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**Elaboration and Application of the guide 'Listen-up' through Moodle-based activities to improve the Listening Comprehension skill in the first level of English in the Medicine School at the University of Cuenca in the school period 2014-2015.**

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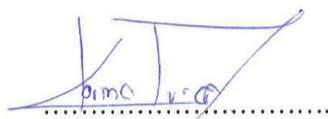
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## CERTIFICACIÓN DEL TUTOR

Certifico que el presente trabajo de investigación previo a la obtención del Grado de Magíster en Lingüística Aplicada al Aprendizaje del Inglés con el tema: “Elaboration and Application of the guide ‘Listen-up’ through Moodle-based activities to improve the Listening Comprehension skill in the first level of English in the Medicine School at the University of Cuenca in the school period 2014-2015” ha sido elaborado por Karolin Lucía Varela Solano, con el asesoramiento permanente de mi persona en calidad de Tutor, por lo que certifico que se encuentra apto para su presentación y defensa respectiva.

Es todo cuanto puedo informar en honor a la verdad.

Cuenca, 22 de junio de 2016



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## **AUTORÍA**

Yo Karolin Lucía Varela Solano con cédula de identidad Nro. 0102607751 soy responsable de las ideas, doctrinas, resultados y lineamientos realizados en la presente investigación y el patrimonio intelectual del trabajo investigativo pertenece a la Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo.



Karolin Lucía Varela Solano

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## **RESUMEN**

El presente trabajo de investigación tiene el objetivo de establecer el grado de efectividad de la guía '*Listen-up*' a través del uso de la plataforma de aprendizaje virtual *Moodle* para que los estudiantes mejoren sus habilidades de comprensión auditiva en el idioma inglés. Se trabajó con un grupo de 18 estudiantes de medicina de la Universidad de Cuenca a quienes se les aplicó una encuesta para recabar información sobre su experiencia previa estudiando inglés y un pre-test para determinar su nivel en la habilidad de comprensión auditiva. Luego se les aplicó el tratamiento a través de la guía y la plataforma Moodle para posteriormente medir su desarrollo final mediante un post-test. Los resultados demostraron la efectividad del proceso pues los estudiantes elevaron significativamente su nivel de comprensión auditiva y las razones expuestas en la discusión de resultados y las conclusiones sobre dichos resultados fueron que los estudiantes se sintieron motivados al considerar una forma novedosa de aprendizaje, el contacto permanente con el idioma y la facilidad de tener múltiples acentos y dialectos que constantemente está ayudando a los docentes.

## ABSTRACT

This research is intended to establish the effectiveness of the guide 'Listen-up' through the use of the Moodle virtual platform, so that students can improve their abilities of listening comprehension in English learning. It was worked with a group of 18 students of the Medicine School of the University of Cuenca. A survey was applied to gather information about their previous experiences studying English and a pretest to determine their level in the ability of listening comprehension. Then a treatment was developed through the usage of the guide 'Listen-up' and the Moodle platform, and finally, their performance was evaluated through a posttest. The results demonstrated the effectiveness of the process since students elevated their level of listening comprehension. The results were explained in the discussion of results conclusions in which it was determined that students were motivated due to a new form of learning, the permanent contact with the language and the easiness of having multiple accents and dialects.

  
Mgs. Myriam Trujillo B.

**DELEGADA DEL CENTRO DE IDIOMAS**



## **INTRODUCTION**

Teaching a foreign language is a task that requires lots of effort but especially lots of time. In the Ecuadorian education system, especially in Cuenca, students are exposed to a reduced number of English classes. This is the reason why teachers do not have enough time to apply activities to help students develop the listening skills and the students arrive to the university with a lack of practice and reduced exposure to the target language, which produces frustrated situations in them at the moment to study English. This was the main motivation to carry out this research in the University of Cuenca, in the Medical School with the English first level students in the school period 2014-2015.

This problem was observed in the University of Cuenca, in the Medicine School where the students from the first level of English have to take this subject because it is compulsory. The students are in the credits system which consists of six hours of classes per week. They must work four hours in the classroom with the teacher and two hours of self-study in the Moodle platform where they frequently practice only reading, writing and grammar, however due to the limited time, the listening skill is practiced in the classroom with the CDs from the book considering that this is the easiest way to develop this skill, but actually the materials on the CDs are usually read by English speaking people which includes different accents, difficult idioms and unfamiliar language chunks in their speaking, causing difficulties to understand the contents.

As a consequence of the students' poor listening background and the assumption by the teachers that listening is a skill that is developed by itself through the CDs' book instead of being taught properly as the other skills. The academic results from the 2014-2015 period evaluation have shown that students were not succeeding at acquiring the English listening skill; they are not achieving a quality level of performance when understanding English.

