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**Students' perceptions on their listening comprehension difficulties in EFL
classrooms: An Ecuadorian case**

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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María Alicia Boroto Carrasco
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DEDICATION

To my sons Eduardo and Daniel, the reasons to pursue my goals. To my parents Richard and Gloria for teaching me to work hard and follow my dreams. And to Nicky, my guardian angel.

Alicia

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I would like to express my deep gratitude to Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja and its entire staff in the area of English for all their help and support during all these years of academic preparation.

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ABSTRACT

This research entitled “Students’ perceptions on their listening comprehension difficulties in EFL classrooms: An Ecuadorian case” attempts to identify the main problems that high school students face regarding listening comprehension when learning English as a foreign language, through qualitative and quantitative approaches.

This study was conducted in the city of Cuenca. One hundred twenty five students of second year of senior high school of 5 different parallels from 2 private high schools and 5 English as a foreign language teachers from those schools participated in this research. The data was collected by applying a survey to students and teachers to learn about their perceptions on the listening comprehension difficulties in the EFL classroom; moreover, twenty-five students were interviewed to discover their opinion and experience concerning the difficulties they face when listening. The results of these processes showed that, for students’ speed, accent, pauses and pronunciation, are definitely key factors that influence on the clear and good transfer of the message.

Key words: Listening comprehension, listener, speaker, listening passage.

RESUMEN

La presente investigación titulada “Percepciones de los estudiantes sobre sus dificultades en comprensión auditiva en el aula de clase de inglés como idioma extranjero: Un caso ecuatoriano” intenta identificar los principales problemas que enfrentan los estudiantes de colegios secundarios con respecto a la comprensión auditiva durante el aprendizaje del inglés como idioma extranjero a través de un enfoque cualitativo y cuantitativo.

Este estudio se realizó en la ciudad de Cuenca. Ciento veinte y cinco estudiantes de segundo curso de bachillerato de 5 paralelos de 2 colegios secundarios privados y 5 profesores de inglés como idioma extranjero de dichas escuelas participaron en esta investigación. La información fue recolectada mediante la aplicación de una encuesta a los estudiantes y profesores a fin de conocer sobre sus percepciones acerca de las dificultades de la comprensión auditiva en el aula de aprendizaje del inglés como idioma extranjero, además de entrevistas a veinte y cinco estudiantes para descubrir su opinión y experiencia con respecto a las dificultades que enfrentan al momento de escuchar. Los resultados de estos procesos muestran que la velocidad, el acento, las pausas y la pronunciación son definitivamente factores claves que influyen en una clara y buena transferencia del mensaje.

Palabras clave: Comprensión auditiva, oyente, hablante, pasaje escuchado.

INTRODUCTION

When learning English as a foreign language it is very important to focus on the four skills in order to acquire a good level of the language. Among these skills listening is which in many cases has been relegated due to the natural difficulty that it constitutes for students especially when they face problems regarding listening comprehension during the communication process.

For this particular research project, I have focused on the topic "Students' perceptions on their listening comprehension difficulties in EFL classrooms: An Ecuadorian case"; in order to achieve this goal, the following objectives are: to identify the listener factors that affect their listening comprehension, to know if the speaker factor interferes in the listener's listening skill and to determine how the listening passage hinders the student's listening comprehension.

We also have to consider that in spite of the usefulness of listening comprehension in real life, its teaching has been neglected and left to a secondary position in most of the EFL classrooms in high schools. This has led to listening comprehension being addressed, in most cases, only using the textbooks, which focus on some basic exercises while in other cases, the development of this skill has been completely left aside.

The development of effective listening comprehension skills is an area of study of many researchers who have been interested in discovering what exactly makes it difficult for students to achieve their goals. Some of the results have been published with interesting theories and are presented as support for this paper such as the differences between note taking while listening and post listening summary writing in the process of listening comprehension in two groups of Iranian EFL students where it was proved that "students who use note taking methods had higher levels of comprehension." (Ahour and Bargool, 2015, p.2231).

Another study by Hemmati, Gholamrezapour, and Hessamy (2015, p.1482) compares "the effect of reading story aloud (RSA) and storytelling (ST) on intermediate EFL learner's listening comprehension" presenting new theories in the field of reading related to listening comprehension.

Aldera (2015, p.1983) introduces the use of multimedia strategies with the use of "computer assisted language learning (CALL) to investigate the efficacy of different multimedia modes on gaining L2 listening comprehension in an EFL environment".

For Tabrizi and Vaezi (2015) students jeopardize their comprehension when they try to focus on the structures used or on each word of an audio or a lecture instead of understanding the message given as a whole.

With this background, it is clear that it is of utter importance to conduct a research in our medium with the purpose of identifying the listening comprehension problems that high school students face in the EFL classrooms according to their personal views, while also considering the opinions from both the teachers and the students. As mentioned by Shi (2015, p.1901) “more and more teachers and scholars realize the significant role listening comprehension plays in language learning and communication”.

The studies used for this research include Ahour and Bargool, (2015) where the objective of the study was to discover “the effect of while listening note taking and post listening summary writing on Iranian EFL students listening comprehension and to see if there is any significant difference between the effects of the two listening strategies” (p. 2331), where it is stated that “our findings indicated that both while listening note taking and post listening summary writing had positive effects on the participants’ listening comprehension ability” (p. 2331).

Hemmati, Gholamrezapour and Hessamy (2015) “were concerned with the influence of RSA (*Reading Story Aloud*) and ST (*Story Telling*) on the listening ability of the students as well as the differences in the listening comprehension skill between ST and RSA groups” (p. 1486) and “the findings showed positive effects for both ways of presenting stories in EFL classrooms; however, storytelling had more positive effects than reading aloud on the learners’ listening comprehension improvement” (1486),

Aldera (2015) presented a “research that confirms evidence that using multimedia in the listening classes enhances second / foreign language English listening comprehension” (p. 1987). The results obtained in his research “show that listening comprehension is improved more when multimedia is used than when audio alone is used” (p. 1987).

Also the paper by Vahdany, Akbari, Shahrestani and Askari (2016) “tried to examine Iranian EFL student’s use of different cognitive and metacognitive test taking strategies and the most and the least frequent uses of these strategies by students while they are performing listening comprehension tests” (p.385) suggesting with their findings that “cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies used could explain variation in language test performance” (p. 389) affecting the listening comprehension skill.

Tabrizi and Vaezi (2015) presented their paper “to determine whether the recognition and interpretation of interpersonal and cognitive discourse markers will enhance students’ listening comprehension ability in authentic situations” (p. 1570) where the final results obtained showed “a significant relationship between the subject’s listening ability and their knowledge of interpersonal and cognitive discourse markers” (p. 1576).

