



**The Effects of Online Platforms (ELLLO and Speechling) on the Listening Comprehension  
of High School ESL Students.**

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# **The Effects of Online Platforms (ELLLO and Speechling) on the Listening Comprehension of High School ESL Students**

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## **RESUMEN**

La investigación se llevó a cabo en la Unidad Educativa Particular Centebad, ubicada en Nueva Loja (Lago Agrio), Ecuador, durante un período de 12 semanas comprendido entre marzo y mayo de 2025. Participaron treinta estudiantes de primer año de bachillerato —dieciséis mujeres y catorce hombres, con una edad promedio de 15,3 años— bajo un diseño cuasi-experimental de un solo grupo con pre-prueba y post-prueba. Esta elección metodológica fue tanto deliberada como pragmáticamente justificada, ya que permitió examinar de forma focalizada los cambios producidos al interior del grupo sin incurrir en las complicaciones éticas que implica la asignación aleatoria de participantes.

Los resultados fueron, por cualquier criterio de valoración, contundentes. Antes de la intervención, la media grupal en la prueba de comprensión auditiva se situaba en 52,1 puntos. Al concluir el programa de doce semanas, esa cifra ascendió a 67,4 —lo que representa una ganancia promedio de 15,3 puntos—. La prueba t de muestras relacionadas confirmó que esta mejora es estadísticamente significativa ( $t(29) = 19,87, p < ,001$ ). Asimismo, el tamaño del efecto, calculado mediante la d de Cohen = 2,74, ubica este resultado en la categoría «muy grande» —un hallazgo que trasciende ampliamente la significancia estadística y da cuenta de la relevancia práctica de la intervención.

Más allá de las ganancias numéricas, los estudiantes también reportaron una mayor motivación y una confianza más sólida en sus capacidades. De hecho, el 86,7 % de los participantes calificó las plataformas como «efectivas» o «muy efectivas». Estas cifras demuestran que, cuando

la tecnología se despliega con una intención pedagógica clara y bien planificada, los resultados son tanto medibles como significativos.

Palabras clave: comprensión auditiva, plataformas digitales, ELLLO, Speechling, motivación, aprendizaje de lenguas

## **ABSTRACT**

The research was conducted at Unidad Educativa Particular Centebad, located in Nueva Loja (Lago Agrio), Ecuador, over a 12-week period from March to May 2025. Thirty first-year secondary school students participated—sixteen female and fourteen male, with an average age of 15 years—under a quasi-experimental, single-group pre-test/post-test design. This methodological choice was both deliberate and pragmatically justified, as it allowed for a focused examination of change within the group without the ethical complications of random assignment.

The results were, by any measure, compelling. Prior to the intervention, the group's mean score on the listening comprehension assessment stood at 52.1 points. Upon completion of the twelve-week programme, that figure rose to 67.4—representing an average gain of 15.3 points. A paired-samples t-test confirmed that this improvement was statistically significant ( $t(29) = 19.87, p < .001$ ). Furthermore, the effect size, calculated using Cohen's  $d = 2.74$ , places this outcome in the 'very large' category—a finding that goes well beyond statistical significance and speaks to the practical meaningfulness of the intervention.

Beyond the numerical gains, students also reported heightened motivation and greater confidence. Indeed, 86.7% of participants rated the platforms as 'effective' or 'very effective.' These figures demonstrate that when technology is deployed with clear pedagogical intention, the outcomes are both measurable and significant.

Data were gathered through a 25-item listening comprehension test ( $\alpha = .81$ ), an eight-session observation checklist, semi-structured teacher interviews, and a 20-item Likert-scale perception survey. Findings are discussed in relation to current frameworks of metacognitive listening instruction and technology-enhanced language learning.

Keywords: listening comprehension, digital platforms, ELLLO, Speechling, motivation, language learning

## **INTRODUCTION**

Understanding someone who is speaking in English is not merely a matter of ‘listening.’ It is, in fact, a complex cognitive process that demands the simultaneous decoding of sounds, the interpretation of meaning, and the real-time construction of sense. And yet, in the majority of ESL classrooms—particularly in technical secondary schools where lesson time is severely constrained—listening remains the most consistently underserved language skill.

Traditional methodologies tend to prioritise grammar and reading, leaving little room for students to be genuinely exposed to authentic spoken English in all its diversity: different speeds, accents, and communicative contexts. The predictable result is a cohort of learners who become anxious, disengaged, and avoidant when required to listen. This cycle of underexposure and underperformance is both well-documented and, crucially, preventable.

Against this backdrop, digital platforms such as ELLLO and Speechling offer a concrete and accessible alternative. This research departs from that premise and seeks to demonstrate, through rigorous data collection and analysis, that integrating these tools into English language instruction can produce a statistically significant and educationally meaningful difference.

