

SOME ONLINE RESOURCES USED TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LISTENING SKILLS

Online Resources Used to Improve English Listening Skills

David O. Yandar Rodriguez

Submitted to Faculty of Human Sciences in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of B.A in
the Department of Linguistics and Languages

Universidad de Nariño

June, 2016

SOME ONLINE RESOURCES USED TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LISTENING SKILLS

Recursos en línea utilizados para mejorar las habilidades para escuchar Inglés

David O. Yandar Rodriguez

Submitted to Faculty of Human Sciences in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of B.A in
the Department of Linguistics and Languages

Universidad de Nariño

June, 2016

“Las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en este trabajo son responsabilidad exclusiva de los autores”

Artículo 1 del acuerdo N° 324 de Octubre 11 de 1966, emanado del Honorable consejo directivo de la Universidad de Nariño

NOTA DE ACEPTACIÓN:

Firma del Presidente de tesis

Firma del jurado

Firma del jurado

Resumen

El uso de recursos en línea es el tema más extenso de este estudio, ya que el uso correcto de internet continúa mejorando el proceso de la adquisición de idiomas. Por otra parte, el objetivo de la enseñanza de idiomas es enseñar a los estudiantes a comunicarse efectivamente, lo cual es el propósito esencial del lenguaje, y escuchar es la base de la comunicación. Por lo tanto, los materiales más atractivos, eficaces y eficientes para enseñar a escuchar deben ser identificados con el fin de lograr los mejores resultados posibles para los estudiantes y profesores. Otros objetivos de este estudio son identificar materiales para enseñar a escuchar, y para establecer qué recursos en línea y actividades de clase son adecuados para que los maestros integren en su plan de estudios para que los estudiantes tengan acceso a los recursos de todo el mundo que los exponen a un determinado contexto donde pueden comunicarse efectivamente. El estudio teórico de la investigación acerca de la tecnología en el aula, la teoría educativa y estilos de aprendizaje demostró que los beneficios de la tecnología de la educación son para la escucha; y la gama de las actividades mencionadas proporcionan material para profesores y estudiantes para trabajar en el aula.

Abstract

The use of online resources is the most extensive subject of this study, since correctly applied internet use continues to enhance the process of language acquisition. On the other hand, the objective of language teaching is to teach students to communicate effectively, which is the essential purpose of language, and listening is the basis of communication. The most engaging, effective and efficient materials to teach listening must therefore be identified in order to achieve the best results possible for both students and teachers. Other objectives of this study are to identify materials to teach listening, and to establish which online resources and classroom activities are suitable for teachers to integrate into their curriculum for the students to have access to worldwide resources that expose them to a certain context where they can communicate effectively. The theoretical study of research surrounding technology in the classroom, educational theory and learning styles demonstrated what the benefits of educational technology are for listening; and the range of activities mentioned provide material for teachers and students to work with in the classroom

CONTENIDO

	Pag
Resumen	5
Abstract	6
Some online resources used to improve English listening skills	8
Listening.....	9
Methods to teach listening.....	10
Learning Styles.....	12
SLA and CALL	14
Technology.....	16
Educational Technology and ICT (Information and Communication Technology)	17
Online Resources.....	18
Online Resources for Teaching Listening.....	18
Didactical proposal.....	20
Discussion and Conclusions.....	22
References	26

Some online resources used to improve English listening skills

According to Computer Desktop Encyclopedia (2014), online resources can be defined in general as web pages and documents on the Internet that provide useful information about social issues, entertainment, literature, etc., which offer ways of assessing, acquiring, and sharing knowledge. They might be used as evidence to support ideas in writing, create spaces to practice speaking, provide readings, and help beginners, intermediate, and advanced learners to learn English online by listening.

While an online resource is typically data, and educational in nature, any support software available online can also be considered a resource for listening practice, most of which are multimedia (videos, news, social web pages, episodes, music, audiobooks, podcasts, etc.), and it being online (i.e. in the public domain) makes it more accessible for teachers and learners of other languages. Hence, it can be considered one of the most important tools for enhancing listening skills. These formats held the promise of access to authentic audio and video and provide multiple opportunities for authentic communication in a globalized environment, in which it is necessary to understand more about the world. As a consequence, some new, entertaining, social, cultural and contextualized scenarios on the internet have started to be considered influential for learners to share free knowledge and seek a deeper understanding of the context through interaction.

