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**FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACIÓN**

**CARRERA DE PEDAGOGIA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y  
EXTRANJEROS**

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en Pedagogía del Idioma Inglés.**

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**Theme:**

ESL Cyber Listening Lab and listening skills

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Ambato – Ecuador

2024

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I, Dra. Mg. Elsa Mayorie Chimbo Cáceres, holder of the I.D No. 1802696458 in my capacity as supervisor of the Research dissertation on the topic: “ESL Cyber Listening Lab and listening skills” investigated by Miss Evelyn Tatiana Moreta Pachacama with I.D No. 1804359477, confirm that this research report meets the technical, scientific and regulatory requirements, so the presentation of it is authorized to the corresponding organism in order to be submitted for evaluation by the Qualifying Commission appointed by the Directors Board.

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## DECLARATION PAGE

I declare this undergraduate dissertation entitled "ESL Cyber Listening Lab and listening skills" is the result of the author's investigation and has reached the conclusions and recommendations described in the present study.

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## **DEDICATION**

### **TO:**

God, for giving me the strength and wisdom to go ahead and not let me fall or get up in the face of any obstacle. To my family for being with me and supporting me in my decisions. To my mother Rosa, who from the beginning gave me her support, and to my friends, who always gave me their trust, loyalty, and beautiful friendship.

Tatiana.

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**RESUMEN**

En el presente estudio, el objetivo era investigar el impacto de la plataforma ESL Cyber Listening Lab en las destrezas auditivas. Se trató de un estudio descriptivo y no experimental con una muestra de 73 estudiantes, de los cuales 24 eran hombres y 49 mujeres. Los datos se recogieron mediante una encuesta con 19 ítems en escala de Likert y tres preguntas abiertas. La fiabilidad de la encuesta fue validada por expertos y por el alfa de Cronbach (0,838). Como resultado de este estudio, se intentó dar respuesta a tres preguntas de investigación: tipos de actividades de la plataforma, estrategias y subhabilidades que los estudiantes utilizan en el aula de EFL. Basándose en los resultados, se descubrió que en la plataforma ESL Cyber Listening Lab, a los alumnos les gustaría escuchar audios de vocabulario, audios con fines académicos, historias de la vida y temas controvertidos para ampliar su vocabulario y mejorar su comprensión auditiva. Además, la plataforma ESL Cyber Listening Lab comparte similitudes con las de otras plataformas como ELLLO, BBC Learning English y ESL Videos. Sin embargo, los estudiantes expresaron su preferencia por el uso de la plataforma Duolingo para mejorar sus habilidades de escucha. Además, se han identificado diversas estrategias que los estudiantes emplean para mejorar su capacidad de comprensión oral, como la toma de notas, la predicción del contenido y la repetición activa para optimizarla. Los resultados revelaron que la mayoría de los estudiantes utilizan la escucha para captar lo esencial, la escucha para obtener información específica y la escucha para inferir la actitud de los oradores, que se emplean colectivamente para mejorar la comprensión auditiva.

*Palabras clave: Plataforma ESL Cyber Listening Lab, comprensión auditiva, estrategias de escucha, subhabilidades de escucha.*

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**AUTHOR:** Evelyn Tatiana Moreta Pachacama

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**ABSTRACT**

In the current study, the aim was to investigate the impact of the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform on listening skills. It was a descriptive and non-experimental study using a sample of 73 students, of whom 24 were men and 49 were women. Data was collected through a survey with 19 Likert-scale items and three open-ended questions. There was a validation of the reliability of the survey by experts as well as by Cronbach's alpha (0,838). As a result of this study, three research questions were attempted to be answered: types of activities from the platform, strategies, and subskills students use in the EFL classroom. Based on the results, it was found that on the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform, learners would like to engage in listening to vocabulary audios, audios for academic purposes, life stories, and controversial issues to expand their vocabulary and improve their listening comprehension. In addition, the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform shares similarities with those on other platforms such as ELLLO, BBC Learning English, and ESL Videos. However, students stated that a preference for using the Duolingo platform to enhance their listening skills. Additionally, a variety of strategies have been identified that students employ to improve their listening skills, including note-taking, predicting content, and active repetition to optimize their listening skills. Findings revealed that most students use listening for the gist, listening for specific information, and listening to infer the attitude of the speakers that are employed collectively to enhance listening comprehension.

*Key words: ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform, listening comprehension, listening strategies, listening subskills.*

## CHAPTER I

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 1.1 Investigative background

Technology and listening skills have become a focal point of research in recent years, driven by the profound influence of digital advancements on our communication. As the world has become increasingly interconnected, the ability to listen effectively has gained importance. Research in this domain involves various aspects, including how technology can enhance or hinder listening comprehension, the role of digital distractions, and the development of innovative tools and platforms to improve listening skills like smartphones, social media, and multimedia content. Individuals are exposed to auditory information, and technology also impacts our capacity to actively listen, discern meaningful signals from noise, and adapt to different listening contexts.

Moreover, this research work supported previous studies from different sources, such as academic works, books, scientific articles, and journals that are similar to this topic. Most of the papers are from 5 years ago and are from different countries such as Indonesia, Turkey, and Thailand. In addition, the population varies, e.g., in high schools, universities, English departments, and specialist teachers. These studies were considered a scientific foundation for the ESL cyber listening lab and listening skills.

San (2020) conducted a study investigating the impact of specific listening strategy instruction on English language learners' general listening performance and level of metacognitive listening strategy awareness. The study examined the effects of strategy-based training such as Randall's listening lab, quizzes, and instructions on foreign language learners. The population occurred at an exclusive collage in Istanbul, Turkey, with 39 students participating in the study. It was a quantitative study. An experimental group (20) and a control group (19) were managed, both of which scored an A1 on the CEFR. The pre-test and post-test were given to the two groups. The experimental group received auditory education using several auditory-based techniques over 8 weeks. Additionally, they developed specific techniques using digital tools. The results of the study demonstrated that explicit strategy-based education improved the listening comprehension and metacognitive awareness of university students at the A1 level.

Lestari and Sihombing (2022) noted that the research examined how teachers and students may use Randall's ESL website as one of the possibilities to improve their English listening skills. An Indonesian university conducted the study with 10 students from the third semester. The research also employed a qualitative method and Alexander Fedorov's media education philosophy. The information used was collected from the official "Randall's ESL" website. In addition to furthering the investigation, researchers used information from various sources, such as journal articles and conference papers. The audio's content is not the only thing that learners learn; they can also learn about the topic in any cultural setting and become more independent. Finally, this research, "Randall's ESL," was the best method for enhancing both teachers' teaching methods and students' listening skills.

The research study investigated by Wahyuningsih et al. (2018) aimed to determine the effectiveness of Randall's ESL cyber listening lab and listening comprehension. The researchers employed experimental design and quantitative research, using a pre-test and post-test as a tool. The investigation had an experimental and a control class. In each group, there were 20 students in SMA PRISMA Kota Serang's eleventh grade. Furthermore, the results show a significance level of 5%, so the null hypothesis is accepted and shows that Randall's ESL cyber listening lab is helpful for instructing students in listening comprehension.

Miranty (2017) conducted a study to discover how the learners feel about using Randall's ESL cyber listening lab in the interpretive listening lesson. In order to do this, 40 second-semester university students from a public institution in the Indonesian province of Banten participated in the study. This study used a qualitative research methodology and was examined using descriptive statistics. Information was gathered from a survey given to 40 students on how the students felt about using ESL lab. It shows that the students concur that Randall's cyber had a favorable impact on the language lab's teaching and learning process and may be used as a resource to make listening lessons engaging and difficult. Additionally, Randall's ESL cyber listening lab is strongly advised for other instructors and students who want to practice listening outside of the classroom because, in this study, students' perceptions of Randall's' ESL cyber listening lab were excellent.

