

Application of the Information and Communication Technologies for the Development of Students' English Language Listening Skill

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Abstract

This article shows the results of an investigation which main objective was to analyze the contribution of information and communication technologies in the development of the listening skills in Fifth grade students at "Sagrado Corazon" School of Esmeraldas, 2019 in whose technological application changes were observed not only in the students' attitude also, in their oral expression. Meanwhile, this research was carried out through a qualitative-quantitative approach. In Fact, the observation and the survey were applied because they allowed obtaining the greatest number of data directly front of the protagonists for their subsequent analysis and execution of solutions to the problem posed. As instrument, a questionnaire was applied to thirty-three students and four teachers. Furthermore, the results revealed the little use of these technological tools by teachers in their classrooms, being evident the need for greater training to know, learn and include these tools in the curriculum, which allow developing an interactive, dynamic, and effective teaching and learning process of the English language.

Keywords: Information, Communication, Technologies, Listening Skills, English Language

Introduction

The learning of the English language has great social, economic, cultural, and even more academic impacts, which leads to the investigation and application of new techniques, strategies, and tools that seek to develop the four language skills which are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Through the progress of education and other social areas, information and communication technologies appear as a teaching-learning tool and the strategies with the greatest impact in the educational field since they have allowed radical changes and advances in this area of human development.

The students of the fifth grade at "Sagrado Corazon" school have many shortcomings in the production of short texts in English since the group of students did not understand oral messages, which leads to get low grades and even more the lack of interest and little enthusiasm to learn this new language; it is necessary to look for other strategies to develop the listening skill, which arises since the use of technological means of daily use such as telephones, tablets, projectors, computers, and as many resources as are available to children under the supervision of their parents, which will contribute to the development of this important skill from the basic levels of teaching-learning the English language. Therefore, this research pointed to solve the question:

How did the application of ICT influence the development of the listening skill in fifth grade students at "Sagrado Corazon" School?

In the teaching-learning process of the English language, all the skills must be developed in an integral way, focusing on hearing as one of the information entry skills, this skill is not easy to acquire, so when knowing and applying the different information and communication technologies students will not only optimize their knowledge but will also improve the input and output of oral messages.

The main objective of this study was to analyze the contribution of information and communication technologies in the development of the student's skills. On the other hand, the specific ones are related to

make a diagnosis, then to analyze the appropriate activities to improve linguistic listening skills and to apply digital resources in the development of interactive listening.

The incorporation of ICT has meant that for educational spaces they are no longer an option, and the efforts of countries and institutions are directed towards the generation and implementation of initiatives that imply the maximum use of technologies in training processes (Severin, E. 2010).

Listening

According to Saricoban (1999) listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, his grammar and his vocabulary, and grasping his meaning. Listening is the process of decoding a series of codes expressed in the oral word, the same one that seeks for the recipient to develop a series of micro listening skills that range from understanding the accent of the speaker to the appropriate use of vocabulary when emitting a message.

When listening, the receiver acts based on the message and its interpretation, considering a series of linguistic signs.

“Listening is the active process of receiving and responding to spoken (and sometimes unspoken) messages. It is one of the subjects studied in the field of language arts and the discipline of conversation analysis” (Nordquist, 2019, p. 77).

Listening is a receptive skill; this provides ways to produce the receptive skills. If teachers motivate learners to produce in different ways, the teaching-learning process may be more communicative.

Moreover, the mentioned process brings us most of the integrated skills. Due to the fact, there are two reasons for using integrating activities in language classrooms: to develop the learners' ability in the use of two or more skills within real contexts and communicative framework. However, the other three English language skills receive a direct educational attention that is reading, writing, and applying correct grammar. Most teachers frequently expect students to develop their ability to listen by osmosis and without help, it is unpredictable to establish the reason why they do this, perhaps due to unknown of strategies, methods, and techniques that allow listening to be developed in their students as one of the most difficult skills.