This research was conducted with one hundred twenty five students who at that moment were attending the second year of high school. Students were divided in groups of

twenty-five students, three groups from one high school and two groups from another high school. Each group of students was asked to take a survey with eighteen statements on difficulties faced during the listening comprehension process, these statements were divided in three sections: The listener, the speaker and the listening passage. The same survey was also given to five English teachers, one teacher for each of the parallels who participated in this study.

This research had two parts a quantitative part based on the surveys applied to EFL students and EFL teachers from two private schools in the city of Cuenca and a qualitative part based on interviews hold with students who participated on the survey process.

The qualitative part of this study was conducted through personal interviews to five students from each group who were chosen at random to participate in an interview regarding the same topics. Then the information was tabulated into charts to show the results using an Excel sheet.

The benefits of this research work were that many of the problems and difficulties EFL students face were identified during the process and at the end of this work we are able to make recommendations on possible solutions to those problems.

Some of the limitations found during the process of data collection were the size of the sample and the perception from some of the students interviewed who were not aware of the difficulties related with the listening comprehension process and replied that they do not consider it as an important part of the language learning process.

CHAPTER I: LITERATURE REVIEW

Regarding listening comprehension Siegel (2015, p.4) states that "it is widely accepted that listening skills are of vital importance in the communicative process"; however, according to Graham and Santos (2013), it is very well known that not enough time is devoted in the classroom to develop the listening skill when teaching a language which leads to many problems faced specially by L2 listeners and EFL students or that the strategies or techniques used do not always meet the needs of learners or catch their attention in order to assure good results. This lack of time and effort may affect the perception of the listeners, also the behavior of the speakers, the type of message and the way this message is delivered are some of the factors which contribute in making listening comprehension a difficult skill, or at creating this perception among many secondary school students.

In order to ground the present study in theory topics like: listening comprehension, elements of listening comprehension: the listener, the speaker and the listening passage, listening comprehension difficulties for EFL learners, strategies and activities to develop listening comprehension skill are deeply analyzed below.

Listening Comprehension

The importance of listening comprehension from the beginning of the learning process must be highlighted by teachers considering that it is important that learners feel confident in order to be able to reach good proficiency and listening comprehension levels. According to Shi (2015) since listening comprehension has great importance within the process of language learning and communication it must be included in tests, quizzes and exams in order to have a follow up of this skill. In the particular case of the Ecuadorian system one of our biggest mistakes when teaching English is that teachers do test listening comprehension but they do not teach it, making students face a difficult situation which is added to the normal difficulties of the EFL listening comprehension process. In order to improve the results teachers need to become proactive and include more listening comprehension activities in their lessons instead of waiting until test time to introduce this task which is not an isolated phenomenon as many authors have pointed out when talking about the importance of listening comprehension from the beginning of any language learning process.

Listening comprehension is a skill that has to be developed from the first stages of the learning process just as it happens with the acquisition of L1, as Richards and Rodgers (2001, p.74) state "Children's ability in listening comprehension is acquired because children are required to respond physically to spoken language in the form of parental commands". In the same way teachers must pay special attention to this skill during the process of learning

a L2 including activities in their lessons which will activate the physical response of their students to spoken English.

Richards and Rodgers (2001, p.74) also expresses that "Once a foundation in listening comprehension has been established, speech evolves naturally and effortlessly out of it". Everyday sounds, words, sentences, authentic material and situations will become part of this cognitive map that will grow to improve the listening comprehension process, later in life this process will be enforced by formal and informal practice until the learner is able to listen and understand what has been said with little or no hesitation on the message received.

According to Aldera (2015, p. 1983) "Listening is one of the hardest skills that English as a foreign language (EFL) students encounter during the process of L2 comprehension", this might be one of the reasons for students to try to ease the process by paying more attention to the other skills and assuming that listening comprehension is already too difficult to make the effort.

Brown (2014, p. 8) states that "apparently satisfactory communication may often take place without the listener arriving to a full interpretation of the words used" giving the listening comprehension process a dimension of a whole process instead of an isolated language skill.

On the other hand Ur (2013) expresses that the perfect combination of utterances and sentences, bringing the learner to real life listening comprehension situations where they are subjected to different characteristics of speech such as accent, elision, assimilation, etc. can create situations when the same sound could not be easily recognizable distorting the sound and therefore the message comprehended.

As Ahour and Bargool (2015, p. 2327) present when they quote Rost (2011), "Listening is the most important skill in learning a new language and its main purpose is to be able to understand what the intended meaning for the speaker is", and many times listening comprehension is left aside by English teachers due to lack of time, not enough experience with the language or a simple assumption that the speaker will guess a meaning when the real purpose of listening comprehension is to transfer the message from one person to the other.

Elements of Listening Comprehension: The Listener, the Speaker, and the Listening Passage

Concerning listening comprehension, three major elements can be clearly identified for the purpose of this study, for explanation purposes the elements of listening comprehension in this section will be analyzed in a separate way but pointing out the importance of having them together at all times to maintain the purpose of the listening task, these elements of listening comprehension have the same value and importance and cannot

function in a separate way otherwise they would not fulfill the purpose of the listening comprehension task.

The Listener

Johnson (2014) expresses a difference between “good” and “poor” listeners as a characteristic to cause a predisposition which create a series of conditions that may be used by the teacher on favor of the group based on the purpose of the listening activity. The role of the listener in this process is as important as the speaker and the message, reasons to pay particular attention to his own view of the whole process and the particular purpose of the listening comprehension activity.

Ur (2013) expresses that students struggle to understand the oral message when it is presented by a new or strange speaker with an accent different from the one they are familiarized with. This type of behavior interferes with the listening comprehension process since listeners tend to block themselves when facing a different speaker. Predisposition of listeners combined with their previous knowledge or lack of knowlegde of the language and their interest and purpose of a particular activity promote their active participation in the listening comprehension process acquiring main importance to achieve the proposed goal.

Since listening comprehension is not an isolated activity rather than a complex and interactive process, Rost (2016) suggests the adoption of proper bases to understand oral communication.

According to Tabrizi and Vaezi (2015) the listener has a critical role in the listening comprehension process and eventhough many times this importance is not considered real, to assure a correct transfer of the message listener must be consider as important as speakers and must be given all kinds of aids to facilitate their role.

The Speaker

For Siegel (2015) many times listeners are mostly relagated to a place behind speakers who tend to be the center of attention due to the production of the oral message to be received, this happends in every day situations and in general communication and it is often replicated within the classroom environment empowering the role of speakers.

Also Ur (2013) mentions that sometimes responses of listeners could be subjected to the visibility of speakers, confirming that listening comprehension is not possible without the presence and interrelation of all the elements of the process. The listening comprehension process is enhanced by the presence of the speaker making comprehension easier if the speaker is present in the communication process rather than if another mean like an audio recording is used. Johnson (2014), explains the importance of speakers in the exchange of communication and the delivery of the message depending on their engagement level in the process.

