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KRONOS

THE LANGUAGE TEACHING JOURNAL

**EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
IMPLICATIONS, BENEFITS, AND IMPACTS OF
INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY IN THE PROCESS OF
LEARNING A SECOND LANGUAGE**



RONOS

THE LANGUAGE TEACHING JOURNAL



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Carta Editorial

La Revista Científica Kronos ha sido concebida por un grupo de académicos y aupada por colegas que creyeron en este proyecto. Este esfuerzo que empezó como una ilusión hoy inicia su recorrido con su primer número. Esperamos que su camino sea significativo y útil para los educadores en el área, que se constituya en una plataforma de investigación y en un espacio de debate de las nuevas tendencias en el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras.

El tema central de este primer número gira en torno al uso de instrumentos tecnológicos y su incidencia en el desarrollo de las destrezas lingüísticas al aprender una segunda lengua. El vertiginoso avance de la tecnología ha obligado a los educadores a dar un giro a la forma de enseñar. Si se considera que la población estudiantil pertenece a una generación denominada nativos digitales, los docentes no pueden desdeñar que estos nuevos aprendices experimentan procesos mentales más acelerados y espacios de atención mucho más cortos. Ante este escenario se hace imprescindible que los educadores, muchos de ellos inmigrantes digitales, exploren el mundo tecnológico y aprovechen de las mejores herramientas para explotar al máximo las capacidades de los estudiantes.

Partiendo de esta premisa, Luis Aulestia e Ivanova Monteros proponen el uso de Comunidades de Aprendizaje de Idiomas Online para mejorar la pronunciación del idioma inglés. Su trabajo *Online Language Learning Communities and the Development of Pronunciation in English as a Foreign Language*, basado en resultados obtenidos luego de la intervención en el grupo experimental, claramente evidencia un positivo incremento en el nivel de pronunciación de los estudiantes después de su participación en estas comunidades online.

Adicionalmente, las herramientas de la web 2.0 representan otra eficiente alternativa tecnológica con el fin de desarrollar la habilidad de escribir académicamente. En su artículo *Academic Writing in the Context of Applied Linguistics for English Language Teaching: Integrating Web 2.0*, Rocío Ortega expone el beneficio de incorporar estas herramientas al proceso de aprendizaje. Así lo evidencian los resultados de los instrumentos de su investigación —pre y post test—. Así como también la encuesta de satisfacción en la que la mayoría de estudiantes reflejan mayor involucramiento en el transcurso de la investigación.

Además de un dominio tecnológico y conocimiento de otras lenguas entre otras demandas, el mundo de hoy exige profesionales capaces de trabajar en equipo para la generación de nuevas ideas. En el artículo *Collaborative Work, Through Google Drive Tool, to Develop the Writing Skill in A1 Level*, Ana León y Andrea Rosero exploran los beneficios de usar google drive con el fin de mejorar la habilidad de escribir en el idioma inglés. Sus descubrimientos manifiestan un significativo progreso en el rendimiento de los estudiantes que fueron parte del grupo experimental en el que se propició el aprendizaje interactivo favoreciendo la corresponsabilidad y la positiva interdependencia hacia un objetivo común.

Producto de una concienzuda revisión literaria, Karina Suasnavas presenta su artículo *The Use of Technological Tools- Movie Maker and Weblogs to Foster Social Interaction in the Classroom*, como estrategias efectivas para desarrollar habilidades de una segunda lengua de forma cooperativa, integral e interactiva.

Si bien este primer número se enfoca en la tecnología y su impacto en el aprendizaje, la Revista Científica Kronos también ofrece un espacio para investigadores en otras áreas del amplio mundo de los

idiomas. María Teresa Llumiquinga presenta *The Use of Graphic Organizers in The Development of EFL Reading Comprehension*, una renovada visión de los organizadores gráficos y su contribución a una mejor comprensión lectora por parte de aprendices de una segunda lengua. El artículo describe como los organizadores gráficos permiten comprimir información en cualquier etapa del aprendizaje, desde un resumen de lluvia de ideas hasta los resultados de un complejo trabajo de investigación.

Por otro lado, María Augusta Heredia nos ofrece su artículo *Improving Listening Comprehension Using Practical Techniques in the English Third and Fourth Levels*, prácticas estrategias para desarrollar la comprensión auditiva. El *dictogloss*, por ejemplo, además de proveer a los estudiantes oportunidades para familiarizar el oído con los sonidos del idioma meta, también involucra otros procesos mentales como la reconstrucción del mensaje emitido, el análisis y la corrección contribuyendo así a un proceso de aprendizaje integral.

Es pertinente resaltar que para la Revista Científica Kronos la calidad de los artículos es prioridad. Tras estricta evaluación de pares, cada trabajo ha sido aceptado luego de cumplir con los estándares académicos pertinentes. Finalmente, nos queda agradecer al Instituto Académico de Idiomas, al equipo de trabajo formado por revisores, editores y sobretodo autores por su valioso aporte para que este primer número salga a la luz y por supuesto a la Universidad Central del Ecuador por su confianza y apoyo.

Gracias por leer Kronos-The Language Teaching Journal

Wilson P. Chiluiza Vásquez, MSc

Director Editorial

Editorial Letter

The Kronos Journal has been conceived by a group of educators and encouraged by colleagues who believed in this project. Although it seemed a distant dream, today it is a reality which marks the beginning of a long research journey. We hope that it becomes a meaningful and useful tool for educators in the area of teaching foreign languages and a research place for debate on new trends in the field.

The central theme of this first issue is about the use of technological tools and their impact on the development of language skills when learning a second language. The dizzying advance of technology has forced educators to change the way they teach. Considering that the students' population belongs to a generation called digital natives, teachers cannot disregard that these new students experience faster mental processes and much shorter attention spans. Given this scenario, it is essential that educators, many of them digital immigrants, explore the technological world and take advantage of the best tools to fully exploit the students' abilities.

Based on this premise, Luis Aulestia and Ivanova Monteros propose the use of online language learning communities to improve the pronunciation of the English language. Their work "Online Language Learning Communities and the Development of Pronunciation in English as a Foreign Language" clearly shows a positive increase in the level of the pronunciation of the students after their participation in these online communities.

Similarly, the web 2.0 tools represent another efficient technological alternative to develop the ability to write academically. In her article "Academic Writing in the Context of Applied Linguistics for English Language Teaching: Integrating Web 2.0", Rocío Ortega exposes the benefit of incorporating these tools into the learning process. This is evidenced by the results of the instruments of her research: pre/post-tests and satisfaction surveys in which most students demonstrate more involvement in the process.

In addition to a technological mastery and knowledge of other languages, among other requirements, the world today demands professionals capable of working as a team to generate new ideas. In the article "Collaborative Work, through Google Drive Tool to Develop the Writing Skill in A1 level", Ana León and Andrea Rosero explore the benefits of using Google Drive to improve the ability to write in the English language. Their discoveries indicate a significant progress in the performance of the students who were part of the experimental group in which interactive learning was fostered. Furthermore, the study contributed to the co-responsibility and positive interdependence towards a common goal.

In her article entitled "The Use of Technological Tools- Movie Maker and Weblogs to Foster Social Interaction in the Classroom", Karina Suasnavas presents the result of an extensive literature review on the use of video creation and blogs as strategies to develop second language skills in a cooperative, integral and interactive way.

While this first issue focuses on technology and its impact on learning languages, Kronos Journal also offers a place for researchers in other areas of the broad world of languages. María Teresa Llumiquinga presents "The Use of Graphic Organizers in The Development of EFL Reading Comprehension", a renewed vision of graphic organizers and their contribution to a better reading comprehension for second language learners. The article describes how graphic organizers compress information at any stage of learning from a brainstorming summary to the results of a complex research work.

In the same way, María Augusta Heredia proposes the article “Improving Listening Comprehension Using Practical Techniques for the Third and Fourth Levels” in which she suggests practical strategies to develop listening comprehension. For example, the dictogloss provides the students with opportunities to familiarize the ear with the sounds of the target language. It involves mental processes such as the reconstruction of the message issued, the analysis and correction. The use of this tool highly contributes to a process of integral learning.

It is essential to highlight that for the Kronos Journal the quality of the articles is a priority. After strict peer evaluation, each work has been accepted after complying with the pertinent academic standards. Finally, we are grateful to the Academic Language Institute, our team of reviewers, editors and especially authors for their valuable contribution and to the Central University of Ecuador for their trust and support.

Thanks for reading Kronos-The Language Teaching Journal

Wilson P. Chiluza Vásquez, MSc
Editor-in-Chief

Presentación

Algunos meses atrás, el Msc. Wilson P. Chiluiza Vásquez, puso ante mi conocimiento el proyecto para la edición de la Revista Científica Kronos. De los diálogos mantenidos, llegamos a la conclusión que ésta sería una tarea difícil, compleja y que debería eventualmente sortear las dificultades económicas y administrativas propias a la consolidación de dicho proyecto. El interés y convencimiento del Prof. Chiluiza para la creación de esta Revista Científica me sorprendió positivamente por lo cual ahora inicio deseándole la mejor de las suertes en este proyecto institucional.

Con sorpresa y alegría he recibido en mi despacho la versión final del primer número de la revista, cuyo nombre definitivo será: Kronos–The Language Teaching Journal. Ésta cuenta con un Comité Editorial, integrado por destacados docentes de nuestra universidad así como con docentes de prestigiosas instituciones de Ecuador, Estados Unidos, Bélgica y Argentina. La meticulosa selección de los miembros del Comité Editorial, tanto nacionales como internacionales, pone en evidencia la seriedad con la cual esta publicación quiere abordar temas relacionados con su especialidad: la enseñanza y aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras y ancestrales.

El proceso de construcción de esta Revista no ha sido fácil. Se han sorteado engorrosos trámites administrativos y, paralelamente, se ha realizado una serie de encuentros, cursos de capacitación y talleres para el aprendizaje de escritura de artículos científicos. Dichos intercambios de conocimiento fueron orientados a jóvenes investigadores, pero contaron con la participación de docentes experimentados en las actividades de investigación. Como paso final, se ha integrado al personal encargado de los procesos de edición, revisión de texto y estilo, incluidos los revisores externos, con la finalidad de garantizar el alto nivel académico y científico de KRONOS.

La consolidación final de Kronos es el resultado de un esfuerzo integrador expresado siempre por el Director Editorial de la misma, quien, junto a un equipo de profesionales de la comunicación tales como Gustavo Pazmiño, Soledad Parra y Diana Castillo entre otros, logran sacar adelante este proyecto, con la idea de hacer de este instrumento un elemento que integre a docentes universitarios, a estudiantes y a la comunidad científica nacional e internacional en general.

Los seis artículos escritos, están orientados a poner de manifiesto la importancia del uso de nuevos instrumentos tecnológicos para el aprendizaje de idiomas como herramientas al alcance de los “nativos – tecnológicos”; así como también para aquellas personas empeñadas en entender, leer, escribir y comunicar en un segundo idioma. Los artículos publicados guardan rigor científico pero son de fácil entendimiento para los lectores; de esta manera estamos seguros que su difusión estará garantizada en el mundo de la enseñanza y en las áreas académicas e investigativas.

Larga vida a Kronos!

Prof. Washington Benítez O., Ph.D

Presentation

A few months ago, Wilson P. Chiluiza Vásquez discussed with me the project of editing Kronos-The Language Teaching Journal. These conversations led us to the conclusion that this idea could face several economic and administrative difficulties before reaching its consolidation. Professor Chiluiza's conviction to create this scientific journal surprised me in a positive way. Therefore, I want to start by wishing him the best of luck in this institutional project.

With pleasure, I have received the final version of the first issue of KRONOS-THE LANGUAGE TEACHING JOURNAL in my office. The Editorial Board is made up of prominent professors from Central University and other prestigious institutions in Ecuador, the United States, Belgium, and Argentina. The thorough selection of both national and international members of the Editorial Board reveals how seriously this publication addresses issues related to its field: the teaching and learning of foreign and ancestral languages.

The process of developing this Journal has not been easy. Cumbersome administrative procedures have been avoided. At the same time, several meetings, training courses, and workshops for learning how to write scientific articles have been held. The sharing of knowledge was open to both young researchers and experienced teachers. As a final step, external reviewers joined the editorial board in order to guarantee the high academic and scientific level of KRONOS.

The final consolidation of Kronos is the result of integrated efforts demonstrated by the Editor in chief and a team of professionals in the communication field such as Gustavo Pazmiño, Soledad Parra, and Diana Castillo among others. This team has managed to turn this project into a reality with the view to use it as a tool of cohesion and motivation for university teachers, students, and the national and international scientific community.

The six articles in this first issue focus on the importance of the use of new technological tools for language learning. Tools which are available for both digital natives and people determined to understand, read, write, and communicate in a second language. Although the articles have been written academically, they are easy to understand. Thus, we are confident that their dissemination will be guaranteed in the world of teaching as well as in the academic and research field.

Long live Kronos!

Prof. Washington Benítez O., Ph.D

Online Language Learning Communities and the Development of Pronunciation in English as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

Technology has advanced dramatically as a major contributing factor in education and in foreign language learning particularly. New and diverse online learning environments have offered the alternative for language students to complement language learning traditionally taken place in the classroom with enhanced interaction in Online Language Learning Communities (OLLC). This research is based on a mixed method design and examines the use of significant OLLC aimed at improving pronunciation in A1-A2 English Level students at the Language Academic Institute of Central University. The data were obtained through the statistical values reported by the OLLC of the experimental group, as well as the statistical values reported by the textbook platform. Voice recordings were used to reveal if OLLC are effective in relation to the development of pronunciation. Additionally, after applying a questionnaire related to the OLLC used, the OLLC that was considered most appropriate and pleasant for the students during the work time was determined. Finally, the results indicated that the students who participated in the OLLC improved their pronunciation by decreasing the number of pronunciation errors.

KEY WORDS: Online communities, pronunciation skills, interaction.

Resumen Ejecutivo

La tecnología ha avanzado dramáticamente como un factor principal en la educación y particularmente en el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras. Los nuevos y diversos ambientes de aprendizaje online ofrecen la posibilidad de que estudiantes de lengua puedan complementar su formación, tradicionalmente llevada a cabo dentro del aula, con el uso y la interacción que permiten las Comunidades en Línea para el Aprendizaje de Lenguas (CLAL). Esta investigación está basada en un diseño cuali-cuantitativo y examina el uso de CLAL para mejorar la pronunciación de estudiantes de nivel A1-A2 de inglés en el Instituto Académico de idiomas de la Universidad Central. Los datos fueron obtenidos de los valores estadísticos reportados por las CLAL del grupo experimental, así como los valores estadísticos reportados por la plataforma del texto de trabajo. Grabaciones de voz fueron usadas para revelar si las CLAL son efectivas en relación al desarrollo de la pronunciación. Adicionalmente, después de aplicar un cuestionario relacionados a las CLAL utilizadas se determinó aquella que fue considerada como más adecuada y agradable para los estudiantes durante el tiempo de trabajo. Finalmente, los resultados indicaron que los estudiantes quienes participaron en las CLAL mejoraron su pronunciación disminuyendo el número de errores de pronunciación.

Palabras clave: Comunidades en línea, Habilidades de Pronunciación, Interacción.

Introduction

Online Language Learning Communities (OLLC) are virtual spaces where an individual or a group of people interact in order to fulfill specific needs, exchange information, share activities, record audios, or listen to authentic recordings. In this sense, this article aims to determine how

OLLC are expected to improve pronunciation in students of English as a foreign language, so that they can use it in international contexts, having in mind that English is now referred to as English as an International Language (EIL) as it has become global and it is spoken by both native and non-native speakers in every part of the world. Our argu-

ment is that our English language students should be ready to use and identify pronunciation features that would allow them to communicate at ease in any English speaking environment.

Pronunciation is by far one of the most difficult aspects to master when learning a language, yet it is also one of the aspects upon which least time is spent by language teachers in the classroom (Pourhossein, 2011), added to the difficulties and lack of confidence that teachers feel in how to teach pronunciation, which in the end might be due to the traditional thought that teaching pronunciation should enable students to acquire an accent that is as close as possible to that of a native speaker only (Brown 1992, Claire 1993, Fraser 2000, Jenkins 2002). Certainly, teaching pronunciation can be a challenge; and language teachers have to be alert to the fact that there is a constant emerge of different varieties of international English by the power of people who speak it as lingua franca in different contexts and encounters where we expect our students to be part of one day as they should feel empowered to understand and be understood by all; therefore, alongside this global changes, new teaching strategies should be also applied and OLLC are definitely suitable alternatives.

In this regard the purpose of the OLLC to be implemented is to promote autonomous-learning, so students become their own guides, as they can choose their own studying rhythm and time. Learners should carry out a sequence of skilled actions to become proficient in a language different from their own, of course not all the skills are to be mastered at once (Lupiccinni 2007; Jones, 2014), and so the A1-A2 level learners' linguistic competences over pronunciation can be enhanced based on constant practice performed on OLLC and complemented by classroom oriented- types of interactions, having in mind that students' language production at this level should be clear enough to be understood while dealing with simple and straightforward information as they express themselves in familiar contexts; this description corresponds to the expected achievements of A1-A2 learners of English as a Foreign Language stated by the Common European

Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001).

Traditionally, teachers have tried to make use of the different components of this core skill in order to apply them in the classroom. Language textbooks have facilitated this process; however, several factors such as the difficulty of teaching this skill, time constraints as well as unawareness of alternative approaches to reinforce this basic linguistic competence on language students have restricted teachers' efforts to at least work on core features of pronunciation (Hill and Raven, 2009; Kelly, 2012). For instance, in the Ecuadorian context, the teaching of pronunciation has not been given the importance that it deserves as other skills have; moreover, English teachers will agree that students, because Spanish is their first language, do not always have the opportunity to practice English in a real English speaking environment other than in the classroom, (Quezada 2017, Almeida *et al.* 2018), a reality that affects the mastery of the English language learning altogether.

This allows OLLC become important alternative resources both to promote general pronunciation awareness on students' language production and to gain attention on the importance of teaching and practicing pronunciation in the classroom. But then again, teachers should have in mind that it is very certain that having a good command of grammar or vocabulary and being able to read and write appropriately are all part of mastering a language (Kelly, 2012); however, not being able to pronounce a word hugely hinders communication no matter the English speaking environment our students could be immersed in.

This article will endeavor to provide insights on what pronunciations aspects are required at an A1-A2 level, exploring the potential technological affordances of online language learning communities in this regard. Therefore, it would attempt to contextualize the issue of practicing pronunciation and the relevance it deserves when learning a foreign language. The results of some practical techniques and activities, which involve the use of online language learning communities, are presented as evidence to promote general phonetic awareness by A1-A2 English level students;

therefore, improvement of their pronunciation is also shown.

2 Online Language Learning Communities - Overview

Online Language Learning Communities, as stated by Garrison et al. (2007), are fundamentally social by nature; they take, as a starting point; the Learning in Community notion which refers to the group of individuals who, in a collaborative way, get together with the sole purpose of arriving at a balanced critical and reflective proposal to construct meaning and to obtain mutual understanding. By doing so, learning communities are conceived under the principles of social constructivism, which in practical terms perceives learning in a social environment, where students are the ones in charge of building their own learning, motivated by common interests.

In such way, an online learning community is a virtual community whose members interact principally through the internet. The emphasis of the learning process is mainly collaborative; knowledge is perceived as a social construct (Lupicchini, 2007), so it is implied that educators become facilitators of the construction of knowledge and at the same time members of the same community which is characterized by promoting interaction, meaning negotiation and constant practice, without leaving aside easy accessibility, where new learning skills and relevant content can be developed (Swan & Shea 2005, Pérez et al 2001).

A learning community can act as a system of communication through which its members, upon previous registration, can upload discussion topics, give advice, interact via forums, chats, blogs, e-mails, social networks, virtual worlds, or games to name a few. Interaction then can be both synchronous and asynchronous, this latter could facilitate the instructors control over the topics studied, online discussions for example can afford participants the opportunity to take more time to reflect on their classmates' ideas and contributions about the same topic.

Nevertheless, the discussion built around this claim also triggers queries on its feasibility to ensure continuous students' participation over time

and how to keep interaction; therefore, this study deemed it necessary to consider an equilibrium model as part of the learning process, this is to refer to the students' expected level of interaction in online communication, a concept supported by content analysis of online discourse, (Rourke, et al., 2001). In this sense, the OLLC indirectly show that while working on their online collaborative activities, participants already possess the tools and motivation to continue joining in the activities which later could be discussed and shared collectively in the classroom.