Stages of the listening process are represented by pre-listening (purpose must be given at this stage), during (in-while) listening, and post-listening (speaking). It is listening on the fourth level that primarily concerns in our teaching. Such listening may add an emotional and dramatic quality. Radio and recordings highlight the importance of listening. Listening is as active as speaking (the other receptive skill), and in some ways even more difficult. It well requires attention, thought, interpretation, and imagination.

To improve the listening skills of students, teachers must allow them to adopt a positive attitude during the teaching-learning process of the English language, be receptive, avoid distractions, because it helps to obtain complete and real information, listen with the purpose of the speaker, look for signs of what is to come, look for summaries of what has happened before, also to evaluate supporting materials and look for non-verbal clues.

Levels of Listening

Saricoban, A. (1999) argued that there are four levels of listening integrated activities, on the other hand, provide a variety in the classroom and thus maintain motivation and allow the recycling and revision of language which has already been taught separately in each skill. How can we be certain that listening experiences will become more productive? In fact, it is necessary to distinguish the four levels related to listening to radio or recordings.

Level 1. This mood is listening. The sound remains in the background - there is usually limited comprehension, and, indeed, limited attention. One becomes directly aware of sounds only when they stop. Nevertheless, a certain amount of learning may take place.

Level 2. The purpose is relaxation, escape, getting your mind off something rather than on it. The material is comprehended, but usually it is not analyzed for its value. This listening may result useful ideas, but they are usually peripheral and/or accidental.

Level 3. On this level, answers are sought as a key to action. Somebody listens to weather reports, traffic information from a plane-temporarily useful but what we might call forgettable transient information. This form of listening does not require long, sustained concentration.

Level 4. This is the stage of analytical and critical listening. The listener not only seeks a serious answer to a serious question but evaluates the quality of the answer. Round-table discussions, serious listening to talk, spirited conversation, and symphonic music is at the fourth level. At this stage, listening to music is in the foreground of attention not in the background as on previous levels.

Undoubtedly, all these changes in the thinking and acting of humanity, force teachers to adapt to new techniques and means of communication which led to the use of strategies and carry out the teaching-learning process. It should be emphasized that current education has been developed and applied new ways of teaching, with the application of the simplest to the most complex media which have been known. Nowadays, Ecuadorian education has been adapted to the different ITC that the world market offers, which is using them to develop listening skills that allow teachers and students to obtain good results in decoding the messages received.

Information and Communication Technologies

Over the years, new educational trends appear to allow the integral development of the four language arts, it is how humanity found advanced and effective ways in the application of current technology which achieve this integration, and over several decades They have been investigated and applied from the smallest as a blackboard, chalk or a recorder to the electronic and technological devices.

Mendoza, D. (2018) reported, the information and communication technologies constitute a set of applications, systems, tools, techniques, and methodologies associated with the digitization of analog signals, sounds, texts, and images, manageable in real-time. Meanwhile, Evgueni, K. & Patru, M. (2002) established that they are a set of processes and products derived from new tools (hardware and software), supports and communication channels, related to the storage, processing, and digitized transmission of information.

On the other hand, the ICT are a set of technological advances that have been used by computing, telecommunications, and audiovisual technologies, all of them provide tools for the treatment and dissemination of information and have various communication channels. The most powerful element that integrates Information and communication technologies is the internet, which has led to the configuration of the so-called information society, the author indicates that it enables the existence of a third world, where almost everything that is done in the physical world, a second world would be that of the imagination (Graells, 2000).

The information in which people are immersed requires new demands from citizens and new challenges to achieve at an educational level. Among them: Have effective search and selection criteria and information that allow access to relevant and quality information. Knowledge of new communication codes used in new media. Encourage new media to contribute to the dissemination of universal values, without discrimination to any group. Train critical, autonomous, and responsible citizens who have a

clear vision of the social transformations that are taking place and can participate actively in them. Adapt education and training to the continuous changes taking place at a social, cultural and professional level.