However, even if the normal practice gives an active role to speakers, it must be said that listeners are the ones that have the option to continue with the process by responding to the communication stimulus or ignoring it through verbal or non-verbal means and stopping the interaction as Rost (2013) mentioned, this concept balances the equal importance of both actors in the process avoiding giving more importance to one over the other since in authentic situations the listening comprehension process could not take place if one of the actors (listener or speaker) is missing or if the message is not delivered or communicated.

The Listening Passage

According to Tabrizi and Vaezi (2015, p. 1571) "listening further calls for evaluation, acceptance, or rejection, internalization and sometimes also appreciation of the ideas expressed" giving an idea of the importance and complexity of the listening passage in listening comprehension to successfully complete the communication process.

As quoted by Hemmati, Gholamrezapour and Hessamy (2015, p 1483) on their study on the effects of using storytelling and reading stories loud on listening comprehension "there are a number of studies emphasizing on the importance of storytelling in improving language comprehension and listening skills" explaining the importance of the listening passage in the final result of the listening comprehension activity.

Listening Comprehension Difficulties for EFL Learners

Ahour and Bagool (2015, p 2327) quoting "Rost (2011) points out that because listening comprehension is very essential in using and learning a language and it is the basic channel for L2 acquisition, the development of this skill should be given great priority in instruction" explaining the importance of listening comprehension, unfortunately many factors produce a series of difficulties for EFL learners making this process difficult and several times even diminished, many students tend to feel disappointed when they encounter problems understanding oral messages delivered and not being able to process the information heard.

This kind of difficulties can become more complex when dealing with sounds that may not exist in the first language of the listeners as mentioned by Ur (2013) causing students to struggle with this difficulty while trying to understand and reproduce sounds.

Another typical problem is the perception that "native speakers talk too fast" as Gilbert (2012) mentioned, the speed while speaking is relative depending on the speakers and their normal way and speed of speaking, but for most listeners speed represents a main problem while trying to understand the listening passage, especially if the person speaking is a native speaker, since the perception of listeners during the learning process is that EFL learners will speak at a lower speed as part of their own learning process while native speakers do not

pay attention to this particular aspect of speaking, which is natural for them, causing comprehension problems for listeners.

Unfortunately these are not the only problems L2 listeners encounter during the listening comprehension process, frequently, materials used in academic situations tend to be too difficult or too demanding and required special attention and concentration from the listener's side lowering the level of comprehension that listeners will obtain from less structured and formal settings as per noted by Tsagari and Banerjee (2016), teachers tend to use academic materials such as texts which are reproduced orally by the teachers themselves or with the help of recordings just because they come with the textbook, creating an artificial setting that makes listening comprehension more difficult for the listener since it constitutes a completely different situation listeners will face if authentic materials such as audio, videos or lectures will be used, paying special attention to the type and level of language used in those materials for each group of students addressed.

Another very common problem is that many exercises suggested for listening comprehension require that listeners pay attention for long periods of time before being able to respond turning the listening comprehension activity into a memorization exercise as mentioned by Ur (2013) where comprehension is left in a secondary place while the listener focus on retaining as many pieces of information as possible in order to be able to continue with the communication process. This type of situations can have a negative effect in the listening comprehension process if we take into account what Aldera (2015) mentioned about the limited capacity of human brain to retain information and the risk of overloading it with extra information that most of the cases is not essential for the final purpose of the listening activity; this can create the false perception among listeners that they have listening comprehension problems or that they understand just a little or do not even understand at all when the real problem is the lack of memory capacity of human brains to retain an excessive amount of information produced orally at once without the help of external aids.

For Brown (1995) the predisposition of the human mind to get distracted can be one of the factors to make the listening comprehension process even more difficult. The fact that we need to use extra concentration or that we need to focus on what it has been said in order to understand the message may influence EFL learners perception that listening comprehension is too difficult for them. This need for extra effort to focus on what has been said tends to bother learners and give them the wrong idea that all listening comprehension activities are boring or difficult or even both.

Many EFL students feel they are not improving their listening comprehension skills because they are not aware or informed of the the nature and goal of the particular listening comprehension activity they are about to work on. By using easy alert messages such as:

today we are going to listen to an exercise which will help you understand native speakers outside the classroom, the teacher sets the limits of the task, bringing students' attention to a particular situation and setting their brains through specific instructions in order to assure the fulfillment of the planned task, as Bratt (1997) stated. EFL students tend to feel more comfortable, understand more and produce more when they are aware of what is going on around them than when they have to guess what is going to happen and what are they supposed to listen to.

EFL learners tend to feel stressed when facing listening comprehension activities that require paying attention to spoken English texts even though as Rost (2013) stated "Grammatical and lexical parsing skills needed for reading and listening would appear to be quite similar since written English texts and spoken English texts are derived from the same linguistic rules". In real world, this statement results true except that EFL learners consider spoken English texts to be more complicated than written text and feel more stressed out and try to pay much more attention when they face a listening comprehension situation that when they are asked to do a reading or even writing activity.

All these problems, plus low results on their tests cause students to think that listening comprehension is a difficult task, requiring students to look for proper strategies, techniques and activities, including new technologies to help EFL learners improving their abilities in this area in order to complete their learning process in the best possible way.

Strategies and Activities to Develop Listening Comprehension Skill

Battel (2006, p.7) states "Developing awareness and control of your emotions can have an enormous effect in your ability to listen effectively". This is the first strategy to be applied by EFL learners in order to improve their listening comprehension ability and skill. Once they become totally aware of their emotions and they face the fact that their knowledge is the base to complete the task the learners will feel secure to perform different activities related to listening comprehension.

Many authors have dedicated studies and complete books to cover different strategies and activities in order to improve or develop listening comprehension skills, among those there are a couple that have become popular among listeners and some that are opening their path through the use of modern technologies, especially computers, we will review some of these activities later on in this paper.

Another practical activity to be used in the EFL classroom is listen and respond, where the main purpose is to give students the possibility to be in contact with English outside the classroom setting where most of their listening comprehension activities take place. Most students tend to be concerned about facing situations with native speakers or speakers of English as a second language or as a foreign language outside the English

classroom because of their fear of not being able to understand what is being said, this is why this activity compiled by Hadfield and Hadfield (2013) is so helpful, the teacher prepares a series of words and sentences related to an specific topic that the listener will hear and become aware in order to be prepare for the next time they are used in a listening comprehension context.

A commonly used strategy is note taking which has a proven face validity and psychological validity as stated by Rost (2013) when saying that its value in authentic situations and academic settings allow listeners to become aware of the message being produce at the same time they feel comfortable by registering the information that will be later used to validate the data received by the listener and increasing the listening comprehension level of the activity. Many other authors such as Dunkel and Pialorsi (2005) and Haswell and Lee (2013) have also pointed out that note taking eases the participation of learners and increases their performance level when doing post listening activities. Although Ahour and Bargool (2015, p. 2331) expressed in their study that note taking did not present “a significant difference between the result of posttest of the two groups of Iranian EFL students”.