The diagnosis executed to determine the problem for this research included a survey that determines what are the causes that explain the poor development of the listening skill were: 1. The students' vocabulary is limited because they do not have enough input. 2. The students cannot understand the main idea; they only answer questions or complete some exercises of the book. 3. The students are not able to listen for specific details because they have never worked in this aspect. To face this problem, this thesis is focused on the improvement of the students' listening comprehension skills with the creation of the guide 'Listen-up' through Moodle-based activities. Consequently, the main question in this research is: to what extent can the 'Listen-up' guide through Moodle-based activities help the student enhance their listening comprehension skills?

The main objective established for this research was to determine to what extent the 'Listen-up' guide through Moodle-based activities can help students to improve their listening comprehension skills. The specific objectives were a) to elaborate the 'Listen-up' guide through Moodle-based activities to improve the students' vocabulary; b) to apply the 'Listen-up' guide through Moodle-based activities to improve the students' main idea understanding; and, c) to work with updated audio material through Moodle-based activities to improve the listening for specific details.

The data collected from the survey applied to a group of students of First Level of English, (see annex 1) 90% of students confirmed that the most difficult skill at the moment to study English is listening, being identify problems as the time to practice during the learning process, the lack of input, and the material in this case CDs' book. Also the results were based on previous grades the students have obtained, showing that the necessary area to be improved is listening comprehension skills. This research will be useful to establish a different approach for teaching and learning the listening comprehension skills. The 'Listen up' Guide was created to give students and teachers a tool to solve problems that have been identified from a previous EFL background. Students and teachers cannot waste more time trying to overcome these problems with the traditional methods based only in textbooks. Through the use of Moodle-based activities, it is expected that students in the first level of the Medical School will develop better abilities in their listening comprehension skills.

The research and the application of the Moodle Platform guide is the most adequate form to solve the listening comprehension problem. The University is attempting to enter into a 'blended' method of learning using traditional classes and self-study on Moodle platform tools. However, this effort is not only focused on technology. Techniques and activities for listening comprehension improvement were carefully selected by the researcher to improve listening comprehension skills and not only to fulfill a chronogram or syllabus.

Academically, it is important since a research like this has not been executed in the University of Cuenca. Tools and guides have been developed through the use of the Moodle platform, however, their effectiveness has not been proven. Therefore, this research constitutes the perfect opportunity to create a guide to help students improve the listening comprehension skills, and to demonstrate if the Moodle-based activities are really useful. Moreover, the teachers will have access to the guide to assist students who need extra help. Data and results will be a contribution to the EFL studies in listening comprehension, linked to technology and the effectiveness of the Moodle virtual platform. This investigation is originally developed in spite of the previous studies made around the world. This study contributes to the teaching program and suggests a specific and updated method which is applied around the world.

This thesis is feasible because there is much information available from the Internet, academic articles, documents and original data, as well as much bibliography. The Master formation in linguistics and didactics allows the researcher to carry on the process and analyze the information. The time projected to develop this thesis was enough to get the objectives stated in this research. The creation of the Moodle-based activities is scheduled for one month with 3 units to be applied. The collection of data is scheduled for five months, the process and analysis of the information is scheduled for three months. All the costs related to this thesis will be assumed by the researcher. The research is supported by the University through the Language Department and human resources including teachers, secretaries and students who will be available to participate.

The beneficiaries of this investigation, through the elaboration and application of the 'Listen-up' guide, which includes the use of the Moodle platform, will be the students, the teachers from the English Department of the University of Cuenca, the authorities, and society in general. Each student studying English as a second language will have access to this guide to help improve their listening comprehension skills. Lastly, the process and results obtained will be meaningful in my career as teacher and researcher since it will be done in the institution where I work.

This investigation was quasi-experimental since we worked with an intervention group of 18 students from the Medicine School. A pretest and a posttest were applied to determine the results of the proposal and survey to gather information about the context of learning of students.

Finally, this thesis was divided in five chapters. In the first one, it is analyzed the theoretical fundamentals of the work. In the second chapter, the methodology is explained. The third chapter contains the alternative guidelines with the proposal used for the research. In the fourth chapter, results are exposed and discussed. Finally, the last chapter is about conclusions and recommendations.

Students, teachers and researchers who are interested in EFL development will find this investigation useful in different perspectives of education since it has important details about the use of technology to teach English and a guide to use Moodle platforms in a correct way.





**CHAPTER I**  
**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

## **1.1. ANTECEDENTS**

Virtual learning has become relevant in higher education and it has the benefits of classroom learning and new technologies. Despite of the advances in combining traditional learning and virtual learning, students still have problems acquiring language skills. This could be provoked by different circumstances like: an incorrect use of technology, a mechanical process of learning that focuses more in technology use than learning, or intrinsic difficulties of this learning method. Precisely, this is the situation of Medicine students in the University of Cuenca, since they have access to technology but most of them show a low development of their language learning skills. According to a previous diagnosis, these students specially have problems with the listening skills and that is why it was decided to carry out a research and make a proposal based on these flaws. Some researchers have studied how technology helps students learn English and some of their findings are summarized in the following paragraphs.

