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**Students' difficulties when learning the skills of listening and speaking in an
EFL context: An Ecuadorian case study.**

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to God and my family for their love and tender.

To the best mother of the world “Alonza” for her immense sacrifice and support. She is my inspiration and reason for being better every day.

To my second mother “Gloria” who showed me the right way when I was wrong.

To my lovely sister “Mariuxi” who was my guide and showed me that I will never be alone no matter the problems.

To my adorable brother “Cristian” who protected me and helped me in every situation.

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RESUMEN

El presente estudio está enfocado en encontrar las dificultades de escucha y habla, factores que afectan estas habilidades y metodología usada para enseñarlas. Los participantes fueron 47 estudiantes y un profesor de segundo año de bachillerato de un colegio público en Loja, Ecuador. Este estudio fue realizado mediante un método cuantitativo y cualitativo. Un cuestionario a estudiantes, una entrevista al docente y hojas de observaciones fueron usados como instrumentos para recolectar información. Los resultados revelan que la mayoría de los estudiantes enfrentan dificultades de escucha como problema con sonidos, entender cada palabra de los mensajes, mantener el ritmo mientras se escucha, discurso rápido y natural de nativos, necesidad de escuchar las cosas más de una vez, diferencias culturales, y la presencia de ruidos externos en clase. Por otro lado, inhibición, escasa participación y uso de la lengua materna fueron identificadas como dificultades del habla. Por estas razones, un proceso de intervención fue realizado mediante actividades o estrategias para superar estas dificultades en un grupo experimental durante cuatro semanas. La efectividad del proceso fue medida con un pre y post test.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Actividades de Escucha y Habla, Aprendizaje de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera, Competencia Comunicativa, Comprensión de Escucha y Habla, Dificultades de Escucha y Habla, Estrategias de Escucha y Habla.

ABSTRACT

The current case study is focused on finding listening and speaking difficulties, factors affecting these skills, and methodology used for teaching them. The participants included 47 students and an English teacher from the second year of a senior public high school in the city of Loja, Ecuador. This study was conducted using quantitative and qualitative methods. Students' questionnaire, a teacher's interview and observations sheets were used as instruments to collect data. The results reveal that most learners face listening difficulties such as trouble with sounds, understanding every word of the message, fast and natural native speech, necessity of hearing things more than once, maintaining the rhythm while listening, cultural differences, and the presence of outside noises in the classroom. On the other hand, inhibition, low-uneven participation, and mother tongue use were identified as speaking difficulties. For these reasons, an intervention process was carried out through activities or strategies to overcome these difficulties in an experimental group for four weeks. The effectiveness of this process was measured with a pre-test and post-test.

KEY WORDS: Communicative Competence, English as Foreign Language Learning, Listening and Speaking Activities, Listening and Speaking Comprehension, Listening and Speaking Difficulties, Listening and Speaking Strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Mastering English is becoming more and more significant nowadays due to this language is growing and controlling the international development of the world, especially, the educational field (Robson, 2013). Because of this, this author makes emphasis that teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is constantly spreading at schools and high schools around the world; hence, instructors apply different and useful strategies, techniques and methods to teach this language in the classrooms. In fact, Robson (2013) remarks that their goal is that learners can express their ideas or thoughts in different ways by using the target language. One way of achieving that goal is with the practice and integration of listening and speaking in activities that involve real contexts such as doing shopping, going out with friends or making a hotel reservation.

However, some teachers still continue using common methods such as grammar translation or audio-lingual which are focused on the systematic learning of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammatical rules (Savasci, 2014). He argues that the use of this methodology increases difficulties to comprehend oral speech and express ideas in real contexts. Furthermore, Hamouda (2013) states that listening or speaking activities are not presented on a high percentage on the course books; therefore, instructors do not make learners practice these skills in their lesson plans. With this in mind, it is noticeable that EFL students need to develop listening and speaking at classrooms; on the contrary, they can face many problems to apply for a job in the real world (Morozova, 2013). According to this author, one clear example occurs when students want to work in another country and a requirement is being able to speak English, but if they do not master this language, they can miss that job.

Bueno, Madrid, & McLaren (2006) state that listening is the skill of understanding the spoken language which requires a complex and cognitive process on the human's mind and deals with an interaction between people and the environment. On the other hand, Lightbown & Spada (2006) argue that speaking involves many mental tasks at the same time such as choosing words, pronouncing, and stringing them together with the correct use of grammar. Taking into account the previous definitions, it is remarkable that these skills implicate a complex process because learners have to identify sounds, understand the correct meaning and produce an oral answer in real-life situations.

Many authors have investigated difficulties when learning listening and speaking on his/her studies. Hamouda (2013) carried out a case study with the purpose of investigating the students' listening problems. The results showed that the typical comprehension problems are unfamiliar words, the length of spoken text, speed of speech, insufficient vocabulary, anxiety, bad quality of recordings, a variety of accents, lack of pronunciation and

concentration. Another study was conducted by Mahmoud (2013) who investigated the students' listening problems and mental processes and strategies in different phrases of comprehension. The following results were presented: not recognizing the meaning of new words, not extracting the meaning of words from the context, not hearing the words accurately; hence, learners obtained the incorrect translation of the words, and they had difficulty for recognizing words with multiple meanings.

On the other hand, other studies were focused on diagnosing EFL learners' speaking difficulties. Juhana (2012) focused on finding the psychological factors that hinder students from speaking. This study showed that fear of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence and motivation were the psychological factors that obstruct expressing oral speech. Similarly, Al-Hosni (2014) carried out a study with the aim of determining the speaking difficulties and factors affecting them in young learners. The results showed that linguistic difficulties (lack of vocabulary and grammatical structures), mother tongue use (lack of sentence formation skills), and inhibition (fear of making mistakes) are the main problems. The factors that contribute to these difficulties are teachers' perceptions and tacit beliefs of teaching speaking, teaching strategies, curriculum, extracurricular activities, assessment regulations, and textbook topics.

As Hamouda (2013), Mahmoud (2013), Juhana (2012) and Al-Hosni (2014) have shown in the previous studies, learners present difficulties with listening and speaking at western high schools and universities. In Ecuadorian high schools, many students face problems when they have to communicate in English, especially this happens at public education. During the development of the teaching practice, future English teachers have noticed that learners do not use the language fluently and are not able to express complete ideas. This difficulty is also reflected at universities. Fauzan (2014) states that undergraduates face problems to communicate because of lack of confidence or fear of making mistakes as a result of using the target language. Furthermore, when most learners come to universities to get a degree, they face big difficulties to work with the material that is presented in English.

Across Latin America, there is little evidence of studies focused on this topic. Alvarado (2014) conducted a study to identify the factors that cause difficulties with productive skills (speaking and writing) in the University of Pamplona, Colombia. Hernández & Vargas (2013) also carried out a study to encourage learners to improve their listening because they presented different problems to understand spoken English in a university of Colombia.

In Ecuador, the evidence of similar studies is very limited; based on the fact above, this study was addressed on determining the students' difficulties when learning the skills of

listening and speaking. Likewise, the following research questions were attempted to answer as follow: (1) Which were the factors that cause students' difficulties when learning listening and speaking? (2) What kind of methodology did the teacher apply for teaching these skills? (3) What kind of activities can be used to solve students' difficulties when learning the skills of listening and speaking in the classroom? (4) Were the activities or strategies effective for improving listening and speaking?

The answers of the previous questions determine the significance of this case study where students, English teachers, the educative institution, and future researchers would be the beneficiaries of this study.

The public high school would benefit because its learners, the experimental group, had the opportunity of practicing and improving their listening and speaking skills. In fact, they could identify, examine, and work on their difficulties by themselves considering the activities worked in class. At the same time, they might be more aware of the importance of improving oral communication in the class.

Likewise, instructors may review the results of this case study to know and understand the difficulties that learners face. As a result, they can use the activities or strategies, which were applied in the intervention process, to overcome the problems that were identified. In addition, teachers could evaluate the effectiveness of their methodology for teaching listening and speaking considering the difficulties that students present. Moreover, this case study can be useful for future researchers who are interested on exploring this topic deeply because it contains useful information from different authors, and the results that were obtained are valid.

On the other hand, although this case study has achieved its objectives, there were some limitations. The investigation was carried out with a small size of population where only 46 learners were part of the sample; hence, it is not possible to generalize the results for larger groups. Besides this, due to the fact of time, the intervention process was very short. Four weeks was not enough to overcome students' difficulties completely and get better results in the post-test.

In general terms, the current case study consists of three chapters. Chapter one includes the theoretical background, definitions of basic terms, and previous studies that support this investigation. In chapter two, the methodological process (research methods), population (setting), instruments for data collection, and the analysis procedures for tabulation and interpretation of data are described. Chapter three deals with the description, analysis, interpretation of the results, and the intervention process (results of the pre-test, post-test, and activities are detailed). After that, conclusions and recommendations of this case study are presented. Finally, references and annexes are included.

CHAPTER I
LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with the theoretical background of the study. It is divided on four sections. The first one involves the integration of listening and speaking in the teaching-learning process which comprises different topics based on these skills. The second section concerns listening where its definition, factors that affect it, and difficulties, that students have, are explained. In the third section, the same topics as the listening skill are described with regard to speaking. The last section refers to previous studies in relation to difficulties when learning listening and speaking.

Integration of listening and speaking in the teaching-learning process

Listening and speaking in the EFL classroom.

Powell & Powell (2016) mention that the EFL teaching- learning process requires instructors and learners exchange information according to the way of teaching, develop several activities, talk about revision of homework, and maintain a teacher-student interaction. More specifically, these authors argue that this fact reflects the importance of working on an effective communication between learners and instructors. That is, one teacher's role is creating a great environment where students express their ideas or thoughts through a procedure. For this reason, they state that listening and speaking allow a direct communication in the teaching and learning process.

As Palmer (2014) reports, first, learners listen to and then, they speak according to what they have comprehended, and this is because listening plus speaking is the result of the classroom communication. For instance, most of the time, instructors provide oral explanations for activities, homework or directions, students listen carefully, and then they ask questions for clarification and this is a circle that is repeated constantly in the classroom. Alharbi (2015) corroborates this idea mentioning this circle forms the educational system triangle "teachers, curriculum, and learners". Namely, this author comments that instructors follow a curriculum, units and topics to teach, where it is necessary a continuous interaction to achieve the goals of the teaching-learning process.

In classrooms, students need to be able to communicate in a competent way in real contexts; therefore, the concept of communicative competence becomes primordial in this frame. From this point of view, a learner can be defined as a competent communicator when he or she is able to combine his/her knowledge and skills to expose their ideas in an effective and appropriate way in social contexts (Canale and Swain, 1980). For this reason, Agbatogun (2014) considers that the application of oral language activities, where listening and speaking play an important role, provides students with an opportunity to use the target language in real-life situations. He claims that the more learners listen or speak to their teacher and classmates, the more they improve their communicative skills.

With respect to communicative competence, Canale & Swain (1980) state that the practice of English in different contexts provides to students the knowledge of the four components of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic. The first one is grammatical competence. This concept deals with the correct use of the language, rules and its features such as vocabulary, word formation, sentence formation, pronunciation, spelling, and linguistics semantics. Mainly, speakers need to know and master these features of the language to express themselves in the most appropriate way (Canale & Swain, 1980).

Sociolinguistic competence is the second component which focuses on the appropriate use of the language in different social and cultural contexts (Canale & Swain, 1980). They propose a specific situation, for instance, when learners travel to another country where the culture is different from theirs, they need to be aware of the norms of behavior of that society to avoid troubles in communication. Otherwise, native people might consider that the speaker misbehaves, and they could cut off the conversation. Furthermore, Richards & Schmidt (2013) state that, in this competence, it is important to keep in mind the communicative functions when speakers are in a specific context such as giving orders, complaining of something and giving some invitations. In this case, they need to express themselves with politeness and formality according to a specific event.

The third component is discourse competence. This concept deals with the combination of grammatical forms and meanings on written or spoken type of texts such as scientific reports, stories, poems, or letters to convince an audience (Canale & Swain, 1980). In this context, the grammatical forms and meanings can be combined through the correct use of cohesion and coherence to connect ideas structurally and facilitate the interpretation of information (Richards & Schmidt, 2013). By way of example, they report that if a speaker is telling a story about his/her holidays, the use of connectors such as “firstly, secondly and finally” promotes the comprehension of the story sequence in a better way.

The last one is strategic competence that refers to the use of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies for two reasons (Canale & Swain, 1980). They describe the first one as overcoming troubles in communication with the use of facial signs or specific structures such as “you know”. Richards & Schmidt (2013) provide a clear example, when a speaker is explaining an embarrassing event and suddenly he/she does not know how to express something and decides to use the structure “you know”; in this way, the listener understands what he/she wants to say by watching speakers’ gestures. On the other hand, the second reason of the strategic competence deals with the use of techniques to improve the communication and achieve that this process is developed in a comprehensible way (Canale & Swain, 1980). For instance, the speaker does not remember a grammatical form,

he/she may use paraphrasing to continue with the conversation; in such manner, the listener could understand what the speaker is trying to say (Richards & Schmidt, 2013).

Teaching listening and speaking in EFL classroom.

The best alternative to guarantee that students become competent communicators is through the application of the most appropriate and effective methods or approaches for teaching English as a foreign language focused on listening and speaking (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Communicative Language Teaching is the approach that best fits with the unification of these skills because its goal is to achieve that learners discuss about topics in real contexts (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983). These authors mention the following characteristics related to this approach: Developing a meaningful communication is primordial, working on different contexts where students expose their ideas, helping and motivating to use the language which is one of the teacher's role, interaction is developed in pairs or groups, allowing learners to create their own way of using the language, fluency is relevant, and mistakes are part of the teaching-learning process.

Another useful method is Suggestopedia which is based on motivating learners to communicate effectively and quickly (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). They explain that as its name says "Suggestopedia", instructors suggest students to set their own goals by providing them confidence, enthusiasm, a relax environment, interesting activities, and an organized process of the class. Moreover, these authors agree with some activities that can be used such as "ask and answer", role plays, and all kind of listening activities. The application of these activities provides teachers the facility to focus their classes on a communicative environment.

According to Richards & Rodgers (1986), Community Language Learning is the third method focused on making students expose their ideas or thoughts inside a community (work groups of 6). Learners listen to their classmates and express orally; this interaction is achieved in a collaborative way where each member of the group participates actively. In addition to that, these authors state that the instructor manages the work by supporting them when there are problems in communication. In fact, they suggest that as many teachers usually deal with classes where there are many students, this method can be useful to make them work in groups where the main goal is using the target language.

Activities for enhancing listening and speaking in class.

Bueno, Madrid, & McLaren (2006) consider that the application of motivated and useful activities that integrate listening and speaking is noticeable in the classrooms; therefore, they define a list of them with the purpose of achieving this integration.