Alternatively, Aziz et al. (2021) conducted a study using authentic materials to improve listening skills in ESL classrooms and determined that using real content helped students' listening abilities. This study used classroom action research as its research approach (CAR). The methods used to gather qualitative data were observation, interview, and questionnaire, as well as pre- and post-tests as a quantitative data analysis tool. The information was gathered from the second-semester of English department of an Indonesian University. The results of the study demonstrate how realistic materials help students' listening abilities, as students' listening comprehension has improved in the following ways: they could locate and identify the general information and draw conclusions.

Del Portillo and Bernal-Ballén (2022), as stated in this study, created a didactic technique based on popular audio and video platforms, including Flipgrid and the ESL Cyber Listening Lab, to help a sample of students with this skill. The sample, made up of fifteen students from an intermediate English course, was chosen based on convenience and was a descriptive study. The technique was broken down into three sections: level of listening, learning activities, and a final test. The results revealed that pupils' pragmatics, comprehension, and intonation have all improved over time. The findings also showed that the employment of alternative methods, mediated by new technologies, seems to be as effective as traditional teaching and that utilizing distant tactics rather than in-person ones is believed to improve English learning.

Fadlilah and Ma'rifah (2022) aimed to use Quizizz Audio and Randall's online listening lab function by second-grade students at Jiarawanon-Utis 4 School in Loei Province, Thailand, to improve their listening abilities, and it was a mixed approach. In this study, classroom action research was separated into two cycles: planning, action, observation, and reflection are the four steps in each cycle, which is composed of three sessions. Moreover, data were gathered through observation, questionnaires, hearing tests, and quizzes. In addition, the results revealed that the children's listening abilities had improved; the average varied between 70% and 90% in the two cycles. As indicated by their responses to the survey, the results of the surveys also showed that students provided good feedback regarding the use of the Quizizz audio feature and Randall's cyber listening lab to improve their listening abilities.

Most research has a mixed study that demonstrated the application of pre- and post-tests for quantitative data and questionnaires, surveys, and interviews for qualitative data. Therefore, the investigations were demonstrated to be effective in improving listening skills. The present research is similar to previous studies and has a positive impact on listening comprehension and global understanding.

## **1.2 Theoretical foundations of variables**

### **1.3 Independent variable**

#### **Information Communication Technology (ICT)**

In accordance with Gokhe (2019), the term "ICT" stands for "Information and Communication Technology," which refers to a broad category encompassing various technologies used for information processing, communication, and sharing. ICT is not the creation of a single individual or entity but rather a collective term that represents the convergence of several technological fields, including computing, telecommunications, and information systems. Moreover, ICT refers to technologies that give access to information via telecommunication and play significant roles in fields like education, business, etc. However, ICT components, including the internet, wireless networks, phones, and other channels of communication, are connected to it. It means that we will have opportunities to include ICT in teacher education programs (Ratheeswari, 2018).

ICT is a technological discipline that uses information management to address economic, social, and cultural issues. Therefore, ICT helps to learn in a fundamental role that allows the teacher to play in more creative environments and is more useful in the educational field. The impact of new technologies is trying to reform their educational programs with the purpose that technology helps for good learning. For example, the exchange of information and different approaches to learning, among others, are essential points for students who have the opportunity to learn and apply in the future.

Information and communication technology is now an essential component of educational change. As mentioned above, ICT contributes to the transfer of information, which helps to verify the use of technology in educational institutions that can enable both teachers and students to learn in a correct way and using a conventional teaching method. Moreover, the equity of the use of technology supports active and collaborative learning as



an integrative approach to teaching. However, in the digital era, with the aim of increasing the accessibility of teaching students and the benefits of learning within the current globalization with different information resources. Fitria (2021) mentioned that educational platforms allow learners to control their learning processes to improve language skills.

In addition, ICT has become a fundamental pillar in modern society because it covers different types of technologies that help transmit or receive information, such as digital television, email, laptops, etc. Also, around the world, they dominate all types of concepts related to education, along with different English skills.

### **ICT and education**

According to Gokher (2019), the educational system proposes a new school curriculum to provide industrial health, teacher training, and ICT, which must be prioritized in government entities so that the strategy specifically helps the relationship between technology and students. There are four major stages in the way that teachers and students learn about and build confidence in using ICT, according to studies of teaching and learning in classrooms around the world. In addition, technology provides different educational resources, and teachers have easy access to online data, digital libraries, and websites that help create resources for their lessons. It also helps improve teacher practice by creating interactive lessons or implementing more resources in class lessons. ICT is very useful and beneficial for education in general (Amutha, 2020).

Henderson (2020), students' use of ICT in a traditional classroom improved learning effectiveness. Integrating technology into lessons provides an opportunity for more active participation. All students have different learning styles; however, the use of platforms helps with different skills and strategies. Access to different platforms provides valuable information such as concepts, examples, and theories, among others. Nowadays, modern learning is one of the most used in class because students can develop skills like problem-solving, leadership skills, critical thinking, and motivation. In addition, students and teachers have the facility to create educational presentations, innovative material, write emails, and even chat with people from other countries.

### **Authentic audio material**

Authentic materials provide information to students that they need for their acquisition; therefore, the purpose of these resources is to help them develop a relationship with the language a meaningful connection with the language that relates to a real context. According to Abdullaeva and Matyazova (2020), the use of English in the real world is not only learned through an academic activity, but the language can be useful for their professional future, travel, or any goal that they set out to achieve. Nowadays, English is a widely used language, and ESL with native texts, audios, and videos, among others, is good material that teachers and students use.

The authentic material was designed by native speakers. It is very beneficial because it helps people, such as students, businesspeople, and teachers, learn the language by listening to its pronunciation and learning to use new vocabulary. Language students use it as a resource to develop listening skills, but it is also key to employing these resources to build other skills, such as speaking. In addition, the student begins to adapt to the pronunciation of the word and thus begins to develop a foreign language (Mashrablovna & Sherzodbekovna, 2023).

Authentic materials contribute to the development of cultural competence as learners gain insights into the social and cultural aspects of the language they are studying. Cardenas (2020) argued that the importance of these authentic materials facilitates learning by increasing the motivation of students because they provide accurate information about the cultures of these countries. These materials can vary from newspapers, videos, conversations, audiobooks, podcasts, and others. Nowadays, they can be found on different websites or applications that can be downloaded from a computer to a cell phone to project these resources inside a classroom.

The Pearson Test of English (PTE) is a clear example of how using authentic materials from different English-speaking sources, such as the UK and Australia, helps provide excellent material that helps learners prepare for different listening tests (Considine, 2018). Consequently, this same author mentions that to find suitable material, they use BBC or VOA, as these two sites offer material for non-native speakers to have a faster understanding and comprehension.

Candelario (2022) mentioned various types of authentic audio material as examples:

**Newspaper or magazine articles:** This is a resource to help students have a greater amount of information that is intended to inform, entertain, and persuade, so they will have true information that is useful in their daily lives.

**Social networks:** Are very useful nowadays; people use them for different things, for example, work, education, or hobbies; all of this has a purpose during their learning.

## **Web 2.0**

Web 2.0 guarantees students a didactic process where collective intelligence is disseminated through networks, and the participation of users encourages collaboration in active learning within educational institutions and teaching faculties (Caliskan et al., 2019). In the same way, education experts discuss the different strategies that are most innovative for users to access information and enhance learning. Also, Web 2.0 focuses on the learning and teaching of connected theories of cognition and instruction. However, learning can be approached as traditional-behaviorist, cognitive, traditional-behaviorist, cognitivist, and constructionist. This technology has the potential benefit of allowing students to create groups to share and collaborate in a certain way. Teachers and students, through the use of Web 2.0 applications, create interaction and communication between teachers and students.