This kind of learning is known as “blended” and it incorporates the advantages of the face-to-face interaction with the teacher and all the tools and resources provided by virtual platforms. The problem is that this term could have different interpretations according to higher education needs in language learning so anything can be considered as blended learning as long as it contains traditional and technology learning (Arguelles & Peco, 2007).

This is why Arguelles and Peco (2007) establish that blended learning involves all the parts of the learning process; teacher, students, materials and institutions. However, in this case students need to play an active role in blended education, a meaningful one that is characterized by adequate tools and platforms; these authors believe that one of the best platforms of virtual learning is Moodle.

Moodle is basically a course management system or free software designed to create online courses. It has many modules where you can generate and modify lessons, quizzes and other resources, within a learning context. This tool has as

main approach of the constructionist educational philosophy that incorporates all members from the learning process (Arguelles & Peco, 2007).

MOODLE (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is a free-source e-learning software platform developed by Martin Dougiamas to help educators create online courses with more interaction and collaborative content. Because MOODLE encourages interaction and exploration, students' learning experiences are often non-linear, MOODLE enforces order upon a course using conditional activities arranged in sequences. Courses contain both conditional and non-linear activities. (Hon, 2013, p. 5)

Research on blended learning and Moodle platforms has about ten years and it is still being developed, but some of the main findings are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Arguelles and Peco (2007) had so many experiences with groups of foreign language learners and consider that the experience of combining face-to-face classes and online monitoring is really productive if it is well executed. Their research demonstrated that students find that they are involved in the learning process and are able to self-evaluate their knowledge. They also think, it is time consuming and a little stressful, especially for the teacher, however, most of their results show Moodle platforms as an excellent tool to develop English skills.

Another researcher Syamsuddin (2014) involved a group of students to put into practice a TOEFL course through a Moodle platform and he tried to develop speaking skills. He managed the platform to install recording tools in the Moodle and the program would run in a lab and students' laptops. He was able to demonstrate that Moodle can be a tool that goes further than grammar or vocabulary practice.

Pain Arias and other researchers (2010) made an investigation with a Moodle platform which was developed to learn English based on occupational purposes with good results in which students could select the information they were interested in and they could get special tools to learn the language and make students more independent.

In different studies, like in Bärenfänger (2005), it has been noticed that the role of educational activities in the classroom, especially in EFL learning, has been complemented with online references, asynchronous web-based learning, e-mail, online assessment, testing, mentoring and tutoring. The new tools satisfy the needs of learners by improving quality of the learning experience, decreasing the time to accomplish goals, and improving content and materials.

Other studies carried out in Italian secondary schools showed that many students do not like to practice at home because they consider that working with textbook material is not useful. However, in the same investigation, some students did not want to work at home online, spending time in social networks or chatting. The research concluded that there is a lack of planning to organize activities online to be worked by students. Most of the teachers in this study sent online homework through different web pages, but with no accuracy and communication problems (Proietta, 2010). Students do not have a guide during activities getting confused and frustrated.

In Latin America people are studying and learning English through a multimedia-program called “OPEN ENGLISH” which offers the opportunity to study anywhere since it is a course to be worked online any time and it is based on interactive material which includes a lot of listening tracks, audios, and videos. So the tendency to study through computer is increasing every day (Open English, 2015).

Moodle activities have been developed to become a huge opportunity for students and teachers around the world. Studies have demonstrated that participation, scoring (Munby, 2011), and motivation (Spataro, 2014) improve when using this platform but other researches also showed that it is important to keep a structure and constant relationship with the student-user if we want results (Peña & Téllez, 2010).

The range of listening comprehension activities is wide taking into account the diverse tools that Moodle has: Downloading and setting up a recorder; Uploading audio files; Making the MP3 links; Adding listening tasks to quiz; Using forums

with audio; Multiple vs. single-play files (Myrick, 2014). Control and evaluation have been improved and commercial and not commercial Moodle platforms products have turned to be effective to measure students' developments (Hinkelmann & Grose, 2004).

Moodle activities have proved to be successful in different scenarios and different groups. However, the methods followed by these researchers are developed under a strict base of concepts and theoretical framework which are worked in the next paragraphs. In the first part, scientific fundamentals are shown through philosophical, epistemological and psychological approaches, and in the second part, the main variables of this study are explained and analyzed.

## **1.2. SCIENTIFIC FUNDAMENTS**

### **1.2.1. Philosophical fundamentals**

Most of the problems that the philosophy education has are in a particular need of promoting a determined ideology without an analytical approximation to the real issues and problems. Some basic concepts, principles, categories and questions must be established as the fundamentals of the subject and we must carefully study problems such as the value of education, its nature, and implications of learning and what should be learned and taught (Wilson, 2009).

To have a real philosophy of education, it consists to analyze education, beginning with the criticism of the general theory of education, consisting on a critical evaluation and reflection upon general theories. It means that we must start from a philosophical process to face educational problems, using a philosophical method and a philosophical attitude to get philosophical conclusions and results (Dhavan, 2005).

