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B-learning en el desarrollo de la habilidad de escuchar en inglés

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TUTOR CERTIFICATION

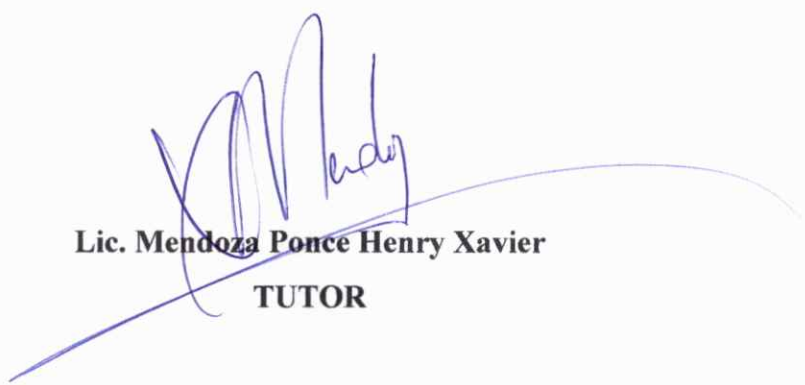
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The present degree work called: " B-learning en el desarrollo de la habilidad de escuchar en inglés." has been exhaustively reviewed in several work sessions. It has been concluded and it is ready for its defense.

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Dedication

This work is the result of perseverance, shared dreams, and the unwavering commitment to personal and professional growth. It has been a journey filled with challenges, learning, and moments of deep reflection, and we proudly dedicate it to those who have been with us every step of the way.

To our families, whose unconditional love has been our safe harbor and our greatest strength. Your constant support, patience, and words of encouragement have uplifted us in times of doubt and motivated us to keep going, even when the road seemed uncertain. Without you, this achievement would not have been possible.

We also extend this dedication to our beloved children, who are our deepest source of inspiration. You have given purpose to each sacrifice, and your smiles have been our motivation to strive for more. This milestone is not only ours, it is yours, too. It serves as a testament that with dedication, courage, and faith, any dream is within reach.

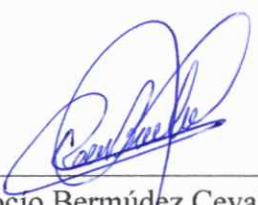
With heartfelt gratitude, we acknowledge the guidance of our teachers and academic mentors, whose wisdom and dedication shaped our way of thinking and helped us grow both professionally and personally. Thank you for encouraging us to ask questions, to investigate with purpose, and to believe in our potential.

And above all, we dedicate this achievement to ourselves, Guadalupe and Andrea for the shared effort, mutual respect, and the spirit of collaboration that sustained us through this process. This is not just the conclusion of an academic phase; it is the beginning of new goals, greater challenges, and the continued pursuit of our dreams.

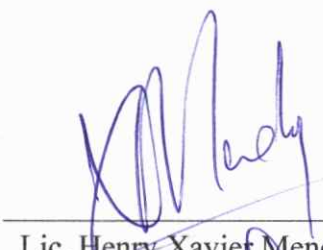
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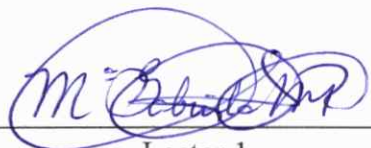
Los miembros del Tribunal Examinador, aprueban el informe de proceso de solicitud de artículo científico sobre el tema “B-learning en el desarrollo de la habilidad de escuchar en inglés.” del año lectivo 2025, elaborado por las estudiante(s) Meza Morales Guadalupe Lisbeth y Triviño Solórzano Andrea Viviana.



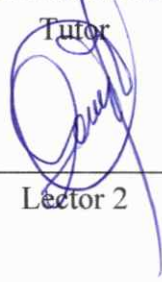
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B-learning in the development of listening skill in English.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, technological advancement and easy access to digital tools have caused drastic changes in education. These changes have set a path for further new approaches that will enhance both teaching and student engagement. A current approach is Blended Learning (B-Learning) which mixes face-to-face traditional education with available online material making the educational experience more flexible and focused on learners. According to Hrastinski (2019), this approach represents an improvement in the increasing accessibility of electronic resources, the internet, and the enduring need for a human component in the opportunity for growth.

