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Ecuadorian high school teachers' perceptions on ICT use in their EFL classes

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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DEDICATION

To God our only creator.

To my father, my mother and my siblings Gabriela and Felix.

<div align="right">Alan</div>

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Alan

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on Ecuadorian high school teachers' perceptions on ICT use in their EFL classes. The objective is to identify and analyze the teachers' characteristics that either motivate or hinder the use of ICT´s. The study was conducted in Portoviejo city. The instruments for data collection were surveys and interviews which were applied to a sample of 20 EFL teachers, ten from private high schools and ten from public high schools.

This study was based on mixed methods research (quantitative and qualitative) for analyzing the information that was gathered. The quantitative method determined the variables that affect positively or negatively the use of ICT as well as the differences in perceptions between genders. The qualitative method corroborated the results obtained from the questionnaires.

The results of the study reveal that teachers' insecurity and teachers' apprehensiveness are psychological characteristics that impede the use of ICT among EFL teachers. On the opposite, psychological teachers' characteristics that affect positively the use of ICT are: teacher's motivation, teacher's innovativeness, teacher's high self-esteem and teacher's favorable attitude toward changes also called teacher's flexibility.

KEYWORDS: use of ICT, EFL classes, teachers' perception, barriers, motivations

RESUMEN

Este estudio se enfoca en las percepciones de los profesores de secundaria ecuatorianos sobre el uso de las TIC en sus clases de EFL. El objetivo es identificar las características de los profesores que motivan u obstaculizan el uso de las TIC. El estudio se llevó a cabo en la ciudad de Portoviejo. Los datos fueron recolectados a través de un cuestionario aplicado a una muestra de 20 profesores de EFL y a través de 6 entrevistas realizadas entre la misma muestra. Se utilizó una metodología mixta. El método cuantitativo determinó las variables que afectan positiva o negativamente el uso de las TIC, así como las diferencias de percepción entre géneros. El método cualitativo corroboró los resultados obtenidos a partir de los cuestionarios.

Los resultados del estudio revelan que la inseguridad y aprensión de los profesores son características psicológicas que impiden el uso de las TIC en las clases de EFL. Por el contrario, las características psicológicas de los profesores que influyen positivamente en el uso de las TIC son: la motivación del profesor, su capacidad de innovación, su alta autoestima y su actitud favorable hacia los cambios, también llamada flexibilidad del profesor

PALABRAS CLAVE: uso de las TIC, clases de EFL, percepción de los profesores, barreras, motivaciones.

INTRODUCTION

Information and communication technologies (ICT) are omnipresent in modern life. In consequence, ICT has a big influence on society. In the last years, ICT has been massively adopted in many areas and education is not the exception. Therefore, it has become mandatory for teachers to have the knowledge that allows them to integrate ICT in their classrooms. Implementation of ICT in classrooms depends on many different factors related to the teacher itself, related to the environment, and to the structure of educational institutions.

This current research focuses on Ecuadorian high school teachers´ perceptions on ICT use in their EFL classes. The principal objective is to study and analyze the EFL teachers´ perception on ICT use by answering the following questions: Which aspects related to teachers' characteristics are considered by most of the EFL teachers as barriers to use ICT in their classroom? Which factors regarding teachers´ characteristics influence teachers the most to use ICT in their classroom? and how is ICT use perceived by EFL teachers in relations to gender?

There have been many previous studies related to ICTs use, for that reason, it is very important to highlight some of them.

The first study carried out by Albirini (2006) investigated the perception of EFL teachers about the use of computer as an educational tool. He found that teachers have a positive perception about the use of computer as an educational tool and that the use of ICT is very important for the schools and for the society in general.

The second study conducted by Li and Ni (2011) was directed to analyze the beliefs of EFL teachers about the use of technology. The results show that most of the teachers perceive computers as a tool that contributes to the teacher's innovativeness, productivity and modelling of ideas.

The third study carried out by Aydin (2013) investigated the perceptions of EFL teachers toward technology integration in their classes. The study reveals that EFL teachers perceive the computer as a useful tool that can help students understand more easily concepts.

Barriers to ICT implementation have also been widely studied. For example, Gilakjani, et al. (2015) analyzed factors such as availability of technological resources, lack of computer knowledge, lack of computer experience and inadequate computer technology support as factors that hinder the use of ICT. Park et Son (2009) also found that lack of time, insufficient computer facilities, rigid school curricula and lack of administrative support negatively influence the implementation of ICT in classroom.

The extant literature has analyzed the implementation of ICT in many countries as Korea (Park and Son, 2009), Turkey (Aydin, 2013), Syria (Albirini, 2006) and China (Li and Ni, 2011). However, there is not an investigation available on scientific reviews about teachers' characteristics and implementation of ICT in Ecuador. The present study is a contribution to the scientific community in that sense.

This study will benefit the English teachers of different public and private high schools who have contributed in the development of this research. Additionally, researchers and all people who may be interested in learning the use of new technology.

As it was expected, some limitations were found during the process of this investigation, especially when the questionnaire and interviews were taken, teachers showed some obvious differences between the answers given and the observations done. Also, our sample included only schools from the city of Portoviejo. Therefore, the results can not be generalized to the country of Ecuador.

CHAPTER I: LITERATURE REVIEW

ICT use in EFL teaching

ICTs have made inroads into all areas of teaching and learning including the development of EFL skills. This situation brings benefits to teachers and students because ICT makes available to this area of knowledge a wide range of interactive software resources that improve writing, reading and pronunciation of English. This is a very favorable situation, given that the proper use of English is a basic tool today to interact in the globalized society in which we live (Navarro, 2013).

According to Pavez (2008) the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have revolutionized the world and the learning action has not escaped this revolution. Many elements have been designed which are compatible with the learning teaching process, such as the use of interactive web 2.0 programs, the use of virtual forums in which students can share their progress, concerns and conclusions with teachers and classmates, as well as with teachers and students from different places of the world and of diverse socio-cultural realities; therefore and due to the propagation of English as one of the most widely spoken languages in the modern world, ICTs have been inserted and used for EFL by means of all kinds of applications and modalities with great success, because the best way to learn English is to live it.

In the past people had to move to English-speaking countries for long periods of time in order to practice the language, but nowadays thanks to ICT you can experience English from anywhere: from home, office or classroom. Through ICT the student has a tool through which he or she can access to the English language as well as appreciate other lifestyles, traditions and ways of thinking of the Anglo-Saxon culture, making more efficient and functional their way of communicating in English (Mineduc, 2015).

Importance

According to Boonkit (2010), today there is a generational gap between what the school or college teaches and what the students live; this gap has a lot to do with the use of ICT especially Internet and social networks. Many schools and teachers have continued to rely on traditional teaching methods and have not opted for updating, without a doubt this is notorious in subjects such as social sciences and natural sciences, it is also very noticeable in the EFL. However, the students need to learn more efficiently for example, in the case of a student that love listening to music in English, the pace of the English courses that the student takes at school are slower than the one he needs in order to be able to understand the song. The same is true for world premiere film that are only released or broadcast in English. It seems like a fluent knowledge of English has become a necessity.

According to Maggio (2013) the new information and communication technologies are the means of knowing, thinking and learning from students and therefore ICT have to occupy a vital space in school careers. Therefore, the English teacher must be aware of creating that "living space". Maggio refers to in the classroom, making the culture they live in, coherent with what they learn in school. On the other hand, Dussel (2014) explains that the pedagogical inclusion of technological resources is an objective still difficult to achieve, however it is imperative that English teachers include the application of ICT.

Advantages and disadvantages

Regarding advantages of using ICT in EFL teaching, Morchio (2014) suggests that these resources allow to have positive aspects in the classroom while the teaching- learning process is carried on, it is important to consider the following: the ICTs put at the disposal of the class an infinity of information with easy and practical supports through different portable devices. There is great diversity of tools such as digital documents, videos, web pages, audio, power

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point and presentations, digital books, among others, for the pleasure and convenience of both teachers and students (Morchio, 2014).

ICTs allow homework to adapt and respect the pace of individual student learning (Ruíz, 2014), this is due to the fact that the student can continuously repeat the topic even after the end of the class, a situation that facilitates learning.

Another advantage of ICT is that it facilitates the learning of oral skills such as pronunciation and oral comprehension (Venzal, 2016). By using tools such as videos, the student can perceive the vocalization of words directly from Anglo-Saxon natives who provide a natural pronunciation of their own language accompanied by the respective expressions.

Moreover Kalnina, (2012) proposes that ICT encourages classroom attention by providing interaction between the ICT resource and students through the use of mobile devices and online internet chat. This is because today there is a very strong tendency for young people to be over-stimulated, to learn interactively and that is precisely what is needed in the classroom to keep the student's attention over-stimulation can be provided by ICT.