In addition, the application of Web 2.0 provides tools that create a pedagogical approach between collaborative learning and social growth, requiring new teaching and learning skills. As mentioned above, the new era of technology creates new learning methods that are student-centered and autonomous, fostering interactivity, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. The use of different applications develops high-level competencies such as metacognitive skills and problem-solving (Unal, 2019).

Web 2.0 tools in education have benefits over traditional learning using digital content (Hassan et al., 2021). Additionally, these tools are flexible communication tools that are used to develop specific content that supports students in being inspired, and formal learning activities facilitate collaborative knowledge building. Other tools, such as multimedia platforms, are effective in the teaching and learning experience and address the different challenges of higher education.

### **Web 3.0**

Web 3.0 is the third generation of the Internet, following the static Web 1.0 and the interactive Web 2.0. Web 3.0 is a more intelligent and decentralized web that utilizes artificial intelligence and machine learning to understand and respond to users' needs. This new phase of the internet is characterized by a more intelligent and decentralized web where data and semantics play a significant role (Driscoll, 2022).

According to Aljawarneh (2019), Web 3.0 wants to organize the body of knowledge using artificial intelligence technology, and it encourages students to create content that combines their analytical and artistic skills. Teachers may now take their pupils to virtual locations using Web 3.0, making for a more engaging and immersive learning environment. Students also spend time obtaining information and have the freedom to learn whenever their active participation. As a result, students will gain greater independence, freeing professors to concentrate on smaller groups.

Web 3.0 will make the internet more intelligent, precise, and personalized, all of which have positive effects on education. The ideal tool for education is Web 3.0. Students will be able to learn anytime and anywhere as a result of this ongoing transition to Web 3.0 and simple internet access (Rawashdeh et al., 2021). Students will stop only depending on the information that teachers supply and start to become more independent. As a result, consolidating knowledge should only take a brief period of time, and Web 3.0 is the finest educational instrument.

### **Web 2.0 vs Web 3.0**

Web 2.0 is the second generation that allows different functionalities in Internet services, including reading and writing. On the other hand, Web 3.0 allows improvements in services such as better communication and provides users with the security of knowing that their data is protected (Geroni, 2023). Additionally, Web 2.0 and 3.0 have more specific approaches, such as identifying certain types of content that allow the user to interact. The evolution of the Web continues to transcend as new improvements and configurations appear.

A modern approach to the internet is called Web 2.0. However, its infrastructure has some issues relating to the protection of personal data. Also, with its semantic infrastructure,

privacy controls, sophisticated metadata system, and interaction with cutting-edge technologies like advanced analytics and artificial intelligence (AI), Web 3.0 represents a promising advancement over Web 2.0.

Additionally, with Web 2.0, it connects people, while with Web 3.0, users have more decentralization in social networks or websites. Web 2.0 also controls all privacy information and access to websites; however, Web 3.0 allows the exchange of data from entities that safeguard the data several times (Yasark, 2023). On the other hand, Web 2.0 had a wide range of web applications from which people could learn about different functions, but Web 3.0 offered a perfect combination of web technology and knowledge based on the artificial intelligence mentioned above (Geroni, 2023).

### **Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab**

Randall's cyber listening lab is an online platform designed to help English speakers of other languages improve their listening comprehension skills. In 1998, the ESL cyber listening lab was created by Davis Randall. While the author was teaching in Japan, he had certain questions about how to improve his listening skills because, in the 1990s, there were not as many resources to help his students improve their English language skills. In addition to creating this platform, he created some of them, for example, Daily ESL and Train Your Accent, among others. The objective of creating these platforms is to help with the four skills. The platform also included writing, reading, and grammar exercises (Randall, 2023).

Over the years, learning and teaching have evolved in terms of pedagogy. Students can face all kinds of challenges, but most of them do not have logical reasoning, which is why Randall created investigative activities where students must complete the different activities, and then by drawing conclusions in this way, students can improve their language skills significantly.

The ESL cyber listening lab is one of the platforms that people use as an efficient means for listening comprehension. Wahyuningsih et al. (2018) claimed that people all over the world can use it to improve listening comprehension, whether it is for students or teachers, among others. Also, this site helps teachers use it as a technological resource to teach in an interactive way to students in elementary, primary, high school, and university.

According to Krajka (2001), the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform is very surprising because there is a multitude of material found on the page, as well as constantly adding new ones that attract students to perform it. This author mentions that it also has the possibility of downloading audio and video and has a section of tips for teachers on how to use it in specific activities before and during the activity. It also has multimedia tutorials describing the development of the Randall listening lab and how educators can create their own English language learning exercises that help students' listening comprehension with authentic material resources, which play an important role in learning. For example, EFL students use these platforms to improve their listening skills, like the ESL cyber listening lab, which is a platform that students have the facility to access freely on any type of device. On this platform, they find different activities that help improve skills (Ho & Nguyen, 2022).

Randall (2023) argued that the platform has additional listening sections that accompany it, like Daily ESL and ELLLO, among others, which aid students in reading, listening to, and discussing commonplace scenarios. Develop your ability to discern the accents of native speakers. The main page of Randall's platform for the cyber listening lab is divided into levels and themes; users must choose a category from the list on the website. Each exercise includes transcriptions, contents, and levels of difficulty. Additionally, students have the choice to read transcriptions of the discussions, and the platform includes other tasks in the vocabulary practice part, including sentence and vocabulary matching, multiple-choice questions, gap-fill exercises, mixed-up sentences, and a section called language games. Interactive games are available for users to practice their vocabulary. Every activity has different learning obstacles that encourage students to learn English in a lively manner.

The platforms have certain advantages and disadvantages that affect the students or the people who use them; therefore, it is very important to mention them. (Randall, 2023) mentioned that students who use Randall's virtual listening lab can learn at their own speed and repeat dialogues until they fully comprehend them. However, it discusses a few drawbacks of using this kind of website for pupils, such as technical issues like a slow Internet connection or the person not having access to the Internet, as well as difficult activity

instructions. Some students lack access to personal technology, and some kids have a lot of homework to finish up after school, leaving them with little time to hone their listening skills.

Randall's Cyber is also improving and extending vocabulary, practicing the conversations, and observing the script of the conversation. This platform offers more than a hundred conversations with multiple-choice quizzes that help check the student's listening comprehension. It is divided into six sections, such as general quizzes activities with three different levels and topics, basic listening quizzes like activities heard on a daily day, listening quizzes for academic purposes, 20-minute ESL vocabulary lessons, learning and life tips, and long conversations with real video (Wahyuningsih et al., 2018).

#### **1.4 Dependent variable**

##### **English language learning**

In accordance with Al-Sharqui and Abbasi (2020), communication is very important for human beings to acquire and learn in all areas, especially in the way they communicate with each other. Therefore, the second most widely spoken language in the world is English, because people learn it for educational, work, and social purposes. There are various ways to learn or improve your skills in the English language. However, it is not easy for people to acquire learning, which is why deficiencies begin in different areas. They also depend on age, methods, and motivations that affect the learning of a foreign language, but if the necessary strategies are applied, they can manage their own learning.

English language teaching (ELT) refers to the difficulties that students have speaking English in context. All language-learning programs exclude the teaching of cultural background; instead, they all place a strong emphasis on the development of skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). On the other hand, comprehending the target culture encourages awareness of the use of language in international communication while also improving communication abilities (Ali et al., 2015).

According to Panggabean (2018), English language learning still requires improving the learning process, as English is a foreign language that students acquire; therefore, they should be aware of what method they should use for certain content to be learned during a course or a class. Some of these methods are considered difficult, but if the students adapt to

a precise method, the teaching is simpler, and there is a great chance that they will learn and grasp L2 faster. Additionally, Lestari and Wahyudin (2020) argued that English language teaching is a phenomenon that involves the exchange of ideas, attitudes, and experiences. Consequently, the study of English requires qualified teachers with an adequate methodology to build an appropriate teaching process and educators who can recognize the different types of students, their learning styles, and their knowledge difficulties. Also, motivation is an important factor for students to learn a second language and become more confident when learning English.

