particularidad e identidad propia de cada parroquia. La organización meticulosa de cada elemento en la plataforma digital, presenta coherencia respecto a la identidad cultural y posibilita el aprendizaje contextualizado del idioma inglés. Se concluye que la plataforma constituye un recurso accesible y replicable, capaz de articular tecnología, identidad y aprendizaje significativo, y de aportar al fortalecimiento de la visibilidad territorial y la pertinencia educativa en contextos rurales.

Palabras clave: construcción de la identidad, diseminación digital, parroquias rurales, plataformas interactivas, aprendizaje del inglés

ABSTRACT: The study aimed to design an interactive web platform for the cultural, touristic, and socioeconomic dissemination of nine rural parishes in the canton of Guano, conceived as a micro-curricular resource for teaching English in rural contexts. The study opted for a mixed-methods approach, where the qualitative approach prevails, supported by quantitative descriptive indicators. Among the main findings, it was identified the common cultural basis shared by the nine parishes, which include agricultural practices, the páramo diversity, ceremonies, gastronomy, and community practices, that constitute the particularity and cultural heritage present in each parish. The meticulous organization of each element in the digital platform suggests coherence towards cultural identity, and provides a contextualized learning of the English language. It is concluded that the platform represents an accessible and replicable resource that

connects technology, identity, and meaningful learning, while contributing to the territorial visibility and educational relevance in rural settings

Keywords: *Identity construction, digital dissemination, rural parishes, interactive platforms, english learning*

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INTRODUCTION

Digital technologies have profoundly transformed the ways in which information, culture, and knowledge are produced, organized, and disseminated in contemporary society. In this evolving landscape, digital visibility has become a crucial factor not only for communication but also for the social, cultural, and economic positioning of communities.

The capacity to represent and project identity through digital environments gradually shapes how territories interact with broader networks of recognition and development. However, this transformation has not taken place evenly. Persistent inequalities in access, infrastructure, and digital literacy continue to widen the gap between urban and rural contexts, leaving many local realities with limited presence in digital ecosystems.

In rural areas, cultural expression tends to circulate through oral traditions, communal practices, and localized forms of interaction. These expressions carry strong meaning and depth. Yet, they rarely enter structured digital systems. Because of this, they are not often documented in a systematic or organized way online. Their visibility is reduced, and opportunities for preservation, intergenerational transmission, and external projection become restricted. What emerges instead are fragmented or partial representations that do not fully reflect their social, economic, and symbolic complexity.

This can be clearly observed in the canton of Guano. Its nine rural parishes sustain a diverse cultural heritage with deep roots. Their identities are closely linked to Andean traditions, agricultural practices, forms of communal organization, and symbolic systems that guide everyday life. Cultural expression appears in festivities, artisanal production, oral histories, and collective labor. All of these elements contribute to a living and evolving sense of belonging.

Even so, the way this cultural richness is shared remains mostly informal. In many cases, it depends on isolated efforts, personal social media accounts, or scattered records. The available information, therefore, is often dispersed and incomplete. It lacks coherence, which makes it difficult to understand these parishes as part of an interconnected socio-cultural system.

A similar limitation can be seen in education. In rural contexts, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is frequently taught through standardized materials that have little connection to students' daily lives. When learners cannot relate to the content, their engagement tends to remain surface-level. Under these conditions, language learning

often becomes mechanical, centered more on memorization than on meaningful communication.

When content reflects students' own sociocultural context, the situation changes. Learning starts to feel more relevant and purposeful. As Gay (2018) points out, culturally responsive pedagogy emphasizes connecting new knowledge with learners' cultural frameworks to promote deeper understanding.

From this point of view, interactive web platforms present a practical opportunity. They offer structured spaces where cultural content can be organized and presented in a more coherent way. Unlike fragmented digital efforts, these platforms allow different types of information to come together within a single system, which can support both understanding and user engagement.

Multimedia elements such as images, videos, and interactive tools can make this representation more dynamic. They add depth and make exploration more engaging. However, their use requires balance. As Paas and Sweller (2014) (1) note, too much information or stimulation can overwhelm users, so clarity should not be sacrificed.