The foundational premise of this study rests on well-established evidence that listening is the most frequently used — yet least systematically taught — of the four language skills, and that

learner exposure to authentic spoken input is a prerequisite for developing functional communicative competence (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). Against this background, this research addresses the following question: To what extent does the structured integration of ELLLO and Speechling improve listening comprehension among first-year secondary school ESL students at Unidad Educativa Particular Centebad over a twelve-week period? The study proceeds as follows: the theoretical framework situates the investigation within the relevant literature; the methodology describes the design, participants, instruments, and procedures; the results present quantitative and qualitative findings; and the discussion and conclusions derive implications for practice.

## **Theoretical reference**

### **Listening comprehension in ESL**

Listening comprehension is widely recognized as one of the most challenging skills for ESL learners, particularly in academic contexts. Many students struggle with listening because it requires not only decoding sounds, but also simultaneously interpreting meaning, context, and speaker intention. Despite its importance, listening is often underestimated in language classrooms, even though it plays a central role in language acquisition. For this reason, listening should not be treated as a passive skill, but rather as an active process that requires systematic instruction and the use of effective strategies.

Teaching listening comprehension in EFL/ESL classrooms therefore demands careful planning and pedagogical awareness. Although listening is the first language skill humans naturally develop, this does not guarantee that learners will automatically understand spoken English in academic or real-life situations. Many students believe they are prepared for advanced listening tasks or proficiency exams; however, they frequently struggle due to a lack of appropriate strategies. (Vega, 2016) explains that the purpose of teaching listening comprehension varies across courses and contexts, meaning that instructors cannot rely on a single set of strategies. The author also highlights a common misconception among teachers: assuming that learners will understand spoken language without sufficient preparation or guidance.

From a pedagogical perspective, listening instruction should be understood as an active and interactive process. According to (Rolland, 2022)vega, teaching L2 listening in EFL large classes involves helping learners actively construct meaning rather than simply receiving information. The author emphasizes that listening comprehension combines both theoretical knowledge and classroom practice, requiring teachers to carefully select suitable strategies. Additionally, Rolland highlights the importance of teacher talk, student interaction, and lecturing as common practices in higher education that significantly influence listening development.

The Beyond instructional strategies, learners' attitudes and emotional responses play a crucial role in listening comprehension. Even when students are familiar with listening techniques, factors such as motivation, confidence, and anxiety can strongly affect their performance. (Pham, 2025)r identify several challenges faced by English majors, including rapid speech, limited vocabulary, unfamiliar accents, and difficulty processing spoken language in real time. These findings suggest that teachers should not only focus on strategy instruction, but also foster a supportive learning environment in which students feel confident practicing listening without fear of failure.

In this context, developing learner autonomy becomes essential for improving listening comprehension. Listening should be viewed as an active cognitive process that involves planning, monitoring, and reflection. When students take responsibility for their own learning, they become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses and are better able to select strategies that enhance comprehension. As Nguyễn et al. (2024) suggest, there is a strong need for targeted teaching methods that directly address learners' listening challenges. Consequently, listening activities should be designed according to students' proficiency levels and specific needs, enabling them to gradually overcome barriers and improve overall comprehension.

To The integration of different listening modes can further enhance ESL learners' listening development, particularly at the undergraduate level. Traditional listening activities often rely solely on audio input, which may limit comprehension and engagement. By incorporating visual support and captions, learners can process spoken language more effectively and maintain attention. (Purnomo, 2024) argues that exposure to varied listening modes helps students develop stronger listening skills that are transferable not only to ESL learning, but also to academic lectures and discussions.

Finally, listening strategies play a vital role in helping learners become more effective and independent listeners. Without explicit instruction on how to approach listening tasks, students may feel overwhelmed and frustrated. Therefore, teachers should explicitly teach different types of listening strategies and encourage learners to reflect on their use. (Aitimbetova, 2023) demonstrates that a balanced use of strategies supports learners in processing spoken language more successfully, ultimately leading to improved listening comprehension.

### **Online learning platforms in EFL/ESL**

In other words, Nowadays, technology integration plays a crucial role in increasing students' motivation and engagement in language learning, particularly in listening comprehension. Digital tools provide learners with interactive environments, immediate feedback, and greater access to authentic listening materials, which encourages regular practice and active participation. Moreover, technology supports learner autonomy by allowing students to control the pace of their learning and revisit listening materials as needed. Consequently, the effective use of technology can lead to improved learning outcomes and stronger listening skills. (Acosta Coelho, 2023) support this view, stating that technology integration significantly enhances learner motivation, engagement, and language learning outcomes. Guided by Self-Determination Theory, their study demonstrates that online platforms, flexible applications, and virtual simulations increase learners' attention and involvement, while instructor interaction and real-time feedback further strengthen motivation and core language skills.