2.1 Online Communities and English Language Learning

There is still a limited number of studies with reference to the use of OLLC and Applied Linguistics in the teaching of English, nonetheless, it is clear that language is a social phenomenon which, because of the logic of social dynamics, has been immersed in the insistent demand for complementing language teaching with the broad spectrum of technical benefits offered by web-based instruction (Lupicchini, 2007), in the sense that this communities facilitate cooperative learning among individuals who share a common project which is practice pronunciation, in spite of being physically separated.

The term online language learning has been referred to several learning arrangements such as web based learning, blended learning, hybrid course, virtual learning, distance learning, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, audioconferencing or online courses, mistakenly, overgeneralizing the use of electronic technologies for the delivery of instruction they offer, besides mixing their delivery formats with the technological tools and methods surrounding technology classroom use. In this study, we focus on Online Language Learning Communities according to the previously defined notion of virtual spaces, where its characteristic will facilitate learning.

What needs to be clear is that the proposal of Online Language Communities lies in the direct impact that it has over the teaching and learning of languages, allowing students and teachers to participate in a collaborative learning environment and promote creative and active tasks in the lear-

ning process (Harrison and Thomas, 2009). At the same time, learning skills and other cognitive aspects as well as social processes like interaction, cooperative learning, identity, autonomous learning, critical and reflective thinking are integrated. To these advantages, it must be added the ability for immediate feedback, not only from the teacher as part of the formal learning guidance, but also from the supporting tools that accompany the OLLC.

Having said so, a Language Learning Community, allows students and even teachers work together to develop different aspects of a language they would like to learn or perfect. Santamaria (2007) affirms that these types of communities have recently appeared with the need of educational and supporting resources for language learning on the Web taking advantage of the Web 2.0 concept of information sharing and collaboration tools or social tools as they are also known, and so English teachers, would definitely appreciate the didactic approach in a natural and holistic way that the teaching and learning of pronunciation could have, since there is no need to prepare any additional material as students practice English pronunciation by direct communication or mutual and immediate correction of the proposed exercises by the OLLC.

2.2 Previous Studies on OLLC and Language Teaching

Research based on these communities mostly focus on technical aspects, accessibility, impact, type of learning content offered and even the interaction between language and culture. Some have shown weaknesses in the interactive sphere, while language learning has been very effective; nevertheless, their users have established new interactive web spaces with the purpose of inclusively practice and learn English outside the community, that is the case of one of the most widely accepted online communities: Livemocha, for example, which despite having being closed and now redesigned by Rossetta Stone, has absorbed a great number of followers to be connected and organized on their own (Zourou 2013, Zorou & Laoiseau 2013).

Jones (2014), mentions a case study about learning Welsh, which corresponds to a linguistic minority spoken natively in Wales. This group has found the way to revive their language through the Say Something in Welsh (SSIW) online language learning community where learners can participate in conversations, forums, to later meet face-to-face practice and promote a culturally rich Welsh festival.

Another study, mentioned by Harrison (2009), was conducted in Japan with students of English as a foreign language, who participated in online language learning communities which proved that students not only improved their language skills, but also their learning identity, in the sense that students were able to create their own personal learning environment, and through a mediating process they were also able to understand the importance of the other as studied from a psychological educational perspective as to manage their own particular learning strategies.

A similar view on social interaction and continuity in the study of languages was conducted in China by the Research Center for Language Learning of the International Studies University. English language students participated in the research, proving once more, that the sense of community perceived and created by them was a direct result of their involvement in online language learning communities as they were immersed in constant interaction. The project raised awareness and developed a desire of continuity in the learning process (Zhao & Chen, 2014).

Indirectly, as stated in the cases previously mentioned, participants in an online language learning community make use of the tools offered by those communities, in a way that their linguistic competences are developed in real contexts of interaction, achieving effective communicative competence in the foreign language; therefore, for this study we view OLLC not only as merely common meeting spaces online but as an alternative for:

1. Students sharing and comparing information in regards of their strengths and knowledge of pronunciation.

2. Potential disagreement on pronunciation appropriateness use, which becomes necessary as each student brings up meaningful knowledge creation.
3. Negotiation of meaning so students can clarify, rephrase, and confirm what they have learned from their pronunciation practice online.
4. Finally, evaluation of students' own pronunciation progress and experience in the process.

3 OLLC and the teaching of English pronunciation

As English has become a global language, there is no need for students to model accents as if they were native speakers of English; anyhow, students should become aware of making their own speech intelligible to others, for it is noticeable for some language learners their difficulty on producing particular sounds, teachers should then help students being able to communicate effectively rather than seeing pronunciation as a way for students to speak perfectly (Walker 2001, Tennant 2007, Ur 2012). In other words, showing proper fluency and accuracy while speaking really matters, but most importantly students need to be aware of the standard phonological conventions used by most speakers in international communication.

In language teaching, pronunciation has been identified with the articulation of individual sounds, with stress and intonation patterns of the target language, added to connected speech and fluency, and the correspondence between sounds and spelling (Harmer, 2005; Kelly, 2012; Trask, 1996). To find a way to teach pronunciation, and cope with intelligibility, it would be important to first analyze some of the most common mispronunciation features found in international English conversations produced by non-native speakers of English as cited by Jenkins (2002) and Ur (2012):

Phonetic reduction

- Substitution of vowel sounds for example in words like: live /i:/– leave /ɪ/.

- Confusion to distinguish “th” sounds in words like: think /θ/ or the /ð/,
- Substitution of /s/ for /z/ in words like: zoo
- Shortened pronunciation of unstressed syllables when using the schwa for weak forms such as in the word about /ə/, or in complete sentences as for example I had **an** apple **for** lunch **today**.
- Pronunciation of silent consonants, like /d/ in Wednesday.

Sentence phonetics

- Stress in the wrong syllable: Where is the *hó-tel?* or Where is the *hotél?*, I would like some *désert*. I would like some *dessért*.
- Speech rhythm based on context: I was **angry** because my boyfriend **didn't call**.

Therefore, it is not expected from the instructor to teach and focus on all the aspects mentioned before, but emphasize on those in which students are more prone to mispronounce. Crystal (2010) mentions that students should be exposed to as many varieties of English as possible, so they realize that there is more to learn than what is stated in their textbooks. Repetition is also important, but not in isolation as Harmer (2005) & Gilakjani (2012) advocate; pronunciation skills go hand in hand with communication (both comprehension and production). Likewise, Harmer (2005) assures that the more students get exposed to some audio or videotape materials, the greater chance that their intelligibility gets improved which is basically the main objective that through the use of OLLC this study has tried to reach.

And with this said, when using OLLC as alternative to develop A1-A2 English level students' pronunciation skills in English, our proposal states:

1. Students need to know what a word sounds like, and consistently practice those sounds to improve their own pronunciation regardless their English proficiency level.
2. Teachers should first identify students' weaknesses in pronunciation to later guide them

- on the type of exercises students should emphasize while working in the OLLC.
3. Students should understand these communities to access to supporting learning material that will make them aware of different English sounds and sound features to improve their speaking immeasurably.
 4. Students will be able to interact with the content, instructor, and other learners, to help them achieve the goal of improved comprehension and intelligibly.
 5. Finally, students will become autonomous learners of the learning process which means that they will be able to construct personal meaning, to their own understanding of spoken English, and of course to improve their pronunciation from the whole learning experience.
 6. OLLC are a great alternative if teachers are limited in time and classroom resources to help students improve their pronunciation. Pronouncing words can sometimes be difficult. This why it is necessary to practice saying English words as often as you can as it is one of the most important features of OLLC.
 7. In summary, teachers should be aware that through OLLC, their students will be involved in the following tasks:
 - **Recording** It's an effective tool to find out if you are pronouncing words properly and if you can be understood.
 - **Listening and Writing**, which promotes sound discrimination, word stress and sentence stress.
 - **Reading and listening**, which enhances students' awareness about intonation to signal stress and accurate message conveyed, as word order is also encouraged.
 - **Listening and Lexical Recognition**, which promotes content and meaning discrimination through the exposure of real life situations, routines, emotions, food, shopping, whether, and so on.
 - **Listening** to understand word and sentence formation.
 - **Focused explanations** on how certain sounds are produced.
 - **Imitation of sounds** includes training rhythm in the repetition of simple words, sentences and dialogues.
 - **Intonation** to differentiate meaning and recognizing intonation patterns.
 - **Production of sentences** via repetition or translation
 - **Phonetic explanation of words**
 - **Exchanging of information** with the OLLC members
- While students get involved in the exercises offered by the OLLC, they automatically receive feedback on their percentage on fluency, and learned words in a weekly basis or at the end of each unit.

4 The five Online Language Learning Communities chosen

For the purpose of this research, five online language learning communities were chosen to be tested by A1-A2 Level English students. The characteristics of each OLLC are explained next:

English Class 101, described as free podcast online community designed for English language learning. It offers English audio and video lessons, voice recording activities, mobile applications, vocabulary learning tools like space repetition flash cards, word of the day, and English core word lists. (Six students registered to work in this free OLLC).

Wlingua, offers 600 English lessons in areas of writing, speaking, listening, and reading, from A1 to B2 levels of English. The practice is based on repetition as each lesson is approved once all the concepts have been mastered, it offers free mobile apps. (Six students registered to work in this free OLLC).

Duolingo, includes different lessons with their corresponding activities to promote oral pro-

duction, listening, reading and writing. Students receive immediate feedback on their progress in both, English and Spanish. It also offers free mobile apps. Each lesson is designed as a game; therefore, students are motivated to continue learning by receiving bonus points to access to other language practice benefits. (Six students registered to work in this free OLLC).

Busuu, provides complete free language courses, presented in short lessons concentrated in daily life, working and traveling contexts. Students are also allowed to chat with other members registered in the online community. (Six students registered to work in this free OLLC).

ABAAnglish, suggests a natural method to acquire the English language, students first listen and watch short films which present daily life situations, then students are invited to imitate the conversations they have heard to finally write and read using grammatical guidance. There are six levels in total, which go from A1 to C1; it has 144 units, with 8 lessons each. (All the students who participated in the previews OLLC mentioned, also registered and completed the exercises in this OLLC, with the purpose of participating in the summative tests it offered, as automatic statistic results were immediate delivered).

5 Research questions

This study seeks answers to the following research questions:

What type of Language Learning Communities can be used to the development of pronunciation in A1-A2 students?

What learning outcomes allow the Online Language Learning Communities for the development of pronunciation in English?

6 Methodology

This study was conducted by the mixed method approach, on one side it is qualitative as stated by Hernandez (2014) it uses data collection and analysis referred to the research questions or to come up with new ones during the interpretation process. On the other hand, it is quantitative because it is based on numbers which are used to analyze and to prove data and concrete infor-

mation useful to allow researchers to make decisions and to transform them into suitable statistics to identify the teaching and the development of pronunciation and plan future interventions or improvements in this area.

7 Participants

The research took place during 2 months from January 2nd, 2018 to March 2nd, 2018 in an A1-A2 intensive English course at the Central University Language Academic Institute in Quito. It was a group of 30 Ecuadorian Spanish speaking students, aged between 20 and 33, male and female, each from different major subjects.

8 Research Project

Description

The research process was divided into three parts:

First, 5 different OLLC were used and assigned to A2-A1 to language learner students in to analyses the number of pronunciation activities as compared to the class textbook.

Secondly, the class members were divided into five groups, and were asked to register in the assigned OLLC which include the ones which had the most pronunciation exercises. Each group had a team leader whose English was certainly more fluent than the rest of the group members. This leader was in charge of supervising and reporting to the teacher the daily group participation, advances, and difficulties while working in the corresponding OLLC. A sixth group did not take part in the OLLC practice, and were dedicated to study their normal class pronunciation exercises offered by the textbook.

The third and last part, was to select two students, one who was part of all the pronunciation activities offered by the OLLC plus the ones offered in the textbook and another who only use the class textbook for practice, therefore, voice recordings were conducted to see how OLLC was or not effective in terms of pronunciation development.

9 Data Collection Procedure

To collect data, two instruments were designed:

1. A questionnaire to gather the type and number of pronunciation practices offer the OLLC in terms of frequency and features, and how appealing they were for students.
2. An observation sheet for group leaders to register what students did as part of their practice in the OLLC as compared to the ones in the textbook.

In general, data of this research was collected through data triangulation such as review of statistics provided by the OLLC, observation during student's participation in the OLLC, written reports, and focus groups. An initial introductory class took place to familiarize students with the concept of OLLC, general guidance was given during the two-month-practice period, in which the teacher and the group leaders, observed and held group sessions, to discuss progress, doubts, and provide feedback. Screen shots on students' progress and results generated by the OLLC were

taken as an evidence of the work accomplished. Students together with their group leaders presented oral and written reports to be shared with the class on a total of 10 occasions from the beginning to the end of the research. Important final discussions in focus groups were held to consolidate students' perceptions on the effectiveness of OLLC.

OLLC allow a great variety of practice in all language skills, anyhow, for the purpose of this research, it was important to focus on specific technological oriented tools for practicing pronunciation that the OLLC generated, which include: audio comments on students oral production, students repetition recordings, modeling exercises, listening comprehension exercises; and depending on the OLLC, evidence of text messages and audio and video conferences with other participants members of the OLLC were also collected.

10 Objectives

Demonstrate whether the use of online language learning communities was beneficial or not for students to improve their pronunciation in English.

Recognize the difference in students' performance between individual assigned and group OLLC.

11 Detail of Results

Part 1

Table 1. Number of Pronunciation activities

Pronunciation Features	Number of Pronunciation Activities (OLLC)	Number of Pronunciation Activities (TEXTBOOK)	Total number of Pronunciation activities
Sounds	3	5	8
Rhythm	7	10	17
Intonation	13	10	23
Stress	9	5	14
Total	27	30	57

The total number of pronunciation exercises according to pronunciation features comprises 57, out of which the majority number of exercises are stated in the OLLC. Phonetic reduction has been emphasized in the use of language texts, while pronunciation improvement activities such imitation, production, repetition and so on are more appealing for OLLC.

Table 2 – Analysis of recording – Mispronounced Words

Mispronounced Sounds	Speaker 1 OLLC	Speaker 2 TEXTBOOK	Total number
/θ/		something	1
/eɪ/		able	1
/θ/	birthday	birthday	2
/'rɪt.ən/		written	1
/rʌn/	run	run	2
Total	2	5	7

In this section, a short reading sample taken from the textbook was used in order to find out whether practicing pronunciation through OLLC was more effective. It seems that students present vowel sounds mispronunciation problems in a greater range than consonant sounds. Having had the opportunity to receive additional practice based on OLLC, students still make important mispronunciation mistakes, which could be caused by an increase of stress or different external factors now of recording the sample text.

Part 2 OLLC with the most number of pronunciation exercises

The data provided by the different OLLC were the bases for the analysis and reports in this research to determine the improvement in the skills, primarily the reason of this research, pronunciation.

Five different OLLC were chosen to see how students grow in their pronunciation skills and they were randomly assigned to the class.

To verify the obtained results, students who were part of the experimental group, were assigned a different OLLC, while those students who were part of the control group, had to work on the textbook platform. The contrast between the data of the OLLC helped us determine the rate of improvement in the skill reason of our study.

It was first intended to assess students’ performance and progress in each one of the initial OLLC assigned per groups, to later contrast these results with the progress and performance in the textbook platform where the entire class participated (See Tables 1 and 2).

Table 3. Pronunciation Rates of Assigned OLLC

REPORTING PERIODS	TEXTBOOK PLATFORM REPORT	ONLINE LANGUAGE LEARNING COMMUNITY REPORT
DAY 1	72%	79%
DAY 2	89%	82%
DAY 3	86%	100%
DAY 4	86%	89%
DAY 5	85%	93%
DAY 6	93%	92%
DAY 7	90%	94%
DAY 8	81%	95%
DAY 9	89%	98%
DAY 10	86%	98%

When observing and analyzing the results in the chart taken from the OLLC and the textbook platform reports, it can be said that the percentage of students' participation in OLLC was good enough to see that most students show high rates in their performance during the 2-month period of this research. It is also necessary to say there is a sig-

nificant difference in students' performance between those who work on the textbook platform and those who work with OLLC having higher results in the experimental group, because the activities in this OLLC were permanently observed and had a direct impact on their outcomes.

Table 4. Pronunciation performance contrast in Individual and Group OLLC

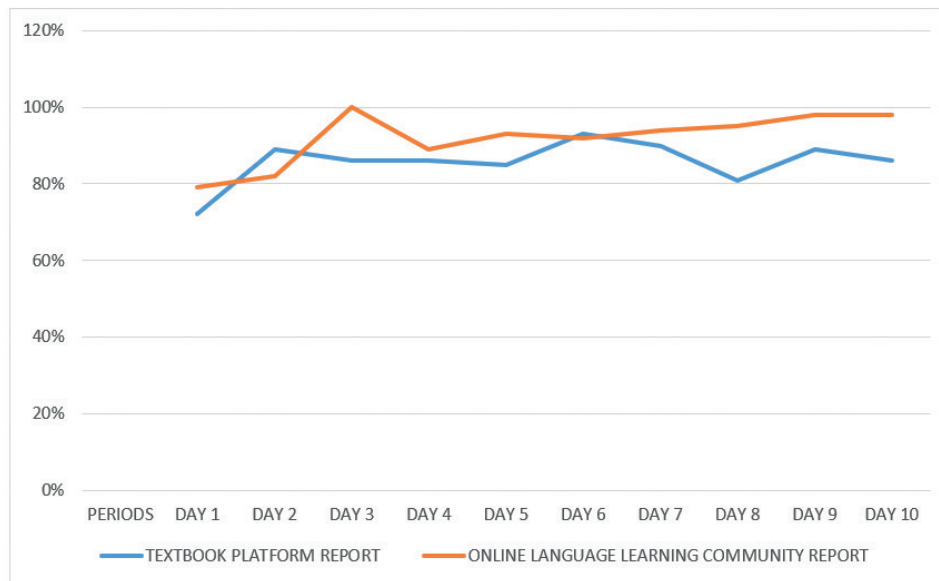


Table 4 states the relationship between the students' performance in the textbook platform and the online language learning community, from which we can conclude by saying that the students experienced a positive performance thanks to the permanent practice seen throughout the 2-month period.

12 Discussion and Conclusions

The study states that the use of OLLC provided several significant insights into current language learning and the improvement of English language students' pronunciation because of the different learning activities proposed in the selected OLLC. The analysis and implications of the research will be discussed regarding the framework surrounding OLLC in language teaching and in the development of pronunciation.

Learning autonomy. It was evident that the focus group improved their pronunciation of target sounds over the time of the research process, as they were constantly engaged in benefits obtained

by doing so. The opportunity given by the OLLC in the sense of accessing, facilitated students' participation and curiosity gaining important improvements in the activities found in the OLLC they registered in. Speaking, oral repetition and recording within the OLLC proved to be beneficial in the sense that students became aware of their own phonological production motivating them to perfect their pronunciation through constant practice as time progressed.

Interaction. Learning should be interactive to enhance higher level thinking skills. Learners who participated in OLLC improved their pronunciation skill as shown these results in the charts. So, building community, as part of the educational process may enhance benefits in pronunciation awareness, since collaboration among learners, outside of class time, helped them solve primary concerns not only about perfecting their phonological competence, but also about using the technological tools provided in the most effective

way for learning. Aspects such as syllable stress, sentence stress, vowel and consonant sounds, intonation, and rhythm were the main areas statistical reported by the OLLC.

Technology and the Equilibrium model. OLLC tools clearly offered new opportunities to practice language skills. Students were committed to make the best of the material used. Therefore, to find equilibrium between the class and online instruction, learners should be given control of the learning process, but there should always be a form of guided discovery where learners can make decisions on leaning goals, and reflect during class time, knowing that their teacher is ready to provide feedback and has all the knowledge to clarify and bring what students have learned on their own, back to the class goals.

Development of Pronunciation. Before the research, students still needed to distinguish how speech rhythm change according to the meaning a person wants to convey, the context where it is used and who they are talking to evidence in; anyhow, it was of much interest to see how progressively students could distinguish specific pronunciation features as they were tested on syllable stress, sentence stress, vowel and consonant sounds, intonation, and rhythm while working with their course book.