At this intersection of technology, culture, and language education, new possibilities emerge. Integrating digital platforms into EFL teaching allows for more contextualized learning. Language stops being treated as an abstract system and becomes a tool for expressing culturally grounded knowledge (Narváez et al., 2023) (2). When local content is included, students can engage with English in ways that connect with their own experiences. This often leads to higher motivation and stronger communicative competence.

Although research on digital education, cultural identity, and language learning has grown, there is still limited work that brings these elements together, especially in rural Andean contexts. Many studies address them separately, leaving aside the potential of more integrated approaches. This gap underscores the need for research that not only documents cultural realities but also proposes practical strategies for their integration into educational and digital environments.

To diminish the consequences of this phenomenon, the present study aimed to design an interactive web platform for the cultural, touristic, and socioeconomic dissemination of the nine rural parishes of the canton of Guano, articulating it as a contextualized micro-curricular resource for English language learning (Aguagallo and Narváez, 2025) (3). The proposal sought to contribute to both cultural visibility and educational relevance by creating a digital space where local knowledge can be organized, represented, and accessed in a structured and meaningful way. Furthermore, it positions English not merely as a subject of study but as a communicative medium through which cultural identity can be expressed and shared.

To meet this objective, the article is organized in several sections. It begins with the theoretical foundations that support the integration of digital platforms, cultural identity, and EFL learning. Then, it presents the methodological approach used in the design of the platform. After that, the results are described and discussed in relation to the study's aims and existing literature. Finally, the article concludes by outlining its

main contributions, recognizing its limitations, and suggesting directions for future research.

Digital platforms and territorial dissemination

Digital platforms are often defined as technological tools designed to store, organize, and disseminate information. However, such a functional definition proves insufficient when applied to rural contexts, where digital environments do not merely transmit information but actively shape the ways in which cultural meaning is constructed, represented, and interpreted. From this perspective, digital platforms can be understood as spaces that mediate how cultural narratives are presented. They do not only transmit information; they shape it through processes of selection, organization, and, at times, simplification. As Ríos et al. (2021) (4) claim, web platforms settled in rural settings should not be considered third-party channels, but rather scenarios where cultural narratives happen, evolve, and transform society (p. 125).

In this sense, it is highlighted the need to address digital transmission particularly in specific territories or contexts. If Latin American Andean rural scenarios are analyzed, often digital narratives overemphasize exposure instead of symbolism. Numbers in online presence may enhance visual range, but do not guarantee the authenticity or integrity of such narratives. As Paredes and Cuesta (2018) (5) highlight, several community-based tourism practices fail since the strategies behind digital promotion show external narratives that local people do not consider as part of their identity (p. 52).

This limitation reveals that dissemination, when detached from local epistemologies, can lead to forms of symbolic displacement. In consequence, the way in which content is organized, the cultural symbols are selected, and the narrative is structured become decisive factors in shaping how territories are perceived both internally and externally.

Under these notions, territorial dissemination should not be reduced to simply uploading content online. Rather, it needs to be understood as a deliberate and organized process that brings together culturally meaningful narratives capable of reflecting the complexity of local identities (Narváez et al., 2026) (6). In this line, the Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador (2020) states that sustainable tourism strategies are in charge of employing technological aids that respect both cultural identity and local involvement (p. 34). In concordance with this principle, the present study proposes a platform design that recognizes and preserves the unique identity of each parish, instead of relying on homogenizing or standardized representations. This approach seeks to maintain the internal coherence of cultural systems while making it more accessible and visible within digital environments.

Cultural identity and symbolic construction in digital contexts

Cultural identity is widely understood as a dynamic and socially constructed process, shaped through interaction, shared meanings, and collective practices. From the standpoint of symbolic interactionism, meaning is not something inherent to objects or practices; rather, it emerges through social interaction. As Blumer (1969) (7) explains, “human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for

them” (p. 2). These meanings are formed within particular situations and can change over time. Although this perspective was developed before the rise of digital environments, it still helps to explain how cultural identity is expressed in online spaces.