In the same way, Pablos (2013) suggest that ICT encourage the development of search capabilities and selection capabilities to identify useful information on the web. This is an excellent advantage because when used by the teacher, ICTs can be instructional tools that guide the student and show him the content into which he needs to concentrate.

Finally, according to Krashen (2011) ICT favors a better teacher-student relationship and vice versa because when teacher uses ICT in EFL teaching, he receives the same stimulation that the student perceives, in consequence they naturally "speak the same language" in terms of rhythm of learning.

The disadvantages of using ICT in EFL teaching include the following aspects: the inclusion of ICT in the classroom for EFL teaching demands a strong economic investment by

educational institutions, as well as its permanent maintenance, updating and renovation following the demands and evolution of technology. Also, by its nature ICT are stimulant and provide a wide range of possibilities. This can facilitate that the student deviates frequently from his or her main learning objective leading the students to activities that are not desired by the teacher or the school. According to Melor et al. (2012) the use of internet as a tool when looking for information about an assignment can be a source of distraction because students can't help looking at social media like Facebook while doing the assignment. In the same way, Simon (2008) suggests that the use of social network between teachers and students can generate misinterpretation of the relationship. It can also generate in an inappropriate relationship between teachers and students. The teacher must keep a careful distance, even if he means well, to avoid misunderstanding. The study of Fandiño Parra (2012) suggests that advances in new technologies forces teachers to be up-to-date. In consequence, it represents a challenge for teachers because they have to look up for new strategies which takes a lot of time and economical resources (training courses).

Teachers and ICT use

When talking about teachers and ICT´s use, teachers must perform several roles in the classroom. Teachers need to be well prepared to use the Internet, e-mail and word processing, digital books, and the interactive whiteboard (IWB) used to present prepared presentations and share space for notes and diagrams (Tezci, 2010). The use of ICT in EFL classes depend on several factors that can be related to the teacher itself, to the culture of the country, to the school's policy and financial means available, among others. The results of Rahimi and Yadollahi (2011) show that teachers who own a computer, have computer knowledge and skills, and hold MA degrees tend to use ICT in their EFL classes. Besides, the availability of computers and internet connection in schools are associated with the adoption of ICT by teachers (Tonder, Valcke and Van Braak, 2008). The teacher's culture can also be a good

predictor of the use of ICT. Albirini (2006) made a research among Syrian teachers and the results of the study show that the majority of Syrian teachers feel that computers should be modified to better suit the Arabic culture and identity. Afshari et al. (2009) found that the success of the implementation of ICT is determined by a dynamic process involving a set of interrelated factors. In fact, school and teacher factors can influence the teacher's decisions to use ICT. Afshari et al. (2009) make a distinction between manipulative and non-manipulative factors. Manipulative factors refer to the attitudes of teachers toward teaching and ICT, ICT knowledge and skills of teachers, commitment, among others. On the other hand, non-manipulative factors are factors that can not be influenced by the school, such as age, teaching experience, computer experience of the teacher, among others. This part of the work will describe 3 teacher's factors that may affect the use of ICT: Teacher's role, teacher's competence and teacher's gender.

Teachers' role

For the adequate implementation of ICTs in EFL teaching, the teacher has to fulfil several roles. It is important to mention that the teacher should keep up to date with his or her role. Some of the roles to be developed are as follows:

Tutor: the teacher is only a guide in the process of learning, an advisor. He points out the path that leads to the required learning, he provides the tools to the students and accompanies them permanently. Teachers must set aside encyclopedic knowledge of the subject and dissociate them from any position of vertical relationship with the student (Coll, 2017).

Communicator: teachers must act as a television presenter. At the same time they have to be able to design virtual courses using the various resources available in the web such as blogs, forums, wikis and even social networks (Esteve, 2013).

Graphic designer: "teachers must nourish themselves with the knowledge of the various software which is very useful and easy to manipulate". Software such as power points, cantasia, present, adobe, among others. These are useful tools for any good educator who wants to be able to develop didactic resources more efficient and instructive (Comezaña, 2011).

Moderator inside and outside the classroom: for example, the teacher can be the administrator of a forum or wiki in which different topics of current events and general culture are being discussed in English language. Also, the news from the classroom can be released using mobiles phone and the now universal WhatsApp tool.

Evaluator: this is a role that the teachers in general have always played. ELF teachers must assess both the student's participation and communicative skills of students as well as good attitude and participation during the course.

Teachers' competences

The level of ICT knowledge that teachers possess can have an impact on the use of ICT in education. In fact, the study of Tezci (2009) shows a significant correlation between the level of knowledge of teachers about ICT and the use of ICT in education. In other words, this study suggests that the higher the level of knowledge in ICT, the higher is the level of the use of ICT in education.

In relation to the competencies that teachers must possess and develop, (UNESCO, 2017), has developed a compendium of these competencies. The most relevant competencies that teachers must use in order to evaluate student´s acquisition of knowledge are :

- o Teachers must be aware of policies and be able to articulate in consciously skilled ways how their classroom practices correspond to and support policy
- o Teachers must have an excellent knowledge of the curriculum standards for their subject, as well as knowledge of standard assessment strategies. In

addition, teachers must be able to integrate the use of technology into the curriculum

- o Teachers must know where, with whom, when (as well as when not) and how to use ICT for classroom activities and presentations

In the same way, García (2016), suggests that when developing competences, the teacher must use ICT elements to assess the knowledge that students have acquired as well as to evaluate the appropriate development of student's skills in learning EFL.

Teachers should be able to incorporate appropriate ICT-related activities into lesson plans "this requires that teachers make a prior planning in which they clearly stipulate the time frame and the part in which the teaching-learning process ICTs will be used" (Jiménez & Santander, 2015). It is also important to make clear which are the means that are going to be used, for example, a website, wiki, software, among others.

Besides, teachers must describe and demonstrate the use of current technologies and according to Jiménez & Santander (2015) "this requires teachers to know and to keep abreast of new technologies that emerge and that can be used in the classroom or in the development of students' knowledge, skills and abilities".

Also, a core competency that teachers should possess is the ability to describe and show the purpose and basic characteristics of the softwares and other computer resources; "hence, the teacher must be well trained in the use of the tools, in the use of all its complements" (García & González, 2016) and in the creation of presentations that can help students understand the topics introduced in class and create spaces for shared knowledge in the classroom.

Moreover, the ability to use appropriate software to manage, monitor and assess the progress of different student projects is a competency that teachers should have. In this way, the teacher will be able to keep abreast of the progress of his students remotely and at all

times as well as their participation. In consequence, the student will feel more committed to their own progress, since the information will be available to teachers, peers and parents (Marquis, 2012).

Finally, teacher´s ability to use ICTs to communicate and collaborate with students, colleagues, parents and the community is a determinant factor to enhance the learning process of students. This competency helps the teacher to create a report of the progress of his students. Nowadays, most web pages and social networks have servers with high storage capacity and the activities are recorded with date and time and they are carried out in such a way that they become a virtual record of the academic progress of the students.

Teachers' gender

The gender of teachers should have nothing to do with their ability to implement ICTs in the teaching and learning processes of the EFL (Carreras, 2012, p. 16). However, Tezci (2009) found that male teachers had more positive attitudes than female teachers in terms of use of ICT. This can be explained by a higher knowledge of ICT found in male teachers compared with female teachers.

Regardless of the age of the teacher or his/her ability to use ICT tools, ICT should be used to facilitate the teacher's work and to keep them in touch with each of their students from the comfort of their own home. Practice is the quickest and most efficient way for teachers to implement ICT in classrooms, they can get started by learning how to use the Smartphones and its tools (Hurtado, 2016, p. 25). Then teachers can explore the world of PowerPoint presentations, they can participate in interactive forums and blogs, wikis, Facebook and WhatsApp. Finally, with the help of tutorial videos available on the YouTube, teachers can create and manage their own blog to share their class material.

Nowadays for teachers, the use of ICT is not an option; is imperative because ICT have become the mean through which young people learn more easily. ICT make the

knowledge more experienced and tangible, leaving aside the abstract of the encyclopedias which characterize of the old-school teachers. ICT are offering resources that had never been available before to teachers and students, and this, at relatively low costs. Teachers should not see ICT as an obstacle or a challenge, but as the best opportunity that exists today to learn by teaching (Kalnina, 2012).