Continuity. Being in contact with real English pronunciation provided by the OLLC, made students curious and lose fear to be in contact with English. A great majority showed interest in trying to have a conversation outside the classroom environment without worrying too much about making mistakes, but to produce communication. Some of the students kept their chatting box opened to continue contacting speakers they had met through the OLLC.

Students' perceptions. Students were asked to meet in groups to talk about the perceptions on

their experiences while working with OLLC. Since students were asked to mostly focus on improving their pronunciation while working on the OLLC, they found easy to try to perform better on one specific language skill and develop it the best they could. Moreover, some students realized, it was not as simple as saying the words in a natural way in English without really thinking about how to pronounce them correctly. At first, they felt forced, and they were not really convinced that the practice on the OLLC would help them improve pronunciation; however, there was an increased general awareness of how important is for them to improve this skill. They also found very helpful to get feedback from their classmates, especially those who didn't participate in the OLLC, confirming a sense of collaboration and community after all the work done. They also mention that it was a short, but intense learning process, and that by continually analyzing their own pronunciation, they were able to recognize some of their weaknesses and strengths not only regarding pronunciation, but other language skills as well. Finally, students found very interesting to record themselves while working in the OLLC assigned, they noticed that at the beginning their oral production was constantly broken, and their pronunciation was closely to the way they see words on written, in the end, it was obvious to all how they sounded more confident in the last recording practices within the OLLC as opposed to the first one. The ABA English OLLC was chosen to be the most integrated and highly reliable because of its statics measuring tools and incorporated generated tests with appropriate characteristics to measure oral and listening skills; and thus pronunciation. Therefore, the reliability and validation of these tests made possible to apply them as pre and post – tests evaluation instruments to be directed to experimental groups.

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Academic Writing in the Context of Applied Linguistics for English Language Teaching: Integrating Web 2.0

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Abstract

The goal of this study was to investigate the effects of the Web 2.0 tools: Web Quest, blog, wiki and forum on EFL Academic Writing performance. Twenty nine students majoring in Applied Linguistics to English Language at a University in Ecuador were involved. Both, quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed. Research instruments included a pre-test, a post-test; and a survey of satisfaction. Students were divided in both control and experimental groups. The control group received the teaching through a textbook; and the experimental one used the technological tools. Students' Academic Writing performance was compared through tests. The pre-test determined the level of academic writing performance at the beginning of the experiment. The post -test determined if there were differences between the groups and differences on the experimental group scores. The findings revealed that students of the experimental group improved their scores, which suggests that the use of Web 2.0 tools can be effective and interesting for EFL Academic Writing classes. The results of the survey of satisfaction showed that most of the students had positive attitudes towards the implementation of the technological tools; they indicated that learning activities made the students more motivated and engaged in the learning process.

Key words: EFL Academic Writing, technological tools: Web Quest, blog, Wiki, forum, learning activities.

Resumen Ejecutivo

El objeto de este estudio fue determinar cómo influye el uso de las herramientas Web 2.0: Web Quest, Blog, Wiki y Foro, en el desarrollo de la escritura académica en inglés. La intervención metodológica se llevó a cabo con una muestra de 29 estudiantes de la Licenciatura en Lingüística Aplicada al idioma inglés, modalidad a distancia, en una Universidad en Ecuador. Se diseñaron dos instrumentos: un pre-test, un post- test; y una encuesta de satisfacción. Se formaron dos grupos: el de control y el experimental. El grupo de control recibió la enseñanza usando un texto mientras que el experimental usó las herramientas tecnológicas enunciadas. El pre -test estableció cómo estaban los estudiantes al comenzar el experimento y el post-test sirvió para determinar si después de la intervención se produjeron diferencias. Los resultados del post-test revelaron que las calificaciones de los estudiantes del grupo experimental habían mejorado. En lo referente a la encuesta de satisfacción, ésta mostró que la mayoría de los estudiantes tuvieron actitudes positivas con respecto al uso de las herramientas tecnológicas y que las actividades de aprendizaje diseñadas lograron que los estudiantes se involucraran más en el proceso de desarrollo y mejoramiento de la escritura académica en inglés.

Palabras clave: Escritura Académica en Inglés, Herramientas Web 2.0: Web Quest, Blog, wiki, foro, actividades de aprendizaje.

Introduction

Academic Writing development is essential in the formation of the teachers of English as a foreign language for three reasons. First, they are expected to write meaningful pieces to be presented

in each one of their subjects; to be able to communicate effectively in English when they write their thesis as a requirement to graduate and to be able to teach how to write. In other words, it is crucial for their academic and occupational fields (Writing, 2009). Second, it can be an effective tool to

get academic language proficiency (Warschauer M. , Invited Commentary: New tools for teaching Writing , 2010) which could be helpful to pass the international standardized exams. In relation to this, Alexander claims: “strong writing skills may enhance students’ chances to success” (as cited in Monirosadat Hosseini, 2013). Third, Writing and Academic Writing can help students master their subject matters, “to raise awareness of knowledge gaps”, “abstract problem-specific knowledge in schemas, and “elaborate mental representations” (Warschauer, 2010).

On the other hand, “computer technology has changed the world’s education scenario” and language instruction (Pornpilai & Punchalee, n/d), Information and Communication Technology has a growing role in university educational processes (Varcárcel, 2007) and Web 2.0 tools have been proved to improve learning in tertiary education. (Carrol J.-A. , 2013).

Without a doubt, this research is especially important in scientific context and in the community in Ecuador, where, Academic Writing has taken on significant moment. Nowadays, there are more opportunities than before of getting scholarships to study abroad and Universities need to make known to the academic community the work done in the different fields of knowledge through scientific articles.

This paper intends to examine and analyze the relevance of the use of Web Quest and three asynchronous on line writing tools: Blogs, wikis and forums to develop the students’ EFL Academic Writing and considers the learning outcomes and learner’s perceptions about them.

Literature Review

Nowadays, traditional methods in educational settings are not challenging enough for world’s demands. Education in general and English language teaching need a curriculum that can produce a more profound intellectual and emotional students’ engagement. This is the reason why learning-teaching process must evolve from covering and memorizing contents to developing the 21st century learning skills: critical thinking, creative thinking problem solving, collaborating

and communicating. The implementation of Web 2.0 tools in teaching seems to be one of the ways that is well supported and updated for filling these requirements.

Web 2.0

Web 2.0 is the term used to describe web sites and applications that allow users to create and share online information (Thompson, 2007). They permit teachers and students to interact and collaborate in a virtual community; may have a “positive impact on supporting students’ learning process and outcomes”; provide feedback or assessment and promote independent learning because students nowadays are reasonably competent users of internet and web 2.0 tools (Waycott & Kennedy, 2009; McLoughlin & Lee, 2008; as cited in Shih R-C, 2011). From the important new tools that have emerged for Academic Writing teaching and learning, four are considered: Webquest, Blog, Wiki and Forum. All of them allow people to connect, to communicate and to collaborate online.

Webquest. This tool that integrates the use of technology and the World Wide Web into classrooms and defined as an inquiry –oriented activity in which information comes from resources on the internet (Alshumaimeri & Almasri, 2012); follows the principles of the Constructivism Theory. As Bitter and Legacy (as cited in Pornpilai, T and Punchalee, W, 2011) say, students are active participants in the learning process and teachers are responsible of creating rich opportunities for authentic project-based tasks. In addition, it helps to the development of the 21st Century skills. Zheng, (as cited in (Gulbahar & Madran, 2010)) for example, suggests that a Webquest promotes critical thinking, knowledge application, social skills and provides help, guidance and support to make students achieve their tasks.

Blog. Minocha argues that this website contains dated entries in reverse chronological order about a topic. It works as an online journal that can be written by one person or in a cooperative way (as cited in (Ivala & Gachago, 2012)). In addition, it allows making materials accessible for reflection and analysis so, students can revise their works to improve them.

Wiki. According to Dudeney G., and Hockly (2008), it is a public and dynamic website where a person starts writing about a topic but subsequent visitors can add, delete or change it as they want. It is one of the most useful tools to promote the collaborative writing.

Discussion Forum. It is an asynchronous communication tool that allows students to post a comment or question on line and the teacher or other students may read and respond to posts with their own remarks (Al- Mahrooqi, Thakur, & Roscoe, 2015). It has shown to stimulate critical thinking, improve communication skills, promote a sense of community among students and encourage collaborative problem-solving.

Academic Writing

Academic Writing is the kind of writing students have to do in the University. It is different from other kinds of writing because of its particular audience, tone and purpose (Oshima & Hogue, 2006). It requires that writers transform information into new texts; it follows specific conventions of structure, style and content. O'Malley Omaggio Hadley (as cited in (Negari G. , 2001)). Unity, Support, and Coherence and Sentence skills are essential characteristics of an Academic Writing piece (Langan, 2005). The most used and useful piece of Academic Writing is the critical or argumentative essay whose main purpose is "to convince the reader that an opinion, theory, claim or interpretation is correct" (Myers, 2012). The process to write an argumentative essay includes reading the topic, choosing a side of the issue and writing an opinion in a sentence which will become the Thesis Statement. The next step is to brainstorm reasons to support their thesis, choose two or three from them and write each of these reasons as a topic sentence by stating an opinion and one reason for that opinion. This process must be done for each topic sentence. Next, writers write down each topic sentence with its supporting ideas and include specific examples, facts, and details for each supporting idea. After that, writers write a 3-5 paragraph essay. Finally, they will revise, edit and check again to avoid problems related to logic or grammatical issues (Endy, 2011).

Mistakes students make in Academic Writing

Academic Writing is viewed by both, teachers and students as one of the most challenging activities. The difficulties have the following causes: (1) academic writing requires conscious effort and much practice in composing, developing, and analyzing ideas; (2) students' academic writing in a foreign language face with social and cognitive challenges related to second language acquisition (Myles, 2002); and (3) the skills involved in spelling, punctuation and selection of appropriate vocabulary are further complicated (Richards & Renandaya, 2005). Academic Writing skills must be developed through practice and learned through experience. "The conscious effort, practice in composing, developing and analyzing ideas are not a naturally acquired skill; it is usually learned or culturally transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional settings or other environments" (Bereiter & Scardamalia (as cited in Myles, 2002)). In terms of the aspects of second language acquisition and theories of the writing process in English, Williams (2003), has divided the mistakes in four levels: word choice, syntax, rhetoric and Sociolinguistics. Students whose native language is Spanish, which is the case of Ecuador, misuse words; translate word by word; they usually use the present verb tense more than other tenses. Since sentences are structured differently in Spanish, students make mistakes in the order of the elements. In addition, Spanish speakers tend to personalize their academic writing and to use metaphors. On the other hand, Mohan and Lo (as cited in (González, Chen, & Sánchez, Bilingual Research Journal, 2001) have suggested that ESL/EFL essays at the sentence level are affected by both positive and negative transfer. The positive transfer takes place when "the composition practices in the native language, educational experience and learners' academic knowledge influence on their essays organization". The negative transfer is a result of the interference of the method of organizing ideas of the writer's native language due to their culture (González, Chen, & Sánchez, Bilingual Research Journal, 2001). According to Williams (2003), even though, the essays in both English and Spanish "follow the basic structure: thesis-body-conclusion, students are somewhat less direct than

native English speaking writers”. An English paragraph, normally, follows a straight line of development, but a Spanish paragraph is different as “its line of thought is sometimes interrupted by rather complex digressions” (Williams, 2003, p. 4). Bender claims that “an awareness that rhetorical patterns differ from one culture to another can help [the student] become more quickly proficient in a writing pattern that is not native to him” (as cited in Williams, 2003, p. 4). In fact, culture is also another factor that affects the academic writing. Kaplan, (as cited in (González, Chen, & Sánchez, *Bilingual Research Journal*, 2001) suggests that people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds organize their ideas in a different way. Finally, in respect of word choice, spelling and punctuation, most mistakes can be caused by learners’ poor knowledge of English rules. Others can be attributed to the learners’ carelessness, first language transfer or interference and limited vocabulary in English (Lasaten, 2014).

Academic Writing in the TOEFL exam

A standardized test is a test in which all the questions, format, instruction, scoring and reporting of scores are the same for all test takers. This kind of test is scored in standard or consistent manner which makes it possible to compare each student score to the rest of the group. Moreover, it is administered according to certain rules and specifications and the main benefit is that it is typically more reliable and valid than non-standardized tests (The Glossary of the Education Reform, 2013). In Ecuador the most known standardized tests at University level are: TOEFL and FCE. The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) tests the English language proficiency of non-native English language speakers who want to enter to the Universities in the United States. In its Writing Section students are asked to write two kinds of essays: the integrated and the independent. This study focused on the independent one, which is about topics such as: technology, education, media, family or some other subjects according to categories, for instance: agree or disagree, preference, description/explanation, If/imaginary, compare and contrast (Bates, 2011).

According to Bates, there are three stages that should be completed to write this kind of

essays: Pre- Writing, Writing and Editing. In the first stage, it is necessary to analyze the question; understand what it is asking to state opinion and support it with reasons, details and examples; decide on a position which can be easily supported; brainstorm reasons and details to support the position; and compose an outline on paper. The most important thing of the outline is the thesis statement in which the answer of the question will be answered adding two main points. In the second stage, test takers must write the introduction which includes a general statement, restate the question; using synonyms, and write a thesis statement; in addition, they will write the body paragraphs in which they will choose main points that can be divided into sub- points (three or four supporting details in each body paragraph) and connect the body paragraphs using transitions. The final activity is to write the conclusion. On this stage, students must paraphrase the thesis; summarize main points; and predict an outcome; make a suggestion, or draw a conclusion. Finally, to edit the essay, it is necessary to check content, flow, cohesion, sentence variety, grammar, word choice, spelling, punctuation and capitalization.

Web 2.0 and the development of Academic Writing

Prior research on the use of these tools in EFL Academic Writing in tertiary education was chosen to review. However, this study claims its originality in the application of four tools simultaneously with a different purpose each one in the Applied Linguistics learners that study on distance. Talking about Web Quests, Chuo (2007) found that students improved their writing performance significantly, they had a favorable perception of it, found more advantages than disadvantages and experienced significant reduction in writing apprehension. In relation to blogs, Warschauer (2010) argues that students can use them as a single medium to publish and discuss their writings and provide a real world tool for learners which help them practice and the possibility to correct their works. With regard to the use of wikis, Mak & Coniam, 2008; Kovacic, Bupas and Zlatovic (2007) (as cited in Warschauer, M, (2010)) suggest that students increase their quantity of writing, develop more confidence and find such tas-

ks motivating. Moreover, Wheelera & Wheelerb, 2009: p 1) state that “Wikis might promote higher quality academic writing and support collaborative learning” and might be used to “communicate ideas, generate course specific content, and engage students more critically in learning”. In relation to the use of Discussion Forum, Torky & Metwall (as cited in Al-Mahrooqi, Thakur & Roscoe (2015) have provided evidence for its effectiveness when they say that the discussion forum can be used as an additional writing experience to improve students writing skills. Finally, (Miyazoe & Anderson, 2010) remark that the application of three different on line writing tools in an EFL context gave a positive effect on students perceptions.

Based on these considerations, two questions regarding to the use of these tools were targeted in this study. These are.

Are the technological tools: Webquest, Blog, Wiki and Forum effective in assisting students to develop the Academic writing skills?

How do students perceive these four Web 2.0 tools?

Materials and Methods

This study is quasi-experimental and a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches was used. It had a pre-test/ post-test control and experimental groups design; and a survey of satisfaction. Prior to the implementation of the technological tools strategy, both control and experimental groups were administered pre-tests. To explore the effectiveness of the implementation of the technological tools strategy both groups participated in post-test EFL Academic Writing tasks at the end of the semester. Only the experimental group received the treatment.

Participants and Context

Twenty nine students of Applied Linguistics Major off campus mode participated in this study. Sixteen students were in the control group and thirteen students in the experimental group. In the control group, three students were male and thirteen students were female. In the experimental group, five students were male and eight stu-

dents were female. They ranged from twenty five to forty five years.

This study was focused on the Independent Writing from the TOEFL exam whose aim is to make students write argued essays about real-life topics using an outline according to the conventions of the exam.

Since the Applied Linguistics Major is a distance program, both groups, control and experimental, received the teaching through a virtual platform. The control group received the traditional teaching and the experimental group used the technological tools: Web Quest, wiki, blog and forum.

Instruments.

Pre- and post-tests were used in this study to measure the students' writing performance before and after the treatment. These tests were designed using an independent essay from the book Oxford Preparation Course for the TOEFL IBT exam. A skills-based Communicative Approach by Susan Bates. The test question for the essay was: “Some people believe using internet is bad for children and teenagers, others believe it is good. Compare these two views. Which view do you agree with and why? Please provide specific reasons, details and examples to support your response”. The rubric to mark the essay included an effective address to topic and task; organization and development; use of appropriate explanations, exemplifications and /or details; unity, progression and coherence; consistent facility in the use of language, syntactic variety; and appropriate word choice.

In addition, a survey of satisfaction was applied. It had five questions and five options following the Likert scale. Its main purpose was to know the level of satisfaction students had about the use of the technological tools to develop their Academic Writing.

Procedure.

The Web Quest, wiki, blog and forum used in this study were designed by the researcher. The lessons were taught following the inquiry-based approach, the constructivism theory, and the principles of cooperative learning with some

adaptations made to suit the students' needs and interests.

Instruction period was about sixteen weeks and comprised four phases: pre testing, intervention, post testing and scoring. Before the students in the experimental group received any teaching, all the students in the two groups were asked to write an essay about the given topic. Each student's score was measured according to the rubric of the TOEFL exam. The intervention started a week after the students participated in the pre-test. There were four big sessions and students received instruction about the technological tools: Web Quest, blog, wiki and forum. During the second, third and, fourth weeks, students became familiar with the use of the technological tools through tasks included in the Web Quest. Four weeks were devoted to the use of the blog, three for the wiki and three for the forums. The last week was for the post-test.

To design the technological tools, it was necessary to plan the contents with interesting tasks; assigning student roles; finding relevant and appropriate resources and links; providing enough guidance or suitable scaffolding while students were working on their essays; including the rubric to write the independent essay of the TOEFL exam; evaluating students' academic writing products; and sending encouraging posts. The steps of teaching were based on the technological tools components and the approaches to teaching the academic writing process. There was just one major stage of implementing the technological tools. It concerned academic writing development and included the steps of pre-writing, writing (planning, drafting, revising, and editing), post-writing and a constructive teacher and peer feedback.

The students' Web Quest page consisted of four main components: introduction, task, process, and evaluation. The task was to use internet to find plenty of information about Academic Writing in general, argumentative essays in particular; how to work in a blog, wiki and discussion forum and how to use them to do a writing practice. The blog was created in the Edu blog platform. It is free and allows teachers to create, manage and control teachers and students blogs. An account was opened and it included six pages. The task was to

write some essays and give their partners feedback according to a rubric. The wiki was designed following steps suggested in the website and the task was to write an essay cooperatively. The forums were developed in the University virtual platform and the task was to reflect on what students have done during this period in paragraphs of 150 words. Finally students had to read what one of their partners said and write 150 words to comment on it.

The other material was a satisfaction survey carried out to know the level of satisfaction students had using the technological tools. It had five questions, each one with five options according to the Likert scale which ascribes quantitative value to qualitative data to make it amenable to statistical analysis (Business Dictionary .com).

A week before the semester finished, students were asked to write an independent essay with the same topic used in the pre-test. Each student's score was measured based on the rubrics designed for the Independent essay in the TOEFL exam. The rating scale is: (5 points), (4 points), (3 points), (2 points), (1 point) and (0 points) with the learning achievement described per each one (TOEFL). Essays were scored by the researcher out of 20 points.

Data collection procedures

The collected data from the pre-test of the two groups was analyzed and an independent sample t-test was computed to determine the equivalence of the two samples using a two tailed test, which means that deviations of the means were considered in both directions of the t distribution. The data from the post-test were introduced in statistical tables which showed the process of advancing in the students, before and after the lessons of the textbook (control group) or the application of the technological tools (experimental group). Paired two sample t-tests were used to investigate any statistically significant differences in the results. Since the main purpose of the study was to determine the improvement of the students' EFL academic writing performance, it was decided to use a one tailed test, which means that deviations of the means were considered in one direction of the t distribution.