Thus, the literature surrounding listening skills should be examined to establish which resources will be best suited for use by teachers. Hence, this study will focus on online resources for teaching listening in particular, because we have a responsibility to both students and teachers to make all materials freely available, and as access to technology in the classroom has increased in recent years, so should the resources teachers use become more innovative, and in general because online resources not only positively affect the way we listen and interpret a new

language but also they give access to worldwide resources to increase students' exposure to language in context which is an important part of the education and can most effectively be done online.

In the first place, a theoretical part will be given with a definition of listening skills, followed by a brief analysis of methods to teach listening. Then, various learning styles will be outlined, considering how they have changed over the last few generations and the implications for the classroom. Subsequently, theory surrounding Second Language Acquisition (hereafter referred to as SLA) will be examined, specifically referring to the improvement of listening skills. On the other hand, a brief history of Computer Assisted Language Learning (hereafter referred to as CALL), and how it is related to technology will be outlined. Subsequently, a definition of online resources will be presented with a list of the main ones for practicing listening. Suggested activities for classroom implementation will be considered as a didactical proposal, and finally, a discussion considering the authors' opinions and my own, and conclusions will be given.

Listening

Listening is the first language skill to be acquired in infants before speaking, reading and writing (Gallagher, 2015). The importance of listening comprehension "has only been recognized relatively recently" (Oxford, 1993, p.205). The role of listening comprehension in language learning was previously taken for granted, and therefore, further research and pedagogical implementation is essential (Vandergrift, 1999). Listening can be defined in several ways depending on the context. Academics tend to have more complex ideas of the definition of listening skills, but there are simplified or more holistic ways of defining listening.

Academics often refer to listening as an active activity, in which listeners use their knowledge about grammar and vocabulary in a sociocultural context, to interpret the words from a

speaker(Vandergrift, 1999, p.168). This is an important definition because it considers listening as a process of analyzing and using personal knowledge about grammar, context and accents to interpret meaning. Therefore, teachers must consider this definition as a guide to design activities for students to develop the different areas of listening.

In contrast, Mendelsohn (1984) offers a more simplistic definition for listening as the skill that allows us to understand utterances from those who speak English as their first language. Mendelsohn's definition is incomplete because it does not mention all the sources of a foreign language, for example, that it can be spoken by non-native speakers. It also ignores the importance of understanding context rather than just language since language only has meaning in context, and the context may not necessarily be that of a native speaker. For the purposes of this study, Vandergrift's definition, as stated above, will be our guide.

Methods to teach listening

Having established the definitions of listening, it might be valuable to mention some commonly recognized methods for teaching it, although Flowerdew and Miller (2005) would argue that, "all language teaching approaches, except for grammar-translation, incorporate a listening component" (p.4). One of these approaches that identifies listening as a separate skill is The Diagnostic Approach.

The Diagnostic Approach is how we assess the requirements, goals and level of our students, and create appropriate material (UNESCO, 2005). It is a procedure that involves testing students' understanding based on an audio and a set of comprehension tasks (Nemtchinova, 2012). An advantage of this is that it allows the students to improve listening and correct pronunciation since the language is spoken by English native speakers. It also enables standardizing in education, so long as the same audio and exercises are consistently applied, and it is particularly important for teaching due to the fact that students can interpret topics rather

than just hear them in non-contextual means. That allows them to become familiar with native language speakers and to improve listening skills. The problem with these kinds of activities is that they are not interactive; this means language learners improve their passive, not their active listening. When applying The Diagnostic Approach and in real-life listening in the classroom, it would be essential for students to use a combination of two key processes, depending on the reasons for teaching listening: Bottom-up and Top-down exercises.