Teachers' characteristics regarding ICT use

It is important to know some characteristics that teachers should possess and how these characteristics influence or affect the use of ICT's. These characteristics are psychological, educational, professional, and personal. Some teacher's characteristics have a positive effect on the use of ICT while other teacher's characteristics have a negative effect on the use of ICT. For example, resistance to change, which is a psychological characteristic, have a negative impact on the use of ICT whereas the willingness of the teacher to adopt technical innovations have a positive impact on the use of ICT. Mahmoudikia et al. (2014) have identified 4 groups of factors affecting the level of ICT uptake by Iranian teachers: psychological factors, professional factors, educational factors, and biological factors. The psychological factors identified by Mahmoudikia et al. (2014) are: teacher's attitude, computer anxiety, resistance to change, motivation and cultural perception. The professional factor proposed by the authors is: ICT literacy and competence. The educational factors suggested by the authors are: the field of study, educational experience, education level and level of ICT use. Finally, the biological factors are age, and gender. This study which is a literature review of 25 researches suggests that the factors do not perform independently. This means that they are interrelated, consequently, the existence of one factor may predict the occurrence of the other, and vice versa. In the following part, 4 individual characteristics affecting ICT use will be described: psychological, educational, professional and personal factors.

Psychological characteristics

Within the psychological characteristics that the teacher must possess to implement ICT in the classroom, we can mention the following:

Firstly, a positive attitude can bring many benefits to both teacher and student, "the teacher should not be harsh, but should maintain an accessible attitude so that the student can feel more confident" (García & González, 2016, p. 41), Thus, if teachers encourage and propose the realization of activities in which ICT is linked, students will participate more easily. A positive attitude can be very helpful when a mistake is made because if the mistake is taken in a positive way, it will be easier to restart the computer and try again with the help of the students.

On the other hand, enthusiasm for change means the commitment of the teacher to the subject, "change is often frightening, but a web teacher who is capable to use ICTs in EFL's teaching and learning process, is not afraid of change" (Mineduc, 2015, p. 32). Instead, he gets inspired with the change of processes and routines and continues to advance at the same pace that society makes use of ICT.

A very important psychological aspect is curiosity, "this is an essential characteristics of a teacher who applies ICT. Teachers who use ICT are curious, they download new educational software and use them" (Venzal, 2016, p. 39). Teachers who implement ICT in their EFL classes like to experiment by themselves the utility of each of the buttons on the toolbar for example. This kind of teachers do researches on the web and look for as many tutorials as needed in order to learn how to properly use the new technologies.

In addition, motivation is another quality very basic what concerns to apply technologies in the class, " a teacher that is motivated is the one that gets excited about reviewing a new EFL forum"(Vega & Moro, 2016, p. 71). Is a teacher that can't wait to read

the comments of the forum in which its students are participating and in which he is the administrator (Vega & Moro, 2016, p. 71)

Finally, a teacher should possess high self-esteem, "the teacher who applies ICTs emanates self-esteem, he knows that he is very capable of using ICTs when necessary" (Comezaña, 2011, p. 14). He knows he can use ICT to transmit knowledge as well as to develop new processes of interactive learning.

Educational characteristics

Teachers who link ICTs to the process of teaching in an efficient way, possess the following educational characteristics:

At first, the teacher must have the capacity to adapt to the new digital materials and the methodological changes related to ICTs "(Lithuania & Gallardo, 2015). It is a continuous process of adaptation from the teachers and the students

In the same way, Brown (2014, p. 21) explains that teachers acquire the necessary technical knowledge on operating systems (Windows, Mac, etc.) and security tools for the protection of minors and parental control. This is due to the fact that not everything that circulates on the web is positive for students. Hence, teachers should be capable of redirect websites and activate systems that block the use of pages that hinder the cognitive development of students.

A teacher should play the role of a coach in addition to explaining the lessons from the textbook. Teachers must have an open and patient attitude towards students and, most of all they have to play the role of a motivator in order to help students achieve their goals. But at the same time he must be able to transmit authority and respect without being aggressive but being an example to follow (Joyce & Weil, 2013).

According to Castillo and Polanco (2015) teachers should have the ability to encourage participation among educators, this means to engage their peers in learning

communities. This allows the teachers to nourish and be nourished by new and fresh experiences, hence renewing the way EFL is taught through ICT.

Furthermore, teachers should promote teamwork among students. Teamwork facilitated the transmission of values such as tolerance, partnership, respect, responsibility and humility to accept mistakes and recommendations from the pairs. The best way to learn through ICT is working in teams. When people join hands with others, they become more efficient and competitive (Díaz & Bruce, 2016).

Also, teachers should use social networks as an interaction tools that allows them to get closer contact with students and to send information related to topics of interest. It is important to mention that the barrier of intimacy and respect between teachers and students should never be crossed (Vega M., 2015).

Professional characteristics

Teachers should continuously carry out technological training courses (Ortiz, 2016). For example, teachers must be interested in continuously registering for each computer course they have at their disposal. This will keep the teacher up to date with the new tools both hardware and software and at the same time he will be continually renewing his knowledge through the exchanges and collaborations made with the others participants of the courses.

Moreover, teachers could design virtual courses for EFL learning and encourage students to actively participate in these virtual courses. Teachers can also share the courses he has designed with the academic community. In this way he will be contributing to the learning process of other teachers, students and the community in general (Hurtado, 2016).

Finally, according to Hurtado (2016), teachers should be active members of virtual knowledge communities. Today there are learning communities on the web that make available to teachers and students extensive academic work that is shared around the world.

Members of the web communities can download information from the platform as long as he or she is also willing to share his/her information.

Personal characteristics

According to Carrera (2012) teachers should enhance and develop the use of ICT. This means that teachers need to have clear on the mind what is the final objective they want to achieve through the use of ICT. Having clearly defined in advance what is wanted by the application of ICTs in the classroom is very important. Teachers focus first on the contents and objectives of the annual work plan and then figure out how the use of ICT can contribute to the fulfillment of these objectives.

Besides, teachers could take advantage of the educational potential of ICT without being enchanted by the diversity of possibilities offered by the web (Maldonado, 2012, p. 25). Teachers should maintain their concentration and attention on the activities that contribute to the development of their own knowledge as well as the knowledge of students. It can be very easy to get distracted by the web because of the infinity of possibilities that it offers.

Finally, teachers must disseminate educational and cultural content online. The diffusion of education content that is useful for both students and readers is a practice of solidarity and social contribution through the web (Borg, 2013, p. 65).

Previous studies in relation to teachers' perceptions on ICT use in their EFL classes

Some studies on ICT use in EFL classes have been conducted. Teachers' characteristics and competences can either positively or negatively affect the use of ICT in EFL classes. These two variables can also affect in an indirect way the use of ICT in EFL classes. In fact, they can affect the use of ICT trough an impact in the teacher's perception of ICT. Different variables can affect the way teachers perceive the implementation of ICT in their EFL classes.

First of all, Albirini (2006) found that a positive attitude has a strong influence on perception. More precisely, the exploratory study was about 314 high school EFL teachers in

Syria. The study showed that Syrian EFL teachers have a positive attitude regarding the use of computer as an educational tool. Consequently, Syrian EFL teachers had also a positive perception about the use of computer as an educational tool and the relevance of ICT to Syrian society and schools.

The second study carried out by Park and Son (2009), studied 12 korean in-service teachers of EFL working at secondary schools in Korea. The instruments used to collect the data were electronic questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Participants were asked to fill in the electronic questionnaires and then they were invited to a 15 minutes face-to-face interview. The results show that all teachers from the study consider that computer technology is a useful teaching tool because it makes possible to expose the student to the target language, hence expanding the students learning experiences which contributes to the development of the student's language skills. Among the factors that influence the use of technology, the results show that the lack of time is a major factor that have a negative impact on the use of technology by teachers. In fact, teachers expressed that they spend a lot of time preparing the technological material and combining it with textbook contents.

The third study conducted by Li and Ni (2011) found that EFL teachers use technology more for their own teaching activities than for the student's activities such as exploring new topics and organizing information. More specifically, Chinese EFL teachers use technology for activities such as preparation of instructions, creation of lesson plans, downloading materials and PowerPoint presentations. According to this study, Chinese EFL teachers rarely use technology as a learning tool for students. Li and Ni (2011) also found that EFL teachers in Chinese primary schools have positive beliefs about technology use. Surveys for this study were filled in by 72 EFL teachers from 20 primary schools. The results of the quantitative study show that 80% of EFL teachers strongly agree that computers are a tool that contributes to the teacher's innovativeness, productivity and modelling of ideas. A point

that needs to be mentioned is that 93% of the participants of this study were females. This can lead to a bias of the data. It could be interesting to study the same phenomenon with a homogeneous sample.