Results

This study investigated the effects of using the technological tools: Web quest, blog, wiki and forum on EFL Academic Writing performance. The scores obtained from the participants’ EFL Academic Writing performance in the pre- test of the control and experimental groups were compared.

Table 1 T-test Results for the Groups’ equivalence

Group	No	Mean	St. Deviation	T Value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control	16	15.13	3.50	0.99	0.33
Experimental	13	13.69	4.15		

Significant at 0.05 levels

The Independent Samples Test (t-test) conducted to analyze the differences between the academic writing pre-test scores of the control and experimental group showed that there was no statistically difference in the scores of the two groups before the research($t = 0.99, p = 0.33$).

Table 2 Paired T-test results for control group (differences between pre-and post-test)

Group	Variable	Test	No	Mean	St. Deviation	T value	Sig. (1-tailed)
Control	EFL Academic Writing performance	Pre	16	15.13	3.5	0.98	0.17
		Post	16	14.13	3.3		

Significant at 0.05 levels

A paired Sample t Test, conducted to analyze the differences between the academic writing pre-test and post-test scores of the control group, showed that there was no statistically difference in the mean scores($t = 0.98, p = 0.17$)

Figure 1 below shows the overall look of the mean scores of the control group in the pre and post-tests.

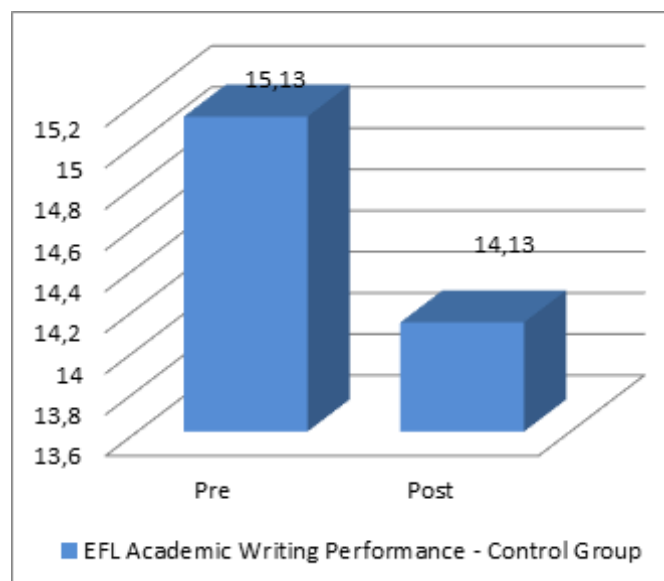


Figure 1. Mean scores of the control group’s performance in the pre and post-test

Table 3 Paired t-test results for experimental group (differences between pre-and post-test)

Group	Variable	Test	No	Mean	St. Deviation	T value	Sig. (1-tailed)
Experimental	EFL Academic Writing performance	Pre	13	13.69	4.15	2.06	0.03
		Post	13	16.31	2.87		

Significant at 0.05

A paired Sample t Test, conducted to analyze the differences between the academic writing pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group, showed that there was a statistically difference in the mean scores ($t = 2.06$, $p = 0.03$).

An overall look at the above results of the experimental group can be seen below in the Figure 2.

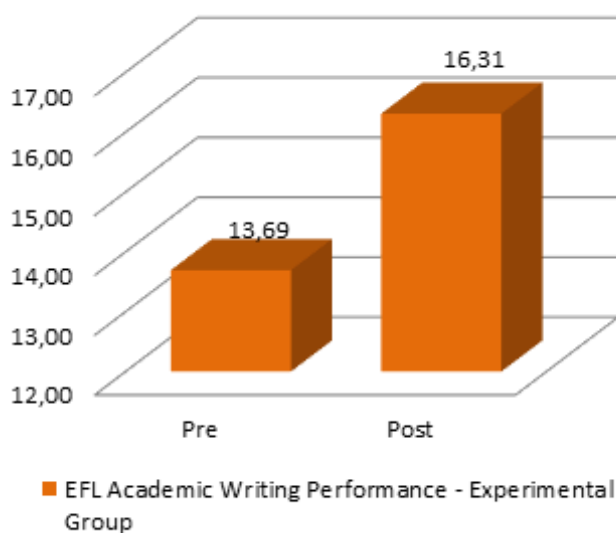


Figure 2. Mean scores of the experimental group's performance in the pre and post-test

Findings on student's perceptions of the implementation of the technological tools: Web Quests, blog, wiki and forum.

Students' perceptions of the implementation of the technological tools to improve their EFL Academic Writing were determined by the qualitative data obtained from a satisfaction survey. Participants were asked to complete a survey of five questions with their opinions on these aspects: the usefulness of the technological tools to improve their EFL Academic Writing, the usefulness of the activities included in the technological tools, the

levels of satisfaction with the application of the technological tools, the level of difficulty of the tasks, and their preference in studying with these technological tools. Most of the students had positive perceptions and attitudes towards the implementation of the technological tools to improve their EFL Academic Writing. They agreed that computer technology suits their interest and their lifestyle. There was also strong evidence showing students perceived that they were provided more opportunities to practice writing, and help to gain more self-confidence. The majority of the participants indicated that after they had sufficient information, they learned how to plan their writing, how to use the gathered information to support their ideas, how to write the first draft, and how to come up with the revised and edited version with appropriate coherence in their writing. Most of the students would recommend the use of the technological tools in order to improve the EFL Academic Writing.

Discussion

In investigating the effects of using the technological tools: WebQuest, blog, wiki and forum on EFL Academic Writing performance in students of the Applied Linguistics Major off campus, this research found that students who belonged to the experimental group improved their academic writing performance and that experimental group students' perceptions towards the use of the technological tools to develop their academic writing performance were very positive. These findings are consistent with those of many authors' where they remark that the Webquest helped students to improve Academic Writing significantly and that since it is a combination of project-based instruction and innovative use of technology, students have more opportunities to be exposed to a va-

riety of authentic texts from the internet which is a great help to write (Chuo, Laborda, Murray, Mc.Pheron, Torres, Pompilai and Punchalee's) In relation to the use of blog, the findings of this study are consistent with Warschauer's (2010) when he states that blogs can help learners move to an academic writing style; "develop a sense of voice; learn to participate in a community of writers; make materials accessible for reflection, and gain an important new literacy by becoming contributors to and not just consumers of online content". In line of previous work, this study found that "wikis can help students develop editing and evaluation skills as they look at their classmates' writing work and give their partners a feedback in attention to grammar, lexis, style, tone and all other aspects of academic writing and allow an additional level of peer-review and peer-support", as Schmitt argues. They are also consistent with the findings by Mark and Coniam, 2008; Kovacic, Bubas and Zlatovic, 2007; cited in Wheeler (2009) when they affirm that wikis can increase the students quantity of academic writing; develop more confidence in their academic writing; and find such tasks motivating, and those of Wheeler (2009) when he says that wikis might be used to promote higher quality academic writing. Finally, the results of this study are supported by Al- Mahrooqi, Thakur, & Roscoe's (2015) who provide evidence of that discussion forum can be used as an additional writing experience to improve students' academic writing performance.

However, it is necessary to make a reflection. Even though, a particular effort was made to use all four tools simultaneously and the study determined the utility students found in each of the tools to develop their Academic Writing and they observed an improvement in their abilities; several issues arouse. On the use of blogs, although, giving a feedback to partners was mandatory, some students did not do that. One of the possible reasons for this could be the students did not know how to use the rubric provided to help their partners to improve. Another reason could be that Ecuadorian people do not have the culture to give and receive constructive criticism. In

addition, there was a difficulty that concerns the collaborative Academic Writing on the Wiki platform and its assessment. Some students could not edit their partners' essays and they complained about their grades.

In terms of the findings on the students' perceptions they are consistent with researchers who found that students had a favorable perception of the WebQuest program; reported recognizing advantages; and students felt motivated. They are also consistent with findings that say that the ease of writing and publishing on blogs makes them attractive for students. In addition, this study is supported by the research done by Schmitt (2008) that explains that wikis help students to interact in the process of editing. Finally, these findings agree with a study done by Bates (as cited in Thomas (2002) ,where he says that by reflecting on peers' contributions in online discussions students engage in higher-order processing of information, and construct their personal meaning as a product of their interaction.

All in all, despite the brief duration of the intervention, and some issues that will be topics for other researches, the differences occurring in the experimental group's post- test EFL academic writing performance were significant and indicate that using the technological tools WebQuest, blog, wiki and forum can improve students' EFL academic writing performance.

Conclusions

To be an effective teacher, it is necessary to think of the roles that technological tools can play in education and how human-computer interaction can be incorporated into our pedagogical decisions. WebQuest, blog, wiki and forum ,used simultaneously, each one with different purposes, are potentially mechanisms to enhance effective instructional approaches that emphasize writing for meaningful purposes, mastery of argumentative essays and development of students' academic language proficiency. In addition, they provide learners with a high level of autonomy, opportunities for great interactions with peers and enhance motivation to write.

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Collaborative Work, through Google Drive Tool, to Develop the Writing Skill in A1 level.

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Abstract

This quasi-experimental research has determined the incidence of collaborative work in developing the written skill, in the students of basic levels of English at university in Ecuador, by implementing collaborative work through the Google Drive tool. This research has been carried out with two groups: the control and the experimental one; each group consisted of 30 students. Both groups were given a pre and a post-test to evaluate their written performance. A rubric was used to grade their tasks. The application of the instruments permitted the researcher to proof and accept the alternative hypothesis through posing a hypothesis test, which determined that the implementation of activities based on collaborative work, through Google Drive, had a positive impact on the students' writing performance. This can be stated by comparing the final means from the experimental group where the grades raised from 3.46 out of 10 in the pre-test to 6.34 out of 10 in the post-test. This research has confirmed the importance of working collaboratively by using technology in the development of the English writing skill.

Keywords: collaborative work, writing skill, google drive, basic english level, rubric.

Resumen Ejecutivo

La presente investigación de tipo cuasi experimental ha determinado la incidencia del trabajo colaborativo en el desarrollo de la habilidad escrita en los estudiantes de los niveles básicos de inglés en una universidad del Ecuador mediante la implementación del trabajo colaborativo usando la herramienta Google Drive. El presente trabajo ha sido llevado a cabo con dos grupos, uno llamado control y el otro experimental consistiendo cada grupo de 30 estudiantes. Ambos grupos fueron asignados un pre y post test para apreciar su desarrollo en la habilidad escrita y se utilizó una rúbrica para evaluar las actividades. La aplicación de los instrumentos permitió al investigador probar y aceptar la hipótesis alterna la cual determinó que el uso del trabajo colaborativo, a través del Google Drive tuvo un impacto positivo en el desarrollo de la habilidad escrita, la información puede ser afirmada al comparar un incremento en la nota final de un 3.46 por ciento sobre 10 en el pre test a un 6,34 por ciento en el post test aplicado, es así que el presente trabajo confirma la importancia del trabajo colaborativo a través del uso de la tecnología en el desarrollo de la habilidad escrita en el idioma inglés.

Palabras clave: Trabajo Colaborativo, Habilidad Escrita, Google Drive, Nivel Básico de Inglés, Rúbrica.

Introduction

The present idea was born from the need to reduce the high incidence of students with a low level of writing performance. Their grades are the reflection of their lack of skill to elaborate a short paragraph and even to build a sentence; this is to say, that their writings lack coherence and cohesion because of their poor knowledge regarding the steps to be followed along the writing process as it can be evidenced in the grading files. For what has been

stated, it is important to motivate learners to enhance this skill though a collaborative and cooperative participation, but not in a traditional way by using papers and pencils, but by using technology, in this case Google Drive, which is a file storage and synchronization service where you can work with many different students simultaneously. This type of teaching turns out to be coherent with the socio constructivist pedagogy which states that language and thought are mediated by society (Vygotsky,

1986); this claims that a task which is carried out in small groups collaboratively and cooperatively within a virtual classroom where participants are interacting among them will allow to develop not only their socio-affective development, but also their thinking skills while constructing a coherent and cohesive paragraph.

The development of the written expression within the teaching-learning process is one of the fundamental objectives when it comes to acquiring a second language. In recent years, it has become evident that learning how to write improves significantly if students work in small groups in a collaborative way to maximize their own and each other's learning through technology. This view is aligned with the perspective of Johnson and Johnson (1996) regarding collaborative work. Therefore, it is imperative for teachers to use methodologies and strategies appropriate to the students' needs and one of their needs is to properly express their ideas in a written way which is in fact one of the skills teachers and students struggle with (Arnaudet, 1990). Unfortunately, students have difficulty in producing a well built and meaningful paragraph; it seems hard for students to follow the paragraph components which mainly consist of three elements: topic sentence, supporting ideas and a conclusion (Ruetten, 1997). It happens that students don't use the parts of the paragraph at all or used them in a disorganized way. Some authors consider certain factors as causes for poor paragraphs; one of those may be the fact that such paragraph components are not found in the student's mother tongue; (in this case Spanish) (Rubens & Southard, 2004); this is to say that first language influences in the students' writing panache (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Another reason could be that students have misinterpreted the correct use of the elements included in the construction of a paragraph. Besides the previous causes, there could also be the existence of the students' lack of enthusiasm or motivations because they are learning how to write but in a traditional way. Whatever the reasons are, the targeted learners are not only required to follow the paragraph components, but they are also required to practice them as many times as possible to develop their writing skill.

This research article aims to prove that collaborative work, through the use of the Google Drive tool,

promotes the development of the writing skill in A1 English learners.

Methods

The research design is quantitative, longitudinal correlational, and quasi experimental; this is to say, that in this study, the participants were not randomly chosen but intentionally. (Hernández RF, 2010, p 188). Therefore, they were groups that were already set in a class group before the experiment.

The present investigation has the control group and the experimental one. The two groups were given a pre-test and a post-test. It should be noted that with the control group, a traditional methodology was used; while with the experimental one, the collaborative methodology through the computer tool of Google Drive was applied.

The relationships between the independent variable: "Collaborative work through the Google Drive computer tool"; and, the dependent variable: "The written expression and the causal effects of the independent variable over dependent one were analyzed in this research.

It should be noted that this research is longitudinal because the research was carried out with two groups of students, in a determined time, to analyze changes along the researching process. This type of study collects data at different points, over time, to make inferences about changes, its causes and effects. (Hernández & Lucio, 2003, p.169).

Population

The study population corresponds to A1 level students of a university in Ecuador. There were two groups: the control and the experimental one. Each group or sample was composed of 30 students, men and women of different careers, with a basic English level; giving a total of 60 students. The sample chosen refers to the average number of students in each classroom. As Galindo (2010) points out, a sample refers to a group of selected units of the population according to a plan or rule, with the objective of obtaining conclusions about the population from which it comes. The students in this study have a basic level of English according to the placement taken by the university evaluation department.

This research lasted 10 weeks. Three daily hours were devoted to developing the controlled group's writing skill. These 30 writing sessions were given within the regular schedule, as part of their curricula, using a traditional methodology (paper and pencil) whilst, the experimental group was exposed to 30 online tutorials. It is important to mention that these online sessions were taken out of their regular English class scheduled and outside the university due to the lack of labs and Internet in the language center. The experimental group had session on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from 6 p.m. to 8p.m. A collaborative methodology was applied through the Google Drive. The 30 students from this group were divided into five groups of six students accordingly.

Data Collection Techniques and Tools

The technique used was done through a survey applied to teachers of the Language Center; While the instruments were a rubric, a pre and a post-test applied to the controlled and to the experimental groups.

Standardized instruments or instrument validation.

A rubric based on the one that holds the Ministry of Education was used to grade the pre and the post test.

The rubric allowed the researcher to grade parameters of linguistic competences such as the writing process, spelling, punctuation, grammar, and paragraph structure. It also included items related to the communicative competence such as: sequence, coherence, and content and its relevance. Each category had a value of 1 to 10 points, the same ones that were multiplied by 7. Giving a total valuation of 70 points.

On one hand, a pre and a post-test were applied to the control and to the experimental group. The pre-test instrument that was applied in both the control and the experimental group consisted in the creation of a paragraph. Each student was given a sheet of paper which contained a set of pictures to be used as prompts to help students write a 60-word paragraph to describe their daily activities and one of their relative's daily activities as well. This instru-

ment was applied to verify the students' linguistic and communicative competence.

The post-test also consisted in the elaboration of a 70-word paragraph to describe their favorite city in Ecuador. The participants were given each a piece of paper with pictures of different places of Ecuador. This post-test was applied to verify the incidence of collaborative work using Google Drive in the construction of a paragraph.

On the other hand, a survey was applied to 25 teachers in charge of teaching A1 level of the of the Central University; This survey was intended to measure the collaborative work through the Google Drive platform and its impact on the development of written expression in students and basic level of the Language Center. It should be noted that the instrument was validated by three experts under the following parameters: Correspondence of the items with the objectives, variables and indicators; Technical quality and representativeness; and, language, grammar and spelling. The instrument consisted of a questionnaire with 18 items evaluated according to the Likert scale, which is scored from 1 to 5 where one means never and 5 always.

Results

As for the writing process, it can be observed that both the control group and the experimental one show an increase in their final grade; however, the group experienced a significant increase with a difference of 6.6 points with respect to the pretest; While the control group increased by 4.2 points.

Regarding the correct spelling of words, the control group maintained a similar score in both the pre- and post-test. This leads us to the conclusion that, with the use of traditional methods, like paper and pencil, students are not able to improve their spelling. With respect to the experimental group, it can be evidenced that spelling of words has improved through collaborative work and through the interaction and feedback received by their peers and their teacher as well.

As it can be evidenced, the scores of the pre- test (7.3) and post-test (7.5) are almost equal in the control group; while the experimental group showed a two-point increase in comparison between the pre and the post-test (5.5 and 7.5 accordingly). These

results ratified that the use of collaborative work through the Google Drive platform does influence in the correct use of punctuation.

Regarding grammar, both groups increased their grades. This makes it possible to show that the traditional methods used in the control group and the collaborative method used in the experimental group helped students use correctly the target grammar.

As for the internal of the composition (title, main idea, secondary idea, and conclusion) an increased in their grades is evidenced in both groups; nevertheless, a greater significance is notorious in the experimental group with a difference of 4.7 points in relation to its pre-test.

Regarding the sequence and coherence of the paragraph, the experimental group showed a higher result (pre-test 4,3/ post-test 7) in comparison to the control group (pre-test 4.5 /post-test 5.8); this is to say that the experimental group had an increment of 27 points while the control group only raised in 1.30 in relation to the pre and the post-test.

Finally, as far as the content of the paragraph is concerned, there is an increase of 1.4 with respect to the pre and post-test of the control group; and a difference of 1.5 points when it comes to the pre and post-test experimental group. This implies that the collaborative method did influence in enhancement of the content of the paragraphs.

Discussion

In this research, a theoretical analysis of collaborative work as the independent variable and the writing performance as the dependent variable was performed. The first was defined as a learning model that uses a methodology based on Vygotsky's pedagogical model, where the student is the protagonist of the teaching and learning process. The first variable "Collaborative work" promotes interdisciplinary work and knowledge, shared among learners, using digital tools. The second variable was defined within the teaching of a second language, in this case English, as a complex system of human communication consisting of written messages by using written communication and the writing skill to develop meaningful, coherent, cohesive, and adequate texts.

Collaborative work is a model of interactive learning which can be done through a digital tool such as Google Drive to encourage reciprocity, responsibility, relationships, positive interdependence and shared work among beginner levels from the English Language at a university in Ecuador. After the implementation of a post-test (a paragraph graded with the use of a rubric) it was possible to demonstrate that collaborative work, through the use of the Google Drive, facilitates the creation of virtual communities and group work to encourage active participation and to enhance students' writing skills.

This research has designed a pre-test and post-test with its corresponding rubric. The tests were applied to the control and to the experimental group. The groups consisted of beginner level students. The purpose was to assess their written performance. The statistics results showed that there were deficiencies regarding the written production in both groups. After applying the collaborative methodology and through the post test, it was noticeable the enhancement in the experimental group's written production. In this context, it was also proceeded to conduct a survey to the teachers. The results of this survey showed that they have never worked with any digital platform for working collaboratively with their students; and therefore, 80% of their students do not participate or contribute in the activities proposed by the teacher. Although teachers recognize the importance of teamwork, they have not designed activities focused on collaborative work within a virtual platform.

