

Running head: TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES FOR TEACHING/IMPROVING LISTENING

USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES FOR TEACHING/IMPROVING LISTENING  
IN SOME RURAL INSTITUTIONS WITH LITTLE ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

Lizeth Paola Chamorro Delgado

Paper submitted as a requirement to opt for B.A degree in English and French

Submitted to the School of Human Sciences in Partial Fulfillment

Linguistics and Languages Department

English and French Teaching Program

University of Nariño

September, 2016

USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES FOR TEACHING/IMPROVING LISTENING  
IN SOME RURAL INSTITUTIONS WITH LITTLE ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

by

Lizeth Paola Chamorro Delgado

Submitted to the School of Human Sciences in Partial Fulfillment

Linguistics and Languages Department

English and French Teaching Program

University of Nariño

September, 2016

## **Nota de Responsabilidad**

Las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en este Trabajo de Grado son Responsabilidad de los autores.

Artículo 1 del Acuerdo No. 324 de octubre 11 de 1966, emanado por el Honorable Concejo Directivo de la Universidad de Nariño.

**Nota de aceptación**

---

---

---

---

---

**ASESOR**

---

**JURADO**

---

**JURADO**

## **Acknowledgment**

I would like to dedicate this work to my treasured family for their unconditional love, support and encouragement; without them I would not have been able to complete this thesis. Equally, I express my gratitude and respect to my advisor Mario Guerrero Rodriguez for his expert guidance, understanding, patience and timely wisdom.

## **Abstract**

This thesis was carried out in order to apply the use of technological tools to improve English listening skill in schools in rural zones that have little access to these services.

Firstly, it will explain what listening is and the importance in develop it. In the same way, it will be explained some characteristics to improve listening lessons, its processes and focused methodologies.

Later, the influence of technology by means of the educational technology, and the phases of application of TICs (Technologies of the Information and the Communications) will be presented.

To complete this work some activities are explained, these can be adapted to teaching or improving listening by means of technological simple tools; this in order for students to be able to practice and progress in their level of proficiency in this skill to comprehend the English language better.

***Key words:*** Listening, Teaching, CALL, ESL, ICT tools, Learning, ESL, Educational Technology.

## Resumen

Esta tesis fue realizada con el fin de aplicar el uso de herramientas tecnológicas sencillas para mejorar la habilidad de escucha en inglés en colegios de zonas rurales que tienen poco acceso a estos servicios

Primeramente se explica en qué consiste la habilidad de escucha al igual que su importancia en desarrollarla. Del mismo modo se explican las características que se deben tener en cuenta para mejorar las clases de escucha, sus procesos y las metodologías enfocadas.

Posteriormente se estudiará la influencia de la tecnología por medio de la Tecnología educacional y se conocerán las fases de aplicación de las TIC (Tecnologías de la Información y las Comunicaciones).

Para completar este trabajo se explican algunas actividades que se pueden enfocar y adaptar a la enseñanza o desarrollo de la escucha por medio de herramientas tecnológicas sencillas; esto con el fin de que los estudiantes puedan practicar y mejorar su nivel de dominio en esta habilidad para comprender mejor el idioma Inglés.

**Palabras clave:** Listening, Teaching, Learning, CALL, ESL, ICT tools, Educational Technology.

## Table of Content

	<b>Pag.</b>
The Listening skill and its importance .....	11
Characteristics to bear in mind for listening lessons .....	12
Table 1. Different characteristics for skilled and no-skilled listeners.....	12
Bottom-up, top-down and interactive processes .....	13
Figure 1. Bottom-up and Top-down processing. ....	13
Figure 2. Interactive processing. ....	14
Methodologies and Approaches related to Listening. ....	15
Audio-lingual method.....	15
The Natural approach. ....	16
Communicative Method of Teaching (CMT) .....	17
Preparing learners for listening .....	18
Technology .....	19
Educational Technology .....	20
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).....	21
Multimedia.....	23
Importance of technology in listening teaching.....	24
Discussions .....	26
Conclusions.....	28
References .....	31



## Table and figure list

	<b>Pag.</b>
Table 1. Different characteristics for skilled and no-skilled listeners.....	12
Figure 1. Bottom-up and Top-down processing. ....	13
Figure 2. Interactive processing. ....	14

## **Use of technological resources for teaching/improving listening in some rural institutions with little access to technology**

Listening is seen as a way to comprehend all the significances of the speech discourse (Richards, 2008 p.3). Its importance resides on how we communicate every day; it means how information is collected, interpreted and produced. Indeed, the skill that takes a relevant role in communication is listening with a 45%; then it is speaking with a 30%; reading with 16%, and finally writing with 9% (Burely-Allen, 1995). Based on this, it may be said that listening is the main source of language input. Despite its importance, it may be told there is not enough listening practice. When listening is not developed enough, learners are more likely to fail in understanding language input and all what it is included in it (accent, pronunciation, phonemes, and so on). Therefore without proper listening skill proficiency, communication could not be possible (Cross, 1998).