The fourth study directed by Hismanoglu (2012), negative perceptions in the use of ICT. The results show that EFL pre-service teachers from Turkey have negative perceptions toward the integration of ICT in the practice of teaching. The field of study was distance education and the participants were 85 teachers who were in the final year of their bachelor degree in teaching English as a foreign language. In addition, the factors that impede EFL pre-service teachers to have a positive perception of the use of ICT are the following: the lack of exposure to lessons fully designed with ICT tools, an exam driven system and studying to learn only what is to be tested. Participants also mentioned that learning ICT use was a disadvantage because they needed to do practices in the technology laboratory. The fact is the participants of this study were EFL pre-service teachers who could explain the difference of Hismanoglu (2012) results compared to the rest of the authors. However, more research need to be done in order to determine the factors that could negatively affect the perception of EFL teachers about the use of ICT. For example, the cultural context could be a factor that influence the perception of ICT implementation.

Finally, a study conducted by Aydin (2013) contributed with another study in Turkey. His objective was to analyze the use of technology in their classes. In this study 157 EFL teachers from Turkey were involved. The results of the quantitative study show that teachers have positive perceptions of computer integration in the process of teaching. More specifically, the results show that most of the Turkish EFL perceive the computer as a useful tool that can help students understand more easily concepts. However, they expressed negative perceptions about being able to guide their students in creating web pages.

Mollaei and Riasati, (2013) also reported that teachers have high perceptions toward technology integration in their classes, particularly computer. Participants of this study believe that technology provides visual support for students and it encourage them being active in their learning. The methodology employed by Mollaei et al. (2013) is a mixed methodology with qualitative and quantitative data and a total sample of 40 undergraduates and graduate EFL teachers with teaching experience ranged between 4 to 10 years participated in the study.

An important aspect that deserves to be investigated is how the EFL teacher's perception of ICT affects the way they use this tool. To be more specific, the question would be: do EFL teachers use ICT for their own teaching activities or for the students learning process, or for both. Most of the studies that have been published about teacher's perceptions regarding the use ICT in their EFL classes show that their perceptions are positive, and this is due to different reasons such as increase in understanding, motivation, productivity, innovation, among others, which are driven by the use of ICT.

CHAPTER II: METHOD

Setting and Participants

This research was carried out in Portoviejo city in several secondary schools, both public and private. Having considered both private and public secondary schools makes the results of this research applicable to all Portoviejo's educational institutions. A study population of 20 teachers aged between 24 and 59 years was selected. Some of the teachers have been recently incorporated into teaching activities while others have a career of more than 30 years.

The participants included 10 males and 10 females teachers.

Procedure

This research is done based on the necessity to know the Ecuadorian teachers´ perceptions on ICT use in their EFL classes. First of all, some relevant topics for the Literature Review were studied, analyzed and finally selected. In addition, five previous studies about the antecedents of the use of ICT among EFL teachers have been chosen.

For the present study, both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied. This methodological design has been chosen because of the advantages. In other words, a combination of quantitative and qualitative data provided a better understanding of the research problem.

The quantitative method was used for numerical analysis of collected data and the qualitative method was used for analysis and description of the research questions.

The instruments used for the present study were surveys and interviews. The totality of participants (20) had to fill a survey composed by 35 questions corresponding to a 5 points Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree or no answer. The objective of the questionnaire was to know the perceptions of the teachers about the use of ICT as a tool in their EFL classes. Some of the variables that were measured through the survey were:

insecurity, age, level of ICT understanding, level of education, among others. The interviews were composed of 8 questions and they were answered by 6 participants. The interviews were used as a complement to corroborate the information gathered in the surveys.

The data gathered from the surveys was classified, counted and represented in percentages in tables. The tabulation was done with excel. A dynamic table was created and then the frequencies of responses were entered in it. The results from the interviews were not presented in tables but were used to contrast results and to argue the information gathered from the surveys. Only the highest percentages of the table were taken into account for the analysis. In this way, contrasts are more apparent and it gives us better insights about the teacher's characteristics considered by EFL teachers as barriers and as drivers of the use of ICT in EFL classes. After doing the analysis and description of the data, five conclusions and some recommendations were written based on the sample analysis of the results obtained exclusively.

CHAPTER III: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

DESCRIPTION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

This section presents a description, analysis, and interpretation of the results. Twenty EFL teachers among women and men, ten from private high schools, and ten from public high schools in the city of Portoviejo were asked to answer a survey and an interview related to the perception of the use of aspects of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use in English Foreign Language classes (EFL) when teaching English as a foreign language. **Which aspects related to teachers' characteristics are considered by most of the EFL teachers as barriers to use ICT in their classroom?**

TABLE 1

Teachers' characteristics considered by EFL teachers as barriers to use ICT in their classroom

N°	STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
		%	%	%	%	%
1	I feel insecure about my ability to use ICT as a resource to teach.	10	25	35	30	0
2	I do not think I would be able to learn how to use ICT in my classroom.	5	5	55	35	0
3	I am afraid that if I begin to use ICT, I will become dependent upon them.	5	20	25	50	0
4	I dislike working with machines that are smarter than I am	5	5	40	50	0
5	I feel apprehensive about using ICT.	10	10	35	45	0
6	I have difficulty in understanding the technical aspects of ICT.	5	15	20	60	0
7	It scares me to think that I could cause the computer to destroy a large amount of data by hitting the wrong key.	5	10	30	55	0
8	I hesitate to use ICT for fear of making mistakes that I cannot correct.	0	0	55	45	0
9	You have to be master to understand how to use ICT	0	10	25	65	0
10	I have avoided ICT use because they are unfamiliar.	0	0	30	70	0
11	I have not attended any ICT training courses	0	20	30	50	0
12	I have attended some ICT training courses; however, I prefer not to use ICT because they somewhat intimidate to me.	0	15	15	70	0
13	I am not interested in attending any ICT course	5	0	30	65	0
14	I do not how to use any ICT resource	0	10	35	55	0
15	I do not use any ICT resource in class because I think that ICT are not necessary to teach English	0	0	30	70	0

16	I prefer not to use ICT because my teaching experience is the most crucial factor in teaching process.	0	10	20	70	0
17	I think that age is factor that determine the ICT use in class	0	15	20	65	0
18	In my opinion, younger teachers are more skillful to use ICT than the older ones.	0	20	35	45	0

Author: Alan Garcia   **N=20**
Source: Ecuadorian high school EFL teachers

In relation to the research question which aspects related to teachers' characteristics are considered by most of the EFL teachers as barriers to use ICT in their classroom? It has been detected that the highest value for the parameter "*strongly agree*" corresponds to the two following statements: 'I *feel insecure about my ability to use ICT as a resource to teach'* and *'I feel apprehensive about using ICT'*.

Regarding the statement Nº1'I *feel insecure about my ability to use ICT as a resource to teach'*, 10% of teachers "*strongly agree*" and 25% of teachers "*agree*" with this statement. These teachers doubt their capacity to use ICTs maybe because ICT are not a recurrent element in the teaching process for them. The lack of security could be overcome by taking ICT training courses which could help improve their knowledge and consequently become more secure.

In addition, Venzal (2016) suggests that teachers who applied ICT are curious and have the willingness to download new educational software and using them. Teachers who are curious tend to take ICT training course and at the same time to link ICT to the teaching and learning process. Therefore, if teachers possess the knowledge and skills, it is probable that they will be more confident using ICT in their EFL classes. Besides, results from the interviews show that teachers feel insecure about using ICT because they perceive that students master technological tools better than them.

Regarding the statement Nº5, it has been found that 10% of teachers "*strongly agree*". This can be explained by a past bad experience related to the use of ICT. Regarding the use of

ICT, Ortiz (2016) explains that the bad experience can be caused by training courses that were not didactic enough. Also, considering the fact that technology has advanced a lot in the last few years, it can be deducted that teachers and people in general have a hard time following the pace of new technologies. This issue can be overcome through a continuous updating of teacher's knowledge through continuous ICT courses given by accredited institutes. This aspect is undoubtedly related to the following professional characteristic: continuous education and training (Ortiz, 2016).

Teachers must be interested in taking every computer course that is available. This will keep the teacher up to date with the new tools both hardware and software, and at the same time, participating in collaborative work with other course participants, allows teachers to constantly renew their knowledge. Therefore, continuous learning could help teachers to be less apprehensive about using ICT. Another participant mentioned the lack of knowledge as a barrier to the use of ICT in EFL classes: 'Some teachers are not willing to use ICT due to different factors such as lack of knowledge about how to use modern devices"

Concerning the parameter *"agree",* it has been found that the statement Nº1 has 25% of responses. As mentioned before, the teacher´s insecurity can be due to a lack of practice using technological devices. The lack of security can also be explained by a lack of curiosity. When teachers are curious, they feel the necessity to register in every ICT course that is available. Once the teacher's knowledge has increased, the insecurity tends to decrease. Regarding this topic, Castillo and Polanco (2015) express that ICT skills for EFL teaching classes can be acquired through virtual platforms available on the internet. Curiosity can also be stimulated by educational administrators by giving all the facilities to teachers who wish to take continuing education and training.