Bottom-up exercises are defined as exercises which oblige learners to identify the base units of language (basic morphosyntax) in their various forms, for instance, sounds, syllables, prefixes and suffixes, conjugations and parts of the sentence (Nemtchinova, 2012, p. 14). The use of these kinds of drills helps language learners to construct sentences of their own, and gives them a better understanding of the mechanics of language. However, there is a heavy emphasis on grammar, and, in daily communication, the recognition of these features is mechanical. Nevertheless, bottom-up listening activities can help learners to understand enough linguistic elements of what they hear to then be able to use their top-down skills to fill in the gaps. One specific example that can be considered as bottom-up exercise is listening to directions or instructions where the comprehension is achieved by dividing and decoding the sound signal bit a bit. Being able to distinguish the string of words is vital at this point (Morley, n.d). Top-down exercises are defined as activities which require students to use their ability to interpret contextual clues in order to understand the language. They have to use their knowledge of the theme, sociocultural context, surrounding text or words; more generally, anything they consider relevant, to assign meaning (Morley, n.d). A clear example in everyday life is when one is listening to an anecdote relayed by a friend; the main concern of the listener is to understand the general idea, and knowing when to respond appropriately.

When it comes to listening, an important approach that should be taken into account is the communicative approach. This approach is a way of teaching language which puts heavy emphasis on communication. Tsinghong Ma (2010) states that the goal when learning a foreign language is to interact in diverse contexts with natural speakers, and in order to do this, a methodology based on communication is evidently needed, due to its emphasis on developing the communicative competence - viewed as the basis of the learner's capacity to use and understand the language (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979).

The communicative approach is based on the use of language in context for real communication. It is advantageous due to its implication in real context-learning. However, as stated previously, the speakers of a language are not necessarily only native. It also makes no provision for the academic side of language learning. Through the communicative teaching, learners are encouraged to think about language as a means of communication, and to take into account its technical aspects, such as grammar (Littlewood, 1981, p.x).

By giving students opportunities to use the language for real communicative purposes, the teacher helps them to develop strategies for relating the structures of a language to the communicative functions they can perform.

Learning Styles

Learning styles are the preferred ways in which people understand, process, and retain information. Most people have a variety of learning styles that work in combination; some have a dominant style depending on the academic context ("Learning styles", 2016a). Although some scholars assert there are up to seven learning styles, for the purposes of this study only four of those will be analyzed below: Linguistic and logical (traditional styles), and kinesthetic and aural (modern styles). Only recently have teachers taken notice of the differences in students' ways of

learning and diverse aptitudes. Conventional education has always employed techniques and planning that appeal to linguistic and logical skills (“Learning styles”, 2016b).

Linguistic learners’ strengths include: memorizing, reading, writing and giving meaning to words. Logical learners’ strengths lie in finding connections between seemingly unrelated ideas and problem solving. Therefore, linguistic and logical learners thrive on what we might term traditional schooling, where listening comprehension is based on reading questions, answering in writing, and identifying audio information out of context.

Yet, not all students are linguistic and logical learners. In fact, there has been suggested that kinesthetic and audio learning styles are more common among millennials (McCrinkle, 2004, p.21). Kinesthetic learners’ strengths are learning through physical actions, creating, and identifying things using the five senses. Meanwhile, aural learners’ strengths are recognizing sounds, rhythms, and intonation. They typically work well with music and can memorize information using it.

All the aforementioned learning styles can be appealed to when teaching listening skills in a foreign language. Aural learners learn different patterns of sounds quickly and easily, and also recognize difference in pronunciation and intonation. On the other hand, kinesthetic learners’ respond quickly to Total Physical Response (TPR) techniques, exercises that appeal to all five senses and involve physical movement. And finally linguistic and logical learners do well in long-established learning environments (see above).

The real challenge is how teachers can incorporate this schema into their teaching of listening skills to enable students’ acquisition of a second language. The following section will therefore focus on SLA, more specifically the improvement of listening skills.

SLA and CALL

Second Language Acquisition is such an extensive term that it is difficult to define. Some broadly define it as the process of learning a language after the first language has been established (Singhal, 2012). This encompasses nearly all aspects of language learning, especially within the Colombian educational context, as practically no children in Colombia start their formal education bilingual; most learn the L2 (in this case English) for the first time in school. It can be said therefore, that students are learning the L2 self-consciously.