### **Blended learning**

The term blended learning was developed by Clayton Christensen at Harvard Business School in the 1990s and early 2000s (Cronjé, 2020). According to this term, it is the combination of teaching in traditional classrooms and different platforms that enhances the skills and experiences of the students. Blended learning also offers students the opportunity to adapt their experiences or skills to meet their individual needs.

Educators can create well-rounded blended learning environments that leverage technology to enhance traditional instructional methods, providing students with a flexible, interactive, and adaptive learning experience. According to Kumar et al. (2021), blended learning is the process of teaching the same students, content, and course using both traditional classroom methods and online learning. Additionally, there are programs that combine traditional classroom instruction with totally online learning. It is a “thoughtful fusion of face-to-face and online learning experiences” (Garrison & Vaughan, 2007).

Moreover, other terms for blended learning include hybrid or mixed-mode learning. These instructional design systems, which make use of a variety of teaching and learning experiences, are implemented in various ways through by different teachers, programs, and schools. Mixed-mode learning has essentially limitless potential variants.

The concept of blended learning acknowledges the benefits of both in-person and online instruction, aiming to create a learning experience for students. Kumar et al. (2021) suggested three main models of blended learning:



Classroom engagement is the first model of blended presentation and interaction, which is supported by outside-of-class, online assignments. For instance, the flipped classroom is a typical illustration of how students use podcasts or other online resources.

The second is the mixed block model (sometimes referred to as a program flow model), in which a series of tasks, or "blocks," is organized to include both face-to-face and online study. For example, a course of students has few opportunities to learn in the classroom; therefore, their studies are intensive, with online tutorials and group presentations in the classroom.

The third model, which includes both synchronous learning (such as online tutorials or classes) and asynchronous activities (such as discussions, debates, or forums), can still be referred to as blended learning.

### **Receptive skill**

Receptive or passive skills (reading and listening) are contrasted with productive skills (writing and speaking), which are used to acquire new knowledge of the foreign language. These skills play a supporting role in the development of skills (International House, 2021). It is a challenging challenge, especially when we communicate with a native; sometimes they do not articulate the words well or are not connected to the idiomatic language. Additionally, by using authentic material such as television, books, magazines, and music to develop a large vocabulary, resources can also be adapted for ESL students and provide exposure to real language use.

Receiving language through the ears is referred to as "listening" (Cimermanová, 2020). Recognizing speech sounds and turning them into words and sentences is a requirement of listening. We used our ears to hear individual sounds when we listened (letters, stress, rhythm, and pauses). Likewise, listening in any language necessitates concentration and effort; it is a skill at which some people need to put in more effort than others. People who have trouble concentrating are often bad listeners when listening in a foreign language necessitates significantly more concentration. In addition, the objective of this skill is not to teach grammar and vocabulary but to ensure that students know how to interpret and understand audio, conversations, texts, articles, etc. Therefore, it is a procedure

that can be combined with language teaching and also establishes a communicative approach that helps the interaction between teacher-student and student-student (Isma, 2018).

According to Brown (2018), receptive skills are more important than the modes of performance; reading and listening comprehension must be judged by looking at the test-taker's response. For this reason, they receive various perceptions through their senses, so listening is a passive activity and speaking is active (Magyar et al., 2022). Meanwhile, growing up, the ability to listen develops day by day, which makes learning more productive. The same author considers that it is an ability that identifies and understands what other people say, for example, their accent, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and the meaning of this same application of different activities and listening skills.

### **Listening skills**

A specific type of language is listening. It is one of a language's four skills, for example, speaking, reading, and writing. Effective message reception depends on one's ability to listen, which requires active participation on the part of the listener. It also requires a sender, a message, and a receiver; it combines listening to what someone else says with active participation by the speaker (Djabborova, 2020). Additionally, it is the psychological process of absorbing, focusing on, deriving meaning from, and reacting to spoken and/or nonverbal cues. As a language ability, listening calls for a desire to comprehend another person, a spirit of acceptance and respect, and a willingness to try to see things from another person's perspective.

Listening is the ability people utilize most frequently in their daily lives. Speaking, writing, and reading abilities all start with listening comprehension. It is crucial to actively listen or to pay close attention to what you are hearing in order to improve your listening abilities (Bite, 2021). Make it a habit to watch videos and movies in a foreign language and to listen to audiobooks, podcasts, news, songs, etc. However, listening is sometimes seen as the hardest skill. This is due to the fact that in ELT, teachers frequently give priority to speaking, reading, and writing abilities. Although the students are aware that listening comprehension is difficult to learn, they frequently disregard it. In the field of education, especially for students, this becomes a problem. Additionally, things got worse because people began to believe that just because someone can talk well, they can also communicate

well. Some individuals think that their ability to speak, write, and understand English will be evident in social situations if they have learned the language (Lestary, 2019).

### **Importance of listening skill**

Indeed editorial team (2022) mentioned three important reasons to develop listening skills:

- 1. Building relationships:** Showing interest when communicating helps you build and maintain relationships in different places, such as work, school, and socially. This helps build trust and avoids misunderstandings between colleagues.
- 2. Learning new skills:** It is important to learn new things, and it is beneficial to improve your listening abilities by orienting yourself or following clear instructions.
- 3. Performing effectively:** Listening and following instructions can improve people's performance and avoid mistakes.

### **Listening subskills**

According to Azeez and Bajalani (2018), in English, students use listening to make sense of the listening. There are six listening sub-skills: listening for the gist, listening for recognizing attitude, listening for the meaning of words, listening for details, listening for the speaker's purpose, and listening for specific information (Spratt et al., 2011).

- 1. Listening for gist:** involves a focus on a concept as a whole rather than on specific details or separate facts. It is one of many listening techniques that aims to respond to fundamental inquiries regarding the main theme, subject, and purpose of a text.

Listeners are not required to listen to collect precise details or answer questions about them. Furthermore, it is a kind of skimming to determine a text's general topic and important ideas; therefore, the interactional purpose is necessary when listening to the text and is not expected to interact with it (Siegel, 2018).

- 2. Listening for specific information:** Azeez and Bajalani (2018), when listeners desire to find a specific piece of information, this sub-skill is the most practiced and developed. Students know ahead of time whatever piece of information they need to identify to complete the assignment when practicing their listening sub-skill.

Listeners can choose to ignore information that is irrelevant to them. Weather forecasts, events, conversations, and dialogues are among the most typical types of information that learners need when practicing listening for specific information.

Learners are also looking for certain facts or specific information, so they employ keywords or phrases in the question to help them pay attention to important words pertinent to the thing you're listening for.

**3. Listening for detail:** Azeez and Bajalani (2018) argue that listening for detail is a method of obtaining information from any audio or speech source. Filling gaps is the most common task for developing and practicing the sub-skill of hearing for detail. Students who are listening for details must focus on each word in order to fully understand. In the hearing for detail subskill, listeners are asked for information such as explanations of terminology, the sub-skill of listening for detail.

Listening for details is a sub-skill that helps pupils understand the context of various actions because students do not know what information from the activities used for the development of worksheets, they cannot afford to ignore anything from the activity, and detailed listeners must focus on the entire activity to understand as much information as possible in order to complete the task.

**4. Listening for attitude and opinion:** refers to recognizing details of spoken language and comprehending the speaker's perspective by teaching them to listen for the speaker's attitude or opinion (such as disagreement or uncertainty) and then infer the speaker's intentions. Attitudes are not innate; rather, they are learned through an individual's experiences during the socialization process and experience for a certain amount of time. For example, the speaker may express likes, dislikes, or concerns to determine if the speaker feels impressed, enthusiastic, or bored about the topic (Taysi, 2019).