Obviously, in this research we cannot deny that we are working with a constructivist approach, especially under the Piaget's perspective, which is based in centuries of educational theory development that comes from all the progression made from the traditional education whose center was the teacher to

a more holistic kind of learning. This way of thinking invites us to think about education from different angles, to consider different philosophical problems like: ethics versus profit, individual satisfaction versus societal satisfaction, theology versus empiricism/experientialism, and so on. (Simatwa, 2010)

Finally, in this context it is also valid to mention that we also consider education as an institution created with a techno-political perspective, with a strict discipline that must be respected, and structured with a model based on the relationship capacity-communication-power (Faubion, 2000). This is why we think that teaching and learning a second language must have more aims than just learning a language mechanically. A critical point of view of the system of power and domain should penetrate every educative action including methodologies and content.

### **1.2.2. Epistemology fundamentals**

Probably, this section is the most fundamental and problematic for this work since technology is quite an issue for epistemology in these days. It carries on a great amount of discussion referred to the role of technology in modern societies and its influence in young people. However, in educational processes, epistemology can go deeper and try to find the basis of education theory and practice. However, authors coincide that educational epistemology has to do a lot with psychology and theses, this is why researchers like Piaget, Chomsky and Krashen are vital in the area. Basically, they try to understand the learning process and there is no better way to do it than finding the structures in the person's head.

For example, Piaget's work on genetic epistemology gives several ideas about learning like it is not static (Applefield, Hubber, & Moallem, *Constructivism in theory and practice*, 2001). This psychological perspective of epistemology in education was developed in further years with different focusses (Labbas, 2013). However, we think that the learning acquisition theory developed by Krashen is the epistemological theory that gives more support to this work, specially, because it is related to a Second Language Acquisition (SLA) process (Abukhattala, 2013). In the next couple of paragraphs, we can summarize the main ideas of this author.

Krashen and other specialists think that there are two different ways of developing second language skills: learning and acquisition. The first one is related to the structure of the language and the second one has relationship with the internalization of the language. In classrooms, teachers and students emphasize the learning process since they are aware all the time that they are trying to know something new. However, in real life, during interaction, no speaker pays attention to the form while they are communicating an idea or using the language. So Krashen thinks that teachers must facilitate the acquisition instead of learning (Abukhattala, 2013).

Another interesting perspective in Krashen's theory is the Natural Order Hypothesis that states that we should put more attention in functions, topics and situations since the order that the teacher provides is not always the one that naturally comes out. We can also talk about Krashen's most important hypothesis called "Input Hypothesis" that considers that teachers must give a comprehensible input if we want our students to internalize the language. However, we are more interested in this work in the "Monitor Hypothesis" theory. This theory supports the idea of the Moodle platform. Students can become their own monitor with the system help. They manage to be an over-monitor, under-monitor and optimal monitor users (Abukhattala, 2013).

However, to the Piaget and Krashen's perspectives, we must add the Complexity Theory developed by Morin. It is said that something is complex when the image of something extremely complicated is produced, or it is a difficult issue or it is a tangled affair. The intention is that students try to develop their thinking always looking for a solution to the problems they face when they are learning a new language. They must be able to detect what skills are more difficult for them in the learning process, and then they must take advice and apply an innovative new strategy that will serve as a tool to develop their learning process (Morin, 2004).

This epistemology approach has different projections for an education in the present and the future. Morin develops the theory that the purpose of education is to transmit knowledge; however, education does not pay attention to realities,

systems, difficulties, errors and illusions. Consequently, education does not teach what knowledge is. In this sense, it is impossible to encourage a model of learning in which major and deep problems are changed in partial and circumscribed knowledge (Morin E. , 2000).

Morin goes beyond when he states that humans are a complex unity of physical, biological psychological, cultural, social, and historical elements. Education has divided this unity in to discipline so we are not able to learn what a real human being is. The future of a human being is located in a planetary scale and this is why we cannot study mankind as isolated groups like education does. It is also important to add uncertainties to the study of physical sciences, biological evolution and historical sciences (Morin E., 2000). Morin thinks that understanding and ethics are essential to awake a new kind of education, since we need to know that comprehending the people around us and developing a human condition that allows democracy will be the platform to create a better world (Morin E. , 2000).

As we can see, Piaget, Krashen and Morin consider that knowledge acquisition is a complex process that cannot be reduced to a couple of statements. Therefore, education is also complex and it has implications for learning a second language since an educator must consider to open the analysis and explore philosophical, psychological, historical, sociological and biological aspects of acquiring a language to avoid memorization of words and grammar structures as the main methods to learn a language. This is precisely what it is being considered in the next paragraphs.

### **1.2.3. Psychology fundamentals**

This work is based on the Piaget's Cognitive Theory which is related to the development of human intelligence. Piaget's idea is primarily known as a developmental stage theory that deals with the nature of knowledge itself and how humans gradually come to acquire, construct, and use it. Piaget J. (2012).