However, SLA can be characterized by the exact opposite of self-consciousness, sub-consciousness. Krashen (2013) states that there are two different ways of developing abilities in other languages: acquiring a language or learning a language. Language acquisition then is something that occurs subconsciously. We are not aware of what is happening at the moment. For example, when listening to a song, watching a movie, or having a conversation, the learning process is not perceptible, but we still might be acquiring language.

As, under this definition, SLA is arguably passive, and more often than not takes place in situations where students are listening to the target language, it is a key part of improving students' listening abilities. It could even be argued that SLA contributes to improving listening more than any other skill, as its focus is specifically passive and that is how listening is primarily acquired. As Krashen (2013) states, acquisition is the process of understanding messages, which is the entire basis of the listening skill.

On the other hand, language *learning*, as previously stated, is a conscious process and we know we are learning, or trying to learn. Though it is perhaps the most important of our communication skills, listening is one of the most neglected (Boles, 1996). However, in the late nineteenth century, listening began to gain significance in language teaching, and since then it

has been considered a basic language skill, alongside the other language skills: writing, speaking and reading.

Improving listening is a significant part of learning languages, and development in this area has given rise to new strategies that contribute to adept listening. Furthermore, the pervasiveness of technology allows language learners to progress in their listening abilities (Renukadevi, 2014).

Listening contributes primarily to language expertise, even though reading, speaking and writing are essential to develop language skills (Renukadevi, 2014). To improve language proficiency and become an expert in the field, several resources have been incorporated into language teaching and learning; from among all of these, the computer has had superior impact. Nowadays, learners can control a combination of images and audio, and interact with various materials that provide exercises for every skill, including listening. According to Meskill (1996):

Arranging these combined media into intelligent, pedagogical-driven material is a challenge to materials developers. Effectively integrating the technology into (sic) language learning context represents a challenge for language teaching professionals. A critical step in accomplishing these goals is careful examination of the technology's features in light of the needs, goals, and processes of language learning. (p.179)

One of the most widely used and available technological tools that provides exercises to learn languages, either individually or in the classroom, is the computer. The umbrella term for using computers in the classroom is Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). This interdisciplinary field integrates technology in language teaching environments, and it has been a point of interest of many researchers over the past years. A large number of theories of CALL have been put forward, some extensive and others less so. Therefore, it is fundamental to simplify the acronym to get to a more precise definition. Firstly, the title CALL encompasses two primary

components: ‘computer’ and ‘language learning’. The idea is not to underplay the importance of the ‘assisted’ part of the equation either, yet it is evident that these two elements have a major influence on how CALL is managed, and equally the academia surrounding it (Stockwell, 2007). Although CALL is seen very much as an extension of SLA (Chapelle, 2005; 2007; Egbert & Petrie, 2005), arguably its deficient theoretical grounding has laid it open to critique (Stockwell, 2007).

Very few serious attempts limited to a particular study or environment, looking at CALL theory have been released. In some of the definitions given by Levy (1997), he succinctly states that CALL is “the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning”(p.1). Likewise, Beatty (2003) defines CALL as “any process in which a learner uses a computer and, as a result, improves his or her language” (p.7). Although this definition is rather open, it is nonetheless an appropriate beginning when starting to examine the profusion of ideas that emerge from CALL material. Technology, and its increased adaptability over the past few years, has allowed CALL to be integrated into the field of education technological developments, and has been influential in students’ learning process as a result of its potential to adapt to every context. CALL is always changing, as it relies on technology which is constantly evolving (Stockwell, 2007). This raises the question of how we specify the terms ‘computer’ and ‘improve’ (Hubbard, 2009). In other words, the question is no longer whether to use technology, but how.

Technology

Technology is omnipresent in the 21st century in all aspects of our daily lives. It does not, however, necessarily have to mean expensive, futuristic, Artificially Intelligent technology. In fact, technology is defined as any kind of specialized knowledge put into practice in any given field or area (“Technology”, 2016). Hence, technology is advanced or specific expertise used to

improve our lives in any given way. In an educational context, therefore, the focus is on any kind of technology that can improve the teaching/learning process.