**5. Intensive listening:** the analysis of the language is a key clue. It can take a lot of time and is frequently monotonous. To ensure that they properly comprehend the book, students have to analyze it to understand every word, phrase, sentence, expression, and grammatical structure (Turkdogan, 2023).

- 6. Extensive listening:** this method focuses on listening broadly and understanding the gist of audio. This is referred to as listening for gist in the context of language learning. There is no need for further information if you can comprehend the key points of a document (Turkdogan, 2023b).

### **Listening comprehension**

Listening comprehension gives valuable insights into how to improve listening skills (Yin, 2016). Learners may find it challenging to master the skill of listening comprehension, which may provide teachers with opportunities to adapt their listening tasks to more active ones. As a result, in the field of second language acquisition, listening skills and exploratory components of emotive listening comprehension have gotten a lot of attention. This is why, in order to keep students' attention, listening comprehension exercises should provide relevant practice. Also, it can be broken down into a variety of distinct sub-skills and is described as a process of understanding communication in both a first and second language. It is classified as a problem-solving activity (Lissimo, 2019). The importance of teaching is considered because listening comprehension is a passive process that involves the ability to hear, understand, decode, etc., resulting in a collaborative discourse that they build between students and teachers.

According to Brito (2016), during the learning process, students may encounter several difficulties, for example, the speed of the speaker; they cannot always repeat the same thing, which means that their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary is basic; therefore, it is very likely that they do not understand the meaning of a speech conversation, among others. It is suggested that, in order for the student to have better listening comprehension, it is recommended to find the appropriate material according to his or her level of comprehension. Listening comprehension can be formulated from the definition of comprehension itself (Syahabuddin & Rizqa, 2021). The measurement of listening comprehension is an important factor in the assessment of a person's understanding of a second or foreign language.

Valencia (2021) mentioned that listening comprehension is considered one of the skills of the English language since using authentic materials such as podcasts encourages excellent work. Also, it offers the ability to understand and build their own idea of the information heard, so students would learn and master a foreign language. However, it is

very complex when wanting to master it to perfection, taking into account the lack of auditory retention and the different contractions of the language, such as the use of colloquial language, rhythm, intonation, etc.

In the English language instruction process, the listening comprehension process is crucial. As a result, it is a communicative act that crosses linguistic and cultural barriers while also re-expressing what has previously been sent in an output language in a target language (Sangnok & Jaturapitakkul, 2019). Additionally, to establish the listening comprehension-interpretation link, it is necessary to look into the factors that influence both processes in order to find overlaps that may be used to explain how both processes occur on a metacognitive level.

### **Strategies of listening**

According to Bite (2021), people are better able to comprehend and retain what they have heard when listening tactics are used. You can divide listening strategies according to how the listener interprets the information.

**Bottom-up** strategies involve utilizing as many low-level cues as possible, such as the way that sounds are combined to form syllables and words that are then combined in texts or dialogues. Also, it focuses on structure and shapes. Students acquiring English utilize this exercise to improve their listening skills. For example, listen for specific details, predicting, drawing inferences, and summarizing.

**Top-down** strategies refer to taking full advantage of the circumstances and your knowledge. Based on your comprehension of the circumstances, contexts, texts, discussions, phrases, and sentences, you can comprehend what you hear. For example, listen to the main idea, recognizing word-order patterns.

### **Listening stage of the lesson**

Spratt et al. (2011) mentioned three important steps that follow in a listening lesson:

Before starting, the class usually begins with a warm-up in any context. The purpose of this step is to motivate learners and get them ready for learning by activating their bodies

and minds. Instead of beginning with difficult grammar or vocabulary problems, it is crucial to gradually introduce them to the learning environment.

**Introductory activities:** helping the students anticipate what they hear and increase their chances of success in any given task, for example, key vocabulary or questions to activate their knowledge of the topic. Also, to stimulate curiosity, develop self-confidence, and improve comprehension because it is one of the more difficult abilities to learn, teachers find a solution to introduce a previous activity before listening to audio, video, or conversation.

**Main activities:** These are a set of tasks students complete while listening to a passage to demonstrate their grasp of what was heard, like activities to develop listening skills for details, gist, and comprehension. Additionally, it provides the opportunity to detect certain errors during the listening activity, and at the end of the lesson, they can be given feedback on the activities.

**Post-task activities:** consist of the primary goal of encouraging students to consider their listening experience. These exercises, which involve expressing thoughts and having discussions about the subject, are carried out after the teacher has successfully finished the pre-listening and while-listening activities. Ask students to listen to something occasionally, such as a tale, a song, or an explanation. This offers students the chance to relax while listening to a foreign language and enjoy the experience. It is suggested at the end of the lesson that you use the information learned through listening to build other skills like speaking or writing.

## **1.5 Objectives**

### **1.5.1 General objective**

- Determine the impact of the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform on listening skills.

### **1.5.2 Specific objectives**

- To analyze what kind of educational platforms that provide listening activities are used in the EFL classrooms.
- To identify the different strategies that students use to develop regarding listening skills.
- To examine the different sub-skills that students use for listening skills.

## **1.6 Fulfillment of objectives**

The objectives were achieved by implementing the survey and collecting data for the three research questions. It was essential to introduce students to a brief introduction of the ESL Cyber Listening Lab and listening skills, allowing students to identify the types of activities, strategies, and subskills needed to develop listening skills. The survey consisted of 22 questions on a Likert scale and was organized in three stages, with each stage consisting of one open-ended question. The survey was designed for students at the beginning levels of the Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros Program.

The answers to the three open-ended questions were essential, providing all kinds of opinions and at the same time being crucial to identify the students' shortcomings in the use of educational platforms and listening skills, such as top-down and bottom-up strategies, the sub-skills within the EFL classroom.



## CHAPTER II

### 2.1 Materials

The research work is based on resources such as human, physical, and technological. The main focus was to determine the impact of the ESL cyber listening lab platform through a survey. In addition, the participation of the beginner-level students of Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros Program at Universidad Técnica de Ambato was important to carrying out the survey. Finally, data was collected using Google Forms, and SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) was used to present and examine the research results.

#### 2.1.1 Instruments

For this research, the survey was created and applied to 73 students. The survey was divided into three important research questions: What kinds of activities from the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform, are used in the EFL classroom? What are the different strategies students use to develop listening skills? And what are the different subskills students use for listening skills?

First, the survey was validated by Cronbach's alpha with 0,838 and included a total of 19 items using a Likert scale and three open-ended questions. It was structured in three sections based on the specific objectives; the first one focused on the types of activities that EFL classroom students use in listening, like the ESL cyber listening lab platform with 10 items and one open-ended question. The second section focused on the different strategies to develop listening skills with 5 items and one open-ended question, while the third section had 5 items and one open-ended question, focusing on the sub-skills. A survey is an essential tool for learning about knowledge, attitudes, and practices. Additionally, surveys should contain a defined research question or questions and use high-quality, crucial survey items that will attract the interest of the intended audience (Story & Tait, 2019).

#### 2.1.2 Population

Students from the beginner levels of Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros career at Universidad Técnica de Ambato, with a total of 73 students. There were 24 males and 49 females, ages 18–25; all of them are Ecuadorian. On the other hand,

participants were selected for prior knowledge of the English language; nowadays, it is a mostly important language and provides big opportunities with labor work or education, especially in the use of platforms to improve their language skills. They also had different technological devices, like laptops and cell phones.

**Table 1**

*Population*

| <b>Population</b> | <b>Participants</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Male              | 24                  | 32,9%             |
| Female            | 49                  | 67,1%             |
| Total             | 73                  | 100%              |

*Note:* Beginner-level survey students

### **2.1.3 Procedure**

The research was carried out in a detailed manner, with procedures for the two variables and previous information on others. This research was supported for the collection of information such as books, magazines, and reports, as well as technological means such as online platforms and bookstores such as Research Gate, ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and Springer, from the perspective of the use of educational platforms like ESL Cyber Listening Lab on listening skills.