On the other hand, to teach listening there are a lot of methodologies that probably most educators are used to apply, but not all of them can be certainly focused on listening practice, for instance Grammar translation and the Silent Method. Likewise due to the complexity listening has and the lack of experience of some educators to teach it, this skill becomes only in difficult problem to be solved (Wipf, 1984 p. 345). In that sense, probably teachers resort to common activities instead of more elaborated and dynamic ones including technology to encourage more active listeners. If there is not a way to fill the gaps in developing the listening skill, then it is possible that learners might not get involved in the real English usage, and it could become difficult for them to comprehend the task that language involves.

In an attempt to improve English proficiency and learning in all Colombian states, the Ministry of National Education (MEN) has implemented two long-term projects: the National Program of Bilingualism (2006-2010), and Colombia, Very Well! (2015-2025). These strategies

were based on making students aware of using English as a communicative tool and as a way to improve their job opportunities (MEN, 2014). In addition to this, due to the wide spreading of using technology in education, especially in English teaching, the Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications (MinTIC) implemented the Colombia Vive Digital project (MinTIC, 2016). Nevertheless, there are still states in Colombia, like Nariño, which are not fully benefited by MEN and MinTIC projects. Many regions of Nariño are rural areas where government policies are sometimes limited or not achieved due to restricted access by transportation issues or illegal armed groups. Due to those negative aspects, students and teachers might not be able to attain the governmental objectives for learning and teaching English, including listening practice.

### **The Listening skill and its importance**

Listening is the ability to understand and identify what the speaker is saying; it includes understanding pronunciation, the meaning, and the speaker's grammar and vocabulary (Howatt and Dakin, 1974). For a good listener, this means he or she should be able to process these points simultaneously. However, developing all what listening represents has been a difficult aspect in English teaching since for some educators this skill is not the easiest to teach, and for students it may represent a challenge to learn it (Ahmed, 2015). This could be because of what is taught in classroom is not as close to reality, where language is handled very differently from its grammatical forms (Cauldwell, 2013). Indeed sometimes classes are developed in a passive way that teachers and students might not pay enough attention to listening as it needs. It may happen when teachers only focus on applying the same method, avoiding the flexibility and practice listening requires. This could be one of the many reasons why students have difficulties in developing listening, and they have to face the expectation of what they learn in class and the reality of the language in the outside world. In this sense, it could be said there is a need for the

student to understand the language in a real use, as it is illustrated by Goh on one of her student's comments, Ying: "*I believe I need to learn what the word sounds like when it is used in the sentence, because sometimes when a familiar word is used in a sentence, I couldn't catch it. Maybe it changes somewhere when it is used in a sentence*" (1997, p. 366).

Considering the reasons, it is pivotal to improve or adapt teaching techniques in class for developing listening by considering some important distinctions.

### **Characteristics to bear in mind for listening lessons**

First of all, it should be necessary to take into consideration two groups in listening proficiency, the skilled listeners and no skilled listeners, as it is explained in the following table by Blasco (2009, p. 112):

<b>Skilled listeners</b>	<b>No skilled listeners</b>
More flexibility of listening strategies	Rely on one or two listening strategies
Use world and discourse knowledge in an effective way.	Depend too much on previous knowledge.
Listen for main points	Listen for details
Not get distracted by unknown words	Distract easily by unknown words and external factors.

***Table 1. Different characteristics for skilled and no-skilled listeners.***

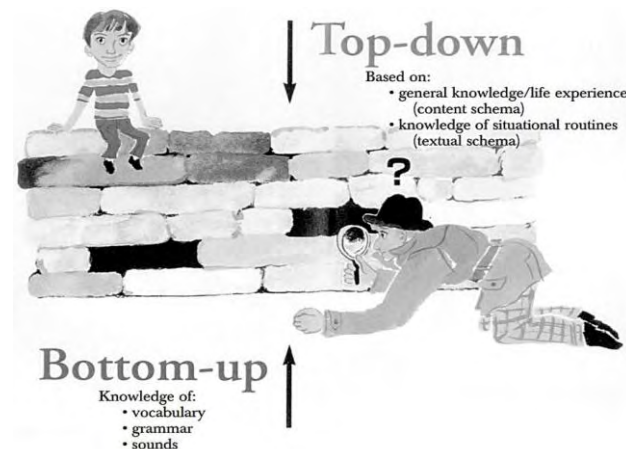
According to the author, once it is possible to recognize those differences the teacher should find ways to fill the gap in listening by supplying more of their training for the no skilled listeners; hence, Blasco (2009) proposes some tips to bear in mind: there should be more *variety in listening strategies* (guessing, predicting, recognition of stress and accent); *comprehend the fragments finding the information in itself* (the genre, year of release, name of actors, cultural concepts, or key words from the fragment); *summarizing information* (questions about the

fragment meaning, short oral explanations, make differences between the main and secondary information; the outcomes obtained are referred by Blasco as *gist*); *focusing on form* (concentrating on the topic that need to be learned, grammatical features, phrases, keywords etc., applying repetition and drilling); and *explanation of the proper use of technology for language learning* (Instructing learners to include technology as a good option to improve their language learning).