From the difficulties found after the application of the pre-test and the lack of use of digital tools as an innovative teaching methodology used by teachers, a proposal of activities focused on collaborative work through Google Drive was developed to improve written production in university students. The results obtained in the post-test, after the implementation of these activities have shown a significant improvement in the learners' written skills. Their mean was 7.34 out of 10; its standard deviation increased by 65.7% in the construction of their paragraph through collaborative work. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, which states that the proposed methodology did influence in the improvement of their scores, and obviously in the enhancement of their written production.

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The Use of Technological Tools- Movie Maker and Weblogs to Foster Social Interaction in the Classroom

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Abstract

This present work depicts a literature review on how the use of technological tools such as Weblogs and Movie Maker can build social interaction within the classroom; while students implicitly learn English and foster the use of values in the learning process. It also briefly discusses the impact of technology in teaching, and why to use the aforementioned technological tools in class. Examples of tools to create weblogs are provided. Furthermore, this paper suggests two purposeful strategies: Literature Circles and Project Menus that can be used and combined with Weblogs and Movie Maker in order to enhance teachers' instruction, and to make students develop the language skills in an integrated and interactive way.

Keywords: social interaction, technological impact, weblogs, movie maker, literature circles, project menus.

Resumen Ejecutivo

Este trabajo representa una revisión de literatura sobre cómo el uso de herramientas tecnológicas como Weblogs y Movie Maker pueden construir interacción social dentro del aula; mientras los estudiantes aprenden implícitamente inglés y fomentan el uso de valores en el proceso de aprendizaje. También se analiza brevemente el impacto de la tecnología en la enseñanza y por qué utilizar las herramientas tecnológicas antes mencionadas en clase. Se proporcionan ejemplos de herramientas para crear Weblogs. Además, éste artículo sugiere dos estrategias útiles: Círculos de literatura y Menús de proyectos las cuales se pueden usar y combinar con Weblogs y Movie Maker para mejorar la instrucción de los docentes y hacer que los estudiantes desarrollen las habilidades de lenguaje de una manera integrada e interactiva.

Palabras clave: Interacción Social, Impacto Tecnológico, Weblogs, Movie Maker, Círculos de Literatura, Menús de Proyectos.

Introduction

In Ecuador, English teaching in public institutions has been based on the use of textbooks, notebooks, pencils, boards and CD players. This traditionalist teaching plus the lack of technology have made that students do not feel the need or get interested in learning English. Correspondingly, teachers were limited to get into the classroom, teach the academic contents, and send homework to finally assess students.

Traditionalist teaching has had its basis on receptiveness and rote memorization, falling in the wrong assumption that students are boxes to be filled with just mere contents, and where the

surroundings of the students were not interactive because the contents were transmitted by their teacher only. "Traditional schoolroom was not a place in which students had experiences (Dewey, 1997, pg. 26)".

Over the past years, we have witnessed how technology has become attractive for young people and that can be verified in the fact that the students learn to use these tools rapidly. Thus, if educators would have the enough knowledge to get also involved in technology they might take advantage of it in their instruction. Educators might captivate their students to develop a better approach to the knowledge of the subject matter and therefore reinforce their learning.

Literature Review

Social Interaction Theory

Creating opportunities for students to socially interact within the classroom is relevant to develop strong social and learning skills. Most students learn to develop accurate social and learning skills by observing how their peers and teachers act in different environments or situations in the school.

Cooter & Reutzell (2004) asserted that the social interaction theory has its basis on how the language acquisition is influenced by the interaction of physical, linguistic, cognitive and social factors. Social interaction theory has been analyzed by several researchers, psychologists and educators, but the two major characters that have contributed to the notion of this theory have been Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner.

Culture and language in human development are vitally important features in Vygotsky's theory of social interaction. Vygotsky, Russian psychologist, assured that social learning precedes development because "every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological)" (Vygotsky, 1978). Additionally, this psychologist proposed two more themes to support his theory, the more knowledgeable other (MKO), and the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The MKO refers to anyone who possesses a better knowledge, understanding or higher thinking level than the learner regarding particular tasks or contents, these people can usually be teachers, old adults, peers, etc. In regard to the ZPD, this zone refers to the distance between the student's ability to perform a task with teacher, adult, or peer's collaboration and the student's ability to perform activities independently. Nevertheless, the relationship between teachers and students is reciprocal since the connections between people and the socio-cultural context serve as means where people interact and develop higher thinking levels.

On the other hand, Jerome Bruner (1967) precursor of the constructivist learning theory disco-

vered that learning is a method of inquiry-based instruction. He asserted that students learn best by discovering facts and relationships for themselves. He also believed that learners have an innate capacity that helps them make sense of the work and that cognitive abilities are developed through active interaction. Moreover, Bruner claimed that learning takes place in problem solving situations where the student draws on his or her own old experience and existing knowledge to discover facts or new truths to be learned. Thus, students interact with the world by exploring, manipulating objects, contending with questions, generating controversy and performing experiments as well.

Garton (1995) pointed out that social interaction is the fundamental mean for the dynamic transmission of cultural and historical knowledge. Additionally, she indicated that the social or cultural origins of cognitive and linguistic knowledge prove an examination of the environmental or contextual conditions that ease the development process. Social interaction thus frames the involvement of participants who bring different experiences to interchange in varied contexts and gain knowledge.

How technology impacts in the classroom

The technological era has forced teachers to be updated and also engaged with the new technologies to support their instruction. Thus, technological devices have become very diverse in the ways they are being used inside the classrooms.

Motteram (2013) manifested that teachers have had to change their teaching resources in the last years due to the evolution of technology. A time ago teachers were used to manage textbooks, tape recorders, and whiteboards only, whereas these days they have had to get adapted at using different technological tools to enhance their professional practice and engage students in their learning. This author also asserted that digital tools are a new feature of world education and have become established and recognized in the field of computer assisted language learning (CALL) and the core of English language teaching (ELT).

Jung and Hyun (2011) pointed out that recently most CALL empirical studies have focused on the

effectiveness of this method since technology has become to be considered as “a magical pill” in regard to language learning. Additionally, they manifested that some studies that address students’ interactions through CALL have been limited in data analysis and interpretation due to the interplay of classroom environment, tools, lessons and teachers; however, other studies have shown an increase in students’ participation based on three measures: (1) percentage of student talk versus teacher talk, (2) directional focus of student talk toward his or her peers or toward the teacher, and (3) equality of students participation.

Pim & Motteram (2013) recognized CALL as a self-paced learning way that allows teachers to assess students through language games and drilled activities. This effective type of learning is a sample of ‘visible learning’ since teachers are able to observe the students’ outcomes, provide feedback and make that students advance in learning. In language acquisition, technology provides a broad variety of learning activities to develop the four skills of the language: listening, speaking, reading and writing in an integrated way.

Accordingly, IES (2014) claimed that the use of technology in the classroom helps students to communicate with each other in an active way. Students feel free to actively make their own choices about how to generate, obtain, manage or display information as well. Using technology in the classroom makes that teachers are no longer the center of attention or the unique dispensers of information; on the contrary, it makes that teachers become facilitators who provide their students with a variety of technological resources in order to scaffold more knowledge. Seeing this from a different perspective, the traditional education or teacher centered has transformed into progressive education- student centered where the student is the generator of his or her own learning.

In addition, Varda, Haxton & Kuenzi (2012) asserted that educators are searching for alternative methods to teaching in the classroom. One of the common methods these days are “high-tech classrooms”. High-tech classrooms allow students to work online, take online course or even access to social media to interact and succeed in the learning process.

Richardson (2010) explained that today’s schools are challenged to face a difficult dilemma, and it is that students have grown up immersed in the world technology, while teachers are not accustomed to use trend tools to support their instruction. In other words, students regardless their ages are further ahead their teachers in computer literacy. Thus, according to Prensky (2004) the online life is a whole lot bigger than just the internet. This online life has become a fully strategy for how to live, survive, and thrive in the twenty-first century where cyberspace becomes a part of everyday life.

Therefore, for the progressing technological era, teachers also realize the necessity of getting immersed into it to use the technology in the classroom and create new literacy environments where students can succeed in learning. There are many tools to be applied according to the cognitive level of the students, their age, the content area of study and learning needs. However, this work is focused on the use of Weblogs and Movie Maker in schooling.

What are weblogs?

Richardson (2010), described weblogs as “an easily created, easily updatable Web site that allows an author (or authors) to publish instantly to the Internet from any Internet connection” (Richardson, 2010, p.17). For UserLand Software (2014) a weblog is a personal website which allows users to easily publish a broad variety of content to the Web. The content that is published may include written essays, annotated links, Word, PDF, PowerPoint documents and multimedia. Computer Hope (2014) described weblogs as “listings of text, images, or other objects that are arranged in chronological order. Blogs are often maintained and run by a single individual, updated daily, or contain random personal remarks about a topic, a personal ramble, an update on the person’s life or their current feelings.” Weblogs allow users all over the world to give a look into different personal journals or diaries and consequently learn about a wide variety of topics.

Why to use weblogs in the classroom?

Weblogs or blogs can be used in the classroom because they can be normally aligned to the curriculum. There is not impediment to apply blogs at any subject. Therefore, they can be used in Math, Language and Literature, English, Arts and so forth. Crie (2006) mentioned that educational blogs are advantageous for the benefits they offer to both teachers and students. Teachers for example, can post different resources, lessons, assignments and share ideas with their colleagues.

On the other hand, blogs keep students highly motivated in their learning since they can participate in forums or discussions. These tools also provide opportunities for students to read and write and enable scaffolding learning. Furthermore, the use of blogs in the classroom permit students and teachers write blog posts from the comfort of their house or from their smartphones at any time. Additionally, students who are shy or struggle with verbal skills may feel confident and secure to express their ideas or thoughts behind the screen, which enables students to enhance their social and communicative skills and accordingly to build social interaction in the classroom. Moreover, blogs provide students the opportunity to proofread, self-edit and rewrite their posts to empower their learning process (AssortedStuff, 2014).

Tools to create Weblogs

“Blogs may be great educational tools and they give students complete freedom to publish content on the web, but if you do not know how to effectively implement them in the classroom, they are only as good as wadded up balls of paper in the trash” (Pappas, 2013).

There are many platforms to create educational blogs that could serve as complementary activities in which students can develop their reading and writing skills as they interact with their peers and teachers inside and outside the classroom. There are many Weblogs Platforms but among the most popular ones are: Edublogs.org, WordPress.org, and Blogger.com.

Edublogs.org is the world's most popular education blog service. It is a free tool that allows educators and students use powerful learning tools by having

a friendly community in the school. www.edublogs.org

WordPress.org is an open-source and free Web publishing application. It allows teachers and public in general to build dynamic websites and blogs that may be updated, customized and managed according to user's needs. www.WordPress.org

Blogger.com is a Google's free tool to create blogs and share topics of interest, images or photos as well as to discuss about opinions or beliefs regarding educational, political, or social issues. It is a free tool which allows its users to create their personal stylish profile and get connected worldwide. www.blogger.com

Richardson (2010) suggested the use of blogs to create and use strategies for the classroom such as: Class Portals, Online Filing Cabinet, E-Portfolio and Collaborative Space. *Class Portals* provide teachers the opportunity to publish the course curriculum, syllabus, class schedule, homework assignments, rubrics, activity sheets and general announcements about the subject. *Class Portals* are eco-friendly and save time, students can access the information as many times as they need and thus they become responsible of their own learning process. *Online Filing Cabinets and E-Portfolios* are a recompilation of students' assignments, with them; teachers can keep track of the students' performance and students can keep their work in an organized and secure way. The students can look back over their work and reflect about their progress. In another way, *Collaborative Space* is the space where students learn from their peers or other professional who are also involved in the digital space. These spaces foster social interaction with all the participants in the Web as they also learn cooperatively.

Literature Circles by using Blogs

One of way to encourage students to read and write is by using Literature Circles and why not to use them in Blogs? “Literature circles as small groups of students gather together to discuss a piece of Literature in depth” (Saskatoon Public Schools, 2009). Literature circle is a complex, and well-structured strategy especially for the roles each student has to play in the circle. Peralta-Nash and Dutch (2000)

suggested five different roles in Literature Circles such as literary laminator, connector, word finder, discussion director, and illustrator. The purpose of this useful strategy in instruction is that it allows student to develop and discuss their own questions and answers as they build meaningful ways to expand and develop critical thinking.

In addition, literature circles are student centered. Students work by themselves and assume responsibility for the construction of their own knowledge, while the teacher monitors and supports the process. Thus, literature circles are supremely relevant because they not only foster active and thoughtful attitude toward reading, but also build conversational skills and social interactions.

On the other hand, literature circles strategy needs to be applied in ways that reflect the students' individual needs. Despite the teachers present the sets of books in the class, which obviously have to be aligned to the curriculum; the students have the final decision to choose what they really want to read, so they feel motivated and challenged to do their best with their assigned role. Additionally, as they work as a whole group, literature circles also promote the use of values, for example, they respect turns to speak, are tolerant to accept their peers' opinions or beliefs and develop a sense of fellowship as well.

There is not any recipe to use this strategy accompanied by technology. However, the use of Blogs in Literature Circles maximizes students' responses and discussions around texts. Using Blogs challenges students to give their best of themselves when publishing their comments or thoughts of a specific piece of reading since they are aware that not only their teacher but their peers are also participating in the task. In contrast, teachers are able to publish open-ended questions "essential questions" to push students in high-order thinking.

Decades ago traditional English language teaching was based on the use of flashcards or just the images provided by the students' books. Students were limited to extend their knowledge further than their teacher's lessons. Nonetheless, presently and thanks to technology teachers have a broad variety of web tools to enhance their professional practice and make that learning English is fun in class.

Another interesting tool that complements instruction and help students develop the four English language skills is Movie Maker.

What is Movie Maker?

Movie Maker is free software manufactured by Microsoft Windows. Movie Maker is "a feature of Windows Vista that enables you to create home movies and slide shows on your computer, complete with professional-looking titles, transitions, effects, music, and even narration" (Microsoft, 2014). Thus, Movie Maker becomes one of the funniest ways for students to create their own videos and share in their class.

Why to use Movie Maker in the classroom?

Using any kind of technology in the classroom is one of the longed-for expectations in education. Although, some teachers are not involved in the technological trend yet, the use of technological tools is becoming a meaningful support in the curriculum and school. About.com (2014) asserted that Movie Maker enables teachers to create their own lesson plans in an interactive and funny way for their instruction. Newingham, B. (2010). assured that some of the benefits Movie Maker has is that teachers and students work together, and that students display their knowledge in a creative way. Using Movie Maker in the classroom permits students to understand, reinforce, and review different contents that are aligned to the curriculum and by doing this students also extend their learning. Children and young people spend their free time watching TV, movies or listening to music, but at the same time they are learning something from them. (Microsoft, 2009) suggested teachers to use this tool in order to make their lesson plans more attractive, funny and interesting in order to grab students' attention and keep them engaged in learning.

In regards to EFL students the use of videos and multimedia in their instruction is pivotal since they feel challenged by their teacher to use their imagination to create videos. For example, Gromik (2008) assured that modern classroom demands the use of authentic audiovisual resources from the internet. He suggested that before integrating filmmaking into instruction, teachers have to bear

in mind four steps to succeed when using Movie Maker. First, teachers should get acquainted with the software in order to provide any help for students who are learning or experiencing the use of video tools. Second, teachers should have access to equipment such as cameras, tripods, or digital videotapes to facilitate the production of videos. Third, teachers should be concerned and aware of how much access to technology the students have outside the classroom. Fourth, teachers should finally establish a pilot task to allow students get familiarized with Movie Maker, the filming process and the practice of their linguistic skills as well.

Project Menus by using Movie Maker

Taking into account the diversity that each student brings into the classroom, teachers need to be creative and look for means that support their instruction and consequently help in the students' development.

A purposeful strategy that can be used and combined with Movie Maker is Project Menus. "A project menu is a numbered list of tiered assignments that can be used for a variety of purposes in the classroom" (Heacox, 2012, pg. 111).

When teachers offer project menus in the classroom, students become autonomous learners since they are allowed to choose the project they would like to work or feel more comfortable with. Firstly, teachers have to be aware that to apply this strategy it is important to consider certain factors to attain optimal results. Project menus have to be aligned to the curricular unit of study. Furthermore, teachers have to keep in mind Bloom's taxonomy to set clear objectives and fulfill their expectations and similarly Gardner's Multiple Intelligences in order to group the students regarding their potential.

Once teachers have already designed the project menus and showed to the students, they will be challenged to work in the project of their preference by using Movie Maker.

Implications and limitations in Ecuador

The implications of incorporating the above mentioned tools in the Ecuadorian Public universities are focused on the following aspects:

Lack of resources or budget to count with the basic technological tools such as computers, internet service, and projectors in the university or at home.

Lack of some teachers' technological knowledge to implement the tools as well as the strategies within their professional practice.

Issues to control the internet access in both the university and at home.

The family economic situation. In some cases, the students do not even have a computer at their home. They have to look for cyber places and pay for renting a machine, and rarely those cyber places are far from home.

Each English teacher works with five or six classes and each one has between thirty to forty students per class.

If the five percent of the students do not have computers or internet access, they might not be able to do their activities.

The infrastructure also hinders the process. The classroom size is too small to the number of students.

The teachers' reluctance to implement the tools and strategies in their instruction.

Conclusion

Taken together, technology has created considerable changes in the development of different areas of human being's activity and education cannot be left apart. Nevertheless, the public universities in Ecuador have not been affected by technology due to the lack of human and economic resources. In spite of this, the technology can start an in-depth change in the learning process if the implications of the Ecuadorian context could be surpassed. Hence, to start incorporating technology in our classrooms, the government needs to invest more in education and the educators must have the willingness to get involved with technology and the commitment to contribute to the empowerment of education in order to compete in this globalized world.

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The Use of Graphic Organizers in The Development of EFL Reading Comprehension

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Abstract

This study investigated how the use of GOs helped EFL university students (18-22 years old) of beginner level in the development of the reading comprehension skill. A control group and an experimental group participated in a pre-test at the beginning of the course and a post-test at the end. During this period, the experimental group went through six reading activities which involved the use of GOs for reading comprehension. Additionally, a test to qualify their level of satisfaction in the use of this strategy was applied to the experimental group. Results showed that the experimental group improved meaningfully their performance through the six structured reading activities; furthermore, from the pre-test to the post-test the difference was higher. On the other hand, the results of the control group were very poor. Regarding their level of satisfaction, the use of GOs for the development of reading comprehension was very high with the suggestion to continue working with them in other areas of knowledge as well as the production of their own GOs according to their needs.

Key Words: Graphic organizers, reading comprehension, EFL (English as a Foreign Language)

Resumen Ejecutivo

El presente trabajo analizó la forma en que los organizadores gráficos (GO) contribuían al desarrollo de la habilidad de lectura comprensiva en el aprendizaje de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL, English as a Foreign Language) en estudiantes universitarios de nivel básico, comprendidos en edades entre 18 y 22 años. En la investigación participaron dos grupos, uno de control y el otro experimental; ambos grupos estuvieron involucrados en dos exámenes, un pre-test al inicio del período y un post-test al finalizar. Durante este período, se trabajó con seis actividades programadas que incluían el uso de organizadores gráficos para la lectura comprensiva. Además, a este grupo se aplicó otro test para evaluar su nivel de satisfacción en el uso de esta estrategia. Los resultados demostraron que el grupo experimental mejoró significativamente su desempeño a través de las actividades estructuradas, y la diferencia fue aún más evidente del pre-test al post-test; en cambio en el grupo de control los avances fueron mínimos.

Con respecto al nivel de satisfacción en el grupo experimental, el uso de los organizadores gráficos (GOs) para la lectura comprensiva fue alto con la recomendación de que se continúe utilizándolos, no sólo en el aprendizaje de inglés sino también en otras áreas del conocimiento; además se sugirió la producción de sus propios organizadores de acuerdo a sus necesidades.

Palabras clave: Organizadores Gráficos (GO), Lectura Comprensiva EFL (siglas en inglés de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera)

Introduction

The Use Of Graphic Organizers In The Development Of EFL Reading Comprehension

Reading is a crucial activity in the development of the acquisition of a language and teachers are con-

cerned with finding a suitable approach to use with his students in order to get effective reading comprehension. Although necessary, reading is usually seen by L2 learners as a tedious activity, mainly if this is extensive. One of the alternatives is the use of graphic organizers (GO) which seems to be a way to show a

story or a piece of reading has been grasped by the learner's mind.