The bibliographic research was fundamental to the creation of the survey; the specific objectives were a crucial point for the three research questions that covered the pertinent information about the two variables. Moreover, the three research questions were considered, taking into account key themes, strategies, and types for the survey, and the three open questions were incorporated; therefore, the participants contributed valuable ideas to the research.

The survey was subjected to a validation process to verify its reliability, and to check it, a pilot test was conducted with ten participants who completed the survey. The responses were carefully reviewed, and Statistical Package Software (SPSS) was used to check the results. A value of 0.838 was obtained in Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which indicated a

high reliability of the instrument and that it could be applied to the designated population. After the validation phase, the survey was administered to the first-semester students, and before applying it, they were given a brief explanation of the topic, objectives, and research questions, and they had a better understanding of what the survey was about. Finally, the teacher in charge of the class shared the survey link. Students had 30 minutes to complete the survey and provided different points of view on the three research questions reflectively and sincerely based on their previous experience.

The data collection was rigorously analyzed in the SPSS program, and tables were made where the item and the mean of each one, as well as the reliability of each one, while the open-ended questions were analyzed manually and each of the answers was read to identify patterns and keywords. The results contributed to the validity of the knowledge of the different types of listening activities to improve listening skills in the EFL classroom; therefore, in the bibliographic research, the implementation of the survey and analysis ensured more credibility of the study within the academic field.

## **2.2 Methodology**

### **2.2.1 Quantitative approach**

This research study applied a quantitative approach to investigating phenomena through numerical data and statistical analyses. This approach aims to uncover patterns, relationships, and trends within a particular population or sample. Mehrad and Tahriri (2019) argue that the main goal of a quantitative research design is to control how a population interprets the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable or consequence variable. In addition, it involves structured data collection methods, such as surveys, experiments, observational studies, and the clear formulation of research questions, to gather information that can be quantified and analyzed using statistical methods, allowing for precise and replicable interpretations.

### **2.2.2 Descriptive research**

The research employed a descriptive method, which is a simple means to describe things in terms of events and circumstances (Taherdoost, 2022). It attempts to either define their views or use observations to investigate the association between the phenomena by

doing systematic research on them. The primary purpose of descriptive research is to provide a detailed and accurate representation of the subject under investigation. Clark (2019) stated that it is often used to answer "what," "who," "where," "when," and "how" questions rather than seeking to explain causal relationships, as is common in experimental or correlational research. Researchers in descriptive studies typically gather data through methods such as surveys, observations, content analysis, and content coding, with the goal of summarizing and organizing the collected information to present a clear and comprehensive overview of the research subject. Further, descriptive research essentially offers an in-depth analysis of the topic, which is vital for informing future studies, the formulation of policies, and strategic planning in a variety of domains, including the social sciences, marketing, healthcare, and education. It is especially helpful for laying the groundwork for a more in-depth study or directing the process of decision-making when researchers want to present an accurate but fair picture of a topic of interest.

### **Research questions**

- What kinds of activities from the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform are used in the EFL classroom?
- What are the different strategies students use to develop listening skills?
- What are the different subskills students use for listening skills?

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Analysis and discussion of the results

This chapter is about the analysis and discussion of the results based on the survey applied to 73 students using an instrument that is divided into three important research questions; therefore, it is taken as a starting point for the survey to measure the perceptions of the students. The data collection was processed through SPSS to obtain the mean and tabulations. The questionnaire is structured on a Likert scale (almost always, always, sometimes, almost never, and never), and the three open-ended questions.

- What kinds of activities from the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform are used in the EFL classroom?
- What are the different strategies students use to develop listening skills?
- What are the different subskills students use for listening skills?

**Table 2**

*Types of listening activities*

| <b>Item</b>   | <b>Mean</b> |
|---|-------------|
| In the English class, I use educational platforms for my listening activities.  | <b>3,77</b> |
| I listen to audios to develop my listening skills in class.   | 3,82        |
| I listen to live broadcasts to improve my listening skills. (Online streaming media in real-time)                           | <b>3,18</b> |
| I listen to audios for academic purposes to develop my listening skills.  | 3,53        |
| My teacher uses vocabulary audios to improve listening comprehension.   | <b>3,92</b> |
| I use vocabulary audios to complement the listening activities.   | <b>3,68</b> |
| I listen to audios in which people talk about life stories to complete a short quiz.  | 3,34        |
| I listen to English idiom audios to practice listening skills in class. (For example: kick the habit = give up a bad habit) | <b>3,26</b> |
| I listen to audios where native speakers use authentic English (one minute of English) to improve my listening skills.      | <b>3,55</b> |
| I like to listen to podcasts to improve my listening skills.  | 3,59        |

*Note:* The following Likert scale was used to measure the answers: 1. Almost always, 2. Always, 3. Sometimes, 4. Almost never, and 5. Never.

## **Analysis and interpretation**

Research question: What kinds of activities from the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform are used in the EFL classroom?

The results of the study show that the activities of the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform indicates that the majority of participants use vocabulary audios to improve their listening comprehension in the EFL classroom, with a mean of 3,92. They also listen to audios to develop their listening skills in class, with an average score of 3,82. Therefore, they use different types of audio for their auditory development, while the use of educational platforms in English classes, with an average of 3,77 allows teachers to know if students have interaction with additional resources and activities to improve their listening skills. In addition, the vocabulary audios are used for a complementary listening activity with a mean of 3,68, and the audios they use are from native speakers (one minute of English) with an average of 3,55. This type of audio allows students to improve their skills and is closer to understanding and hearing the direct pronunciation of a native speaker. The types of listening activities vary in personal, academic, and preferential interest. Furthermore, activities like English idiom audios practice listening skills with an average of 3,26. These types of activities are unconventional as they are not used within dialogues or conversations. Additionally, live broadcast audios does not improve listening comprehension skills with an average of 3,18 because students do not have a significant interest in this activity and prefer to use another type that they can reproduce as many times as necessary.

Based on the results, it can be inferred that students use different activities on the platform, but the use of vocabulary audios to improve listening comprehension stands out. This shows that teachers use this type of activity within the classroom. Furthermore, teachers should use varied activities, such as audios and videos, with students' interests for effective skill development.

### ***Table 3***

#### *Strategies for listening skills*

| <b>Item</b>  | <b>Mean</b> |
|--|-------------|
| When I listen to an audio, I take notes on important information (keywords, topic, etc.) in classes. | <b>3,56</b> |

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Before listening, it is difficult for me to predict the main idea, concepts, or messages.                         | <b>3,37</b> |
| After listening, I develop the following extra activities related to the topic in pairs or groups.                | <b>3,48</b> |
| While I listen to an audio, I can identify parts of speech like verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc., and intonation. | <b>3,36</b> |
| When I listen to an audio, I translate it into Spanish.   | <b>3,41</b> |

*Note:* The following Likert scale was used to measure the answers: 1. Almost always, 2. Always, 3. Sometimes, 4. Almost never, and 5. Never.

### **Analysis and interpretation**

Research questions: What are the different strategies students use to develop listening skills?

The results point out that students mainly use taking notes on important information strategies (keywords, topics, etc.) while listening to audio in class, with a mean of 3,56. They also reported that they find it difficult to predict the main idea, concepts, or messages before listening, with a mean of 3,37. After listening, students develop additional activities related to the topic in pairs or groups, with a mean of 3,48. Students also reported that they can identify parts of speech such as verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc., and intonation while listening to an audio, with a mean of 3,36. Finally, students reported that they translated the audio into Spanish while listening, with a mean of 3,41.

In conclusion, students mainly use the taking notes strategy while listening to audio in class to develop their listening skills in the EFL classroom. They also reported that they find it difficult to predict the main idea before listening and develop additional activities after listening. In addition, students can identify parts of speech and intonation while listening to audio, and some students translate the audio into Spanish while listening. Overall, the study provides insights into the diverse strategies employed by students to enhance their listening skills in the EFL classroom.