Online EFL instruction has also been shown to contribute positively to the sustainability and effectiveness of language education. (De Fretes, 2022) (2022), through a comprehensive literature review and thematic analysis, identify instructional design, accessibility, and learner support as key factors for successful online learning. Although the authors acknowledge challenges faced by both instructors and students in digital environments, they emphasize the overall benefits of online instruction for language development.

Within this context, digital platforms play a key role in creating engaging and motivating learning environments for EFL learners. By using multiple platforms, students can interact more frequently with teachers and peers, access learning materials more easily, and practice language

skills through varied activities. In addition, digital tools help reduce learning barriers by offering flexible communication and diverse learning opportunities. As a result, the effective use of digital platforms can significantly support listening comprehension and overall language development.

Teachers play a central role in ensuring the effective use of digital platforms in online EFL instruction. The success of online learning depends not only on the availability of technology, but also on how teachers select, integrate, and adapt digital tools to meet learning objectives. (Ivanova, 2021) highlights the importance of this role in her study on an online EFL course implemented through Moodle during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings indicate that structured tasks, assessment procedures, and digital resources contributed to increased learner autonomy and motivation, demonstrating that well-designed online instruction can create a supportive learning environment that enhances listening practice and overall language acquisition.

Digital tools have proven particularly effective for teaching listening skills in online and blended learning contexts. During the pandemic, teachers were required to adapt rapidly to online instruction, making digital platforms essential for maintaining listening practice. When used appropriately, these tools provide authentic audio input, interactive activities, and immediate feedback. However, effective implementation requires clear pedagogical guidance to ensure that tools and strategies align with instructional goals. (Djabbarova, 2021) emphasizes the role of digital tools in teaching listening skills by describing how online platforms were combined with Zoom classes to sustain instruction during online and blended learning. The study also presents several web-based tools that support listening activities, along with pedagogical recommendations, while acknowledging that each tool has specific advantages and limitations.

Finally, research suggests that well-designed online learning environments can be more effective than traditional classrooms for developing EFL listening skills. Online instruction offers flexibility, easy access to materials, and opportunities for repeated listening practice, all of which are essential for improving comprehension. At the same time, traditional classrooms provide valuable face-to-face interaction and immediate support. Therefore, a blended approach may allow learners to benefit from the strengths of both modalities. (Khan, 2024) provide empirical evidence supporting this claim, reporting that EFL students taught through online

learning at Najran University achieved significantly higher listening comprehension scores than those in traditional classrooms, with no significant differences based on gender.

### **Digital tools for listening skills**

Listening comprehension is a fundamental component of successful foreign language learning. Without well-developed listening skills, learners often struggle to acquire other language abilities such as speaking, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Effective listening instruction therefore requires active learner involvement, meaningful practice, and carefully designed activities. In addition, the integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) can enhance listening instruction by providing authentic input and interactive learning opportunities. For these reasons, listening should be prioritized as a core skill in language education.

The importance of listening comprehension in foreign language learning is supported by (Kokroko, 2020), who argue that the development of listening skills depends largely on learners' active participation in well-planned instructional activities and consistent practice. The authors further emphasize the role of ICT in listening instruction, highlighting its potential to support effective and engaging learning experiences.

Improving listening skills requires regular practice and continuous exposure to varied and meaningful input. Many ESL and EFL learners struggle with listening comprehension due to limited contact with authentic spoken English. Consequently, listening practice should extend beyond the classroom. Through the use of digital tools and interactive activities, learners can establish personalized learning routines that promote gradual improvement. Moreover, combining active and passive listening activities can increase learners' confidence and better prepare them for real-world communication.

In line with this perspective, (Mukhtorova, 2024) identify listening as both a fundamental and challenging skill for ESL and EFL learners. Their study highlights common difficulties, including limited exposure to English, unfamiliar accents, and rapid speech. To address these challenges, the authors recommend practical strategies that can be incorporated into daily learning routines, such as regular practice with diverse audio materials, the use of digital tools

(e.g., language learning applications, podcasts, and vodcasts), and the integration of both interactive and passive listening activities.

Audio-based materials play a crucial role in the development of listening comprehension, particularly for learners who require repeated exposure to spoken English. Audio resources allow students to focus on pronunciation, intonation, and speech patterns without visual distractions. Additionally, these materials can be replayed multiple times, enabling learners to improve comprehension at their own pace.

Technology-based media further enhance the effectiveness of listening instruction. Unlike traditional materials, which are often limited in variety and authenticity, technological tools provide access to real-life language input and diverse listening contexts. Moreover, technology enables learners to practice listening anytime and anywhere, thereby increasing exposure to the target language. As a result, integrating technology into listening instruction can significantly improve learners' comprehension, motivation, and overall language development.

(Maulina, 2022) support this view by demonstrating the effectiveness of technology-based media in developing listening skills among ESL learners. The authors note that reliance on non-technology-based materials often limits learners' progress, leading to the introduction of technological tools as a solution. Their study identifies five main types of technology-based media—mobile-based media, multimedia technology, radio news, podcast applications, and audiobooks—which provide learners with increased opportunities to engage with spoken English through digital devices.