Therefore, discovery and application of new forms of communication, and human imagination has given ways to deeper research with great achievements in the computer field, which allows the teaching-learning process to be part of these advances where the development of hearing has been a fundamental part of the educational field from the earliest levels of education. These technological tools and resources include computers, the Internet (websites, blogs, and emails), live broadcasting technologies (radio, television, and webcasting), recorded broadcasting technologies (podcasting, audio and video players, and storage devices) and telephony (fixed or mobile, satellite, vision/videoconferencing, etc.).

In the process of acquiring a second language, ICT could enrich and favor each of the approaches mentioned, since most of the students naturally lived with them, they have grown with them in many areas of their daily life and now they have only adopted them in their educational work, although they must adequately integrate them into their learning processes if they want to develop communication skills or abilities (López, 2007).

Currently, the new generations have developed with the daily use of different technological means, thus, facilitating adaptation in the educational field, allow auditing specific language skills to have a broad development in the teaching-learning process from the basic years of study.

The correct use of electronic devices, resources have allowed communication to be viable the skill of listening, which receives and internalizes oral messages, which, when correctly decoded, will ensure that the communication process is given. From elementary schools to university academic institutions, technologies are used as tools to promote competencies. The board, for example, allows the teacher to show how a simple mathematical calculation is solved, from the classic "two plus two" to the most complex algebraic operation of a university century.

Tools that allow display could be the simplest and most accurate definition of technologies. In the long paths of teaching, clear proposals were produced about what it is to show and how to do it, which are synthesized in the recognition that has been understood by each other (Hammond, D. et al. 2020).

It should be remembered that from the first years of regular education to university levels, the use of technology in a variety of devices, whether manual or electronic, has allowed teaching-learning to propose and establish several strategies and methods, giving rise to the creation and the application of new fields of action in the educational work, specifically the listening skills developed efficiently. When people are talking about listening as a skill, refer to the reception and decoding of the information received, giving way to interpretation that expresses act according to the objective of the person who issues a message.

On the other hand, Blake , B & Pope, T. (2008) revealed the complexity of the teaching-learning process, for this reason, it is proposed the application of new strategies and tools that will allow both, students and teachers, the development of listening as one of the English language skills.

Antecedents

Read, T. & Kukulska, A. (2015) in their article called The Role of a Mobile App for Listening Comprehension Training in Distance Learning to Sustain Student Motivation, applied an experimental investigation, taking as a population a sample of 45 students registered in their application, they concluded that the data from the applied questionnaires showed that students did not normally use their smart phones or tablets to listen to news before the experiment and that, as a result of this experience, they would do so from now on, even if this particular application I was not available. However, they generally did not seem aware these devices, beyond the applications they might install, could provide

them with a way to listen to radio broadcasts in the target language while in their everyday life, thus immersing themselves in a context of continuous practice. It is relevant to mention that motivation is one of the most important factors for learning a new language and much more for the development of listening skills.

Shen, Wichura, & Kiattichai (2007) developed a study called Using Websites to Practice Undergraduate Students' Listening Skills. Taking an intentionally selected sample of students who enrolled in the English II course in the 2007 mid-term of the academic year at Suranaree University of Technology; concluded that students had positive attitudes towards the use of the internet as a learning tool, adequate basic knowledge of the internet and considered that learning environment supported the use of the internet for learning.

Teachers must be clear about the teaching-learning objectives, and above all establish rules that maintain control and dominance of the group of students.

According to Olalla, A. (2016) in the research entitled ICT in the development of listening skills in the English language applied to students of 8th grade of basic education at "Jim Irwin" school in Quito, based on the technique of the survey and as an evaluative instrument a questionnaire applied to a population of ninety students and a teacher; concluded that students showed poor performance in the English language, especially in the development of listening skills, because they did not use technological resources in their English classes.

This determines that by not applying ICT, students will not be able to develop listening properly and therefore will not improve their grades in the English subject.