Sometimes, it is likely to find students who do not engage in listening easily, for this issue teachers should be aware of other options to be applied, and which are the most effective ways to get the students engaged in the topic and in class tasks. For this, it is recommendable to check how listening works in the following processes.

### **Bottom-up, top-down and interactive processes**

Flowerdew and Miller (2005, p. 24) explained most of techniques or methodologies for listening teaching were based by three processes bottom-up, top-down, and interactive processes. These models are still important nowadays, and understanding their function offers clarity to know how an approach/methodology in listening teaching can be developed. For better clarification of the models/processes, Nunan (2004, p. 27) proposes the following figure.

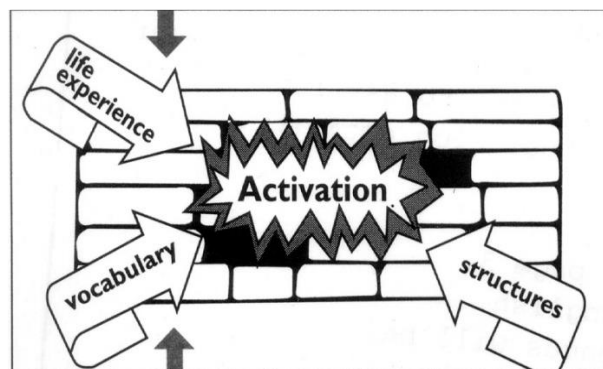


**Figure 1. Bottom-up and Top-down processing.**

Bottom-up strategy focuses on details of listening, - vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, accent, etc.- so the practice of this skill becomes more intensive (Tennan, 2015). Due to its emphasis on language form, bottom-up could be a support to expand lexis for those students who have lower English proficiency. However, it can bring some difficulties since students may only get focus in understanding every single word while listening, and it would take more time than expected to process the information. In addition, the normal speed of the spoken language might be an issue for beginners consequently they may often get lost in the task and find listening difficult.

Top-down process in listening refers to getting the meaning of words based on previous knowledge, it has to do with experiences or general information of the topic – it may be provided by the teacher- (Richards, 1990). In some way it is possible to start with a discussion of the topic or talking about it in class, so students may get a general idea of the listening text (Tennant, 2015). This can be appropriate to guess the context of the conversation, and get the meaning of some words, and be more interested in the situation.

Interactive process for listening is the combination of top-down and bottom-up processes through the application of activities in class (Peaterson, 2001). Meaning that life experiences plays an important role as well to activate previous knowledge and activate what students have “built up” for listening understanding, as it is explained again by Nunan (2004, p. 29) with the following figure.



**Figure 2. Interactive processing.**

In general these approaches cannot be taught separately; instead they work together almost unconsciously, but it depends on how the listeners understanding of the topic (Richards, 2016). However, some activities for top-down and bottom-up approaches should be made in class to intensify listening process, for example; using flash-cards while playing a recording can help in both cases and students may become more familiar with the context of the story and the topic. Now, it is quite important to see briefly some methodologies that were or are still focused on developing the listening skill.

### **Methodologies and Approaches related to Listening.**

In English teaching there have been a wide range of methodologies and approaches which were really useful at their time, but it is possible to adapt these methodologies to activities in class using ICT tools too. It is essential to follow their principles and depending on the creativeness of the teacher, it may possible to create modern lessons.

#### **Audio-lingual method**

Also called the Army Method, this was the first methodology based on theory, and it was applied in the outbreak of World War II for the armies to have a good oral proficiency level in the languages of their enemies or allies (Taylor, 2016). Rather than focusing on understanding the meaning of words, the purpose of this method is to acquire grammar structures and patterns. The models of language were elicited, drilled and tested until the student's spoken outcome in the foreign language is given in an automatic way (Richards & Rodgers, 1986 p. 45).

The learning principles shape the methodological practices and become in the scaffolding for the psychological bases of Audiolingualism; those principles are the following (p. 51):

- Learning a foreign language is the formation of automatic behaviors. It means that good responses are obtained only by good habits which were reinforced by memorizing phrases or dialogues.

- Language skills were separated emphasizing first on listening, speaking, and finally reading and writing.
- It is more important the analogy than analysis for a better basis of language learning. It means grammar rules were not taken into account until pupils have enough practiced a pattern in different contexts, and they have an awareness of the analogies included. In this case drilling allows students to improve the creation of analogies.
- Linguistic and cultural context are essential for understanding the meaning of the words said by the native speaker. This includes the cultural aspect of the foreign language.

After some time Audiolingual method decayed due to the monotonous drills and repetition, adding the fact the teacher's role was the center of the class. Although today, this method is still used but mostly for individual lessons. It could be considered that lessons, from teacher's perception, are simple and the student knows in advance how the class is going to be taught.

### **The Natural approach.**

Richards & Rodgers (1986, p. 129) explains how Terrell and Krashen in 1983 established their proposal in the naturalistic principles of language learning in young children. This approach, first prepares learners emotionally for learning through *input* (exposure). This is a stage of attention where the student develops listening skill before producing language; to get a *comprehensible input* the student generally uses written material or other kind of help (pictures, movements, animations, etc.).