Through this study, the researcher analyzes the use of GO in the development of EFL reading comprehension with L2 beginner students to show GO effectiveness in the development of the Reading skill.

Literature Review

Dechant (1991), refers to the reading skill at the very beginning stage that "In the broadest sense, reading is the process of interpreting sense stimuli... reading is performed whenever one experiences sensory stimulation" because he considered the reading skill as a sensorial process to comprehend situations such as reading pictures, reading faces, reading symbols, reading gestures. Further he also mentions a higher stage in which there is a dynamic interaction between the reader's prior knowledge and the text; this way, the reading contacts the writer mentally. And (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, Reading for Understanding, 2000) cited by Oktay Akarsu and Leyla Harputl in 2014 in their journal Perceptions of EFL Students toward Academic Reading, corroborates this definition when they assert that "Successful reading comprehension is a complete grasp of meaning in a text in which dynamic and growing appreciation of interrelationships in the text is required". But this is not that simple, an L2 learner needs to be motivated to find reading an enjoyable activity. Regarding this, (Grabe, 2004) suggests the promotion of intrinsic motivation as one of the main abilities that an L2 reader needs to develop. Motivating strategies help an L2 learner be interested in reading and get a good interrelationship with the text. However, a successful reading comprehension depends on the reader's background.

Appropriate prior knowledge is definitely an overwhelming need the L2 reader requires in order to process the written information and understand the writer's real message. According to (Dechant, 1991), meaningful reading depends on the reader's prior knowledge which is supported by the schema theory,

and numerous studies have been done about the connections between the knowledge that the reader already possesses (it includes L1, cross-cultural knowledge, symbols, categories, meaning of individual words, etc.) and the new information in the written text which will help him to predict and infer facts to elaborate a meaningful reading.

Other authors (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983), (Barrios Espinosa, 1996, págs. 239-), (Ajideh, 2003), (Al-Issa, 2006), (An, 2013) have made research on the schema theory and its contribution to reading comprehension.

(Landry, 2002) in his article Schemata In Second Language Reading says "this learning theory views organized knowledge as an elaborate network of abstract mental structures which represent one's understanding of the world." (Dechant, 1991) defines scheme theory as "a cognitive theory that emphasizes cognition; conceptual learning; the process of understanding; mental events; conscious experience; acquiring, processing, organizing, storing, and retrieving of information; thinking; reasoning; problem solving; and meanings." All this describes reading as a high-level thinking process as the L2 reader starts a series of connections even before the moment he gets in touch with the written piece, he interprets, analyzes, synthesizes, and is able to apply this knowledge and create new ideas about it.

Although the L2 reader has a background in his mind, it needs to be activated, and the role of the teacher is definitely decisive. (Landry, 2002) refers to this role "Language teachers should consider the different dimension added to the task of reading by students who have already developed a schema related to the topic in another language" it means L2 teachers must be aware of EFL readers needs and carry out the reading process by following a step-by-step procedure considering their prior knowledge and steps suggested by many authors, for example, (Graves & Graves, 2003) describe a process to be used with L2 learners,

it consists on a set of pre-reading, during-reading, and after reading activities designed to assist students in successful reading, understanding, meaningful learning, and enjoying a specific piece of text.

In the process of reading, the mind uses schemata or mental organization structures to interact with the new information and categorize it hierarchically from the highest level that is at the top (superordinate) to the lowest level that is at the bottom (subordinate); subcategories are called hyponyms and they can be represented as tree-like diagrams (Dechant, 1991). When the L2 reader is going through this process, he develops many different sub-processes such as comparing and contrasting, discovery of causes and effects, a whole and its parts, main idea and details, a sequence of actions in a story, etc. Additionally, when an L2 reader finds pictures or graphics in a story, he is sure he will find very interesting and relevant information, so he feels motivated and inspired to continue reading more sources to get more data and eventually create his own version. All this means the learner's schemata has been successfully activated and the teacher has the chance to take advantage to assess reading comprehension by using graphic organizers (GO).

Hall & Strangman (2008) state that "a graphic organizer is a visual and graphic display that depicts the relationships between facts, terms, or ideas within a learning task. Graphic organizers are also sometimes referred to as knowledge maps, concept maps, story maps, cognitive organizers, advance organizers, or concept diagrams;" under this concept, teachers can develop students' capacity to think visually by means of using these devices. In the same article, they say GO connect important words or statements to diagrams, show a process, or present a sequence, serve as excellent study guides, and can be used to present new information. Similarly, (Phillips, Foote, & Harper, 2008) cite (Clarke, 1991), (Dunston, 1992) who emphasize that the use of GO lead

to higher level thinking and serve as reminder notes that promote learning.

Cleveland (2005) reiterates the phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" as she considers human beings learn more when they visualize the object. (Glassgow, Cheyne, & Yerrick, 2010) include GO and specifically mind maps in their study to help students achievement; they mention that GO can be used "at any age and any stage of learning, from brainstorming ideas to presenting research findings." To design a GO, pictures lines, geometric figures, words or short phrases are included and Bloom's taxonomy is used as the basis to categorize information of a text or a short story. Thus, when L2 learners read, they are able to establish relationships between different elements, concepts, identify the main idea and the supporting ones, show the sequence of a story, set causes and effects, compare and contrast ideas, etc; in a few words, an EFL reader is able to organize ideas according to different contexts and needs. He synthesizes, analyzes, verifies, evaluates, and he is even able to create or propose solutions to some problems, so he can use a variety of GO on the basis of his need; he can use; Venn diagrams for comparing and contrasting, a fishbone to show cause and effect, a sequential map to narrate the chronological facts of a story, a web for identifying main ideas and supporting ideas, etc.

Many studies have been done around the effectiveness of the use of GO to improve students achievement in different areas. For example, (Strangman, Vue, Hall, & Meyer, 2004) have carried out a series of 13 studies, and 10 of them "elevated comprehension"; these studies were supported by many meta-analysis (Moore & Readence, 1984; Dexter & Hughes, 2011; Dexter, Park, & Hughes, 2011; Ciullo, 2013) cited by (Strangman, Vue, Hall, & Meyer, 2004) which found a consistent effect on comprehension. (Phillips, Foote, & Harper, 2008) report "the research on the use of graphic organizers in vocabulary instruction has yielded overwhelmingly strong results." Additionally, many other authors (Salazar & Galora, 2017),

(Manoli & Papadopoulou, 2012) (Sam & Rajan, 2013), (Uba, Oteikwu, Onwuka, & Abiodun-Eniayekan, 2017), mention important contributions of GOs to the development of L2 reading skill.

Materials and Methods

Two groups of students between 18 and 22 years old, at elementary level of EFL learning at ESPE University took part in this study, one was the experimental group (13 students) and the other one was the control group (9 students).

This study took place during a semester; at the beginning, two pre-tests about reading comprehension were applied to two groups of students between 18 and 22 years old, at elementary level of EFL learning at ESPE University, one was the experimental group (13 students) and the other one was the control group (9 students). Then, six

Results

The arithmetic mean of the pre-test and the post-test was calculated in both groups and the results were evident.

pieces of reading with GOs to show comprehension were administered only to the experimental group. At the end of this research, a post-test with the use of GOs was applied to both groups. Finally a survey to find out their feelings about the use of GOs for reading comprehension was administered to the experimental group.

All the pieces of reading were selected according to the participants' stage of knowledge of English, their interests and the needs of this research. These activities were mapped out by adopting the scheme proposed for scaffolding reading by (Graves & Graves, 2003), planning and implementation.

The methodology for this study was mixed: experimental because two groups were used and the data was processed with numbers; and ethnographic because a survey about satisfaction was analyzed in a qualitative way.

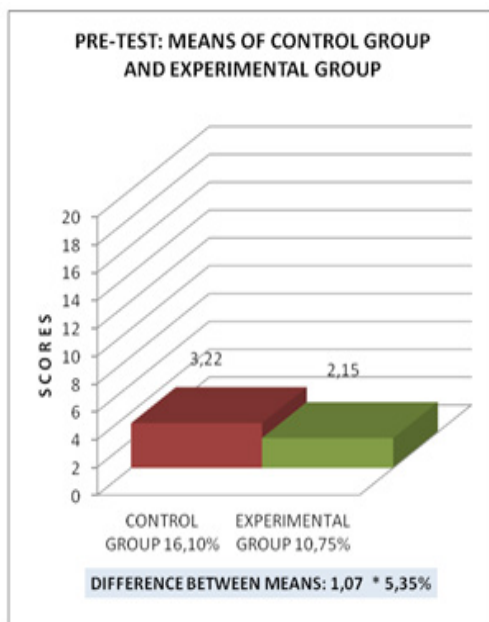


Figure 1: Graphic of Post-test of Control Group vs. Experimental Group

Source: Thesis "The use of Graphic Organizers to improve Reading Comprehension skills with students of I-II intensive courses at ESPE – Sangolquí – Ecuador, semester September 2010 – February 2011" by María Teresa Llumiquinga P.

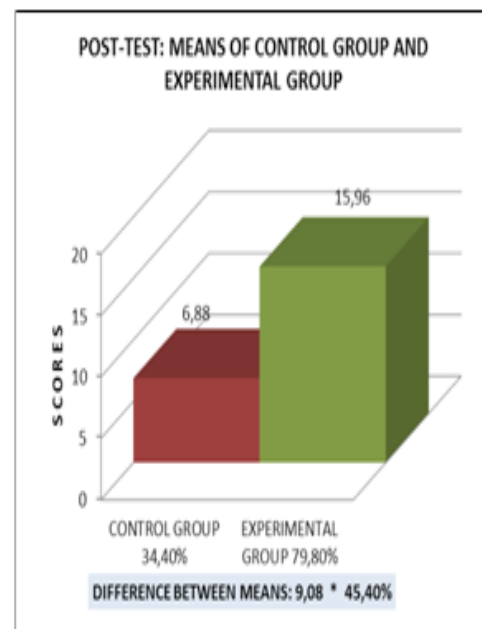


Figure 2: Graphic of Post-test of Control Group vs. Experimental Group

Source: Thesis "The use of Graphic Organizers to improve Reading Comprehension skills with students of I-II intensive courses at ESPE – Sangolquí – Ecuador, semester September 2010 – February 2011" by María Teresa Llumiquinga P.

At the beginning of the study, in the pre-test, both groups got very low results in reading comprehension; Control Group $\bar{X} = 3.22/20$ (16.10%); Experimental Group $\bar{X} = 2.15/20$ (10.75%). The difference between the means of both groups was slight, 1.07 (3.5%), in favor of the Control Group. So, it was similarly low before the application of GOs for reading comprehension (Figure 1)

After the application of the GOs, the progress that the Experimental got was noticeable; the mean of the Control group was $\bar{X} = 06.88/20$ (34.40%), and the mean of the Experimental group was $\bar{X} = 15.96$ (79.80%). There was a minuscule of the Control Group (3.66); meanwhile the Experimental group grew a 13.81 (61.95%).

At the end of the treatment of GOs in the Experimental Group, there was a big difference between the two groups, an advantage of 9.08 (45%) of the Experimental Group over the Control Group, (Figure 2).

Regarding the performance of the Experimental Group, in the 6 activities during the application of the GOs for reading comprehension, there was a great improvement in their comprehension from the first activity to the fifth one, in the sixth activity, there was a slight decrease in the mean of the last activity although the general average was always higher than 14.4 in every activity (Figure 3)

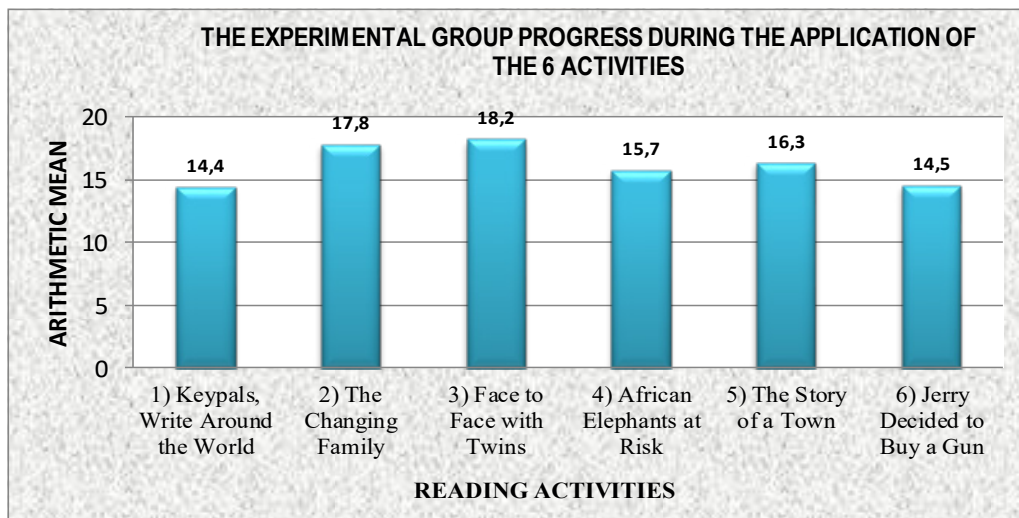


Figure 3: Graphic of Post-test of Control Group vs. Experimental Group

Source: Thesis "The use of Graphic Organizers to improve Reading Comprehension skills with students of I-II intensive courses at ESPE – Sangolquí – Ecuador, semester September 2010 – February 2011" by María Teresa Llumiquinga P.

Finally, the survey about their confidence in the use of GOs for reading comprehension was analyzed. It showed that, at the beginning, they were hesitant to use the GO; then, they were more motivated to work on this strategy; but they found it hard but challenging and definitely useful to improve reading comprehension.

Discussion

After reviewing several articles related to the use of GOs for the development of EFL reading comprehension, it can be argued that some of them reported high level of improvement while oth-

ers, especially some addressed to lower grades of education; for example, (Strangman, Vue, Hall, & Meyer, 2004) say that "the largest effects have been reported for university populations; consistent but more modest effects have been reported for students in elementary grades"; (Moore & Readence, 1984; Dexter & Hughes, 2011; Dexter, et al., 2011; Ciullo, 2013), cited by (Strangman, Vue, Hall, & Meyer, 2004) mention in their study that "There are consistent although more modest effects for elementary populations."

Assessment and the sense of sight for readers have been identified by (Glassgow, Cheyne, &

Yerrick, 2010) as other weaknesses in the use of GOs as it is said that “a big problem with graphic organizers is assessment. Some students may look at the graphic organizer as just another assignment and not authentically engage in its construction;” and “Graphic organizers can be used at any age and at any stage of learning from brainstorming ideas to presenting research finding because visualization to learn is daily used by anyone who is able to see.”

Limitations in this study

All the exercises for the application of this study were created by the researcher, students just completed the GOs after every short story, they did not design any GO to show their reading comprehension as it had already been designed by the teacher.

Another limitation was that GOs were only used as a post reading activity; they were never used as a pre-reading task or during reading exercise.

It was not considered the chance to let students use technology to create their own GOs about different stories or texts.

Conclusions

Some articles reviewed have reported improvement in the skill of reading after the use of GOs, some others had a slight or modest improvement. The present study has shown that even both groups, the control group and the experimental group got extremely low and relatively similar results at the beginning of this research, after the application of GOs for reading comprehension in the experimental group, they experienced a significant increase in their performance and evidenced a great level of confidence in the use of these tools.

Limitations found in this study show clearly there is room for future research by allowing students to develop their skills in the construction of GOs for reading comprehension according to their own point of view; another area of inquiry will be the construction of GOs for reading comprehension in the EFL classroom with the use of technology.

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Improving Listening Comprehension by Using Practical Techniques in the Third and Fourth English Levels

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Abstract

Though listening is fundamental to the acquisition of the English language, there has been little research about this skill. This quasi-experimental research describes listening techniques to improve students' listening comprehension. The targeted population consisted of university students in pre-intermediate level in a university in Ecuador. Students with poor listening skills were detected in the pre-test and teacher observation. Likewise, the background of the study showed that the lack of listening teaching and meagre listening habits were the cause of diminishing listening skills. The treatment was given to 15 students (the experimental group). It consisted of the application of listening techniques such as note-taking, dictogloss, and dictation. Besides the following listening activities based on assessment: matching, multiple matching, sentence and completion exercises. Data was gathered by means of questionnaires, interviews, the pre-test and the post-test. Finally, post intervention data demonstrated the experimental group students' listening progress. On the whole, the results showed that the treated group increased their listening skills due to the listening techniques applied.

Key words: Strategies, Listening comprehension, Listening skills

Resumen Ejecutivo

A pesar de que la habilidad de escuchar es fundamental para la adquisición del idioma inglés, ha habido poca investigación sobre estrategias para desarrollar esta habilidad. Esta investigación cuasi experimental describe técnicas para mejorar la comprensión auditiva de los estudiantes. La investigación se la realizó con estudiantes universitarios de nivel pre-intermedio en la universidad de las Fuerzas Armadas ESPE del Ecuador. Los estudiantes con habilidades auditivas deficientes fueron detectados a través de una pre-test conjuntamente con la observación del maestro. Del mismo modo, los antecedentes del estudio mostraron que la falta de enseñanza de estrategias para desarrollar esta destreza y el escaso tiempo dedicado al desarrollo de las mismas son causa de la disminución de las capacidades auditivas. La intervención se la realizó a quince estudiantes (grupo experimental) a quienes se les aplicó las técnicas de tomar nota, dictogloss, y dictado para desarrollar la comprensión auditiva. Además de actividades como emparejamiento, emparejamiento múltiple y ejercicios para completar oraciones. Los datos se recopilaron mediante cuestionarios, entrevistas, pre-test y post-test. Finalmente, los datos posteriores a la intervención demostraron el progreso auditivo de los estudiantes del grupo experimental. En general, los resultados mostraron que el grupo tratado aumentó su dominio sobre las habilidades auditivas debido a las técnicas aplicadas.

Palabras clave: Estrategias, Comprensión Auditiva, Habilidades Auditivas

Introduction

It is a well-known fact that listening is vital in the acquisition of the English language because it provides language input. Krashen (1985) claims that "The best methods are therefore those that supply 'comprehensible input' in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to

hear. These methods do not force early production in the second language, but allow students to produce when they are 'ready', recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production." Whereas, English language learners acquire the second lan-

guage when they absorb sufficient comprehensible input. As we see listening is crucial in the acquisition of English. Nowadays, there is an urgent need to improve students' listening comprehension since it impedes that English students acquire and be communicatively competent in English. However, there has been little research about this skill. In spite of English second language learners have serious problems in English listening comprehension due to the fact that universities pay more attention to English grammar, reading and vocabulary.

Likewise, most English teachers assume and think that listening will develop naturally and simultaneously within the process of language learning. Therefore, there is a lack of practicing the listening skill and lack of exposure to different kind of listening materials with different accents. It has not been clear what the best methods to teach listening are, and the way in which immediate listening feedback must be given. Thus, most English teachers have neglected the teaching of listening. The result is unmotivated students who do not participate in listening activities or in interactions. Still another reason to not pay attention to this skill is that in listening multiple choice activities students guess or when they are asked questions they just nod or move their heads as a sign of understanding when they have not understood anything, and some teachers take for granted that they are acquiring English. The purpose of this paper was to present several listening techniques to get students to improve their listening comprehension.

Then, this article reports the findings of a quantitative study in which these listening techniques were applied and we can evidence a significant improvement in students' listening grades.

This research would concentrate on these matters below: Literature Review, methodology, treatment, results and conclusion.

Literature Review

This section presents a review of related literature which contains the following main topics.

What listening comprehension is

Significance of listening comprehension

Listening comprehension problems

Listening strategies

What listening comprehension is

There is not a common definition of listening comprehension among linguists. Nevertheless, there is a common agreement that listening comprehension is an invisible mental process. This process according to Rost (2002 p7) allows language learners to understand spoken language. During this complex process "listeners must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, understand intention and retain and interpret this within the immediate as well as the larger socio-cultural context of the utterance.

Howard and Dakin (1974) claim that listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, the speaker's grammar and vocabulary and comprehension of meaning. An able listener is capable of doing these four things simultaneously.

Likewise, Rost (2002) defined listening as a process of receiving what the speaker actually says (receptive orientation); constructing and representing meaning (constructive orientation); negotiating meaning with the speaker (listening strategies) and responding (collaborative orientation); and creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy (transformative orientation).