In the context of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), developing listening comprehension stands out as one of the most challenging yet crucial skills. As a receptive ability, listening requires learners to process spoken language as it happens, recognize sounds, and derive meaning from context. Although it plays a vital role in overall language acquisition, listening is frequently overlooked in classroom settings. This is often due to a lack of authentic listening materials and limited instructional time devoted specifically to honing this skill. As Vandergrift and Goh (2012) explain, listening is a dynamic and interactive process that involves both bottom-up decoding and top-down inferencing, making it essential to implement teaching strategies that reflect this complexity.

To address these difficulties, both educators and scholars have turned their attention to the potential of Blended Learning (B-Learning) to enhance listening comprehension in EFL contexts. By integrating digital resources such as podcasts, videos, and interactive media into traditional instruction, learners are exposed to authentic language use that extends learning beyond the classroom walls. These tools offer opportunities for repeated listening, active participation, and the cultivation of independent study habits, all of which contribute to more effective skill development.

According to Graham (2006), blended learning not only improves access to language input but also supports learner autonomy and sustained motivation factors that are crucial in the development of listening competence.

Thus, the use of an innovative teaching approach in the learning process is effective for developing students' skills based on the target language. This study was carried out with fifth-semester students enrolled in PINE at Eloy Alfaro University, located in Chone, Manabí province. The main objective was to evaluate the impact of B-Learning on the development of students' listening skills in English.

To explore the impact of this approach on listening skills of students, a mixed-methods research design was implemented. This research combined useful instruments to collect data. Listening performance was evaluated through the standardized EF SET test. Furthermore, structured observation checklists were used to record classroom behavior and student engagement in the listening activities. To enrich the data with professional insights, interviews were conducted with three English teachers, shedding light on the practical application and impact of the blended learning approach.

This paper explores the theoretical basis of blended learning and its connection to the development of listening comprehension skills. It also details the methodological approach adopted in the research and analyzes the results obtained from the educational intervention. The main objective is to determine the effectiveness of B-learning in the

development of listening skills in English through technological tools in fifth-semester students of the PINE program at Eloy Alfaro University. To achieve this purpose, the following specific objectives are established:

- Evaluate the English listening comprehension level of fifth-semester students at Eloy Alfaro University according to the CEFR.
- Identify the technological tools most commonly used in B-learning that contribute to the effectiveness of developing listening skills.
- Examine English teachers' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of B-learning in enhancing students' listening skills and engagement in the learning process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The arrival of technology in society, along with its evolution over the years, has made it easier to work in various fields, especially in education, providing diverse ways to teach and learn by integrating both asynchronous and synchronous spaces and times.

In this context, the presence of new educational approaches focuses on the use of technology, offering a significant opportunity to renew traditional approaches to the teaching and learning process that encourage the interest of students nowadays.

In recent years, blended learning, often called b-learning, has gained considerable importance as an educational approach. Graham (2013) defines blended learning as a method that integrates traditional face-to-face classroom instruction with digital or online activities, aiming to create a more effective and engaging learning experience.

In the same way, Chai, Koh, and Tsai (2020), define blended learning as an educational approach that integrates face-to-face instruction with online learning, aiming to enhance student engagement, provide greater flexibility, and optimize learning outcomes.

According to Hrastinski (2019), this approach represents an improvement in the increasing accessibility of electronic resources, the internet, and the enduring need for a human component in the opportunity for growth.

B-learning is the feasible combination of traditional and online resources that allow the use of different technological tools to promote the learning process especially encouraging the interest and motivation to develop the skills through language acquisition being beneficial to academic growth.

Attard and Holmes (2020) found that learners are more likely to engage in the learning process when they are provided with more avenues and methods using technology. Learning can be enhanced by providing multiple approaches, offering open opportunities for academic development without time and space limitations due to its flexibility, which makes it easier for the student to manage their schedules for online work.