In this sense, it is possible to start with listening according to language proficiency of the learners. There is no mean to say listening should be taken isolated, because every skill is linked to each other, but according to the natural approach what can be heard is the clue for understanding a language; for example when students watch a video with subtitles on it, they can hear and read at same time they get some vocabulary and expressions, as well as they can



noticing the context in which the conversation takes place. If instructor wants to get to a higher level of proficiency, then it is possible to make students listen to the dialogue or recording so as to predict what is happening, as well as let them create the context where the event takes place.

### **Communicative Method of Teaching (CMT)**

Nowadays, the center of teaching and learning is having a dynamic class through communication (Liu, 2015). This kind of interaction is based on the fact that learners are emotional and thinking beings instead of passive ones, and that is why the interaction among students is crucial to develop a communicative competence (p. 15). Despite CMT being a famous method, some teachers are not familiar or have not enough experience when applying it in class. The typical approach is having students sit together and giving instruction to do the task in group, but some recommendations by Johnson & Johnson (1994) should be considered to implement this method in class successfully:

- **Individual accountability:** Each student of the group takes part in the activity and participates.
- **Social skills:** These skills need to be taught by applying small activities, first in couples, before starting in a more complex work piece of in bigger groups.
- **Group processing:** Students discuss what type of actions were helpful or not in the process of doing the task, and how they can change that behavior for future works (1994)
- **Positive interdependence:** The realization that all the members of the group need to be dependent each other in order to fulfill the task (Frey, Fisher & Everlove, 2009). For this, all the work needs to be distributed in each student of the group.
- **Face-to-face interaction:** It is possible to say this is the point which has more influence in communicative competences of language learning, since interaction among the members of the group may build up a sense of help for sharing new and old knowledge.

All this point should be applied in the first lessons so as to learners get used to the way of work for the rest of the classes. On the other hand, when material is presented to the class it does not have to be too easy nor too difficult to understand, so it builds a level of comprehensibility, as Krashen (1985, p. 3) explains in his well-known formula  $i + 1$ ; In addition, the significance of the materials should be considered, it means interesting sources and topics ought be relevant for students. Knowing this information it is possible to create a plan, following basic steps to create a productive listening lesson.

### **Preparing learners for listening**

It is possible that most students may have some gaps of background knowledge; in this case the educator can become a supporter who, at same time, allows learners to start with listening by themselves (Cutting, 2002 cited by Holden, 2008 p. 305). At the beginning, it may become difficult for students to get adapted to listening to a new language, tempted to lose motivation and interest; these situations call the teacher to encourage their students, and support classes with new ideas for practicing listening but it is equally important to consider some basic steps and some listening bases to be applied in class.

In the initial stages, students require some help from teacher's part for comprehensible input so before starting an activity, it is necessary a warm-up for preparing students in what they are going to hear, for example, explaining vocabulary, background, situations, etc. Then, the teacher should establish the type of information required and details -objectives for listening-. Lastly, the task is explained as well as the steps to be developed. Now that the basic steps above were clarified, the basic points for listening teaching in classroom mentioned by Field (2009) should be considered:

- Pre-listening: This is the introduction for the lesson. The teacher motivates learners to listen and focuses their attention toward the topic.

- Extensive listening: The first time the recording is played, students get the main idea of the situation through general questions (number of speakers, situation, etc.)
- Questions or tasks: Presented before the extensive listening. These in order to ensure students are focused on what they hear.
- Intensive listening: The recording is played again, and students obtain responses. The accuracy is checked through those answers.
- Language of the recording: Teacher and students examine the phrases which contain unknown lexical items.
- Final play: It helps to remind students what has been heard in class.

Finally, after contextualizing the importance of listening, studying their qualities and how it works as well as some steps to implement in class, it is necessary to explain the benefits of technology in education, and clarify the use of those aids for improving and teaching listening in rural areas.

### **Technology**

Technology has a worldwide recognition and use that there is not a straight definition for it. However, a less neutral meaning of technology is made by Lane (2006), who agrees that technology has to do with comprehending how knowledge is applied creatively to organized tasks, involving people and machines that have viable objectives. This definition is shared by the author Mesthene who explains that technology is “the organization of knowledge for the achievement of practical purposes” (1970).

Nowadays, technology is available almost everywhere and changes dramatically the way people do research, find information, and communicate with people from other countries; for this reason, teachers and students have to manage at some level their technological skills in order to have more interest and draw attention, in this way and eventually classes come to be

more efficient too (Kasapoğlu-Akyol, 2010 p.228). In complementing the author's idea, it is possible to say technology becomes a great ally in developing the foreign language skills because it provides different benefits which are mentioned by Pérez Basanta (2000):

- Authenticity
- Confidence, interest and motivation
- The sociolinguistic level, and pragmatic level of language (words interpretation in different ways based on the situation)
- Nonverbal features, (body language and gestures)
- More participation and involvement
- Real vocabulary acquisition

Despite the fact some teachers dislike or fear technology due to bad experiences or considering it is time consuming to apply in class, it is possible to mention they have at least some sort of technical skills and they should be encouraged to start to apply at least the basic technological resources (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007 p. 10); besides, there are lots of web pages which can offer support in planning lessons with different activities suggesting the use of images, audio, video, etc., and they may offer some guidance for the course book too (p. 11).