Moreover, teacher´s insecurity about the use of ICT may be attributed to the age of the teachers. More precisely, older teachers could have more difficulties to learn rapidly how to

use technological tools for their EFL classes. On the opposite, young teachers are more familiar with new technologies; some of them were even born in the technological era, which plays an important role in their capacity of learning. The results from the interview show that years of experience can also be a factor that explains the teacher's insecurity about using ICT. In fact, one of the participants who expressed being nervous using ICT has 5 years of experience, while teachers that expressed being confident about the use of ICT have between 8 and 28 years of experience.

Which factors regarding to teachers' characteristics does influence the most on teachers to use ICT in their classroom?

TABLE 2

Teachers' characteristics that influence the most on teachers to use ICT in their classroom

N°	STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
		%	%	%	%	%
1	The challenge of learning about ICT use is exciting.	40	50	10	0	0
2	I am confident that I can learn technological skills.	50	50	0	0	0
3	I feel motivated to use ICT in my class.	55	45	0	0	0
4	Learning to use ICT is like learning any new skill – the more you practice, the better you become.	50	45	5	0	0
5	I am sure that with time and practice I will be as comfortable working with ICT.	45	55	0	0	0
6	I feel that I will be able to keep up with the advances happening in the ICT field.	30	70	0	0	0
7	If given the opportunity, I would like to learn about and use ICT.	35	65	0	0	0
8	I think that ICT are necessary tools in educational settings.	55	45	0	0	0
9	I like to use ICT because they help me to innovate my teaching methodology.	55	45	0	0	0

10	ICT help me to motivate my students to learn English.	65	35	0	0	0
11	If I had any technical problem with ICT during my class, I would continue doing the planned activities.	45	50	5	0	0
12	When I have any technical problem with ICT, I do not feel frustrated.	30	55	15	0	0
13	Age is not an obstacle to learn about and use ICT in my classes.	65	30	5	0	0
14	I know a lot about ICT use because I have attended some ICT training courses	15	45	40	0	0
15	I have learned to use ICT resources by myself	45	50	5	0	0
16	I think ICT has a positive impact on teaching process	55	45	0	0	0
17	ICT use has more advantages than disadvantages in EFL teaching.	40	60	0	0	0

Author: Alan Garcia
Source: Ecuadorian high school EFL teachers

Table 2 aims to identify the teacher's characteristics that influence or propitiate the use of ICT in their classes. The most relevant teachers' responses regarding the parameter "*strongly agree*" show that 55% of teachers feel motivated to use ICT in their classes, 55% think that ICT are necessary tools in educational settings, 55% like to use ICT because they help them to innovate their teaching methodology, 65% of teachers think that ICT help them to motivate students to learn English, 65% of teachers think that age is not an obstacle to learn about and to use ICT in classes and 55% of teachers think that ICT has a positive impact on teaching process.

Regarding statement Nº 3, "*I feel motivated to use ICT in my class*", 55% of respondents *"strongly agree."* This means that half of the teachers from the sample are highly motivated to use ICT. In fact, motivation as a psychological characteristic is an essential factor in any educational process. These results are in concordance with the results of Albirini (2006) who found that teachers have a positive attitude regarding the use of computer as an educational tool. A positive attitude and high motivation are related in a bidirectional way.

Afshari et al. (2009) also found that teacher's attitude can influence the teacher's decision to use ICT.

These results are aligned with those from the interviews. Most of the teachers interviewed have a positive attitude about the use of ICT and this is because teachers think than ICT are tools that makes the class more interesting. In other words, teachers think that ICT are a useful tool for the teaching process.

Statement 8 shows that 55% of the teachers consider the use of ICTs are necessary tools in educational settings. For example, among the variety of technological tools we have Power Point Presentations which facilitate the presentation of the class and allows the teacher to support the class with graphs and pictures, interactive Web pages help students to combine elements together to create beautiful websites, and wikies help to improve new collaborative dimensions to education and professional development. These results are in agreement with the ideas of Maldonado (2012) who explains that it is very important to take advantage of technological tools in order to contribute to the development of both students and teacher's knowledge.

Talking about the statement N° 9, it is observed that 55% of the teachers think that the use of ICTs contributes to the learning process in a feasible way. Currently, most of the teachers think that the student-teacher relationship has a positive impact in the teaching-learning process by the use of technology. ICT gives the teacher the opportunity to vary methodological strategies to teach in the classroom, and helps teachers to use mix methods, new strategies, and new techniques every day in class. In addition, teachers must always innovate and learn new things in order to teach with successful results and it is a way to innovate the teaching methodology and as a result a way to motivate English students.

These findings are in line with Mahdizadeh et al. (2008) who demonstrates that most of the teachers believe that computers and the Internet have added value to teaching and learning

processes. Hence, it can be deducted that teachers who participated in this research have a focus on learning process innovation. Results from the interviews corroborate innovativeness is a characteristic of EFL teachers. More specifically teachers have a willingness to innovate their methodology through the use of ICT. In addition, these results are confirmed by the study of Tondeur et Braak (2008) who demonstrated that teacher's innovativeness has a positive effect on computer use by primary school teachers. In the same vein, Braak et al. (2004) argue that teacher's innovativeness is an important factor that determine the use of computers in class.

Statement N° 10 "*ICT help me to motivate my students to learn English*" has 65% of responses. As it is noticed, the teachers 'perceptions about the benefit of motivate students by the use of ICTs, it allows teachers to plan several activities in order to enhance students to reach their goals.

With respect to motivation, Warschauer (1996) explains that one of the reasons why ICT has a positive effect on motivation is because it gets the immediate attention of students. Once the teacher gets the student's attention by the use of a new technological tool, the learning process becomes easier. It is also important to mention that the brain is a highly malleable organ and hence can be influenced by the environment. Therefore, technology could positively influence the learning process of students through motivation. In the same way, Joyce and Weil (2013) point out that a teacher who motivates his student's functions as a driver of learning that should possess one of the key educational characteristic: the teacher must play the role of a coach. He must master the techniques that increase motivation. This kind of teachers must have an open and patient attitude towards students and, most of all they have to play the role of a motivator in order to help students achieve their goals. But at the same time he must be able to transmit authority and respect without being aggressive but being an example to follow.

The results of the interviews confirm the positive impact of ICT on student's motivation and enthusiasm.

With regard to positive impact of ICT, 55% of the teachers think that the use of technologies has a positive impact even if there are also negative outcomes as student's distraction when exposed to ICTs. Most of the teachers from the sample, perceive ICT as a helpful tool that does not harm student´s knowledge. Additionally, ICT can reduce the time teachers spend preparing the classes. As suggested by Li and Ni (2011) teachers use ICT for their own teaching activities more than for student's activities. Finally, Li and Ni (2011) has demonstrated that Chinese EFL teachers use technology for activities such as preparation of instructions, creation of lesson plans, downloading materials and PowerPoint presentations. Continuing with the analysis, the results from the interview confirm that teachers perceive ICTs as a tool that supports the teaching activity.

Regarding "*Age is not an obstacle to learn about and use ICT in my classes*", responses from the questionnaire indicate that 65% of participants "*strongly agree*". However, participants did not mention age at all in the interviews. The absence of a specific question about age as a positive aspect to learn and use ICT in the interviews could explain the omission of age by participants in the interviews. The extant literature about age as a factor that influence the use of ICT is divided. For example, Jegede (2009) and Albirini (2006) found that age is not significantly related to ICT use while Afshari et al. (2009) suggest that age is correlated negatively to EFL teachers use of ICT.

Equally important for the present analysis are the responses that correspond to the parameter *"agree"*. The most relevant percentages concerning the parameter *"agree"* were obtained in the following statements: *"I am sure that with time and practice I will be as comfortable working with ICT"* had 55% of responses, the statement *"I feel that I will be able to keep up with the advances happening in the ICT field"* had 70% of responses, the statement

" If given the opportunity, I would like to learn about and use ICT" had 65% of responses and the statement *" ICT use has more advantages than disadvantages in EFL teaching"* had 60% of responses.

Fifty five percent of teachers who participated in the present study are sure that with time and practice they will be comfortable working with ICT. It can be deducted that this group of teachers do not master ICT but have the predisposition to invest time and energy in practicing the use of ICT. It can also be deducted that this group of teachers have self confidence because they think that they are capable to adapt to ICT if they want to. The personal characteristic related to these findings is high self esteem. As mentioned by Comezana (2011), a teacher who apply ICT emanate self-esteem, he knows that he is very capable of using ICT when necessary. The teacher knows how can use ICT to transmit knowledge as well as to develop new processes of interactive learning. No proof of teacher's high self esteem was found in the interviews. Maybe this is because there was not a specific question about self-esteem addressed in the interview.