As it was analyzed in the epistemology fundamentals, Krashen also writes from a psychological perspective since he considers that acquisition depends on the students' mood and some content or structures are acquired by affection (Abukhattala, 2013). Krashen also identifies a division between learning and acquiring a language based on the structure of a learning class and real life language acquisition that has an enormous influence in the students' confusions and mistakes when they try to acquire the language.

Consequently, a meaningful learning process depends on having a clear purpose to learn English and teachers must identify what are students' real objectives and help them to acquire a second language using pertinent contents and useful didactic material to cover students' interests. "Although they may say they just want to 'learn English', they frequently have very specific learning goals and needs (...)" (CAL, 2010). Students' minds will be developed if they are challenged to access to new information and problems. The different people's necessities and interests, the permanent changes of the English language, and the demands of the new world generate the obligation of use English in different contexts.

However, we can also take a look to other psychological and more personal variables that may facilitate and inhibit efforts of English learners. English is quite a challenge in some countries that see language learning as a step forward to a rich and powerful post-industrial society. So failure in the first stages can generate things like anxiety, low self-esteem and motivation, identity conflict, language shock and culture shock (Clyne, 2013). Consequently, the teacher and the students must deal with these conflicts as part of learning.

## **Pedagogical fundamentals**

Our pedagogical fundament is the constructivism. However, we have to say that it is a complex theory that needs of other sciences to be understood. This is why some main questions of the constructivism can be discussed through psychology and educational theories. For example: "Is it our individual knowledge about the world? ("Children construct their own knowledge.")". Other questions need

philosophy, epistemology, and sociology. For example: “Is it the shared and accepted scientific knowledge about the world as it exists in established science? (“Scientific knowledge is socially constructed”). Or is it the world itself? (“The world is socially constructed”).” (Sjober, 2007). Under the constructivist paradigm of pedagogy, it is impossible to keep educative characteristics and aims in simple terms.

Constructivism was created as an evolution of the behaviorist perspective movement, with the purpose of having different views of teaching the learning process in which students have a main role: being the active center of the process. Education needs to take into account individualities with their prior beliefs, knowledge, and skills that individuals bring with them. Individually based instruction to instruction that was mostly left behind and replaced by a community of learners who integrates young and elderly people. Constructivism’s greatest contribution is thinking education as process and not just as results (Gail Jones & Brader, 2002).

Therefore, this research project is based on the Theory of the Constructivism according to Piaget, because it is a theory that exposes humans in order to gain knowledge from their experiences, and learn in a manner that is influenced by these experiences. Also the individuals learn by their own experiences, this experiential level contributes to the subject matter to be learned. Each individual is his or her own teacher and gains more knowledge from their own life experiences, this also states that an individual learns from his own set of values and morals. Constructivism is not a specific way of learning but an educational theory. Jean Piaget (1896-1980) believed that children's play had an important role in constructivism and learning; his theory expounds that we learn through assimilation and accommodation.

Modern constructivists believe in two main principles (1) knowledge is not passively received but actively built up by the cognizing subject; (2) the function of cognition is adaptive and serves the organization of the experiential world, not the discovery of an ontological reality. (Hussen & Postlethwaite, 2000). This is why the lesson inside this model must have a clear content goal with an authentic

task, question or problem, and the teacher must think of multiple ideas to represent the points in the lesson, so students can connect, integrate, and elaborate the new learning. Students' interactions are also important and must be an essential part of the learning process (Applefield, Hubber, & Moallem, Constructivism in theory and practice, 2001).

#### **1.2.4. Legal fundamentals**

This work meets the requirements dictated by the constitution as shown in the following articles from several laws:

**LOES. Art. 9.** Higher education and good living. Higher education is essential to building the right of good living condition in the context of multiculturalism, respect for diversity and harmonious coexistence with nature.

**Law No. 18.437 of the General Education Law** in the following articles says:

**Article 11.** (From academic freedom). - The teacher, as a professional, is free to plan their courses making responsible, critical and informed choices of the themes and educational activities, respecting the objectives and content of the plans and programs of study.

**Article 36.** (From distance education and semi-presencial attendance).- The distance, online or assisted, education understands acknowledges the processes of teaching and learning which do not require the students' physical attendance presence of in classrooms or other similar units, for receiving their regular courses, once the teacher has provided material and technological resources specifically developed to obviate their presence, and ensures an academic organization and a management system and specific assessment designed for that purpose. The blending learning, in addition to the above features, required classroom actions.

#### **UNACH Regulation**

Characteristics and organization of Master program studies:

**Art. 74.**-The Master studies should be based on the scientific research, aimed at deepening of an area of knowledge with scientific and academic purposes.