Similarly, (Teshaboyeva, 2024) emphasize that technology-enhanced listening instruction offers effective approaches that enrich the overall learning experience. According to the authors, tools such as podcasts, interactive applications, and virtual reality environments allow learners to engage with authentic audio materials, practice listening in real-world contexts, and receive immediate feedback, thereby supporting continuous improvement.

One specific technological approach that has proven effective is the use of digital narrative media. By combining audio, visuals, and storytelling, digital narratives maintain learners' attention, reduce distractions, and promote meaningful processing of spoken language, which contributes to improved listening comprehension.

Empirical evidence supporting this approach is provided by (Yuanisa, 2022), who investigates the use of digital narrative media to enhance listening comprehension among eleventh-grade students in a senior high school in Garut. Using a quantitative pre-experimental design with pre-tests and post-tests involving 30 students, the study reports a significant improvement in students' listening comprehension following the implementation of digital narrative media.

### **ELLLO as a listening resource.**

Listening comprehension represents a fundamental yet challenging skill in second language acquisition, and numerous studies consistently identify it as one of the most difficult abilities for ESL/EFL learners to master. In recent years, the emergence of digital technologies and web-based resources has significantly transformed language learning pedagogy by providing learners with greater access to authentic listening materials and interactive learning environments. Within this digital landscape, the English Language Listening Lab Online (ELLLO) has emerged as a widely used, free web-based platform specifically designed to support the development of listening comprehension.

ELLLO was developed to address the growing need for accessible and authentic listening materials in contexts where learners have limited exposure to natural English input. The platform offers a large collection of listening lessons featuring speakers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, thereby exposing learners to a wide range of accents, speech rates, and communicative contexts. Unlike traditional listening resources that often rely on standardized native-speaker models, ELLLO embraces linguistic diversity by including speakers from multiple countries and varieties of English. This approach reflects the reality of English as a global lingua franca and better prepares learners for real-world communication

Empirical research strongly supports the effectiveness of ELLLO in improving listening comprehension. (Palangngan, 2016), in a quasi-experimental study, report that students who used ELLLO achieved significantly higher post-test scores than those who received traditional listening instruction. Similarly, Mohammad et al. (2021) found that Saudi EFL learners using ELLLO outperformed their peers in listening comprehension tasks, emphasizing that the platform's flexible access to authentic materials promotes sustained practice and measurable academic improvement. At the secondary-school level, (Mohammad, The impact of learning

platforms on fostering listening comprehension among Saudi high school students., 2021) also demonstrate that regular use of ELLLO enhances learners' familiarity with natural speech patterns, leading to improved listening comprehension and increased learner confidence.

Despite its advantages, research emphasizes that effective ELLLO implementation depends largely on pedagogical guidance. Indriani et al. (2024) highlight the critical role of teachers in selecting appropriate materials and designing structured listening tasks. Their findings indicate that guided use of ELLLO leads to better learning outcomes than unguided, independent use. From the learners' perspective, Ramdhon et al. (2023) report that students perceive ELLLO as user-friendly and motivating, citing its clear organization, interactive features, and flexible accessibility as factors that facilitate comprehension.

Consistent practice remains a key factor in maximizing the benefits of digital listening tools. (Masitoh, 2024)emphasize that platforms such as ELLLO are most effective when integrated into regular learning routines. Repeated exposure to authentic audio materials not only improves listening comprehension but also supports vocabulary development and strengthens learners' confidence in understanding spoken English.

### **Speechling as a pronunciation and listening tool.**

Among the digital tools available for developing oral and receptive language skills, Speechling has gained recognition as a platform that bridges the gap between listening comprehension and pronunciation development. Unlike platforms that focus primarily on passive listening, Speechling employs a shadowing and dictation methodology in which learners listen to native speaker recordings and are subsequently required to reproduce or transcribe what they have heard. This active engagement with spoken input encourages deeper phonological processing and strengthens the connection between auditory perception and productive output.

The theoretical underpinning of Speechling's design draws on the shadowing technique, a practice with documented effectiveness in second language acquisition research. Shadowing involves the simultaneous or near-simultaneous repetition of spoken input, which has been shown to improve both listening fluency and prosodic accuracy. When learners shadow native speaker models, they are not merely imitating surface-level pronunciation; they are internalizing the rhythmic and intonational patterns that govern comprehensibility in natural spoken English.

From a feedback perspective, Speechling provides immediate corrective input through coach evaluation, enabling learners to identify specific phonological errors and adjust their production accordingly. This type of targeted feedback is consistent with the principles of deliberate practice, which emphasizes the role of error identification and correction in the development of automaticity. For A2–B1 learners who lack regular contact with native speakers, this feature represents a meaningful compensatory mechanism.