Moreover, Ramírez, M. (2015) in his thesis entitled "Influence of methodological strategies and TICS on the pedagogical process teachers apply to develop listening skill in English" concluded that methodological strategies and ICT to guiding the learner towards an objective clear understanding guides the educator since both can direct their steps. These strategies are fundamental in the educational development process of listening skills since they are more likely to establish a significant student who teaches their own points of sight.

Currently, the role of ICT in society is very important because they offer many services such: electronic mail, information search, online banking, music and film download, electronic commerce, etc. For this reason, they have easily incorporated in different areas of life, including education at all levels and specialties. The world changes day by day, due to the educational systems have progressed, emphasizing on the teaching-learning of the English language, because of the great changes, technology plays a very important role in the development of listening as one of the four skills of this language.

Each one of the devices, tools, and other elements of technology, with the passing of the years from its appearance have allowed great updates in all areas of life, especially in education, much more so in today's times where information and communication technologies are playing a very important role in the teaching-learning process, with new information and communication technologies appearing worldwide. People do not need the internet to apply them to the development of listening, so as alternative TVs and radios can be used to develop the listening comprehension skills of a student in an entertaining atmosphere; also, they are part of ICT. Another way which can be developed refers to singing songs, karaoke and computer games can also have striking effects on student's listening comprehension.

Method

The current study was carried out at the Sagrado Corazón School in Esmeraldas. It is a school with a Fiscomisional nomination. This project was applied to four teachers, with an intentional sample of 33

learners, 20 girls and 13 boys who are involved in average age of 8 and 9 years old, given the low qualifications that they presented in the fourth elementary grade.

On the other hand, the research was qualitative, taking the diagnosis as a starting point, it was possible to demonstrate the low performance of the students and the little application of ITC to develop listening in the teaching-learning process, it was also a quantitative research since they were assigned numerical values to the data obtained a logical connection between the reasoning of the inductive method that goes from the specific observations to the generalizations, and the deductive reasoning that goes from the generalization to the specific application of the instruments.

The survey included multiple-choice questions related to the knowledge and use of information and communication technologies. The questionnaire was focused on close questions according to the results obtained with their application to the selected group of students, which aimed to describe the qualities, not only be about measuring or evaluating the largest number of people, also, to achieve knowledge, understanding the correct application of all technologies in the development of listening skills.

The data obtained determined whether the application of ICT to the selected group of students would develop listening skills, which would lead to improve their grades in the English language, making them more interested in the subject. The hypotheses were established concerning the development of the variables, in this case, listening skills as the dependent variable and information and communication technologies as the independent variable. These hypotheses were: With the application of ICT children can improve their grades. When applying ICT, children can develop listening more dynamically. If information and communication technologies are applied, learners pay more attention to the subject.

Results

The purpose of this investigation was to know if these teachers of English at Sagrado Corazon School from primary section were aware of the advantages of these new technologies in the development of listening as a linguistic macro-skill and to identify them. Therefore, relevant aspects must be considered when incorporating all technologies and devices into listening teaching some ideas will be provided on methodological strategies with the use of information and communication technologies, the results are showed as follow:

According to the obtained results from the teachers' survey regarding the knowledge of information and communication technologies and the frequency of its application, it was established in figure one that the four of them knew the essentials about the computer and the internet, the projector, cell phones, and players sound and videos. The frequency which students develop the information and communication technologies like computers, projectors, cd records, cell phones and others, for listening in their classes, two of the four teachers agreed that they always applied and used them.