It should be said that using technology as supporter, for assuring a better learning process and dynamic in class, will not mean it is going to replace teachers' knowledge or capabilities, books and traditional materials. On the contrary, technology can be taken as a complement which may offer help at hand in English lessons, and this is how it plays an important role in Education.

### **Educational Technology**

Defining educational technology is a difficult topic and has reached an abstract level since it has been changing over time with the development of technology. Despite of this, Association of Educational Communications and Technology (AECT, 2001) based on Seels & Richey's

work, explains: “*Educational technology is the study and ethical practice of facilitating learning and improving performance by creating, using, and managing appropriate technological processes and resources.*” (1994, p. 1, 9). Teachers who decide to use technological devices in class should consider understanding the proper techniques to make listening learning more efficient and possible for practicing.

Commonly, most learners have access to mobile technology, which sometimes can be very useful in classroom or at home, for example, cellphones and Wi-Fi. In the case of teachers, a computer room can be used, a video room, or a lecture hall. Nonetheless, all of that change when some rural areas do not have complete access to these technological tools. Regarding this problem, MinTIC (Ministerio de Tecnologías de la Información y las Comunicaciones de Colombia) has implemented the Nariño Vive Digital, creating more than 40 digital rooms, the project was meant to close the technological gap in those places and educational institutions too (Casas, 2013).

### **Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**

This term can be explained in all that involves communicative tools: television, radio, cellphones, applications, software, hardware, etc. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is gaining progressively importance in classroom (Dudeney & Hockly, 2007). Some of the important reasons can be explained in the following way: First, a new generation is growing up with technology, so it is easier to bring the outside world into the classroom. Secondly, English is used as lingua franca even in technological contexts. For teachers it is a great help for assessing and somehow it improves vocabulary. Meanwhile for students ICT is useful for practicing language with downloaded materials or finding data on resource books or websites, in that sense some students may become teachers themselves (p. 7). In addition, ICT may help to

create more learner-centered classes and integrate topics from real world to help in listening lessons.

On the other hand, mastering the basic skills in ICT as well as including its benefits as part of the center education is the main goal (UNESCO, 2002 p. 8). For implementing ICT tools in English teaching, and in this case listening three important stages (p. 16) must be considered:

- **Discovering ICT tools:** It refers to identify the type of devices or services, as well as to learn their uses and functions. The most common devices could be cellphones, active or passive speakers, USB, memory cards, tablets and laptops. This stage also has to do with basic skills in ICT and literacy too.
- **Learning how to use ICT tools:** After recognizing what type of devices can be used in listening lessons, it is essential to know how to apply them in different aspects and when it is necessary to teach a specific topic.
- **How and when to use ICT tools:** In this stage, the teacher recognizes when ICT tools could be of help. It also implies choosing a suitable device adapting its usages for the kind of activity is going to be applied. In this sense the purposes of the listening lesson can be achieved.

There is a fourth stage which involves specialization in the use of ICT tools. This step concerns a deep study into the science of ICT; therefore it mostly has to do with professional education rather than overall education, so this stage is dissimilar in comparison to the previous stages for teaching or improving listening through ICT tools.

ICT is linked through multimedia since it becomes a branch that involves dynamic sources that offer students and teachers new ways for learning and teaching listening respectively. The information that is available about a foreign country and in a foreign language can be used in many ways to provide different activities or assignments. Somehow multimedia provides more

context and cultural background information that includes all types of spoken speeches, accents and pronunciations too.

### **Multimedia**

Multimedia can be mentioned as a variety of archives which involve sound, text, animation or images. In a general view, it is beneficial to use multimedia because it can supply the limitations that books may have and promotes autonomous language learning as well as participation and cooperative work (Benson, 2001). Students, then, could get more interested in finding information by themselves on Internet or offline apps by using different devices, such as mobiles, laptops, or computers; therefore the teacher is not the only source of information (Beatty, 2003 p. 50).

It is possible for some educators, who are not familiar with multimedia, they see this form of teaching just as a matter of “pick up” information through it, but from another point of view, information can be experienced by students, thus it can help to improve their listening. Besides, it is more likely to implement a better use of multimedia through common resources. Using multimedia in listening can reduce stress and anxiety that work as *affective filters* (Richards & Rodgers, 1986 p. 133) and may block learner’s mind to be active learners. The most common resources for improving listening could be video, audio, and pictures.

In the case of videos, they are one of the most feasible tools to apply for practicing the four skills, so listening is included. The video should be selected in cases in which it can be helpful to English lessons; otherwise it may be a distraction to students. When video materials are applied, it is more likely to have beneficial attitudes towards learning and makes a more dynamic class; including that videos can put listening in context in a very advantageous way. It is possible to make more activities in group.

