

ESCUELA SUPERIOR POLITÉCNICA DEL LITORAL

Facultad de Ciencias Sociales y Humanísticas



**“THE EFFECTS OF ONLINE LISTENING ACTIVITIES ON
AUDITORY COMPREHENSION OF EFL A1 LEARNERS IN AN
ECUADORIAN UNIVERSITY”**

An action research

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DEDICATION


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ABSTRACT

Auditory skills are a fundamental social component in the process of English Language Learning (ELL), yet the students' greatest difficulty is to understand conversations in English. Therefore, this study aims to determine the effectiveness of online listening activities on students' auditory skills. Thus, we decided to make an intervention at a private university located in a coastal province of Ecuador. This intervention was conducted with undergraduate students to whom learning English is mandatory. The university offers the students various services such as the access to both internet service and virtual platforms. These virtual platforms allow the students to have access to a variety of online activities to learn English more quickly and effectively. The action research paradigm was implemented to verify this problem. Consequently, in order to solve the problem, we decided to use the Moodle virtual platform. The students of the university have already used this platform to develop grammar and writing exercises. Then, for a period of one month, we used the platform to post online listening activities. Similarly, at the beginning of the intervention, the students took a pre-test, and at the end of the intervention a post-test. These research tools made it possible to ascertain to what extent the online listening activities helped students improve their auditory skills in English. It is also worth mentioning that we have considered previous studies conducted in the same field of study. Finally, we applied statistical tools to interpret and determine the significance of the results obtained in the research.

Keywords: online listening activities, virtual platforms, Moodle, technology, significance

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ABBREVIATIONS

The following initials stand for:

CD Compact Disc

CD-ROM Compact Disc Read-Only Memory

CEAACES Consejo de Evaluación, Acreditación, y Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior (Ecuador)

CEFR Common European Framework of Reference

EFL English as a Foreign Language

ELL English Language Learning

ELT English Language Teaching

ICT Information and Communication Technology

L2 Language 2 (Language students are learning: English)

LOES Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior (Ecuador)

MOODLE Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment

SLA Second Language Acquisition

TEFL Teaching English as a Foreign Language

CHAPTER 1: SUMMARY OF THE THESIS PROPOSAL

1.1 Introduction

This action research aims to ascertain the effectiveness of online listening activities on the development of auditory skills. In order to reach our goal, we decided to use the virtual platform, Moodle. This is a friendly and interactive platform that has allowed us to easily and effectively expose the learners to a variety of online listening activities.

This intervention was carried out with university students in their first semester, i.e. level A1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The learners were exposed to various online listening activities developed by the British Council and chosen beforehand by the authors of the study taking into account the learners' level, needs, and likes. These activities were also piloted before implementing them online or in-class.

1.2 Aims and Rationale

Based on our experience as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers with several years teaching learners of all ages, we have noticed that one of the main difficulties students face when learning English is to understand what they hear in the target language. This difficulty mainly arises from the lack of contact the learners have with the target language. Our study, therefore, seeks to demonstrate to what extent the use of technological resources can help the learners develop their auditory skills. Also, it is important to mention that the participants of this study took a pre-test at the beginning of the intervention, and they also took a post-test at the end of the intervention. The purpose of applying both the pre and post-tests was to verify to what

extent the students improved their auditory skills with the assistance of technology over a period of four weeks.

1.3 Research Question

To what extent does the use of online listening activities influence the development of auditory comprehension skills of EFL A1 learners in an Ecuadorian university?

1.3.1 Sub-research questions

1. What level of listening comprehension do the EFL A1 students demonstrate before the intervention?
2. Are there any differences between auditory comprehension before and after the implementation of online listening activities?

1.4 Overview of the Inquiry

In Chapter 1, the aims and rationale, as well as the research and sub-research questions are set for this study. Chapter 2 establishes the setting of this study, i.e., the location where it takes place, the kind of institution this research was carried out, the staff who was involved in the institution and their academic qualifications. Chapter 3 cites some previous studies that have been read and analyzed by the authors and taken as a basis for this research. In Chapter 4, the methodology and paradigm for this study, the sample taken, the tools to be applied, and the background of the participants in the study are established.

In Chapter 5, the results are summarized using a variety of graphs and tables. Then, Chapter 6 presents the discussion of findings. Finally, Chapter 7 contains our conclusions and recommendations and topics for further research.

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

The study was developed in a private university that offers undergraduate and post-graduate studies. It is located in Manabí, Ecuador. The purpose of the university is to provide high professional standards with humanistic criteria, endeavoring to fulfill the current demanding academic canons of higher education.

2.2 The Institution, its Students, and Instructors

Currently, the university comprises eleven colleges that attempt to satisfy local professional's needs. It has a Language Centre that is in charge of teaching EFL to all the students, grouped by major and level of proficiency.

The Language Centre currently has around 890 students of English from all the majors. The students are predominantly young learners, aged 18 to 26, who mostly come from different cantons of the province where it is located. Due to the entrance exams for higher education institutions in Ecuador, some of the students are assigned to majors even though they come from other provinces of Ecuador. As students bring different socio-cultural backgrounds and different levels of English, at the beginning of each course, mainly in the first levels, the professors meet with the students and explain the possibility of taking a test to determine if they fulfill the requirements of the content of the course. If the learner agrees to take it and obtains the score required, then he/she skips that level.

At the time of this study, the Language Centre had eight instructors with high qualifications, six of them working full-time and two part-time. Five professors held a graduate level degree related to Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), while another had one in Education Administration. Of the two teachers without a master's

degree, one had completed a master's program in TEFL and was writing her thesis to obtain the degree, and the other one had plans to enroll in a master's program that term. Professors worked on different schedules from early morning to late evening.

2.3 The Need for this Research Project

According to Art. 173 of *Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior* (LOES), the *Consejo de Evaluación, Acreditación, y Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior* (CEAACES) is in charge of executing the process of external evaluation, accreditation, academic classification, and quality assurance. Art. 174 establishes that CEAACES issues institutional accreditation certificates for programs and majors valid for five years to the higher education institutions and academic units once they have fulfilled all the mandatory requirements.

The Language Center at the University has implemented a project to achieve the level B2 according to the CEFR, required by the law for institutions of higher education. This project attempts to achieve the B2 level for students of the College of Odontology, which was the first accredited major in the university. This college obtained its certification issued by CEAACES in January, 2016. In order to keep its accreditation and level, the *Honorable Consejo Universitario* issued the Resolution No. USG-HCU-No. 036-03-2015 in March, 2015. This resolution gave the green light to the proposal submitted by the Language Center staff. The aim of this proposal is to improve the English proficiency of the students, starting with level A1 until the achievement of level B2 as a requisite for the graduation of the learners. According to Art. 31 of *Reglamento de Régimen Académico*, Chapter III - *De La Estructura Curricular* – the level B2 of proficiency or its equivalence from 500 or 600 hours class is required by higher education institutions. This

process must be completed or evaluated before the enrollment in the last ordinary academic term irrespective of being certified or completed beforehand (2016).

No research has been conducted since the Odontology faculty's accreditation to measure improvement or goal fulfillment. One of the biggest problems our community faces in the learning process of a foreign language is the lack of auditory comprehension. This is due to not using the Second Language (L2) outside the classroom, and its limited exposure is through the Internet and media such as radio and videos, mainly for entertainment. Moreover, students who come from public schools or other cantons do not have enough exposure to the L2 through listening activities or platforms. This fact is different when talking about learners who studied middle and high school in private schools located mainly in Portoviejo; thus, they have a more advanced level of English.

2.4 Conclusion

In summary, the skill of listening comprehension and its vital importance must be recognized when starting to learn an L2. These are the reasons to carry out this action research. Once we identified this problem, we decided to implement the use of technology to achieve the goal of improving the learners' auditory comprehension skills. This can be accomplished through online listening activities, based on the students' level and syllabus for the course. With this study, we will state the advantages and disadvantages of the use of these new alternatives to either improve learners' auditory skills or to overcome their auditory comprehension problems.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

In this study, the literature review has allowed us to analyze and discuss some scientific papers previously published in the field of TEFL. The analysis of the literature has solidified our views on the correct application of virtual platforms as explained below.

3.2 Literature Review

Listening skills

The authors Celik and Yavuz (2015) mentioned that listening comprehension is a cognitive process that involves several steps. If the steps are properly followed, the process can be adequately developed. In addition, the authors commented that the ability of listening comprehension should not be confused with hearing. The last is a psychological process. The development of listening comprehension skills is essential when learning a foreign language. The authors Harputlu and Ceylan (2014) stated that in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), developing listening comprehension skills is of paramount importance for everyday life. Likewise, Bilican, Kutlu, and Yildirim (2012) pointed out that listening comprehension skills are fundamental in the educational life of the learners. Hence, listening skills are necessary in several areas including the workplace, social areas, entertainment, and studies.

According to the authors Gulec and Durmus (2015), learners who study a foreign language can already benefit from certain activities assisted by technology so that they can develop their listening comprehension skills. These activities can be assisted by computer,

television, radio, CD player, etc. Moreover, the authors explained that with the help of technological tools, students can listen to poems, stories, tales, songs, etc.

The authors Bilican et al. (2012) also found that technology-related activities including audio material allow the students to improve their listening comprehension skills. The above-mentioned authors considered technology as a means to improve their teaching experience in the classroom. Thus, teachers need to come up with innovative activities to teach listening comprehension taking into consideration that it is one of the most difficult skills to teach since there are no rules involved like grammar. This coincides with the author Safranji (2015) who mentioned that listening comprehension is a key element in the process of learning a foreign language, but it is also one of the most difficult tasks for teachers. Furthermore, Bilican et al. (2012) stated that the ability of listening comprehension is a complex intellectual activity. Similarly, Rahimi and Abedi (2014) mentioned that listening comprehension is the most difficult skill to deal with, and it is the least explicit of all four. It is therefore important that English teachers are constantly developing and seeking information that enables them to create more effective activities to help learners strengthen their listening comprehension skills.

The authors Bilican et al. (2012) stated that teachers should be able to identify those effective variables that allow students to build up their listening comprehension skills. Moreover, Yilmaz and Yavuz (2015) argued that learners should come up with certain strategies that help them improve their listening comprehension skills; for example, jotting down notes, and getting involved in a lot of English practice. The author Nachoua (2012) stated that in order to properly strengthen the students' listening comprehension skills, appropriate teaching methods must be applied.

According to Bilican et al. (2012), most of the students do not adequately develop their listening comprehension skills. In order to imbue the students with effective listening comprehension activities, it is also important to identify potential drawbacks that may hinder their learning. The authors Idrissova, Smagulova, and Tussupbekova (2015) agreed that regardless of the students' learning stage, it is important to identify those problems that negatively affect their learning. One of the main problems faced by the students in Ecuadorian schools is the lack of contact they have with the target language. Hence, many students have claimed they do not need to learn English because they do not use it outside the classroom. The students' lack of motivation is one of the main hindrances teachers have to deal with.

The authors Celik et al. (2015) mentioned that motivation plays a very important role in listening comprehension classes. Moreover, Yilmaz et al. (2015) mentioned that students need to practice a lot in order to polish their listening comprehension skills. The more the students practice, the faster they can develop their listening comprehension skills. In addition, the authors Celik et al. (2015) commented that in order to have a successful listening comprehension process, it is necessary to bear in mind some factors: (1) the learners have to pay attention in classes, (2) the learners' background knowledge, and (3) the learners need comprehensible input.

In the classroom, many students remain silent during their first English lessons. This common behavior is defined by the experts as the Silent Period. The writers Eken and Dilidüzgün (2014) explained that this Silent Period is closely related to the process of acquiring their mother tongue. The authors also mentioned that children, when acquiring their mother tongue, just listen until they can start speaking the language; hence, in one

way or another this period of silence is connected to their intrinsic normal behavior of acquiring their native language. Sometimes, teachers get stressed to see that students remain silent and do not want to participate in classes at all, or they do not even respond to the questions asked by the teacher. Then, it would be necessary to find out the possible reasons for this behavior. As mentioned above, it is important to be able to identify problems that negatively affect the students' listening skills development; by doing so, teachers could find solutions to the problems that have arisen within the classroom.

Another potential problem faced by the English teachers might be the listening activities the English textbooks bring to perform in classes. The authors Yavuz, Degirmenci, Akyuz, Yilmaz, and Celik (2015) advised that teachers need to adapt activities to strengthen the students' listening comprehension skills, and these activities must be developed based on their needs. Consequently, the authors commented that if it is not possible to change, adapt, or edit these activities that come in the English textbooks, the process of developing the listening comprehension skills could bring about a high level of anxiety; eventually, the students could fail. Then, teachers have to carry out a needs analysis to identify what their students' needs are, and to implement the most effective learning activities. This agrees with the authors Harputlu et al. (2014) who mentioned that creating an environment that motivates learning is fundamental, whereas those students with a high level of anxiety and lack of self-confidence will not be successful in developing their listening comprehension skills. Moreover, the authors Yilmaz et al. (2015) mentioned that anxiety and the fear of making mistakes can create mental barriers that block the students' learning.

The authors Bilican et al. (2012) stated that teachers could have students develop activities both inside and outside the classroom, this will allow greater exposure to the target language. In this way, it is possible to fight one of the main problems which is the lack of opportunities to put into practice what has been learned in the classroom. However, it should be noted that learning activities performed outside the classroom require more commitment and maturity from the students.

In the EFL field, there is a lot of discussion regarding the most suitable teaching methods to help learners achieve their listening comprehension skills. Several authors have developed different methods and activities to teach listening and have claimed their methods are the best. However, the majority of authors have agreed that teachers should apply those methods that best meet the students' learning needs. In addition, in general education, technology has contributed to several advancements.

Teaching methods of listening

Richards (2009) makes a very clear distinction between listening as comprehension and listening as acquisition. According to Richards (2009), listening as comprehension in learning a second language is based on the understanding of the spoken discourse, while listening as acquisition is based on the use of activities for the development of second language proficiency.

The author referred of two kinds of processes to teach listening, bottom-up and top-down processing. While bottom-up processing points out the received data as the basis for comprehension (language to meaning), top-down processing takes the learner's background knowledge into account to comprehend the message (meaning to language).

Similarly, the author Nunan (1997) explained that the listener understands the spoken discourse by using his/her prior knowledge, which is related to top-down processing.

Although the author Richards (2009) makes clear distinctions between both processes, he claims that a class would be more successful if both methods were used together. Similarly, Nunan (1997) disagrees with the use of only bottom-up processing because a learner would not be able to store a large amount of listening texts as the approach suggests. Therefore, Nunan also supports the idea of using bottom-up and top-down processing together as Richards (2009) described. The author suggests some listening strategies that will ensure a better understanding of the spoken discourse; for example, listening for gist, matching, listening for detail, and comprehension before production (1997).

The author James Asher's (1981) described Total Physical Response as an effective method for teaching listening. He explained, for example, that during the early stages of SLA, comprehension is more important than production. Moreover, he claimed that the level of listening comprehension increases when the activities are associated with physical things presented in the environment.

Additionally, Nunan (1997) supports the learner-centered dimension indicating that all the actions undertaken in the class should be centered in the learner. Hence, the learners can start building their skills while using the language in context. Similarly, he claims that the learners need to engage in different activities of reciprocal and non-reciprocal listening. In the reciprocal listening (dialogues), the learners have the opportunity to actively participate in a conversation, whereas in the non-reciprocal listening (listening to monologs), the learners are passive and do not take part in the conversation.

The authors Vandergrift, Mareschal, and Tafaghodtari (2006) described five effective listening strategies to help learners develop his/her auditory skills including the following: person knowledge, directed attention, mental translation, problem-solving and planning and evaluation.

The importance of accent

The authors Potter and Saffran (2017) claimed that it can be extremely difficult for some people to understand unfamiliar accents. That is the reason, they explain, that learners should be exposed to multiple accents. Ideally, if the learners are exposed to unfamiliar accents, they would be able to overcome the impediment of understanding different accents.

The authors Matsuura, Chiba, Mahoney, and Rilling (2015) conducted an experiment at a university in Japan. They realized that the EFL learners found it easier to understand an American accent than to understand people from India speaking English. Therefore, the authors concluded that accent really matters when teaching listening. The authors think that although it may be challenging for the learners to understand a less familiar accent, they need to be exposed to different kinds of unfamiliar accents. The authors Matsuura et al. (2015) mentioned that there are certain elements that may affect results in SLA. They said, for example, learners' background knowledge, proficiency level of the listeners, and the accent familiarity.

Technology in education

The author Kosar (2016) mentioned that technology in recent years has greatly influenced our daily lives. This is quite evident; technology has made a contribution in different fields, especially in the field of education. Therefore, education and technology

go hand in hand. In English Language Teaching (ELT), technology has gained a lot of space. As mentioned earlier, the learners already benefit from some technology-assisted learning activities. According to Leong and Ibrahim (2015), in the last decades, technology has played an important role in education. Likewise, Kosar (2016) mentioned that it is vital that technology be implemented in the English curriculum. In the world of technology, many applications have been designed and implemented to help students reach their learning goals. In some places, online education is extremely necessary because students live far away from campus. Furthermore, many teachers use e-learning to generate new activities that motivate students to continue their learning process and not to drop out.

E-learning

The authors Mozhaeva, Feshchenko, and Kulikov (2014) mentioned that one of the main characteristics of technology in modern education is e-learning. They also mentioned that modern students highly value this new way of learning through the internet and the main reason may be that e-learning involves social networks as well.

The authors Rymanova, Baryshnikov, and Grishaeva (2015) found some advantages and disadvantages of working with e-learning. The authors mentioned that e-learning has some advantages including (1) the opportunity to choose the topic of greatest interest of the student, (2) students have autonomy and flexibility regarding their available time for learning, (3) e-learning goes along with the students' learning pace, (4) students can choose various activities of their interest such as videos, animations, texts, and images. The authors also mentioned several disadvantages including (1) little social contact between the teacher and the student, (2) there is little contact among the students, (3) there are some learning difficulties due to little teacher monitoring. Therefore, due to the various

difficulties that can be found in the use of e-learning, teachers should establish a balance between face-to-face class time and online activities.

The authors Gorbunovs, Kapenieks, and Cakula (2016) explained that it is an advantage that e-learning offers a more efficient, attractive, time-aligned environment for students and free access from anywhere; however, this process requires a lot of motivation and the students' commitment to learning. Moreover, the authors Rymanova et al. (2015) mentioned that multimedia activities can be integrated into e-learning which makes it more attractive and students can build up their listening comprehension skills appropriately. The authors Gorbunovs et al. (2016) also stated that e-learning offers more freedom to learners; hence, it is necessary for students to understand the importance of following their learning process with little supervision by the teacher.

Web 2.0

In the field of e-learning, there are several applications or tools that are of great help in the learning of English; for example, the Web 2.0 tools. According to Kulakli and Mahony (2014), the advancement of technology and the paradigm change have caused many universities to implement the use of Web 2.0 tools. According to Leow and Neo (2015), Web 2.0 tools have been defined as the second generation of the Web. They also mentioned that the term appeared in an international conference, and it was developed by O'Reilly in 2004.

The authors Pieri and Diamantini (2014) defined Web 2.0 tools as second-generation internet services employed to share documents, to establish communication among users, and to strengthen the teaching-learning process. Moreover, they also mentioned that one of the advantages of the Web 2.0 tools is that they are easy to use;

therefore, the user does not need to have much experience to use them. The authors highlighted some of the most common Web 2.0 tools including Skype, Facebook, YouTube, Google etc. Similarly, Brengarth and Mujkic (2016) stated that one of the advantages of working with Web 2.0 tools is that they can be connected to all devices regardless of the operating system the user has. Also, Bennet, Bishop, Dalgarno, Waycott, and Kennedy (2012) mentioned that Web 2.0 tools are an appropriate way of sharing content and interacting with others regardless of the distance among the users. It is worth mentioning that Web 2.0 tools allow users to share images, texts, discussions, etc. Furthermore, Bennet et al. (2012) commented that Web 2.0 technologies have evolved and have become popular in the community of knowledge. Consequently, they are widely applied in formal education.