According to Ayob et al. (2020), blended learning methodology is the use of internet tools and resources like chat rooms, forums, discussions, podcasts, and self-assessment tools to reinforce traditional face-to-face learning.

In this regard, Sholihah et al. (2018) note the application of blended learning tools exposes students to unlimited kinds of activities and authentic materials such as oral texts in English language allowing students to develop communicative competencies that include non-verbal language important for communication. The execution of various tools of this approach allows the achievement of objectives based on the student's production.

In addition to what was mentioned by the author, the process of learning a new language requires developing communication skills from a cognitive level as well as understanding of the language, therefore the implementation of a combined process of resources, approaches, and academic tools such as technologies that facilitate linguistic acquisition and communicative performance.

Garrison and Kanuka (2004) have recently written about the potential for blended learning to transform higher education; Blended learning only proves effective when face-to-face teaching and online tools are truly integrated, not just added as a complement to traditional methods.

Overall, the use of the traditional approach is usually boring and unproductive for students. For this reason, students consider it useful to access technological resources like platforms, applications and online tools that encourage their interest and convenience regardless of whether synchronously or asynchronously.

The research by Macedo and Finardi (2020), defined that the factors determining success in the integration of digital technologies in blended learning are closely related to teachers' opinions and reflections on the value of the online environment in education.

In line with what has been mentioned, it is evident that the application of blended learning supports the development of language skills through a combination of technological and traditional resources used for educators appropriately to promote motivation on innovative teaching approach.

In context of the English language learning process, the development of comprehension and communication skills is functional for the mastery of the new language, the process of understanding the message received for its decoding involving listening, which is often regarded as the most complex to acquire due to the student's language proficiency level.

According to Nuttall (2005), listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process. It is a skill that involves more than just hearing; it requires the ability to understand and respond to what is being said.

Vandergrift and Goh (2019), establish the crucial listening skills for effective communication and language acquisition, as they allow learners to comprehend spoken language and interact meaningfully in various contexts. In the same way, Gilakjani and

Sabouri (2020), stated that listening is a crucial skill in language learning, as it directly impacts comprehension and overall communication competence.

On the other hand, Lindsay and Knight (2006), defined that learners need to develop the following skills: learning to listen in various ways, adapting the way they listen according to the text and the reason for listening, recognizing the features of spoken English, using visual and textual clues to help them, listening activity-asking for repetition, clarification, etc. and developing their background knowledge.

In reference to the authors, listening not only depends on decoding what is heard through the ear, but also involves cognitive processes to recognize the message using our prior knowledge alongside what is unknown, to understand the information.

In correspondence to Campoverde-Castillo et al. (2019), describe their experience on the implementation of b-learning in an educational institution focused on primary school students productive and dynamic, they determined that the combination of virtual and in-person class sessions favored participation in academic tasks proposed by the teacher, since it promotes interaction in a virtual environment based on what was acquired in the classroom.

Not so different, in the experience of Yang et al. (2013), the most notable results after applying the b-learning method in the classroom were interactivity, fluid communication, improved clarity of information, time flexibility, reduced commuting, online participation and the exchange of experiences among students. Other significant outcomes included improvements in listening comprehension in English.

In this case, the content taught is acquired in classes, but the practice focuses on the use of online tools to restore a totally traditional learning process. Nowadays, this approach is beneficial to the development of communicative as well as social skills by ongoing exposure to audio materials.

On the other hand, in Russia, Lebedeva et.al (2017), examined the application on blended learning based on the purpose of listening skill, listening for general information and selective listening. The finding indicates positive effect particularly on the shaping of selective listening skills.

In reference to the above, it is reported that the implementation of b-learning is significantly useful in learning a new language, it provides flexibility anytime and anywhere from direct contact between personal interactions with the virtual environment in a dynamic and interesting continuous participation to audio materials by the students. The use of flexible platforms with multimedia capabilities is key in b-learning for listening practice. According to Álvarez et al. (2020), Moodle is widely used in blended learning because its flexible design and multimedia features make it well-suited for enhancing listening skills in education.