Seventy percent of teachers who participated in the present study feel that they will be able to keep up with the advances happening in the ICT field. These teachers are inclined to maintain their knowledge up to dated in order to keep the pace with technology. These findings are related to a professional characteristic that is the willingness of the teacher to pursue continuous education. Concerning continues education, Ortiz (2016) states that teachers should continuously carry out technological training courses. Also, Hurtado (2016) considers "being an active member of virtual knowledge communities facilitates knowledge sharing between students and teachers". Besides, the statement 6 can also be related to a psychological characteristic of teachers: self-esteem. A teacher that is positive about his capacity of learning continuously new things is somebody that trust him/herself and who has a high self-esteem.

Sixty-five percent of teachers who participated in the present study agree that if given the opportunity, they would like to learn about and use ICT.. These results show that teachers are willing to learn about ICT. Hence they have a good attitude and openness toward ICT adoption. These findings can be related to a favorable attitude toward change also called flexibility which is a psychological characteristic. Willingness to change can be related to innovativeness related to teaching methods. In relation to good attitude and openness toward ICT adoption, Van Braak (2001) found that the willingness of the teacher to adopt technical innovation is a predictor of the use of computers by teachers in secondary schools.

Sixty percent of teachers who participated in the present study think that ICT use has more advantages than disadvantages in EFL teaching. These results show that teachers have a positive perception about the use of ICT in their EFL classes. These results are in line with most of the studies that have been published about teachers' perceptions regarding the use of ICT in their EFL classes. In effect, the extant literature suggest that EFL teachers consider that ICT are drivers of motivation, productivity, innovation, improvements in comprehension, among others. Mollaei and Riasati (2013) also reported that teachers have high perceptions toward technology integration in their classes, particularly computer. Participants of this study believe that technology provide visual support for students and it encourage them being active in their learning. In the same vein, Park and Son (2009) report that teachers consider computer technology as a useful teaching tool because it can expand the student's learning experiences.

How is ICT use perceived by EFL teachers in relation to their gender with respect to the factors that they consider as barriers to use ICT in classroom?

TABLE 3

Teachers' perceptions by gender in relation to the aspects that they consider as barriers to use ICT in their classroom

N°	STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE		NO ANSWER	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1	I feel insecure about my ability to use ICT as a resource to teach.	5	5	15	10	15	20	15	15	0	0
2	I do not think I would be able to learn how to use ICT in my classroom.	0	5	0	5	25	30	20	15	0	0
3	I am afraid that if I begin to use ICT, I will become dependent upon them.	5	0	0	10	10	25	25	25	0	0
4	I dislike working with machines that are smarter than I am	0	5	0	5	20	20	25	25	0	0
5	I feel apprehensive about using ICT.	5	5	5	5	25	10	25	20	0	0
6	I have difficulty in understanding the technical aspects of ICT.	0	5	5	10	10	10	30	30	0	0
7	It scares me to think that I could cause the computer to destroy a large amount of data by hitting the wrong key.	0	5	5	5	15	15	35	20	0	0
8	I hesitate to use ICT for fear of making mistakes that I cannot correct.	0	0	0	0	30	25	25	20	0	0
9	You have to be master to understand how to use ICT	0	0	5	5	10	15	35	30	0	0
10	I have avoided ICT use because they are unfamiliar.	0	0	0	0	15	15	35	35	0	0
11	I have not attended any ICT training courses	0	0	10	10	15	15	25	25	0	0
12	I have attended some ICT training courses; however, I prefer not to use ICT because they somewhat intimidate to me.	0	0	10	5	10	5	40	30	0	0
13	I am not interested in attending any ICT course	0	5	0	0	15	15	35	30	0	0
14	I do not how to use any ICT resource	0	0	5	5	15	20	30	25	0	0

15	I do not use any ICT resource in class because I think that ICT are not necessary to teach English	0	0	0	0	15	15	35	35	0	0
16	I prefer not to use ICT because my teaching experience is the most crucial factor in teaching process.	0	0	5	5	10	10	35	35	0	0
17	I think that age is factor that determine the ICT use in class	0	0	10	5	10	10	30	35	0	0
18	In my opinion, younger teachers are more skillful to use ICT than the older ones.	0	0	10	10	20	15	20	25	0	0

Author: Alan Garcia

Source: Ecuadorian high school EFL teachers

How is ICT use perceived by EFL teachers in relation to their genders with respect to the factors that they consider the most influential to use ICT in classroom?

Based on question 1, it shows that women and men have different perceptions when talking about the insecurity to use ICT as a resource to teach, 50% of women and 10% of men "strongly agree", "agree". On the other hand, 5% of women and 20% "disagree" and 60% of men and 5% of women "strongly disagree". As we can see, insecurity is a psychological characteristic that is inherent to a human being, independently of the gender, but that can vary in function of the environment where the person evolves and in function of the knowledge and experience that the person possesses.

With regard to the information obtained from the interview, especially female teachers are insecure because the principal reason is that the students know a lot of technology. Teachers prefer to use another resources such as flash cards, realia, posters, draws, etc. It can be deducted from the verbatim that the students' proficiency in English language is a factor that can make the female teachers feel insecure about their ability to use ICT as a resource to teach. Talking about this, Afshari et al (2009) explain that the success of the implementation of ICT is determined by a dynamic process involving a set of interrelated factors. In fact, school and teacher factors can influence the teacher's decisions to use ICT. Afshari et al.

(2009) make a distinction between manipulative and non-manipulative factors. Manipulative factors refer to the attitudes of teachers toward teaching and ICT, ICT knowledge and skills of teachers, commitment, among others.

Question 2, reveals that 10% of female teachers don't think they would be able to learn how to use ICT in the classroom while 0% of male teachers agree with that statement. These findings suggest that women are more insecure than men with respect to their capacity of learning how to use ICT. One female teacher said: "I haven't had the opportunity to learn how to use ICT", also most schools or high schools don't have the tools that make possible to use of ICT which is a barrier for teachers to improve their ICT skills. It can be understood from this extract of interview that female teachers feel insecure about their ability to learn how to use ICT because the educational institutions where they work have not given them the opportunity and the tools to learn and to improve their ICT skills.

More specifically, table 3 shows that 50% of women and 50% of men consider that they have not avoided ICT use because they are unfamiliar. Not avoiding unfamiliar activities is a positive psychological characteristic that could be linked to a high self-esteem and the propensity to face new challenges. The results from the analysis suggest that both female and male teachers possess this positive psychological characteristic.

Additionally, as it can be noticed in table 3, both male and female teachers don't consider that they don't use any ICT resource in class. In fact, 50% of women and 50% of men do not agree that they don't use any ICT resource in class because they are not necessary to teach English. This means that regardless their gender, teachers think that ICT are useful for their EFL classes. As mentioned by a male teacher, ICT can be useful because it can enrich the teacher's life: "*we as teachers need to learn how to use these resources, because it will make our life as a teacher more interesting, funny, and a little easier*".

Table 3, question 4, reveals that 10% of female teachers dislike working with machines that are smarter than them. In contrast 0% male teachers dislike working with machines that are smarter than them. These results show that women and men do not feel the same way about working with smart machines. Disliking particular activities is a psychological characteristic. Hence, it can be suggested from the analysis that women and men can be different from a psychological point of view. A female teacher stated that "if we become dependent upon them (the smart machines) our teaching can become systematically just letting the machine speak for us". This verbatim suggests that the teacher's fear of being replaced by smart machine can explain why female teachers dislike working with machines that are smarter than them. It can be concluded from this point of view, female teachers dislike working with machines that are smarter than them because they think that the machine can fail at any time which could make them feel frustrated.

Regarding question 6, 15% of men and 15% of women "strongly agree" and 35% of men and women "agree" with the difficulty in understanding the technical aspects of ICT. Teachers have expressed that machines can fail and teachers can become frustrated and that can be evident to the students. Additionally, teachers have expressed that they like to be mainly theorical rather than practical when using technological resources. Regarding this situation, García (2016) suggests that when developing competences in EFL classrooms, the teacher must use ICT elements to assess the knowledge that students have acquired as well as to evaluate the appropriate development of student's skills in the teaching-learning process.

Concerning the statement "*I do not know how to use any ICT resource*", both male and female have similar results. 20% of female and 15% of male agree with the statement. This means that regardless their gender, teachers know how to use ICT resources. In the modern world, almost every teacher has at least a basic knowledge of technology. In fact, according to the global information technology report (2016), Ecuador has 3.9 of readiness level. The

readiness index assesses the state of networked readiness using 53 individual indicators. The

readiness level of a technology determinates the maturity of a technology; and the maturity of

a technology determines its adoption by end users. In Ecuador ICT are pretty much adopted,

in consequence it makes sense that both male and women know how to use ICT resources.