The authors Kurilovas and Juskeviciene (2015) highlighted that the learning activities on Web 2.0 tools can be developed taking into consideration the students' learning styles. This is key since one of the main advantages of using Web 2.0 technologies is that they allow teachers to develop more innovative learning activities based on the students' needs.

According to Kulakli et al. (2014), due to the characteristics and benefits offered by Web 2.0 tools, many universities around the world have decided to implement them to teach different courses. The authors Leow et al. (2015) stated that one of the main uses that some teachers give to Web 2.0 tools is the creation of learning virtual communities. Al-Ghamdi (2015) stated that Web 2.0 technologies offer several features including social networks, photos, video sharing, blogs, podcasts, etc.

However, the authors Rainie and Wellman (2012) commented that Web 2.0 tools are not only for social networks but also through these technologies, the users can establish contact with interest groups, companies, other entities, etc. The authors Liburd and Christensen (2013) also mentioned that Web 2.0 technologies not only contain the social element but also, they enable users to engage in interactive discussions and narrative focus. In the learning communities, students can share opinions, texts, and experiences. By doing so, the learners can have the opportunity to improve their listening comprehension skills. Web 2.0 technologies are used in different settings, especially for educational purposes. According to Kulakli et al. (2014), students who attend higher education are aware of Web 2.0 tools and their uses. Consequently, we believe that students' background knowledge will be of great use when making the intervention.

It is of the utmost relevance to mention that during the learning process teachers must be aware of all the steps that must be carried out. This implies that any educational process involving technology would not succeed if teachers do not know how to use a computer, for example. According to the authors Hao and Lee (2015), it is important that teachers know and are aware of the characteristics of Web 2.0 tools so that they can make adaptations that meet the learners' needs.

We have compiled an extensive literature on the usefulness of technology, e-learning, and Web 2.0 tools in the field of education. These technology-assisted tools offer many benefits in developing listening comprehension skills. Within the Web 2.0 technologies, we can mention several applications, tools, or platforms that could be used for the purposes of our intervention. However, we have collected information from one

well-known platform called Moodle. This virtual platform will be used with our students to post the online listening comprehension activities during the intervention period.

Moodle

The authors Yang, Chuang, and Tseng (2013) stated that the Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (Moodle) offers many features that allow creating an individualized instruction. Similarly, Shilova, Artamonova, and Averina (2014) mentioned that the Moodle virtual platform is optimal in the teaching process and individualization of learning. The authors Costa, Alvelos, and Teixeira (2012) commented that Moodle is one of the most used platforms in the e-learning world, which offers several benefits to the class during the teaching-learning process. However, the authors also mentioned that the success of using the platform greatly depends on the teacher's knowledge of the tool's features. Several authors have drawn on the conclusion that for successful learning the teachers must become effective learning guides. Therefore, it is necessary that before the implementation of any technological tool, the school authorities find out if the teachers are prepared to start working with a new tool, if not they have to train them immediately.

The author Kosar (2016) found that the Moodle virtual platform combined with face-to-face instruction helped him create a more effective learning environment. The authors Yang et al. (2013) mentioned that the effectiveness of Moodle in the teaching-learning process is due to the fact that it allows the incorporation of multimedia contents, and it enhances the learners' motivation. In addition, the authors mentioned other benefits of the Moodle platform including (1) it is easy to install, (2) it provides multi-language access, (3) it is free, (4) it is easy to use, (5) it can be used to teach listening

comprehension activities. Therefore, once we have conducted an intensive investigation on the Moodle platform, we consider it is appropriate for our intervention.

The virtual platform Moodle was selected as the tool to develop this study for several reasons. First, most of the practical activities students develop as autonomous work are vocabulary, grammar, and written interactions. Although their material includes a CD-ROM, it is noticeable that just few of them use it regularly at home. The reason might be that currently, most of the laptops do not have a CD player unit, so the students do not have the means to play the CD. As they are only exposed to controlled listening activities using multimedia in the classroom, it is pivotal for them to increase this practice as homework. Second, young learners are highly motivated to use technology to learn and practice, and adding variety increases their expectation for learning. Moreover, educational institutions in Ecuador are required by control organizations to use ICTs in class or as blended learning (extra practice/autonomous hours). Thus, the institution where the study was carried out has implemented the virtual platform Moodle for its academic purposes. All in all, the application of the virtual platform offers the opportunity to fulfill the requirements of higher institutions, to meet students' interests, and expose the learners to audios recorded by native English speakers. This last goal is of high importance in SLA, and mainly in EFL because students do not have the chance to be exposed to L2 and practice it outside the classroom.

The authors De-Siqueira, Peris-Fajarnes, Gimenez, and Magal-Royo (2009) highlighted the importance of the use of technology in education since today most students use electronic devices such as cell phones, laptops, and desktop computers for multiple purposes. Consequently, he mentioned that this trend in the use of technology can be

exploited in different ways including students' assessment through computer-based tests. Then, we can identify two important elements that will allow our intervention to be more effective, (1) the use of the Moodle platform in which students will perform their online listening activities to strengthen their listening skills, and (2) the use of computer-based test to assess the students' progress and improvement after the intervention.

Computer-based tests

The author Shilova et al. (2014) stated that computer-based tests are now becoming more popular to evaluate students who are learning foreign languages. We consider that computer-based tests have become more popular because they are easier to manage. Advantageously, the same system shows the grades obtained by the test-takers. So this is a way to save time. The authors Yamazaki, Shimada, and Eto (2013) mentioned that the increase in the use of computer-based tests is due to cost efficiency and they also provide immediate feedback to the test-takers. However, Hosseini, Abidin, and Baghdarnia (2014) mentioned that one of the disadvantages of computer-based tests is that many institutions do not have the necessary technology. Unfortunately, these types of tools can only be used in institutions that may have the capacity to acquire the necessary technological equipment.

3.3 Conclusion

The literature review has been carried out as part of the development of our thesis in order to provide context and justification of our study. Furthermore, it has allowed identifying what has been done in the area of EFL and what still needs to be done. In addition, the literature review has allowed us to recognize important and relevant variables to establish a clear relationship between ideas and practice. At the beginning of our study, there were certain unfamiliar terms; consequently, through the development of the

literature review, we were able to understand and use them. Finally, we have been able to obtain clear guidance on the methodology and techniques to be applied in our research study.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Paradigm

4.1.1 Definition and rationale

The action research paradigm was used to analyze the information and understand this research problem. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), action research is focused on practice, and implemented to solve local problems. Similarly, Meyer (2000) claimed that action research especially helps those professionals who are responsible for identifying and solving problems. Consequently, these professionals who work in this field reflect on the processes and results obtained that underpin these changes.

The authors Munn, Pearson, Jordan, Murphy, Pilkington, and Anderson (2016) mentioned that action research allows analyzing social problems aiming to make changes to improve or solve these problems. Furthermore, action research allows the researcher to change the approach or to make adaptations during the process if necessary. Hence, action research provides a better understanding of the problems inside the classroom. The fact of recognizing a problem helps to identify more effective solutions.

4.1.2 Identify the problem

As previously stated, our research is focused on the solution of a problem identified in our classroom. The learners show difficulty to communicate in English. The Ecuadorian educational system mandates all students to take English classes since primary instruction. Although the learners have gone through an extensive process of learning English, the results have not been favorable. There are only a few students who are able to communicate in English effectively. So as teachers of this private university, we believed

that intervention was required to help the learners develop their auditory skills in the foreign language, which is one of their main weaknesses. For example, many students have some difficulty in trying to understand spoken directions. Consequently, we claim that an intervention with the assistance of technology could help the students develop their auditory skills and reach their learning goals.

4.2 Methodological Stances

The research method is mixed: quantitative and qualitative. A mixed research method clearly indicates the use of quantitative and qualitative research combined during the elaboration of a project (Bryman, 2012). Moreover, the author explains that mixed research methods are becoming more and more common within the research field due to its effectiveness. By the nature of this research, our ontological position is positivist.

4.3 Method

4.3.1 Definition and characteristics

The research method used in this thesis is the Mixed Method Research: qualitative and quantitative research strategies. Based on the literature, we conclude that action research allows the researcher to analyze and solve a problem. This problem may be affecting either a person, a group of people, or a whole society.

4.3.2 Methods of data collection

Development of the action plan

In the university of our study, the students in their first semester have difficulty engaging in a basic conversation in the target language because their auditory skills have

not been properly developed. Consequently, we decided to make an intervention to help them overcome this difficulty. By doing so, the learners would have a better understanding of how technology can assist them to embrace their listening skills. At the beginning, we communicated with the learners about this project to ensure the majority of them agreed to be part of the intervention.

In order to determine the effectiveness of the intervention, it was necessary to apply the pre and post-test as instruments of data collection. It is remarkable to express that, owing to the results obtained in the post-test, we decided to give a second post-test to the participants to add reliability and measure the level of significance of the results achieved. The second post-test was administered four months later to the same sample of students. To obtain the statistical values, the authors used the tools available in Excel of the ofimatic package Microsoft Office 2016.

Moreover, we applied a survey using a Likert Scale with closed questions to all the participants, while a semi-structured interview was applied to a group of eight participants, as can be seen in the Appendices. Prior the intervention, the participants took the pre-test. During the intervention, learners were exposed to four listening practices, one per week, which means the intervention lasted a month. When the period of intervention culminated, the students took the post-test on the fifth week. All activities were taken from the British Council website, after obtaining their permission to use them. Moreover, the activities were chosen in advance according to the topics previously checked in class and the level of English of the learners.

Since both tests were used as instruments of data collection, we could draw some important conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the online listening activities through

the use of the virtual platform, Moodle. In addition, we were able to make a comparative analysis of both results. This comparative analysis was also used to detect strengths and weaknesses; thus, actions can be undertaken to help the learners succeed in their learning process. Finally, we concluded that the application of these data collection instruments has certainly let us answer the question and sub-questions of our study.

4.4 Selection and handling of data

The selection and management of the data have been a continuing process, and it has been done in a cyclical way. The selection process has been systematic and comprehensive. Once the participants took both the pre and the post-test, we carried out a comparative analysis to determine the effectiveness of the intervention.

Moreover, it is of utmost importance to mention that it was necessary to apply a closed survey and a semi-structured interview. They were applied in the study with the purpose of determining the participants' perceptions towards the use of online listening activities to improve their auditory skills. The interview had both open and closed questions. Therefore, the participants were able to express themselves more coherently towards the varied activities they performed during the intervention.

Before the intervention, the learners were given a pre-test to measure their initial level of auditory comprehension. Then, with the assistance of the virtual platform by Moodle version 2.8, the participants were able to log into the system. Each week, online listening activities with comprehension questions were posted on the platform. Each activity was graded and we gave the learners feedback, so they were able to see their progress throughout the weeks. Subsequently, the students took the post-test. Both the pre and post-test were rated out of 10 points.

The analysis of the interview was done with the help of some techniques. The interview helped to systematize the gathered data. Furthermore, we transcribed the audio tracks and analyzed the information for a more orderly and comprehensive analysis.

4.5 Participants

This study involves learners of a private Ecuadorian university, who attended nine hours of English classes a week during their first semester, which means A1 level according to the CEFR. These learners are between 18 to 26 years old. The majority of learners have different learning styles and socio-cultural background, constituting a mixed ability class. Furthermore, it has been detected that their greatest difficulty is to understand spoken English conversations from audios, videos, lyrics, or dialogues. Advantageously, as they are young learners, they are users of technology on a regular basis, especially the internet. Therefore, taking into consideration the need of using multimedia tools among the college learners, we decided to make an intervention implementing the use of the virtual platform to improve the learners' auditory skills. Moodle 2.8 is the version of the platform chosen by the institution for its academic purposes. The staff in the university has received a training of 10 hours face-to-face plus 20 hours online to manage the main resources of the platform. Therefore, we were able to post videos, audios, and more multimedia on the platform, as well as develop activities for the learners.

4.6 Selection and sampling

There were three classes used in this study with each class consisting of approximately 30 students. There were 89 students in the classes including 62 women and 27 men. There were only 55 students, however, who agreed to participate in the

intervention. Hence, we used purposive sampling, which is a non-random sampling method. This means that all the students had the opportunity to be part of the study. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that the intervention was conducted as a part of regular classes; therefore, there was no need to create a special class.

4.7 Background of the Participants

The students upon completing their secondary instruction have not developed the ability to understand English conversations, as demonstrated in the placement test. While they are aware of the importance of learning English, some of them have had to find other alternatives to learn the language; they either take private classes at home or go to an English center. Among those students who have just finished their secondary instruction, it is common to hear that they have some difficulty understanding different English texts, but when it comes to listening or following a conversation, it is almost impossible.

4.8 Conclusion

This study has two main objectives. First, our study aims to help students to develop their English skills. Although there are four skills a learner must develop to be able to communicate effectively in a language, this study only focuses on the development of auditory skills. Second, our study seeks to resolve that the educational community recognizes the great contribution of technology in SLA. Nowadays, there are a large number of methods for learning a foreign language; consequently, we consider that each method or learning technique can be supported by technology.

Our research method has led us to find possible solutions to one of the greatest difficulties that learners have when studying a foreign language: the development of auditory skills. In addition, with the help of data collection methods, a comparative

analysis could be carried out which made it possible to see the effectiveness of technology in language learning.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The results reflect information compiled from 55 students who agreed to participate in this study. Nevertheless, it is important to reveal two important aspects: 1) the information from 2 students had to be discarded due to the fact they faced problems of Internet connection that did not allow them to take the post-test at home, which from now on will be called post-test 1; and 2) due to the fact that the results of the post-test 1 were significantly high, we decided to give a second post-test (post-test 2) in order to add reliability to the information obtained in the post-test 1. The post-test 2 was given to the same group of participants after the intervention, unexpectedly, and under our supervision. Therefore, the results reflect the information of 53 students contrasted with a pre-test and two post-tests.

5.2 Presentation of Findings

The results of the pre and post-tests of the 53 students are shown in histograms, pie charts, bar graphs, and box plots. The raw data has been arranged from the lowest to the highest score, and then transformed in grades using a scale of 10 points according to the rating scale that Ecuadorian universities currently apply. In this rating scale, the minimum required score to pass a test is 7 points. In addition, this private university applies a decimal in the academic register, it has also been considered in the data.

The pre-test applied was paper-based, taken from the website of the source (See Appendices). It had 25 questions in total, and the total number of right answers was converted into 10 marks following the table of conversion below, obtained from a simple cross multiplication.

Number of correct answers from a total of 25 questions	Equivalence out of 10 points
25	10
24	9.6
23	9.2
22	8.8
21	8.4
20	8
19	7.6
18	7.2
17	6.8
16	6.4
15	6
14	5.6
13	5.2
12	4.8
11	4.4
10	4
9	3.6
8	3.2
7	2.8
6	2.4
5	2
4	1.6
3	1.2
2	0.8
1	0.4
0	0

Table 1: Table of conversion of 25 answers and its equivalence out of 10 points.

The post-test 1 was applied using the Moodle platform, and it had 20 questions in total, taken from the original source of the pre-test. The total number of right answers was converted into 10 marks following the table of conversion below, obtained from a simple cross multiplication.

Number of correct answers from a total of 20 questions	Equivalence out of 10 points
20	10
19	9.5
18	9
17	8.5
16	8
15	7.5
14	7
13	6.5
12	6
11	5.5
10	5
9	4.5
8	4
7	3.5
6	3
5	2.5
4	2
3	1.5
2	1
1	0.5
0	0

Table 2: Table of conversion of 20 answers and its equivalence out of 10 points.

The post-test 2 given to corroborate the results of the post-test 1 was administered in class time, four months after the intervention. This time, the students could listen to the audio twice but they did not have any alternative of an extra explanation or an extra opportunity to listen again or stop the audio to answer. It had 25 questions taken from the original source of the British Council website, converted into 10 marks following the same table of conversion of the pre-test.

The results of the pre and post-tests, and the statistical values, are shown in the table below.

Students	Pre-test	Post-test 1	Post-test 2
1	2.8	6	6
2	2.8	6	8
3	3.2	8.5	8
4	3.2	8.5	8
5	3.6	9	8.4
6	3.6	9	8.4
7	4	9	8.4
8	4.4	9	8.4
9	4.4	9	8.4
10	4.4	9	8.4
11	4.8	9	8.4
12	4.8	9.5	8.4
13	4.8	9.5	8.4
14	5.2	9.5	8.4
15	5.2	9.5	8.4
16	5.2	9.5	8.8
17	5.6	9.5	8.8
18	5.6	9.5	8.8
19	6	9.5	8.8
20	6	9.5	8.8
21	6	9.5	8.8
22	6	9.5	9.2
23	6	10	9.2
24	6.4	10	9.2
25	6.4	10	9.2
26	6.4	10	9.2
27	6.8	10	9.6
28	7.2	10	9.6
29	7.2	10	9.6
30	7.2	10	9.6
31	7.2	10	9.6
32	7.2	10	9.6
33	7.2	10	9.6
34	7.6	10	9.6
35	8	10	9.6
36	8	10	9.6
37	8.4	10	9.6
38	8.4	10	9.6
39	8.4	10	9.6
40	8.4	10	9.6
41	8.8	10	10
42	8.8	10	10
43	8.8	10	10
44	9.2	10	10
45	9.2	10	10
46	9.2	10	10

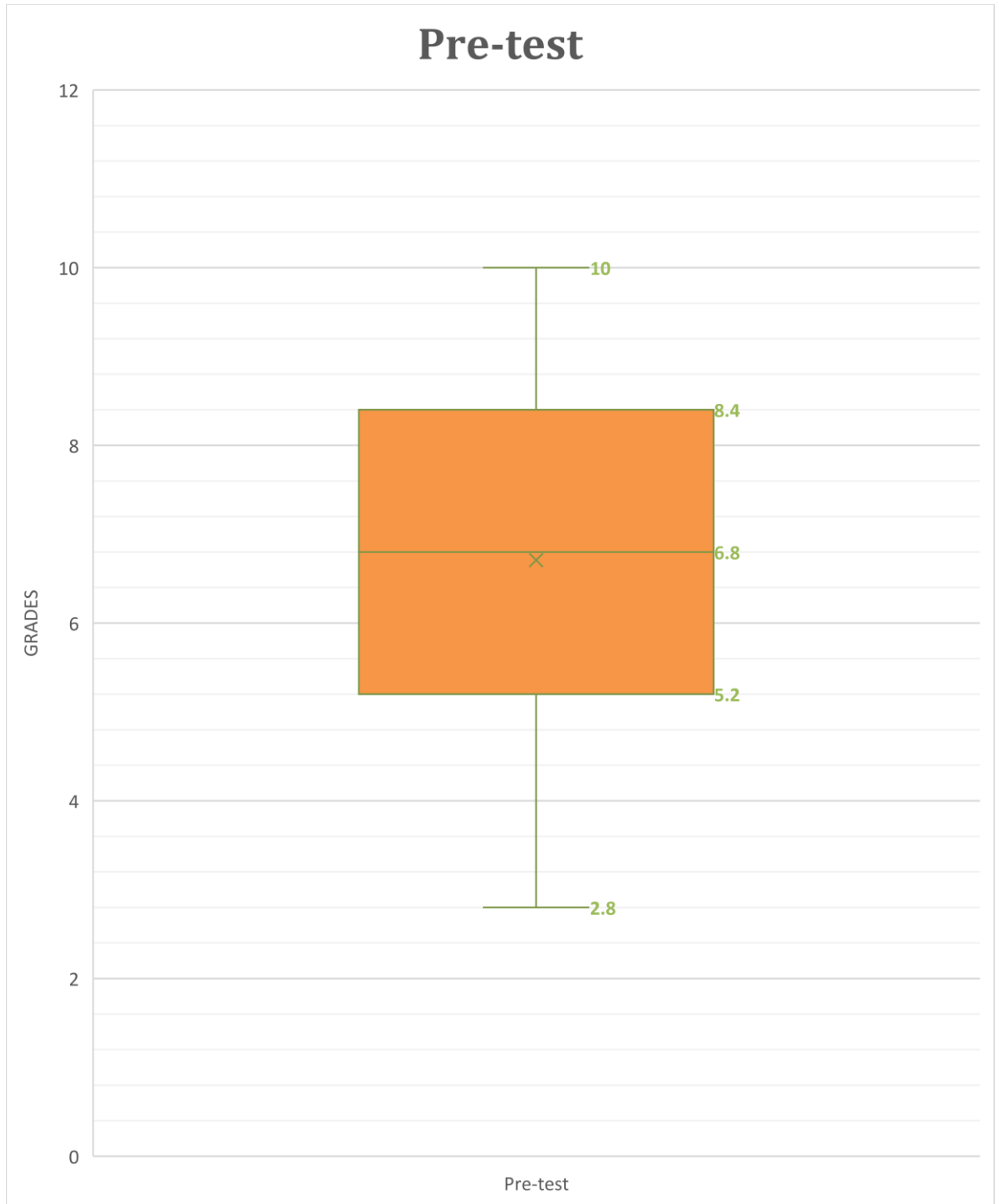
	47	9.6	10	10
	48	9.6	10	10
	49	9.6	10	10
	50	9.6	10	10
	51	9.6	10	10
	52	9.6	10	10
	53	10	10	10
Mean		6.7	9.6	9.2
Median		6.8	10.0	9.6
MIN		2.8	6.0	6.0
Q1		5.2	9.5	8.4
MEDIAN		6.8	10.0	9.6
Q3		8.4	10.0	9.6
MAX		10.0	10.0	10.0
RANGE (MAX-MIN)		7.2	4.0	4.0
IQR (IQR3 – IQR1)		3.2	0.5	1.2
IQR * 1.5		4.8	0.8	1.8

Table 3: Raw Data of the Pre and Post-tests and statistical values.

