

English for Latin America (ELA) is an initiative that focuses on increasing access to high quality English language instruction through the use of EDC's Interactive Audio Instruction methodology.

What is ELA?

English for Latin America (ELA) is an Interactive Audio Instruction (IAI) program designed to teach English to young people and support teachers in providing effective instruction. ELA consists of 100 audio lessons that use dramas, song, games, and more to help students meet the basic level of English according to internationally recognized standards. Taking into account the need for English proficiency to succeed in life and the workforce today, ELA is offered throughout Latin America and provides youth with a solid foundation in the English language.

Connecting with Learners

The ELA program is aimed at youth and is culturally relevant to the Latin American context. In addition to weaving strategies for learning and teaching English into the program, ELA helps teachers learn and carry out best practices to improve their own teaching skills. The program also incorporates EDC's internationally recognized work readiness curriculum.

Focusing on Language Acquisition

- Each ELA lesson guides the teacher to teach with interactive methods using the latest language acquisition strategies.
- The vocabulary is adapted to students' age, grade level, realities and interests.
- Vocabulary and concepts are repeated in several programs, helping to facilitate the acquisition and consolidation of language skills.
- Pronunciation is carefully modeled to specifically address the difficulties faced by Spanish speakers learning English.
- The extensive use of stories, songs, and dialogues reinforces and extends the oral language skills of students.



How Does ELA Work?

A typical lesson of ELA includes:

- **Introduction:** The model teacher and student connect the lesson to real life starting with an activity.
- **Game Show Review:** A game provides review and ensures continued practice of vocabulary from previous lessons.
- **What's New:** Students learn words and phrases used in context. The teacher guides students to interact with the audio and each other to practice the new material.
- **Listen to Reality:** Students hear examples of English words from the lesson, in "real life" context and from the mouths of native speakers.
- **Drama:** Students hear a drama series about a Latin American teenager who spends the summer showing his country to two American youth. Episodes incorporate phrases students have learned, and other phrases critical to English communication.
- **Sing it Now:** Students hear an English-language song featuring new phrases. Through learning the songs, students memorize vocabulary and phrases within them.
- **Reading/Writing:** Students participate in guided spelling, decoding, and writing activities.
- **Get to Work:** Students learn life skills, how to manage their finances, and how to use English in the tourism and service industries.
- **Review and Conclude:** Students participate in a review activity and teachers receive instructions on how to continue to practice after the lesson.

ELA in Honduras

In 2016, Honduras became the most recent country to adopt the ELA program. EDC launched ELA in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, with the pilot program being implemented in 14 of the 18 departments in the country, involving approximately 21,000 students. Due to requirements set by the Ministry of Education, students were evaluated after having received 2-3 months of programs (approximately 30%). Despite this extremely short period, ELA experimental school students demonstrated statistically significant learning gains in reading, writing, use of language and listening comprehension over their control school counterparts. In oral competency testing, the experimental group achieved a gain of 1.35 points in its overall performance of oral competency while the control group obtained a gain of 0.53 points. This indicates a gain by the experimental group 2.5 times greater than the control group. During the 2018 school year, the Rotary Club funded the implementation of ELA in schools in Roatan, Honduras. Students participating in ELA scored twice as high on their speaking tests and scored significantly higher on their listening-comprehension and written tests than their counterparts not participating in ELA after only following an average of half of the programs.

ELA in the Dominican Republic

The Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic, with support from the Inter-American Development Bank, launched ELA in schools throughout the country in 2014 and results from teachers and students alike were very positive. At the end of the program, treatment schools within the sample had a 7% higher learning gain on average than their control school peers on EDC's evaluation. The treatment group also had higher scores on the oral part of the test, with an effect of 1.65 standard deviations.

IAI Results in Other Countries

A study of English language teaching in India and Pakistan compared the performance results of IAI versus other conventional methods. The evaluation examined students' English comprehension and English oral communication by asking questions to each student and asking him or her to respond in English. Statistical analysis showed a significant difference between the IAI pre-test and post-test, as well as significantly higher gains in the IAI group than the control group in both the comprehension test and the oral test.

To see ELA in action, visit the Facebook page, www.facebook.com/englishforlatinamerica.



Photos by Education Development Center.

[The program] is not too adult, not too childish. Youth, children... everyone can learn.

—Vanessa, 12

Why Use ELA?

- Research shows highly significant learning gains in both students and teachers using the IAI program when compared with conventional methods.
- IAI is a **cost-effective** way to provide large-scale instruction. IAI reaches and helps teach millions of students every day.
- IAI addresses many of the challenges facing education systems, including: the lack of English-as-a-foreign-language teachers, limited English proficiency level of teachers, difficulty in reaching remote rural areas, overcrowded classrooms, and the overall financial cost to provide English instruction.
- **IAI benefits teachers** by modeling the use of new reading, writing, speaking and comprehension strategies, allowing them to see the impact on student learning.

Costs

ELA is cost-effective. To implement the program, teachers simply require a means of audio playback - there is no need for additional materials or equipment. The cost of ELA per participant is a fraction of the cost of online programs or in-person English certification classes. Estimated ELA costs are below:

	Pilot	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Number of students	5,000	20,000	50,000	500,000	5,000,000
Cost per student	\$67.79	\$27.70	\$21.08	\$9.27	\$7.19
Cost per student after the first year*	\$13.56	\$5.54	\$4.22	\$1.85	\$1.44

*Cost per student after the first year goes down to only 20% of the original cost.