### **1.3. THEORETICAL FUNDAMENTS**

In this section, it is pretended to analyze three main areas of research related to the influence of the usage of the Moodle platforms in second language acquisition, specifically to listening comprehension. To do this, a brief analysis of second and first language acquisition is essential to establish the context of the use of Moodle platforms. In the second part, it is studied the concepts and functioning of Moodle platforms and checked some necessary terminology. Finally, it is important to take a look of the characteristics of the listening comprehension skills that would be important to determine basic students' flaws.

#### **Second Language Acquisition**

As English teachers, we know that learning a second language is not the result of a single factor, but of several variables of different types: contextual (environment) and personal (age, cognitive style, intelligence, aptitude, attitudes, motivation, personality, affective factors, learning opportunities and type of instruction). The connection of these elements guarantees a success at the end, but focusing in just one or two of them provokes problems with bad outcomes:

Some obvious reasons for the problems experienced in L2 acquisition are related to the fact that most people attempt to learn another language during their teenage or adult years, in a few hours each week of school time (rather than via the constant interaction experienced by a child), with a lot of other occupations (the child has little else to do), and with an already known language available for most of their daily communicative requirements (Yule, 2013, p. 190).

Learners of a second language have to deal with different obstacles in order to achieve competence in a second language. Motivation is one of the main problems in an English class. If a teacher does not motivate EFL learners, they will surely fail in their road to learn a second language. The facilitator has to help the learner

be confident since motivation that a teacher can provide is an important aspect to be successful in learning a second language (Abukhattala, 2013).

Krashen's Input theory (Abukhattala, 2013) affirms that a language is the product of an unconscious process called acquisition and it is similar to the development of how children acquire their first language. This process needs natural communication in which the learner's goal is to communicate and not the form of their expressions.

Moreover, Hymes affirms that speakers of a second language have to know not only grammatical competence to communicate successfully, but also know how native speakers use language. For this reason, an EFL learner should not get competence in a second language if the teachers do not develop activities in which the learner can perform the second language in concrete situations in an affective environment. A teacher has to keep in mind that he has to encourage his students to produce and understand the language (Hymes, 2000).

### **First Language Acquisition FLA and Second Language Acquisition SLA compared**

Second Language Acquisition is, in contrast to First Language Acquisition, the study of how learners learn an extra language after they have acquired their mother tongue. The study of language-learner language began with the study of FLA. SLA research has tended to follow in the footsteps of L1 acquisition research, both in its methodology and in many of the issues that it has dealt with. It is not surprising that a key issue has been the extent to which FLA and SLA are similar or different processes.

There are obvious parallels between FLA and SLA but, by no means, they should be considered as completely similar, but there is a series of factors which makes them clearly different. As McDonough (2000) explains:

Positions have been defended which can be located all the way across the continuum from the idea that second language development is a recapitulation of

the first in a new code, to the belief that the two are totally unrelated processes. How much notice you take of the first language work depends partly on how convincing you find the parallels between error patterns and acquisition orders in the two circumstances of language learning. (p. 111)

Let us explore then the points in common and the differences between the two processes:

**Chart 1.1 The main differences between FLA and SLA**

<b>FEATURE</b>	<b>FLA</b>	<b>SLA</b>
Success/Result	Learners achieve a more or less "perfect" command of the language	It is very difficult to obtain a "perfect" command of the language
Variation	Very little variation as regards progress and result	Quite a lot of variation as regards progress and level obtained
Objectives	The main and final objective is to communicate	The main and final objective(s) may vary from one learner to another
Formal instruction	Not required. If done, it is with the purpose of developing learner's writing or spoken skills	Formal instruction favors learner's progress and it is required
Affective factors	Almost irrelevant	Very important role

Input	Wide in scope. More opportunities for practice	Limited and restricted opportunities for language practice
Acquisition order	Different in both processes	

**Source: Al Gazhali, 2006**

**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

Nowadays, teachers let students use the language spontaneously, even when they make errors or mistakes. Error correction must be done in a natural and general way, like what happens in L1 acquisition. Students are not interrupted, but asked to repeat what they have said to clarify, at the end of the speaking activity. In some cases, students will be able to correct the errors or mistakes by themselves or with peer correction (Alfaro & Bonilla, 2013).

The term “acquisition” used by Krashen (1981) refers to the gradual development of ability in a language by using it naturally in communicative situations. The term “learning”, however, applies to a conscious process of accumulation knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar of a language.” For example, the Grammatical Rules of any language, including L1, they are learned not acquired, since they are taught at school. This is why, to native speakers, a sentence would “sound” correct, but they cannot explain the Grammatical Rules involved, unless they have studied the language and have learned those rules previously.

The order of acquisition varies from FLA to SLA learners. This means that first language learners do not go through the same stages in the learning of a language as second language learners. For example: grammar points like the use of verb "be" are acquired earlier by L2 learners, and the irregular past form of verbs are acquired later. In both cases, it is possible to speak of an order of acquisition learners, independently of their language backgrounds, follow a similar path in their learning process. Furthermore, second language learners already have certain

linguistic knowledge when they start learning the second language in order to dominate the skills (Al Gazhali, 2006).