Moodle has become an essential tool in blended learning environments due to its adaptability and multimedia integration. This makes it particularly effective for enhancing listening skills, as it allows teachers to upload audio resources, create interactive activities, and monitor student progress.

Moodle excels with its focus on collaboration and accessible tools. As explained by González and Ramírez (2019), Moodle provides a safe and collaborative environment that encourages listening practice using audio materials, such as podcasts, recordings, and interactive activities.

In this context, Moodle provides a collaborative and secure platform that supports listening practice through features like audio recordings, videos, podcasts, and interactive tasks that students can download at any time. Its user-friendly interface makes it a popular choice for educators aiming to foster communication and engagement in hybrid learning settings.

In language learning, platforms like Duolingo facilitate the acquisition of listening skills dynamically. López (2018) notes that Duolingo's gamified and flexible design has yielded positive results in enhancing listening comprehension within the context of foreign language learning.

For this reason, Duolingo is a powerful platform for developing listening skills, particularly in language learning. Its gamified approach keeps students motivated, while its adaptive design ensures that listening exercises are tailored to individual proficiency levels, promoting steady progress.

According to Surya and Binyomin (2020), Edpuzzle is an online video-modifying platform that allows instructors to take videos (both instructor-made and pre-existing available videos) and insert questions to create active-learning video experiences. Moreover, Edpuzzle engages learners in self-paced learning and provides student accountability characteristics that enable educators to keep track of students' progress, how much time they need in a specific question, and prevent the skipping of questions.

Research on the use of Edpuzzle in the improvement of teaching English and listening reflect that in Ecuador, like many countries nowadays, classes have turned into a virtual environment. Nevertheless, although the core of the success of education is to investigate, practice, correct, reflect to have a continuous improvement process, exploration on this area have not been found, neither on studies that support the use of Edpuzzle to improve the listening skill, nor others that contradict the proposal.

Edpuzzle is an interactive platform that provides flexibility to educators who can create educative material using videos, inserting different questions or types of activities in relation to skill to work in function to the language, students like to learn using technological resources, adapting the studies to their learning styles.

"Blended learning enhances English listening comprehension by integrating digital resources with in-person instruction, offering flexible environments where students can practice, repeat, and construct meaning at their own pace" (Martínez,2023).

Thus, this approach is considered a useful way to help students develop their autonomy in the learning process, facilitating scheduling flexibility and promoting the ongoing improvement in different skills, especially when it refers to language skills.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology selected for this investigation was carefully designed using a mixed-method approach that combines both descriptive and synthetic-analytic techniques. This dual approach was chosen to ensure a comprehensive and effective collection of data, enabling a deeper understanding of the phenomena under study. Specifically, the descriptive aspect allowed for a detailed examination of patterns, trends, and characteristics within the data, while the synthetic-analytic component facilitated the integration and critical analysis of findings. By utilizing this methodology, the research was able to explore the effectiveness of B-learning in developing listening skills in English, providing insights into how this approach impacts learners' auditory comprehension. As highlighted by Creswell (2014), such a design is particularly suitable for identifying, describing, and analyzing phenomena within specific contexts, as it allows for a nuanced understanding of the subject matter without requiring direct intervention or manipulation of variables.

The selected population was fifth semester students of the PINE program. In the same way, the sample consists of **30** students enrolled in that level of study and **3** English teachers. This choice is because, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (**CEFR**), a student at the B2 level should have developed listening skills adequately. This level implies that the learner can understand the main ideas of complex texts, both concrete and abstract, and can interact with a degree of

fluency and spontaneity that makes regular communication with native speakers possible (Council of Europe, 2001). Therefore, by focusing on students who are expected to have listening skills aligned with this standard.

Data collection will be conducted using instruments such as observation checklists, interviews, and standardized tests. In this case, the observation checklist allows for the systematic collection of observational data, such as behavior, responses, and interest in the classroom. "The purpose of observations is to gain insight into the nature of the phenomenon under investigation, identify patterns or relationships, and develop a deeper understanding of the social or natural world." (Coale, 2023). Therefore, the application of this instrument is to identify, through visualization, real aspects that influence the English class at this level, recognizing the deficiency in the development of listening activities by students.