#### **Table 4**

##### *Listening subskills*

| <b>Item</b>  | <b>Mean</b> |
|--|-------------|
| After listening to an audio, I identify the general idea, and specific details in the lecture or conversation. | <b>3,68</b> |

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| When I listen to an audio, the pauses and interaction patterns of the speakers are difficult for my listening comprehension. | <b>3,29</b> |
| When I listen to an audio, I recognize the speaker's attitude.   | <b>3,82</b> |
| When I listen to audios, I feel confident in recognizing, and understanding the accents and dialects of speakers.            | <b>3,37</b> |

*Note:* The following Likert scale was used to measure the answers: 1. Almost always, 2. Always, 3. Sometimes, 4. Almost never, and 5. Never.

### **Analysis and interpretation**

Research question: What are the different subskills students use for listening skills?

The results reveal that students mainly use subskills like listening for the gist, for details, and specific information in the lecture or conversation after listening to an audio, with a mean of 3,68. They also reported that they find it difficult to understand speakers' pauses and interaction patterns while listening to an audio, with a mean of 3,29. Students can recognize the speaker's attitude while listening to an audio, with a mean of 3,82. In addition, some of them feel confident in recognizing and understanding speakers' accents and dialects while listening to audio, with a mean of 3,37.

The students who were surveyed mainly used the subskill of identifying the general idea and specific details in the lecture or conversation after listening to audio to develop their listening skills. This information provides valuable insights for educators to tailor teaching strategies that address specific aspects of listening comprehension in the EFL classroom.

**Table 5**

#### *Open-ended questions*

| <b>Question 1</b>   | <b>Answer</b>           | <b>Total</b> |
|---|-------------------------|--------------|
| What types of educational platforms do you use the most when improving your listening skills? | Duolingo                | 28           |
|   | BBC learning English    | 15           |
|   | ESL Cyber Listening Lab | 8            |
|   | ESL videos              | 5            |
|   | Other answers           | 17           |
|   | Total                   | 73           |
| <b>Question 2</b>   | <b>Answer</b>           | <b>Total</b> |



|   |   |              |
|---|---|--------------|
|   | Finding keywords                                    | 30           |
|   | Summarizing   | 22           |
| What types of strategies do you use for your listening activities?      | Predicting  | 7            |
|   | Problem-solving                                     | 6            |
|   | Inferring   | 4            |
|   | None  | 4            |
|   | Total   | 73           |
| <b>Question 3</b>   | <b>Answer</b>                                       | <b>Total</b> |
|   | Listening for specific information                  | 31           |
| What type of listening sub-skills do you think you use most in classes? | Listening for inferring the attitude of the speaker | 20           |
|   | Listening for the gist/global understanding         | 19           |
|   | Listening for detail                                | 3            |
|   | Total   | 73           |

*Note:* Results gained from open-ended questions.

### **Analysis and interpretation**

Table 5 presents the results from the three open-ended questions to provide more information for the research questions.

Regarding question number one, “What types of educational platforms do you use the most when improving your listening skills?” The results indicate that most students use Duolingo as an educational platform to improve their listening skills, with a total of 28 responses. In addition, some students use BBC Learning English (15 responses) and the ESL Cyber Listening Lab (8 responses) as educational platforms to improve their listening skills. In short, students mainly use Duolingo as an educational platform to improve their listening skills in the EFL classroom. Similarly, other educational platforms, such as BBC Learning English and the ESL Cyber Listening Lab, are used to improve their listening skills.

Nevertheless, some students gave other answers (17 responses). They use other types of applications to improve their listening skills, such as HBO Max, Spotify, YouTube, and TED Talks, meaning that they do not only use common applications but also seek to use

applications that match their interests, for example, videos, movies, music, or speeches on. In conclusion, the use of the platforms helps to improve language skills, and the majority of the students use the Duolingo platform because of its new updates, such as Duoradio, which provides the opportunity to perform different listening and feedback activities.

Regarding question number two, “What types of strategies do you use for your listening activities?” Most learners use the finding keywords strategy, such as recognizing specific words or phrases, when listening to an audio. This strategy is relatively easy to implement in the EFL classroom. Additionally, 22 learners prefer the summarizing strategy because they take notes of the most important main ideas of something or someone clearly and concisely and have a clear idea of what the audio is about. Furthermore, 7 participants chose the prediction strategy since before carrying out the activity they preferred to predict the topic or the context in general. Additionally, problem-solving (6 students) and inferring (4 students) use the ability to approach the topic by complementing ideas with the context of the audio, while inferring students are able to draw informed conclusions and grasp the speaker's meaning. However, some participants did not use any of these strategies for various reasons, the previous options were not feasible, or had another type of strategy to perform the listening activities.

In the third question, “What type of listening subskills do you think you use most in class?” The results show that the participants use most of the subskill of listening for specific information; they focus on the details, facts, or particulars of the speaker during the activity. On the other hand, the second subskill they use is listening for inferring the attitude of the speaker (20 students). The participants prefer to infer through the speakers' attitude, which depends on the tone, volume, and emphasis of the sentence or word according to the context of the audio. Moreover, listening for the gist or global understanding (19 students) is another subskill that learners use because it focuses on the main idea or key concepts of the topic and allows them to quickly grasp the context in general. Instead, only 3 learners reported the use of the listening for detail sub-skill, as this type of listening requires careful focus and paying close attention to the information given. In conclusion, listening subskills that reflect a balanced approach and adaptability in their listening skills can be beneficial in diverse

learning environments, allowing them to effectively navigate various types of information and communication styles in their classes.

## **Discussion**

The three research questions determine the impact of the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform on listening skills in the EFL classroom.

Question 1: *What kinds of activities from the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform are used in the EFL classroom?*

In general, the results obtained show that students opt for vocabulary audios, podcasts, life stories, and interviews. Furthermore, the participants' positive opinion regarding the use of vocabulary audios was also consistent with the findings of this study. Mashrabovna and Sherzodbekovna (2023) reported that vocabulary audios contribute to the consolidation of terms in long-term memory and enhance accurate and fluent oral communication. In addition, this study highlighted that the adaptability of vocabulary audios, when integrated into interactive activities, helps learners have a holistic learning experience and enriches the language acquisition process. Furthermore, vocabulary audios complement listening activities to improve comprehension and speaking in a language. Djaborova (2020) stated that by applying vocabulary audios with specific listening activities, learners can associate words with their correct pronunciation, intonation, and usage. For instance, educational platforms offer activities such as creating paragraphs, mind maps, and dialogues in order to improve listening skill. Additionally, the use of vocabulary audios serves to diversify the learning experience, adapting to different learning styles. Auditory learners, in particular, benefit significantly from vocabulary reinforcement through listening.

Moreover, students use educational platforms to improve their listening skills through activities. Students consider that educational platforms are effective and offer opportunities to practice and improve their listening skills because they propose a series of beneficial resources for students and teachers in the learning process, such as multimedia content, chat, and recordings, among others. In this regard, Fitria (2021) mentioned that learning a foreign language through different educational platforms allows learners to control their processes while listening to audio or video clips, optionally using transcripts, comments, and subtitles.