## **Moodle Platform**

Moodle means: “A modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment. It is open-source software that provides the ability to create, deploy and manage e-learning websites and applications” (Lopes, 2014, p. 14). They were initially developed by an educator and are now maintained by Moodle Community and Moodle HQ. Moodle course management provides the functionality to create and manage educational courses online.

Moodle's features include the ability to develop courses, enroll students, manage assignments, and provide quizzes, grading, wiki and discussion forums for thousands of virtual students at a time. Besides education, Moodle is used for various other related environments such as business communication and employee or system training. Moodle can also be used as a generic knowledge management system (Jansen, 2015).

Moodle can form an environment to study in any moment anywhere, if students have access to a computer. Course administrations results easier and helps to reduce time of delivering instruction. Besides, some activities or additional work outside class can be provided. Modular object-oriented dynamic learning environments are a type of learning management system (LMS) or online learning system (OLS) (Syamsuddin, 2014). They were initially developed by an educator and are now maintained by Moodle Community and Moodle HQ. Moodle course management provides the functionality to create and manage educational courses online. The Moodle environment is entirely free to use, is available under General Public License (GPL) and is developed in PHP. Moodle facilitates student-centered and anytime-anywhere learning. Moreover, it makes course administration easier and helps to reduce the cost and time of delivering instruction (Kongphet, 2012).



The tools provided by Moodle can be used to integrate any level course, provide additional work outside the class and experience cooperative learning. According to Brandl “as a courseware package and learning System, Moodle has great potential for supporting conventional classroom instruction, for example, to do additional work outside of class, to become the delivery System for blended (or hybrid) course formats, or even to be used as a standalone e-learning platform” (Brandl, 2005, p. 17).

Moodle and its platform can thus be used to integrate the school course, inviting the students to join the modules and try the new experience (Proietta, 2010). They can be asked by the teacher to attend the platform and receive credits or marks, which will contribute to the end-of-year evaluation. The result of this kind of experience may contribute to support the use of new technologies in secondary schools, and increase foreign language proficiency.

Since the intention is not to substitute the textbooks, CDs or CD ROM, but to integrate them with an e-learning environment, the following steps may be followed, to create the module or sections in the platform and provide the interaction needed. According to Proietta, the steps are the following:

1. The teacher chooses some Units of the textbook (or textbooks) that can be more easily considered as Learning Objects (modular digital resources that are uniquely identified and can be used and reused to support learning. The main idea of 'learning objects' is that educational content is broken down into small chunks that can be reused in various learning environments).
2. Some of the audio material (tracks) on CDs can be saved as audio files in a directory to be used as a resource.
3. Short video sequences can offer dialogues corresponding to the units chosen.
4. Additional audio material should be prepared, such as listening exercises, whose solutions and answers could be sent via e-mail to the teacher for correction or recorded by the students and put in an area of the platform where

other students could access for listening and discussion in a chat room (Proietta, 2010).

## **Moodle terminology**

**Course:** a “course” is a sub-section on a Moodle platform and a protected area, comparable to a classroom with a teacher and the course participants. On a Moodle platform, a teacher can have several courses. A “course” can be filled with a few exercises or complete units. This is left to the course teachers and their individual needs (Warth, 2008).

**Course sections:** courses can be divided into “sections” to organize resources and activities for students. Each section can have a description and can contain as many activities and resources as the teacher desires (Warth, 2008).

**Editing mode:** mode in which someone with course editing rights can change the appearance of a Moodle course (e.g. add resources and activities) (Warth, 2008).

**Moodle:** Moodle is a learning management system and software developed from a social constructivist perspective. One can find many “Moodles” on the web as they are installed and offered by many educational institutions. One usually talks of “Moodle” when referring to the tool and software or “the Moodle platform” when referring to an individual Moodle as provided by one institution or organization, e.g. the WiMi Moodle (Warth, 2008).

**Teacher:** in Moodle terminology, teacher always refers to the Moodle “teacher role”. A teacher has full editing and administration rights in his or her course (Warth, 2008).

**Computer:** A computer is a device that accepts information (in the form of digitalized data) and manipulates it for some result based on a program or sequence of instructions on how the data is to be processed (Warth, 2008).

**Internet:** means of connecting a computer to any other computer anywhere in the world via dedicated routers and servers. When two computers are connected over the Internet, they can send and receive all kinds of information such as text, graphics, voice, video, and computer programs (Warth, 2008).

## **Listening Comprehension Skill**

Listening is considered an invisible mental process, making it difficult to describe. Listeners must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intention, retain and interpret all of this within the immediate as well as a larger socio-cultural context of the utterance. Rost (2002) considers that listening is a process composed of four stages: receptive orientation, constructive orientation, collaborative orientation and transformative orientation. Listening is a complex, active processes of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with what they already know.