Audio is a versatile tool for language learning. Despite being less technologically advanced, it offers good opportunities to interpret information. One of the reasons is, for example, it could provide an interface for visually disabled learners. Moreover, audio could offer a major concentration on the spoken language, which is better in those cases that it is preferable to avoid distractions videos can bring sometimes (Tsinghong, 2010 p. 471).

Finally, pictures can be one of the most practical gears to teach, since images can represent literally the meaning of the word. Flashcards are well-known for representing phrases or vocabulary significantly. Mixing audio and pictures could be helpful to explain vocabulary, pronunciation, and meaning at the same time students get more interested in more visual activities.

So far multimedia could be represented as a great tool for teaching and learning languages. It may provide variety in class, flexibility and more authentic materials for students to get more into real language. Apart from this benefit, it could be said that multimedia, with proper teaching techniques, can help students since they do not present common characteristics for learning, this is why multiple intelligences are mentioned by Gardner (1983) to recognize the characteristics and include dynamic activities to supply those needs (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

### **Importance of technology in listening teaching.**

An indication of listening competence relies in the assumption that the learner has the ability to answers properly questions or instructions of a task properly; in that way, there is an appropriate goal for the class (Field, 2009). What technology or multimedia offer are new opportunities for authentic materials and tasks facilitating the learner's listening comprehension; especially in the early stages of acquisition for a better management of the rest of the skills following the natural process. This can be justified by Krashen's Input hypothesis where the



essential approach to learn a language is by understanding language input; thus, information can be internalized and acquisition may occur (Wu, 2010 p. 137). Part of that understanding is based on what student listens to, and it is quite necessary to develop this skill in order to have a better output in speaking or writing. That is why using ICT tools is a good option to practice listening and to be expose to other skills, always bearing in mind what kind of activities are going to be applied and what kind of skills are mean to be developed.

When it is possible to work with audiovisual elements there are more probabilities to expect responses from the learner's part even after the class (Ur, 1984). The importance to get responses is explained by Tsinghong (2010, p. 465) in three aspects. First, the need to create an overt response that provides motivation for the students to listen. Second, that response guides students to some type of meanings that can help them in the listening activity. Third, the variety of responses obtained can be useful to create a base for conceptualizing the main meaning of the audio or text. Finishing the lesson, for example, it is possible to reconnect the ideas and work the new vocabulary with short essays, discussions, or in some cases role plays.

The idea of how to implement a listening class was explained above when explaining how to prepare learners for listening lessons in the point of view of Field (2009); however, this plan should be flexible foreseeing moments when it is possible to apply short active responses, between or during parts of the recording rather at the end.

## Discussions

Technology and ICT tools could become a great ally for English lessons, especially for improving or teaching listening. Nowadays, technology has widespread in more places and has become part of our daily life; therefore it is more likely to find more usage of transportable technology in classroom. However there are still exceptions in some public institutions, when lacking this valuable tool, teachers and students miss the opportunity to benefit from it in classroom; for example, technology can promote more variety in learning styles as well as more interaction among students; besides, students are more familiarized with new technological tools, therefore they get more engaged in learning if they are allowed to use them. Additionally with technology educators and learners get more active in the teaching and learning field, so teachers become in encouragers and guiders and students become more responsible by taking control of their own learning. As a result motivation in classroom is also improved.

Even though in Colombia there are policies implemented for educational and technological improvement, there still are rural places which are not fully covered by this service or it presents some backwardness due to low budget issues or not appropriate infrastructure, including also transportation issues and armed groups. Despite all these negative factors to apply technology in the classroom, teachers might use their creativity and still take technology to their classes by using some portable and rechargeable devices, such as speakers, USB pen drives, memory cards, radio, MP3 players, laptops as a dynamic support in classes, etc. The main objective is applying technology to make students learn and practice listening and/or speaking. For this, teachers should consider creating or adapting different and creative activities by using the aforementioned devices in the classroom, according the students' needs. Besides, teachers have to own some affordable technological resources, such as a tape recorder, a portable MP3 player, a portable speaker (one that has enough sound power to be listened in classroom), a portable

video projector, a laptop, etc. It is important to take into account that all the aforementioned devices must be rechargeable so the teacher can use them without electrical power issues. These technological resources combined with multimedia activities would be of great help in any teaching and learning process.

Following, some suggestions to use multimedia and some technological resources in the classroom are given:

1. Sound only video (Laptop / tablet, and video): applied for students to predict what is happening in dialogue. For first time, learners listen only to the audio. Then, they predict what the conversation is about; discuss the scenario, and guess who could be the speakers. The video is played for teacher and students check if their predictions were right.
2. Listen and draw (Tape recorder/active speakers, and CD/USB): this activity may help reinforce work group. The instructor plays the audio for students to pay attention to the description, and teacher clarifies doubts. Then learners listen to the recording and start to draw.
3. Describing the pic (active speakers/mobile, two pictures, and recording): In this activity students reinforce listening to discern characteristics mentioned about an image. The teacher shows first the two pictures to the class, and tapes them on the board. Then, the recording is played for first time to make students listen to the description, in the second or third time they find out which picture is described.
4. Video recording (mobile camera, camera, laptop): Teacher settles the topic for this activity, it can be related to tv shows, cartoons, advertisements or documentaries. It is important to clarify the limit time of the video. This kind of activities requires work

group work, so it is more likely to practice the main skills. In the same way, their peers are able to listen and pay attention to each presentation.