In practice, note-taking helps listeners by giving them confidence so they are not so focus on memorizing as many pieces of information as possible and become stressed out while thinking they might forget something important during the listening comprehension process.

Based on what many authors and textbook publishers suggest, fill in the blanks is one of the most popular activities to be carried on during the practice of listening, for example, West (2010) has a variety of excersices where he shows the way this excersice is done. When students are beginners the tendency is to have them listen the text once without the writen part and then while listening again they complete the gaps in the text, this exercise is an introduction to pre-listening activities and it is good for focusing on specific words. While prepareing this type of excersice teachers sometimes erase the easy words, sometimes they erase specific words that have been taught in that lesson or they choose words students have had problems with to assure the practice of listening this words in context. The level of complexity of this activity can be adapted based on the students' levels or particular needs identified by teachers.

Another interesting and very practical activity is listening journals. This topic is widely covered by Schmidt (2016) in his study that explains the principles, steps and results of using listening journals as a strategy to help people get interested in improving listening comprehension based on the use of this technique which allows students themselves to choose, listen and record their experiences while listening. Schmidt (2016, p. 7) states that

“almost every student has found the listening journal to not only be interesting and useful for listening practice, but a source of improvement for their real-world listening skills”. This activity has an added value because it allows the use of modern technology such as computers but also can be adapted to those less technology-oriented environments offering students the chance to reflect their own success through the consecution of their goals, which in most cases lead to the improvement of listening comprehension. EFL students feel empowered of their own learning process and are able to register and measure their improvement in listening comprehension by being aware of the process at all times.

Gilbert (2012, p. 19) “Linking practice helps linking comprehension”, this process is possible due to the existence of groups of words that tend to run together most of the time keeping the message and helping students to concentrate in particular sounds as part of their learning process. Teachers will choose the sounds, words or parts of the sentences that are normally linked and through out loud repetition or by using audio or video materials students will be given the opportunity to practice and improve their listening comprehension abilities.

One of the most modern strategies is the one known as CMC, English acronym for Computer Mediated Communication. As mentioned by Long and Doughty (2011), CMC brings the perfect combination of native speakers and target culture into the classroom reducing in an enormous way the expense and effort required to perform this activity and involving the use of Interpretive, Interpersonal and Presentational modes as essential parts of CALL (English acronym for Computer Assisted Language Learning), which nowadays is present in most EFL learning settings around the world. With this technique students are able to use a wide variety of authentic listening materials such as telephone conversations, face-to-face conversations, songs, videos, etc. and they are exposed to a wide range of accents not only of native speakers but also of English speakers from all over the world. Nowadays this is the wider source of resources especially for language learners.

There are lots of resources and technological tools that can be incorporated in the EFL classroom when considering CMC strategies, among the most known ones are podcasts, YouTube, TED talks, music videos, and other offers. As stated by Meier (2015, p.1), “Podcasts are audio or video programs on the WEB that can be listened to on a computer or downloaded to an mp3 player or iPod”. The difference between traditional audio or radio programs and podcasts is that the latter contain a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed, allowing users to subscribe to their favorite podcasts so the new episodes are downloaded automatically to their listening devices (Sze, 2007)”. Podcasts have become very popular among teachers as useful and modern tools for their listening comprehension activities requiring extra effort on their side only the first time they register and allowing them

to receive regular updates on the material recommended based on their previous selections. In the case of students who want to improve their listening comprehension abilities, this tool allows them to choose from a wide range of listening materials and choose those audios or videos that suit their needs and their levels of listening comprehension. With podcasts both teachers and students become engaged in the learning process without the tedious use of traditional audio or radio programs, keeping students interested.

For Blake (2016) if English teachers use tools like YouTube they are entering a source of endless materials which will allowed them to reach and cover all kinds of learners and learning styles within their classrooms and even create new videos based on their own particular needs. But this huge amount of information can be overwhelming if not treated carefully. If teachers decide to use this tool, they must be aware of the preparation time that this activity requires in order to assure the relation of the video with the topic intended for study, the length, the accents of the speakers (most of the time native speakers which is an invaluable advantage) and because of the involvement of the native speaker the use of improper or too informal language or the overuse of idiomatic expressions, sarcasms, slang, etc. which will complicate the already “difficult” process of listening comprehension. Teachers may pay additional attention to crafting or creating the classroom activity around the on-line material in such a way that the objectives of the lesson are fulfilled and avoiding this tool to become an activity that results useless in a learning setting.

To support this research, the findings of five studies related to the researched topic are presented below. Ahour and Bargool (2015) conducted a study about the effect of while listening note taking and post listening summary writing on Iranian EFL students listening comprehension to discover if there is any significant difference between the effects of the two listening strategies. The author concludes that when listening, both note taking and post listening summary writing had positive effects on the participants’ listening comprehension ability. In this study “60 students from two advanced level classes in an English institute in Tabriz in East-Azerbaijan, Iran” (Ahour and Bargool, 2015, p. 2328) participated in December 2014. The study was conducted with 60 students from two advanced classes at an English Institute in Tabriz in East-Azerbaijan, Iran in December 2014. Participants were male and female students between ages 18 to 25. A pretest and a posttest were applied to support the quasi-experimental research. The independent variables were based on note taking and summary writing activities and the dependable variable was the listening comprehension ability. The study was divided in 20 sessions for the two classes for a total of 40 hours. Even though researchers tested the four language skills, the main importance was given to the listening part with 20-minute sessions. For the activities of pretest, class practice and posttest students received new material, meaning material they have not heard before and

then they were given multiple choice listening comprehension tests. “15 multiple choice questions which was chosen from Barron’s (2008) TOEFL iBT book were used as the pretest” (Ahour and Bargool, 2015, p. 2329). Results were tabulated and presented in the form of tables with their corresponding explanation. The results concluded that listening note taking and post listening summary writing had a positive effect on students participating in the study but there was no significant difference between the results of the posttests of the groups.

Hemmati, Gholamrezapour and Hessamy (2015) in a study about the influence of RSA (*Reading Story Aloud*) and ST (*Story Telling*) on the listening ability of the students as well as the differences in the listening comprehension skill between ST and RSA groups discover that there were positive effects for both ways of presenting stories in EFL classrooms; however, storytelling had more positive effects than reading aloud on the learners’ listening comprehension improvement on a group of learners formed by 56 females and 43 males for a total of 99 intermediate EFL undergraduate Iranian students. Participants in the study had to take two different tests: “An Objective Placement Test by Lesley et al (2008) as the pretest, and another test from the same book as the posttest” (Hemmati, Gholamrezapour and Hessamy, 2015, p. 1484). Henry James (2002) storybook called *the turn of the screw* was also used. After taking the placement exam participants were divided in two experimental groups and one control group. The first group participated in 6 sessions listening to stories told by the teacher and the second group listened to their teacher reading out loud the story. No stories were given to the control group but they had to work with the listening activities included in their textbook. After these all of the groups took a posttest. The results were collected, analyzed and presented in the form of tables and figures with the corresponding analysis and explanation of results.