Jigsaw listening is an activity with the purpose of learning in a cooperative way by hearing and sharing information. Students work in groups (four participants). Each group

listens to an audio script which refers to the same topic “a travel” but with a different version for each one. Then, a member of each group stands up and goes to another group to exchange information related to what he/she has listened in his/her version. Each group pays attention and finally a different member of each group comes to the front and tells the new version to the whole class.

Another activity is the use of video clips. Its purpose is motivating to listen and express their ideas of an interesting topic. The video needs to be catching for students to cause interest such as a video music, a short film, or an emotional advertisement. Each learner watches the video and then teacher could ask them the following questions: What is the video about? What did you like the most or least? What would you change on the video?

The next activity is focused on using computers and CD-ROMs. Its purpose is making learners work with laptops or audios at home to improve listening and speaking. Instructors may consider the provision of useful webpages to practice these skills. The use of pop songs in class is another enhancing activity. Its goal is motivating to listen to English songs. Most students like famous and pop songs and the selection of the most catching ones is relevant, where the singer sings clearly and uses the topic or grammar that they are studying. The songs might be listened at classrooms or home, then students may share ideas with their classmates and teacher with respect to the songs.

The last activity is based on games. Its objective is practicing listening and speaking by playing interesting activities. The games can be considered as competitions for learners; therefore, the selection is according to students’ ages to increase motivation. The phrases as “It is my turn”, Can you repeat that?” “I do not understand” could be used as patterns in each game.

The listening skill

Brownell (2016) confirms that the result of a successful communication begins with an effective listening due to the 80% of the exchange of information depends on listening in comparison with speaking only 20%. This author complements this idea suggesting that if learners listen to exactly what the speaker has said, the listener can analyze the information received and produce the correct answer for continuing the conversation. According to Bozorgian & Pillay (2013), listening is a complex procedure that allows people to comprehend spoken speech. Mahmoud (2013) also states that listening is an active ability that deals with a series of steps such as discrimination between sounds and interpretation of stress and intonation. Bozorgian, Pillay, and Mahmoud agree that this skill requires developing a complex process in humans’ minds to get a meaning.

Different authors have stated different listening processes, and Brownell (2016) explains her own which is named as Hurier (Hearing, understanding, remembering, interpreting, evaluating, and responding) and it is described in six steps.

The author of Hurier listening process considers that it is useful to improve and assess this ability. According to Brownell (2016), learners first discriminate and focus their attention, secondly, they comprehend the information perceived “listening comprehension”, then, they retain information on their brain, next, they provide a meaning related to the context, after that, they evaluate the information from their own point of view considering past experiences, attitudes, personal values and so on. Finally, they provide a response orally according to what they have listened where the speaker makes a judgment about it.

In the second step “understanding” of the Hurier listening process, an important concept is mentioned “listening comprehension” which plays a primordial role (Brownell, 2016). This concept has been defined by different authors. Hamouda (2013) defines it as a process where listeners have to get the meaning of the information perceived. In the same way, Nadig (2013) states that listening comprehension deals with the understanding and making sense of spoken language considering some components of the language such as phonology, semantics, and syntax.

Listening comprehension has become one of the most relevant components of oral speech since it is essential for language acquisition (Masalimova, Porchesku, & Liakhnovitch, 2016). These authors remark that when learners face problems on comprehending speaker’s speech, they cannot develop a good communication because misunderstandings may appear, and the message might change constantly. Considering the importance of listening comprehension in the process of communication, Azmi et al., (2014) mention that many authors have concluded that cognitive, metacognitive and socio-effective are the strategies that allow students to improve and work on their comprehension. In other words, through these strategies, learners evaluate their own responses and understand the meaning of the information perceived by listening.

Cognitive strategy is used to comprehend and gather information in short-long memory (Azmi et al., (2014). A clear example provided by these authors refers to when a student listens to the speaker, discusses a topic, and suddenly, he/she does not remember the meaning of a word; as a result, he/she tries to decode the meaning from the context. With this strategy, they agree that students could acquire knowledge and skills with games such as solving problems, memorizing or summarizing. In each game, there is a speaker and a listener with the purpose of transmitting a message.

Metacognitive strategy is used to plan, monitor and evaluate the whole activity (Renukadevi, 2014). This author argues that this strategy involves a complete and complex

process where listeners think about every aspect of the activity by making an analysis of the results at the end of the activity. To illustrate this, the author mentions that a learner can listen to a story and make a summary with respect to it. Once, he/she had completed the activity, he/she decides to evaluate his/her own work to know what is right or wrong with the purpose of improving.

Socio-affective strategy is used to make learners work in an interactive and positive way among them. As its name is “socio-affective”, the students support each other with positive comments or gestures (Azmi et al., (2014). For example, these authors suggest that if during a conversation the listener has difficulties to understand what the other person is saying, the speaker can use some expressions or gestures to facilitate the comprehension.

Factors that affect listening comprehension.

According to Hamouda (2013), there are internal and external factors that obstruct the understanding of information perceived in the listening comprehension process. More specifically, Seferoglu & Uzakgoren (2004) mention the presence of four factors that make the listening process more difficult than normal. These factors are reduced forms, stress, rhythm and intonation, rate of delivery and lack of concentration.

Reduced forms are words or group of words that are shorter than original ones in terms of phonology, morphology, syntax, and pragmatics. These forms are normally used by native speakers such as “cuz? instead of because”; “whatcha instead of what are you?” in a common English conversation (Brown, 2001). He mentions that reduced forms are too short, and are produced quickly; thus, learners face difficulties to understand them at the beginning of learning this skill because students are in the habit of listening to slow and complete expressions instead of reduced forms.

The second factor to consider is stress, rhythm, and intonation. They are prosodic features of the English language that provide listeners the meaning or the speaker’s intention (Alizadeh, 2016). As Brown (2001) mentions, when the speaker makes a question or statement in a conversation, the listener should keep in mind prosodic features to comprehend if the message is a confirmation, admiration, sarcasm, insult or request.

Rate of delivery is the third factor and it can be defined as the speed of a speaker’s speech (Alizadeh, 2016). This author reports that native speakers tend to expose their ideas too fast; hence, the faster their speed is, the more difficult is to understand the main ideas and learners lose the message easily.

The fourth factor is lack of concentration that is related to the presence of motivation in the activities. If students do not feel interested in the topic or activity, hence, they do not put attention on the listening script and miss the meaning of the message (Azmi et al., (2014).

Learners' difficulties in listening.

As listening requires a complex process to achieve comprehension of information, many students face difficulties when learning this skill (Chen, 2013). From this point of view, according to Ur (1996), they can present the following problems during the listening activities. Trouble with sounds is considered as the first one. Students may face obstacles when they have to catch the actual sounds of English because they do not master the English Phonetic Alphabet. This author corroborates his idea mentioning that the 44 sounds in the English language cause difficulties due to a single letter might present different ones. For example, he suggests that learners need to recognize the phonemes of the letter "c" which can be pronounced as "k" or "s" for avoiding misunderstandings. Moreover, he makes emphasis on the fact that students present more difficulties in recognizing specific sounds such as [θ] and [ð].

The second problem is understanding every word of the message. Some teachers promote the idea of focusing on every single word in a sentence for getting the correct meaning. As a result, learners stop concentrating on listening when they do not comprehend a word in the sentence, and this situation makes them feel lost and disappointed. For avoiding this, the author recommends students to concentrate in the most important information to figure out the meaning of the message. Can't understand fast and natural native speech is the third problem. Learners often ask the teacher the production of slow and clear speech to understand the meaning of instructions. But, this fact does not help them because natives tend to speak fast especially at everyday informal speech. In addition, the audio scripts used in classes are based on conversations where natives talk about their experiences very fast. Therefore, exposing students to communicate at real contexts is necessary to avoid this difficulty.

The fourth problem is the necessity of hearing things more than once. Learners want to hear the audio scripts many times to understand better the information. However, the act of this skill involves doing it only once in real life contexts; thus, it would be excellent for learners get used to this condition. Another solution to this problem is the provision of redundant passages where the speakers repeat the main idea many times and giving them the opportunity to hear the material twice or three times.

The fifth problem is the difficulty for maintaining the rhythm. Students feel stressed when they listen to information and new one is coming. They consider that it is very complicated to comprehend each part of the audio script and continue doing it. In this case, teachers could make learners feel relaxed and quiet by telling them to focus on the most essential information and not only trying to understand everything. The last problem is getting tired while listening. When students hear long passages, they feel very tired. For this reason,

they lose their concentration and do not finish the activity successfully. In this case, Ur (1996) suggests that instructors could make learners listen to short dialogues or the most important information and be the role of listeners or speakers in short conversations.

Azmi et al., (2014) have mentioned a list of five problems that students present in the listening process. Quality of recorded material is the first one. In some classes the quality of recorded material is not good enough for developing listening activities, although technology is improving a lot every day. Accordingly, if the quality is not good such as an appropriate volume or the clarity of audio scripts, learners cannot listen to the information adequately because misunderstandings might appear. The second problem deals with cultural differences. In the material, native speakers sometimes discuss topics in the matter of their culture with specific vocabulary and it can be totally different from the student's culture. For this reason, these authors agree that it is important to provide the vocabulary about the cultures for avoiding troubles in the comprehension process before developing the listening activity.

Variety of accents is the third problem. Pilus (2013) states that the study and practice of a variety of accents causes frustration and confusion since each one has its own features. For instance, he comments that if learners listen to a variety of accents on audio scripts, they lose their interest because they consider they do not understand the meaning of some words or expressions since they sound or mean different in each English accent. In addition to that, this author mentions that although there is a great variety of English accents around the world, students prefer learning "British or American" accents. Namely, the author recommends that teachers should focus on a model accent to get accustomed students approximating to a native accent according to their needs.

Unfamiliar vocabulary is the fourth problem to keep in mind. The presence of unknown words on the listening scripts complicates the comprehension and reduces interest on the topic (Azmi et al., (2014). Furthermore, they consider that when learners deal with a word which has different meanings and they do not know them; this produces a lot of confusion.

The last problem is related to physical conditions of the classroom. Some factors affect listening comprehension such as outside noises and ambient temperature of class. In some large classes, the students, who sit on the back rows especially, cannot listen to the audio scripts appropriately because there are outside noises which obstruct the activities; hence, this makes difficult to understand information (Azmi et al., (2014). These authors also argue that the ambient temperature could affect students' performance because if there is not an air conditioner during the seasons of the year "summer and/or winter", the climate

makes learners lose their concentration because they do not feel comfortable during the activity.

The speaking skill

Most of English Foreign/Second Language Learners want to express their master of English through speaking (Leong & Masoumeh, 2017). They claim that when students notice that they have improved their English knowledge, they prefer to show it by producing ideas as native speakers. In the same way, Fauzan (2014) adds that through this skill, they are able to transmit their ideas and show their control of the language. This author remarks most learners feel very exciting when they express their thoughts in English at classrooms even if they use short sentences; they enjoy the act of communicating messages in the target language. This preference for speaking English is a common desire but learning it is one of the most complex challenges because it requires expressing and connecting ideas live at a time in real contexts (Mahmoud, 2016).

According to Leong & Masoumeh (2017), speaking is not easy because it requires the management of different components such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Hughes & Szczepek (2017) state that speaking is the human production speech considering linguistics fields such as grammar, syntax, phonology, semantics discourse and conversation analysis. In other words, the act of speaking effectively involves mastering the four key areas of speaking competence where the linguistics fields are inside them (Goh, 2007). This author defines these areas as the following ones.

The first one is the phonological aspect which is focused on pronunciation; this can be defined as the act of producing and articulating the phonemes “sounds” that involve vowels and consonants for effective oral communication. In addition, it is important to consider other features of pronunciation such as stress and intonation to transmit the message with the correct intention such as asking a question or making a statement. If learners develop a correct pronunciation, they are able to transmit the correct meaning of the message.

The second area deals with the speech function. Students use words or expressions to inform, provide an instruction, persuade or entertain as communicative functions in social contexts. For instance, learners may present the necessity to make a request “Could you answer me?”, demand something “That is not ethical”, explain something, greet, warn about a success “Be careful”, and so on.

The third area to consider is the interaction management that is based on the face to face spontaneous exchanges during a conversation or discussion. For instance, there are moments when speakers want to close the conversation, initiate with another topic, take conversation turns or negotiate the meaning with the listener. In these situations, speakers

could make some facial expressions and use phrases, or change intonation to express what they want to do. For instance, when the speaker is ready to give his/her turn, he or she looks at the other person “make eye contact” to indicate to him/her to take the turn.

The last area is the extended discourse organization that deals with the correct structuration of short or long sentences to follow the purpose of the conversation. In this aspect, vocabulary, grammar, fluency and accuracy are primordial in the act of speaking. Speakers choose specific and suitable words or expressions to communicate their ideas; as a result, the vocabulary is related to the topic that they are talking about. Furthermore, they need to know and apply words or expressions in various contexts because a word can have different meanings depending on the context. Knowing the meaning of words is not enough to express something due to grammatical rules are necessary to connect words and make complete sentences or clauses. To be more precise, grammar allows the correct association of words to communicate messages.

According to Srivastava (2014), accuracy and fluency determine the success of spoken English. This author defines accuracy as the ability to produce correct phrases or sentences grammatically. Accordingly, learners need to be aware of the use of grammatical rules and speak accurately. If speakers commit many grammatical mistakes, listeners cannot understand the message and lose their interest in the communication. On the other hand, fluency is the ability to produce spoken sentences with facility, efficacy, and without hesitations “pauses” in a normal speed speech (Rishi, 2014). This author remarks that speakers communicate clear and understandable ideas in a natural way by considering fluency.

For learners, mastering these four speaking areas “live at a time” at the moment of producing oral ideas could become a big problem because it is a complex process to manage (Mahmoud, 2016).

Factors that affect the speaking performance.

Teachers need to be aware of the factors that affect speaking to help students decrease the difficulty of learning it. Hoang & Ngoc (2015) mention the presence of five factors that affect speaking which are performance condition, the affective factor, listening ability, topical knowledge, and feedback. With regard to the first factor, these authors explain that performance condition refers to the four conditions under speaking can be performed based on what Nation and Newton (2009) stated. For this reason, they describe planning, time pressure, amount of support, and standard of performance as the conditions under speaking can be performed. The condition of planning allows students to prepare the task with reference to the topic, organize ideas or take notes before developing the activity.

The second condition refers to time pressure. Under this condition, learners turn ideas into speech and discuss a topic without feeling any constraint of time. The third condition involves the amount of support that teachers provide through supportive listening strategies. To illustrate this, the educator could use some expressions such as “you said” or the “ask and answer” technique to interact with students and provide support. The last condition is standard of performance. They report that learners take seriously the act of speaking when they have to expose their ideas in front of an audience because people listen to them attentively.