Finally, to conclude the analysis of table 3, it can be observed that both male and

female teachers don't hesitate to use ICT for fear of making irreversible mistakes. In fact, the

results of table 3 show that men are a little bit more fearless than women with respect to

making irreversible mistakes when using ICT. To be more specific, 55% of men and 45% of

women expressed that they don't hesitate to use ICT for fear of making irreversible mistakes.

A fearless attitude can be categorized as a positive psychological characteristic and the

majority of teachers from the sample have it.

How is ICT use perceived by EFL teachers in relation to their genders with

respect to the factors that they consider the most influential to use ICT in classroom?

TABLE 4

Teachers' perceptions by gender in relation to the factors that they consider the most

influential to use ICT in their classroom

N°	STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE		NO ANSWER	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1	The challenge of learning about ICT use is exciting.	20	20	25	25	5	5	0	0	0	0
2	I am confident that I can learn technological skills.	20	20	25	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	I feel motivated to use ICT in my class.	25	30	20	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Learning to use ICT is like learning any new skill – the more you practice, the better you become.	25	25	25	20	0	5	0	0	0	0

5	I am sure that with time and practice I will be as comfortable working with ICT.	25	20	30	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	I feel that I will be able to keep up with the advances happening in the ICT field.	15	15	35	35	0	0	0	0		0
7	If given the opportunity, I would like to learn about and use ICT.	15	20	35	30	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	I think that ICT are necessary tools in educational settings.	30	25	20	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	I like to use ICT because they help me to innovate my teaching methodology.	25	30	25	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	ICT help me to motivate my students to learn English.	35	30	20	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	If I had any technical problem with ICT during my class, I would continue doing the planned activities.	20	25	25	25	0	5	0	0	0	0
12	When I have any technical problem with ICT, I do not feel frustrated.	15	15	30	25	5	10	0	0	0	0
13	Age is not an obstacle to learn about and use ICT in my classes.	30	35	15	15	0	5	0	0	0	0
14	I know a lot about ICT use because I have attended some ICT training courses	10	5	20	25	20	20	0	0	0	0
15	I have learned to use ICT resources by myself	20	25	25	25	0	5	0	0	0	0
16	I think ICT has a positive impact on teaching process	30	25	25	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	ICT use has more advantages than disadvantages in EFL teaching.	20	20	30	30	0	0	0	0	0	0

Author: Alan Garcia
Source: Ecuadorian high school EFL teachers

To continue with the analysis by gender of teachers' perceptions about the use of ICT, the following part will focus on the results and the analysis of table 4.

As it can be noticed in table 4, there is not such a big difference between the opinion of men and women with respect to the motivation they feel about using ICT in their classes. In fact, 55% of women and 45% of men agree that they feel motivated to use ICT in their classes. These findings suggest that teachers from the sample are highly motivated. This corresponds to a psychological characteristic that is very positive for the use of ICT. In fact, Cox et al. (2000) found that motivational factors such as perceived ability to use ICT, the

level of resources available and whether using ICT in teaching is considered to be interesting and enjoyable determines the use of ICT. According to the interviews, teachers are motivated to use ICT in their classes because it is a tool that helps to captures the student interest. One female teacher expressed the following: "using ICT is a way that the teachers engage the students interested to learn, analyze or discuss about the new topic of the class".

Similarly, little difference was found between male and female teachers concerning their perception of age as an obstacle to learn about and to use ICT in classes. In fact, table 4 shows that both male and female teachers agree that age is not an obstacle to learn about and use ICT in classes. This results suggest that in general, teachers from the sample think that they can learn how to use ICT regardless their age. Being confident about oneself capacity of learning new things can be considered as a positive psychological characteristic and can be related to a high self-esteem of the teachers that participate in the present study.

Also, table 4 shows that regardless of their gender, teachers from the sample have learned to use ICT resources by themselves. More specifically, 50% of women and 45% of men said that they have learned to use ICT resources by themselves. These findings suggest that teachers from the sample have the capacity of self-educating. They have educated themselves maybe through online courses, forum and other resources available online for free. These findings can be related to the teacher's willingness to learn which is a professional characteristic.

In addition, both male and female teachers agree that they like to use ICT because it helps them to innovate their teaching methodology. The interviews corroborate these results and also suggest a positive correlation between the innovation of teaching methodologies and the motivation of students. For example, one female teacher expressed that using ICT "is a way to innovate the teaching methodology and as a result a way to motivate English

students". Moreover a male teacher said that using ICT "gives you the opportunity to vary your methodological   strategies to teach in the classroom".

Furthermore, table 4 shows that 5% of women don't think that they can improve their abilities by practicing the use of ICT while 0% of men think the same way. These findings can be related to a lack of security of women. When people have self-confidence, they think that learning new things depends totally on them and they feel capable of improving their knowledge and skills through time and practice.

The results of the statement "if I had any technical problem with ICT during my class, I would continue doing the planned activities" show that 5% of women and 0 % of men "disagree".   These findings suggest that if women had technical problems, they would change the plans either by improvising new activities or either by stopping the planned activities.   In order to improvise, a person should be creative. These findings suggest that women are more creative than men.   The following statement support the results. One teacher expressed the following: "because the (women) are more creative I think". Another teacher said that " they (women) are more dedicated when it comes to work and investigate".

Finally, table 4 shows that female teachers feel more frustrated than male teachers when they have any technical problem with ICT. It can be deducted from these results that women have less emotional self-control than men. Emotional intelligence is at the origin of efficacy among EFL teachers. The study of Moafian et Ghanizadeh (2009) demonstrated that teacher's emotional intelligence is a predictor of self-efficacy in language institutes. Self-efficacy is a personal characteristic of teachers and it is a crucial factor to the integration and development of modern technologies in education (Paraskeva et al. 2006).

CONCLUSIONS

In this study, most of the teachers of both public and private high schools considered that two psychological characteristics were perceived as barriers to ICT adoption for EFL courses. These barriers were: the teachers feel insecure and apprehensive about using ICT. In other words, insecurity and fearfulness impede the integration of ICT´s among EFL teachers. The causes of insecurity and fear among teachers when implementing ICT in their classes were the teacher's perception about student's technological knowledge and teacher's lack of knowledge.

There is a noteworthy difference between female and male teachers when using ICT´s. Older female teachers prefer to use traditional methods, strategies and techniques because these are familiar. Younger men teachers have a preference for having technological tools when teaching because of the benefits. It is due to having easy access to audio, interactive web pages and all kind of visual information.

Most of the female teachers are in agreement with time, patience and practice they will be skillful working with computers, videos, audio CDs and DVDs. On the other hand, men teachers are more confident than women because men are more practical, flexible and relaxed than women in the context of the use of ICT´s because men perceive that they can rely on students when it comes to the use of ICT´s as nowadays students have better knowledge in the use of computers and mobile devices than before.

Most of the teachers have not attended any ICT training courses. They were not motivated to be in line with up to date trends and innovations in the teaching-learning process. A minor group consider the use of technology as irrelevant because experience is the most important element instead of using technology.

Finally, regardless the technological barriers, teachers showed their disposition to use the ICT´s in their classrooms because the truth is evident, emerging digital environment requires designing new educational actions in order to complement the existing ones.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study has focused on causal relationships between antecedents of the use of ICT. Future research should focus on the process by which teachers adopt new technologies. Furthermore, the following paradoxical result has been found: teachers feel insecure because they think that students have better knowledge than them about ICT. However, the mission of a teacher is to educate students, in consequence, teachers should feel happy to know that their students are brilliant. More research needs to be done in order to clarify and have a wider view of the reasons why teachers feel insecure about the abundance of knowledge of students.

Another paradoxical result is that female teachers feel insecure when using ICT because they think students master better than them the new technologies, however male teachers fell the opposite: they feel relaxed because they think that they can rely on students knowledge for the use of technologies. Future research should investigate more deeply why men and women have different perceptions regarding student's knowledge.

Also, teacher's innovativeness appears to be an independent variable as well as an intermediary variable through which the use of ICT is positively affected. More research needs to be done to investigate the double role of this variable.

From a practical point of view, high schools must capacitate their teachers from a psychological perspective in order to help teachers to overcome insecurity and apprehensiveness when using ICT.

It is also necessary to create circles of study and professional self-improvement courses aimed at encouraging teachers to develop the following characteristics: curiosity, a positive attitude towards change and a willingness to update their knowledge.