Aldera (2015) presented a research that confirms evidence that using multimedia in the listening classes enhances second / foreign language English listening comprehension. The results evidence that listening comprehension is improved more when multimedia is used than when audio alone is used. In this study 60 Arabic native speakers EFL students participated. The textbook used by students was New Interchange by Richards (1998), this book uses pre-listening activities to present the exercise and questions about the topic, which answers could lead to predictions or use in context depending on the activity. A post listening comprehension test was given to participants and after a month they completed a questionnaire, both tools were used for data collection, which was analyzed by researchers who used quantitative analysis and descriptive and inferential statistics to measure the results obtained. The results were presented using tables and figures and proved to be in line with theories of multimedia learning used as literature support of the study.

Also the paper by Vahdany, Akbari, Shahrestani and Askari (2016) “tried to examine Iranian EFL student’s use of different cognitive and metacognitive test taking strategies and the most and the least frequent uses of these strategies by students while they perform listening comprehension tests” suggesting with their findings that “cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies used could explain variation in language test performance”, affecting the listening comprehension skill. For the first stage of this study 273 volunteers’ ages 20 to 24 took a TOEFL sample test, all of them were students from the Shahab Danesh Institute of Higher Education in Qom, Iran. After the results of the sample test were analyzed 96 students were selected to continue, this group was divided in 39 females and 57 males. Then students were divided in three different levels depending on their English level: An advance level, an upper intermediate level and an intermediate level. Researchers divided the research in four different phases with a specific tool for each one. For the first phase they used the TOEFL paper based test. For the second phase the IELTS Listening Comprehension Test was used. The third phase was based on a Cognitive and Meta-cognitive Strategy Questionnaire and for the last phase Immediate Retrospective Interviews were applied to students participating. The data collected was tabulated and presented in the form of tables with the corresponding explanation of the findings which suggested that cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies use could explain the variation in language test performance.

Tabrizi and Vaezi (2015) conducted a study to determine whether the recognition and interpretation of interpersonal and cognitive discourse markers will enhance students’ listening comprehension ability in authentic situations. In order to gather data for this investigation 100 female and male Iranian EFL students, ages 18 to 30 who were tested using different tests such as the Nelson Proficiency Test and the Preliminary English listening Test (PET), this last test was used as a pre-test and a post-test tool in order to compare the improvement reached by participants. Results of both tests were analyzed using statistical tools and results were compared. During the sessions audiotapes were used and students were allowed to take notes and answer questions for five minutes after listening to the tapes. Data obtained was analyzed and presented in the form of tables with their corresponding explanation. The results obtained showed that there was a significant relationship between the subjects’ listening ability and their knowledge of interpersonal and cognitive discourse markers and that students could benefit from language training programs and the null hypotheses presented regarding no statistical significant difference between listening comprehension who learned discourse markers and those who did not and the use of interpersonal and cognitive discourse markers related to their ability of listening comprehension were discarded.

CHAPTER II: METHOD

Settings and participants

This research was conducted in the city of Cuenca. The sample included a total of 125 students of second year of senior high school divided in 5 parallels from 2 private high schools. These groups of learners study a minimum of five hours of English as foreign language per week. The average level of English is advanced, A2. Furthermore, five EFL teachers, one teacher per each parallel participated in this research. The sample of students was randomly selected from the five English classes in the two high schools. The sample was divided in 94 male students and 31 female students between ages 16 and 17. Some students had previous studies at private English academies but most of the rest of the sample was considered low intermediate level.

Procedures

Data was collected through the use of a survey which included eighteen statements divided in the following way: 9 statements regarding the difficulties listeners face, 4 statements regarding difficulties encountered by the speaker and 5 statements regarding difficulties with the listening passage. Participants had to answer by choosing one of the given frequencies: Never, seldom, sometimes, often or always. The survey presented to students was written in Spanish considering that some students could not have the English level to understand the survey. The same statements were given to five English teachers, one from each parallel that participated in this study. The statements were exactly the same with the only difference that this survey was written in English.

After the survey was applied 5 students from each class were chosen randomly to participate in the interview, which was based on a questionnaire including questions students had to answer and then give an explanation to their responses. Teacher did not participate in the interviews.

The data collected was tabulated using Microsoft Excel and after being analyzed in a quantitative and qualitative way. The quantitative part was based on the surveys applied to EFL students and EFL teachers from two private schools in the city of Cuenca and a qualitative part based on interviews hold with students who participated on the survey process and personal interviews to five students from each group who were chosen at random to participate in an interview regarding the same topics. Then the information was tabulated into charts to show the results which were presented in the form of tables with percentages for each frequency and the corresponding explanation to each statement.

CHAPTER III: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description, Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The following section includes the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the results obtained through surveys applied to a total of 125 students of second year of senior high school divided in 5 classes from 2 private schools in the city of Cuenca regarding the topic of listening comprehension. The data is being presented in tables with the explanation of each statement and its relation to the three research questions posted in this study.

Regarding the listening factors that affect their listening comprehension, students asked clearly stated that there are several factors such as background, lack of knowledge, length of passage, etc. that directly affect their listening comprehension level. It can be seen that most students think that listening comprehension is a very difficult task and due to different factors they don't treat it with the appropriate importance.

How do the listener factors affect their listening comprehension?

TABLE 1: The Listener

Item No.	Statements	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
		%	%	%	%	%
1	I use my experience and background knowledge of the topic to understand the listening passage	21%	35%	33%	6%	6%
2	I listen to every detail to get the main idea of the listening passage	22%	28%	30%	12%	8%
3	I find it difficult to do listening activities because of my lack of knowledge of English language	28%	35%	22%	9%	6%
4	After my teacher stops the recording, I find it difficult to predict what will come next	22%	34%	27%	7%	10%
5	I find it difficult to hold a short dialogue after listening to a passage	36%	27%	21%	12%	4%
6	I find it difficult to get a general understanding of the message from listening for the first time	30%	30%	23%	10%	6%

7	I feel nervous and worried when I do not understand the listening passage	32%	30%	22%	10%	7%
8	I find it difficult to understand the listening passage because it is not of interest to me	26%	33%	26%	8%	6%
9	I find it more difficult to listen to a recorded text than to my teacher reading aloud	22%	30%	26%	9%	12%

Source: Students of second year of senior high school in private high schools.

Author: Maria Alicia Boroto Carrasco.

The listeners' role in this process is as important as speakers and the message, reason to pay particular attention to their own feelings about the whole process and the particular purpose of the listening comprehension activity.

In many cases, language learners tend to have a bad perception of their own listening skills, considering themselves "good" or "bad" listeners (Ur. 2013) and maybe unconsciously blocking their listening comprehension process.