In relation to the second factor, the affective factor refers to the effect of positive or negative feelings during the speaking activities; hence, these feelings can measure the success or failure of the performance. (Hoang & Ngoc, 2015). The listening ability is the third factor to consider (Hoang & Ngoc, 2015). Palmer (2014) agrees with the fact that this skill always affects speaking because learners first listen, and then they speak. In other words, in the act of communication is important to understand “hear information” and be understood “produce answers”; and this is the way of how messages are transmitted from one person to another.

The fourth factor is topical knowledge and it refers to speakers’ prior knowledge that they master in their brains in reference to a specific topic (Hoang & Ngoc, 2015). They confirm that this factor allows them to communicate easier in the context where they live. The last factor that affects speaking is the way of providing feedback during the activities (Hoang & Ngoc, 2015). One of the purposes of teaching English language is to achieve learners speak fluently; but, some teachers do not apply the correct strategies or techniques to provide feedback when students commit mistakes (Razavi & Naghizadeh, 2014). Accordingly, these authors consider that learners decide not to speak anymore because some instructors make them feel embarrassed when they correct their mistakes in front of the class. The solution would be applying the correct techniques for providing feedback or asking learners the best way that they want to be corrected.

Speaking problems.

Ur (1996) explains four problems such as inhibition, nothing to say, low or uneven participation and mother tongue use that obstruct learners’ speaking performance. Moreover, he mentions some solutions to reduce those difficulties. Inhibition is the first problem and it can be defined as a feeling of disconcertion that does not allow students to say or do something. In this context, Mahmoud (2016) adds that, in several occasions, learners want to expose their ability of speaking in front of their classmates and teachers, but this desire is often obstructed for some problems such as fear of making mistakes, shyness, lack of

confidence, and anxiety. This author defines them as psychological problems that hinder students from speaking.

In this context, the first problem is related to fear of making mistakes. According to Jannah (2016), learners do not speak using the target language because they feel embarrassment of being laughed, not being understood, pronouncing incorrectly in front of their classmates; as a result, they prefer to keep quiet. The second one is shyness. Mahmoud (2016) states that shyness is a common emotional feeling when speaking English. Learners feel unsecure and think that they are not able to express themselves clearly. The third problem is the lack of confidence. Students do not feel secure about their speech because they consider classmates do not understand them or vice versa (Mahmoud, 2016). The fourth one is anxiety. Learners feel nervous, stressed and tense at the moment of expressing their ideas in an oral way; hence, they are not able to communicate orally (Mahmoud, 2016).

Ur (1996) provides a solution for inhibition problem which involve all the psychological problems. He recommends that creating a comfortable environment in class and using group works make the inhibition decreases because the teacher is not controlling every student's mistake. Therefore, learners feel the freedom to express themselves because their classmates help them or have the same English level. He also mentions that another solution could be developing the activity with easy and essential vocabulary or expressions; in this way, they can speak fluently with their classmates.

Nothing to say is the second speaking problem mentioned by Ur (1996). Although some learners have the opportunity to participate in class, they prefer to keep quite because they do not have a reason for sharing their ideas. He states that if instructors ask students a question, they answer with these expressions "I do not know" or "I have no idea". Thus, the motivation plays an important role in this problem because if learners are motivated, they can assimilate something interesting and attractive for them, and teachers must discover the best way to get it (Jannah, 2016).

A good solution for this problem is selecting an interesting topic according to students' level that makes them feel interested on it (Ur, 1996). He manifests that if there is motivation on the activity, they want to share their ideas and practice their speaking skill. Maybe they only use a short sentence, but they are communicating something instead of keeping quiet.

The low or uneven participation is the third speaking problem. It happens frequently in large classes where there are few opportunities for all learners to participate and express their ideas (Ur, 1996). In this situation, some students practice this skill, especially; who present advanced levels participate more than low levels. This author proposes that a

solution for avoiding this problem is the provision of some advices in relation to how to deal discussions with classmates. For instance, he recommends that if the activity is a conversation in group, each learner could have a role “chairperson” or “secretary” and the teacher should make sure that each one participates equally.

The last problem is the mother-tongue use. In classes where most learners share the same language, it is noticeable that they feel comfortable using their first one (Ur, 1996). He states that many reasons explain this such as the facility to speak referring to any topic, no pressure or fear of making mistakes and naturalness of producing a speech. If students work in groups, they tend to communicate in their mother tongue unless they are motivated or interested in using English. According to Ur (1996), a good solution for this problem is making sure that learners use the target language at any activity. Actually, he recommends that a student of each group may be a monitor who must inform instructor if all members of the group use the target language or not; therefore, they are aware of communicating in English. In addition, this author remarks that the best thing that teachers can do is supporting and enhancing all learners to use the target language as much as possible.

The upcoming section presents six relevant case studies dealing with the student’s difficulties when learning the skills of listening and speaking. Each study has been carried out in a specific population where instruments, results and recommendations are mentioned, and this information would provide more background on this field.

Previous studies

Listening problems.

Hamouda (2013) carried out a case study with the purpose of investigating the listening problems of 60 students. Questionnaires and interviews were used as instruments to collect data based on a mixed approach “quantitative and qualitative”. Questionnaires were focused on getting information about factors that influence this skill, and interviews to obtain data referring to the reasons behind those difficulties. The results showed that the typical comprehension problems were unfamiliar words, the length of spoken text, speed of speech, insufficient vocabulary, anxiety, bad quality of recording, variety of accents, lack of pronunciation and concentration. In addition, this author proposed some solutions to face these problems such as improving listening materials and classroom techniques for teachers, and learners should work on the improvement of their listening comprehension.

Another case study was conducted by Nowrouzi, Tam, Zareian, & Nimehchisalem (2015) with the purpose of exploring the listening comprehension problems of 100 EFL students from the tertiary level in the first year. The data were obtained through a quantitative approach with the application of a survey. The instrument was a questionnaire called “The Listening Comprehension Processing Problems Questionnaire” to determine the listening

comprehension problems. The results were categorized into three cognitive stages of perception, parsing and utilization. In the perception stage, five problems were found such as fast speech rate because of the difficulty for understanding native speakers, who talk very fast, hearing sounds but not clear words, confusing the meaning of a word with another one, presence of unfamiliar words or expressions, and missing the next part of the text while thinking in the meaning.

In the parsing stage, learners faced difficulties on the division of long sentences into smaller ones, knowing the correct meaning of words, and presence of unfamiliar topics. In utilization, problems in getting details, relationships among ideas and supporting ideas. The authors make emphasis that material developers, professionals who design syllabus, and second language educators should work on the third cognitive stage which refers to utilization problems due to the lack of work on this field.

Mahmoud (2013) investigated the students' listening problems, mental processes in listening comprehension and the strategies they use in different phrases of comprehension. The sample was 20 advanced learners of English as a foreign language and 20 intermediate ones. As instrument a test was applied to divide the sample into two groups. In order to achieve the purposes of this study, the author used the "Think Aloud" technique during for sessions; one session for each student. This technique was used as a method to collect data where each participant listened to a task, and then he/she had time to think about which problems he/she found on the activity and his/her answer was recorded. The following results were presented: not recognizing the meaning of new words, not extracting the meaning of words from the context, not hearing the words accurately; thus, students obtained the incorrect translation of the words, and had difficulty for recognizing words with multiple meanings.

While those problems were found, strategies were applied for overcoming them. Therefore, the "Think Aloud" Technique is very useful for knowing the main difficulties that learners face, and this author makes emphasis on the necessity of enhancing to discuss their listening problems in class and applying strategies to solve them.

Speaking problems.

There are some studies which have been focused on investigating speaking problems by EFL learners. For instance, Al-Hosni (2014) carried out her study with the aim of finding the speaking difficulties and factors that cause those difficulties in young learners. Three classes of grade fifth and 4 English teachers were part of the sample. To collect data, observations, interviews, and curriculum analysis were used as instruments in this study. The purpose of the interview was to investigate instructors' and students' beliefs, the factors that cause the difficulties, class observations were useful for obtaining more information about

them, and the curriculum presented on the textbook was analyzed to find out possible factors that contribute to the problem of speaking. The results showed that the lack of vocabulary, lack of knowledge of grammatical structures, mother tongue use (lack of sentence formation skills), and inhibition (fear of making mistakes) were the main difficulties for this sample.

The factors that contribute to the difficulties were teachers' perceptions and tacit beliefs of teaching speaking, teaching strategies, curriculum, extracurricular activities, and assessment regulations. Furthermore, the author mentioned that the textbook topics is the factor that is increasing these difficulties because it makes emphasis on teaching reading and writing rather than speaking; hence, it is difficult for instructors allow learners to produce ideas in an oral way at class.

The next study was carried out by Jannah (2016) with the purpose of finding the psychological problems that students face when learning speaking. Two classes from the eleven-year were part of the sample of this qualitative case study. Classroom observations, field notes, questionnaires, and interviews were used as instruments to collect data. The results showed that the fear of making mistake (embarrassment), shyness (fear of producing unclear pronunciation), anxiety (all attention focus on them), lack of confidence (they consider their English is bad), and lack of motivation (poor preference of English and it is boring) were the main psychological problems. Some suggestions were provided on this study, for teachers, they need to pay great attention on these problems and work on motivation to improve English. For learners, they need to motivate themselves to improve their spoken skill to express their ideas in the target language.

Juhana (2012) also investigated the psychological factors that hinder students from speaking, causes of those factors, and proposed solutions to overcome them. The sample was 62 second grade students in a senior High School. The data were obtained through classroom observations, questionnaires and interviews. In the questionnaires, learners had the opportunity to provide their own answers where they selected one of the factors that affect their performance. Then, they provided a cause and solution from their own point of view about the factor they chose. The results revealed the psychological factors, that hinder students from speaking, are fear of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence and motivation. According to this author, the most effective solution is to work on the motivation in the class where the environment is comfortable and supportive for learners.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Settings and participants

The participants of this case study were 46 students (25 men and 21 women) and one English teacher from the second year of a senior public high school in the city of Loja, Ecuador. They were between 16 and 17 years old at the time of the study. The participants' native language was Spanish. The second-year senior high school consisted of seven classrooms, but two different classrooms were investigated. The majority of learners presented a low English level, especially with listening and speaking. In addition to that, the English teacher was the main instructor of both classrooms and has been teaching more than 16 years in different educational institutions.

Procedure

The present research is an Ecuadorian case study which is focused on analyzing the students' difficulties when learning the skills of listening and speaking of the second year of senior high school. According to Cresswell (2009), a case study is an approach used for exploring in depth and detail an event, activity, a person or group of individuals through the application of different instruments (observations, interviews, and so on) to collect data over a period of time. This case study was elaborated with a specific group of learners, and questionnaires, interview, observations sheets, tests, and activities (intervention process) were used to identify and overcome the difficulties with listening and speaking.

Davies & Hughes (2014) mention that researchers can develop their studies focusing on two research methods "quantitative and qualitative". According to Cresswell (2012), the benefit of using both methods is the guarantee of achieving a better comprehension of the research problem because if a method cannot answer a research question, the other one can do it. He states that the qualitative method allows the researcher to observe, describe and explain the characteristics of a specific population; while the quantitative method analyzes the data of a population statistically and quantifies the data to numbers.

First of all, the theoretical information was compiled from materials such as books, journals, or scientific articles to support and compare the results of previous studies. A detailed selection of the topics was made to work on the literature review, which was extracted from different authors. Secondly, different instruments were applied to collect reliable information from the sample such as students' questionnaire, a teacher's interview, and observations sheets.

A student's questionnaire was used to collect data and it was adapted from three sources; Hasan (2000) & Hamouda (2013) & Hoang and Ngoc (2015). Some items were modified to make them more understandable for learners and achieve the purpose of this research. The questionnaire contained 3 multiple-choice questions and 29 Likert-type items (See annex 1). It was translated into Spanish, which was the students' mother tongue, to

avoid misunderstandings and collect valid information. Likewise, the English teacher was interviewed by the researcher who explained the statements or questions clearly and took notes of some aspects that instructor mentioned. The interview contained the same 3 multiple-choice questions and 29 Likert-type items that were presented on the students' questionnaire by considering the teacher's point of view (See annex 2). Also, 2 multiple choice questions were added to collect personal information.

Next, 5 sessions of class observations were conducted and each one lasted a period of 40 minutes in the two different classrooms. In total, 10 observations were carried out by using observation sheets which consisted of 3 multiple choice questions and 29 yes/no questions (See annex 3). The questions were the same, which were asked on the students' questionnaire, by considering the researcher's point of view.

Thirdly, the process of tabulation was elaborated and based on the quantitative method to quantify the data of multiple choice questions and Likert-type items into numbers. The data was taken from students' questionnaires and the responses of each item were tabulated in frequencies/percentages and presented in tables or graphs to show the results by using the Excel program.

Fourthly, the results from the questionnaires, teacher's interview and class observations were analyzed through a procedure of triangulation to provide more credibility and validity to the results due to the combination of the three different instruments to collect data (Wilson, 2014). Furthermore, the results were supported with the theoretical information and previous studies of different authors.

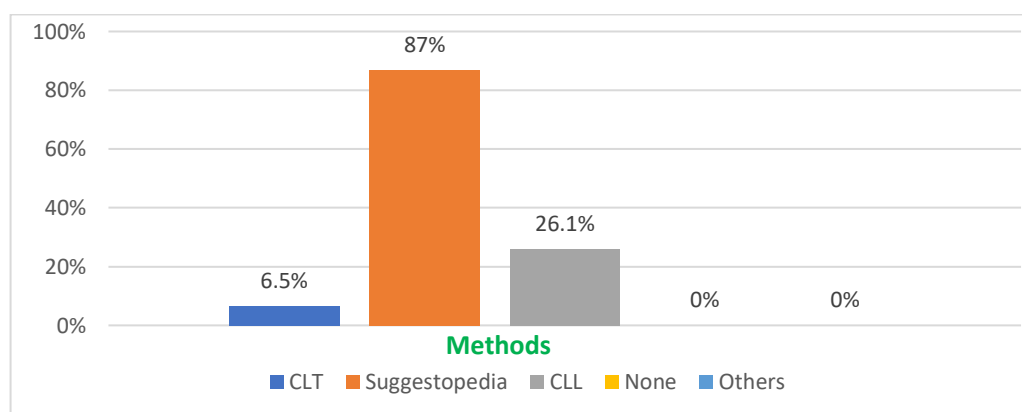
The analysis and discussion of results concluded the difficulties with listening and speaking. Therefore, the intervention process started, and it lasted a period of four weeks. First of all, a pre-test was designed and applied in the experimental group (one classroom) before working on the first activity. After applying the pre-test, a series of activities and strategies were used and combined to overcome the difficulties according to different authors.