Question 2: *What are the different strategies students use to develop listening skills?*

In general, the results determine that the majority of students use the finding keywords strategy, such as recognizing specific words or phrases, when listening to an audio. This strategy is relatively easy to implement in the EFL classroom. Moreover, Vandergrift and Goh (2012) argue that finding keywords is a listening strategy that involves identifying and focusing on important words or phrases within spoken discourse to grasp the main idea or extract specific information. It helps listeners concentrate on crucial content rather than getting overwhelmed by every detail and enables listeners to focus on essential details, leading to improved comprehension and retention of the content. In another context, some learners prefer the summarizing strategy because they take notes on the most important main ideas of something or someone clearly and concisely and have a clear idea of what the audio is about. Summarizing and taking notes help EFL learners improve their listening skills. Successful note-taking involves four key elements: language, speed, organization, and accuracy. Taking notes in the same language as the lecture is essential to ensure accurate understanding and retention of terms and context to improve English language skills. Note-takers must be able to record information quickly, which requires the use of abbreviations, initials, shorthand, keywords, or symbols to represent ideas efficiently and clearly. Likewise, the summary should be organized using diagrams, mind maps, or graphic organizers to accurately reflect the main ideas (Liao, 2012). Furthermore, other participants chose the prediction strategy since, before carrying out the activity, they preferred to predict the topic or the context in general. On this basis, Vandergrift and Goh (2012) emphasize the importance of prediction as a listening strategy. By encouraging students to predict content based on contextual cues or prior knowledge before hearing a passage or dialogue, students actively interact with the material and anticipate what they might hear. This strategy helps them concentrate and understand better while listening, as well as allowing them to confirm or adjust their predictions based on the actual content they hear. Finally, a smaller group of students use problem-solving and inferring to address the topic by supplementing ideas with the context of the audio, while inferring students are able to draw informed conclusions and grasp the speaker's meaning. In this case, it could be said that incorporating activities that promote problem-solving and inference encourages students to actively listen, analyze, and understand information more effectively. Supports their language learning process by

allowing them to understand the nuances of communication and develop stronger listening skills. On the other hand, some participants did not use any of these strategies for various reasons; the previous options were not feasible, or they had another type of strategy to perform the listening activities.

Question 3: *What are the different subskills students use for listening skills?*

The results indicate that the different listening subskills place strong emphasis on listening for specific information, listening to infer the attitude of the speaker, and listening for gist. In fact, most students prefer listening for specific information because they focus on the details, facts, or particularities of the speaker during the activity. As stated by Azeez and Bajalani (2018), when listeners desire to find a specific piece of information, this sub-skill is the most practiced and developed. Students know ahead of time whatever piece of information they need to identify to complete the assignment when practicing their listening sub-skill. Listeners can choose to ignore information that is irrelevant to them. Weather forecasts, events, conversations, and dialogues are among the most typical types of information that learners need when practicing listening for specific information.

On the other hand, the second subskill they use is listening to infer the attitude of the speaker. The participants prefer to infer through the speakers' attitude, which depends on the tone, volume, and emphasis of the sentence or word according to the context of the audio. In this way, Taysi (2019) explains that inferring through the speaker's words refers to recognizing details of spoken language and understanding the speaker's perspective by teaching them to listen to the speaker's attitude or opinion (such as disagreement or uncertainty) and then infer the intentions of the speaker. Attitudes are not innate; rather, they are learned through an individual's experiences during the socialization process and experience for a certain amount of time. For example, the speaker may express likes, dislikes, or concerns to determine if the speaker feels impressed, enthusiastic, or bored about the topic (Taysi, 2019).

In addition, listening for gist or global understanding is another subskill that learners use because it focuses on the main idea or key concepts of the topic and allows them to quickly grasp the context in general. According to Siegel (2018), listening for gist is one of many listening techniques that aims to respond to fundamental inquiries regarding the main theme, subject, and purpose of a text. Listeners are not required to listen to collect precise details or

answer questions about them. Furthermore, it is a kind of skimming to determine a text's general topic and important ideas; therefore, the interactional purpose is necessary when listening to the text and not expecting to interact with it. Instead, few learners reported the use of the listening for detail subskill, as this type of listening requires careful focus and paying close attention to the information given. Azeez and Bajalani (2018) argue that listening for detail is a subskill that helps pupils understand the context of various actions because students do not know what information from the activities used for the development of the worksheet, they cannot afford to ignore anything from the activity, and detailed listeners must focus on the entire activity to understand as much information as possible in order to complete the task.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

#### 4.1 Conclusions

Once the survey results were analyzed and obtained, the following conclusions were reached:

The research has demonstrated that the activities offered by the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform can be put into practice in the EFL classroom in order to significantly improve listening skills. In fact, most students prefer to listen to vocabulary audios, podcasts, and life stories that include various topics and quizzes and allow students to expand their vocabulary according to their corresponding proficiency levels. Conversely, there was a lack of interest in listening to English idiom audios and live broadcasts to develop listening skills. Ultimately, while the activities on the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform share similarities with those on other platforms such as ELLLO, BBC Learning English, and ESL Videos, students expressed a preference for using the Duolingo platform to enhance their listening skills.

In addition, various strategies have been identified to improve your listening skills. Note-taking, predicting the main idea, concepts, or messages, identifying parts of speech, summarizing, and translating into L1. These strategies are employed by learners to enhance their listening skills and foster critical thinking, comprehension, and effective communication skills. Additionally, they support learners in building a strong foundation for language acquisition and overall cognitive development. Although the majority of students favor these strategies to identify key points in the audio, some students opt not to employ any strategies, relying on their instincts in the EFL classroom. Teachers should consider the effectiveness of different strategies for improving learning and listening skills.

On the other hand, the detailed analysis has allowed the identification of various subskills, such as listening for specific information, listening for gist, listening for inferring the attitude of the speaker, and listening for detail. These subskills are employed by students to refine their listening abilities. The results indicate that students use a combination of subskills, including active listening, global thinking, and paraphrasing, among others. When employed collectively, these skills enhance comprehension and contribute to an improved

overall listening experience. Additionally, recognizing the importance of subskills extends our understanding of listening activities.

## **4.2 Recommendations**

Teachers should continue to diversify and adapt the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform activities or implement alternative educational platforms to cover a wider range of listening contexts and challenges. This will allow students to experience diverse situations and improve their listening comprehension skills in different scenarios. In addition, students will be able to enjoy listening to the content, which will improve their skills.

It is recommended to actively implement educational activities that explicitly encourage and teach effective strategies for developing listening skills. These programs could include workshops, specialized teaching materials, and individualized guidance for students. Taking into account the learning style and strategy that are useful for them during a listening activity.

Moreover, there is a need to integrate specific activities focusing on identified sub-skills, such as keyword identification, inference and anticipation, and speaker attitude, among others. This targeted approach facilitates more focused practice, leading to a deeper understanding of these critical components.

Furthermore, it is recommended to implement interventions, primarily utilizing the ESL Cyber Listening Lab platform, within a specific group of students. This approach aims to assess the impact of the platform on the EFL classroom environment, providing valuable insights into its effectiveness.



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## ANNEXES

### Annex 1: Commitment letter

#### ANEXO 3 FORMATO DE LA CARTA DE COMPROMISO.

### CARTA DE COMPROMISO

Ambato, 06 de Septiembre 2023

Doctor  
Marcelo Nuñez  
Presidente  
Unidad de titulación  
Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación

Yo, Mg. Sarah Iza, en mi calidad de Coordinadora de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, me permito poner en su conocimiento la aceptación y respaldo para el desarrollo del Trabajo de Titulación bajo el Tema: "ESL cyber listening lab and Listening skills" propuesto por la estudiante Moreta Pachacama Evelyn Tatiana, portadora de la Cédula de Ciudadanía, 180435947-7 estudiante de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

A nombre de la Institución a la cual represento, me comprometo a apoyar en el desarrollo del proyecto.

Particular que comunico a usted para los fines pertinentes.

Atentamente.



Lcd. Sarah Jacqueline Iza Pazmiño, Mg.  
Coordinadora de la Carrera  
0501741060  
0984060528  
sj.iza@uta.edu.ec





## Annex 2: Cronbach's alfa validation

| Reliability Statistics |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha       | N of Items |
| .838                   | 19         |

*Note:* Cronbach's Alpha Validity

### **Annex 3: Survey**

Survey available upon request

## Annex 4: Turnitin Report



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