Listening is one of the four language macro skills (the others are reading, speaking and writing). But it's important to understand that in real life there's no such thing as just 'listening'. In fact, there are several different kinds of listening, which we call sub-skills. Among the most important we have: listening for gist, listening for specific information, listening in detail, etc. (Cambridge English Teacher)

Taking into account all these definitions about listening comprehension, the writer concludes that listening is an active (interactive) complex process in which listeners process listening input and

make use of other listening subskills and listening strategies to understand the spoken language. In this interactive process listeners are not passive hearers. They are active listeners doing other activities simultaneously or after receiving listening input which gives the speaker, teacher, or themselves a clear idea to what extent listeners understood the received listening input. These activities could be: matching, multiple matching, sentence completion exercises, dictation, note-taking, etc.

Significance of Listening comprehension

Listening is the fundamental language skill, It is the medium through which individuals obtain a large portion of their education, information, understanding of the world, human affairs, ideals, sense of values, and appreciation. In our world of mass communication, much of it is developed orally. So, it is important that students are taught to listen effectively and critically” (Bulletin 1952). Listening is considered the most important of the fourth skills (speaking, Reading, and writing) not only in the acquisition of a second language also in the acquisition of the first language, because it gives the aural input which is necessary to acquire a language and permits people to interact in spoken communication (wilt, 1950).

Feyten’s research (1991) revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between listening comprehension ability and foreign language acquisition, indicating that listening ability is an extremely factor in the acquisition of foreign language. Likewise, Coakley & Wolvin, 1997; Truesdale, 1990 confirm that numerous studies indicated that efficient listening skills were more important than reading skills as a factor contributing to academic success. It is evident that listening plays the main role in second language acquisition, Therefore, English teachers must take action and promote listening comprehension teaching in their classrooms to help students get improved with their listening skills.

Listening comprehension problems

According to Rost (2002), “Listening is the mental process of constructing meaning from spoken input” (p. 24). Furthermore, listening is “conceived as an active process in which listeners select

and interpret information which comes from auditory and visual clues in order to define what is going on and what speakers are trying to express” (Rubin, 1995, p., 7). This process implicates perception, attention, cognition, and memory. During this process many factors can impede that second language learners grasp listening input.

Among the most important factors we have speech rate (Conrad, 1989; Blau, 1990; Griffiths, 1992; Zhao, 1997), lexis (rost, 1992), phonological features and background knowledge (Long, 1990; Chiang and Dunkel, 1992).

Other aspects that hinder listening input comprehension are insufficient exposure to the target language, and a lack of interest and motivation. Brown (1995) also argued that listener difficulties are also related to the levels of cognitive demands made by the content of the texts. Buck (2001) identifies numerous difficulties which can be confronted in listening tasks such as unknown vocabularies, unfamiliar topics, fast speech rate, and unfamiliar accents. Higgins (1995) studied Omani students’ problems in listening comprehension and found that the factors which facilitate or hinder listening are speech rate, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

The first thing that the writer had to do to help students get improved with their listening skill was to find out their listening problems which cause difficulties to them.

In this research, several beginner and pre-intermediate Spanish students in a university in Ecuador were interviewed about their listening comprehension problems. They were learning English to get their proficiency. The results showed that most of them thought that listening was the most difficult skill to acquire; and that most of the students understood 40 % when they listened to songs, conversations, interviews, or watched movies. In the case of movies they understood them because they watched the scenes and they inferred meaning. It also indicated that most of the students were predominantly visual. Likewise, they conveyed that new vocabulary, connected speech, idiomatic expressions, different accents, stress, complex grammatical structures, and ‘the length of the spoken text’ (they were short) are

the most important message factors for listening problems.

Although some studies have been conducted concerning students' listening comprehension in Ecuador, they do not explore the different listening comprehension problems that students confront and the effective listening techniques to help students overcome this problem. The present paper provides several listening techniques to improve students' listening comprehension.

Listening Strategies

Listening strategies facilitate comprehension and help listeners compensate the difficulties they had in understanding listening input. According to Vandergrift (1996) there are three types of listening strategies: metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies. All of them utilize different techniques to grasp meaning and some of them (especially socio-affective strategies) interrupt the listening process to do it more efficient. Metacognitive strategies describe complex activities that listeners do to catch meaning. They regulate and direct the language learning process (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, Vandergrift, 1997a) when listeners use metacognitive techniques they begin to analyse the requisites of the listening task, try to make good predictions, activate the correct listening process required, check their comprehension, evaluate the success of their approach, etc.

Cognitive strategies refer to basic techniques that listeners do to understand listening input; for example making inferences, realizing what went wrong, or what produced misinterpretation during the listening task, etc. Finally, socio-affective strategies refers to techniques that listeners utilize to confirm understanding, cooperate with the speaker, or to lower anxiety (self-encouragement); for example, listeners interact with the speaker, ask for clarification, negotiate meaning, etc.

Grant (1997) also pointed out four strategies which would help learners to listen to English by activating or building schema, guessing, or predicting, listening selectively, and negotiating meaning.

Ma Weima (2005) reveals that short-term memory is an important clue in listening comprehension, and put forward three most effective ways to improve short term memory retention, repetition, dictation, and good command of the language.

Taking into account all these theories the writer applied listening techniques in an experimental group. What is really important is that these techniques interrupt the listening process, pay attention to pre-listening, while listening, and post-listening to give students the opportunity to build a schema, guess, make predictions, make inferences, confirm understanding, and negotiate meaning.

Methodology

In terms of the method, at the beginning of the research a needs analysis was carried out. A questionnaire was completed by a group of students. It showed students' listening problems and the need to apply listening techniques to remedy this problem. The questionnaire included close and open-ended questions. Close-ended questions because they are easy to collate and analyse and open-ended questions to give the interviewees the opportunity to convey a detailed answer.

Among the most important answers we had that they would like music in the classroom and to listen to audio books. They wanted to watch movies, to take song tests, listening exercises, games and conversations. The writer chose a questionnaire because they are considered the most reliable ways to get information since they encourage honesty, since they are anonymous (Cohen 2000:269).

After the needs analysis, the writer carried out a Quasi-experimental method (Intact groups single-control). It is well-known that quasi-experimental methods calculate approximately how the treatment affects the treated group (the experimental group). However, in order to establish the efficiency of the treatment (the practical listening techniques), the experimental group has to be compared with a control group, which does not receive any treatment. The writer must point out that in this research, she worked with intact groups. However, the author randomly applied

the treatment to one of the two groups with the flip of a coin.

The schematic for this design was:

Experimental group G1 (intact):

X1 - T - X2
Pre-test - Treatment - Post-test

Control Group G2 (intact):

X1 - O - X2
Pre-test - Observation - Post-test

G1 (Intact): It stands for the experimental group. The group that received treatment (the listening techniques)

G2 (Intact): It stands for the control group. The group that did not receive any treatment. It was only used to observe to what extent the students had improved their listening comprehension, by only doing activities from the book called American Channel-Pre-intermediate, written by H.Q. Mitchell and J. Scott. In 2005 without developing any listening techniques. It was also used to compare the students' grades with the experimental group grades, in order to establish if the listening techniques had been effective.

Data collection

The data collection in this experimental research was done by means of a pre-test and a post-test. These instruments were designed taking into account students' needs. They had to pass the KET English test. It was necessary to calculate the means and standard deviation to obtain numerical data for further analysis.

The pre-test and post-test were Mock Ket English tests. They included five parts. Part 1 matching. It had five short conversations in which the students had to match the question with the correct answer. Part 2 multiple matching. In this part students listened to a long conversation and matched people with places, people with clothes, etc.; part 3 matching. In this section the students listened to a long conversation and matched 5 questions related to the conversation with 5 answers. Part

4 and Part 5 were completion exercises. The students listened to a long conversation or monologue and completed charts with one, two, or three words.

In this research several statistical procedures were used to compare the experimental group with the control group before and after the treatment applied to the experimental group. The author used the mean (measure of central tendency) to compare both groups before treatment and after the intervention done to the experimental group to measure the listening improvement of both groups. In addition, the standard deviation (dispersion measure) was used to contrast the homogeneity of both groups, before and after treatment, and in this way, to reject the null hypothesis. Likewise, the significance of the difference between both means. The mean of the pre-test and the mean of the post-test of both groups jointly with the *t-test* (or *t-value*) allowed the author to reject the null Hypothesis and accept the alternative Hypothesis.

Alternative Hypothesis: the application of the listening techniques (treatment) increases the listening comprehension of the experimental group students.

Null Hypothesis: There is no correlation between the application of the treatment (the listening techniques) and the experimental group students' improvement in listening comprehension.

Participants

The classrooms chosen as a sample for this experimental research were two third-fourth level classrooms. The sample had twenty-eight students, separated into the following categories: twenty-one young female university students, four young male university students and three high school students. All were native Spanish speakers, between fifteen and twenty-eight years old.

The Treatment (Listening techniques applied)

The writer applied a variety of techniques but the most effective were: note-taking, dictogloss, and dictation (techniques based on methodology). Similarly, the writer applied matching, multi-

ple matching, sentence completion exercises (listening activities based on assessment).

Note-taking

Note-taking is the process of taking notes. The writer used this technique because it gave the learners the opportunity to have a written record of the lecture. Taking notes made the learners active and involved listeners. When learners took notes they had to concentrate and paid attention to what was being said and how the writer was saying it. The learners paid attention to different aspects, for example, body language, listening for introductory, concluding and transition words and phrases, and using pictures and diagrams to make the notes more understandable. The writer explained to the experimental group students that they had to organize their space on the page; develop their own system of shorthand abbreviations; use diagrams, pictures, colours to make the notes more visual. Similarly, the author emphasized that when they get lost they had to leave space to fill it later, and left a symbol indicating that it had to be completed. It was learners' obligation to write legibly. It was obligatory to use "The Cornell Format" It says that on page of his notes the learner must draw a vertical line, top to down. 5cm from the left side of the paper. The learners will write their notes on the right of this line and on the left of the line they will write key words, word clues, and sample questions.

In addition, if the writer spoke too fast, the learners had to ask her to slow down. In the case of the audio program, if it was too fast, the learners had to ask that the track be repeated. Equally, the learner had to ask questions and clarifications about the topic (negotiating meaning). All these aspects contributed to make note-taking more effective.

Note-taking abbreviations

The author presented well-known abbreviations like these. However, learners could create their own abbreviations to copy rapidly.

Thus / Therefore	∴
Because	∵
Between	betw

or	/
Equals/same as	=
Definition	def
Does not equal / not the same as	≠
Conclusion	conc
Important / importance of	NB
Example / for example	eg
And	&
Before	B4
As against / contrast with	vs
Compare/contrast with	cf

The note-making process.

Once learners had learnt to take notes. They had to continue with the note-making process in order to complete and consolidate this process. This process began with the reading of the taken notes. After, the learners had to underline headings and subheadings, correct spelling mistakes and rewrite illegible chunks. Also, the learners had to complete any gaps, underlined or highlighted important sentences or paragraphs. The learners made sure that they understood concepts, definitions, opinions, etc. In some cases the learners completed the Cornell system. As soon as the learners had reviewed the lecture notes. They were ready to use this information to talk about it, to give their opinions about the topic, or to write a composition about the topic. On the whole, they showed that they have understood the listening input.

Dictation

According to Davis and Rinvoluceri (1988) dictation is to decode the sounds of a language and to recode them in writing. The writer used this technique to work with the experimental group. First, the writer dictated to them words, once they were used to doing it. The writer continued using this technique but at a sentence level. At the beginning, it was difficult for them, but little by little they felt more confident and did it very well. The writer applied all types of dictation in order to get a different approach to them; for example: shouting dictation, wall dictation, song line dictation, song stanza dictation (according to the students' English level), etc.

Dictogloss

The writer applied this listening skill since it is a variation of dictation. In fact, it is a sort of supported dictation which integrates the four skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking). Hence its effectiveness, it requires learners to listen, talk, collaborate, take-notes, redraft, and present orally. Observe that, it can be used at all levels.

The writer read short texts several times. The texts had a language level slightly above that of the learners but the subjects were familiar for them. The writer introduced new vocabulary or new structures, but not complicated ones, since the learners could feel anxiety and frustration. The learners tried to produce their own version as close to the original as possible. The collaborative nature of the activity means that a beginner can be paired with a more fluent learner and get a model to follow.

The most important advantage of applying dictogloss was that they encouraged learners to use more advanced vocabulary and sentence structures. The writer worked in this way: First, she read a short text on a familiar topic at normal speed. Second, the learners listened and took notes. Third, the writer repeated the reading, after writing new subject vocabulary on the board to help learners. Fourth, the learners worked in pairs and shared their notes. Fifth, the author read the text again at normal speed. The learners worked in groups of four to produce a final written version of the text. The objective was to write a similar version as the original one.

All these techniques were applied by the writer in order to give the experimental group tons of listening input. Similarly, the writer followed the three phases described by Underwood (1989) to teach listening: pre, while and post-listening. The writer considers that these phases and the activities developed in these stages are important in the listening process. In the pre-listening phase listeners are prepared to be successful in the listening activity through these activities setting the context, generating interest, activating current knowledge, acquiring knowledge, activating vocabulary / language, predicting content, pre-learning vocabulary, checking / understand-

ing the listening tasks, etc. In the while-listening phase the learner shows their understanding of what was heard of, while the teacher supervises comprehension. Among the most used activities we have: listen for main ideas, listen for details, making inferences, correct the errors, gap fill, listen and describe, true or false, etc. Finally, in the post-listening phase the teacher evaluates if the listening technique applied and the results were good or not. In fact, post-listening activities are a follow-up to the listening technique. The main objective of post-listening activities is to utilize the acquired knowledge for the improvement of other skills like speaking or writing. Post-listening activities also allow students to recycle new vocabulary and further use.

It is worth emphasizing that immediate listening feedback was always given especially during the application of matching, multiple matching, and sentence completion exercises. It basically consisted of repeating the audio programs and stopping them exactly in the answer. Likewise, when students knew the answer in matching they had to justify their answer. Similarly, when the students did not know the answer the teacher provided the right answer explaining them why it was the right answer.

Results

The listening pre-and-post-test results allowed the author to compare and contrast the academic listening outcomes of the experimental and control groups, establish conclusions, and reject the null hypothesis as well.

Pre-test results of experimental and control groups

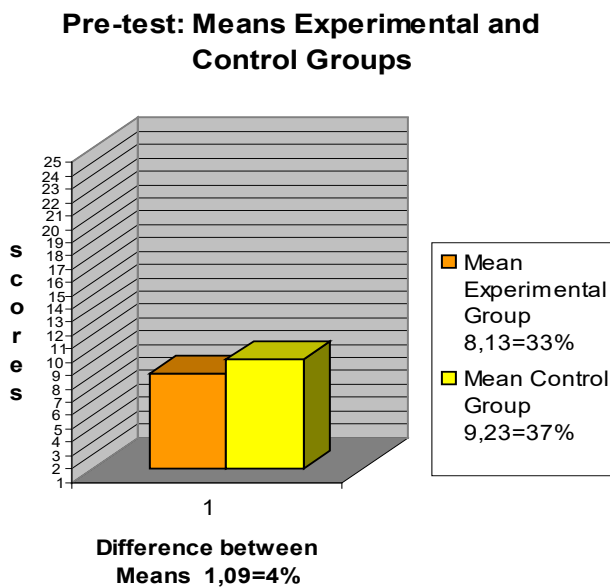
The pre-test was taken by experimental and control group students at the beginning of the April-August 2009 semester. On the one hand, the results of the pre-test taken by the experimental group students showed a mean of 8.13 equal to 33.00% of listening comprehension. On the other hand, the results of the pre-test taken by the control group students showed a mean of 9.23 equal to 37% of listening comprehension. Both results were very low, considering that students needed to get 17.50 marks equal to 70% to be considered

proficient in listening on the target language and pass the KET English test. Observe that the difference between both means in the pre-test was 1.10 equal to 4%, it was not significant, both groups were in similar listening conditions; or in other words, they had similar listening problems. However, the very low listening outcomes (listening grades) confirmed the need to apply this project to improve students' listening comprehension.

Table 1a: Pre-test results experimental and control groups

Experimental Group	Control Group
$\bar{x}_1 = 8,13$	$\bar{x}_2 = 9,23$
$n_1 = 15$	$n_2 = 13$

Histogram1a: Means pre-test experimental and control groups



Post-test results of experimental and control groups

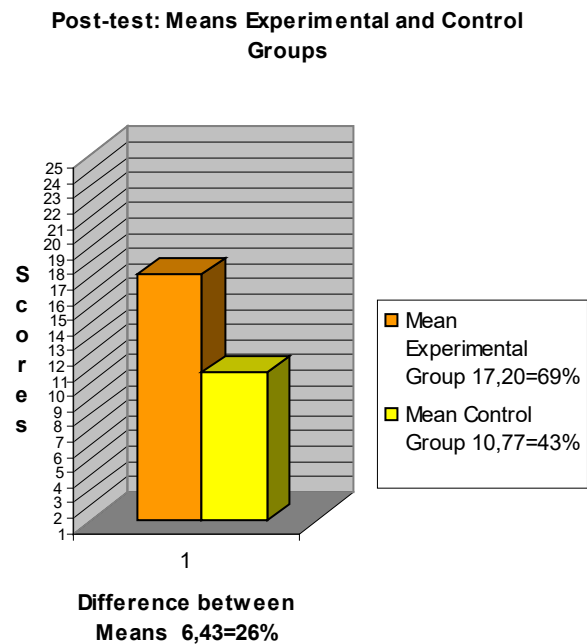
The post-test was taken by control and experimental group students at the end of the April-August 2009 semester (on 14th July, 2009), after that the listening treatment was applied to the experimental group students. On the one hand, the results of the post-test taken by the experimental group students after treatment showed a mean \bar{x}_1

of 17.20 equal to 69.00% of listening comprehension. On the other hand, the post-test taken by the control group students showed a mean \bar{x}_2 of 10.77 equal to 43% of listening comprehension.

Table 1b: Post-test results experimental and control groups

Experimental Group	Control Group
$\bar{x}_1 = 17,20$	$\bar{x}_2 = 10,77$
$n_1 = 15$	$n_2 = 13$

Histogram1b: Means post-test experimental and control groups



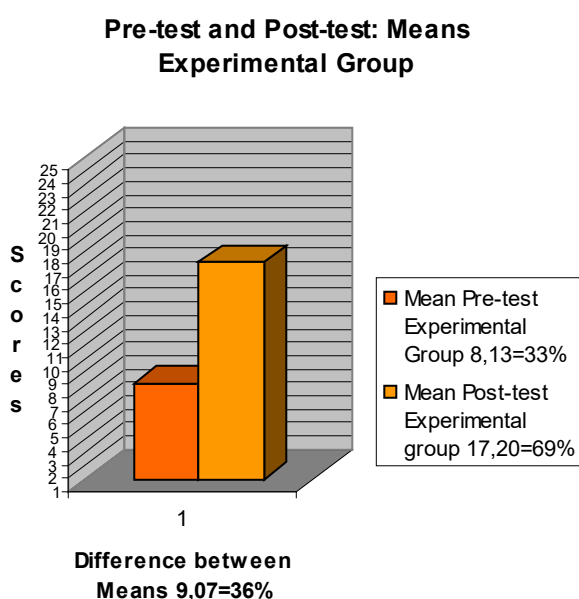
Pre-and-post-test experimental group results

The purpose of this comparison was to have a clear idea of the listening improvement of the experimental group students after treatment and establish with precision if the treatment threw good results or not. On the one hand, the pre-test demonstrated that the experimental group had a mean \bar{x}_1 of 8.13 equal to 33.00% of listening comprehension. On the other hand, the post-test of the experimental group showed a mean \bar{x}_1 of 17.20 equal to 69% of listening comprehension. The difference between both means of the experimental group in the pre-and-post-test was 9.07 marks equal to 36%. It seemed significant; however, the utilization of statistical procedures was necessary to show if it was significant or not.