After finishing the application of the last activity, a post-test was designed and applied with the purpose of measuring the effectiveness of the all activities to overcome students' difficulties with listening and speaking.

CHAPTER III
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This chapter deals with the analysis and discussion of results of this case study. Two sections compose this chapter. The first one refers to the description, analysis, and interpretation of results from students' questionnaires, a teacher interview and class observations. This section is divided into seven parts such as the methodology for teaching listening and speaking, the listening skill, factors that affect it, listening difficulties, the speaking skill, factors that affect it, and speaking difficulties. The second section deals with the results of the intervention process. This section contains three parts. The first one refers to results of the pre-test. In the second part, the results of the activities and strategies are presented. The last part involves the results of the post-test by making a comparison between both tests and showing the effectiveness of the intervention process.

Methodology for teaching listening and speaking



Graph 1. Methods for teaching listening and speaking

Source: Students' Questionnaires

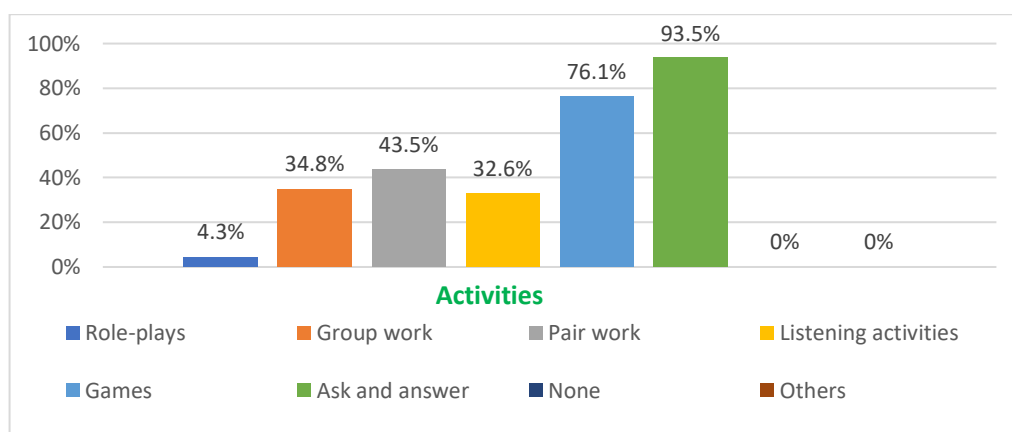
Elaboration: Michelle Stefanía Pineda Jiménez

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), Communicative Language Teaching, Suggestopedia, and Community Language Learning are the three methods that guarantee the achievement of competent communicators through listening and speaking. Based on the students' questionnaire, the most used method is Suggestopedia which is represented with a high percentage (87%). During the observations, it was very noticeable that the English teacher motivates learners to participate by providing extra points. If students are motivated, they are able to communicate effectively because the instructor provides them confidence (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). However, these learners were not able to express their ideas in the target language because they just read or repeated isolated words or short sentences as part of the class participation.

In fact, this lack of communication was evident because the teacher did not apply activities that require interaction among learners or group work. This event explains the low percentages of Communicative Language Teaching and Community Language Learning 6.5% and 26.1% respectively. Therefore, as Richards & Rodgers (1986) manifest the

instructor should consider the use of these methods frequently to ensure the work in group and communication.

On the other hand, an important fact that was noticed is the excessive application of the Grammar Translation method. During the observations, the instructor gave instructions in English and translated them into Spanish immediately. As a result, learners were accustomed to listen to their mother tongue and not interested in understanding information or instructions in English. In this context, this method does not allow the practice of listening and speaking because it is focused on the translation, systematic memorization of grammatical rules and vocabulary (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).



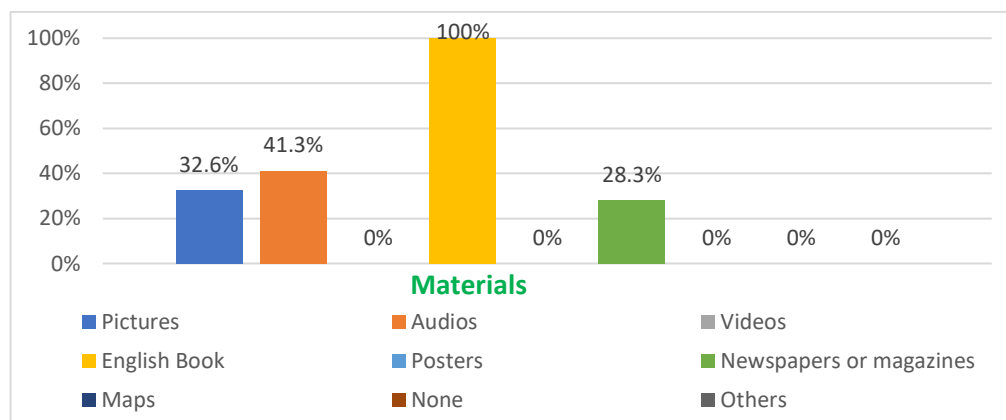
Graph 2. Activities for practicing listening and speaking

Source: Students' Questionnaires

Elaboration: Michelle Stefania Pineda Jiménez

Activities such as role-plays, pair work, group work, listening activities, games, and “ask and answer” let learners practice communication in real-life situations (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Students, the teacher and researcher have coincided that the most used activities are the “ask and answer” activity and games which represent a high percentage 93.5% and 76.1% respectively. During the classes, the instructor used a lot games such as board games, chair games and “listen and write” game to motivate learners. However, listening activities (32.6%) pair work (43.5%), group work (34.8%) and role plays (4.3%) are represented with low percentages. That means, the instructor does not use them frequently. In this context, Richards & Rodgers (1986) consider that the continuous application of these activities is useful to improve listening and speaking.

On the other hand, the researcher has identified the use of the activity “listen and repeat” during all the observations. According to Parrish (2004), its application allows the teacher to control the correct use of the target language by providing confidence and feedback at the same time. This explains why the instructor applies this activity in each class.



Graph 3. Materials for practicing listening and speaking

Source: Students' Questionnaires

Elaboration: Michelle Stefanía Pineda Jiménez

According to students' questionnaires and class observations, the following materials are applied for practicing listening and speaking such as pictures, audios, English book, and newspapers or magazines in the class. The instructor maybe uses the course book as the main material because it is economic, provides a guidance to follow, and contains a lot of exercises to practice; these characteristics are the advantages of this resource according to Ur (1996). Nevertheless, pictures (32.6%), audios (41.3%) and newspapers or magazines (28.3%) present a low rate which means the teacher rarely uses other kinds of materials apart from the book.

Pictures, audios, newspapers, posters and maps are considered supportive resources that promote the communication in real contexts (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Thus, the instructor should keep in mind this kind of materials to improve listening and speaking. On the other hand, a contradictory point was detected during the interview. The teacher mentioned the use of more materials, such as posters, worksheets, and webpages (links from YouTube) to facilitate and reinforce the knowledge and practice at home. For this reason, learners were asked about these materials, but they claimed that her teacher only applies the materials that were mentioned in the questionnaire.

The Listening skill

Table 1. The listening skill

N°	Listening Skill	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		Total	
		F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
1	I consider that listening is important for communication.	3	6.5%	0	0%	3	6.5%	11	23.9%	29	63%	46	100%
2	My listening comprehension is good.	0	0%	25	54.3%	8	17.4%	12	26.1%	1	2.2%	46	100%

Source: Students' Questionnaires

Elaboration: Michelle Stefanía Pineda Jiménez

According to Brownell (2016), mastering listening is primordial to develop a successful communication because the 80% of the exchange of information depends on listening. This is the reason why 86.9% of the students agree and strongly agree with its importance (See statement 1). This opinion was also corroborated by the teacher and researcher who have noticed that the majority of learners are aware of mastering this skill to comprehend information in English. However, some of them are unsure or do not consider listening as important (13% neutral and strongly disagree).

The second statement refers to the evaluation of students' listening comprehension. Some learners report their listening as good (28.3% agree or strongly agree). However, the majority of them evaluate it as not good (54.3% disagree). Similarly, the teacher and researcher have the same perception because it was remarkable the presence of problems to understand instructions or speech in English during the observations. For this reason, the teacher takes into account translation as an alternative to make learners comprehend the input. According to Masalimova, Porchesku, & Liakhnovitch (2016), students rate their listening comprehension as not good because they consider it is the most difficult skill to master and instructors do not apply productive strategies to practice it in class. Therefore, the application of activities in this field is noticeable and necessary.

Factors that affect the listening skill

Table 2. Factors that affect the listening skill

N°	Factors that affect Listening	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
	Statements	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
3	I recognize reduced forms of spoken English. For example, "cuz" instead of "because", "gonna" instead of "going to"	7	15.2%	24	52.2%	12	26.1%	3	6.5%	0	0%	46	100%
4	I understand speakers' speech because I know what stress, intonation, and rhythm is.	23	50%	6	13%	8	17.4%	5	10.9%	4	8.7%	46	100%
5	I lose concentration easily when I am listening.	2	4.3%	9	19.6%	25	54.3%	7	15.2%	3	6.5%	46	100%

Source: Students' Questionnaires

Elaboration: Michelle Stefanía Pineda Jiménez

Seferoglu & Uzakgoren (2004) claim that reduced forms, stress, rhythm and intonation, and lack of concentration are the three factors that affect listening comprehension. The factor of reduced forms of spoken English is presented on the third statement. It is visible that this factor affects a lot to students' listening because most of them do not recognize spoken reduced forms (67.4% rarely or never), while some of them

sometimes or often do (32.6%). Similarly, the teacher has reported that learners rarely recognize reduced forms while they are listening information. Accordingly, as they present a low master of this skill, they are in the habit of hearing slow and complete expressions instead of reduced forms which are shorter words than the original ones (Brown, 2001). This author also mentions that these reduced forms are pronounced too quickly by native speakers that make more difficult to comprehend the speech.

The fourth statement deals with the factor of stress, intonation and rhythm. The majority of students do not understand the speakers' speech because they do not know these three aspects (63% never and rarely) while other ones do (37% sometimes, often or always). The instructor has mentioned that her learners sometimes do, but the researcher has noticed a complete lack of knowledge of these three aspects. At the end of some observation classes, the researcher presented examples of sentences and students had to comprehend them by considering stress, rhythm and intonation, but they were not able to do it correctly. Accordingly, this factor affects most of them because they cannot figure out if the message was a confirmation, sarcasm or request (Brown, 2001).

The last factor refers to the lack of concentration while listening and it is presented on the fifth statement. Most students lose the concentration easily (76% sometimes, often or always), while some of them do not (23.9% rarely or never). In the same way, the teacher and researcher have confirmed the presence of this factor due to the topics do not seem being interesting for learners (Azmi et al., 2014). These authors consider that the lack of motivation increases the loss of concentration and meaning of the message.

Difficulties with the listening skill

Table 3. Difficulties with the listening skill

N°	Difficulties with Listening Statements	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
6	I have problems to recognize the sounds of each letter. For example, sounds of letter "c" which are "k" for car and "s" for city.	4	8.7%	10	21.7%	23	50%	8	17.4%	1	2.2%	46	100%
7	I cannot understand the main idea of a message. Hence, I focus on understanding every word.	3	6.5%	11	23.9%	24	52.2%	5	10.9%	3	6.5%	46	100%
8	I do not understand the audio scripts because	0	0%	4	8.7%	6	13%	12	26.1%	24	52.2%	46	100%

	native speakers speak too fast.												
9	I need to listen to the material more than once to understand it.	1	2.2%	4	8.7%	12	26.1%	5	10.9%	24	52.2%	46	100%
10	I understand the listening activities from the beginning to the end.	25	54.3%	8	17.4%	6	13%	6	13%	1	2.2%	46	100%
11	I listen to long audio scripts in class.	28	60.9%	12	26.1%	6	13%	0	0%	0	0%	46	100%
12	The quality of audio scripts is good (volume, clarity...)	0	0%	0	0%	7	15.2%	8	17.4%	31	67.4%	46	100%
13	I am confused when I listen to information which is about different cultures.	2	4.3%	11	23.9%	23	50%	7	15.2%	3	6.5%	46	100%
14	I am confused when I listen to different English accents.	23	50%	5	10.9%	11	23.9%	7	15.2%	0	0%	46	100%
15	I know the vocabulary of the listening activities.	5	10.9%	12	26.1%	24	52.2%	3	6.5%	2	4.3%	46	100%
16	There are outside noises which obstruct listening activities.	1	2.2%	5	10.9%	6	13%	24	52.2%	10	21.7%	46	100%

Source: Students' Questionnaires

Elaboration: Michelle Stefanía Pineda Jiménez

Six problems can obstruct the process of listening and understanding of information during the activities (Ur, 1996). Trouble with sounds is the first difficulty and it is introduced on the sixth statement. Based on the students' questionnaire, most of them have problems to recognize the sounds of each letter (69.6% sometimes, often or always). According to the observations, learners do not identify the difference between sounds since they seemed very confused, especially, with the recognition of verbs ending in "ed" such as /id/, /t/, /d/ because the topic was the past simple and the present perfect tenses. This problem is produced due to the lack of knowledge of the Phonetic Alphabet where each letter can present different sounds (Ur, 1996). As a result, the application of activities to put on practice the recognition of regular verbs ending is essential.

The second problem deals with understanding every word of the message (See statement 7). The majority of learners focus on understanding every word to recognize the meaning of the whole message (69.6% sometimes, often or always). This opinion has been confirmed by the teacher and researcher because students tended to do this frequently

during the listening activities. It occurs since every single word is relevant to figure out the messages according to learners' point of view (Hasan, 2000). In this case, the instructor should make students listen to the most important information to catch the main idea instead of every word (Ur, 1996).

Fast and natural native speech is the third problem which is presented on the eighth statement. Almost all students (91.3% sometimes, often or always) do not understand audio scripts because they think that natives speak too fast. This inclination has been supported by the researcher who observed the presence of this difficulty. In this context, the habit of instructors of speaking slow and clear to be understood causes this problem since learners consider that spoken English is produced in this way. But, when they listen to native speakers on audio scripts, they do not figure out the ideas due to native speech's speed is very quick (Ur, 1996). In this context, breaking into segments or sentences the information from audio scripts and uses them as meaningful units of speech is presented as a possible solution (Lee & Patten, 1995).

The necessity of hearing things more than once is the fourth problem (See statement 9). Most students (89.2% sometimes, often or always) agree with this necessity to understand the information from audio scripts. The teacher has mentioned that learners often ask her to repeat audio scripts twice or three times. This affirmation was noticeable during the class observations; however, the repetition of audios made the instructor lose a lot of time class. According to Ur (1996), it is not appropriate to listen the material many times because the act of listening consists of comprehending information only once in real contexts. Thus, this author suggests that using audios where the main idea is constantly exposed can reduce this difficulty.