The Median is the midpoint of the values after arranging them from the lowest to the highest, i.e., the value of the student number 27. Therefore, the Median of the pre-test, post-test 1 and post-test 2 is 6.8; 10; and 9.6, respectively.

Interquartile Range (IQR) describes the middle 50% of values when ordered from lowest to highest. To find the IQR, the formula is $IQR3 - IQR1$.

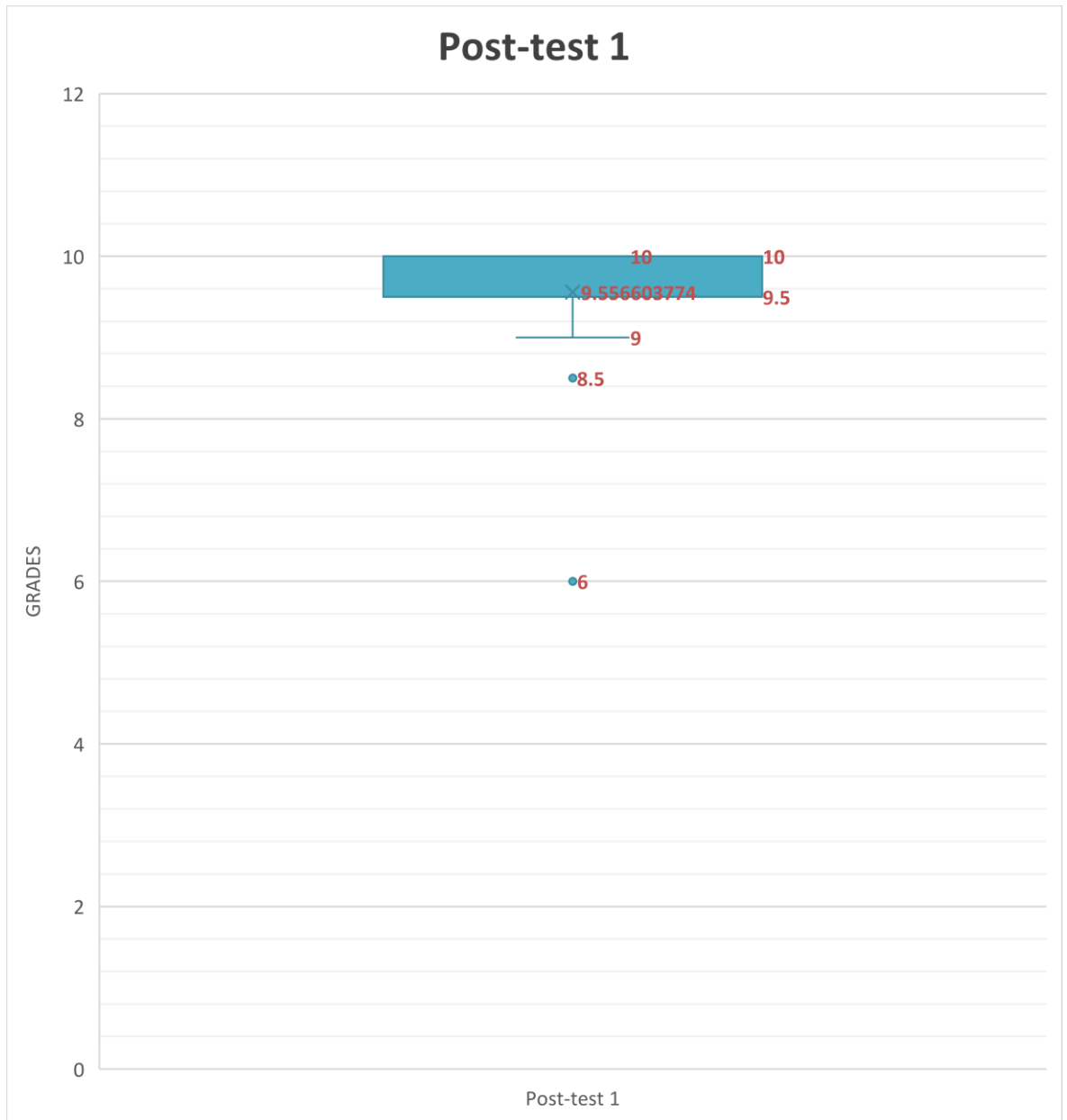
Below are the Box Plot and Whiskers Graphs that allow the readers to observe the information of each test graphically.



Graph 1: Box and Whisker Chart showing the quartiles and median of the Pre-test.

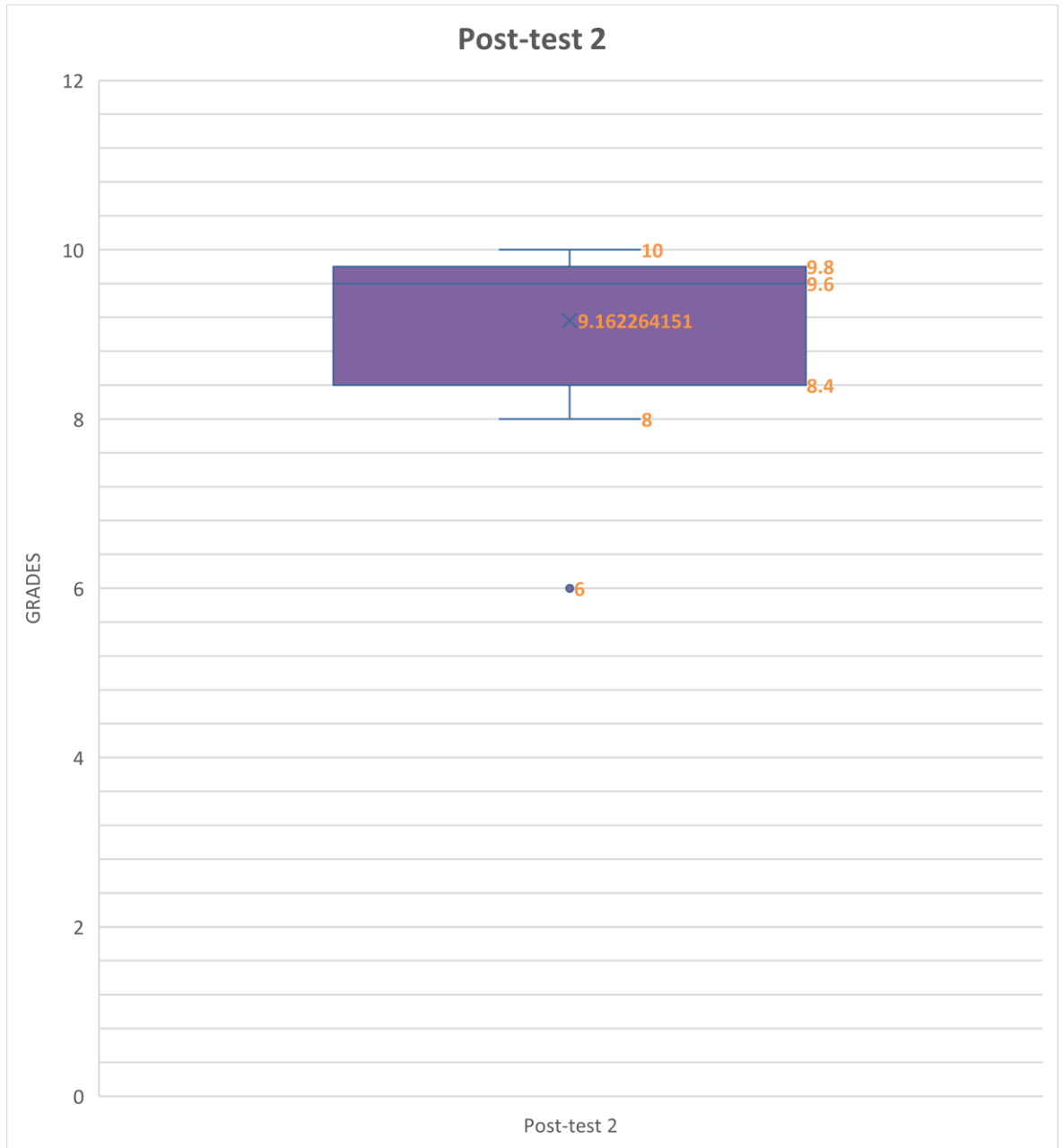
In the box plot, the minimum value is 2.8. The first quartile is 5.2; the median is 6.8; and the third quartile is 8.4. The maximum value is 10 out of 10 marks.

Hereafter, the results of the post-tests are shown.



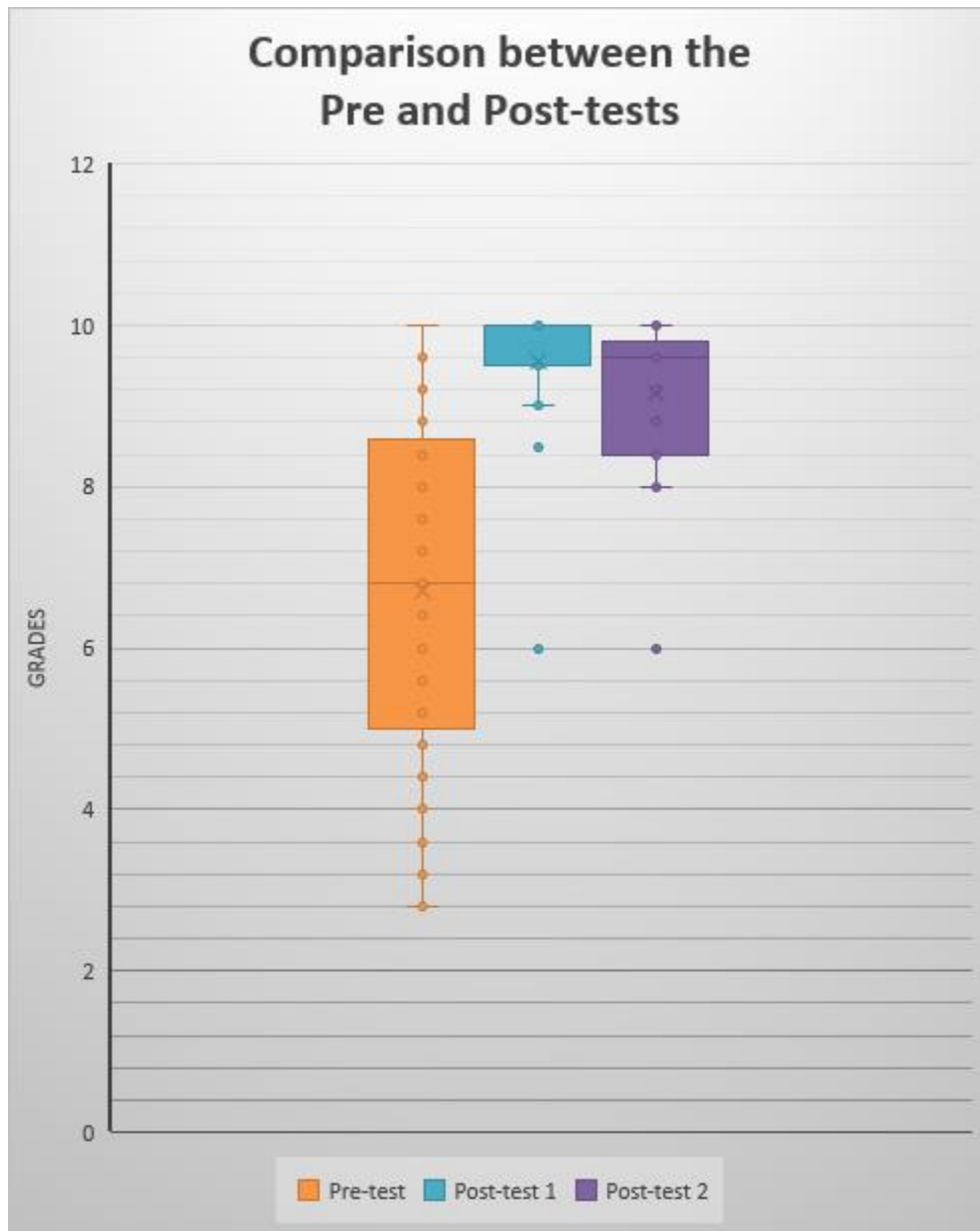
Graph 2: Box and Whisker Chart showing the quartiles and median of the Post-test 1.

In the box plot for the post-test 1, it is observable two outliers of 6.0 and 8.5; the lower extreme or minimum value is 9.0; while the maximum is 10. The first quartile is 9.5; the median is 10; and the third quartile is 10, too.



Graph 3: Box and Whisker Chart showing the quartiles and median of the Post-test 2.

In the box plot for the post-test 2, there is an outlier of 6.0. The minimum value is 8.0; while the maximum is 10. The first quartile is 8.4; the median is 9.6; and the third quartile is 9.8.



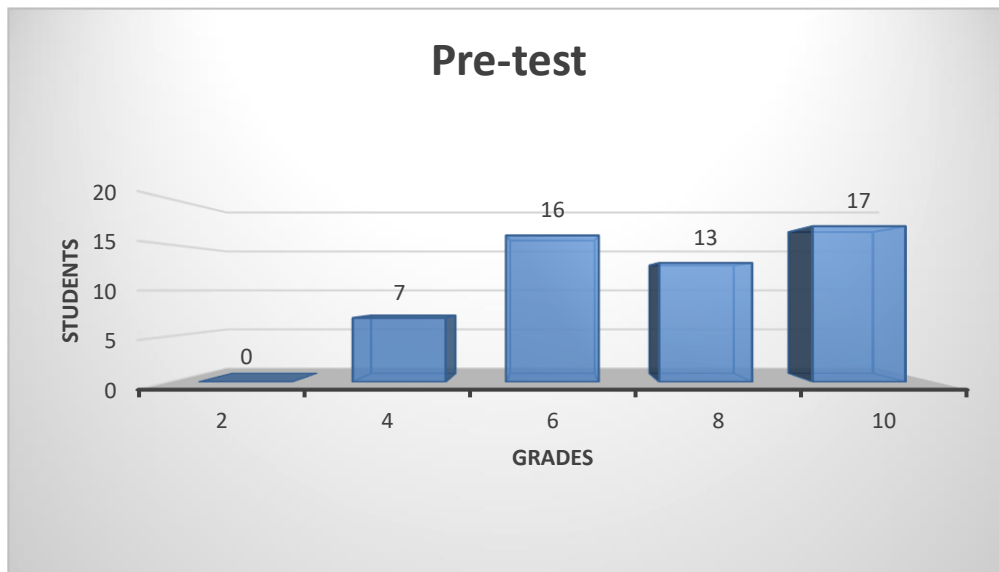
Graph 4: Box and Whisker Chart comparing the quartiles and median of the Pre and Post-tests.

We have the following results when grouping the raw data in a table of frequency distribution:

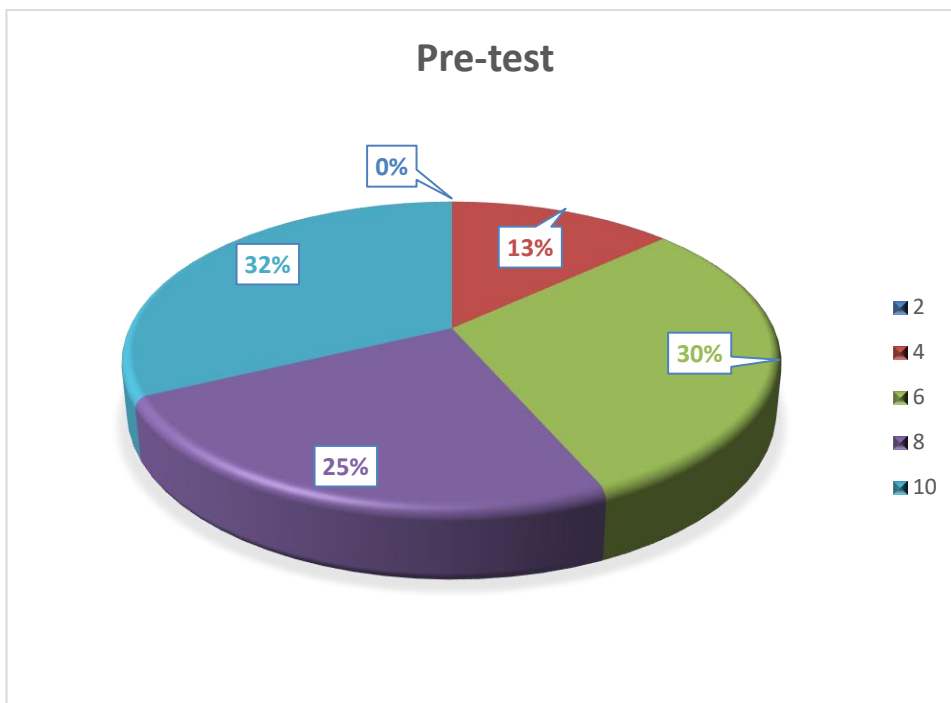
Class Intervals	Frequency			
	GRADES	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST 1	POST-TEST 2
0-2	2	0	0	0
2.1-4	4	7	0	0
4.1-6	6	16	2	1
6.1-8	8	13	0	3
8.1-10	10	17	51	49
	TOTAL	53	53	53

Table 4: Frequency Distribution of the Pre and Post-tests.

The following graphs show the results obtained in the Pre-test.