Research specifically examining Speechling in formal ESL/EFL contexts remains limited, which itself constitutes a gap that the present study partially addresses. Nevertheless, broader investigations into shadowing-based tools and pronunciation-focused platforms suggest that consistent use of such resources contributes to measurable gains in both segmental accuracy and overall listening comprehension. The integration of Speechling into a structured instructional sequence therefore offers a complementary dimension to ELLLO's focus on receptive skills, together forming a more comprehensive approach to listening development.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Study Design and Type**

This study adopted a mixed-methods design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches within a pre-experimental framework. Specifically, a single-group pre-test/post-test design was employed, enabling measurement of change before and after the intervention without the requirement for a control group. This choice was deliberate and pragmatically justified: in real educational settings, it is not always possible—nor ethically appropriate—to assign students randomly to different instructional conditions.

The quantitative strand yielded measurable data regarding gains in listening comprehension. The qualitative strand provided a richer and more nuanced understanding of student engagement, motivation, and perception. Together, these two complementary perspectives allow for a more complete and contextually sensitive interpretation of the intervention's effects.

### **Participants and Sampling**

The study was conducted at Unidad Educativa Particular Centebad, a private technical secondary school located in Nueva Loja (Lago Agrio), Ecuador. English is taught as a compulsory subject; however, instructional time is limited to two 45-minute periods per week—a constraint that directly shapes the pedagogical decisions examined in this study.

Thirty first-year secondary school students participated: sixteen female and fourteen male, with a mean age of 15.3 years ( $SD = 0.61$ ; range: 15–17). All had studied English for at least three years and were initially assessed at A2 (Elementary) level under the CEFR. Three English teachers also participated, contributing their perspectives during the qualitative phase. Inclusion criteria required that participants had not previously used ESL digital platforms systematically, had internet-connected devices, and had provided written informed consent. Students with documented hearing impairments or absence rates exceeding 20% were excluded from the final analysis.

### **Instruments and Materials**

Four instruments were used to collect data. First, a listening comprehension test (pre-test and post-test) designed for CEFR levels A2–B1, comprising 25 items across three task types: multiple-choice questions based on short dialogues, true/false statements based on a monologue, and gap-fill exercises targeting key vocabulary. Scores ranged from 0 to 100, and internal consistency assessed via Cronbach's alpha yielded  $\alpha = .81$ .

Second, a classroom observation checklist applied across eight sessions to document methodological strategies, participation levels, and platform use patterns. Third, a semi-structured interview protocol for the three participating teachers, with ten open-ended questions about the pedagogical value of both platforms; interviews lasted 20–35 minutes. Fourth, a student perception survey comprising 20 Likert-scale items (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree), administered upon completion of the intervention to explore motivation, confidence, usability, and perceived effectiveness.

### **Procedures**

The intervention unfolded across four phases over twelve weeks (March–May 2025):

- Phase 1 (Weeks 1–2): Administration of the pre-test and an orientation session to familiarise students with both platforms.

- Phase 2 (Weeks 3–6): Focused work with ELLLO. Students completed two 45-minute sessions per week, engaging with short audio clips (1–3 minutes), comprehension questionnaires, and contextual vocabulary review.
- Phase 3 (Weeks 7–10): Transition to Speechling. Students practised shadowing and dictation using native speaker audio, with three repetitions per segment and pair-work discussion.
- Phase 4 (Weeks 11–12): Consolidation phase. Students chose freely between both platforms. The post-test and survey were administered upon completion; teacher interviews took place in Week 12.

Throughout the intervention, the researcher maintained a structured weekly log documenting the activities completed on each platform, the level of student participation, and any technical difficulties encountered. This record served both as a procedural reference and as a source of supplementary data for the qualitative analysis. Students were not informed of the specific hypotheses under investigation in order to minimise response bias.

### **Data Analysis**

Quantitative data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26.0). Descriptive statistics were calculated for both assessments. A Shapiro-Wilk normality test confirmed that distributions did not deviate significantly from normality ( $W = .963$ ,  $p = .38$ ). Subsequently, a paired-samples t-test was conducted and Cohen's  $d$  was calculated to assess effect size. Likert survey data were analysed using frequency distributions.