The fifth problem refers to the difficulty for maintaining the rhythm while listening and which is described on statement number ten. The majority of learners cannot understand the activity from the beginning to the end (71.7% never or rarely). This inclination has also been confirmed by the teacher and researcher. According to Ur (1996), students feel stressed when they focus on each part of the audio scripts. For this reason, this author recommends that providing a relax environment and working on the most important information instead of each part allow to get good results on the activity.

Ur (1996) reports that getting tired while listening to long audio scripts is the last problem (See statement 11). Almost all students affirm that they do not listen to long audios (87% never or rarely). Likewise, the researcher and the teacher have corroborated this idea since the audios lasted from 30 to 60 seconds. This type of material makes learners get tired or lose concentration quickly (Ur, 1996). However, as the instructor does not use long passages, this problem was not detected as a difficulty.

Quality of listening material, cultural differences, variety of English accents, presence of unfamiliar vocabulary and physical conditions are the five problems that obstruct the listening activities (Azmi et al., 2014). The quality of the material is presented as the seventh problem (See statement 12). The majority of learners (84.8% often or always) consider that the clarity and volume of audios are good because all of them can listen to the information appropriately. This affirmation has coincided with the researcher and instructor's opinion who agree that the quality is always good. Therefore, when students listen to audio scripts, the quality of material does not produce misunderstandings because it is always adequate (Azmi et al., 2014).

The cultural differences are reported as the eighth problem, and it is presented on the statement number thirteen. Most learners (71.7% sometimes, often or always) are confused when they listen to information which is about different cultures. During the class observations, students seemed very confused when people talk about the American culture on audios. The lack of knowledge of vocabulary, that they listen, produces misunderstandings and confusion (Azmi et al., 2014). For this reason, they propose that the provision of the most appropriate vocabulary before working on the listening activities is primordial.

The ninth problem refers to the confusion with different English accents (See statement 14). The majority of students announce that the variety of accents does not produce confusion (60.9% never or rarely). However, some of them report that this variety does (39% sometimes and often). But, learners just practice the American accent and are not aware of other ones; for this reason, they think there is not confusion with the variety of accents. In this context, the teacher has mentioned that she always teaches the American accent because the course book is based on it and this accent is the most common that people use. This idea is reflected on point of view's Pilus (2013) who considers that instructors should focus on a model accent which is according to their students' needs.

The presence of unfamiliar vocabulary reduces learners' interest on the activity because they do not understand it (Azmi et al., 2014). Unfamiliar vocabulary is the tenth problem and it is presented on the fifteenth statement. Most students (52.2%) estimate that they sometimes know the vocabulary of the listening activities. Some of them (37%) comment that they never or rarely do. During the class observations, learners were not able to work in a suitable way because they did not know the meaning of the words. However, the activities were based on the vocabulary of a specific unit that students have been working for two months. Hence, the general idea is that there is no presence of unfamiliar words, and students need to review and study the vocabulary to have success on the activities.

The last problem is related to physical conditions of the classroom (See statement 16). The presence of outside noises is clear because most students (86.9% sometimes, often and always) notice this problem. During the class observations, different noises obstructed the listening activities because the class is near the road where cars, trucks or people make noises constantly. The teacher has also complained about this; so, she had to speak aloud most of the time to be listened. According to Azmi et al., (2014), these outside noises obstruct the comprehension of information in the listening activities.

The speaking skill

Table 4. The speaking skill

N°	Speaking Skill	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		Total	
		F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
17	I consider that speaking is important for communication.	3	6.5%	1	2.2%	3	6.5%	16	34.8%	23	50%	46	100%
18	My speaking skill is good.	0	0%	27	58.7%	11	23.9%	8	17.4%	0	0%	46	100%
19	My pronunciation is good.	2	4.3%	24	52.2%	9	19.6%	10	21.7%	1	2.2%	46	100%

Source: Students' Questionnaires

Elaboration: Michelle Stefania Pineda Jiménez

The seventeenth statement deals with the importance of speaking for communication. Most students agree with that affirmation (84.8% strongly agree or agree). This is because they feel that mastering speaking allows them to transmit their ideas and show their control of the target language (Fauzan, 2014). During the class observations, it was remarkable that learners wanted to express their ideas in English, but they were not able to do it because of their low English level. On the other hand, some students are unsure or do not consider speaking as important (15.2% neutral, disagree or strongly disagree).

The eighteenth statement refers to the speaking evaluation. The majority of learners rate this skill as not good (58.7% disagree), while other ones report it as good (17.4% agree). In general terms, the teacher and researcher also rate students' speaking as not good because it was obvious that learners were not able to talk, and they just produced short sentences, words, or read when the instructor asked questions. In the same context, Hadijah (2014) found the same results where most of learners qualified their speaking as not good. Hence, this author suggests that the motivation and promotion of the importance of English to communicate in the real word can be considered as a way to improve this skill.

Evaluation of pronunciation is presented on the nineteenth statement. Most learners mention that their pronunciation is not good (52.2% disagree and 4.3% strongly disagree), while other ones estimate it as good (21.7% agree and 2.2% strongly agree). The teacher and researcher rate students' pronunciation as not good because learners commit a lot of

mistakes when they pronounce words or sentences during the activities. But, the instructor also pronounces some words incorrectly; and this fact increases the incorrect learning of the vocabulary. According to Yilmaz & Yavuz (2015), the application of activities of phonetics allows to improve students' pronunciation and listening at the same time.

Factors that affect the speaking skill

Table 5. Factors that affect the speaking skill

N°	Factors that affect Speaking	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
	Statements	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
20	I have time and support before doing a speaking activity in the class.	2	4.3%	4	8.7%	5	10.9%	6	13%	29	63%	46	100%
21	Positive or negative feelings affect my speaking.	1	2.2%	6	13%	23	50%	11	23.9%	5	10.9%	46	100%
22	My listening ability affect my speaking skill.	5	10.9%	0	0%	10	21.7%	8	17.4%	23	50%	46	100%
23	I have previous ideas of the topics before working with them.	1	2.2%	2	4.3%	8	17.4%	10	21.7%	25	54.3%	46	100%
24	Teacher provides me feedback after speaking.	6	13%	6	13%	6	13%	5	10.9%	23	50%	46	100%

Source: Students' Questionnaires

Elaboration: Michelle Stefanía Pineda Jiménez

According to Hoang & Ngoc (2015), five factors affect speaking such as performance condition, affective factor, listening ability, topical knowledge, and providing feedback. The factor of performance condition is the first one (See statement 20). Most learners (76% always or often), the instructor and researcher confirm the provision of time and support before and during the speaking activity. In this context, Nation & Newton (2009) announces that, when instructors provide time to learners, they can think about more ideas to speak and feel less pressure. Regarding support, the teacher can use supportive listening strategies "useful expressions or the "ask and answer" technique to make the act of speaking more understandable and comfortable.

The second factor is the affective, and it is presented on the statement number twenty-one). The majority of learners (84.8% sometimes, often or always) report that positive or negative feelings affect their speaking performance. During the observations, some of them felt excited when they had to talk because they enjoyed the act of expressing ideas, while others felt disappointed or bored. Hoang & Ngoc (2015) consider that these positive or negative feelings can measure the success or failure of the performance.

Listening is the third factor that affects speaking performance (See statement 22). Most learners agree with this affirmation (89.1% sometimes, often or always). According to the observations, when students paid attention to what the instructor asked them, they produced a correct answer. Otherwise, when they did not, they answered incorrectly. This idea coincides with Palmer's contribution (2014) who argues that according to what learners understand or listen to, they produce a right message to communicate ideas.

The fourth factor is topical knowledge and it is presented on the twenty third statement. Almost all students (93.4% sometimes, often or always) possess previous ideas of the topics before working with them. The instructor and researcher have confirmed this mentioning that the book contains familiar topics for learners. According to Hoang & Ngoc (2015), when students have a prior knowledge of the units that they are studying, it is easier for them to connect their previous and new ideas.

The last factor deals with the provision of feedback after speaking (See statement 24). Most learners confirm this provision (73.9% sometimes, often or always) while some of them do not (26% rarely or never). The instructor and researcher have ensured the provision of feedback such as writing the mistakes on the board, making all students repeat the correct answer and telling them directly how to pronounce correctly when they work in pairs or in groups. It is great that the teacher applies the best ways of providing feedback because she knows how learners want to be corrected; hence, they do not feel embarrassed when she corrects their mistakes in front of the class (Razavi & Naghizadeh, 2014).

Difficulties with the speaking skill

Table 6. Difficulties with speaking

N°	Statements	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
25	I feel shy and nervous when I speak.	4	8.7%	6	13%	24	52.2%	7	15.2%	5	10.9%	46	100%
26	I am afraid of making mistakes when I speak.	0	0%	3	6.5%	23	50%	9	19.6%	11	23.9%	46	100%
27	Teacher motivates me to speak in English.	0	0%	5	10.9%	5	10.9%	7	15.2%	29	63%	46	100%
28	Considering the number of students, I have time to participate in class.	2	4.3%	23	50%	5	10.9%	8	17.4%	8	17.4%	46	100%
29	I feel better speaking in Spanish than in English.	0	0%	4	8.7%	12	26.1%	6	13%	24	52.2%	46	100%

Source: Students' Questionnaires

Elaboration: Michelle Stefanía Pineda Jiménez

Ur (1996) claims four problems that obstruct speaking performance which are inhibition, nothing to say, low-uneven participation and mother tongue use. The first difficulty is related to shyness and nervousness (Inhibition) and it is presented on the statement number twenty-five. The majority of learners (78.3% sometimes, often or always) report that they feel shy and nervous when they speak. This affirmation has been corroborated by the researcher who noticed that most of them were nervous when they had to talk in front of the class because their pronunciation was not good; so, they felt embarrassed of it. Mahmoud (2016) states that when students feel shy and nervous, they do not speak clearly, and it is difficult to understand the message. According to Jannah (2016), a way of reducing stress and tension is providing confidence with motivating expressions "Excellent, you are improving" while they are trying to talk. This author recommends letting learners know that if they are too shy and do not practice speaking, they cannot improve this skill.

The fear of making mistakes is related to inhibition (See statement 26). Almost all students are afraid of making mistakes when they speak (93.5% sometimes, often, or always). The teacher and researcher have also noticed the presence of this fear during the development of speaking activities. In this context, Jannah (2016) affirms that learners are afraid of making mistakes because they feel embarrassed to be laughed, not being understood or pronouncing incorrectly in front of their classmates. For this reason, they prefer to keep quiet. Ur (1996) suggests that creating a comfortable environment and working in groups can reduce this fear since the instructor is not controlling too much, and learners feel more relaxed and free to express themselves.

The second speaking difficulty deals with nothing to say. It is presented on the twenty-seventh statement. The lack of motivation plays an important role in this problem (Jannah, 2016). Almost all students (89.1% sometimes, often or always) argue that her teacher motivates them to talk in English. According to the class observations, this motivation was remarkable and based on extra points as class participation. Therefore, it is important to apply other kind of strategies to motivate learners to speak and not only for giving extra points; in this regard, Jannah (2016) remarks that instructors must discover the best way to do it because when students are motivated, they are most interested on learning English and improving their speaking. Likewise, Ur (1996) claims that interesting topics and activities increase the motivation.

Low or uneven participation is the third difficulty (See statement 28). Most learners (54.3%) mention that they cannot participate because there are many students in the classroom. However, some of them (45.7%) comment that they can sometimes, often and always. During class observations, some students participated and spoke more than other ones with the purpose of getting extra points. Ur (1996) explains that this problem occurs in

large classes where advanced students participate more than ones who have a low English level. This author suggests that discussion in groups ensures the participation of each learner in the activity.

The last difficulty is related to the mother tongue use and it is presented on the twenty-ninth statement. The preference of using Spanish is noticeable because almost all learners (91.3% sometimes, often or always) feel better speaking their mother tongue than English. According to the instructor, students sometimes feel this necessity, but the researcher has observed a great use of the first language in the class. Ur (1996) comments that there is a continuous use of the mother tongue because learners feel free and comfortable to speak about any topic and are not afraid of making mistakes. He suggests that the solution is working in groups where a student might inform the instructor if his/her partners are using the target language or not.

Results of the intervention process

Results of the pre-test.

The pre-test was based on the first unit “Breaking News” because this topic was studied during the class observations and it was made of two parts (See Annex 4). The listening part contained four questions to measure students’ ability to recognize the pronunciation of each regular verb (past or present tense), identify specific details or the most important information, and understand the main idea of a message instead of every word. On the other hand, the speaking part consisted of one question to measure students’ ability to express their ideas about a topic.

Hence, learners took the pre-test where they provided written answers and talked about news. Also, the teacher supplied students with audios scripts to complete the tasks. After the application of the pre-test, the results were tabulated by using the Excel Program to obtain the grades. The test was graded over 10 points, 7 to mark four questions in listening and 3 to mark one question in speaking.

The following table shows the results obtained in the pre-test. It presents a general average of grades for each section, and the final grade in the experimental group.

Table 7. Results of the pre-test

Average of students' grades						
	Listening				Speaking	Final Grade
	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	
Average of grade	0.53/1	1.18/2	0.61/0.75	1.26/3.25	0.21/3	3.79/10
	3.58/7				0.21/3	

Source: Students' Pre-Test

Elaboration: Michelle Stefania Pineda Jiménez

The table above shows that learners do not master listening and speaking because the final average grade is very low 3.79/10 (3.58/7 and 0.21/3 respectively). These grades reassert why students present many difficulties since they are not able to comprehend speaker's speech and express ideas in an oral way. Basically, they had problems to recognize the pronunciation of regular verbs, identify the main idea, specific details or complete dialogues with missing words. Regarding speaking, only 3 of 19 students talked about news and committed several mistakes in pronunciation and/or grammar where their answers just contained one or two sentences. They were not able to communicate messages which present coherence and cohesion.

Results of the activities and strategies.

Artifact 1. "Repeating sounds" and "identifying sounds" activities.

The teacher explained how to recognize the pronunciation of regular verbs in past or past participle by providing information about the topic to each student in a worksheet (See the material in annex 5). After that, the instructor wrote examples of verbs on the board and made learners listen and repeat them. Then, students classified other verbs in a worksheet. As a result of this artifact, they understood the categorization of regular verbs with the information that the instructor provided. Furthermore, they distinguished the sounds by hearing and repeating them through imitation as Nation & Newton (2009) argue. In this case, the difficulty "trouble with sounds" was worked.

Artifact 2. "Using the written sounds", "listen and choose" activities and "small groups and partners" strategy.