Graph 5: Bar graph showing the results of frequency of the Pre-test.



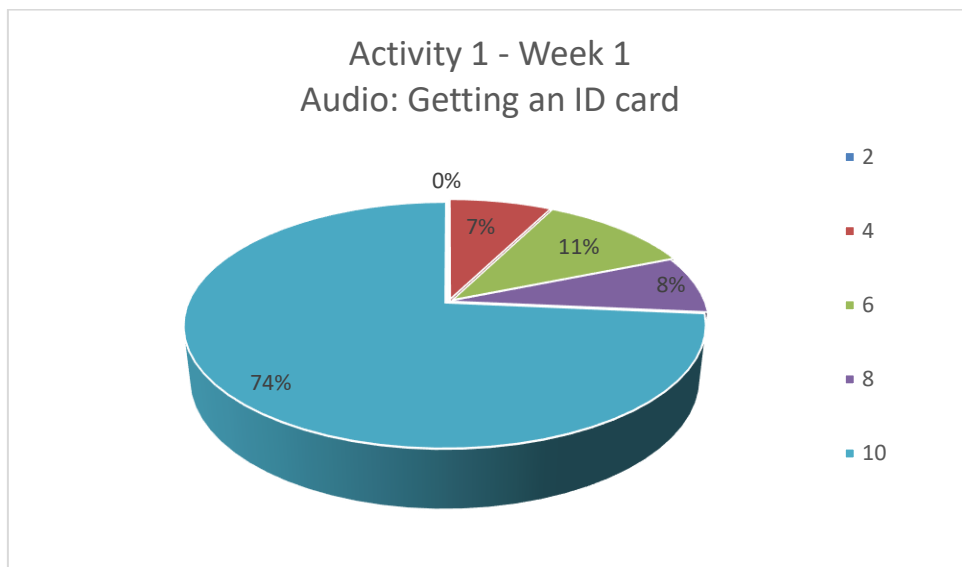
Graph 6: Pie chart showing the results in percentages of the Pre-test.

The results of the pre-test can be seen in the histogram and pie chart above, showing the number of students and its percentage of the outcomes achieved in the pre-test. None of the students achieved a grade of 2 or below; while 7 students representing 13% obtained more than 2 to 4 points. 16 students, i.e., 30% of them are in the interval from more than 4 to 6 points; while 13 students representing 25% were upper 6 to 8 points; and the last 17 students representing 32% obtained more than 8 to 10 points. It demonstrates the results were slightly acceptable in the pre-test, but they still needed an improvement due to the intervals under or equal 6 points represent 43% of the class. It means that 43% of the students did not fulfill the requirement to pass the pre-test, which is a minimum of 7 out of 10.

Below we will show the results of each listening activity given per week in order to practice and improve learners' auditory skills.

Activity 1

During the first week of the intervention, after the pre-test, the audio selected *Getting an ID Card* was chosen in accordance with the program. It had 20 questions in total converted into 10 marks using cross multiplication. The conversion can be seen in the table 5.2.

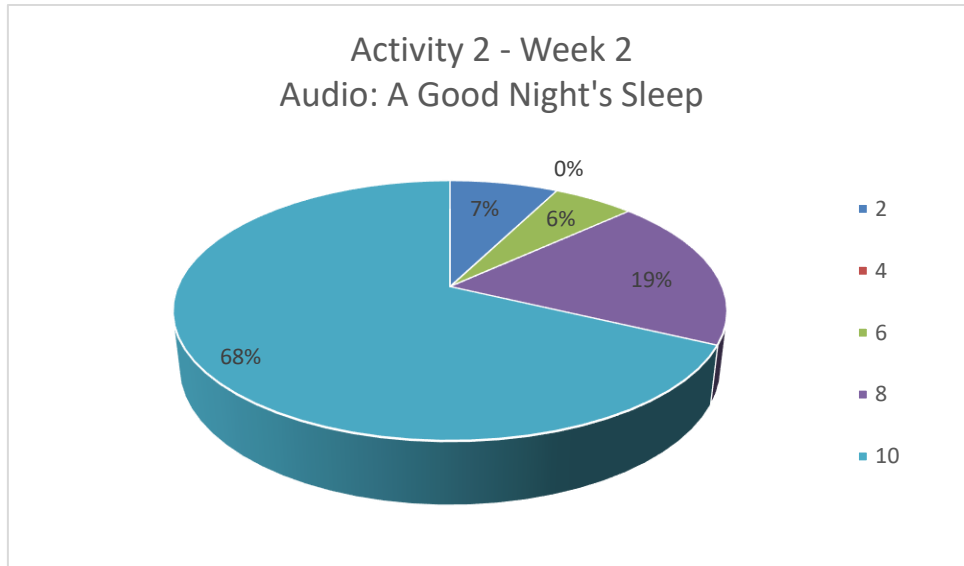


Graph 7: Results of the listening activity ‘Getting an ID card’ for Level A1

The pie chart above shows the results of the listening activity given to the students during the first week of the intervention. 7% of the learners obtained more than 2 to 4 points; 11% had more than 4 to 6 points, while 8% of the learners were in the range from more than 6 to 8 points. Lastly, 74% of the learners achieved from more than 8 to 10 points, showing the results of the activity for the first week were satisfactory.

Activity 2

For the second week of the intervention, the audio selected *A Good Night's Sleep* was chosen according to the level of the students and grammar structures covered in class. It had a total of 20 questions, converted into 10 marks using as reference the Table 5.2.

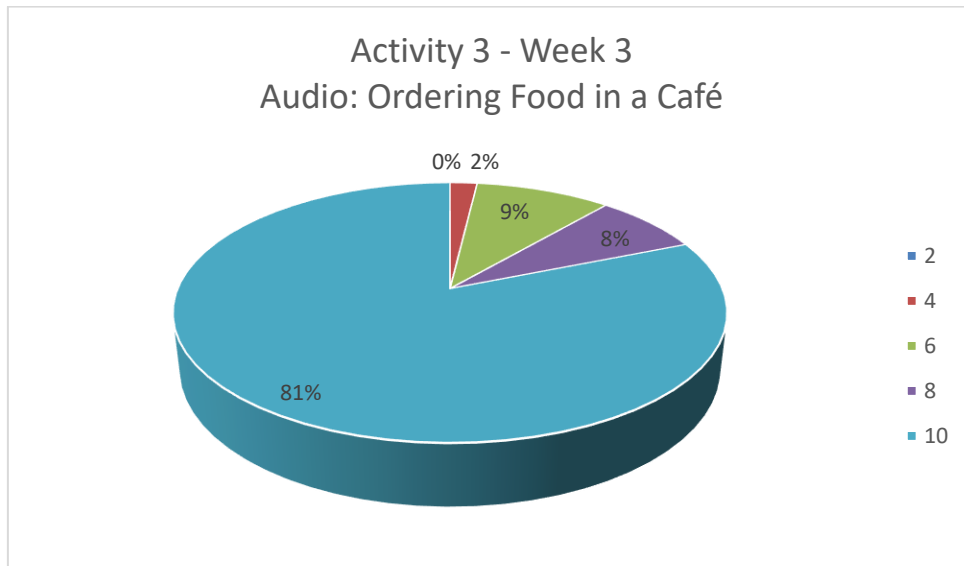


Graph 8: Results of the listening activity 'A Good Night's Sleep' for Level A1

The pie chart above shows the results of the listening activity given to the students on the second week of the intervention. 7% of the learners achieved up to 2 points due to problems of internet connection. None of them were in the range from 2 to 4 points; while 6% achieved from 4 to 6 points; 19% obtained a grade from 6 to 8 points; and the final 68% of them obtained more than 8 to 10 points.

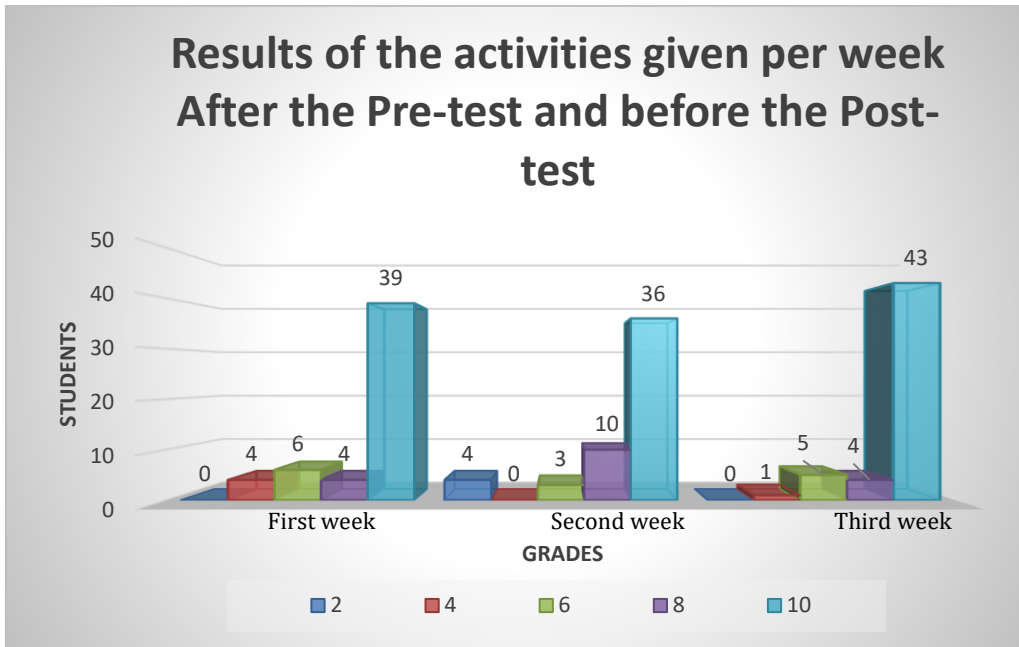
Activity 3

For the third week of the intervention, the audio *Ordering Food in a Café* was selected according to the level of the students, and considering topics and contexts reviewed in the program. The quiz had 10 questions, and it was graded out of 10 marks. Below we can observe the results of the quiz for week 3.



Graph 9: Results of the listening activity ‘Ordering Food in a Café’ for Level A1

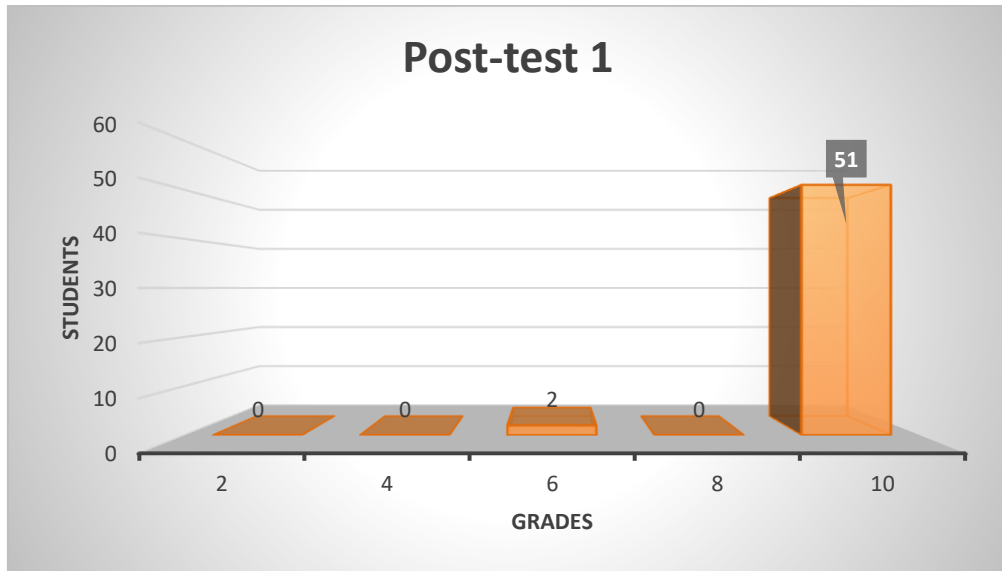
The pie chart above shows the results of the listening activity given to the students on the third week of the intervention. The name of the activity is ‘Ordering Food in a Café’. In it, none of the learners obtained less than 2 marks; while 2% of the learners achieved from 2 to 4 points; 9% obtained from 4 to 6 points; 8% achieved the upper range from 6 to 8; and the last 81% which represents a majority of the learners obtained more than 8 to 10 points. These results were satisfactory.



Graph 10: Results of the listening activities given per week during the intervention, after the Pre and before the Post-tests.

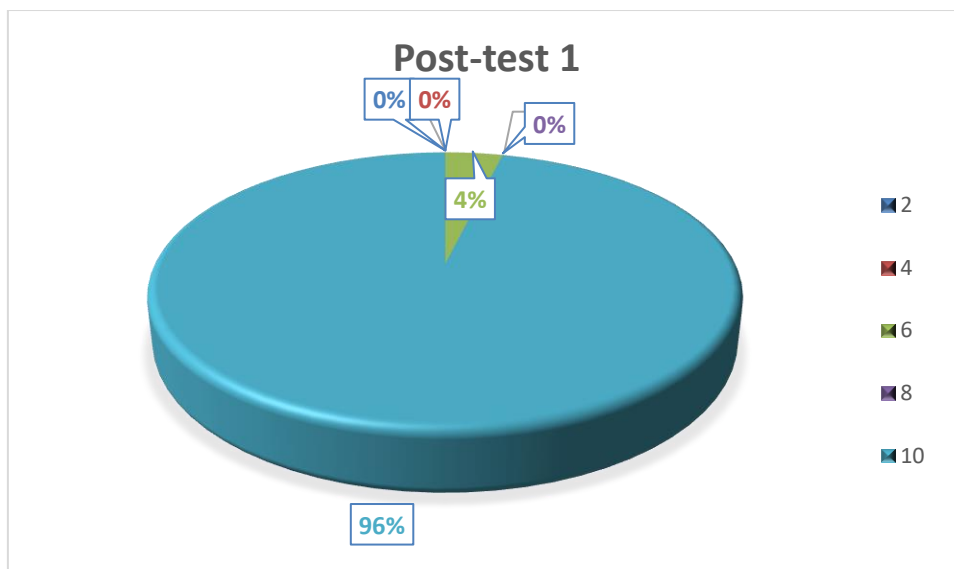
The bar graph above shows the results of the activities given during the three weeks of the intervention, starting after giving the pre-test and before the post-test. The bars clearly show a high performance in the upper range, with minimum values in the other ranges. It corroborates that the activities supported by the teacher in-class and being posted online on the platform were of great benefit to practice and improve the learners' auditory skills.

Below we have the graphs showing the results of the post-tests.



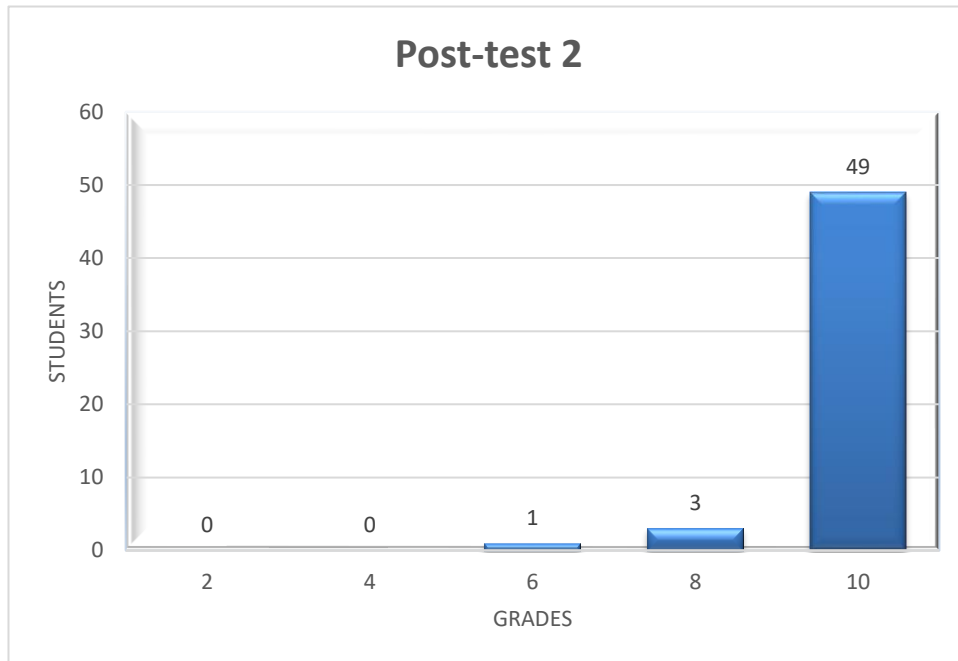
Graph 11: Bar graph showing the results of frequency of the Post-test 1.

The bar graph above shows the results of the frequency of the post-test 1. Now we can observe a considerable improvement in the upper range, with very low values in the other ranges. The percentages are shown in the pie chart below. 96% of students obtained a range of grades between 8.1 to 10.0; and 4% obtained from 4.1 to 6.0 marks.

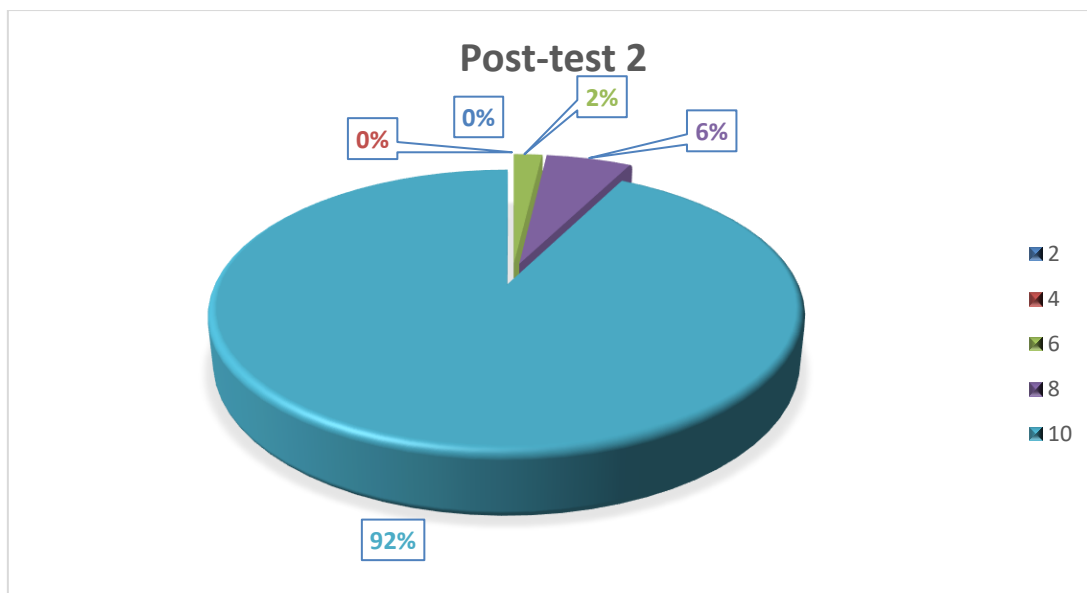


Graph 12: Pie chart showing the results in percentages of the Post-test 1.

Below we can observe the results of the post-test 2.