When cultural elements such as rituals, agricultural practices, or festivities appear on digital platforms, they tend to be reinterpreted. This process is not always consistent. In some cases, it helps maintain their original meaning, while in others it can lead to simplification or distortion. Paredes and Cuesta (2018) (5) note that “the digital exposure of cultural practices without contextual explanation risks reducing them to visual consumption” (p. 49). This highlights a key concern: visibility alone does not guarantee that meaning and context are preserved.

In this study, cultural identity is not treated as a fixed trait, but rather as a way to guide how content is organized. Cultural elements are not presented as isolated or purely aesthetic units. Instead, the platform brings them together as interconnected practices within broader social and symbolic systems. Agriculture, gastronomy, rituals, and festivities are therefore approached as relational components that collectively construct meaning. This perspective is consistent with Blumer’s (1969) (7) assertion that meaning cannot be detached from the contexts in which it is produced and interpreted. By preserving these relationships, the platform seeks to maintain the integrity of cultural representation while adapting it to digital formats.

English as a foreign language and contextualized learning

In many rural educational contexts, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has traditionally been introduced as an external academic requirement, often disconnected from learners’ sociocultural realities. This approach tends to limit the communicative potential of the language, positioning it as an abstract system rather than a meaningful tool for interaction. As a result, learning processes frequently become mechanical, centered on memorization rather than comprehension and application.

Culturally responsive pedagogy offers an alternative framework by emphasizing the integration of students’ cultural backgrounds into the learning process. Gay (2018) (8) argues that “when academic content is disconnected from students’ cultural experiences, learning becomes mechanical and disengaging” (p. 32). Conversely, when learners are able to relate language to their own contexts, learning becomes more meaningful and effective. In this regard, Gay (2018) (8) further explains that “students learn best when they are able to use language to describe, interpret, and value their own cultural realities” (p. 36).

This perspective is particularly relevant in rural contexts, where local knowledge, traditions, and practices offer rich opportunities for contextualized language use. Empirical evidence from Ecuador supports this view. Ríos et al. (2021) (9) report that “students show higher motivation and vocabulary retention when English is used to narrate local cultural practices rather than decontextualized topics” (p. 131). These findings reinforce the importance of aligning language instruction with learners’ lived experiences.

Under this approach, concepts surrounding the English language suggest that it functions as a vital tool, given that it is a universal language helpful to disseminate cultural elements, by means of local content and meaningful learning activities that facilitate engagement with the language as well as the global scope of culture. This shift redefines the role of English from an external requirement to an instrument for expressing and sharing cultural identity.

Social constructivism and interactive learning environments

Social constructivism offers a solid framework for understanding learning as a process shaped by social interaction and cultural context. Vygotsky (1978) (10) highlights this idea by noting that “learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment” (p. 90). Although this perspective was originally developed in face-to-face settings, its principles can be extended to digital environments, where interaction takes place through multimedia resources, symbolic representations, and user engagement.

However, simply incorporating interactive elements does not necessarily lead to meaningful learning. What truly matters is how information is organized and presented. Paas and Sweller (2014) (1) point out that “instructional designs that overload learners with multimedia elements can hinder rather than support learning” (p. 28). This reinforces the need to carefully manage cognitive load when designing digital platforms.

With this in mind, the platform proposed in this study follows a clear and structured organization of content. Interactive features, such as maps, image galleries, and audio descriptions, are included in a selective way, ensuring that they support understanding rather than distract from it. This approach reflects a deliberate pedagogical choice that prioritizes clarity, coherence, and usability, where interaction serves as a means to enhance learning rather than an end in itself.

Gamification and digital engagement: A critical perspective

Gamification has been widely promoted as a strategy to increase user engagement in digital and educational environments. While it can enhance motivation, its effectiveness depends on how it is implemented. This study approaches gamification from a critical perspective, acknowledging that not every form of engagement necessarily leads to meaningful learning. As Paas and Sweller (2014) (1) state, “engagement should not be confused with learning effectiveness” (p. 31). It is essential to understand the consequences of abusing reward or competition-based dynamics, as this leads to superficiality and diminishes the value of the content. In cultural contexts, this is especially problematic, as it can lead to the simplification of practices with deeper meaning.