5. Drawing a story (recording of a short story, pieces of paper, images, laptop/speakers, or mobile): The educator clarifies first some vocabulary for the students to understand better the recording. After that, the students organize in couples, then the story is played for the first time and learners pay attention. The couples get ready for drawing while listening to the story. The process is repeated twice, and the couple with the best drawing close to the description of the story is the winner.

With these activities both teachers and students may have easier access to technology, no matter where the institution is located. Including simple devices and tasks can bring a great support for teaching and learning listening and a positive change in class.

### **Conclusions**

Listening can be considered one of the most important skills in English learning, since it takes the most part in communication, and provides significant input for English learning, and especially for the speaking skill (Burely-Allen, 1995). In this sense, technology can be an important ally, since it could help to facilitate the teaching and learning processes for listening. However, it is necessary to bear in mind that: some teachers may be afraid or refuse to incorporate technology in education; particularly those who have been teaching with traditional methods all their life. Sometimes it is believed digital technology can largely affect discipline and attention in classes; contrary to this opinion, most of teachers, students and experts agree that technology has improved the way of learning and teaching.

In terms of difficulties to implement technology is possible that some imported solutions are implemented to fit in certain places but not always in the most challenging environments where

there is little knowledge of the real problematic, so it is always helpful to trying to orient the application of TICs.

Listening and technology combined offer more opportunities for students to hear various voices in the recording, accents, pronunciation, phrases, idioms, etc., so pupils do not need to only depend on the educator to improve their communicative skills. Additionally, listening can help students in real circumstances, where they will need to listen to, answer, and understand a variety of voices from real life events and from native language speakers.

It is also important to consider technology is not the only solution to teaching and learning problems. Maybe for some activities using recordings or any other resource students may not adapt to the speed of the dialogue. The natural spoken English could be considered too “fast”, instead of moderate and simple to grasp. Therefore learners have to figure out what is being said during the recording, contextualize the information, so the teacher should provide repetitions for a better dialogue comprehension and explain the incomprehensible parts. However, as language teachers we should think of the classroom of tomorrow. Applying technology and multimedia can make a great difference in the environment of teaching and learning (Abunowara, 2014).

When technological resources are applied properly it can help deepen the learning process because they can foster group work, interaction, and active participation. In the same way, teacher can find other ways to teach in order to support different learners’ needs. It is essential to remember that the best technological resource is the one the teacher is most familiar with, and it is possible to afford too, maybe the most common are cellphones, and speakers. The overuse of technology is not the best option to increase listening proficiency; instead it is better to think of the devices which may facilitate the kind of activities to be applied in classroom. Some teachers tend to give up when the first attempts at using technology may fail, but to finally succeed it is necessary to learn from those experiences.

Depending on the teacher's creativity it is possible to adapt old technologies, such as television or radio for listening practice or learning. The most common is presenting subtitled videos or songs so that students get gradually used to real language use, at the same time it highlights pronunciation and promotes reading skills. Radio is one of the basic options for teachers to get more focus on listening, commonly if short dialogues or podcasts are presented to the class, and in some cases teachers can find off-line material or programs which can simulate an environment with internet connection.

Somehow, some techniques in implementing technology to improve English skills, and in this case listening, are not a definite solution for the issues faced by teachers in remote or low income areas. However, it depends on the educator's perspective to find the most appropriate ways to carry out things with even the simplest device, like cellphones. Most times it is a matter of practice and experience to finally establish a good knowledge to target students' needs and apply the right activities combined with devices. This endeavor for changing positively the way of teaching help lessen the impact of lack of technology and it assures a more equal form to have access, at least, to the basic services and help that TIC's offer in education, especially in remote areas.