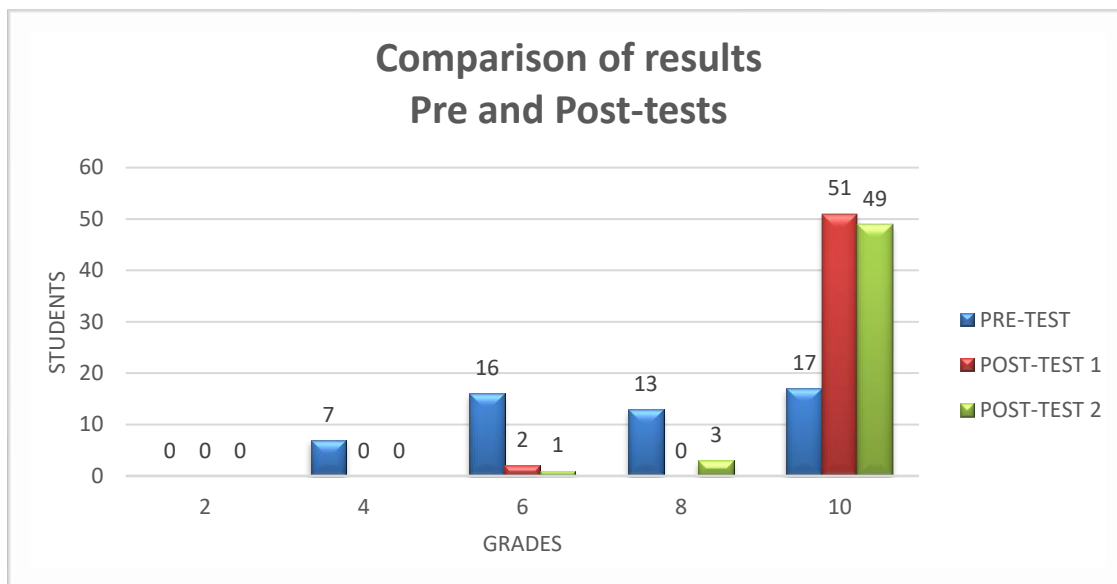
Graph 13: Bar graph showing the results of frequency of the Post-test 2.



Graph 14: Pie chart showing the results in percentages of the Post-test 2.

The above graphs show the results of the post-test 2. The upper range of more than 8 to 10 points has an equivalence of 92%, while the range from 6.1 to 8 points represents 6%, and 2% are in the range of 4.1 to 6.0. The graph corroborates the success achieved in the results of the post-test 1.

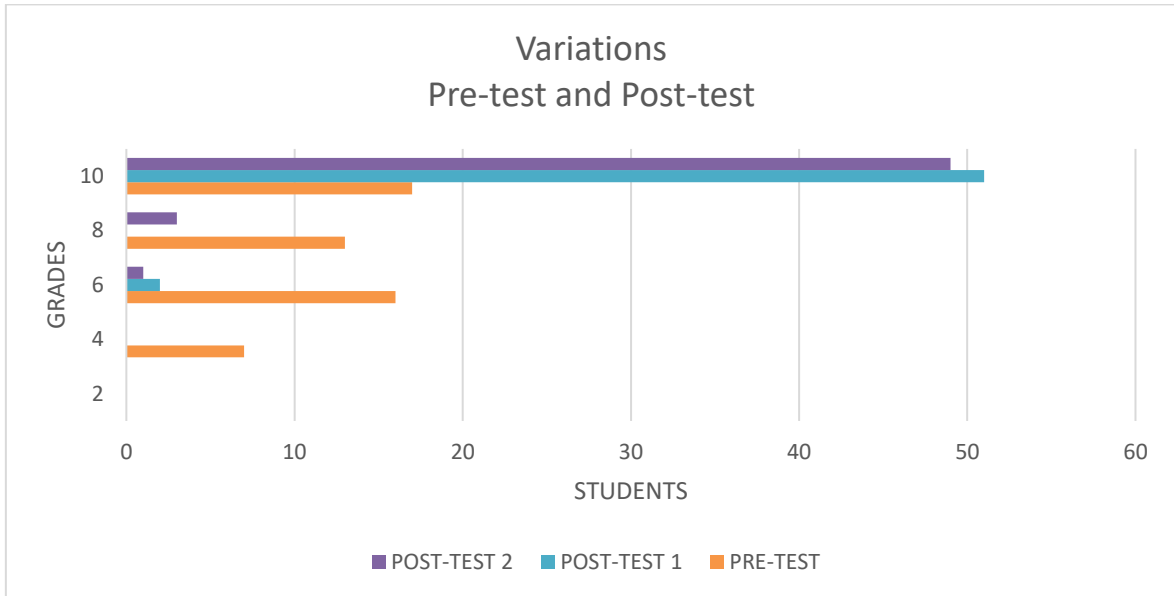
Following up, the next graphs compare the results obtained in both tests.



Graph 15: Comparison of results of frequency of the Pre and Post-tests.

The bar graph above shows the relationship between the results of both tests. Firstly, it is noticeable that there is no difference between the pre and post-tests in the lowest range of up to 2 points; while in the pre-test there was a frequency of 7 students in the range of 2 to 4 points, which disappeared in the post-tests. Moreover, in the pre-test, there was a frequency of 16 students in the range of 4 to 6 points, which decreased to 2 in the post-test 1, and to 1 student in the post-test 2. While there was a frequency of 13 students in the range of 6 to 8 points in the pre-test, it disappeared in the post-test 1 and the frequency was of 3 students in the post-test 2. Finally, there were 17 students in the range of 8 to 10 points in the pre-test, which considerably increased in the post-test 1 to 51 students, and it is pretty close in the post-test 2, which had 49 students in this range. The graph clearly demonstrates the improvement of the post-tests in relation to the pre-test.

The below clustered bar graph shows the values across the categories in the pre and post-tests.



Graph 16: Variations across the categories of the Pre and Post-tests.

The bar graph above shows the variations across the categories of the pre and post-tests 1 and 2. We can observe the orange bar of the pre-test, with 7 students in the band of 4 points, and a regular length in the bands of 6, 8, and 10, whose values go from 16, 13 and 17 students, respectively. Meanwhile, the light-blue bar of the post-test 1 shows 2 students whose grades were in the band of 6, and 51 students in the band of 10. A similar situation is observable in the purple bar that represents the post-test 2, where 1 student obtained a score in the band of 6; 3 students obtained grades in the band of 8, and 49 students achieved grades in the band of 10. Let's consider that the post-test 2 was given to the students unexpectedly, some months after the intervention and during the time of obtaining the results of the findings. This post-test 2 was given to corroborate the results obtained in the post-test 1, fulfilling this purpose.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings obtained from the data are discussed and the hypothesis is tested to determine which one worked for this study.

6.2 Discussion of the Findings

To answer the research question, “*To what extent does the use of online listening activities influence the development of auditory comprehension skills of EFL A1 learners in an Ecuadorian university?*” the authors have applied bar graphs that show the increase of the outcomes in the listening comprehension skills graphically. These graphs, however, need more reliability; thus, to test the hypothesis, the chi square and the p-value has been obtained by using formulas in Excel.

The *Probability Value* or p-value is used in hypothesis testing to determine if the results are significant or not. A p-value is a number between 0 and 1, but they are usually represented as percentage (i.e., a p-value of 0.05 is 5%). P-value estimates the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis (H_0) of a study, i.e., when there is no difference or variation in the results. If the p-value is lower than the chosen significance level of 5% ($p < 0.05$), then the null hypothesis is rejected. That implies to accept that the sample gives reasonable evidence to support the alternative hypothesis.

In this study, the H_0 states “*The use of online listening activities did not influence the development of auditory comprehension skills of EFL A1 learners in an Ecuadorian university.*” Meanwhile, the H_a states “*The use of online listening activities positively*

influenced the development of auditory comprehension skills of EFL A1 learners in an Ecuadorian university.”

Calculating the chi square in Excel, the p-value is 0.04945. Therefore, there is strong evidence to reject H_0 , which means that in our study, the H_a works.

To answer the sub-research questions,

1. What level of listening comprehension do the EFL A1 students demonstrate before the intervention?

The bar graphs and the pie charts regarding the pre-test show the level. The mean of the pre-test is 6.7 which is slightly under the minimum required to pass a test.

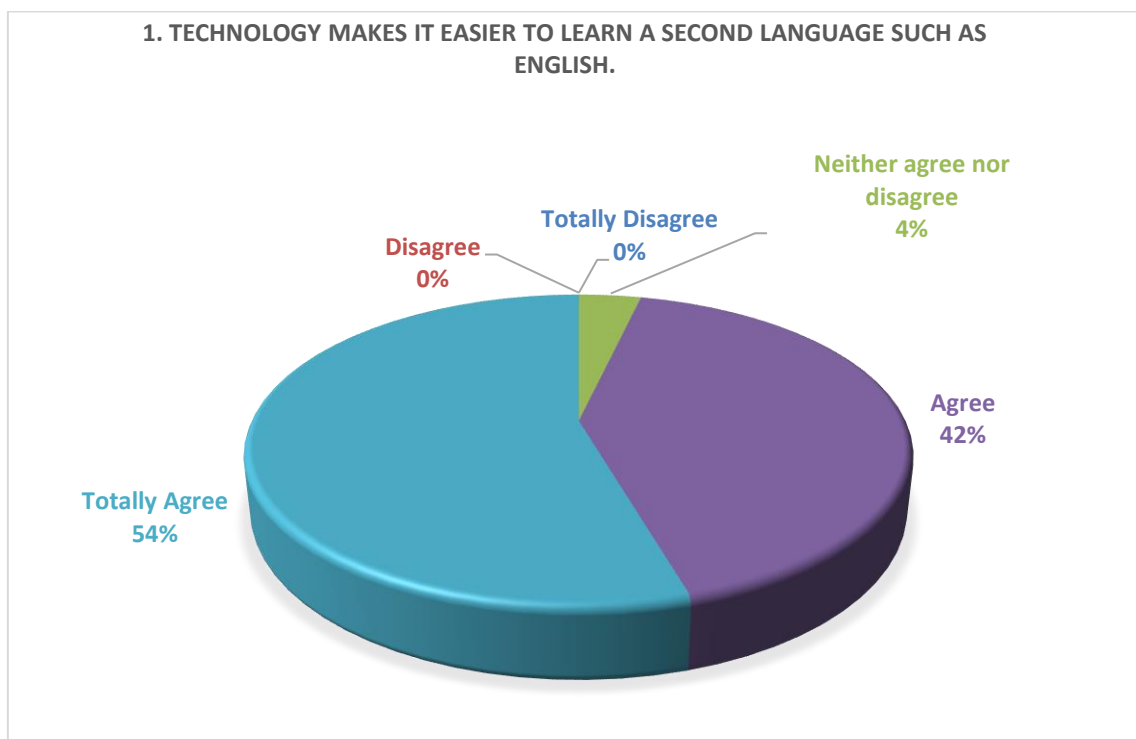
2. Are there any differences between auditory comprehension before and after the implementation of online listening activities?

There are differences in the participants' auditory comprehension before and after the exposure to online listening comprehension activities. In the mean of the pre-test, the students obtained 6.7 while in the post-test they obtained 9.6 and 9.2. It represents a significant improvement. Moreover, the median of the pre-test went from 6.8 to 10 points and 9.6. In all the measurements of central tendency of the post-test, the results are in the highest range (from 9.2 to 10), which represents a positive increase in the results.

6.2.1 Survey results

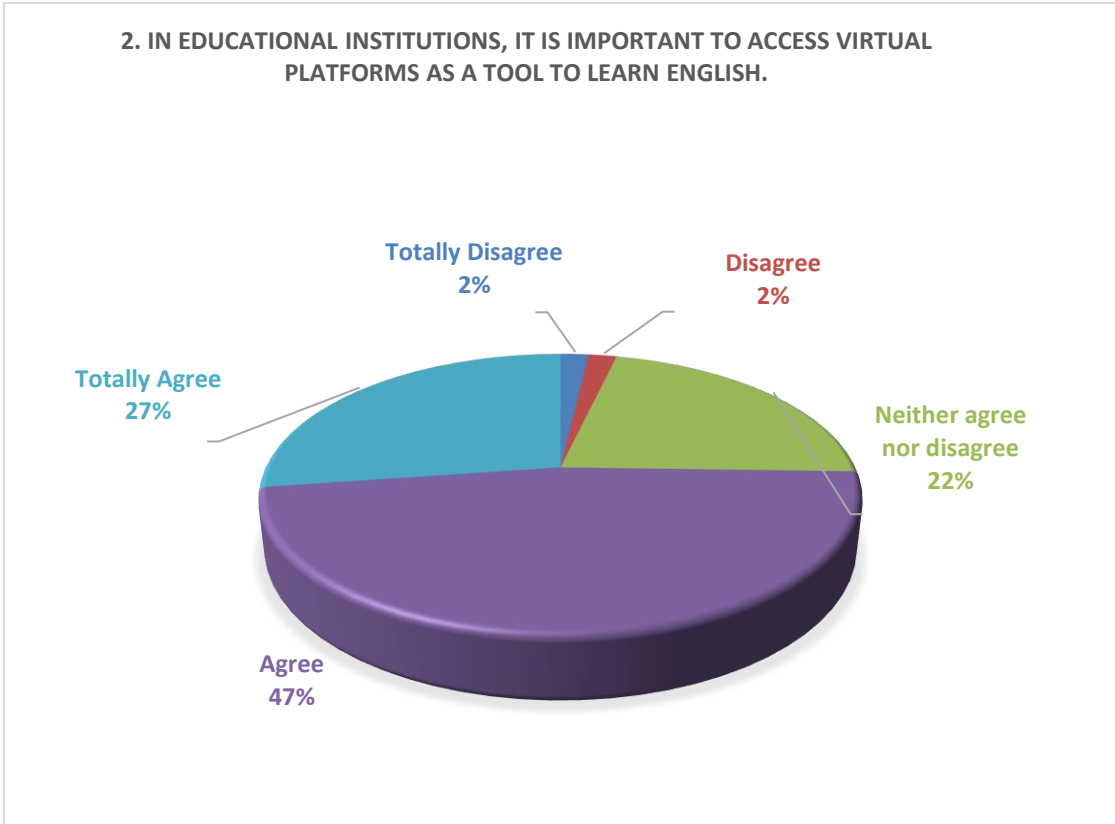
The survey results are shown in pie charts, and the information is contrasted with the interviews made to some of the students who agreed to participate in the study. Due to

ethical issues, the identity of the students has been protected; thus, the names that appear are just pseudonyms.



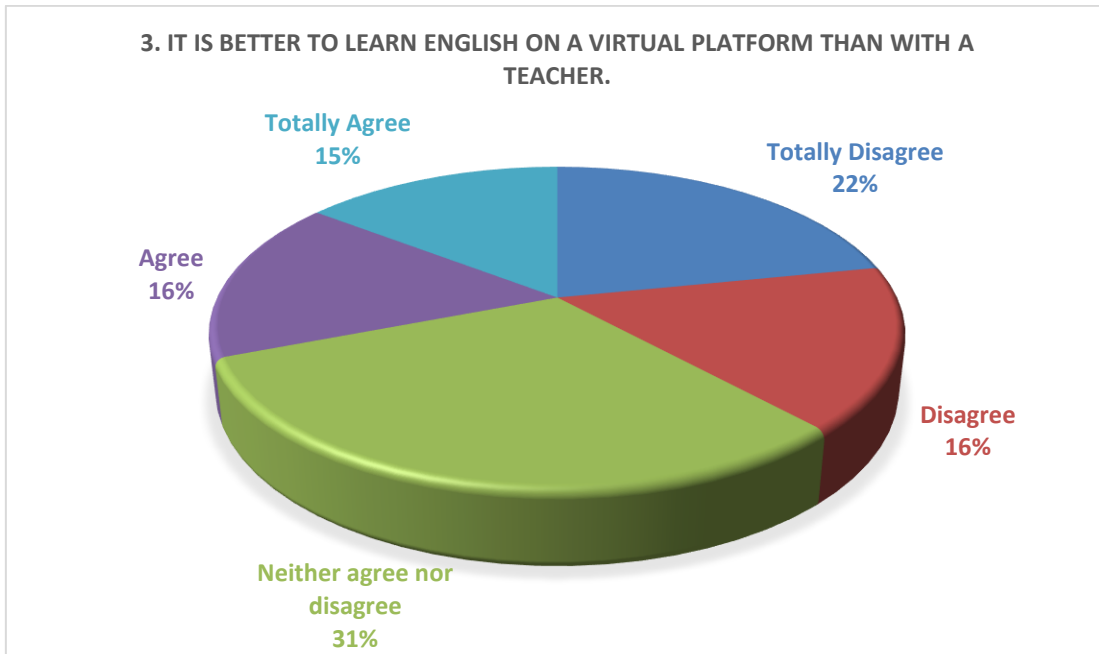
Graph 17: Results of the Survey - Question 1

As can be observed in the pie chart above, most of the students agreed that technology makes it easier to learn English. This information was corroborated by the student Linda who said “...Over the last 2 years, I have used my iPad to watch series in English and I do not read subtitles anymore. By doing so, I have been able to learn some English.” Ricky, another student, expressed, “I have watched movies with the captions in English, I have listened to some music in English, and the activities we have done on the platform” (...) so “when I have a conversation in English, I feel I can understand more.”



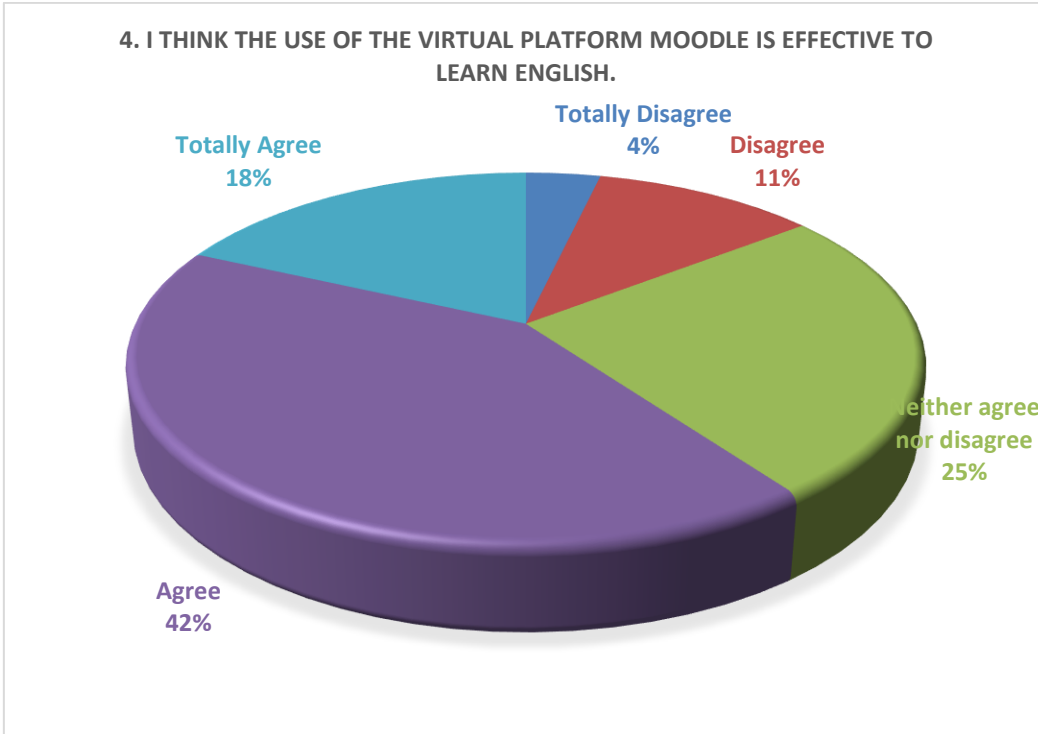
Graph 18: Results of the Survey - Question 2

According to the pie chart above, the 54% of the students agreed that it is important to access virtual platforms as a tool to learn English. Regarding to this question, Tita said “I have used virtual platforms, computer, and telephones.” (...) and “I think I have made a lot of progress.”