Considering this aspect, the platform does not allow competition or rewards to be the central focus; instead it includes interactive elements, such as exploration tools that encourage users to engage with cultural content in a culturally meaningful way. This approach seeks to balance engagement with depth, ensuring that interaction supports both learning and cultural understanding.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach with a predominantly qualitative orientation, complemented by quantitative elements to support the systematic organization and structuring of digital content. Mixed-methods research is defined as an approach that integrates qualitative and quantitative data to provide a clearer understanding of a research problem (Creswell, 2009) (11). This study integrated both approaches in order to support the examination of cultural implications; simultaneously, this data guided the design of the digital platform created to disseminate the heritage of Guano's parishes.

The research combines descriptive and propositional design. In a first approach, the descriptive component focuses on characterizing the cultural, touristic and socioeconomic features of the nine rural parishes of Guano, comprising traditions, festivities, symbolic elements and productive practices such as agriculture and livestock farming. This stage does not seek to manipulate variables but rather to systematize and interpret existing information in order to understand the current state of cultural dissemination in these territories.

At the same time, the study is propositional in nature, as it advances a concrete solution to the identified problem: the limited and fragmented digital dissemination of rural cultural heritage. In this sense, the design and development of an interactive web platform is conceived as a practical and context-sensitive response, grounded in prior analysis and supported by theoretical frameworks related to digital environments, cultural identity, and educational technology (Hernández-Sampieri et al., 2014) (12).

Context of the study

This study was carried out in the canton of Guano, in the province of Chimborazo, Ecuador and focused on the nine rural parishes: San Andrés, La Providencia, Ilapo, Santa Fé de Galán, San José de Chazo, Guanando, San Gerardo, San Isidro, and Valparaíso.

These parishes share a strong cultural identity shaped by Andean traditions, agricultural practices, communal organization, and local knowledge systems. Despite this richness, their presence in digital environments is still limited, fragmented, or informal, which restricts and reduces opportunities for cultural and touristic dissemination.

The study was conducted within the framework of the formative research project "English Teaching for Cultural Identity Project (ECIC)", developed during the 2025-2S academic period at Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo (UNACH). This project provided an academic and contextual foundation for gathering and organizing the information used in the study.

Data collection techniques and instruments

Data collection was primarily conducted through documentary analysis and structured observation.

Documentary analysis included the review of:

Academic literature related to cultural identity, digital dissemination, and EFL learning
Institutional documents and governmental reports

Official websites and digital platforms associated with the rural parishes

This technique allowed for the identification and systematization of relevant cultural, touristic, and socioeconomic information.

In addition, structured observation was applied to identify and categorize key cultural elements, including traditions, festivities, productive activities, and symbolic practices. This process made it possible to organize the content into thematic categories that reflect the identity of each parish.

As part of the methodological process, a digital design instrument was incorporated through the development of a prototype web platform using Odoo. This tool enabled the structured organization of information, the creation of interactive sections, and the integration of multimedia and navigational elements. The platform itself functioned as both an instrument and an outcome of the research.

Data analysis

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative strategies for data analysis. Qualitative data were analyzed using an inductive thematic approach, allowing for the identification of recurring patterns and categories related to cultural identity, heritage, and territorial representation. This process involved the classification and interpretation of information gathered from documentary sources and observations.

Quantitative elements were incorporated through descriptive analysis, focusing on the structural organization of the platform. This included criteria such as:

Logical hierarchy of information

Usability and navigation structure

Distribution of content across sections

Integration of multimedia elements

Rather than statistical inference, the quantitative component supported the evaluation of the platform's design in terms of clarity, accessibility, and coherence.

Procedure

The methodological process was carried out in four interconnected stages: the study began by identifying a central issue, the limited and fragmented dissemination of cultural and touristic information across the rural parishes of Guano. This initial step helped define the focus and direction of the research.

Next, relevant information was gathered from both documentary and digital sources. This material was then carefully organized and classified into thematic areas such as: culture, tourism, production, and territorial identity, allowing for a clear understanding of each parish.

The third stage consisted of the development of the interactive web platform using Odoo as a digital tool. The platform was divided into sections and an easy-to-use interface to navigate throughout the website. The key characteristic of each section included image galleries, maps of each parish, links to official parish social media and official websites. Additionally, the website presents an interactive section made by elements of gamification to combine both exploration and engagement.