Educational Technology and ICT (Information and Communication Technology)

The aim of recent research studies has been to assess the role of technology in the development of language teaching and learning (Zhao, 2003). A recent aspect of educational technology that considers self-assessment skills, as well as being a means for people (in this case listening language learners) to learn independently, is called ICT. As a general definition, ICT concerns both work and study as the main subject of information processing and communication. Additionally, UNESCO (2002) offers another definition, stating that ICT is a combination of informatics technologies used to communicate. In consequence, considering both definitions, especially the terms 'communication', 'change', 'information' and 'technology', it can be argued that ICT employs the most up-to-date technology and software to manage information, and enable communication (Freeman & Hasnaoui, 2010). ICT, broadly, is the technology that we use to teach and learn. In language teaching, there are many advantages that can be found in terms of teaching and learning listening through ICT. For instance, students improve their listening skills independently and learn how to use technology.

However, ICT is not exclusively for individual learning, it can also be used in classroom contexts. Teachers need to implement technology in their classes so that all students can benefit from the variety of materials that educational technology provides. Some technological devices that are adaptable to change and have the functions used to process information and communicate are desktops, laptop computers, software, peripherals, and connections to the Internet (Statistics Canada, 2008). However, not all teachers have access to such a wide range of technological resources, since few materials are provided in their classroom. Therefore, the focus of this study

and the suggested exercises are ones that only require an internet connection and can be accessed from any device that connects to the internet.

Online Resources

Materials that can be accessed on the Internet are online resources. With such a variety of online resources available, what needs to be established is which resources are appropriate for teaching listening, and how to use them. Moreover, the priority should be gaining the students' interest, which depends largely on the quality of the materials, and how they are used.

Online resources can be classified as sites, papers, and articles that we find on the internet, present relevant material, and are normally informative ("Online resources", n.d). Evidently, this is a very broad definition, because anything can be arguably relevant. Therefore, a list of online resources that have been chosen according to their adaptability for pedagogical aims, more specifically for improving listening, follows.

Online Resources for Teaching Listening

Video repositories. These are sites where users can view, upload and download video content. The most famous example of these is YouTube. Furthermore, these sources of material are useful for teachers to introduce vocabulary in context and access free multimedia content which is interesting for students.

Language exercise websites. These are places specifically designed for language learners that provide interactive exercises and explanations to develop language skills. Unquestionably, these are an invaluable material as they foster self-study, and more specifically to do with listening, they expose students to a variety of spoken language. An example of one of these websites is Englishlistening.com which not only provides exercises, but also diagnostic tests for students to assess their level. The exercises can also be used in the classroom

News websites. These have the double advantage of giving students both a resource to practice language skills, and the opportunity to gain sociocultural knowledge. The standard of language is also reliable, which is reassuring for teachers looking for high quality audio. Most modern news websites have videos, for instance, CNN, BBC, The Times, etc., and most of these videos are perfect for teaching because they are accessible in terms of language and timing (they are not too long).

Online Forums. Forums broadly allow the exchange of ideas. Video conferencing is a good way for students to practice listening, and learn vocabulary and culture, while interacting authentically in a communicative context. It also enables instant feedback, so as students can work on their errors without teacher support. In the case of the research carried out in Melilla, Spain (2010), a group of professionals including individuals from all areas of education, from government officials to psychologists and school teachers, created an online forum in order to improve the unsatisfactory results at the high school. The aim for listening was to improve “analytical and critical listening, to directed or attentional listening” (Molina García, 2010, p.3), by including in the forum a selection of “online dictionaries... videos, audio stories, audiopoetry, virtual games” (Molina García, 2010, p.2), among other things. The access was designed for all the people involved in the children’s education, such as parents, educators, and peers, and its success is a testimony to the importance of online forums in modern education.

Online Radio and Podcasts. These have the advantage of portability. Students can download podcasts on topics they find interesting, and listen to them anywhere at any time. They expand not only their linguistic knowledge and listening skills, but also their general knowledge about the world. As stated in the British Council website which has podcasts with exercises, these activities enable students to “learn everyday English with over 50 free podcasts about everyday topics. There are interactive exercises to help you practise the language you hear” (“Listen and

watch”, n.d.). iTunes alsohas an exhaustive selection of radio stations and podcasts useful for teaching and learning listening

Didactical proposal

The explanation above related to how to practice English using online resources provides a source of activities that teachers can use in the classroom.