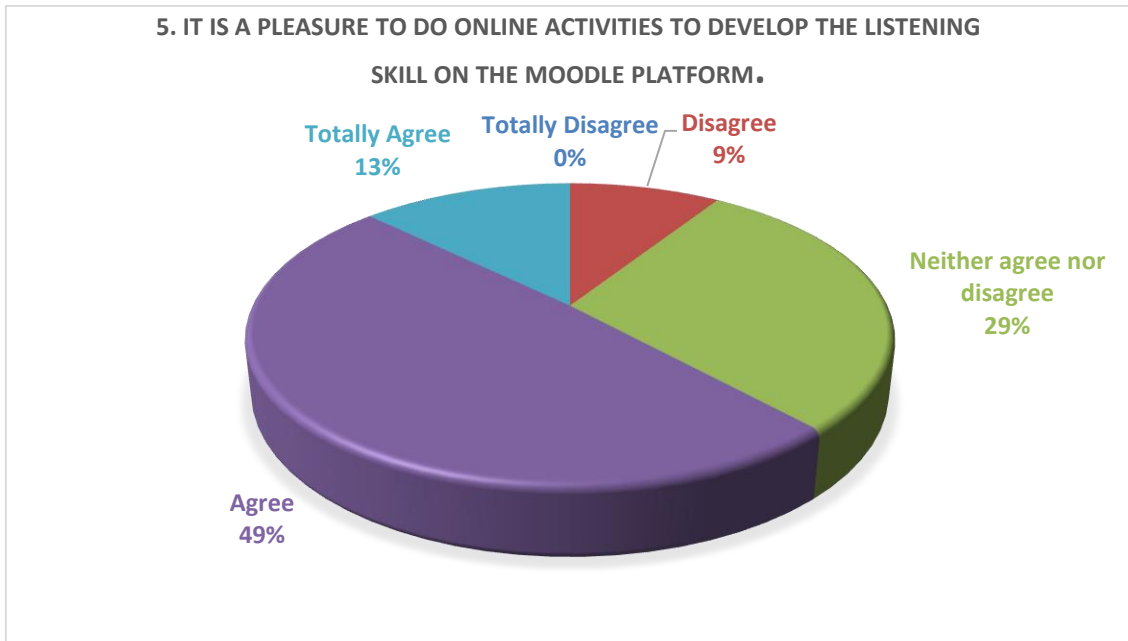
Graph 19: Results of the Survey - Question 3

In the above pie chart, 22% and 16% of the students which totals 38% do not agree that it is better to learn English on a virtual platform than with a teacher. 31% neither agree nor disagree, and 16% and 15%, which makes the last 31% of the learners, agree with this statement. Linda states, “Because we have some difficulties with English, we usually get low grades.” Consequently, you (the teacher) have prepared us in the class providing us with a lot of hints and pieces of advice to do better on the activities. So, when we get home, we feel more confident to develop the activities on our own. Furthermore, what I did most of the time was to focus more on pronunciation.”



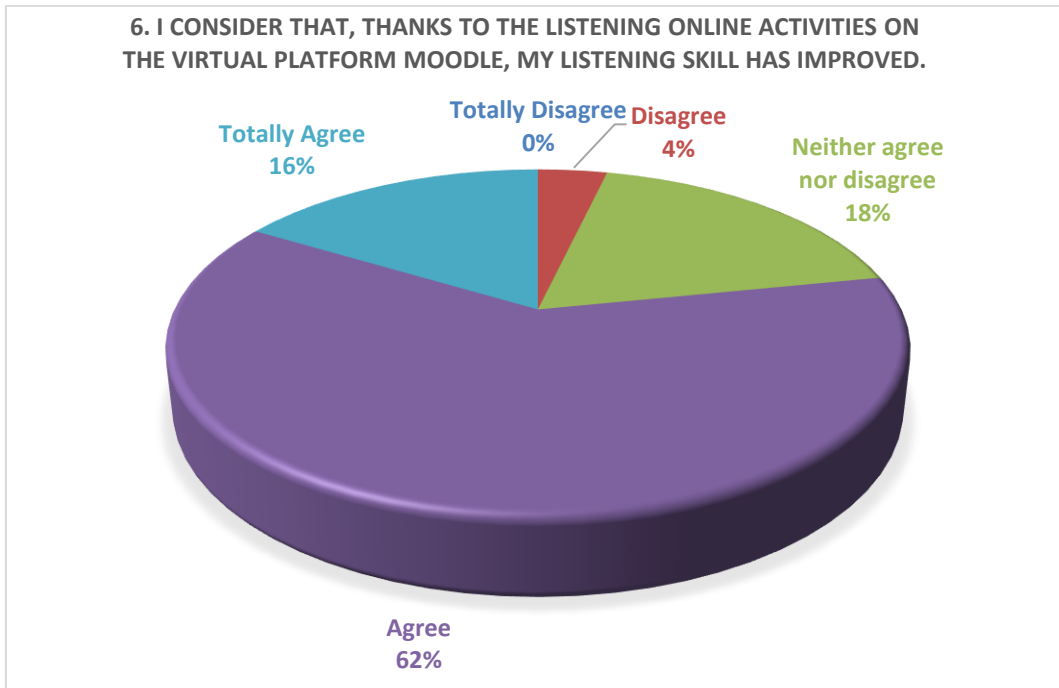
Graph 20: Results of the Survey - Question 4

60% of the students agree that the use of the virtual platform Moodle is effective to learn English. As Peter commented, “At the beginning (...), it was difficult to understand certain activities, but I have improved as I have developed the online activities.” Besides, Mary also stated, “At the beginning, it was really challenging to understand a different accent I was not used to. Eventually, I got used to.”



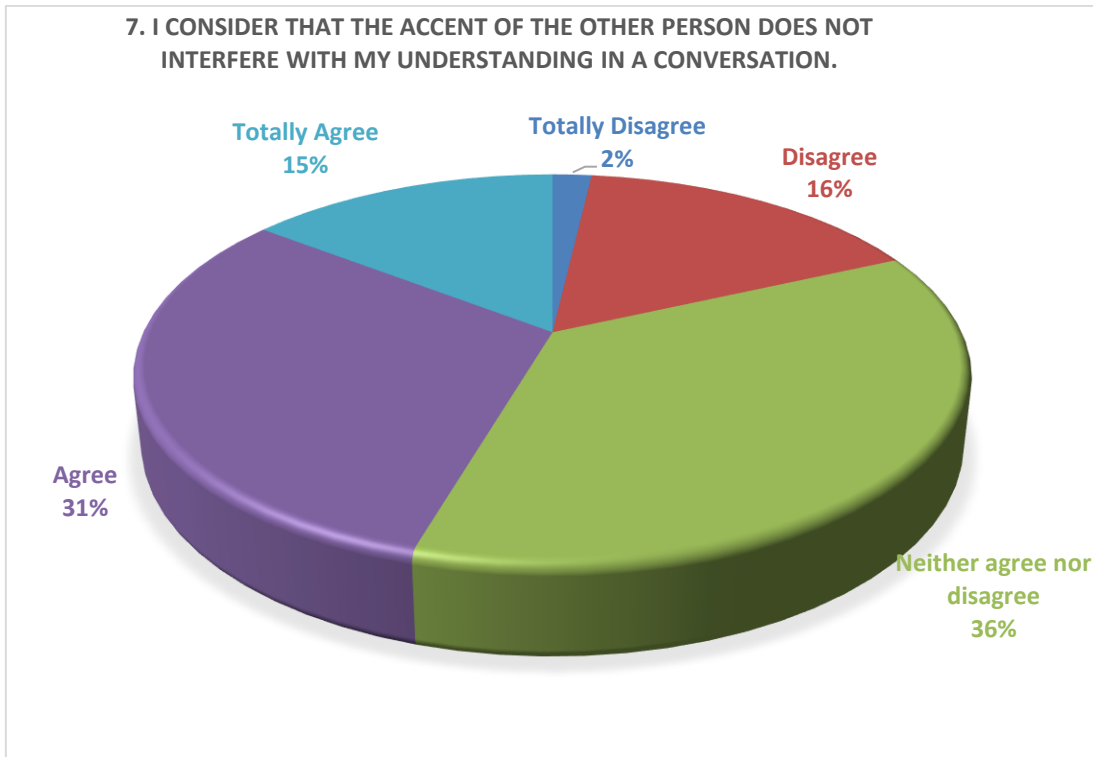
Graph 21: Results of the Survey - Question 5

62% of the students considered it interesting and motivating to develop online activities on the platform to improve listening skills. This survey question was supported by Bianca, who commented, “Well, the activities are interesting because we went from the traditional method of learning to a new innovative way of learning English. In addition, I really enjoyed the listening activities online because it was a way to be exposed to the target language. I listened to people speaking English, and I found it easy to understand.” Also, Gretel mentioned, “I find it very interesting because this is a key point to learn and develop knowledge.”



Graph 22: Results of the Survey - Question 6

78% of the learners agreed that their listening skills had improved thanks to the online activities developed using the platform. Bianca confirmed this question: “Of course, I do.” I listened to people speaking English, and I found it easy to understand.” Tita also commented, “I think I have made a lot of progress.” And Omar said, “Yes, I do. At the beginning, it was pretty difficult for me to understand, but as we continued working on the activities, it became easier to understand.” Linda confirmed, “Yes, I do. I strongly believe that my listening skills have developed a lot.”

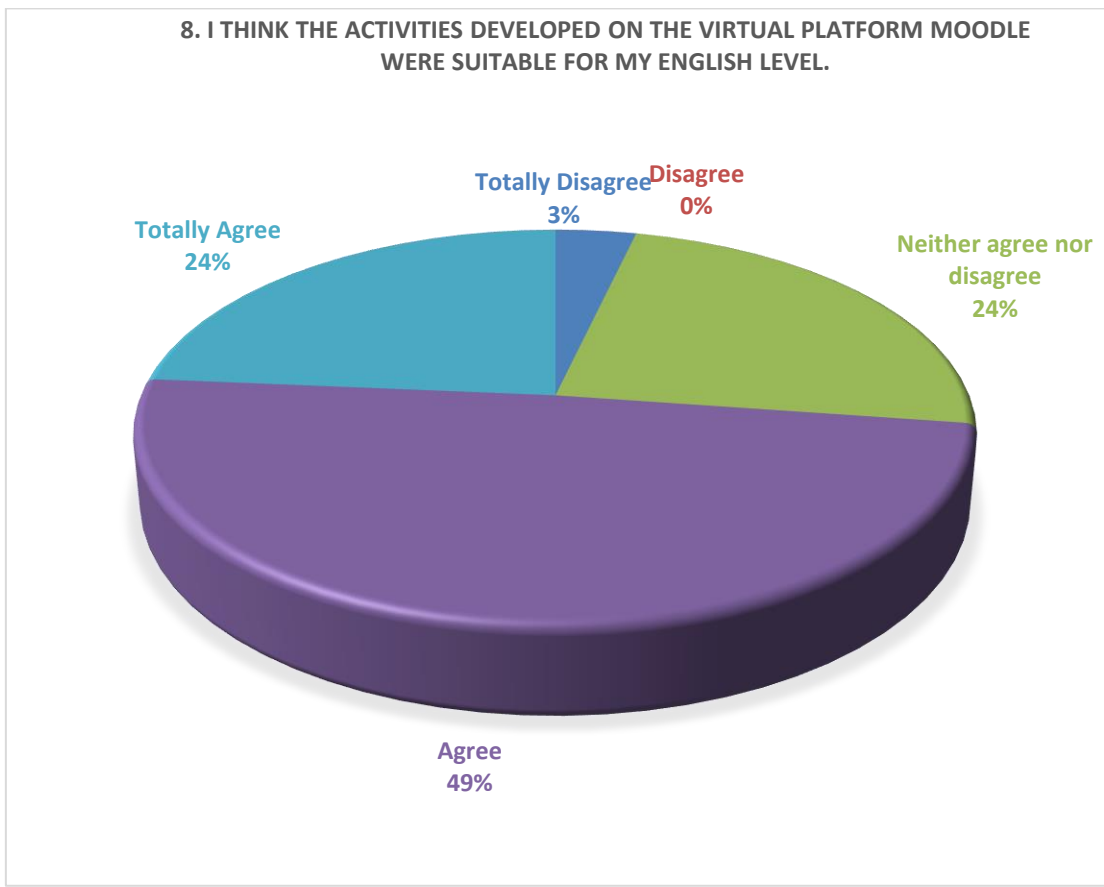


Graph 23: Results of the Survey - Question 7

As the material harnessed to fulfill the program of the students is in American English, it represented a challenge for them to be exposed to British English. Therefore, we wanted to know to what extent the accent influenced on their listening comprehension.

In the survey, 46% agreed that the accent does not interfere to understand a conversation. The 36% neither agreed nor disagreed, and the 18% disagreed with the statement. For most of the learners, at the beginning it was hard to get accustomed to the British accent. Nevertheless, some of them agreed that with the practice and the teachers' help and explanation, it became easier and they finally could do it. Omar expressed, "It was pretty difficult for me to understand at the beginning because I am used to the American accent, but as we continued working on the activities, it was easier to understand." Tita said that she had had a little difficulty, but with the teacher's help, she was able to understand. Peter also commented that at the beginning, it was difficult for

him to understand some activities. But, eventually, he was able to better understand the dialogues.



Graph 24: Results of the Survey - Question 8

Most of the learners, 73% of them, agreed that the activities posted on the platform were suitable for their English level. It is corroborated by all the interviews. Below are some of the learners' opinions.

Linda expressed, "Yes, I do. Although I know some grammar, I find it difficult to understand some dialogues, especially when the speakers speak fast. Moreover, I am not used to these types of listening activities. Therefore, I consider that the complexity of the listening material was appropriate to my level of English. In addition, I want to point out

that the audio was clear and went well.” Omar also expressed, “Yes, the online activities were related to the ones developed in our regular classes.” Ricky commented, “Yes, it was not difficult to understand some dialogues.”

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Summary

All in all, the findings of the study show the improvement in listening comprehension of A1 learners in a university context. One of the main difficulties students faced was to understand and get familiar with the British accent, but it was easily overcome. We can conclude that the teacher's assistance, mainly in basic levels, is important to explain new phrases, to visualize them on the board, and to pronounce them contrasting the accents. This is a significant reason to state that, even though technology is important to develop skills in any language, the assistance of a teacher is pivotal to address students' requirements.

Some of the factors that we consider might have influenced in the good performance of the students are listed below:

- The activities were presented in class and the students had to autonomously work online for a period of a week. Thus, they had the opportunity to review the audio several times and stop it whenever they wanted while answering the unit quizzes.
- Working at home on the platform, students could have multiple windows opened on the computer and they could check them while doing the quizzes.
- As the students are young learners (from 18 to 26 years old), they are active users of social media, and their relationship with one another is pretty good. Another possibility is that they were able to easily and quickly share the information via screen capture or text messages, and helped each other with the answers of the unit quizzes.

- The stronger students in English were able to do the activities before the weaker ones, and thus support the weaker students.
- As there were some problems of internet connections during that time, due to the rainy season that affect the coast of Ecuador, the teacher allowed two attempts to take the unit quizzes on the platform. This may be one of the reasons that the students obtained better scores on the final test. They were able to learn from their previous mistakes. This may be a good strategy to help learners practice more when it is needed.

To improve the use of online listening activities on the Moodle platform, we recommend the following:

- The teacher could use from time to time the computer labs of the institution to work during class time on developing the comprehension questions;
- The teacher could print worksheet versions and give them to the learners so they can complete the questions immediately after being exposed to the audios during class time.
- To develop the activities on the website by projecting those in class and having individual students to answer different questions.
- The teacher can create a bank of questions on the course platform. The platform will select the questions at random each time the students take the quizzes. This would make it more difficult for students to share the information.

7.2 Limitations of the Study

One of the main limitations of this study was the time for the intervention, which lasted only five weeks. Listening is an important skill to be developed in the first stages of learning a language; therefore, it is recommended to frequently apply it during the entire semester. The frequency might be an audio activity every week or two weeks. Nevertheless, to motivate learners we recommend selecting the audios or videos bearing in mind the learners' interests according to their ages, majors, likes, and cultural background.

7.3 Future Directions and Further Areas for Research

A method that is currently being used as a trend in education, and combines technology and media as tools to achieve the goals of the curriculum is *Blended Learning*. It combines some hours of face-to-face instruction with online activities as autonomous work. That allows the institution and the students to fulfill the requirements of the number of hours of instruction to achieve the level required by the law before graduating. In further studies, this methodology could be applied with a variety of media in different accents, to measure the final progress vs the initial one.

An impact to the study might be given exposing a control group of students to the platform without any assessment, just providing guidelines to complete the activities; and an experimental group with the teacher's assessment in class to explain meaning, differences in pronunciation, and reveal some useful expressions employed in the dialogues.

Lastly, as the learners have made progress in auditory comprehension, some further research to improve speaking would be beneficial for the students to develop communicative competence.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Permission from The British Council

Permission required and approved by *The British Council* to use its material for developing listening skills: Evidence of the mails sent and received.

The screenshot shows an Outlook web interface with a sidebar on the left containing folders like Drafts, Sent Items, Deleted Items, and various email accounts. The main pane displays an email thread. The selected email is from 'UK MNC LearnEnglish Teens (British Council)' with the subject 'RE: [Website feedback] PERMISSION TO POST VIDEOS IN AN EDUCATIONAL PLATFORM'. The email body contains the following text:

Hi Karen,

This all sounds interesting.

Just to check - so when learners click on the task you set and actually 'do' the listening - they will be doing the activity on LearnEnglish Teens?? Or are you planning to upload our audio onto your platform?

That's the only thing that isn't clear to me as yet. I would advise that you link through to us rather than uploading our worksheets and audio onto your platform. You can describe the tasks and give the instructions on your platform but sending learners over to us to do the activities would be best. I think that's what you're planning to do - but I wanted to check.

If that's the case - that you're using links to LearnEnglish Teens - and if so then that is absolutely fine. I wish you all the best with your project.

If you have any feedback about any of our activities please do pass it on to me as it's always interesting to hear the views of learners and teachers around the world.

Best wishes, Joanna.

LearnEnglish Teens Website Team
www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish-teens

Sign up for our [newsletter](#) or join us on [Facebook](#).

From: Karen Resabala [karen_resabala@hotmail.com]
Sent: 13 January 2017 22:43
To: UK_MNC_LearnEnglish Teens (UK); Karen Resabala
Subject: Re: [Website feedback] PERMISSION TO POST VIDEOS IN AN EDUCATIONAL PLATFORM

Dear Joanna,

Thanks for your prompt reply. It has been a pleasure to hear from you.

The educational platform serves to a small private university located in Portoviejo, Ecuador. Currently, this is my place of work (Karen's). As EFL teachers, Jonathan and I have agreed that the learners need to develop listening and speaking skills, thus we have chosen to work on the improvement of their listening comprehension skill using valid and reliable sources like The British Council website offers to the school community. Because the project will be developed with A1 learners (average aged 15, approximately 80 students) during four weeks, we plan to give four listening exercises and post them on the platform gradually in order to expose the learners to one activity per week. The material will be available for our students until the end of the semester (February 17, 2017). Once the semester finishes, new courses will be assigned to us (teachers) and the information from the platform will be removed to allow the creation of new courses. Nevertheless, as teachers post the tasks, we can remove the activities at any time, for instance, once the students complete the task (in case you require us to do that).

Permission obtained from *The British Council* after requesting further information about the study.

From: UK MNC LearnEnglish Teens (British Council)
<LearnEnglish.Teens@britishcouncil.org>
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2017 4:00 AM
To: Karen Resabala
Subject: RE: [Website feedback] PERMISSION TO POST VIDEOS IN AN EDUCATIONAL PLATFORM

Hi Karen,

This all sounds interesting.