On the other hand, the interviews provide detailed qualitative information regarding teachers' perceptions of the B-learning approach. According to Mckee (2023), an interview is a data collection method in which a researcher asks participants questions to gather information, insights, or opinions in a structured, semi-structured, or unstructured format. For this reason, this instrument allows obtaining useful qualitative data that supports this study, to find appropriate results to the research problem.

Additionally, the application of standardized test **EFSET** enables the assessment of students' listening skill levels. ACTFL (2024) defined a standardized listening test as a structured assessment tool designed to evaluate an individual's ability to comprehend spoken language under consistent conditions. These tests are administered and scored uniformly, ensuring that all test-takers receive the same instructions, questions, and scoring criteria, which allows for reliable comparisons across different individuals.

This research was conducted at the University facilities, focusing on students enrolled in the fifth semester during the second academic term of 2024. To analyze the participants' level of English listening comprehension, a standardized test was

administered. To present the results, statistical graphs were used, including a pie chart, which allowed the percentage of each student's listening proficiency to be illustrated. Apart from that, a reference table based on the EFSET (EF Standard English Test) standards was also used to guide the interpretation of the scores obtained in the assessment. This table facilitated the classification of students into the different levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), from A1 to C2, thus allowing for an accurate and objective assessment of each student's listening performance according to international criteria.

Therefore, by incorporating these three instruments, a wealth of information and necessary data is obtained to evaluate the effectiveness of the research outcomes, to show the reliability, validity, and usefulness of the proposed research.

RESULTS

As a result, observations conducted in a fifth semester class showed 60% of the indicators proposed in the checklist were met, indicating a significantly active implementation of PEARSON platform in developing listening comprehension. The most strengthened aspects were the use of this platform, the use of speakers to play audios, and the creation of a supportive virtual environment. However, areas for improvement were identified, such as monitoring participation of students, immediate feedback, and the use of additional resources to ensure listening comprehension.

On the other hand, the results obtained of interviews reflect that the teachers interviewed perceived the integration of B-learning in English classes as essential for improving listening skills. In response to whether they considered it necessary to integrate B-learning in English classes and how they use online platforms for listening activities, all three English educators agreed that B-learning is essential for increasing the exposure of the target language, especially in countries where English is not spoken as a native language, for example, Pearson, SigmaNet English, TechTalks, and social media provide students with authentic materials through accessible places/available

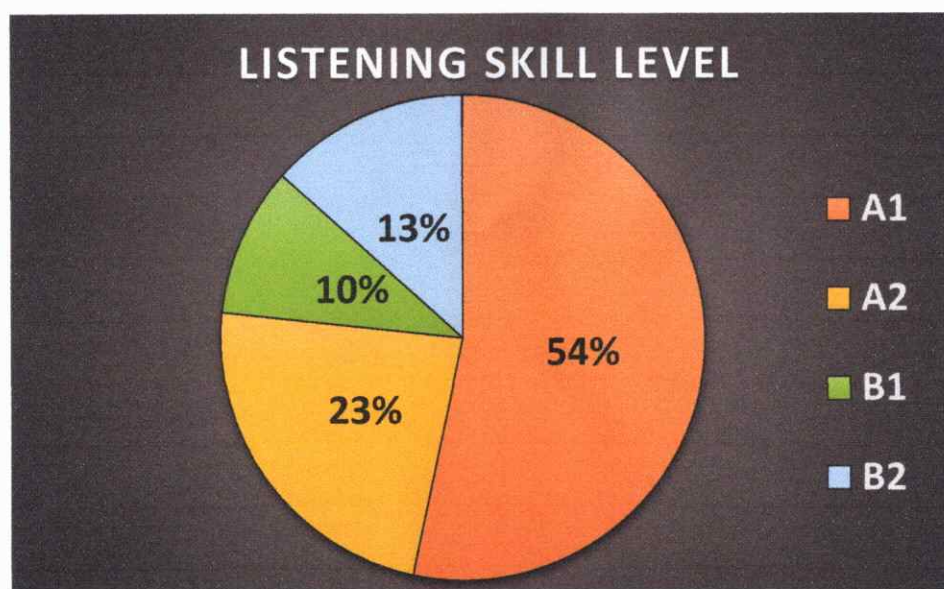
spaces which support both in-class and extracurricular learning giving a wider context for practicing listening comprehension. Additionally, these resources accessed through online platforms like podcasts, TikTok videos; or movies are good for vocabulary growth when used with strategies such as pre-teaching keywords.