With video repositories, a useful activity that can be done using YouTube is “Pause and predict”. In this activity students watch a video about a certain situation and while it is playing they combine audio and visual skills in order to understand what is happening. At a critical point in the action the teacher pauses the video and the students guess what follows. The advantages of this activity can be seen in its versatility, any kind of vocabulary can be used, according to the chosen video content. It allows students to interpret situations critically, and practice future tenses. There are some variations that can be implemented with this activity to make it more or less communicative, replacing the speaking with written predictions, interaction in group work, limiting the video to audio for the first prediction, etc. However, listening is an integral part of this exercise.

Another exercise that can be done using video repositories is watching a video, such as “Hello-Adele ASL Interpretation” (Bartholomew, 2016) on Vimeo in order for the students to answer questions about what they hear and see. For example, What is the woman doing in the video?, What is the song about?, Can you identify any vocabulary or tenses?, Can deaf people enjoy music? This is a good exercise for improving listening comprehension and understanding of grammar. It also asks them to express an opinion in a foreign language.

For language exercise websites, simple activities can also be used in the classroom. For example, using the audio “A Trip to Italy” (“English listening”, 2016), the teacher can play the monologue and students can listen and take the test which goes with it. A follow up activity is

that students create their own monologues and ask their classmates comprehension questions. They have a variety of different kinds of colloquial English which students would not otherwise be able to access in the classroom.

As an activity using news websites in the classroom, students can be asked to listen to a news broadcast on a controversial and current topic to prepare a debate or discussion in order to improve their listening comprehension and communicative competence. Another way that teachers can use BBC is by asking students to watch The One Minute World News. They can listen to and identify new vocabulary, give their opinion about the situations and choose a title or headline to expand into a discussion or use for further research.

Finally, one example of how teachers can use British Council podcasts in the classroom is to play them for the students who listen and complete a fill in the gap exercise. This allows students to practice precision listening, and accuracy by identifying small words or phrases in a whole dialogue or discussion.

Discussion and Conclusions

Ma (2010) states that the entire objective of a language is to learn to communicate. Therefore, the resources outlined in this study are the ones that encourage authentic communication.

Literature surrounding not only teaching methods but also learning styles has been scrutinized. Evidently, accepted modern theory acknowledges the existence of several learning styles. Hence, any suggested exercises or resources must ideally appeal to all of these; however, it is seen as impossible to engage with every learning style, since learners are all distinct (Boles, 1996). Accordingly, students should be encouraged to learn autonomously so as they can adapt their learning process to their own style.

Online resources are viewed as a tool for accomplishing this objective. Although as Meskill (1996) says the process of successfully integrating technology in the classroom must be monitored in order to promote interest and define teaching objectives in order to achieve students' goals; nonetheless, it would be essential that an online component be brought into the curriculum. Purely because of the vast number of resources is available online, but also because as Freeman and Hasnaoui (2010) affirm that ICT is the best way to process information and communicate, so it is essential in the 21st century classroom.

Using the aforementioned online resources, listening skills can be practiced, giving priority to the development of language comprehension and communication in general. The positive results of using onlinematerials are manifold. Students are encouraged to be self-driven when it comes to learning a language, since the materials are available both inside and outside the classroom. Traditional materials like textbooks can also be used at home, but these may be considered tedious by the tech savvy younger generation.

Using technology in the classroom with teachers' guidance is one of the outcomes of applying these resources; language learning can happen anywhere the students choose, and not just in class time (Peterson, 2010, p.140). Taking this into account, it is possible for the students to develop their attitude towards language learning by themselves, in particular listening, because as previously stated, there are a wealth of resources at hand, and they can be used solely. Historically, listening could only be practiced under teacher supervision using their audio resources, such as cassettes or CDs which were school property. Although the use of online resources does allow students to take more initiative in their listening practice, it must be noted that for less motivated or struggling students, a move away from traditional teacher-centered listening practice may widen the gap between students with different levels of listening proficiency. As such, many of the exercises previously outlined in the proposal activities are for teacher use in the classroom.