Finally, the content was reviewed to ensure coherence, accuracy, and consistency throughout the platform. This stage aimed to guarantee that the cultural identity of each parish was represented in a respectful, organized, and meaningful manner.

Validity and reliability

The validity of the study was ensured through data triangulation, combining multiple documentary sources, institutional materials, and digital records. This approach strengthened the credibility of the information and minimized bias derived from single-source data.

Reliability was addressed through a process that included systematic review, data collection, and analysis. Furthermore, categorization criteria and a structured organization of the website content were implemented. Finally, the use of an organized digital platform contributed to ensuring consistency in the presentation of information. Throughout the study, academic thoroughness was maintained to clearly define research procedures in order to ensure transparency at every stage of the process.

Rather than aiming for statistical generalization, the study seeks to offer a context-sensitive and replicable model that can support cultural dissemination and contextualized EFL learning in rural settings.

RESULTS

The findings of this study indicate that the design and implementation of an interactive web platform constitute a contextually grounded and pedagogically meaningful strategy for the cultural, touristic, and socioeconomic dissemination of the rural parishes of the canton of Guano. Results compilation was carried out through qualitative examination, focused mainly on quantitative parameters that strengthen the categorization and analysis of data.

Throughout the data-driven analysis, it was revealed that there is a strong cultural consistency surrounding the Guano rural parishes, which is heavily manifested across several emblematic practices. Following this line of thinking, cultural identification could not be seen merely as a combination of individual elements, but rather as a solid structure involving vital items such as agricultural practices, cultural ceremonies, collaborative traditions, and gastronomy, that best reflect their interrelation.

This interpretation is consistent with the principles of symbolic interactionism, which understand meaning as something constructed through social interaction and shaped by specific contexts (Blumer, 1969).

The thematic analysis led to the identification of key cultural categories, which are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Thematic categories identified across parishes

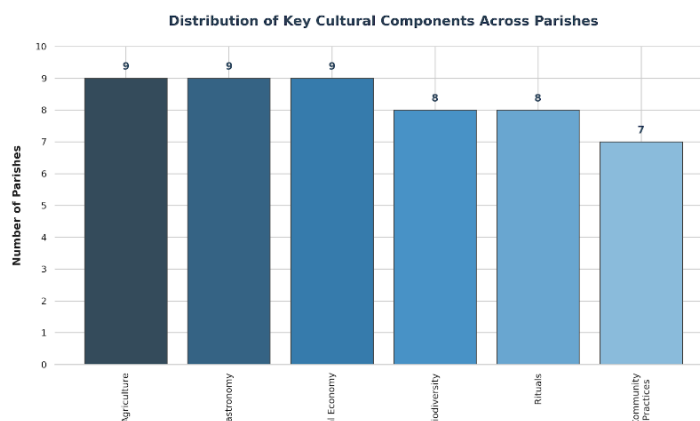
Thematic Category	Description	Presence Across Parishes
Ancestral Agriculture	Traditional practices, especially corn cultivation	9/9 (100%)
Biodiversity (Páramo)	Flora and fauna linked to highland ecosystems	8/9 (88.9%)
Rituals and Festivities	Religious and cultural celebrations	8/9 (88.9%)
Traditional Gastronomy	Local food practices and products	9/9 (100%)
Community Practices (Mingas)	Collective work and social organization	7/9 (77.8%)
Local Economy	Agriculture, trade, and small-scale production	9/9 (100%)

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

As shown in Table 1, agriculture and gastronomy are present in all parishes, confirming their central role in both cultural identity and local economies. Meanwhile, biodiversity and ritual practices, although slightly less widespread, remain highly representative. These findings reinforce the existence of a shared cultural structure with localized expressions, rather than fragmented or isolated identities.

To counterpart this explanation, Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of the main cultural elements across the parishes.

Figure 1. Distribution of key cultural components across parishes



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Figure 1 shows how the main cultural components are distributed across the nine rural parishes. Elements such as agriculture, gastronomy, and local economy appear constantly in all cases, while aspects like biodiversity and communal practices present slight variations. The idea of each parish presenting individual biodiversity within the canton is strengthened by the previous mentioned concept: cultural consistency.