Teachers consider important that the learning should be dynamic and engaging about active participation in the classroom. It may involve the use of interactive tools and strategies like Padlet, chat apps, digital post its, Projector-Assisted Activities that grab attention and gently nudge students towards participation and immersion. Apart from that, reinforcement feedback is done immediately, emphasizing here the comprehension assimilation, error correction, and encouragement of progress. In the classroom, teachers monitor through observation, paired tasks, gap-filling, word organization listening comprehension checks, YouTube videos, blogs for autonomous listening practice. Therefore, the findings underscore that B-learning implemented with digital strategies plus supportive feedback greatly aids in developing English listening skills of students.

According to the **EF SET** (EF Standard English Test), listening scores range from 0 to 100 and are aligned with the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). This is the breakdown:

EF SET Score	CEFR Level	Listening Skill Description
0 – 30	A1 (Beginner)	can understand very basic everyday expressions and simple sentences.
31 – 40	A2 (Elementary)	can understand simple information and short conversations on familiar topics.
41 – 50	B1 (Intermediate)	can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters.
51 – 60	B2 (Upper-Intermediate)	can understand extended speech and lectures, follow complex ideas.
61 – 70	C1 (Advanced)	can understand a wide range of spoken language, including implicit meaning.
71 – 100	C2 (Proficient)	can effortlessly understand any kind of spoken English, even when delivered fast.

Based on the EF SET scoring system, a B2 level corresponding to a score between 51 and 60 is generally regarded as suitable for students of fifth semester at university, as it signifies an upper-intermediate proficiency in English, particularly in listening. Upon administering the EF SET to a sample of 30 students, the outcomes showed considerable variation:



This graph shows the results of the standardized test administered to fifth-semester students at Eloy Alfaro University. The listening skill level of each student was determined based on the test results. A significant majority, corresponding to 54% (16 students), are at level A1, indicating basic skills for understanding simple everyday expressions and phrases. This data suggests that more than half of the students are still at an early stage of development in this skill.

At the next level, A2, 23% of those tested (7 students), which represents a slight improvement over the previous group, but still within the elementary levels according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Overall, 77% of the students remain at basic levels (A1 and A2), highlighting the need to strengthen teaching strategies focused on listening comprehension.

On the other hand, a smaller group achieved intermediate levels: 10% (3 students) obtained level B1, and 13% (4 students) reached B2. This last level implies a greater ability to understand more complex discourse and follow main ideas in academic or work contexts. However, the complete absence of students at levels C1 and C2, which correspond to advanced skills, highlights a considerable gap with respect to higher levels of the language.

The results reflect limited mastery of listening skills, with a strong focus on the basic levels. This could be attributed to various factors, such as teaching methodology, insufficient exposure to the language, or a lack of intensive listening practice. In this context, the B-Learning model (blended learning) is presented as an effective and necessary alternative.

DISCUSSION

The results of the present investigation show an insufficient development of listening comprehension in students in the fifth semester of the PINE program. Seventy-seven percent are concentrated in levels A1 and A2 of the CEFR, while only 13% reached level B2, considered the minimum desired according to international standards. This gap between the expected output profile and the results obtained calls for a review of the methods implemented by teachers.