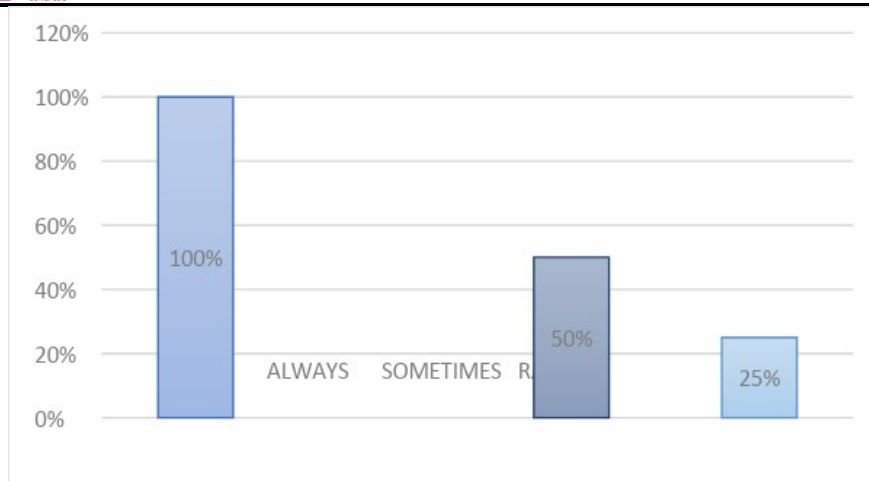


Figure 1. Frequency teachers apply ICT.

Source: Survey aimed at teachers of English

As reported by the statistical (figure two), teachers two and three considered listening as a very important skill. Nevertheless, a hundred percent of the teachers agreed that listening is a basic skill for the teaching process of learning the English language.

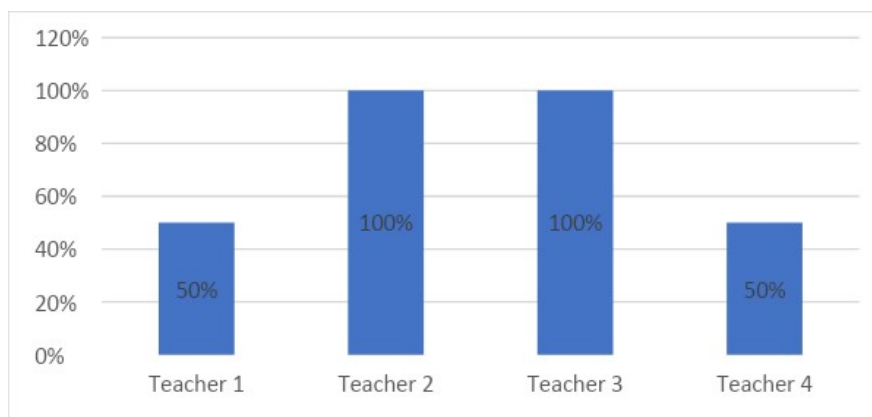


Figure 2. Importance of listening skill

Source: Survey aimed at teachers of English

Once the survey was applied to the teachers, a diagnostic evaluation was made to determine the level of understanding from listening to the group of selected students without applying the ICT, at the end of the academic year the same questionnaire was applied but this time with the application of the information and communication technologies during the evaluation process, where it was evident that when applying the technological resources the students had better results, the learners were more motivated, interested in the subject. In the following comparative table, it is noticing the great difference in the results obtained.

Table 1. Pretest and posttest results

PRETEST	POSTTEST
As a result of the pretest, ninety eight percent of the students got low grades to evaluate listening skill without the application of ICT, only listening to the teacher and using paper and pencil.	As a result of the final evaluation, a hundred percent of students obtained better grades when developing the listening activities with the ICT: computers, headphones, internet, interactive worksheet.

Source: Pretest and posttest applied to the students.

Contrasting the results with the data of table one selected in the diagnostic evaluation, regarded that most of the students (98%) got low grades, since this evaluation was applied without the use of any technological equipment, only listening to the teacher using paper and pencil, that would allow them to develop listening in a more didactic and entertaining way. However, students practiced for three weeks with some ICT resources such as: computers, headphones, and interactive worksheets in the computing lab. Meanwhile, when applying the final evaluation using ICT to the same group of learners, a hundred percent of them exceeded the score, due to the evaluative instrument applied, which caught pupils 'attention. Also, it was so easy to understand through videos and activities carried out during the final evaluation.