Results in table 1 present students' opinions regarding *listener factors*. In statement 1, *I use my experience and background knowledge of the topic to understand the listening passage*, the highest percentages obtained from the students' survey were divided between seldom (35%) and sometimes (33%). During the interview most students agreed that knowing the topic helps them understand the audio, especially if the listening passage is long or if it involves new vocabulary. On the other hand, most teachers agreed that students who have any kind of previous knowledge of the topic have better results than those who do not. In fact, as Hadfield and Hadfield (2013) stated knowing the words or sentences related to a specific topic help improving the results of the listening comprehension activity. Even though most students are not aware of the use of previous knowledge, this is an important help during the listening comprehension process.

For the second statement, *I listen to every detail to get the main idea of the listening passage*, most students answered that they agreed that sometimes they try to listen to every detail in order to get the main idea, but during the interview they also expressed that trying to understand every detail makes the process more difficult, and that by doing this they tend to get lost with new vocabulary and completely miss the general idea expressed. Aldera (2015) mentioned the limited capacity of the human brain to retain a big amount of data which definitely affects the listening process; this problem is also addressed by Ahour and Bargool (2015) when they suggested that note-taking eases the participation of learners and increase

their performance giving a clear idea that it is too difficult to try to retain each detail from a listening passage without losing the main idea. Teachers agreed that sometimes the search for details in order to better understand a passage can affect the activity outcome. In authentic situations students tend to focus on the details in order to understand the main idea of a listening passage.

The third statement, *I find it difficult to do listening activities because of my lack of knowledge of English language* shows that a little more than a third of students surveyed consider that they seldom face this difficulty and during the interview most of them expressed that if the topic is familiar to them it is easier to understand the general idea. Most teachers agreed on this explaining that the lack of knowledge is a frequent problem among students. Students are conscious that their lack of knowledge directly affects the listening comprehension process and reduces their level of understanding.

Statement number four, *after my teacher stops the recording, I find it difficult to predict what will come next*, presented a majority of students who seldom find it difficult to predict, but during the interview most of them expressed that if they have some previous knowledge of the topic is much easier to predict the general idea or what is going to happen than if they don't have any knowledge at all. Students also mentioned that knowing the setting or the context might help them predict what comes next but being honest most of the times their predictions were wild answers instead of properly funded replies. Most students are able to predict a general idea when they know the topic but will present problems when it comes to predicting details.

Regarding statement 5, *I find it difficult to hold a short dialogue after listening to a passage*. Most students answered that they never have problems or difficulties to hold a short dialogue. These results were corroborated by the teachers who agreed that students seldom (40%) and sometimes (40%) have difficulties. Ur (2013, p. 134) states that "in real life situations the communication cycle includes both the listener and the speaker participation", so students can easily come up with some type of dialogue related to the topic, but according to students' answers during the interview, the extension of the dialogue will have a big influence in the outcome, short dialogues are definitely considered pretty easy to hold but longer dialogues will represent a bigger challenge for them. Students agreed that they never have problems to hold a short dialogue but they did not mention extension or topic of the dialogue basically because they will complete the task without focusing on the original exercise presented by the teacher.

For the sixth statement, *I find it difficult to get a general understanding of the message from listening for the first time*, the highest averages for this statement were obtained under never (30%) and seldom (30%). During the interviews students reply that

new topics are not a problem, but teachers' answers on the other hand expressed that sometimes and often the first time students hear a passage it is difficult for them to understand the message especially if the language or the accents used are unfamiliar. Most students are used to listen to a listening passage for two or three times in order to get the general idea and they do not make an important effort on the first try.

Statement 7, *I feel nervous and worried when I do not understand the listening passage*, showed that 40% of students never feel nervous. During the interviews a couple of students expressed that more than nervous they feel stressed, anxious and sometimes even frustrated when they are not able to understand the listening passage since they feel they will be graded only on their level of understanding. Teachers' responses matched students' results. Because listening comprehension is considered a difficult task, most students do not feel comfortable with this type of exercise.

Regarding statement 8, *I find it difficult to understand the listening passage because it is not of interest to me*, a third of the students expressed that seldom this constitutes a difficulty for their listening comprehension. On the other hand 40% of the teachers expressed that this is often the situation when working with listening comprehension activities. Again students consider listening comprehension a difficult task so most of them do not pay the required attention in order to complete the task correctly, or because they consider that listening comprehension is not an important part of their learning process.

Finally, for the ninth statement of this section, *I find it more difficult to listen to a recorded text than to my teacher reading aloud*, the results of the survey showed that a third of the students seldom identify this as a problem, but during the interviews several students expressed that they prefer the teacher to read the passages out loud since it is easier for them to understand than using a recording, mostly because they feel that the teacher will accommodate the speed, intonation and stress to the general level of the class instead of trying to duplicate the conditions native speakers normally used in textbooks. Teachers agreed on often (40%) and always (40%) as their highest answers for these statements, with a coincidence on student's opinion about the fact that teachers tend to slow down their reading in order to ease the listening comprehension process. Most students feel more comfortable with teacher reading out loud than with recordings of authentic situations and this difficulty interferes with their learning process.

Do the speaker factors interfere on the learners' listening skills?

As stated by Siegel (2015) real life situations where oral communication take place set all the attention on speakers leaving listeners on the background mostly as passive actors while speakers are considered the active role of the process, this is also true in classroom settings where skills such as speaking are considered more important than

listening and teachers tend to speak most of the time or use exercises where audio that have been recorded in advance as the base for a listening comprehension activity as pointed out by Ur (2013), setting speakers as actors of the process and leaving listeners in the position of simple message receivers, when both should be considered of equal importance in achieving the goal. The above introduction takes us to the logical answer of yes, speaker factors do interfere with learners' listening skills and cannot be considered as separate issues.

TABLE 2: The Speaker

Item No.	Statements	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
		%	%	%	%	%
10	I find it difficult to understand natural speech which is full of hesitation and pauses	20%	30%	30%	13%	7%
11	I find it difficult to understand the meaning of words which are not pronounced clearly	18%	25%	36%	12%	9%
12	I find it difficult to understand well when speakers talk too fast	18%	30%	24%	16%	12%
13	I find it difficult to understand well when speakers talk with varied accents	17%	30%	30%	13%	11%

Source: Students of second year of senior high school in private high schools.

Author: Maria Alicia Boroto Carrasco.

In this section the tenth statement, *I find it difficult to understand natural speech which is full of hesitation and pauses*, presented the same percentage for seldom and sometimes with students expressing that they feel more comfortable with speakers speaking slowly, some of the students interviewed do not see a difference between pauses due to hesitation and speaking slowly (which they definitely prefer), most teachers' responses matched students' results on the fact that students have problems identifying hesitation and pauses. This happens basically because pauses and hesitations produce a feeling of bareness in most students provoking that they lose their attention.