Graham (2013) describes the B-learning model as an integration of face-to-face strategies with digital media. Nevertheless, the observed evidence shows a restricted use of technological tools. In particular, the listening activity is focused on the base book, and Pearson platform without the incorporation of resources such as podcasts, interactive videos, or other external platforms. In contrast to Ayob et al. (2020), the blended approach should include collaborative spaces, authentic materials, and self-assessment tasks as part of the training process. With the aim of strengthening students' listening comprehension skills during their English language learning process

Attard and Holmes (2020) add that scholars are more engaged in learning when varied methodologies mediated by technology are employed. In the observed classroom, that principle is not reflected, as auditory work was limited to a single source. The exclusion of virtual environments such as Edpuzzle and Duolingo represents a limitation in meaningful exposure to language. López (2018) posits that Duolingo improves listening comprehension through a playful and progressive approach, adapted to the user's level.

During the interviews, teachers expressed interest in applying digital resources that promote participation. Macedo and Finardi (2020) suggest that the success of technological strategies depends primarily on the teachers' perception and disposition towards the digital environment, since educators are the ones in charge of applying these strategies in the classroom. However, when carrying out classroom observations, there was no evidence of constant implementation or planning focused on auditory activities beyond the basic text and platform.

Regarding listening comprehension, Nuttall (2005) emphasizes that listening involves interpreting and responding with meaning. Listening is not limited to hearing but requires cognitive processing that links prior knowledge to updated content. Vandergrift and Goh (2019) reinforce this perspective, stating that the development of listening competence enables functional communicative interaction. Nonetheless, classroom analysis illustrates little variety in listening purposes and an absence of explicit strategies to train this receptive skill.

Yang et al. (2013) recorded significant improvements in listening comprehension when implementing B-learning in conditions where asynchronous digital activities were combined with face-to-face interaction. In the observed classroom, equivalent results were not found, possibly due to poor integration of authentic resources or stand-alone activities.

Lebedeva et al. (2017) analyzed selective and general listening, observing a favorable impact on auditory development. In contrast, the class evaluated lacked specific objectives to differentiate types of listening, limiting the progressive acquisition of cognitive strategies linked to comprehension.

Moodle, as González and Ramírez (2019) expose, provides a collaborative environment with resources such as recordings and podcasts that can be downloaded at contrasting times. The absence of this type of dynamics in the observed environment leaves in evidence an untapped pedagogical opportunity.

Overwhelmingly, Martínez (2023) argues that the combined model favors listening comprehension by integrating digital resources with face-to-face sessions, generating flexible spaces where the student constructs meaning autonomously. On this premise, the studied environment requires methodological adjustments, such as authentic tasks and a variety of resources, etc.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the EF SET standardized test reveal that the English listening comprehension level of fifth-semester students at Eloy Alfaro University remains largely at basic levels of proficiency according to the CEFR. With 77% of students at levels A1 and A2, their ability to understand simple and familiar expressions is still limited, indicating an early stage in their listening development. The fact that only 13% of students reached the expected B2 level, and none reached advanced levels (C1 or C2), highlights a significant gap between their current performance and international language standards. In this context, the implementation of e-learning or blended learning approaches is recommended, as they could provide greater access to diverse listening materials.

The research highlights several technological tools that improve the development of listening comprehension skills in blended learning environments. Platforms such as

Moodle and Duolingo provide flexible, multimedia-rich resources, including audio recordings, podcasts, interactive activities, and gamified exercises tailored to students' proficiency levels. Edpuzzle stands out as an interactive video platform where teachers can incorporate questions, encouraging active learning and accountability.

English educators at Eloy Alfaro University perceive B-learning as important for increasing language students' exposure to the target language and improving listening skills. They value the flexibility and accessibility of online platforms that provide authentic materials like podcasts, videos, and social media content, which extend learning beyond the classroom. Educators also emphasize the value of dynamic activities and tools like Padlet and chat apps to encourage participation. Nevertheless, they point out that online learning still has limitations in practice and suggest improving it by diversifying digital resources and offering immediate feedback.

Finally, for future research, it is suggested to design a didactic proposal that incorporates interactive digital platforms, oriented to turn the teacher into a strategic mediator that transforms the listening process into a meaningful experience for learners of foreign languages such as English.

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