These conceptions highly contributed to the structurization of the webpage. Starting by how the information was categorized into structured sections, considering essential cultural aspects, then followed by easy-to-follow and contextualized content. The web platform presents content in an innovative way, blending cultural elements and providing an integrated perspective of territorial belonging.

Figure 2. Screenshot of the platform



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Link of the platform: <https://guanoparishes.odoo.com/>

From a functional perspective, the platform incorporates a structured and hierarchical organization, facilitating navigation and user comprehension. The main components and their pedagogical functions are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Digital platform functional structure

Component	Description	Pedagogical Function
Interactive Maps	Geographic visualization of parishes	Spatial understanding
Image Galleries	Visual representation of culture	Cultural recognition
Audio Descriptions	Narratives in English and Spanish	Listening comprehension
Thematic Sections	Organized cultural categories	Structured learning
External Links	Connection to official parish sources	Information expansion

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

As Table 2 states, the meticulous selection of each digitized item provides a particular didactic aim which interconnects language learning and cultural diffusion. The particular structure of the website highlights the conceptions of Cognitive Load Theory, emphasizing the challenge to display information in an understandable and objective manner (Paas & Sweller, 2014). The page was specifically designed under the Germane Cognitive Load type since it focuses on how the web's content is transferred from temporary information to long-lasting knowledge that will prevail and take importance for each user.

Quantitatively speaking, the whole website incorporates 80% of audiovisual materials, which reinforces the concept of a structured platform.

A significant qualitative outcome of the study is the role of the platform as a mediating tool for contextualized English language learning. English is embedded within culturally relevant content, allowing users to interact with vocabulary and expressions linked to their own realities. This approach aligns with culturally responsive pedagogy, which highlights the importance of connecting learning to students' cultural contexts (Gay, 2018).

Furthermore, the website highlights the viability in terms of technology since it allows access from any technological device such as cellphones, tablets, or computers. This aspect diversifies its capability of reaching both urban and rural scenarios. With its easy-to-use interface, the designed platform promotes exploration as well as low cognitive load, which enhances the user-platform interaction.

Qualitative aspects surrounding this insight were validated by local communities, which included parish representatives that considered the website a constructive and significant instrument to spotlight culture and identity. Participants emphasized its role in promoting intergenerational knowledge transmission, transforming local practices into structured digital content while preserving their symbolic meaning.

Table 3 presents a synthesis of the cultural and socioeconomic approaches identified for each parish.

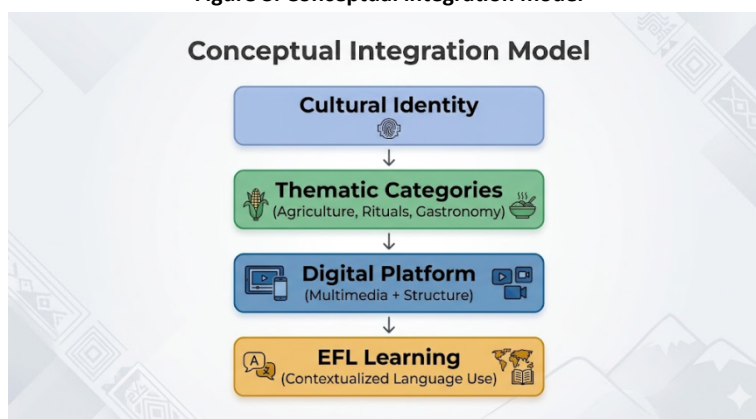
Table 3. Cultural and socioeconomic approach by parish

Parish	Main Cultural-Socioeconomic Focus
San Andrés	Hiking, Andean forests, potato and barley agriculture
San Isidro	Corn-based traditions, beverages (chicha, morocho), festivities
Ilapo	Ecotourism, medicinal plants, quinoa production
San Gerardo	Communal work (mingas), agriculture, local narratives
Guanando	Harvest traditions, corn festivals, agricultural trade
San José de Chazo	Symbolic importance of corn, community tourism
Santa Fé de Galán	Syncretic festivals, gastronomy, diverse agriculture
La Providencia	Rural tourism routes, gastronomy, livestock
Valparaíso	Páramo landscapes, agriculture, wine and strawberry production

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Finally, Figure 3 presents a conceptual model that synthesizes the integration of cultural identity, digital platform design, and contextualized EFL learning.