Regarding statement 11, *I find it difficult to understand the meaning of words which are not pronounced clearly*, the highest averages on the students' survey showed that sometimes the clarity of word pronunciation constitute a difficulty for them. Students ratified

these answers during the interviews where students stated that sometimes they misunderstand the meaning of a word or even a whole sentence based on the pronunciation of the recording or the teacher. Some of the students interviewed expressed that they tend to confuse the words specially when they have similar sounds and sometimes this causes them a problem to understand the whole message. Teachers' survey showed a unanimous result showing that this seldom happens. Most students expressed that they get easily confused with words that they perceive as not being pronounced correctly or that sound different due to the accent of the speaker.

Regarding the twelfth statement, *I find it difficult to understand well when speakers talk too fast*, 30% of students expressed that this is seldom a problem for them, but during the interviews most of them agreed that it is actually difficult to understand when a speaker talks too fast. Even though the highest results of the survey were between seldom and sometimes during the interview students stated that the speed is a very important factor to be considered. For them speakers who speak too fast are definitely more difficult to understand regardless of the context or the passage. Teachers' results gave the highest scores to often (40%) and always (40%). Speed of speaking specially when it comes to native speakers is definitely an important point to be taken into account during listening comprehension activities.

For statement 13, *I find it difficult to understand well when speakers talk with varied accents*, the results of the survey show that seldom and sometimes are the highest occurrence but during the interviews students expressed that most of the time they do have problems understanding different accents, especially in the case of British or unfamiliar accents, since they are more aware of the American accent. Teachers' results expressed that this is often a problem. As cited by Ur (2013), the presence of a new or unfamiliar accent may become an issue for listeners, which make it important for teachers to take this issue into account when choosing the material to be used in their EFL classrooms. Different accents do affect the listening comprehension of most students due to their lack ability to adapt to the different sounds they perceive and also to a lack of practice or exposure to different accents.

How does the listening passage hinder the students' listening comprehension?

The attitude of listeners and speakers directly affects the nature and content of the message creating a bond where both participants interact to convey in the proper delivery of the message; its content and the way it is deliver will vary depending on the speaker but also the predisposition of listeners as mentioned above will contribute to the message being not only listened but also comprehend. If speakers communicate the message in a proper way and listeners are willing to pay attention to it, the listening passage will be communicated and understood properly completing the communication cycle, but sometimes these aspects are

not considered and all the attention is driven towards listeners and speakers leaving aside the message to be communicated.

TABLE 3: The Listening Passage

Item No.	Statements	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
		%	%	%	%	%
14	Vocabulary used in the listening passage interferes with my listening comprehension	22%	37%	28%	8%	5%
15	Some grammatical structures in the listening passage interfere with my listening comprehension	22%	34%	26%	12%	6%
16	The length of the listening passage hinders me to interpret the message	31%	30%	24%	10%	5%
17	The content of the listening passage is abstract	26%	30%	29%	8%	6%
18	The poor quality of recording does not allow me to understand the listening passage	30%	22%	23%	14%	10%

Source: Students of second year of senior high school in private high schools.

Author: Maria Alicia Boroto Carrasco.

For statement 14, *Vocabulary used in the listening passage interferes with my listening comprehension*, the results of the students' survey expressed that this is a problem that seldom affects students. Nevertheless during the interviews students expressed that new vocabulary is always a challenge when listening to a passage and most of the time it is the cause for misunderstandings or losing interest. Teachers on the other hand answered that this is a problem sometimes present in their classrooms. If students are not familiar with the vocabulary being used in the listening passage or if they are not able to understand the meaning of new words from the context this will definitely be a problem for the listening comprehension level.

The fifteenth statement, *some grammatical structures in the listening passage interfere with my listening comprehension* showed the following results: Students expressed

that this is a problem seldom present (36%). When being asked during the interview a majority expressed that most of the time they are not aware of the structures used, they focus more on trying to understand the vocabulary used than actually identify the tenses or particular grammar structures, which could be the goal of the listening activity. Teachers answered that this a problem seldom present (60%). Complex or unfamiliar grammatical structures do affect the listening comprehension of students.

Regarding the sixteenth statement, *the length of the listening passage hinders me to interpret the message*, 31% of students expressed that length is never a problem to interpret the message but during the interviews most students expressed that if the listening passage is too long they tend to lose interest due to the amount of information received. Teachers answered that in 60% of the cases this is always a problem. If the passage is too long students will lose their attention and for this reason it will be difficult for them to understand the intended listening message.

The seventeenth statement, *the content of the listening passage is abstract*, showed the highest answers given by students divided between seldom (30%) and sometimes (29%). During the interviews a couple of students expressed that even though the topic of the listening passage is important to them, abstraction is not a concern. Teachers responded this is a problem sometimes present in their lessons. If students do not feel related to the listening passage in any way they will lose interest and will present comprehension problems.

Statement number 18, *the poor quality of recording does not allow me to understand the listening passage* showed that for students the poor quality of the sound is not an issue giving a highest score to the never option opposed to teachers responding that this is always a problem. During the interview some students expressed that they will like to have audios with better quality. Students require a good technical quality in order to pay attention especially if they are in constant contact with high quality sound.

CONCLUSIONS

When talking about the speaker factors interfering on the learner's listening skills the results obtained showed that speed, accent, pauses and clear pronunciation are definitely key factors to be taken into account to assure a clear and good transfer of the message.

Results show that students have different perceptions about the roles of the speaker, the listener and the passage within the listening comprehension process; in many cases this perception is distorted due to bad previous experiences which causes a negative impact on the learning of listening skill because students tend to underestimate the importance of learning comprehension as part of learning a foreign language.

Previous knowledge either of the language in general or the specific activity and topic help students to overcome listening comprehension problems in the English classrooms when they are acting as listeners. If they have a previous level of knowledge they feel confident and are able to fulfill the required task but if their level is not high enough for the task this will affect them and will become a difficulty.

In the case of speakers factors interfering with the learner's listening skill it was proved that these factors do affect the listening comprehension process, different accents, speed, pronunciation, etc.

Regarding the listening passage and students' listening comprehension, the results show that even though most students do not give importance to this aspect, the passage constitutes a very important part of the listening comprehension process which must be carefully selected during the planning stage, since the use of unknown vocabulary, the grammar structures and the complexity of the message directly affect the students' listening comprehension results.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers should not only rely on the textbook resources but work with students in developing strong listening skills through the use of technological tools especially those that tend to catch their attention like YouTube videos, TED talks, podcasts, etc. Take advantage of the natural interest of students in current technology and bring it to the English classroom.

Students should be encouraged to record their own voices and then to listen to the audio in order to improve their communication skills, this will allow them to be aware of their skills in English and to correct themselves.

It is important to include cooperative strategies in class to include all the member of the English teaching community to work together creating awareness of the importance of the listening process in order to improve and ease the process of learning English as a foreign language.