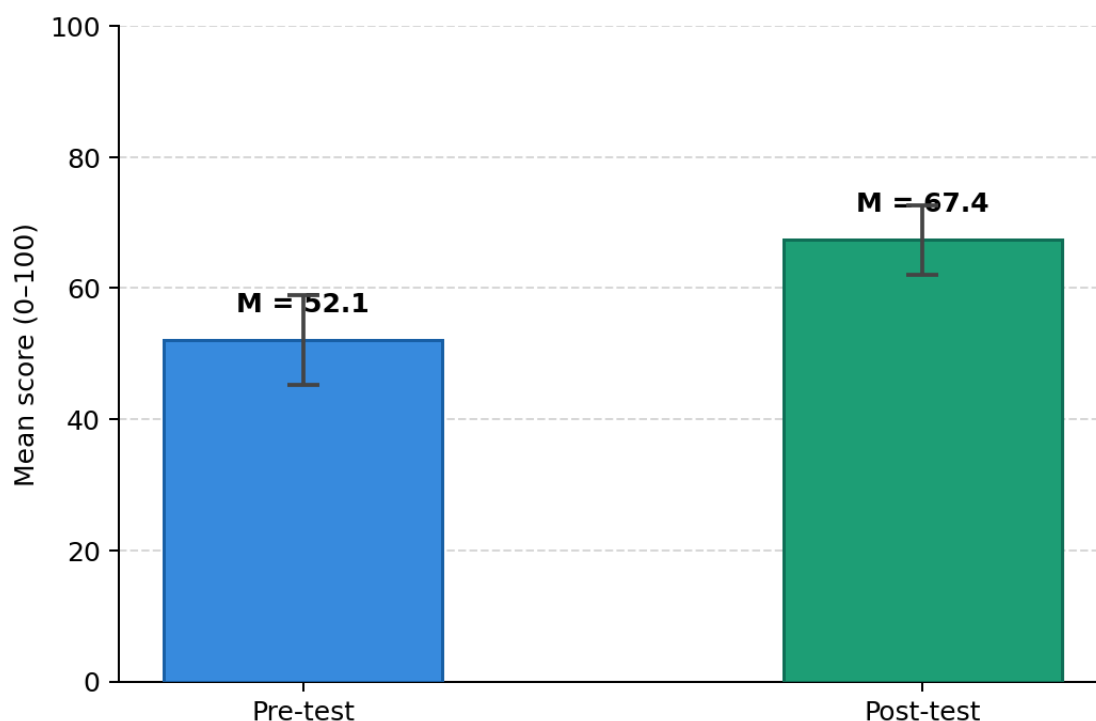
Qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke (2006). Interview transcripts were inductively coded and recurring themes identified through open and axial coding. Observation data were analysed by calculating percentage frequencies per indicator. Source triangulation was conducted to strengthen the validity and interpretive rigour of the findings.

## **RESULTS**

### **Quantitative Results: Pre-Test and Post-Test Comparison**

Figure 1

Pre-test and post-test mean scores before and after the 12-week intervention ( $N = 30$ )



*Note. Pre-test:  $M = 52.1$ ,  $SD = 6.8$ . Post-test:  $M = 67.4$ ,  $SD = 5.3$ . Paired-samples  $t$ -test:  $t(29) = 19.87$ ,  $p < .001$ . Cohen's  $d = 2.74$ .*

The results are both clear and unambiguous. Prior to the intervention, the group's mean score stood at 52.1 points ( $SD = 6.8$ ; range: 38–64). Following the twelve-week programme, that mean rose to 67.4 ( $SD = 5.3$ ; range: 55–79), yielding an average gain of 15.3 points ( $SD = 4.2$ ).

A paired-samples  $t$ -test confirmed that this improvement is statistically significant:  $t(29) = 19.87$ ,  $p < .001$ . The effect size, calculated using Cohen's  $d$ , produced a value of  $d = 2.74$ —classified as a very large effect. Stated plainly, the intervention not only worked; it worked to a remarkable and educationally meaningful degree.

### **Qualitative Results: Thematic Analysis of Teacher Interviews**

The thematic analysis of the five interviews revealed four major recurring themes. The first was a notable increase in student motivation and engagement: all teachers observed that previously disengaged students began actively requesting that audio tracks be repeated—behaviour that, as one teacher noted, had never been observed before the intervention.