Figure 3. Conceptual integration model



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Figure 3 illustrates the relationship between cultural identity (expressed through thematic categories such as agriculture, rituals, and gastronomy), the digital platform (structured through multimedia and interactive design), and English language learning (as a contextualized communicative tool). This model highlights the integrative nature of the proposal.

Overall, the results demonstrate that the platform does not function merely as a repository of information but as a structured, pedagogically oriented environment that connects cultural representation with language learning and digital accessibility.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study suggest that the design of an interactive web platform constitutes a contextually relevant response to the need for structured cultural dissemination in rural territories, while simultaneously supporting meaningful and contextualized English language learning. Consistent with the results, the platform does not operate merely as a repository of information but as an integrative environment where cultural identity, digital representation, and language use converge.

This convergence highlights how cultural coherence co-exists among the rural parishes of Guano with specific items, which include ceremonies, community practices, cultural variety, and agricultural practices that form a whole system with several variations. Descriptively speaking, agricultural practices are present in each rural parish without exception, being the corn plantation and the shared communal activities the basis for the complementation of quantitative insights.

These findings are consistent with the idea that cultural identity is not made up of isolated elements, but rather emerges from the relationship between interconnected practices (Blumer, 1969) (13). In this sense, organizing the platform around thematic categories helps preserve these connections, avoiding the fragmentation often seen in digital representations of rural contexts.

Similarly, this design aligns with culturally responsive teaching. As Gay (2018) (8) suggests, learning becomes more meaningful when it connects with students' cultural experiences. In this case, English is embedded within culturally relevant content, allowing users to engage with language through familiar contexts. This shifts the focus from abstract language learning to a more contextualized use of English as a tool of communication and cultural expression.

These results also resonate with recent studies in EFL contexts. As Samiei and Ebadi (2021) (14) suggest, learners are demonstrated to have higher comprehension levels and the willingness to learn when they are exposed to technology-supported learning environments and contextualized pedagogical activities. Following the same line of research, the study conducted by Ali et al. (2022) (15) claims that there is a positive outcome between the combination of authentic content and didactic structures as they provide a motivational environment and meaningful learning. This research supports heavily the present study as there is a relationship between rural Andean scenarios and contextualized learning of cultural identity.

From the constructivist approach, the website offers a holistic perspective about active and co-constructed learning. Vygotsky (1978) (10) claims that there is a strong need of situating the learner in content-rich environments that facilitate their learning. Nevertheless, Gruenewald (2003) (16) states the importance of integrating authentic academic scenarios with social context. In this sense, the web platform emphasizes the need to explore context-rich content related to Andean areas in terms of agriculture, cultural diversity, and community practices, through the English language in order to expand the scope of learning and transform it to meaningful learning.

With this consideration, it is essential to highlight how the pre-analysis in the creation of the platform influenced its outcomes. The platform is an interconnected and structured network of cultural elements, which employs more than 80% of multimedia

resources to maintain a balance between Cognitive Load Theory and the diffusion of content, suggesting low cognitive load and better information retention (Paas & Sweller, 2014) (1). The ultimate purpose of the website is to show clear and concise organization, technological interaction, and coherence between sections.

The study involves not merely the cultural aspects of the rural parishes, but the social impact of it. With the feedback obtained from parish representatives, it can be suggested that the website holds a strong potential as it represents genuinely their cultural identity, their preservation of information, and the transmission to future generations. With this finding in mind, digital diffusion of cultural heritage happens not only through community unity, but under principles of sustainability and legitimacy, as Hidayah et al. (2025) (17) exposed. For that reason, the website clearly transmits the information by promoting preservation and recontextualization of local knowledge.