[...] I would advise that you link through to us rather than uploading our worksheets and audio onto your platform. You can describe the tasks and give the instructions on your platform but sending learners over to us to do the activities would be best. I think that's what you're planning to do - but I wanted to check.

If that's the case - that you're using links to LearnEnglish Teens - and if so then that is absolutely fine. **I wish you all the best with your project.**

If you have any feedback about any of our activities please do pass it on to me as it's always interesting to hear the views of learners and teachers around the world.

Best wishes, Joanna.

LearnEnglish Teens Website Team
www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishteens

Sign up for our [newsletter](#) or join us on [Facebook](#).

From: Karen Resabala [karen_resabala@hotmail.com]
Sent: 13 January 2017 22:43
To: UK_MNC_LearnEnglish Teens (UK); Karen Resabala
Subject: Re: [Website feedback] PERMISSION TO POST VIDEOS IN AN EDUCATIONAL PLATFORM

Dear Joanna,

Thanks for your prompt reply. It has been a pleasure to hear from you.

The educational platform serves to a small private university located in Portoviejo, Ecuador. Currently, this is my place of work (Karen's). As EFL teachers, Jonathan and I have agreed that the learners need to develop listening and speaking skills, thus we have chosen to work on the improvement of their listening comprehension skill using valid and reliable sources like The British Council website offers to the school community. Because the project will be developed with A1 learners (average aged 18, approximately 80 students) during four weeks, we plan to give four listening exercises and post them on the platform gradually in order to expose the learners to one activity per week. The material will be available for our students until the end of the semester (February 17, 2017). Once the semester finishes, new courses will be assigned to us (teachers) and the information from the platform will be removed to allow the creation of new courses. Nevertheless, as teachers post the tasks, we can remove the activities at any time; for instance, once the students complete the task (in case you require us to do that).

To measure listening comprehension, we would like to use the activities proposed after each listening downloading and printing them, or completing them online, where your name always appear. At the moment of posting the online listening activities, a link will appear on the platform, and when students click on it, they will be led to the specific listening exercise from LearnEnglish Teens. Moreover, in our project and in our bibliography, your website is mentioned, acknowledging the work made by The British Council and LearnEnglish Teens.

Therefore, we both look forward to getting your permission to make use of your online material and make our classroom intervention successful.

Best wishes,
Karen Resabala and Jonathan Molina

Sent from [Outlook](#)

From: UK MNC LearnEnglish Teens (British Council)
<LearnEnglish.Teens@britishcouncil.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2017 3:34 AM
To: karen_resabala@hotmail.com
Subject: RE: [Website feedback] PERMISSION TO POST VIDEOS IN AN EDUCATIONAL PLATFORM

Hi Jonathan and Karen,

This sounds very interesting and I wish you all the best with your studies.

Please can you let me know who will be able to access the 'educational platform' you are referring to? Also, how long will the listenings be there for - what is the duration of the project and will you remove the listenings once you have completed the research? Will you also use the exercises that accompany the listenings? Will you be able to acknowledge the original source of the content as LearnEnglish Teens?

I look forward to hearing from you again with this additional information.

Best wishes, Joanna Budden.

LearnEnglish Teens Website Team
www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishteens

Sign up for our newsletter or join us on Facebook.

APPENDIX B: E-mail Requesting Permission to *The British Council*

From: karen_resabala@hotmail.com [karen_resabala@hotmail.com]
Sent: 11 January 2017 22:15
To: UK_MNC_LearnEnglish Teens (UK)
Subject: [Website feedback] PERMISSION TO POST VIDEOS IN AN EDUCATIONAL PLATFORM

Karen Resabala (karen_resabala@hotmail.com) sent a message using the contact form at <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/contact>.

Dear Sir(s)/Madame(s),

Who subscribe, EFL Teachers, would like to ask for your written permission to post some listening activities for level A1 from this site, on an educational platform, to carry out a research project that attempts to determine the effects that online listening activities have on auditive comprehension. The development of these listening activities will let us gather data for this research, as a requisite to obtain our master's title on TEFL.

Kind regards,
Jonathan Molina and Karen Resabala
EFL Teachers
Ecuador

Report as inappropriate:
http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/mollom/report/mollom_captcha/17011167483c641476

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. A registered charity: 209131 (England and Wales) SC037733 (Scotland). This message is for the use of the intended recipient(s) only and may contain confidential information. If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete it. The British Council accepts no liability for loss or damage caused by viruses and other malware and you are advised to carry out a virus and malware check on any attachments contained in this message.

APPENDIX C: Permission Requested to the University

Portoviejo, enero de 2017

Señora XXX
XXXX
DIRECTORA DEL CENTRO DE IDIOMAS
UNIVERSIDAD XXX
Ciudad.

De nuestra consideración:

La presente es para solicitar su aprobación para desarrollar el tema investigativo “*The Effects of Online Listening Activities on Auditory Comprehension for EFL A1 Learners*” como trabajo de titulación previo a la obtención del título de *Master en Enseñanza de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (MTEFL)* en la Escuela Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL).

El presente trabajo investigativo se desarrollará con los estudiantes de Primer Nivel (A1 según el Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas) paralelos B, C, y D de la escuela de XXX de esta institución, los mismos que están a cargo de quien suscribe, docente del Centro de Idiomas de esta institución. La intervención tendrá una duración de 4 semanas a partir de Enero 2017. Por motivos éticos, la participación de los estudiantes en este proyecto es totalmente voluntaria, debiendo firmar un formulario de consentimiento, y sus identidades, así como el nombre de la institución, serán mantenidas en estricta reserva.

Esperando su aprobación, agradecemos su atención.

Atentamente,

Lcda. Karen Resabala Encalada
Cédula 130808616-2
DOCENTE CENTRO IDIOMAS

Ing. Jonathan Molina Guillén
Cédula 131172297-7
DOCENTE INGLES

APPENDIX D: Letter of Approval Issued by the University

Portoviejo, enero 10 de 2017

**LCDA.
KAREN RESABALA ENCALADA
DOCENTE DEL CENTRO DE IDIOMAS**
Ciudad.

De mi consideración:

En relación a su solicitud de aprobación para desarrollar el tema investigativo "The Effects of Online Listening Activities on Auditive Comprehension for EFL A1 Learners", como trabajo de titulación previo a la obtención de su título de Master en Enseñanza de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera, tengo a bien comunicar a usted que la misma ha sido aprobada, por lo cual, se le permite trabajar con los estudiantes de Primer Nivel, paralelos B,C y D de la Carrera de Odontología de nuestra Universidad, durante 4 semanas, a partir de Enero 2017.

Atentamente,

Note: Some parts have been removed to keep the confidentiality of the name of the institution and person in charge.

APPENDIX E: Informed Consent Forms

In English

CONSENT FORM

Dear student,

Since we have already obtained permission from the authorities of the university to make an academic intervention, this document aims to inform you that your class has been chosen to be part of our intervention. The aim of the study is to demonstrate the effects of the online listening activities on the development of the learners' auditory skills. By doing so, the graduate students JONATHAN MOLINA GUILLEN and KAREN RESABALA ENCALADA will complete their master program in MTEFL (Master of Teaching English as a Foreign Language) at the ESPOL (Escuela Politécnica del Litoral).

Therefore, if you wish to be part of this study, please, find out more details and the terms to be accepted. Similarly, if you do not want to be part of this study, please, leave the CONSENT FORM unsigned and hand it back to your teacher.

This project will last 4 weeks; during this period of time, the learners will work on several online listening activities to develop their auditory skills. At the end of each listening activity, the learner will take a short listening comprehension test. It is of paramount importance to mention that all the information gathered from the intervention will be handled with strict confidentiality, keeping in secret the information about the participants, the class, and the name of the university.

Once the evidence is analyzed, you will be able to complement the analysis. You can contact the researchers via e-mail kiresabala@sangregorio.edu.ec or jonathanlemo@yahoo.com. You can send any information, ask questions, or arrange a meeting via email. Furthermore, your comments, suggestions, or concerns can be included in our final report.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that, as a participant, you are not at risk or get any benefit from participating in this study. Moreover, you can withdraw from the study at any time, without any legal or academic consequence. Your signature below confirms your acceptance of being part of this intervention.

Thanks a lot for your cooperation.

SIGNATURE

NAME: _____

I.D. _____

Portoviejo, January of 2017

In Spanish (for the students)

FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO

Estimado estudiante,

Una vez obtenido el permiso correspondiente de las autoridades de esta institución educativa, el presente documento tiene como finalidad dar a conocer que su curso ha sido escogido para la intervención en un trabajo investigativo que pretende demostrar el efecto de actividades de listening en el desarrollo de la comprensión auditiva, con el cual los egresados JONATHAN LEONEL MOLINA y KAREN RESABALA ENCALADA completarán su programa de estudios y obtendrán el título de Masters en Enseñanza de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera en la ESPOL.

Si usted desea ser parte del presente trabajo investigativo, puede continuar leyendo los términos a ser aceptados, caso contrario puede devolver el formulario sin firmar a su docente.

Este proyecto tendrá una duración de 4 semanas, tiempo en el cual los estudiantes trabajarán virtualmente en la habilidad auditiva (listening), la cual será medida con preguntas de comprensión. La información recolectada de los trabajos realizados será manejada con estricta confidencialidad, manteniendo en secreto tanto el nombre de los estudiantes, curso y paralelo, así como el nombre y lugar de la institución.

Una vez que las evidencias sean analizadas, usted podrá retroalimentar dicho análisis, pudiendo contactarse con los investigadores a las siguientes direcciones de correo electrónico kiresabala@sangregorio.edu.ec, o jonathanlemo@yahoo.com, para enviar sus comentarios y/o agendar una entrevista. En caso de requerirlo, sus comentarios serán incluidos en el reporte final de esta investigación.

Finalmente, cabe recalcar que, como participante, usted no corre riesgos ni tiene beneficios por participar en esta investigación, y tiene completa libertad de decidir abandonar ser participante en cualquier momento, sin consecuencias legales o académicas. Su firma a continuación expresa la aceptación de ser parte del presente proyecto.

De antemano, expresamos nuestro agradecimiento por su colaboración.

FIRMA

NOMBRES: _____

CEDULA No. _____

Portoviejo, enero de 2017

APPENDIX F: Samples of Pre and Post-test Audio *Study Tips* – Level A1

The first screenshot shows a Moodle course page for 'INGLES I'. The browser address bar indicates the URL: eva.sangregorio.edu.ec/odontologia/mod/page/view.php?id=4392. The page title is 'INGLES I' and the breadcrumb trail is 'Área personal > INGLES I B > UNIT 3: DESCRIPTIONS, LIKES AND DISLIKES > Listening 1: Study Tips'. A sidebar menu under 'ADMINISTRACIÓN' includes options like 'Administración del recurso página', 'Editar ajustes', 'Roles asignados localmente', 'Permisos', 'Compruebe los permisos', 'Filtros', 'Registros', 'Copia de seguridad', and 'Restaurar'. The main content area is titled 'Listening 1: Study Tips' and shows a 'Study Tip' with the text 'Última modificación: jueves, 12 de enero de 2017, 00:51'. The system tray shows the date as 4/28/2017.

The second screenshot shows the British Council 'LearnEnglish Teens' website. The browser address bar shows the URL: learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening-skills-practice/study-tips. The page features the British Council logo and navigation links for 'Skills', 'Grammar & vocabulary', 'Exams', 'UK now', 'Study break', 'Magazine', and 'Courses'. The main content area is titled 'Study tips' and includes a video player with the caption 'Listen to the conversation and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.' The video player shows a scene with several students in a classroom. To the right of the video player is a sidebar with 'HELP & SUPPORT' and 'COURSES' sections. The system tray shows the date as 4/24/2017.

Taken from <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening-skills-practice/study-tips>

Note: The link posted onto the platform Moodle led to the site *LearnEnglish Teens*.

Transcript for **Study tips**

- Ben:** You always get good marks at school. You're lucky! I study but I don't always get good marks.
- Katy:** I'm not lucky! I know how to study. I always do three things. Do you want to know them?
- Ben:** Yeah, please!
- Katy:** OK, number one. Always study in a quiet place.
- Ben:** I usually study in my bedroom. It's very quiet.
- Katy:** Number two. Have a clear desk!
- Ben:** Right. A clear desk. My desk isn't clear. There are lots of papers and books and pens on it.
- Katy:** Well, that isn't very good!
- Ben:** What's tip number three?
- Katy:** Have lots of breaks. I always study for thirty minutes. Then I have a break for five minutes. I move my arms and legs and drink some water. Then I study again for thirty minutes.
- Ben:** I never have a break. I sometimes study for two or three hours.
- Katy:** That isn't a good idea! It's important to get up and move your body.
- Ben:** OK. Thanks. Next time I think I can get good marks!



Listening skills practice: Study tips – exercises

Listen to the conversation and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation: matching

Match the opposite adjectives and write a–f next to the numbers 1–6.

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1..... good | a. unlucky |
| 2..... lucky | b. untidy |
| 3..... always | c. noisy |
| 4..... quiet | d. bad |
| 5..... clear | e. unimportant |
| 6..... important | f. never |

1. Check your understanding: multiple choice

Circle the best answer to these questions.

- Ben ...
a. doesn't study b. studies and does well. c. studies and doesn't do well.
- Ben usually studies ...
a. in the library. b. at home. c. in his friend's house.
- On Ben's desk there are ...
a. papers, books and pens. b. pencils, books and pens.. c. a pencil case and pens.
- Katy ...
a. has a break for thirty minutes. b. exercises for thirty minutes. c. studies for thirty minutes.
- When Ben studies ...
a. he doesn't take breaks. b. he has a break for two or three hours. c. he has two or three breaks each hour.

2. Check your understanding: grouping

Write the ideas in the correct group.

a. Study for two or three hours without a break	b. Get up and move your body	c. Stay in your chair when you take a break	d. Have lots of papers and books on your desk
e. Play loud music while you study	f. Take lots of breaks	g. Have a clear desk	h. Study in a quiet place

Good ideas	Bad ideas

3. Check your vocabulary: gap fill

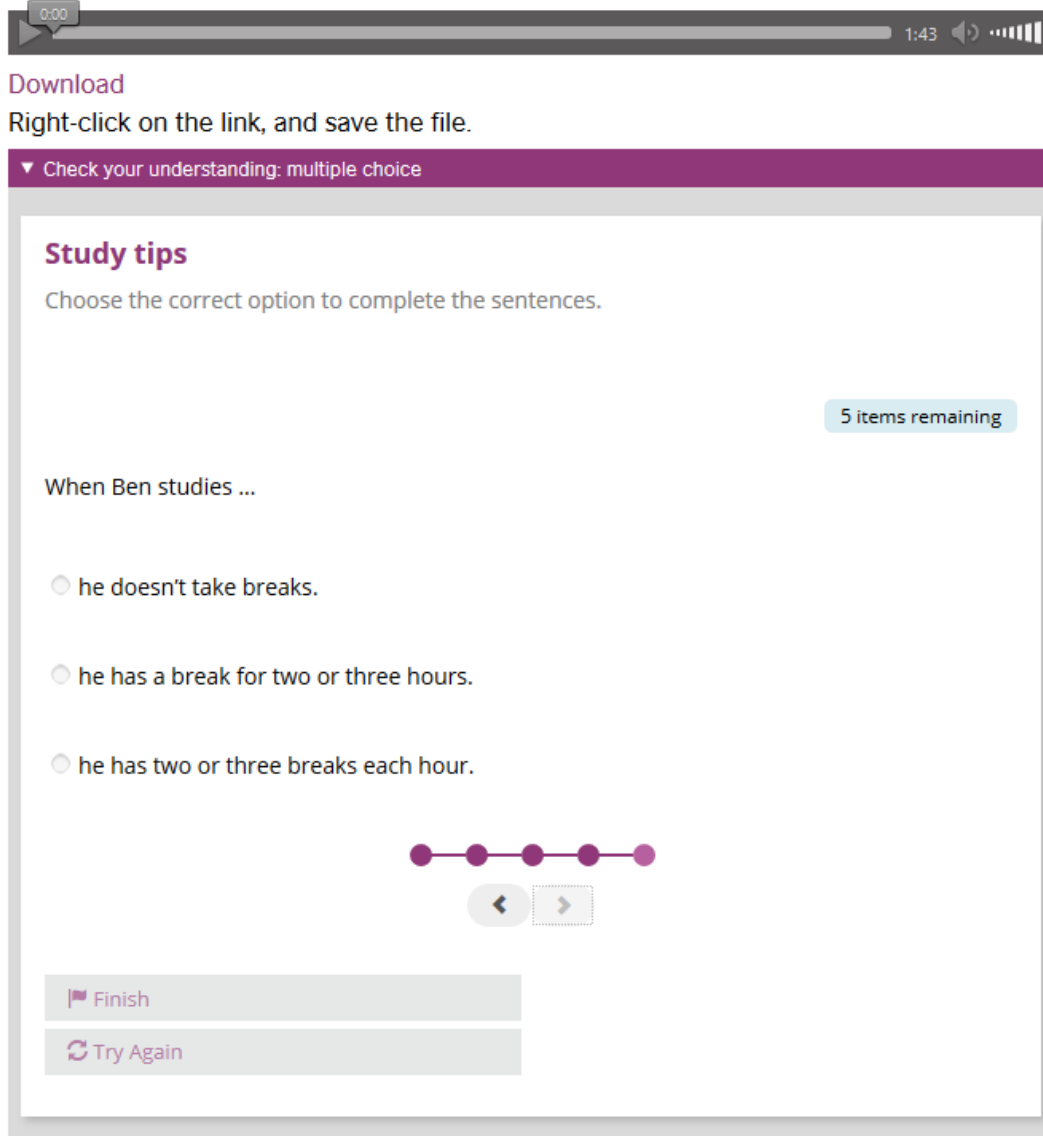
Complete the sentences with a word from the box.

good	body	quiet
three	legs	marks

- You always get good _____ at school!
- I always do _____ things. Do you want to know them?
- I usually study in my bedroom. It's very _____.
- I move my arms and _____ and drink some water.
- It's important to get up and move your _____.
- Next time I think I can get _____ marks!

Sample of questions as seen from the website

Check your understanding: Multiple choice questions



0:00 1:43

[Download](#)

Right-click on the link, and save the file.

▼ Check your understanding: multiple choice

Study tips

Choose the correct option to complete the sentences.

5 items remaining

When Ben studies ...

- he doesn't take breaks.
- he has a break for two or three hours.
- he has two or three breaks each hour.

◀ ▶

Finish

Try Again

Check your understanding: Grouping questions

▼ Check your understanding: grouping

Study tips

Put the ideas in the correct groups.

8 items remaining

Have a clear desk. Have lots of papers and books on your desk.

Study for two or three hours without a break. Get up and move your body.

Take lots of breaks. Play loud music while you study. Study in a quiet place.

Stay in your chair when you take a break.

Good ideas

Bad ideas

Finish

Try Again

Checking vocabulary: Gap filling exercise

▼ Check your vocabulary: gap fill

Study tips

Fill the gaps with the word from the box.

6 items remaining

marks legs three good body quiet

1. You always have good at school!
2. I always do things. Do you want to know them?
3. I usually study in my bedroom. It's very .
4. I move my arms and and drink some water.
5. It's important to get up and move your .
6. Next time I think I can get marks!

Finish

Try Again

Taken from <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening-skills-practice/study-tips>

Sample of questions as seen from the university platform

The screenshot shows a web interface for a quiz titled "INGLES I". The user is logged in as Karen Ivette Resabala Encalada. The page displays a navigation menu on the left and a main content area. The main content area contains a warning message: "Puede previsualizar este cuestionario, pero si éste fuera un intento real, podría ser bloqueado debido a: Este cuestionario no está disponible en este momento". Below this, there is a question titled "Pregunta 1" with the instruction "Listen to the audio STUDY TIPS and answer the following questions". The question asks to "Match the opposite adjectives" and lists five words: quiet, clear, important, good, and always. Each word has a dropdown menu labeled "Elegir...". A dropdown menu is open for the word "lucky", showing options: noisy, never, unimportant, untidy, bad, and unlucky. The "Siguiente" button is visible at the bottom of the question area.