Although technology is adapted to individual use, as previously stated, it is necessary that teachers bring online resources into the classroom so that all students can benefit from the many materials available on the Internet. Teachers need to be able to monitor students' progress, and help them identify new vocabulary and grammar. The activities and websites mentioned above are perfect for classroom use and help students to advance their listening skills.

Nonetheless, it is imperative to implement resources that facilitate students' access to speakers of the L2 other than their teacher, and authentic resources, in an online context. In consideration of this aim, some intended learning outcomes can be mentioned which are a result of learning online. For example, learners can develop a global perspective as they have access to the world via the web; it allows them to identify appropriate online resources to listen to English in context which makes them more involved in their own education. In addition, learners develop critical thinking and reflective thinking skills as they listen to and interpret other's opinions in

discussions and debates about various subjects, even perhaps about technological methods assimilated for learning and teaching.

As a result of using all these online resources, language learners become more conscious (inside the classroom and out) about the functionality of language, its purpose in social and human interaction (Rico & Molina, 2010).

Listening has already been established as an underappreciated skill (Oxford, 1993); therefore, more attention must be given to it, considering its importance in communication which is the main aim of modern language teaching. The greatest resource of our age and the best way to appeal to current and coming generations is by using the internet to teach. The question is how to choose from the plethora of listening resources available online. Based on modern educational theories (SLA, CALL, and Communicative Approach), the resources outlined have been suggested as the most valuable for teachers to implement in their classrooms, to push the agenda of improving listening in our schools, and to enable student's self-study. Online resources used in the classroom are useful to teach listening in context; however, not every classroom has access to that kind of technology. Moreover, some of the most experienced teachers are not comfortable with using technology and we do not want a whole generation of valuable teachers to feel alienated in their own classrooms. Although the teacher's well-being is important in the education system, students experience is still more significant.

Barnes, Marateo and Ferris (2007); Oblinger and Oblinger (2005); (as cited in Peterson, 2010, p.140) point out that students currently enrolled at schools or universities have been labeled the 'new generation', and that Prensky (2001) characterized as native speakers of technological language used in computers, video games, and the internet. The improvement of listening skills relies on teacher's use of these materials which motivate students and help them

learn, and to appeal to this new generation at least some of the exercises used by teachers should be online.

References

- Barnes, K., R. Marateo, & S. Ferris. (2007). Teaching and learning with the net generation. *Innovate* 3 (4). Retrieved from:
<http://www.innovateonline.info/index.php?view=article&id=382> April 1, 2016.
- Bartholomew, M. L. (2015, November 2). *Hello-Adele ASL Interpretation* [Video file]. Retrieved from: <https://vimeo.com/144355064>
- Beatty, K. (2003) *Teaching and researching computer assisted language learning*. New York: Longman.
- Boles, Billy J. (1996). Forward to Kline, J. A., *Listening Effectively*. Alabama: Air University Press.
- Brumfit, C.J., & Johnson. K (Eds). (1979). *The communicative approach to language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chapelle, C. (2005). Interactionist SLA theory in CALL research. In J. Egbert & G. M. Petrie (Eds), *CALL research perspectives* 53-64.
- Chapelle, C. (2007). Technology and second language acquisition. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 27, 98-114.
- Egbert, J., & Petrie, G. M. (Eds) (2005) *CALL research perspectives*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- English listening. Englishlistening.com (2016). Accessed 1 May 2016:
<https://www.englishlistening.com/index.php/listen-to-passages/>
- Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (2005). *Second language listening: Theory and practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Freeman, I., &Hasnaoui, A. (2010). Information and communication technologies (ICT): A tool to implement and drive corporate social responsibility (CSR). Retrieved from

<https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00495968>

Gallagher, E. (2015) Building language skills. Part 1: Listening. Accessed April 4 2016. Retrieved from: <http://mx.unoi.com/2015/10/21/building-language-skills-part-1-listening/>

Hubbard, P. (Ed.) (2009). *Computer assisted language learning* (Vol 1) Critical concepts in linguistics. London: Routledge.