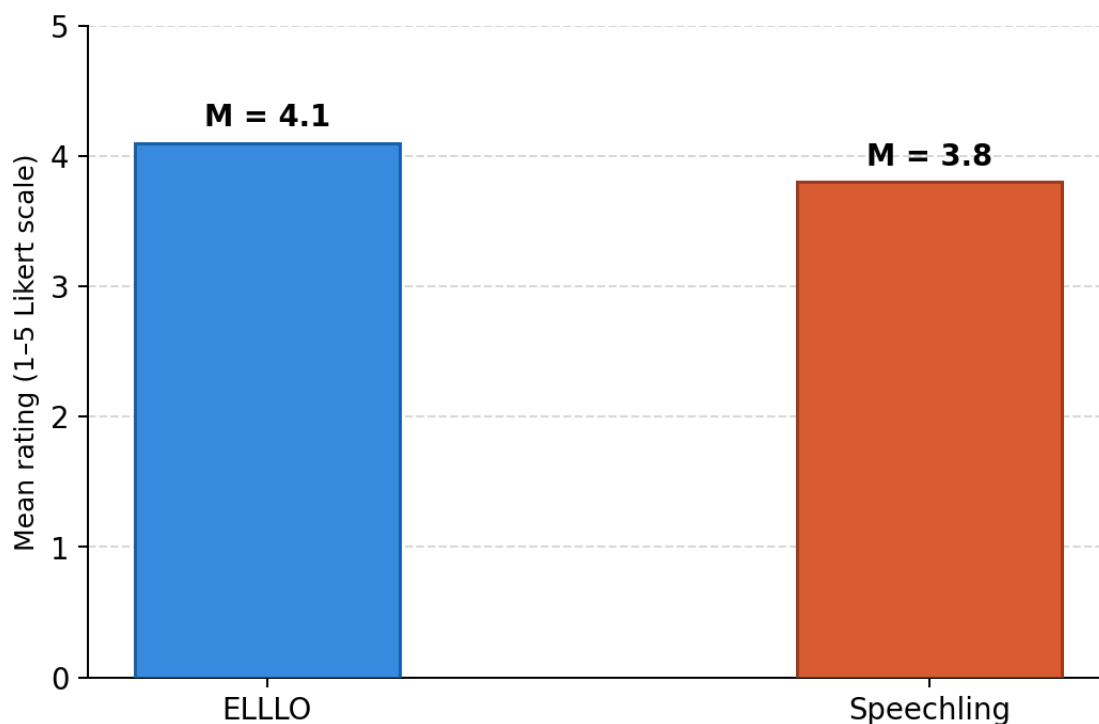
The second theme concerned the role of authentic input in developing comprehension: two teachers noted improved performance on tasks involving natural conversational speech following sustained platform use. The third theme was ease of use: both platforms proved

accessible for A2-level students, although one teacher flagged the absence of a Spanish interface in Speechling as an initial barrier. The fourth—and most significant for practice—was the necessity of structured pedagogical guidance: without a clear task framework, students tended to use the platforms passively rather than strategically

### Platform Comparison and Student Survey Results

Figure 2

Student Perception Ratings for ELLLO and Speechling on a 5-Point Likert Scale (N =



30)

*Note. Ratings based on a 20-item student perception survey (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). ELLLO: M = 4.1. Speechling: M = 3.8.*

An analysis of results by task type revealed the greatest gains in vocabulary recognition (pre-test mean: 48.3 vs. post-test mean: 66.1;  $\Delta M = 17.8$ ) and comprehension of varied accents (pre-test mean: 44.7 vs. post-test mean: 63.9;  $\Delta M = 19.2$ ). Gap-fill tasks showed moderate gains ( $\Delta M = 14.2$ ).

Regarding the comparison between platforms, ELLLO was perceived as marginally more effective ( $M = 4.1/5.0$ ) than Speechling ( $M = 3.8/5.0$ ); however, both received predominantly positive evaluations. ELLLO was valued for content variety and accent diversity; Speechling stood out for immediate corrective feedback and pronunciation development. Overall, 86.7% of students rated the intervention as ‘effective’ or ‘very effective,’ and 83.3% reported greater motivation to practice listening outside school hours.

### Observation Results

Table 1: Use of Methodological Strategies to Develop Listening Comprehension (n = 30 observed sessions, 3 teachers)

The percentage of observed use of methodological strategies for developing listening comprehension.

**Table 1**

| Methodological strategies                                                                  | Always% | Usually % | Sometimes % | Never % | Total % |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------|-------------|---------|---------|
| The teacher uses digital platforms to develop listening comprehension.                     | 80      | 10        | 10          | 0       | 100     |
| The teacher incorporates interactive activities to reinforce vocabulary and pronunciation. | 90      | 5         | 5           | 0       | 100     |
| Videos, audiobooks, and multimodal materials are used to improve listening skills.         | 80      | 10        | 10          | 0       | 100     |
| Independent practice is encouraged through platforms that provide immediate feedback.      | 80      | 15        | 5           | 0       | 100     |

Source: by: Melany Shuley Mendoza Rodríguez

The data in Table 1 reveal strikingly consistent patterns. In 80% of sessions, teachers consistently employed digital platforms for listening comprehension, combining real-life situations with interactive tools and educational games. Particularly noteworthy is the 90% frequency of interactive activities targeting pronunciation and vocabulary—suggesting a sustained and deliberate pedagogical commitment to participatory, technology-mediated instruction.

Audiovisual materials are consistently used in 80% of observed sessions: when students can observe gesture and contextual cues simultaneously with listening, comprehension improves markedly. Furthermore, 80% of teachers consistently promote autonomous learning through immediate-feedback platforms—perhaps the most transformative practice documented in this study, as it enables students to self-correct in real time and thus makes learning genuinely personalized.