Discussion

It is common to consider the classroom as a place where teachers and students interaction should be the main objective of education, which is why the teacher's role is the main actor in this well-worn process, being a mere transmitter of their knowledge. It should be noted that the teaching-learning process of English has not been the exception in this form of traditional education. With the passing of the years and with the appearance of new academic, labor, social, and even political economic competencies, all these educational models have been left in disuse, so the opportunity is given to the application of ICTs which every day they take more force in their applicability much more in the educational field.

Read, T. & Kukulska, A. (2015) in their article showed that students did not normally use their smart phones or tablets to listen to news before the experiment and that, as a result of this experience, they would do so from now on, even if this particular application is not available; This coincides with the present study, since attracting the students' attention to a significant learning of the English language mainly involves the development of listening skills, taking ICT into account, in this case they were mobile devices and the internet to attend to the news.

In addition, Shen, Wichura and Kiattichai (2007) in their article concluded that students had positive attitudes towards the use of the Internet as a learning tool, adequate basic knowledge of the Internet and considered that the learning environment supported the use of the Internet for learning; which concurs with the present investigation since according to the results obtained, students feel more confident, secure and comfortable, when developing listening activities with the use of ICT, in this case the internet, it is evident that the bases in the management of internet browsers and other networks are fundamental for the development of said learning.

Finally, according to Olalla, A. (2016) in their research concluded that students showed poor performance in the English language, especially in the development of listening comprehension, because they did not

use technological resources in their English classes; which shows a close relationship with the results of the present investigation, since in reference to the results, they determined that without the use of ICT the students fail their grades and therefore they could not develop listening as one of the macro- English language skills.

Conclusions

Information and Communication Technologies in the teaching-learning process of the English language to develop listening as a linguistic macro-skill has been a relevant topic in recent years. It has generated a great impact on educational advances at the level of teachers and specialists in the teaching of the English area. Currently, teachers of English motivate their students to learn and implement technological tools in the curriculum of their courses. In this regard, the questionnaire applied to students and the meeting applied to teachers provided relevant information, which is provided in the conclusions mentioned below:

The surveyed teaching staff recognized that "good knowledge is a good pedagogical practice" which helped to improve the quality of Listening skills in the teaching-learning process of the English language. However, technological resources, cd recorders, computers, tablets, cell phones, songs, videos, films, and texts, have only been used to search for information and as support material, which had not allowed the various technological tools to provide diversity in planned activities and stimulate development, mental and creative skills of learners in a language class.

Also, it was evident that the group of teachers knows the different Information and Communication Technologies and devices, but their use has been minimal because they do not know their correct application for education or by the reason, they do not have these tools. This limitation in its use does not allow teachers to incorporate technological tools that can also stimulate frequent listening, the exchange of ideas, and the discussion of these through blogs, forums or social networks. This use would enhance the linguistic abilities of the students, especially the listening skills. It is shown that the teachers recognized that information and communication technologies offer updated complementary material, which allows the classes to be less traditional and more innovative. However, this recognition is not enough for these technological tools to be fully incorporated into the classroom curriculum, either due to lack of devices, lack of knowledge in the application of them, or due to not having these resources in the institution.

Furthermore, those who have applied Information and Communication Technologies in their academic activities assure that the Listening language competence of their students has improved through cooperative work and the use of exercises or activities developed with their use. It is worth mentioning that the implementation of them in the planning of the activities to be carried out in the classroom is not a constant or frequent practice common among the teaching staff surveyed. It is necessary to establish certain criteria that determine the importance of the application of ICT in the learning process of the English language, specifically in the development of Listening as a linguistic macro-skill.

To conclude, the technological changes that today's world experiences are closely related to impact the educational field, so teachers must be in tune and update with these challenges, including in the methods, tools, and all kinds of innovative strategies the incorporation of information and communication technologies into the curriculum and planning in teaching performance should be fundamental in the development of listening skills of the students.

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