Krashen, S. (2013). Second language acquisition: Theory, applications and some conjectures. Mexico: Cambridge University Press. Accessed April 10, 2016. Retrieved

from:http://www.sdkrashen.com/content/articles/krashen_sla.pdf

Learning styles (2016). Advanogy.com. Retrieved from: <http://www.learning-styles-online.com/overview/>

Levy, M. (1997) Computer-assisted language learning: Context and conceptualization. Oxford: Clarendon.

Listen and watch (n.d). In British council learn English. Retrieved from:

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/listen-and-watch>

Littlewood,W. (1981).Communicative language teaching. Cambrigde: Cambridge University press.

Accessed April 5, 2016. Retrieved from:

<https://books.google.com.co/books?id=LRataYhTQ3gC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Ma, T. (2010). Communicative listening training in English— Features, strategies and methods. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, Vol. 1, (4), 464-472.

McCrindle Research (2006). New generations at work: Attracting, recruiting, retraining & training generation Y. Retrieved from: www.mccrindle.com.au.

Mendelsohn, D. J. (1984). There ARE strategies for listening. *TEAL Occasional Papers* 8, 63-76.

Meskill, Carla (1996). Listening skills development through multimedia. *Journal Of Education Multimedia and Hypermedia* 5(2), 179 – 201. Retrieved from: http://www.albany.edu/etap/files/Listening_skills_dev_Meskill.pdf. Accessed on April 3rd 2016.

Morley, C., (N.D). Listening: Top down and bottom up. Retrieved from: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/listening-top-down-bottom>.

Nemtchinova, Ekaterina (2012). *Teaching listening*. USA: TESOL International Press.

Oblinger, D. G., & Oblinger, J. L. (2005). Educating the net generation. EDUCAUSE, 2-1. Retrieved from: www.educause.edu/educatingthenetgen/

Online resources. (n.d). In Yourdictionary. Retrieved from: <http://www.yourdictionary.com/online-resources#computer#9w6oqWIVAc8pay1w.97>

Oxford, R. (1993). Research update on L2 listening. *System* 21:205-11.

Peterson, E. (2010). Internet-based resources for developing listening. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 1 (2). 139-154.

Petrie, G. M (Ed), *CALL research perspectives* 53-64. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: 9-24.

Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants. *On the Horizon*, (Vol. 9) No. 5.

Renukadevi, D.(2014).The role of listening in language acquisition: The challenges & strategies in teaching listening. *International Journal of Education and Information Studies*. 4, 59-63. Retrieved from:<http://www.ripublication.com>

Rico Martín, A. M., & Molina García, M. J (2010). The use of ICTs to improve communicative skills in a bilingual context: An educational project of the Spanish ministry of education

in Melilla. *ICT for language learning conference proceedings 2011*. Italy: Simonelli Editore. Retrieved from: http://conference.pixel-online.net/ICT4LL2011/common/download/Paper_pdf/IBL40-277-FP-Martin-ICT4LL2011.pdf.

Singhal, V. (2012). Defining second language acquisition. Accessed April 8 2016. Retrieved from: <http://www.brighthubeducation.com/language-learning-tips/70729-defining-second-language-acquisition/>

Statistics Canada (2008). Information and communications technologies (ICTs). Accessed 10 April 2016 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-004-x/def/4068723-eng.html>

Stockwell, G. (2007). A review of technology choice for teaching language skills in the CALL literature. *ReCALL*, 19(2), 105-120.

Technology. Merriam-Webster.com. (n.d.). Accessed 1 May 2016: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/technology>

UNESCO (2002). Information and communication technology in education. Accessed 1 April 2016 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001295/129538e.pdf>

UNESCO (2005). Diagnostic teaching for primary level schooling. Accessed 19 April 2016 from <http://www.unesco.org/education/literacy/doc/overview.pdf>

Vandergrift, L. (1999). Facilitating second language listening comprehension: Acquiring successful strategies. *ELT Journal* 53:168-76.

Zhao, Y. (2003). Recent developments in technology and language learning: A literature review and meta-analysis. *CALICO Journal*, 21 (1): 7-28.