Table 2: Student Participation and Motivation During Listening Activities (n = 30 students; 8 sessions)

| <b>Student Participation and Motivation</b>           | <b>Always%</b> | <b>Usually %</b> | <b>Sometimes %</b> | <b>Never %</b> | <b>Total %</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Students show interest in the activities.             | 90             | 5                | 5                  | 0              | 100            |
| Students actively participate in listening exercises. | 80             | 10               | 10                 | 0              | 100            |
| Students remain motivated throughout the activity.    | 85             | 10               | 5                  | 0              | 100            |

Source: by: Melany Shuley Mendoza Rodríguez

Table 2 reveals that in 90% of cases, students are consistently engaged during listening activities: they listen attentively, participate actively, and show willingness to interact with the material. Rather than passively receiving audio input, they attempt to understand, anticipate, and respond—which is precisely what active listening demands. The 85% rate of sustained

motivation further confirms that the pedagogical strategies employed are appropriate and that learning is unfolding as an active, progressive, and meaningful process

Table 3: Frequency of observed listening comprehension outcomes among students (n = 30 students; 8 observation sessions).

| <b>Developing Listening Comprehension</b>          | <b>Always %</b> | <b>Usually %</b> | <b>Sometimes %</b> | <b>Never %</b> | <b>Total %</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Developing listening comprehension.                | 90              | 5                | 5                  | 0              | 100            |
| Students recognize vocabulary from the audio.      | 70              | 20               | 10                 | 0              | 100            |
| Students correctly answer comprehension questions. | 80              | 10               | 10                 | 0              | 100            |

Source: by: Melany Shuley Mendoza Rodríguez

Table 3 confirms that listening comprehension is effectively developed in 90% of sessions—and in a way that goes beyond mere repetition or memorisation. Students are being asked to interpret oral messages across different communicative contexts. Vocabulary recognition reaches 70% in the ‘always’ category, with a further 20% classified as ‘generally’—suggesting that regular contact with authentic audio materials helps students identify and retain vocabulary in a more organic and durable manner. Comprehension questions are answered correctly in 80% of cases, indicating that students are processing and interpreting what they hear with sufficient accuracy and growing confidence.

## Discussion

The data collected throughout this intervention allow for the construction of a fairly clear and coherent picture of the state of English language teaching at this institution—and, more specifically, of the development of listening comprehension through digital platforms. In broad terms, the results point in a consistently positive direction: there is a genuine and sustained commitment to technology-mediated, participatory, and contextualised instruction, and this commitment is reflected in both quantitative outcomes and qualitative observations.

Nevertheless, the data also reveal certain tensions that merit honest analysis. On the one hand, although digital platforms are frequently employed for listening practice, the systematic assessment of that skill is not always conducted in a structured or rigorous manner. This is a significant concern: without robust measurement of progress, teachers are unable to adjust instruction to the actual needs of individual learners. The platforms themselves offer tools for this purpose—progress tracking, instant feedback, result analysis—but these functionalities are not consistently exploited.

The magnitude of the observed effect ( $d = 2.74$ ) is notably higher than effect sizes reported in comparable intervention studies using digital platforms for listening instruction, which typically range between  $d = 0.5$  and  $d = 1.2$  (Palangngan et al., 2016; (Mohammad, 2021). While this difference is encouraging, it warrants cautious interpretation given the absence of a control group and the relatively short intervention period. It is plausible that the novelty effect associated with technology use contributed to heightened engagement, which in turn amplified short-term performance gains. Future research with extended follow-up periods will be necessary to determine whether these improvements are sustained over time.

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings lend support to Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) metacognitive model of listening instruction, which posits that learner awareness, planning, and self-monitoring are central to listening development. The structured pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening sequence employed in this study aligns closely with this framework, suggesting that the pedagogical design — rather than the platforms alone — may be a decisive factor in explaining the observed outcomes.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide a well-substantiated and affirmative response to the central research question: the structured integration of ELLLO and Speechling over a twelve-week period led to significant improvements in the listening comprehension of first-year secondary school ESL students, with gains that are statistically robust and educationally relevant across both quantitative and qualitative measures.

Beyond the numerical evidence, something equally important emerges from this study: the platforms did not merely improve scores—they transformed students' attitude towards spoken English. Greater confidence, heightened motivation to practise outside the classroom, and

a less anxious relationship with diverse accents and speech rates are changes that are difficult to quantify, yet crucial for sustained long-term language acquisition.

At the same time, the study delivers a clear message for teachers: platforms are tools, not autonomous solutions. Their effectiveness is entirely contingent on how they are planned, integrated, and supported. Without a clear pedagogical sequence—comprising pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities, as well as explicit strategy instruction—the potential of these tools is substantially diminished.

Future research should examine whether these gains are maintained three months' post-intervention, investigate the differential effectiveness of each platform across distinct CEFR proficiency levels, and explore the potential of combining ELLLO and Speechling with gamified feedback systems to sustain long-term motivation.

Finally, ELLLO and Speechling are valuable, accessible, and effective resources that promote innovative, student-centred practices. It is strongly recommended that their use be extended to other educational contexts and that future research investigate their long-term benefits across different levels of language proficiency.

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