The instructor drew a chart with 3 columns (written sounds: /id/, /d/, /t/) on the board and pasted 10-word cards (verbs) in different parts on the wall (See the material in annex 6). Then, learners worked in groups (3 participants) to make a competition. A member of each group had to listen to an audio, run to the front, choose the word card, classify it on the correct column and pronounce the verb aloud. As a result, they identified the verbs by listening and classifying them on the correct column considering a pattern to follow "written forms" as Nation & Newton (2009) claim. At the same time, they were motivated to develop the activity since they were competing in groups to be the winners. In this case, the difficulty "trouble with sounds" was worked.

Artifact 3. "Listen and repeat" activity.

The teacher provided to students a poster and worksheet that contained the vocabulary with categories such as verbs, type of news, the media, section, and ways of expressing feelings about news (See the material in annex 7). After that, the teacher explained the meaning of the words and made learners listen and repeat aloud. As a result of this, students knew and had a clear idea of the vocabulary before working on the listening

activity as Azmi et al., (2014) mention. In this case, the difficulty “cultural differences” was worked because they identified and understood the main vocabulary that can be presented on the audio scripts about a topic.

Artifact 4. “Sorting activity” strategy.

The instructor pasted the poster that contained the vocabulary with categories such as verbs, type of news, the media, section, and ways of expressing feelings about news on the board (See the material in annex 8). The poster was used as a guide to explain the activity. Then, students worked in a worksheet where they had to listen to two audios and select with a cross the correct option of each category such as verbs, type of news, the media, section, and ways of expressing feelings about news of each audio. As a result of this, learners identified the most important information and classified it into categories and with that information; they were able to determine the main idea of the message as Herrel & Jordan (2016) manifest. In this case, the difficulty “understanding every word of the message” was worked.

Artifact 5. “Sorting activity”, “communication games”, “small groups and partners” strategies.

Students worked in groups (3 or 4 participants) to complete a worksheet. Each group was provided with 3 pictures and 24 sheets of paper. Therefore, they had to listen to an audio and stick the correct picture and sheets of paper in each category about news in the worksheet (See the material in annex 9). The categories were divided on title, picture, verb, type of news, the media, section, detail about news, and way of expressing feelings about news. As a result, learners identified the most important information and classified it into categories and with that information; they were able to determine the main idea of the message as Herrel & Jordan (2016) manifest. At the same time, students were motivated to communicate among them to complete the task in group as Herrel & Jordan (2016) consider. In this case, the difficulty “understanding every word of the message” was worked.

Artifact 6. “Listening cloze” activity.

The teacher pasted a poster which contained a picture and an incomplete dialogue about the news “The largest and oldest lake in the world” on the board (See the material in annex 10). After that, students had to listen an audio about the dialogue and complete it by sticking word cards on the poster. Likewise, learners completed the same written passage in a worksheet in an individual way. Also, the instructor pasted another poster which contained the vocabulary with categories such as verbs, type of news, the media, section, and ways of expressing feelings about news on the board. As a result, students identified specific information and completed a written passage while listening as Brown (2010) argues. Hence, they were concentrated on the audio script to complete the task from the beginning to the

end and maintained the rhythm. In this case, the difficulty “maintaining the rhythm” was worked.

Artifact 7. “Open-ended response to a question” activity.

Learners listened to a dialogue about social news part by part (See the material in annex 11). Then, they worked with the complete audio. While they were listening, they took some notes and the teacher made questions to verify that students comprehended the information. As a result, they reinforced and understood fast and natural native speakers’ speech by comprehending part by part of the information as Lee & Van (1995) suggest. In this case, the difficulty “fast and natural native speech” was worked.

Artifact 8. “Open-ended response to a question” activity.

Students listened to a short dialogue about health news where the information is repeated many times; and the teacher only played the audio two times (See the material in annex 12). Then, the instructor made questions to confirm the understanding of the input. As a result, learners were able to comprehend the dialogue without the necessity of listening to it three or more times because the information is constantly repeated as Ur (1996) recommends. In this case, the difficulty “necessity of hearing things more than once” was worked.

Artifact 9. “Small groups and partners” strategy.

The instructor made learners work in groups (3 participants) to read a dialogue about local news (See the material in annex 13). After reading, they had to comprehend the complete dialogue by talking to their partners and asking to the teacher the meaning of vocabulary (provision of feedback). As a result, they figured out the information by interacting with their classmates and instructor as Herrel & Jordan (2016) comment. In addition, students did not feel shy or nervous and were not afraid of making mistakes because they were working in groups as Ur (1996) confirms. In this case, the difficulties “fear of making mistakes, shyness and nervousness, low/uneven participation and mother tongue use” were worked.

Artifact 10. “Role-play” activity.

Learners worked in pairs with the same dialogue that was used in the previous strategy (See the material in annex 14). They produced the dialogue in an oral way without reading while the teacher was providing feedback to students. Some learners came to the front to role-play the dialogue. As a result, they practiced their speaking, were not afraid of making mistakes, and did not feel shyness or nervousness to talk because their classmates have the same English level as Ur (1996) confirms. Besides this, they used the target language most of the time. In this case, the difficulties “fear of making mistakes, shyness and nervousness, low/uneven participation and mother tongue use” were worked.

In each activity for listening or speaking, the teacher provided instructions or information in English most of the time by making mimics, drawing, or writing on the board to avoid translation. As a result, students were in the habit of hearing and understanding information in English instead of Spanish. In this case, the difficulty “mother tongue use” was worked.

In most activities, the instructor ensured that all learners participate by making raffles or providing each one a sheet of paper (number) to consider his/her cooperation. In addition to that, the teacher provided support and created a relaxed environment in the class. As a result, all students could work in the activities. In this case, the difficulty “low/uneven participation” was worked.

Results of the post-test.

The post-test was designed under the same characteristics of the pre-test and it was made of two parts; the first one consisted of 4 questions related to listening, and the second part of 1 question in relation to speaking (See annex 15). The questions were focused on the same purposes and based on the same topic of the pre-test. Hence, after the last activity, learners took the post-test where they provided written answers and talked about news. The instructor supplied students with audios scripts to complete the tasks.

After the application of the post-test, the results were tabulated by using the Excel Program to obtain the grades. The test was graded over 10 points, 7 to mark four questions in listening and 3 to mark one question in speaking.

The following table shows the results obtained in the post-test. It presents a general average of grades for each section, and the final grade in the experimental group.

Table 8. Results of the post-test

Average of students' grades						
	Listening				Speaking	Final Grade
	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	
Average of grade	1.18/1.5	1.36/1.5	0.71/0.75	2.04/3.25	0.63/3	5.91/10
	5.29/7				0.63/3	

Source: Students' Post-Test

Elaboration: Michelle Stefanía Pineda Jiménez

The table above shows that learners have overcome the difficulties with these skills since the final grade has increased 2.12 points (3.79 to 5.91/10) from the pre-test to the post-test. In fact, listening has raised 1.58 points (from 3.58 to 5.29/7) and speaking 0.42 (from 0.21 to 0.63/3) respectively in the post-test. However, speaking has not increased too much in comparison with listening since the grade is still very low in the results.

In general terms, students have improved their grades in both sections in the post-test. That means, the activities applied have brought benefits to overcome their difficulties with these skills. They have learned to recognize the pronunciation of regular verbs, identify the main idea, specific details, or complete dialogues with missing words. Regarding speaking, 17 of 19 students talked about news by using one sentence or two sentences. The number of learners, that provided oral answers, has raised in the post-test; however, they still committed errors in pronunciation and/or grammar.

CONCLUSIONS

This case study reveals that students from second year of senior high school face four difficulties when learning the listening skill. The first one is the trouble with sounds. Understanding every word of the message instead of the main idea to figure out the complete information is the second difficulty. Moreover, the third one is the necessity of hearing audio scripts more than once. Besides this, understanding fast and natural native speech is considered as the fourth problem.

With regard to speaking' difficulties, shyness and nervousness cause insecurity to express ideas in front of an audience. Another difficulty is the fear of making mistakes; in the same way, the preference of using the mother tongue "Spanish" instead of the target language "English" in the class is detected as another problem. Likewise, the difficulty "low/uneven participation" is noticeable.

Reduced forms, rhythm, stress and intonation, and lack of concentration are the three factors that affect listening comprehension. Not recognizing the reduced forms of spoken English makes more difficult understanding speech. Similarly, not mastering stress, rhythm and intonation produces more obstacles to obtain the correct speaker's intention. Additionally, the lack of concentration is caused by the absence of motivation in the activities.

On the other hand, performance conditions (time and support) and the provision of feedback are the two main factors that affect speaking performance. The time and support that the teacher provides to students allow achieving the correct production of answers. Moreover, the provision of feedback improves the oral communication.

In general terms, the presence of difficulties with listening and speaking is because the methodology, that the instructor uses, is not emphasized on teaching these skills due to the lack of communicative activities and variety of resources to practice English in real-life situations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers should keep in mind the application of different and effective strategies and activities that emphasized listening and speaking in order to work on the difficulties with these skills.

In relation to listening, the “identifying sounds” activity and “sorting” strategy should be used to work on the recognition of sounds and understanding the main idea of the messages. They can be combined with other activities to work on and improve students’ comprehension.

With respect to speaking, the “small groups and partners” strategy and the “role play” activity could be applied to practice and improve this skill because learners feel less pressure working with their classmates and more freedom to interact with someone who has his/her same English level.

The use of Communicative Language Teaching and Community Language Learning methods might be estimated as useful and productive methods to promote the use of the target language in real contexts and work on the difficulties found.

Besides this, teachers could take into consideration the use of a variety of interesting and authentic materials as an alternative to make learners be in real contact with English and motivate them to practice and improve their listening and speaking.

Another suggestion may be to avoid using the Grammar Translation Method and try to provide instructions and information in the target language to let students be in the habit of understanding English instead of Spanish.

In future studies, the intervention process should last a longer period of time to achieve better results in the activities or strategies to overcome the difficulties with listening and speaking.

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ANNEXES



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

Titulación de Inglés

Students' difficulties when learning the skills of Listening and Speaking in an EFL context: An Ecuadorian case study.

Annex 1. Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information about students' difficulties when learning listening and speaking, factors that affect their performances in these skills, and the methodology that instructor uses to teach these skills. I am conducting this study as a requirement to get the Degree in Teaching English at "Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja".

I would be very grateful if you take your time to provide your answers in each item because your anonymous contribution through this questionnaire will be of a great help to my study.

Instruction. Please put a cross (X) in the box beside the option(s) that best you consider.

Part I. Methodology for teaching listening and speaking

1. Which methods does the teacher use to teach listening and speaking?

(You may choose more than one option)

- ☐ CLT (I practice communication with classmates in different contexts "go to the supermarket, last holidays, go out with friends, etc....")
- ☐ Suggestopedia (I am motivated to communicate with confidence, enthusiasm, and relaxed in class).
- ☐ CCL (I communicate working in groups)
- ☐ None
- ☐ Others

2. What kind of activities does the teacher use to practice listening and speaking?

(You may choose more than one option)

- ☐ Role-plays ☐ Work in groups ☐ Work in pairs ☐ Listening activities
- ☐ Games ☐ Ask and answer ☐ None
- ☐ Others

3. What kind of materials does the teacher use to practice listening and speaking?

(You may choose more than one option)

- ☐ Pictures ☐ Listening audios ☐ Videos ☐ English Book ☐ Posters
- ☐ Newspapers, magazines ☐ Maps ☐ None
- ☐ Others

Part II. Listening skill

The responses range from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”.

1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that best you consider.	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
4. I consider that listening is important for communication.					
5. My listening comprehension is good.					

Part III. Factors that affect listening

The responses range from “Never” to “Always”.

1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Always

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that you best consider.	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
6. I recognize reduced forms of spoken English. For example, “cuz” instead of “because”, “gonna” instead of “going to”					
7. I understand speakers’ speech because I know what stress, intonation, and rhythm is.					
8. I lose the concentration easily when I am listening.					

Part IV. Difficulties with listening

The responses range from “Never” to “Always”.

1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Always

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that you best consider.	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
9. I have problems to recognize the sounds of each letter. For example, sounds of letter “c” which are “k” for car and “s” for city.					

10. I cannot understand the main idea of a message. Hence, I focus on understanding every word.					
11. I do not understand the audio scripts because native speakers speak too fast.					
12. I need to listen to the material more than once to understand it.					
13. I understand the listening activities from the beginning to the end.					
14. I listen to long audio scripts in class.					
15. The quality of audio scripts is good (volume, clarity...)					
16. I am confused when I listen to information which is about different cultures.					
17. I am confused when I listen to different English accents.					
18. I know the vocabulary of the listening activities.					
19. There are outside noises which obstruct listening activities.					

Part V. Speaking skill

The responses range from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”.

1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that best you consider.	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
20. I consider that speaking is important for communication.					
21. My speaking skill is good.					
22. My pronunciation is good.					

Part VI. Factors that affect speaking

The responses range from “Never” to “Always”.

1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Always

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that you best consider.	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
23. I have time and support before doing a speaking activity in the class.					
24. Positive or negative feelings affect my speaking.					
25. My listening ability affects my speaking skill.					
26. I have previous ideas of the topics before working with them.					
27. Teacher provides me feedback after speaking.					

Part VII. Difficulties with speaking

The responses range from “Never” to “Always”.

1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Always

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that you best consider.	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
28. I feel shy and nervous when I speak.					
29. I am afraid of making mistakes when I speak.					
30. Teacher motivates me to speak in English.					
31. Considering the number of students, I have time to participate in class.					
32. I feel better speaking in Spanish than in English.					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COLLABORATION!



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

Titulación de Inglés

Students' difficulties when learning the skills of Listening and Speaking in an EFL
context: An Ecuadorian case study

Annex 2. Teacher's Interview

Dear teacher,

The purpose of this interview is to gather information about students' difficulties when learning listening and speaking, factors that affect their performances in these skills, and the methodology that instructor uses to teach the skills. I am conducting this study as a requirement to get the Degree in Teaching English at "Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja".

I would be very grateful if you take your time to provide your answers in each item because your anonymous contribution through this questionnaire will be of a great help to my study.

Instruction. Please put a cross (X) in the box beside the option(s) that best you consider.

Part I. Personal Information

1. How long have you been teaching English?
☐ 1-5 years ☐ 6–10 years ☐ 11-15 years ☐ More than 16 years
2. What is your educational level?
☐ Bachelor's degree ☐ Master's degree ☐ Other

Part II. Methodology for teaching listening and speaking

1. Which methods do I use to teach listening and speaking?
(You may choose more than one option).
☐ Communicative Language Teaching (Communication in different contexts "go to the supermarket, last holidays, go out with friends", etc....)
☐ Suggestopedia (Motivate students to communicate with confidence, support, enthusiasm...)
☐ Community Language Learning (Communicate working in groups)
☐ None
☐ Others
2. What kind of activities do I use to make students practice listening and speaking?
(You may choose more than one option).
☐ Role-plays ☐ Work in groups ☐ Work in pairs ☐ Listening activities
☐ Games ☐ Ask and answer ☐ None
☐ Others

3. What kind of materials do I use to practice listening and speaking?

(You may choose more than one option)

- ☐ Pictures ☐ Listening Audios ☐ Videos ☐ English Book ☐ Posters
☐ Newspapers, magazines ☐ Maps ☐ None
☐ Others.....