Table1c: Pre-test and post-test experimental group

Experimental Group Pre-test	Experimental Group Post-test
$\bar{x}_1 = 8,13$	$\bar{x}_2 = 17,20$
$n_1 = 15$	$n_2 = 13$

Histogram1c: Means pre-test and post-test experimental group



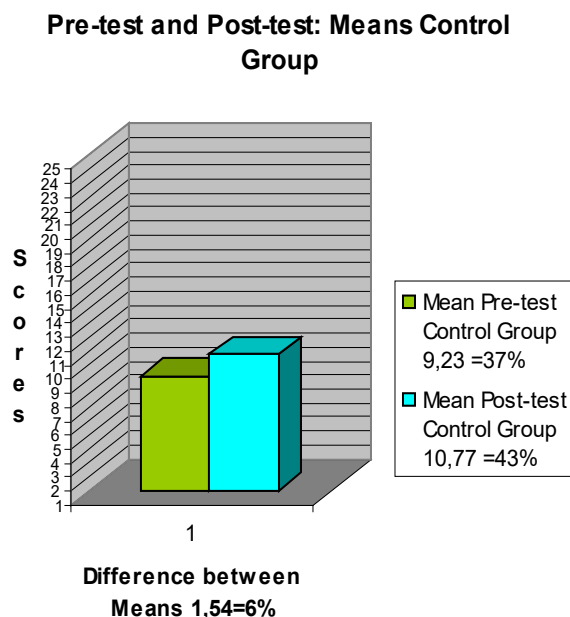
Pre-and-post-test control group results

Likewise, it was necessary to compare the pre-and-post test results of the control group in order to establish the control group students' listening improvement. Note that, this group was teaching listening only following the activities from the book called *American Channel-Pre-intermediate*, written by H.Q. Mitchell and J. Scott in 2005. On the one hand, the pre-test demonstrated that the control group had a mean \bar{x}_1 of 9.23 equal to 37.00% of listening comprehension. On the other hand, the post-test of this group showed a mean \bar{x}_2 of 10.77 equal to 43% of listening comprehension. The difference between both means of the control group in the pre-and-post-test was 1.54 marks equal to 6%.

Table1d: Pre-test and post-test control group

Control Group Pre-test	Control Group Post-test
$\bar{x}_1 = 9,23$	$\bar{x}_2 = 10,77$
$n_1 = 15$	$n_2 = 13$

Histogram1d: Means pre-test and post-test control group



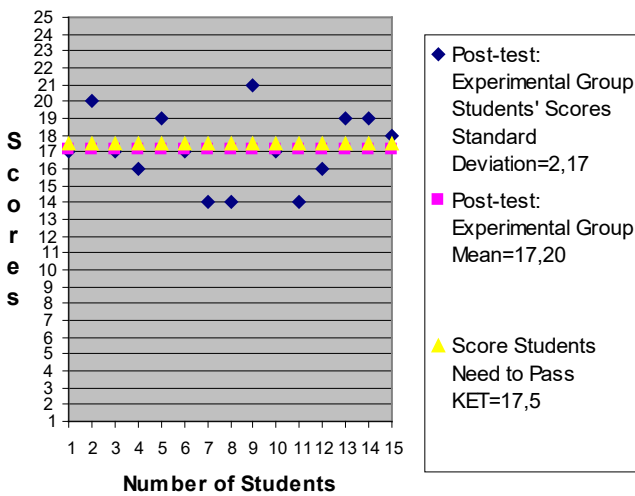
Discussion

The listening techniques raised significantly academic listening results (output) of the students in the experimental group; this group, after treatment on the post-test, had a mean \bar{x}_1 of 17.20 which is superior to the academic listening output of students in the control group, who had a mean \bar{x}_2 of 10.77 in the post-test. This was due to the fact that they acquired listening only by following listening activities from the book called *American Channel Pre-intermediate*, H.Q. Mitchell and J. Scott, in 2005. Note that according to the means, both groups in the post-test improved their listening comprehension. However, the difference between both means in the pre-test and post-test of the experimental shows an improvement of 9, 07 which is significant. The control group reported an improvement of 1, 54 which is relatively low.

The standard deviation of the experimental group after treatment in the post-test was 2.17, which showed that after treatment, the experimental group was more homogenous than the control group, which had a standard deviation of 4.00. Consequently, the experimental group after treatment showed a dispersion lower than that of the control group (the untreated group), because the treatment helped all the students improve their listening comprehension, but the treatment helped specially the weak listening students, who improved their listening comprehension, and reached an adequate listening level inside the experimental group. In this way, the author demonstrated the effectiveness of the listening techniques.

Experimental Group Post-test Standard Deviation	Control Group Post-test Standard Deviation
$S_1=2,17$	$S_2=4,00$

Dispersion: Post-test Experimental Group Standard Deviation



Generally speaking, the author would say that it is not enough to teach listening only following the listening activities from the text-book ca-

lled *American Channel, Pre-intermediate* written by H.Q. Mitchell and J. Scott in 2005. Students need to acquire their listening in other ways; for example, through note-taking, dictogloss, dictation, and by developing listening activities based on assessment. For example, matching, multiple matching and sentence completion exercises.

Conclusions

After the application of the listening techniques and statistical procedures in this experimental project, the author has arrived at several important conclusions; among the most significant are the improvement in listening comprehension of the experimental group students, homogeneity in this group, and rejection of the null hypothesis.

The listening techniques provided useful listening resources such as: note-taking, dictogloss, dictation, matching, multiple matching and sentence completion exercises. These techniques helped a lot in the class when the students got tired, bored, or were stressed, because they created a relaxed and nice environment which stimulated listening acquisition. Likewise, the students developed listening exercises which focused on listening evaluation and prepared the students to take the KET English test. Both resources worked together and helped experimental group students improve their listening comprehension. During this experimental project, the author explored principles like “good listeners become good speakers” (Lynch, 1996), because listening helped the learners improve their speaking. The above-mentioned listening techniques were enriching for the author because she grew up as an English listening teacher. It was also rewarding to see all the listening process through which experimental group students improved their listening comprehension.

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POLÍTICA EDITORIAL

1. La Revista Científica Kronos es una publicación del Instituto Académico de Idiomas (IAI) de la Universidad Central del Ecuador la cual se publica semestralmente. Constituye un espacio que promueve la difusión de prácticas investigativas en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de los idiomas extranjeros y ancestrales con visión a mejorar la práctica educativa.

SECCIONES

Cada edición de la Revista Científica Kronos tiene una temática central (sección Dossier), la cual es gestionada por un coordinador especialista en ese campo. El tema del dossier es público a través de convocatorias abiertas difundidas por medios electrónicos e impresos. La Revista Científica Kronos recibe durante todo el año trabajos para su sección Experticia, que incluye temas no relacionados con el dossier, pero sí con los trabajos vinculados a estudios lingüísticos, sociológicos, antropológicos, metodológicos, vinculados con los Idiomas extranjeros. La Revista Científica Kronos también publica en cada número reseñas de obras científicas de relevancia.

SELECCIÓN DE LOS ARTÍCULOS

Los artículos sometidos a revisión serán evaluados por un sistema de doble ciego (double blind peer review). Cada artículo será evaluado según criterios de pertinencia, calidad, claridad de expresión, originalidad y relevancia por parte de al menos dos lectores. Además de los criterios de contenido, los artículos deben ajustarse a la Política Editorial y las normas de publicación.

REQUISITO DE ORIGINALIDAD

Los artículos presentados deben ser inéditos y representar un esfuerzo científico original. Los trabajos que se considerarán para su publicación en la Revista Científica Kronos deben tomar en cuenta estas normas de publicación.

NORMAS DE PUBLICACIÓN

Los trabajos que se considerarán para su publicación en la Revista Científica Kronos deben tomar en cuenta estas normas de publicación.

SOBRE EL CUERPO TEXTUAL

1. En la portada, las colaboraciones deben hacer constar, en este orden: i) título del artículo, ii) nombre del autor o autora acompañado del grado académico, iii) adscripción institucional u organizacional, iv) dirección electrónica, y v) fecha de envío. Los títulos no deben exceder de 20 palabras.
2. El título debe estar escrito tanto en Inglés como en Castellano.
3. En la siguiente página, toda colaboración —menos las reseñas— debe tener un resumen ejecutivo (abstract) de entre 150 y 200 palabras en castellano y en inglés. Bajo los dos resúmenes se pone entre tres y cinco palabras clave.

4. Todo el texto principal —incluso la primera hoja, las notas al final, la bibliografía— tendrá una interlínea de 1,5 y se usará la tipografía Times New Roman, tamaño 12.
5. Los párrafos no se espaciarán y se introducirá sangrado al inicio
6. Márgenes: 2,5 cm por todos los lados de la hoja
7. La bibliografía citada en el texto principal se colocará al final del trabajo con sangría francesa.
8. La primera vez que aparezcan siglas deberá escribirse su significado completo, luego solamente las siglas.

Sección	No. palabras	No. Hojas
Dossier	3000 a 6000	10 a 20
Experticia	2000 a 3000	6 a 10
Reseñas	1000 a 1500	3 a 5

9. La cantidad de figuras y tablas se limita a máximo tres elementos. Los editores de la revista se reservan el derecho de eliminar los demás cuando sean usados de manera excesiva.
10. Los títulos de figuras y tablas deben ser concisos, sin que superen las 8 palabras.

SOBRE LA EXTENSIÓN

11. La extensión de los textos puede medirse con número de palabras o número de hojas para cada sección, tal cual se ilustra en el siguiente gráfico:

Sección	No. palabras	No. Hojas
Dossier	3000 a 6000	10 a 20
Experticia	2000 a 3000	6 a 10
Reseñas	1000 a 1500	3 a 5

REFERENCIAS BIBLIOGRÁFICAS

12. El estándar de las referencias bibliográficas al que se acoge y rige la Revista Científica Kronos es el estilo APA en su sexta edición (2009). A manera de guía para las citas y la bibliografía, se detalla a continuación los casos más comunes.

CITAS

13. La cita corta, que es de menos de cuarenta palabras, va dentro del cuerpo textual (párrafo). Se la puede manejar de dos maneras:
 - Con énfasis en el autor, cuya secuencia esquemática es: Apellido, (año), «cita», (página), punto. Ejemplo:

Morales (2009) afirma: «lorem ipsum» (p. 8).
 - Con énfasis en el texto, cuya secuencia esquemática es: «cita», (Apellido, año, página), punto. Ejemplo:

«Morbi dolor sapien» (Morales, 2009, p. 68).

14. La cita larga, que es de más de cuarenta palabras, va en párrafo aparte, sin cursiva ni comillas y con sangría. Se la puede manejar —al igual que con las citas cortas— de dos maneras:

- Con énfasis en el autor, cuya secuencia esquemática es: en párrafo precedente Apellido, (año), cita en párrafo independiente, punto, (página). Ejemplo:

Morales (2009) afirma:

Quisque purus mauris, ullamcorper quis varius eu, placerat a felis. Aliquam consequat bibendum neque eu efficitur. Vivamus scelerisque, purus et vestibulum efficitur, leo quam blandit neque, nec rutrum urna urna in nunc. Sed diam nunc, porta vitae aliquet sed, dapibus at metus. Vestibulum at ex imperdiet, luctus nisi eget, interdum purus. (p. 68)

- Con énfasis en el texto, cuya secuencia esquemática es: cita en párrafo independiente, punto, (Apellido, año, página). Ejemplo:

Quisque purus mauris, ullamcorper quis varius eu, placerat a felis. Aliquam consequat bibendum neque eu efae aliquet sed, dapibus at metus. Vestibulum at ex imperdiet, luctus nisi eget, interdum purus. (Morales, 2009, p. 68)

SOBRE LA DISPOSICIÓN TEXTUAL INTERIOR

15. Se jerarquizará la información para facilitar el ordenamiento del contenido de la siguiente manera. Los encabezados no llevarán números, ni tampoco mayúsculas sostenidas.

Nivel 1: Encabezado centrado en negrita, con mayúsculas y minúsculas

Explicación	Categoría	Categoría	Categoría
Variable			
Variable			

Nivel 2: Encabezado alineado a la izquierda en negritas con mayúsculas y minúsculas

Nivel 3: Encabezado de párrafo con sangría, negritas, mayúsculas, minúsculas y punto final.

Nivel 4: Encabezado de párrafo con sangría, negritas, cursivas, mayúsculas, minúsculas y punto final.

Nivel 5: Encabezado de párrafo con sangría, cursivas, mayúsculas, minúsculas y punto final.

NOTAS FINALES

16. La Revista Científica Kronos no utiliza pie de páginas. Todas las aclaraciones complementarias deben ser puestas al final del documento como notas finales.

TABLAS Y FIGURAS

17. En el texto principal se incluirán tablas y figuras —(con figuras entiéndase gráficos, mapas, fotografías)—. Si fuese necesario
18. Las tablas deben tener en la parte superior la palabra *Tabla*, un número secuencial y un título; en la parte inferior una *Nota* y la *Fuente*, si aplica. Ejemplo:

Tabla 1. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit

Explicación	Categoría	Categoría	Categoría
Variable			
Variable			

Nota: Morbi dolor sapien, venenatis bibendum. Fuente: Morales (1995, p. 3).

- Las notas informan y ofrecen explicaciones relacionadas con la tabla. La cita de la fuente —sea, libro, revista, página web, etc.— solo se la hace si la tabla no es de propia autoría y siguiendo las normas de referencia expuestas.
19. Las figuras deben tener en la parte superior la palabra *Figura*, un número secuencial y un título; en la parte inferior una *Nota*, si aplica, y —obligatoriamente— la *Fuente*.

Ejemplo:

Figura 1. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit



Nota: Morbi dolor sapien, venenatis bibendum. Fuente: Morales (1995, p. 3).

- Las notas informan y ofrecen explicaciones relacionadas con la figura. La cita de la fuente —sea, libro, revista, página web, etc.— solo se la hace si la figura no es de propia autoría y siguiendo las normas de referencia expuestas.
20. Las figuras deben enviarse obligatoriamente con los datos numéricos correspondientes.
21. La Revista Científica Kronos se reserva el derecho de poner determinadas tablas y figuras a todo color cuando las necesidades explicativas e interpretativas lo exijan.

ASPECTOS GENERALES

22. Cualquier situación no prevista en estas normas de publicación será resuelta por el Editor General.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

AIMS AND SCOPE

1. Kronos Journal is a publication of the Academic Institute of Languages (IAI) of the Central University of Ecuador which is published every six months. It is a place that promotes the dissemination of research practices in the teaching-learning process of foreign and ancestral languages with the aim of improving educational practices.

SECTIONS

Each issue of Kronos Journal has a central theme (Dossier), which is managed by a specialist coordinator in that field. The theme of the dossier is announced through open calls broadcasted via electronic and print media. Kronos Journal receives works for its Expertise section all year round which includes studies related to linguistic, sociological, anthropological and methodological studies related to foreign languages. Proposals for the Dossier are not considered for this section. In addition, Kronos Journal publishes relevant book reviews in each issue.

EDITORIAL PROCEDURE- PEER REVIEW

All submitted manuscripts will be assigned to two experts for a blind peer review. Each manuscript will be evaluated according to criteria of relevance, quality, clarity of expression, originality, and relevance. In addition to the content criteria, articles must meet the editorial policy and publication standards requirements. (see next page).

PUBLICATION ETHICS

The articles submitted should be unpublished and a result of serious scientific research.

For publication in the Kronos Journal authors should consider the following:

MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

FRONT AND TEXT MATTER

1. On the front page, proposals must state the following information i) title of the article, ii) name of the author together with the academic degree, iii) institutional or organizational affiliation, iv) electronic address, and v) date of submission. Titles should not exceed 20 words.
2. The title should be written in Spanish and English
3. On the next page, all proposals, except for the reviews, - must have an abstract of 150 to 200 words in Spanish as well as in English. Under the two summaries three to five keywords have to be stated.
4. All the main text - including the front page, the endnotes, or the references list - will have an interline of 1.5 and will use Times New Roman type 12 font.
5. Paragraphs will not be spaced and an indentation will be introduced at the beginning

6. Margins: 2.5 cm on all sides of the sheet
7. The references cited in the main text will be placed at the end of the document with French indentation.
8. The first time that acronyms appear, their full meaning must be written. The meaning is not required in further occasions.
9. The number of figures and tables is limited to a maximum of three elements. The editors of the journal reserve the right to remove elements when used excessively.
10. The titles of figures and tables must be concise, without exceeding 8 words.

THE LENGHT

The length of the manuscripts can be measured by the number of words or number of sheets accordingly.

Section	No. Of words	No. Of sheets
Dossier	3.000 to 6.000	10 to 20
Expertise	2.000 to 3.000	6 to 10
Book reviews	1.000 to 1500	3 to 5

REFERENCES

11. Kronos Journal follows the standards of the APA style, sixth edition (2009). The following is a guide for cites and bibliography.

QUOTES

12. The short quotation, which is less than forty words, is stated inside the textual body (paragraph). It can be managed in two ways:
 - Emphasis on the author. The schematic sequence is: last name, (year), “citation”, (page), period. Example:

Moles (2009) affirms: «lorem ipsum» (p. 8).
 - With emphasis on the text, The schematic sequence is: “citation”, (Last, Year, Page), period. Example:

«Morbi dolor sapien» (Morales, 2009, p. 68).
14. The long quotation, which is more than forty words, is stated in a separated paragraph. Italics or quotation marks shall be avoided. An indentation is required. It can be written in two ways:

- Emphasis on the author. The schematic sequence is: Last name, (year), in a previous paragraph. A quotation in a separate paragraph, period, (page). Example:

Morales (2009) affirms:

Quisque purus mauris, ullamcorper quis varius eu, placerat a felis. Aliquam consequat bibendum neque eu efficitur. Vivamus scelerisque, purus et vestibulum efficitur, leo quam blandit neque, nec rutrum urna urna in nunc. Sed diam nunc, porta vitae aliquet sed, dapibus at metus. Vestibulum at ex imperdiet, luctus nisi eget, interdum purus. (p. 68)

- With emphasis on the text. The schematic sequence is: quotation in separate paragraph, period, (Last name, Year, Page). Example:

Quisque purus mauris, ullamcorper quis varius eu, placerat a felis. Aliquam consequat bibendum neque eu efficitur. Vivamus scelerisque, purus et vestibulum efficitur, leo quam blandit neque, nec rutrum urna urna in nunc. Sed diam nunc, porta vitae aliquet sed, dapibus at metus. Vestibulum at ex imperdiet, luctus nisi eget, interdum purus. (Morales, 2009, p. 68)

THE INSIDE TEXT

15. The information will be hierarchized to facilitate the reading in the following way: The headings will not have numbers, nor will they be capitalized.

Level 1: Heading centered in bold, with uppercase and lowercase

Level 2: Heading aligned to the left in bold with uppercase and lowercase

Level 3: Paragraph heading with indentation, bold, uppercase, lowercase and endpoint.

Level 4: Paragraph heading with indentation, bold, italics, uppercase, lowercase and endpoint.

Level 5: Paragraph heading with indentation, italics, uppercase, lowercase and endpoint.

FINAL NOTES

16. Kronos Journal does not use footnotes. All supplementary explanations should be placed at the end of the document as final notes.

TABLES AND FIGURES

17. The main text will include tables and figures - (by figures read graphics, maps, photographs) -. If necessary

18. Tables should be labelled with the word Table, a sequential number and a title in the upper part of the table. At the bottom, a Note and Source, if applicable, should appear. Example:

Table 1. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit

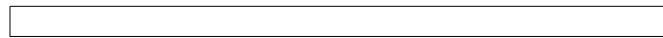
Explaining	Category	Category	eCategory
Variable			
Variable			

Nota: Morbi dolor sapien, venenatis bibendum. Fuente: Morales (1995, p. 3).

- The notes inform and offer explanations related to the table. The citation of the source – either a book, a magazine, a web page, etc. - is made when the table is not authored. If this is the case, follow the reference standards set forth.

19. Figures must have a sequential number, and a title in the upper part of the figure. In the lower part a Note, if applicable, should be added. The Source is mandatory. Example:

Figure 1. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit



Note: Morbi dolor sapien, venenatis bibendum. Fuente: Morales (1995, p. 3).

- The notes inform and offer explanations related to the figure. The citation of the source – either a book, magazine, website, etc. - is only done if the figure is not of own authorship and following the reference standards exposed.

20. The figures must be sent with the corresponding numerical data.

21. When tables and figures do not meet the color quality requirement, Kronos Journal reserves the right to make the necessary arrangements

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

22. Any situation not foreseen within the present guide will be solved by the General Editor.

La Revista Científica Kronos - The Language Teaching Journal promueve la difusión de prácticas investigativas en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de los idiomas extranjeros y ancestrales para mayor y mejor desempeño en el ámbito educativo. Así mismo genera el debate del quehacer pedagógico en la enseñanza de lenguas destinado a personas, organizaciones e instituciones nacionales e internacionales.



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