Assure an active participation of the speaker in the listening comprehension process by giving them outlines to follow during the listening comprehension activities and make sure that teachers pay the proper attention to the speakers' role when preparing the EFL lessons. Teachers must plan their listening comprehension activities not as a way to fill the blank spaces of a lesson but to encourage meaningful communication, giving students the sufficient knowledge and confidence to be able to understand the whole idea as part of the context instead of looking for specific words that might be missing.

Train non-native teachers to develop a neutral accent, as well as a clear and non-intimidating tone, in order to allow students to more easily understand what is being said during the lessons.

It is important to expose students to different English accents by inviting native speakers to the EFL classroom or exposing students to authentic situations through the use of modern technology.

Students need to be taught to improve their ability to identify the key ideas and the structural parts of the message in order to increase their level of understanding, thus to have a better perception of the whole listening comprehension process.

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ANEXOS

ANNEX A



UNIVERSIDAD TECNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

OPEN AND DISTANCE MODALITY

ENGLISH DEGREE

STUDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Estimado estudiante:

La presente encuesta tiene como objetivo obtener información para conocer cuál es su opinión sobre **las dificultades que usted tiene para escuchar comprensivamente en las clases de inglés**. Cabe señalar que la información será utilizada con propósitos académicos exclusivamente, por lo que, le solicitamos comedidamente contestar el siguiente cuestionario:

Instrucciones: Marque por favor la opción de frecuencia que más refleje su criterio (UNA SOLA

RESPUESTA POR NÚMERO)

Dificultades como oyente

No.	Enunciado	Nunca	Rara vez	A veces	Frecuente mente	Siempre
1.	No entiendo el tema que escucho en inglés y por ello debo usar mi conocimiento o experiencia previa sobre el mismo.					
2.	Me es difícil entender lo que escucho en inglés y por ello debo escuchar todos los detalles para entender la idea principal.					
3.	Tengo dificultad en hacer las actividades del texto que escuché en inglés por la falta de conocimiento del idioma.					
4.	Después de que el profesor pausa la grabación, me es difícil predecir (adivinar) la idea que continúa en el texto escuchado.					
5.	Me es difícil mantener un diálogo corto en base al texto que escuché en inglés.					
6.	Es difícil para mí tener una idea general del texto después de la primera vez que lo escuché en inglés.					
7.	Me siento nervioso y preocupado cuando no entiendo el texto que escuché en inglés.					
8.	Me es difícil entender el texto que escucho en inglés porque el tema no es de mi interés.					

9.	Me resulta más difícil comprender en inglés el texto grabado que el texto leído en voz alta por mi profesor(a).					
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Dificultades con el hablante

No.	Enunciado	Nunca	Rara vez	A veces	Frecuente mente	Siempre
10.	Me es difícil entender lo que dice un extranjero que habla inglés porque titubea (duda) y hace varias pausas mientras habla.					
11.	Cuando escucho me es difícil entender el significado de las palabras en inglés porque el que habla no las pronuncia claramente.					
12.	Me es difícil entender lo que escucho en inglés porque quien habla lo hace muy rápido.					
13.	Es difícil para mí entender lo que escucho en inglés por las diferentes formas de pronunciar de los hablantes.					

Dificultades con el texto que escucho

No.	Enunciado	Nunca	Rara vez	A veces	Frecuente mente	Siempre
14.	El tipo de vocabulario utilizado en el texto que escucho en inglés no me permite comprender el tema.					
15.	Las estructuras gramaticales que hay en el texto que escucho en inglés interfieren con mi habilidad de escuchar comprensivamente.					
16.	La extensión del texto que escucho en inglés me impide interpretar el mensaje.					
17.	El contenido del texto que escucho en inglés es abstracto.					
18.	La mala calidad de las grabaciones de los textos en inglés que escucho no me permiten comprender el mensaje del tema					

¡GRACIAS POR SU COLABORACIÓN!

ANNEX B



UNIVERSIDAD TECNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

OPEN AND DISTANCE MODALITY

ENGLISH DEGREE

STUDENT'S INTERVIEW

1. ¿Cree Usted que le es difícil escuchar comprensivamente en inglés dentro del aula?

Sí ()

No ()

¿Por qué? _____

2. ¿Cuál de los siguientes elementos cree Usted que dificultan su habilidad de escuchar grabaciones en inglés en su aula?

Usted como oyente ()

El texto que escucha ()

El hablante (quien emite el mensaje) ()

¿Por qué? _____

3. ¿Según Usted, que factor(es) hace(n) que escuchar grabaciones en inglés en su aula sea difícil? Mencione al menos tres por cada elemento y por qué?

El oyente ¿Por qué? _____

El texto que escucha ¿Por qué? _____

El hablante (quien dice el mensaje) ¿Por qué? _____

4. ¿Qué hace Usted cuando no entiende el texto de la grabación en inglés que le hace escuchar su profesor en el aula?

Apuntes extras de la entrevista en relación al tema:

¡GRACIAS POR SU COLABORACIÓN!

ANNEX 3



UNIVERSIDAD TECNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja

OPEN AND DISTANCE MODALITY

ENGLISH DEGREE

TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear teacher:

The aim of this brief questionnaire is to obtain information concerning *your opinion about your students' listening comprehension difficulties in the EFL classroom.*

The following information will only be used for academic / research purposes. Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible based on the following criteria.

Instructions: Place and (X) in the box that best reflects your personal opinion.

The listener

No.	Statement	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1.	Students use their experience and background knowledge of the topic to understand the passage.					
2.	Students listen to every detail to get the main idea of the listening passage.					
3.	Students find it difficult to do listening activities because of their lack of knowledge of the English language.					
4.	After you stop the recording, students find it difficult to predict what will come next.					
5.	Students find it difficult to hold a short dialogue after listening to a passage.					
6.	Students find it difficult to get a general understanding of the message from listening for the first time.					
7.	Students feel nervous and worried when they do not understand the listening passage.					
8.	Students find it difficult to understand the listening passage because it is not of their interest.					
9.	I find it more difficult to listen to a recorded text than to my teacher reading aloud					

The speaker

No.	Statement	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
10.	Students find it difficult to understand natural speech which is full of hesitation and pauses.					
11.	Students find it difficult to understand the meaning of words which are not pronounced clearly.					
12.	Students find it difficult to understand well when speakers talk too fast.					
13.	Students find it difficult to understand well when speakers talk with varied accents.					

The listening passage

No.	Statement	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
14.	Vocabulary used in the listening passage interferes with students' listening comprehension.					
15.	Some grammatical structures in the listening passage interfere with students' listening comprehension.					
16.	The length of the listening passage hinders your students to interpret the message.					
17.	The content of the listening passage is abstract.					
18.	The poor quality of recording does not allow me to understand the listening passage.					

THANKS FOR YOUR COLLABORATION!