## References

- Abunowara, A. (2014). Using Technology in EFL/ESL Classroom. *International Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies*. 1(2), 1-18. Benghazi University, Libya
- Ahmed, R. (2015). Five essential listening skills for English learners. *Voices Magazine*. Retrieved from: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/five-essential-listening-skills-english-learners>
- Anderson, A. & T. Lynch. (1988). *Listening*. Oxford: OUP.
- AECT. (2001) *What is the knowledge base?* Bloomington, IN: Association for Educational Communications and Technology. Retrieved from: <http://www.aect.org/standards/knowledgebase.html>
- Beatty, K. (2003). *Teaching and Researching Computer-assisted Language Learning*. New York: Pearson.
- Benson, P. (2001). *Teaching and Researching Autonomy in Language Learning*. Harlow: Pearson.
- Blasco, M. J. (2009). CALL-enhanced L2 Listening Skills – Aiming for Automatization in a Multimedia Environment. *Indian journal of applied linguistics*.35 (1), (p. 107 – 120). New Delhi: Bahri Publications
- Burely-Allen, M. (1995). *Listening: The forgotten Skill*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). U.S: Wiley & Sons
- Casas L. M. (2013). *Nariño Vive Digital*. Retrieved from: <http://www.mintic.gov.co/portal/604/w3-article-2003.html>
- Cauldwell, R. (29<sup>th</sup> January, 2013). *Jungle listening. High- and low-tech approaches to teaching the stream of speech*. British Council Seminar for teachers. Seminar held in Bournemouth, UK. Retrieved from: <http://www.speechinaction.org/research/publications/>
- Dudenev, G. & Hockly N. (2007) *How to Teach English with Technology*. London: Pearson Longman.
- Field. J. (2009). *Listening in the Language Classroom*. UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Frey, N., Fisher, D. & Everlove, S. (2009). *Productive group work: how to engage students, build teamwork, and promote understanding*. Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD.
- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind: The theory of the multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gardner, H. (1999) *Intelligence Reframed. Multiple intelligences for the 21st century*. New York: Basic Books.
- Goh, C. (1997). Metacognitive awareness and Second language listeners. *ELT Journal*, 51(4), 361-369. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/51.4.361>
- Howatt, A. & Dakin, J. (1974). *Language laboratory materials*, ed. J. P. B. Allen, S. P. B. Allen, and S. P. Corder
- Holden, Wm. R. (2008). Extensive listening: A new approach to an old problem. *Journal of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Toyama*. 49, 299-312.  
Retrieved from: <http://www.hmt.u-toyama.ac.jp/kenkyu/kiyo49/william49.pdf>
- Johnson, D.W. & Johnson, R.T. (1994). *Learning Together and Alone: Cooperative, Competitive, and Individualistic Learning*. Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon
- Kasapoğlu-Akyol, P. (2010). Using Educational Technology Tools to Improve Language and Communication Skills of ESL Students. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)*. 4 (2), 225-241.
- Krashen, S. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis. Issues and Implications*. UK: Longman.
- Lane, A. (2006). *What is technology?* Retrieved from:  
<http://www.open.edu/openlearn/science-maths-technology/engineering-and-technology/technology/what-technology>
- Liu, C. L. (2015). Application of Communicative Method in EFL Listening and Speaking Class. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 10 (5), 1-4.
- Mesthene, E. (1970). *Technological Change. Its Impact on Man and Society*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- MinTIC. (Ministerio de Tecnologías de la Información y las Comunicaciones de Colombia) (2016). *El plan Vive Digital*. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.mintic.gov.co/portal/vivedigital/612/w3-channel.html>



- MEN (Ministerio de Educación Nacional). (2014). *Colombia, a hablar inglés con la nueva propuesta del Ministerio de Educación*[Article]. Retrieved from: <http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/cvn/1665/w3-article-343403.html>
- Nunan, D. (2004). *Practical English Language Teaching*. [Figure 1]. New York: McGraw-Hill Education
- Pérez Basanta, C. (2000). Cognitive processes in L2 listening: Implications for teaching and learning. In F. J. Ruiz de Mendoza (Ed.). *Panorama Actual de la Lingüística Aplicada. Conocimiento, Procesamiento y Uso del Lenguaje* (p. 1811-1820). Logroño: Universidad de La Rioja.
- Purdy, M. W. (1999). *Listening in Everyday Life: A Personal and Professional Approach*. Germany: University of Münster.
- Richards, J. C. & Rodgers T. S. (1986). *Approaches and methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Richards, J. C. (2008). *Teaching Listening and Speaking: From theory to practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Saricoban, A. (1999). The teaching of listening. *The Internet TESL Journal*. 5 (12). Retrieved from: <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Saricoban-Listening.html>
- Seels, B., & Richey, R. (1994). *Instructional technology: The definition and domains of the field*. Washington DC: Association for Educational Communications and Technology.
- Taylor, A. (2016). *The Audio-lingual Teaching Method* [Web log post]. Retrieved May 8, 2016, from <http://blog.tjtaylor.net/method-audio-lingual/>
- Tsinghong, Ma. (2010). Communicative Listening Training in English – Features, Strategies and Methods. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*. 1 (4), 464-472.
- UNESCO. (2002). *Information and Communication Technology in Education: A curriculum for schools and programme of teacher development*. Retrieved from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001295/129538e.pdf>
- Ur, P. (1984). *Teaching listening comprehension*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- Wipf, J. A. (1984). Strategies for Teaching Second Language Listening Comprehension. *Foreign Language Annals*, 17 (4), 345–348.  
doi: 10.1111/j.1944-9720.1984.tb03240.x
- Wu, Wenquan. (2010). The Application of Input Hypothesis to the Teaching of Listening and Speaking of College. *Asian Social Science Journal*. 6 (9), 137-141. Retrieved from: <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ass/article/viewFile/7276/5616>