Part III. Listening skill

The responses range from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”.

1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that best you consider.	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
4. My students know that listening is important for communication.					
5. My students' listening comprehension is good.					

Part IV. Factors that affect listening

The responses range from “Never” to “Always”.

1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Always

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that you best consider.	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
6. My students understand reduced forms of spoken English. For example, “cuz” instead of “because”, “gonna” instead of “going to”					
7. My students understand speakers' speech because they know what stress, intonation, and rhythm is.					
8. My students lose the concentration easily when they are listening.					

Part V. Difficulties with listening

The responses range from “Never” to “Always”.

1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Always

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that you best consider.	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
9. My students have problems to recognize the sounds of each letter. For example, sounds of letter “c” which are “k” for car and “s” for city.					
10. My students cannot understand the main idea of a message. Hence, they focus on understanding every word.					
11. My students do not understand the audio scripts because native speakers speak too fast.					
12. My students need to listen to the material more than once to understand it.					
13. My students understand the listening activities from the beginning to the end.					
14. My students listen to long audio scripts in class.					
15. The quality of audio scripts is good (volume, clarity...).					
16. My students are confused when they listen to information which is about different cultures.					
17. My students are confused when they listen to different English accents.					

18. My students know the vocabulary of the listening activities.					
19. There are outside noises which obstruct listening activities.					

Part VI. Speaking skill

The responses range from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”.

1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that best you consider.	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
20. My students know that speaking is important for communication.					
21. My students’ speaking skill is good.					
22. My students have a good pronunciation.					

Part VII. Factors affect speaking

The responses range from “Never” to “Always”.

1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Always

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that you best consider.	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
23. My students have time and support before doing a speaking activity in the class.					
24. Positive or negative feelings affect my students’ speaking.					
25. The listening skill affect my students’ speaking skill.					
26. My students have previous ideas of the topics before working with them in class.					

27. I provide my students feedback after speaking.					
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Part VIII. Difficulties with speaking

The responses range from “Never” to “Always”.

1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Always

Please, read the statements and put a cross (X) beside the option(s) that you best consider.	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)
28. My students feel shy and nervous when they speak.					
29. My students are afraid of making mistakes when they speak.					
30. I motivate my students to speak in English.					
31. Considering the number of students, my students have time to participate in class.					
32. My students feel better speaking in Spanish than in English.					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COLLABORATION!



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

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Titulación de Inglés

Students' difficulties when learning the skills of Listening and Speaking in an EFL context: An Ecuadorian case study

Annex 3. Classroom Observation Checklist

The purpose of this class observation is to gather information about students' difficulties when learning listening and speaking, factors that affect their performances in these skills, and the methodology that instructor uses to teach these skills. I am conducting this study as a requirement to get the Degree in Teaching English at "Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja".

Classroom Observation N°

Part. I Methodology for teaching listening and speaking

1. Which methods does the teacher use to teach listening and speaking?
 - ☐ Communicative Language Teaching ☐ Suggestopedia
 - ☐ Community Language Learning ☐ None
 - ☐ Others
2. What kind of activities does the teacher use to practice listening and speaking?
 - ☐ Role-plays ☐ Work in groups ☐ Work in pairs ☐ Listening activities
 - ☐ Games ☐ Ask and answer ☐ None
 - ☐ Others
3. What kind of materials does the teacher use to practice listening and speaking?
 - ☐ Pictures ☐ Listening Audios ☐ Videos ☐ English Book ☐ Posters
 - ☐ Newspapers, magazines ☐ Maps ☐ None
 - ☐ Others

Part II. Listening skill

	Yes	No
4. Students consider that listening is important for communication.		
5. Students' listening comprehension is good.		

Part III. Factors affect listening

	Yes	No
6. Students recognize reduced forms of spoken English. For example, "cuz" instead of because", "gonna" instead of "going to".		

7. Students understand speakers' speech because of knowing what stress, intonation, and rhythm is.		
8. Students lose the concentration easily when they are listening.		

Part IV. Difficulties with listening

	Yes	No
9. Students have problems to recognize the sounds of each letter. For example, sounds of letter "c" which are "k" for car and "s" for city.		
10. Students cannot understand the main idea of a message. Hence, they focus on understanding every word.		
11. Students do not understand the audio scripts because native speakers speak too fast.		
12. Students need to listen to the material more than once to understand it.		
13. Students understand the listening activities from the beginning to the end.		
14. Students listen to long audio scripts in class.		
15. The quality of audio scripts is good (volume, clarity...)		
16. Students are confused when they listen to information which is about different cultures.		
17. Students are confused when they listen to different English accents.		
18. Students know the vocabulary of the listening activities.		
19. There are outside noises which obstruct listening activities.		

Part V. Speaking skill

	Yes	No
20. Students consider that speaking is important for communication.		
21. Students' speaking skill is good.		
22. Students have a good pronunciation.		

Part VI. Factors affect speaking

	Yes	No
23. Students have time and support before doing a speaking activity in the class.		
24. Positive or negative feelings affect students' speaking.		
25. Listening ability affect students' speaking skill.		
26. Students have previous ideas of the topics before working with them.		
27. Teacher provides students feedback after speaking.		

Part VII. Difficulties with speaking

	Yes	No
28. Students feel shy and nervous when they speak.		
29. Students are afraid of making mistakes when they speak.		
30. Teacher motivates students to speak in English.		
31. Considering the number of students, all students have time to participate in class.		
32. Students feel better speaking in Spanish than in English.		

Other aspects to consider:

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Annex 4. Pre-Test
Listening and Speaking
Unit 1 “Breaking News”

Name: Score: / 10



LISTENING SECTION

7 POINTS

1) Listen and classify each verb in the correct section. (0,1 each). /1

liked	happened	attended	arrived	fixed
presented	closed	created	published	listened

Pronunciation of regular verbs “ED”		
/id/	/t/	/d/

2) Listen to the audio and complete the paragraph with the words from the boxes. Then, choose only one picture that matches with the news that is being described with a cross (X). Not all the words or expressions are used. (0,25 each)./2

✓ journalist
✓ shocking news
✓ intercultural
✓ have lived
✓ That’s astonishing

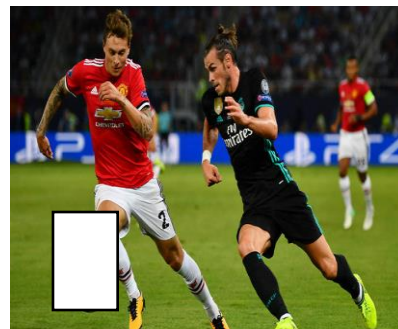
✓ international
✓ has taken
✓ has been published
✓ photographer
✓ That’s awesome

✓ have stayed
✓ has obtained
✓ breaking news
✓ has been described

I have read a) “The largest and oldest lake in the world”. In the b) section, this great “Lake Baikal” c) It has 640km of length and at least 25 million years of age in Russia. d)..... for me! Around 1750 plant and animal species e) inside it because its water is the purest and most transparent in the planet. The f) “Alexey Trofimov” g) this beautiful picture.



- 3) Listen to three audios and identify with numbers the order of the newspaper sections in each picture. (0,25 each)./0,75



- 4) Listen the three dialogues and classify the words or expressions related to each dialogue from the boxes. Not all the words or expressions are used (0,25 each).

...../3,25

Have you read the news?			
	Topic	Details	Ways to express feelings about news
1.	a.	b. c.	d.
2.	e.	f. g.	h.
3.	i.	j. k. l.	m.

- ✓ Social
- ✓ Great game
- ✓ Health
- ✓ Beautiful couple
- ✓ Bayern vs. Porto
- ✓ Couple scandal
- ✓ Olympic Games

- ✓ Pneumonia
- ✓ It is hard to believe!
- ✓ That's too bad!
- ✓ Bronchitis
- ✓ New boyfriend
- ✓ Sports

- ✓ It is hard to comprehend!
- ✓ That's shocking!
- ✓ Symptoms (Fever, coughing)
- ✓ New partner
- ✓ Breakup
- ✓ That's awesome!
- ✓ Basel vs. Paris



SPEAKING SECTION

3 POINTS

- 5) Talk about news that you have read recently by using the vocabulary of the unit.

..... / 3

Audio scripts for the pre-test

Audio for activity 2

I have read breaking news "The largest and oldest lake in the world". In the international section, this great "Lake Baikal" has been described. It has 640km of length and at least 25 million years of age in Russia. That's awesome for me! Around 1750 plant and animal species have lived inside it because its water is the purest and most transparent in the planet. The photographer "Alexey Trofimov" has taken this beautiful picture.

Audios for activity 3 and 4

Dialogue 1. Sports

Mike: Look! Bayern, my favorite team has won the Champions League.

Anna: It is hard to believe! Who was the opponent team?

Mike: Porto. This team lost but it was a great game 3-2.

Anna: You're right. I think the game was very exciting.

Mike: Of course! I want to watch it on television tonight.

Anna: Can I go with you?

Mike: Sure.

Dialogue 2. Health section

Mary: Have you read the news today?

Sandra: No, I haven't. What have you read?

Mary: A child has died of pneumonia recently.

Sandra: That's too bad! How has happened?

Mary: The child has had different symptoms several days such as fever, coughing, body aches and more. He was taking medication, but he got worse and went to the hospital.

Sandra: I guess his parents must be too depressed. |

Mary: Of course!

Dialogue 3. Social

Kim: Have you listened that Katy Perry has a new boyfriend?

Larry: That's shocking! But she was dating Orlando Bloom recently. What happened?

Kim: They broke up due to the distance. But now, she looks very happy with her new partner. Look the photographs.

Larry: That's true. They make a beautiful couple.

Kim: I love reading this kind of news.

Larry: Me too.

Annex 5. Artifact 1. “Repeating sounds” and “identifying sounds” activities.

Worksheet (Information)

PRONUNCIATION OF ED		
The pronunciation of words ending in ED depends on the final consonant (sound) .		
/id/	/t/	/d/
t, d	c, x, ch	l, n, r
	p, k, f	g, v, s
	gh, sh, ss	w, y, z
Ex: Wanted	Watched	Cleaned
Needed	Published	Listened

Worksheet

Pronunciation of ED (Regular Verbs)

Name:

Listen and select the pronunciation of each regular verb in the past or past participle tense with a cross (X).

SENTENCES	/d/	/t/	/id/
a. I <u>visited</u> the Empire State Building.			
b. Sam has <u>worked</u> here for seven years.			
c. They <u>loved</u> it.			
d. I have <u>travelled</u> the world.			
e. She <u>edited</u> the research paper.			
f. They <u>talked</u> a lot.			

Pictures of the material used in the class



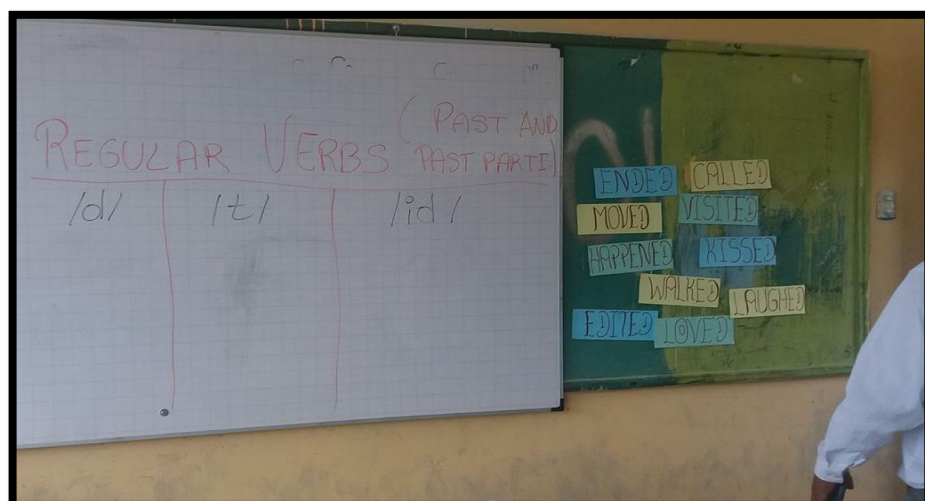


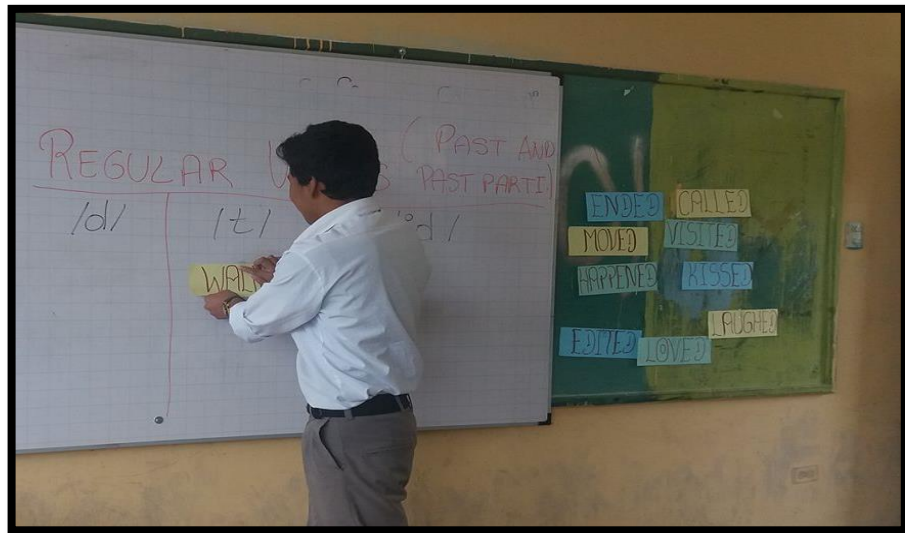
Annex 6. Artifact 2. “Using the written sounds”, “listen and choose” activities and “small groups and partners” strategy.

Word cards (Verbs)



Pictures of the material used in the class





Annex 7. Artifact 3. “Listen and repeat” activity.