The screenshot shows the same web interface as above, but with a different question. The main content area contains the same warning message. Below it, there is a question titled "Pregunta 2" with the instruction "Listen to the audio STUDY TIPS and answer the following questions". The question asks "According to Katy, which of the following is a GOOD idea to study for an exam:". Below the instruction, there are three radio button options: a. Take lots of breaks, b. Stay in your chair when you take a break, and c. Study for two or three hours without a break. The "Siguiente" button is visible at the bottom of the question area.

APPENDIX G: Audio for Activity 1

Getting an ID card – Level A1

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening-skills-practice/getting-id-card. The page is titled "Getting an ID card" and features a video player with a man looking at a document. Below the video are instructions and exercises, including a "Download" section with a right-click instruction and two "Check your understanding" options: "wording" and "multiple choice". The right sidebar contains "HELP & SUPPORT" links (Find out your English level, CEF levels, Getting started, House rules), "COURSES" (Find a face-to-face course), and a "Top Post" section with a "Photo caption" exercise. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 2:08 AM on 7/15/2017.

Taken from <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening-skills-practice/>


Transcript of the audio *Getting an ID Card*



Transcript for **Getting an ID card**

Admin worker: International Student ID card?
Student: Yes, that's right.
Admin worker: Have you got the form?
Student: Yes, here it is.
Admin worker: OK, let's see. Name – Ahmed, surname – Saeed, age 14, address ... (pause) ... oh, what's your address?
Student: 14 Spring Avenue ...
Admin worker: 14 Spring Avenue ...
Student: Leicester.
Admin worker: Can you spell that, please?
Student: L-E-I-C-E-S-T-E-R.
Admin worker: What's your postcode?
Student: LE 14 2GZ.
Admin worker: LE 14 2GS.
Student: No, 2GZ.
Admin worker: OK, 2GZ. And what's your nationality?
Student: I'm British.
Admin worker: What's your school?
Student: Newtown Secondary School. N-E-W-T-O-W-N.
Admin worker: And what's your date of birth?
Student: The 2nd of June 1998.
Admin worker: 02/06/1998 (the second of the sixth, 1998). Have you got a photo?
Student: Yes, here you are.
Admin worker: Thank you. One moment, please ... (pause) ... and here's your card.
Student: Thanks. Bye.

Sample of questions for *Getting an ID Card*

 **BRITISH COUNCIL**

LearnEnglish Teens

Listening skills practice: Getting an ID card - exercises

Listen to the conversation and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation
Do this exercise before you listen. Match the vocabulary with the correct definition and write a – f next to the number 1 – 6.

1..... ID card	a. A paper document with spaces for information.
2..... Form	b. A group of numbers and letters used as part of your address. (British English)
3..... Surname	c. Your second name or family name.
4..... Postcode	d. For example British, Japanese, Mexican, Albanian ...
5..... Nationality	e. A school for students aged 11-18.
6..... Secondary school	f. An identity card with a photo to say who you are.

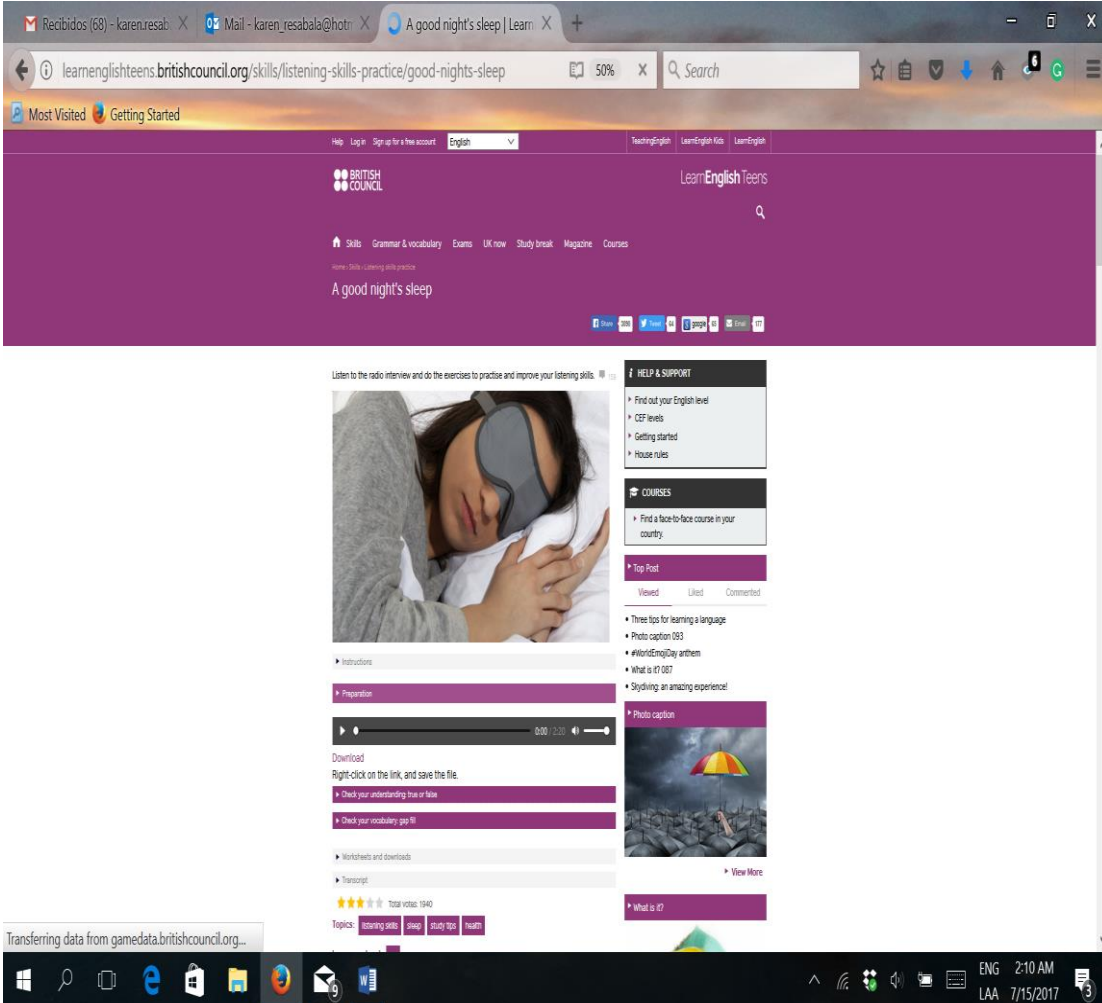
1. Check your understanding: ordering
Do this exercise while you listen. Write a number (1-8) to put the questions in the order you hear them.

.....	What's your school?
.....	Have you got a photo?
.....	What's your postcode?
.....	And what's your date of birth?
.....	What's your address?
.....	Can you spell that, please?
.....	And what's your nationality?
.....	Have you got the form?

www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishteens
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APPENDIX H: Audio for Activity 2

A Good Night's Sleep – Level A1



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the British Council Learn English Teens website. The page title is "A good night's sleep" and it is categorized under "Listening skills practice". The main content area features a large image of a person wearing a sleep mask, with a video player below it. The video player has a progress bar and a play button. To the right of the video player, there is a "HELP & SUPPORT" section with links for "Find out your English level", "CEF levels", "Getting started", and "House rules". Below this is a "COURSES" section with a link for "Find a face-to-face course in your country". The page also includes a "Top Post" section with a list of articles: "Three tips for learning a language", "Photo caption 193", "#WorldEmojiDay anthem", and "What is it? 087". A "Photo caption" section is also visible, featuring an image of a person holding a colorful umbrella. The website's navigation menu includes "Skills", "Grammar & vocabulary", "Exams", "UK now", "Study break", "Magazine", and "Courses". The browser's address bar shows the URL "learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening-skills-practice/good-nights-sleep". The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 2:10 AM on 7/15/2017.

Taken from <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening-skills-practice/>

Transcript for *A Good Night's Sleep*



Transcript for **A good night's sleep**

Host: At exam time it is important to sleep well. Today we have Doctor Baker with us in the studio and he is going to give us five top tips for getting a good night's sleep. Welcome to the show, Doctor Baker.

Dr Baker: Thank you. It's great to be here. Let's start with tip one. Don't go to bed with the television on. Some people think they can sleep well with the TV on, but the noise and lights mean you don't really sleep well, so turn it off!
Tip two: Don't think too much before bedtime. Do your hardest homework earlier in the evening. Do easier homework later. If your brain is too busy and full of ideas it takes longer to get to sleep.
Tip three: Don't play video games for an hour before you go to sleep. They also make your brain too busy and active.
Tip four: Turn off your cell phone when you go to bed. What is so important that it can't wait until the morning? If possible, leave your phone in another room.
Tip five: Play music if you like. But don't play it too loud. Turn the sound down low.

Host: Thank you, Doctor. That is very useful advice for our young listeners.

Sample of questions for *A Good Night's Sleep*



LearnEnglish Teens
Listening skills practice: A good night's sleep – exercises

Listen to the radio interview and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation: matching

Match the vocabulary with the correct definition and write a–h next to the numbers 1–8.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1..... an exam | a. useful information or advice |
| 2..... bedtime | b. a test to show what a person knows or can do |
| 3..... a listener | c. the time you go to bed |
| 4..... low | d. the most difficult |
| 5..... a tip | e. quiet |
| 6..... the hardest | f. a person who listens |
| 7..... busy | g. making a lot of noise |
| 8..... loud | h. doing something |

1. Check your understanding: true or false

Circle *True* or *False* for these sentences.

- | | | |
|---|-------------|--------------|
| 1. The guest in the studio is a teacher. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 2. Some people can sleep well with a television on. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 3. It is bad to think a lot before going to bed. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 4. It is good to play video games before bed. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 5. It is good to turn your mobile off when you go to sleep. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 6. It is bad to play loud music while you study. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |

www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishteens

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APPENDIX I: Audio for Activity 3

Ordering Food in a Café – Level A1

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying a menu for ordering food in a café. The menu is organized into several sections:

- COURSES**
 - CHEESE BURGER..... £4.39
 - DOUBLE CHEESE BURGER..... £4.99
 - CHICKEN CURRY WITH RICE... £3.99
 - MACARONI CHEESE..... £4.19
 - SEAFOOD SALAD..... £4.49
 - EGG SALAD..... £3.99
 - FISH AND MUSHROOM PIE..... £4.69
- PIZZA**
 - MUSHROOM PIZZA..... £4.60
 - FOUR CHEESES PIZZA..... £4.10
 - MEAT PIZZA..... £4.75
 - SEAFOOD PIZZA..... £4.75
 - CHICKEN PIZZA..... £4.55
- DESSERTS**
 - ICE CREAM..... £1.99 (VANILLA, CHOCOLATE, STRAWBERRY)
 - BANANA CAKE..... £2.39
 - FRUIT CAKE..... £2.29
- DRINKS**
 - TEA..... £0.59
 - COFFEE..... £0.59
 - ORANGE JUICE..... £0.99
 - APPLE JUICE..... £0.99
 - WATER..... £0.49
- FRUIT**
 - APPLE..... £0.59
 - ORANGE..... £0.59
 - BANANA..... £0.69
 - PEAR..... £0.69
 - MIXED FRUITS..... £1.29 (3 FRUITS)

The website interface includes a browser address bar with the URL learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening-skills-practice/ordering-food-cafe, a search bar, and a navigation menu. The page also features a sidebar with a 'COURSES' section, a 'Top Post' section, and a 'Photo caption' section with an image of a person holding a colorful umbrella.

Taken from <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening-skills-practice/>

Transcript for *Ordering Food in a Café*



Transcript for **Ordering food in a café**

Café worker: Next, please! What would you like?

Andi: Can I have a burger, please?

Café worker: A cheese burger or double cheese burger?

Andi: Double cheese burger, please.

Café worker: Anything else?

Andi: Yeah, I'd like some banana cake.

Café worker: Would you like a drink?

Andi: Yes, can I have an apple juice, please?

Café worker: OK, so that's one double cheese burger, one banana cake and an apple juice. What's your table number?

Andi: Table 3. How much is that?

Café worker: That's £8.37, please.

Andi: Here you are.

Café worker: Thank you ... that's £10.00 ... and £1.63 change. Next, please ...

Sample questions for *Ordering Food in a Café*



Listening skills practice: Ordering food in a café – exercises

Listen to the conversation in a café and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Do this exercise before you listen. Write the words in the correct group.

Banana cake	Cola	Ice cream	Water
Apple tart	Apple juice	Four cheeses pizza	Cheese burger
Chicken curry and rice	Orange juice	Chocolate cake	Seafood salad with bread

Main courses	Desserts	Drinks

1. Check your understanding: multiple choice

Do this exercise while you listen. Circle the best answer to complete these sentences.

- For his main course, Andi chooses a normal cheese burger / a double cheese burger / a burger with chips.
- For dessert, Andi chooses ice cream / chocolate cake / banana cake .
- To drink, Andi chooses apple juice / fizzy water / still water .

APPENDIX J: Interviews

Karen Resabala

File Home Insert Draw Design Layout References Mailings Review View Grammarly Tell me what you want to do

Clipboard Font Paragraph Styles Editing Grammarly

Dialogue # 1: Linda

Teacher: Good morning. Today, I am with one of my students of 1st year of the faculty of Odontology. I will use a pseudonym to protect her identity, so I will call her Linda. She is here to be interviewed. She agreed to be interviewed about the online listening activities assisted by the virtual platform Moodle.

Linda: Good morning.

Linda: Good morning, teacher.

Teacher: Are you familiar with the use of technology for learning English?

Linda: Yes, I am. Over the last 2 years, I have used my iPad to watch series in English and I do not read subtitles anymore. By doing so, I have been able to learn some English.

Teacher: How much time a day do you dedicate to each of the activities on the Moodle platform?

Linda: Because I am familiar with English, I spend 20 minutes learning English on the platform. I can do this on my own because I sort of understand the language.

Teacher: Do you believe that the help received from the teacher, when performing the activities in the classroom, has helped you do better on the listening activities?

Linda: Yes, I do. Because we have some difficulties with English, we usually get low grades. Consequently, you have prepared us in the class giving us with a lot of hints and pieces of advice to do better on the activities. So, when we get home, we feel more confident to develop the activities on our own. Furthermore, what I did most of the time was to focus more on pronunciation.

Teacher: Did you have any difficulty understanding British English?

Linda: Yes, I did. At the beginning, it was hard for me to understand British English because it is different from American English. In addition, I was not used to it, but I remember I asked you for help and you kindly made me notice the difference in pronunciations and intonation. Then, at home, I was more familiar with this new accent.

Teacher: Do you consider that your listening abilities have improved with the practice?

Linda: Yes, I do. I strongly believe that my listening skills have developed a lot.

Teacher: Do you consider that the listening activities were suitable to your level of English? And to what extent each of the activities was in accordance with your listening proficiency level?

Linda: Yes, I do. Although I have some grammar, I find difficult to understand some dialogues, especially when the speakers speak fast. Moreover, I am not used to these types of listening activities. Therefore, I consider that the complexity of the listening material was appropriate to my level of English. In addition, I want to point out that the audio was clear and went well.

Teacher: Thank you.

Dialogue # 2: Tina

Teacher: I am with one of the students of 1st year of the faculty of Odontology. Her pseudonym will be Tina. She has agreed to be interviewed about the online listening activities assisted by the virtual platform, Moodle. Tina, are you familiar with the use of technology for learning English?

Tina: Yes, I am.

Teacher: What technological devices have you already used?

Tina: I have used virtual platforms, computer, and telephones.

Teacher: How much time a day do you dedicate to each of the activities on the Moodle platform?

Tina: Well, it depends on the time they give me. Time is usually limited. So, I would say that I usually work on the platform about 20 minutes.

Teacher: Do you consider that your listening skills have improved?

Tina: Of course, I do.

Teacher: How much progress do you think you have made?

Tina: I think I have made a lot of progress.

Teacher: Do you think that the teacher's support has helped you improve your performance?

Tina: Yes, I do.

Teacher: Did you have any difficulty understanding British English?

Tina: Yes, a little bit, but with the help of the teacher, I was able to understand.

Teacher: Do you consider that the listening activities were suitable to your level of English?

Tina: Yes, I do.

Teacher: Were the listening activities in accordance with your listening proficiency level?

Tina: Some of them.

Teacher: Do you consider the listening activities were extensive?

Tina: No, I don't. I think they were short.

Teacher: Well, because you are at level A1, we intended to choose short activities to avoid either boredom or frustration. Thank you very much.

Dialogue # 3: Gretel

Teacher: Good morning. Today is the 16th of February, and I am with one of my students of 1st year of the faculty of Odontology. She was one of the students who worked on the online listening activities assisted by the virtual platform, Moodle. Her pseudonym will be Gretel. Gretel, are you familiar with the use of technology for learning English?

Gretel: Yes, I am. I find it very interesting because this is a key point to learn and develop knowledge.

Teacher: How much time a day do you dedicate to each of the listening activities on the Moodle platform?

Gretel: I usually work 30 minutes on the platform.

Teacher: Did you have any difficulty understanding British English?

Gretel: Not much, I was already familiar with it from high school.

Teacher: Do you think that the teacher's support has helped you improve your performance?

Gretel: Of course, I do. During the practice in class, I could jot down notes.

Teacher: Do you consider that the listening activities were suitable to your level of English?

Gretel: Yes, I do.

Teacher: Do you consider the listening activities were extensive?

Gretel: Yes, I do.

Teacher: Thank you.

Page 3 of 9 2439 words English (United States) 50%

ENG 12:27 AM
LAA 7/3/2017

Samples of transcripts of interviews

Teacher: Are you familiar with the use of technology for learning English?

Student (Linda): Yes, I am. Over the last 2 years, I have used my iPad to watch series in English and I do not read subtitles anymore. By doing so, I have been able to learn some English.

Teacher: How much time a day do you dedicate to each of the activities on the Moodle platform?

Student: Because I am familiar with English, I spend 20 minutes learning English on the platform. I can do this on my own because I sort of understand the language.

Teacher: Do you believe that the help received from the teacher, when performing the activities in the classroom, has helped you do better on the listening activities?

Student: Yes, I do. Because we have some difficulties with English, we usually get low grades. Consequently, you have prepared us in the class proving us with a lot of hints and pieces of advice to do better on the activities. So, when we get home, we feel more confident to develop the activities on our own. Furthermore, what I did most of the time was to focus more on pronunciation.

Teacher: Did you have any difficulty understanding British English?

Student: Yes, I did. At the beginning, it was hard for me to understand British English because it is different from American English. In addition, I was not used to it, but I remember I asked you for help and you kindly made me notice the difference in pronunciation and meaning. Then, at home, I was more familiar with this new accent.

Teacher: Are you familiar with the use of technology for learning English?

Student (Gretel): Yes, I am. I find it very interesting because this is a key point to learn and develop knowledge.

Teacher: How much time a day do you dedicate to each of the listening activities on the Moodle platform?

Student: I usually work 30 minutes on the platform.

Teacher: Did you have any difficulty understanding British English?

Student: Not much, I was already familiar with it from high school.

Teacher: Do you think that the teacher's support has helped you improve your performance?

Student: Of course, I do. During the practice in class, I could jot down notes.

Teacher: Do you consider that the listening activities were suitable to your level of English?

Student: Yes, I do.