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ANNEXES

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja

MODALIDAD ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA
TITULACIÓN DE INGLÉS

TEACHERS' SURVEY

Gender: M ( ) F ( )
Years of EFL teaching experience: ( )
Age: ( )

1. For each statement, decide whether you disagree or agree with the statement using the following five - point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

N°	STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
1	I feel insecure about my ability to use ICT as a resource to teach.					
2	I do not think I would be able to learn how to use ICT in my classroom.					
3	I am afraid that if I begin to use ICT, I will become dependent upon them.					
4	I dislike working with machines that are smarter than I am					
5	I feel apprehensive about using ICT.					
6	I have difficulty in understanding the technical aspects of ICT.					
7	It scares me to think that I could cause the computer to destroy a large amount of data by hitting the wrong key.					
8	I hesitate to use ICT for fear of making mistakes that I cannot correct.					
9	You have to be master to understand how to use ICT					
10	I have avoided ICT use because they are unfamiliar.					

N°		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
11	I have not attended any ICT training courses					
12	I have attended some ICT training courses; however, I prefer not to use ICT because they somewhat intimidate to me.					
13	I am not interested in attending any ICT course					
14	I do not how to use any ICT resource					
15	I do not use any ICT resource in class because I think that ICT are not necessary to teach English					
16	I prefer not to use ICT because my teaching experience is the most crucial factor in teaching process.					
17	I think that age is factor that determine the ICT use in class					
18	In my opinion, younger teachers are more skillful to use ICT than the older ones.					

2. For each statement, decide whether you disagree or agree with the statement using the following five - point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

N°	STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
1	The challenge of learning about ICT use is exciting.					
2	I am confident that I can learn technological skills.					
3	I feel motivated to use ICT in my class.					
4	Learning to use ICT is like learning any new skill – the more you practice, the better you become.					
5	I am sure that with time and practice I will be as comfortable working with ICT.					
6	I feel that I will be able to keep up with the advances happening in the ICT field.					
7	If given the opportunity, I would like to learn about and use ICT.					
8	I think that ICT are necessary tools in educational settings.					
9	I like to use ICT because they help me to innovate my teaching methodology.					

10	ICT help me to motivate my students to learn English.					
11	If I had any technical problem with ICT during my class, I would continue doing the planned activities.					
12	When I have any technical problem with ICT, I do not feel frustrated.					
13	Age is not an obstacle to learn about and use ICT in my classes.					
14	I know a lot about ICT use because I have attended some ICT training courses					
15	I have learned to use ICT resources by myself					
16	I think ICT has a positive impact on teaching process					
17	ICT use has more advantages than disadvantages in EFL teaching.					

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja

MODALIDAD ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA
TITULACIÓN DE INGLÉS

TEACHER'S INTERVIEW

Gender: M ( ) F ( )

Years of EFL teaching experience: _____

1. Do you think the use of ICT is important to teach English?

YES ( ) NO ( )

Why?

_____

_____

_____

2. Do you use ICT in your English classes?

YES ( ) NO ( )

Why?

_____

_____

_____

3. If your answer was affirmative in the previous question, how do you feel (afraid, nervous, relaxed, confident, etc.) when you use ICT? Why?

_____

_____

_____

4. Do you consider that factors such as psychological, personal, etc., which are related to your characteristics as a teacher, are barriers to use ICT in your classes? (If it is necessary, use some of the statements in the teachers' survey to explain these factors)

YES ( ) NO ( )

Why?

_____

_____

_____

5. Do you consider that factors such as psychological, personal, etc., which are related to your characteristics as a teacher, have a positive influence on you to use ICT in your classes? (If it is necessary, use some of the statements in the teachers' survey to explain these factors)

YES ( ) NO ( )

Why?

_____

_____

_____

6. Is there any advantage to use ICT in EFL teaching?
YES ( ) NO ( )

Why?

_____

_____

_____

7. Is there any disadvantage to use ICT in EFL teaching
YES ( ) NO ( )
Why?
_____

_____

8. According to your opinion, who uses more frequently ICT in EFL classes male or female teachers?
Why?

_____

_____

_____

Male ( ) Female ( )
Why?

_____

_____

_____

ANNEX 3

Bibliographical data

Theme	Pg.	Information	Form Nº 1
ICT use in EFL teaching: Definition	63	Through ICT the student has a tool through which he can access directly with the use of the English language as well as appreciate other lifestyles, traditions and way of thinking of the Anglo-Saxon culture, making more efficient and functional their way of communicating in English.	
Citation in APA format: Mineduc. (2015). *Curriculum, fundamental objectives and minimum compulsory contents of education media.* Santiago de Chile: The Ministry of Public Education.			
Importance	22	The new information and communication technologies are ways of knowing, thinking and learning from students and therefore have to occupy a vital space in school careers.	
Citation in APA format: Maggio, M. (2013). *Enrriquecer teaching.* Buenos Aires: Paidos.			
Advantages / Disadvantages (if any)	54	The ICT places at the disposal of the class an infinity of information with easy and practical supports by means of different portable devices, among the means there is great diversity as it is the case of digital documents, videos, web pages, audio, presentations of pawer point and present, digital books; among others, for pleasure and convenience of teachers and students.	
Citation in APA format: Morchio, M. (2014). *El rol de las TIC en las clases de inglés .* Buenos Aires : Universidad de San Juan			

Theme	Pg.	Information	Form Nº 2
Teachers and ICT use: Teachers' role	24	In this case, it must set aside encyclopedic knowledge of the area or subject and detach itself from any position of vertical relationship with the student.	
Citation in APA format: Coll, C. (2017). *ICT and educational practices: realities and expectations.* España: Santillana.			
Teachers' competences	57	In this case, the teacher must make use of ICT elements to perform a procedural evaluation of the knowledge acquired by the student as well as the appropriate development of his/her skills in EFL learning.	
Citation in APA format: García, A., & González, L. (2016). *Pedagogical use of educational materials and resources of ICT: advantages in the classroom.* España: University of Salamanca.			
Teachers' gender	16	The age or gender of teachers should have nothing to do with their ability to implement ICTs in the teaching and learning processes of the EFL.	
Citation in APA format: Carreras, J. (2012). *Internet resources for the teaching of English in the third cycle of primary education.* Buenos Aires: Turrets and Towers.			

Theme	Pg.	Information	Form Nº 3
Teachers' characteristics regarding ICT use: Psychological	41	The teacher should not be rude, but should maintain an accessible attitude so that the student can feel more confident.	
Citation in APA format: García, A., & González, L. (2016). *Pedagogical use of educational materials and resources of ICT: advantages in the classroom.* España: University of Salamanca			
Educational	27	Encourage two-way participation among educators, engage colleagues in learning communities as he does to nurture and be nurtured by new and fresh experiences that renew the way EFL teaches through ICTs.	
Citation in APA format: Castillo, S., & Polanco, L. (2015). *Teach them to study, learn to learn: teaching of Study.* Madrid: Pearson			
Professional	21	Be an active member of virtual knowledge communities	
Citation in APA format: Hurtado, M. (2016). *Technologies for the teaching and learning of a foreign language.* España: University of Salamanca.			
Personal characteristics	65	Disseminate online educational and cultural content that is familiar but can help both to students and readers	
Citation in APA format: Borg, S. (2013). *Teacher cognition in language teaching: a review of research on what language teachers think.* Boston : Pharmafin.			

Theme	Pg.	Information	Form Nº 3
Previous studies in relation to Teachers' perceptions on ICT use in their EFL classes	43	The school must adapt and improve to provide an educational response to the digital natives, current school students today. On the other hand, digital immigrants, an essential part of the school, have to adapt their technological language and methodologies so that digital natives receive an education appropriate to their	

		interests.

Citation in APA format:

Vega, B., & Moro, A. (2016). *Use of ICT in the classroom of foreign languages in primary education.* España: University of Cantabria

	68	In the educational process, traditional education has not given the results expected by society, due to this and its demands, education reforms have emerged, the most current being Skills-Based Education, in which the role of the teacher is changed and becomes a facilitator of knowledge, while the student becomes the center of learning, which is intended that students acquire a certain capacity or potential to effectively address any situation in a given situation.

Citation in APA format:

Vega, M. (2015). *Teaching English supported with ICT.* España: Autonomous University of the State of Hidalgo

	27	The roles students play in the English language learning process vary by activity. Students report following the teacher's recommendations, adapting to the requirements of the activities. However, students are also given the freedom to make decisions about their own learning process.

Citation in APA format:

Díaz, C., & Bruce, L. (2016). *The English language learning and the use of technologies: perceptions of students and teachers at the secondary level Chilean.* Chile: Matices

	39	Without a doubt, for a teacher it is necessary to value the resources available to him/her when programming the different areas that he/she is going to teach. The availability of ICT tools is undoubtedly one of the elements that have a decisive influence on the use of new technologies in the classroom, as well as,

		evidently, the methodologies selected in each case by the teacher.
Citation in APA format: Villaescusa, L. (2014). *The application of ICT in the teaching of English.* Valladolid: UVA.		