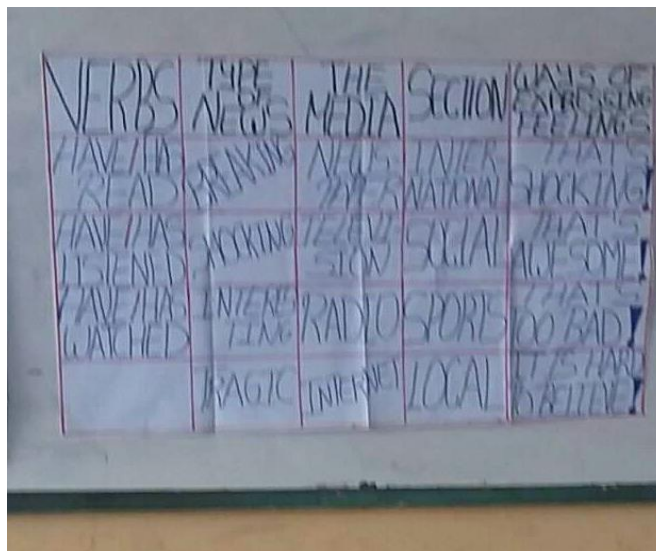
Poster (Vocabulary about news)

VERBS	TYPE OF NEWS	THE MEDIA	SECTION	WAYS OF EXPRESSING FEELINGS
HAVE/HAS READ	BREAKING	NEWS-PAPER	INTER-NATIONAL	THAT'S SHOCKING!
HAVE/HAS LISTENED	SHOCKING	TELEVISION	SOCIAL	THAT'S AWESOME!
HAVE/HAS WATCHED	INTERESTING	RADIO	SPORTS	THAT'S TOO BAD!
	TRAGIC	INTERNET	LOCAL	IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE!

Worksheet (Vocabulary about news)

TALK ABOUT NEWS!				
Verbs	Type of news	The media	Section	Ways of expressing feelings about news
Have/has read	Breaking	Newspaper	International	That's shocking!
Have/has listened	Shocking	Radio	Social	That's awesome!
Have/has watched	Interesting	Television	Sports	That's too bad!
	Tragic	Internet	Local	It is hard to believe!

Picture of the material used in the class



Annex 8. Artifact 4. “Sorting activity” strategy.

Poster (Vocabulary about news)

VERBS	TYPE OF NEWS	THE MEDIA	SECTION	WAYS OF EXPRESSING FEELINGS
HAVE/HAS READ	BREAKING	NEWSPAPER	INTERNATIONAL	THAT'S SHOCKING!
HAVE/HAS LISTENED	SHOCKING	TELEVISION	SOCIAL	THAT'S AWESOME!
HAVE/HAS WATCHED	INTERESTING	RADIO	SPORTS	THAT'S TOO BAD!
	TRAGIC	INTERNET	LOCAL	IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE!

Worksheet

Worksheet "Sorting activity"

Name:

Listen and select with a cross (X) the correct option in each category for audio 1 and audio 2.

Audio 1

TALK ABOUT NEWS!				
Verbs	Type of news	The media	Section	Ways of expressing feelings about news
Have/has read <input type="checkbox"/>	Breaking <input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/>	International <input type="checkbox"/>	That's shocking! <input type="checkbox"/>
Have/has listened <input type="checkbox"/>	Shocking <input type="checkbox"/>	Radio <input type="checkbox"/>	Social <input type="checkbox"/>	That's awesome! <input type="checkbox"/>
Have/has watched <input type="checkbox"/>	Interesting <input type="checkbox"/>	Television <input type="checkbox"/>	Sports <input type="checkbox"/>	That's too bad! <input type="checkbox"/>
	Tragic <input type="checkbox"/>	Internet <input type="checkbox"/>	Local <input type="checkbox"/>	It is hard to believe! <input type="checkbox"/>

Audio 2

TALK ABOUT NEWS!				
Verbs	Type of news	The media	Section	Ways of expressing feelings about news
Have/has read <input type="checkbox"/>	Breaking <input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/>	International <input type="checkbox"/>	That's shocking! <input type="checkbox"/>
Have/has listened <input type="checkbox"/>	Shocking <input type="checkbox"/>	Radio <input type="checkbox"/>	Social <input type="checkbox"/>	That's awesome! <input type="checkbox"/>
Have/has watched <input type="checkbox"/>	Interesting <input type="checkbox"/>	Television <input type="checkbox"/>	Sports <input type="checkbox"/>	That's too bad! <input type="checkbox"/>
	Tragic <input type="checkbox"/>	Internet <input type="checkbox"/>	Local <input type="checkbox"/>	It is hard to believe! <input type="checkbox"/>

Audio scripts to complete the worksheet

Audio 1

Mike: Look! Bayern, my favorite team has won the Champions League.

Anna: It is hard to believe! Who was the opponent team?

Mike: Porto. This team lost but it was a great game 3-2.

Anna: You're right. I think the game was very exciting.

Mike: Of course! I want to watch it on television tonight.

Anna: Can I go with you?

Mike: Sure.

Audio 2

Mary: Have you read the news today?

Sandra: No, I haven't. What have you read?

Mary: A child has died of pneumonia recently.

Sandra: That's too bad! How has happened?

Mary: The child has had different symptoms several days such as fever, coughing, body aches and more. He was taking medication, but he got worse and went to the hospital.

Sandra: I guess his parents must be too depressed.

Mary: Of course!

Picture of the material used in the class



Annex 9. Artifact 5. “Sorting activity”, “communication games” and “small groups partners” strategies.

Worksheet

Work in group

Students' name:

Listen and stick the correct word or group of words in each section.

TITLE	PICTURE	MAIN VERB TO DESCRIBE THE NEWS
TYPE OF NEWS	THE MEDIA	SECTION
DETAIL ABOUT THE NEWS	WAY OF EXPRESSING FEELINGS ABOUT THE NEWS	

Small pictures and sheets of paper to work in group



Breaking	Shocking	Interesting	Tragic	Radio	Internet
Newspaper	Television	International	Social	Sports	Local
That's shocking!	That's awesome!	It is hard to believe!			
That's too bad!	A girl committed suicide in Malacatos!				
A girl disappeared in Malacatos!					
A drunk man was found for the police in Malacatos!					
The girl hang herself on her room.			The man was in a party.		
The girl went away from her home.					
My mother and sister <u>have listened</u>					
My mother and sister <u>have read</u>					

Audio script to work in group

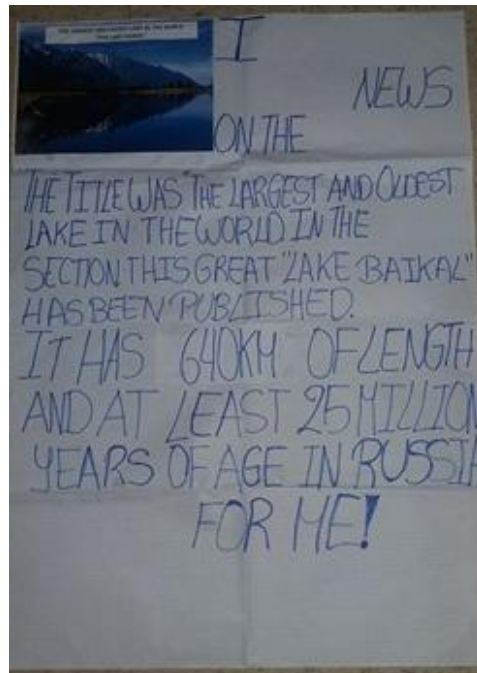
My mother and sister have listened about tragic news on the radio. The title was "A teenager committed suicide in Malacatos". This publication has been described in the local section. Apparently, the girl had problems with her boyfriend. For this reason, she decided to hang herself. The police found the girl's body on her room. This news it is hard to believe!

Pictures of the material used in the class

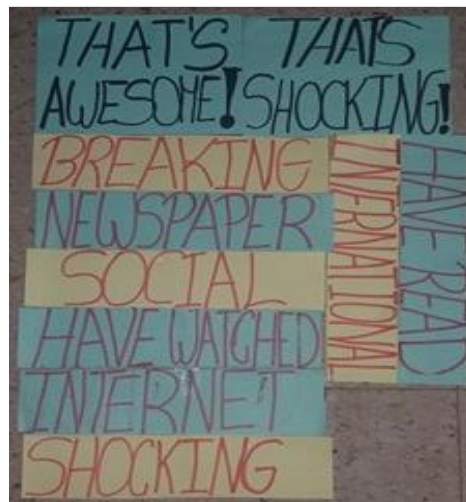


Annex 10. Artifact 6. "Listening cloze" activity.

Poster (Dialogue about "The largest and oldest lake in the world")



Word cards



Poster (Vocabulary about news)

VERBS	TYPE OF NEWS	THE MEDIA	SECTION	WAYS OF EXPRESSING FEELINGS
HAVE/HAS READ	BREAKING	NEWS-PAPER	INTER-NATIONAL	THAT'S SHOCKING!
HAVE/HAS LISTENED	SHOCKING	TELEVISION	SOCIAL	THAT'S AWESOME!
HAVE/HAS WATCHED	INTERESTING	RADIO	SPORTS	THAT'S TOO BAD!
	TRAGIC	INTERNET	LOCAL	IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE!

Worksheet

Worksheet "Listening cloze"

Name:

Listen to the audio and complete the paragraph with the words from the boxes. Not all the words are used.

- ✓ shocking news
- ✓ intercultural
- ✓ That's astonishing
- ✓ has been described

- ✓ international
- ✓ has been published
- ✓ That's awesome
- ✓ breaking news

I have read a) "The largest and oldest lake in the world". In the b) section, this great "Lake Baikal" c) It has 640km of length and at least 25 million years of age in Russia. d)..... for me!

Audio script about "The largest and oldest lake in the world"

I have read breaking news "The largest and oldest lake in the world". In the international section, this great "Lake Baikal" has been described. It has 640km of length and at least 25 million years of age in Russia. That's awesome for me! Around 1750 plant and animal species have lived inside it because its water is the purest and most transparent in the planet. The photographer "Alexey Trofimov" has taken this beautiful picture.

Pictures of the material used in the class





Annex 11. Artifact 7. “Open-ended response to a question” activity.

Audio script (Dialogue about social news)

Audio 1

Kim: Have you listened that Katy Perry has a new boyfriend?

Larry: That’s shocking! But she was dating Orlando Bloom recently. What happened?

Kim: They broke up due to the distance. But now, she looks very happy with her new partner. Look the photographs.

Larry: That’s true. They make a beautiful couple.

Kim: I love reading this kind of news.

Larry: Me too.

Picture of the material used in the class



Annex 12. Artifact 8. “Open-ended response to a question” activity.

Audio script (Dialogue about health news)

Audio 2

Mary: Have you read the news today?

Sandra: No, I haven't. What have you read?

Mary: A child has died of pneumonia recently.

Sandra: That's too bad! How has happened?

Mary: The child has had different symptoms several days such as fever, coughing, body aches and more. He was taking medication, but he got worse and went to the hospital.

Sandra: I guess his parents must be too depressed.

Mary: Of course!

Annex 13. Artifact 9. “Smalls groups and partners” strategy.

Worksheet (Dialogue about local news)

Dialogue about news

Claire: Have you read the news today in the newspaper?

Peter: No, I haven't done it yet. What happened?

Claire: Last Friday heavy rain led to serious flooding in Amalusa. The consequences were terrible.

Peter: Wow, that's too bad! Sometimes the nature imposes its power, but the authorities haven't fixed the river walls since 1998!

Picture of the material used in the class



Annex 14. Artifact 10. “Role play” activity.

Worksheet (Dialogue about local news)

Dialogue about news

Claire: Have you read the news today in the newspaper?

Peter: No, I haven't done it yet. What happened?

Claire: Last Friday heavy rain led to serious flooding in Amalusa. The consequences were terrible.

Peter: Wow, that's too bad! Sometimes the nature imposes its power, but the authorities haven't fixed the river walls since 1998!

Pictures of the material used in the class



Annex 15. Post-Test
Listening and Speaking
Unit 1 “Breaking News”

Name:

Score: / 10



LISTENING SECTION

7 POINTS

- 1) Listen and select the pronunciation of each regular verb in the past or past participle tense with a cross. (0,25 each). /1,5

SENTENCES	/id/	/d/	/t/
Researchers have <u>discovered</u> important relationships between different types of animals.			
John has not <u>fixed</u> the sink.			
They <u>loved</u> it.			
Have you <u>visited</u> New York?			
They <u>talked</u> a lot.			
She <u>edited</u> the researcher paper.			

- 2) Listen and mark True or False for these sentences (0,25 each).

...../1,5

SENTENCES	T	F
The news was described as shocking news.		
The news was listened on the radio.		
The news has been published on the international section.		
“A man killed his father at his home” was the title of the news.		
The man has been sentenced 30 years in prison.		
The expression used was “It is hard to believe”		

- 3) Listen to three dialogues and choose the main idea of each one from the following options. (0,25 each)./0,75

Dialogues	Main Idea		
1	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Jennifer Lopez has adopted a new child.	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Jennifer Lopez has divorced her husband.	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Jennifer Lopez has broken up with her boyfriend.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Real Madrid won the National Football Competition.	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Barcelona won the Champions League.	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Barcelona won the National Football Competition.

3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	a. A man has dead of cancer in Zamora.	b. A woman has dead of cancer in Zamora.	c. A man has dead of pneumonia in Zamora.

- 4) Listen the three dialogues and classify the words or expressions related to each dialogue from the boxes. Not all the words or expressions are used (0,20 each). Also, write a specific detail as additional information about each dialogue (0,85).

...../3,25

Dialogue	Type of news	Type of media	Section	Ways of expressing feelings about news	Additional information
1					
2					
3					

Type of news	The media	Section	Ways of expressing feelings about news
Breaking Shocking Interesting Tragic	Newspaper Radio Television Internet	International Social Sports Local	That's shocking! That's awesome! That's too bad! It is hard to believe!



SPEAKING SECTION

3 POINTS

- 5) Talk about news that you have read recently by using the vocabulary of the unit.

..... /3

Audio scripts for the post-test

Audio for activity 2

Being informed about news is very important.

On the television, I have watched breaking news at night. The title was "A man killed his children at his home". This has been published on the international section because this happened in California, USA. Fortunately, a neighborhood reported to the police the event. The man has been sentenced 30 years in prison. This is hard to believe!

Audios for activities 3 and 4

Audio 1

The world of celebrities is funny.

On the Internet, I have read interesting news. The title was "Jennifer Lopez has divorced her husband". Apparently, they broke up due to the distance. That's shocking for me because they got married six months ago.

Audio 2

My cousin loves news.

Last night, he has listened to interesting news on the radio. Apparently, his favorite team "Barcelona" won the national football competition. The opponent team was Real Madrid and the game was very exciting because it finished 4-3. Barcelona won and that's awesome for me"

Audio 3

The doctor has read tragic news on the newspaper. The title was "A man has dead of cancer in Zamora". The man had different symptoms that took him to the hospital, but he did not have money to pay the medication. Finally, he died in two months. That's too bad to understand.