However, it is important to manifest that these findings should be understood within the scope of the study. While the results point to a strong potential in both educational and cultural terms, the research remains primarily descriptive and propositional. For this reason, any implications related to language learning outcomes are better seen as theoretically grounded projections rather than direct measured effects. In this sense, future lines of research can be developed under this study by implementing quasi-experimental or experimental designs in order to probe the impact that the website holds in areas such as effective communication, literacy proficiency, and vocabulary development.

Ultimately, the research study derives future discussions on how to merge three main aspects: language learning, culture, and technology, in rural scenarios. Exemplifying, the model applied in the creation of the platform can be adapted to similar contexts by contextualizing the learning and preserving the cultural identity. In this sense, technology is not treated as an end in itself, but as a mediating tool that, when grounded in local realities, can enhance both educational relevance and cultural visibility.

CONCLUSIONS

The main aim of this study was to design an interactive web platform for the dissemination of the cultural, touristic, and socioeconomic heritage of the rural parishes of the canton of Guano, while simultaneously articulating it as a micro-curricular resource for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning within a rural Andean context.

Based on the findings, the proposed platform can be understood as a contextually grounded digital resource with academic, social, and touristic value. With the structuration, the complete free access, and employment of audiovisual materials, the knowledge is presented in an organized, coherent, and accessible way.

Similarly, it involves the English language as a functional tool that engages users into cultural-rich content and foreign language learning. With that consideration in mind, English is not seen as a solely language system, but as a diffusional instrument of culture that is responded by pedagogical-rich approaches.

Obtained results show biocultural fundamentals present in the rural parishes of Guano and its connection with Andean elements, including biodiversity, agricultural practices, specifically those based on corn plantation, community practices, and local festivities. Through the qualitative analysis and descriptive indicators, it can be suggested that there is indeed a consistent territorial identity which safeguards local variations.

Furthermore, each one of the parishes holds distinctive touristic and cultural elements which reinforces the idea of a territorial diversity. For instance, the well-known mountain-based activities such as hiking or ecological routes are characteristic in San Andrés and Ilapo, agrotourism present in Guanando and San Isidro, sustainable tourism seen in San Gerardo, San José del Chazo, La Providencia, and Santa Fé de Galán, and finally, production systems obtained from páramo-based landscapes in Valparaíso. Each parish profile is represented in the platform as a way of strengthening cultural presence to expand culture in broader scenarios and promote tourism.

The most significant insight present in the study involves the recontextualization of the English language, that most of the time is considered merely as a subject in the academic field instead of a diffusional aid. The website presents a new concept of how language should be taught assisted by the implementation of micro-curricular resources and integrated simultaneously with context-rich scenarios, so that learners associate and reflect their own sociocultural environment. The model adopted in the platform can be adapted to similar rural settings who are concerned with educating through identity value and language learning.

In the pedagogical area, the website acts as a support tool for teaching in EFL classrooms, specifically in rural environments where most of the time the information is presented under a traditional approach, lacking of cultural relevance. The areas of improvement present in the platform include vocabulary development under real-word scenarios, strengthening of sense of belonging to a specific territory, and user engagement.

The future scope of research may focus its studies in the particularity of integrating technology in low-connectivity settings by creating modalities of education that include hybrid or offline versions of the platform, and alternative techniques of assessment to promote deeper understanding of both the user's educational and personal experience. In sum, the present study represents the initial step toward the integration of technology, language education in rural settings, and sense of belonging, emphasizing the necessity to strengthen cultural diffusion and learning dynamics.

Ethical consideration

The research was carried out following protocols previously established in the academic research. Since the study is a digital-based and documentary research, the compiled information was obtained through trustworthy sources that ensure the information complies with legal and ethical requirements. There was not a compilation of sensitive or personal data towards the study. The content present in the website was reviewed beforehand by parish representatives in order to get validation and accuracy in terms of cultural appropriateness.

The researchers declare that there are no conflicts of interest since the study has not received external funding and has been developed in accordance with the activities proposed during the 2025-2S academic period at the Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo (UNACH).

The use of Artificial Intelligence tools was measured and done merely when needed to support the academic writing quality and generation of certain features present in the platform such as images. Every result given by the artificial intelligence tools was carefully analyzed and validated by each of the authors.

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