To define what listening is, some statements can be presented in the following paragraph: Brown J. Donald et. al. (2000) states that listening is “receiving, analyzing and interpreting oral signal that come to some-one and creating messages of the speaker.” Judi Brownell (2000) defined listening as “a definite, usually voluntary, effort to apprehend acoustically.” Listening also can be defined as the activities of hearing the symbols of speaking with fully attentions, acquiring, appreciation, and interpretation to get information, gathered the message, also to get the meaning from communication which have applied the subject though a verbal language.

English hearing is different from listening. Hearing is physical ability while listening is a skill. Listening skill allows one make sense of and understand what another person is saying (Alfaro & Bonilla, 2013). In other words, the listening skill allows you to understand what someone is talking about. Moreover, listening skill involves etiquette, asking for clarification, showing empathy and providing an appropriate response (Alfaro & Bonilla, 2013).

To sum up, listening is an activity that involves receiving, deciphering and perceiving a message with intent to respond. Based on the statements above, it can be stated that listening is more than just being able to hear and understand what someone else says since listening is also a continuous responding (Vandergrift, 2002).

Also, there are two distinct processes involved in listening comprehension that this thesis project is going to take into account. The first one is: listeners have prior information that they use to identify the meaning of a message and it can be the awareness of the topic, context, culture or any other knowledge about the topic. This is called top-down processes. The second one is called bottom-up processes. They basically use linguistic knowledge to comprehend the meaning of a message. Students manage to build meaning from lower level sounds to words and then to grammatical links, arriving to lexical meaning and the final message (Vandergrift, 2002).

However, these two processes are not able to work separated. This is why it is considered that listening comprehension is not just top-down or bottom up processing but a matter of interaction and interpretation where listeners use both processes to understand a message. Real learning depends on linguistic and meta-linguistic conditions and both are necessary in listening comprehension development (Vandergrift, 2002).

**CHAPTER II**

**METHODOLOGY**

## **2.1. Research design**

This research is quasi-experimental. It was worked with an intervention group. It is based on the analytic and scientific method (Clarke, 2005).

The scientific method is the set of logical procedures that follows the research to find internal and external processes of natural and social reality relationships (McDonald & Headlam, 2011).

The analytical method involves the dismemberment of a whole, breaking it down into parts of elements to observe the causes, nature and effects. This method allows us to know more of the subject matter, which can be: to explain, to make analogies, to better understand their behavior and to establish new theories (Clarke, 2005).

## **2.2. Type of research**

This is a quantitative research because it is a formal, objective, systematic process in which numerical data is used to obtain information necessary for this investigation (Clarke, 2005). Also it uses graphics and statistics to show the results obtained. This research method is used: to describe variables; to examine relationships among variables; and to determine cause-and-effect interactions between variables.

The process in this investigation was:

1. Application of the survey
2. Application of the pretest
3. Application of the posttest
4. Tabulation of data
5. Presentation of the results

### 2.3. Population

The population for this work is 18 students who attended to the first English level from the Medicine School. This statement can be verified in the next statistical chart:

**Chart 2.1. Strata of the Investigation**

<b>Strata</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Students	18	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: English Department- Medical School

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

### 2.4. Sample

The whole population, it means the 18 students from the Medical School, is considered the sample in this research.

### 2.5. Research methods

It is based on the analytic and scientific method in which a problem is first identified and observations, experiments, or other relevant data is then used to construct or test hypotheses that purport to solve it.

The inductive method is also used as a working tool because it is a process in which starts with data and reaches the theory. Therefore, we ascend from the particular to the general, as it is the case in this investigation (McDonald & Headlam, 2011).

## **2.6. Data collection techniques and instruments**

A survey was applied to collect the necessary data for this research.

A pretest and a posttest were applied at the beginning and at the end of the period respectively to determine the result. Consequently, questionnaires were elaborated by the researcher.

Both tests were validated by the application of pilot tests in different moments of the research. The Chi Square test was applied to determine if the hypothesis was proved or refused.

## **2.7. Data analysis procedure**

After applying the survey and the pretest and posttest, the information collected was organized, analyzed and interpreted using charts and graphics of percentages to observe the results.

## **2.8. Hypothesis**

### **General Hypothesis**

- The use of the 'Listen-up' guide through Moodle-based activities can improve the students' listening comprehension skills.

### **Specific Hypothesis**

- The use of the 'Listen-up' guide through Moodle-based activities improves vocabulary acquisition.
- The application of the 'Listen-up' guide through Moodle-based activities improves the student's main idea understanding.
- The use of updated audio material through Moodle-based activities improves listening for specific details.



**CHAPTER III**

**ALTERNATIVE GUIDELINES**  
**(PROPOSAL)**

### **3.1. Topic**

“Application of the guide ‘Listen-up’ through Moodle-based activities to improve the Listening Comprehension skill in the first level of English in the Medicine School at the University of Cuenca in the school period 2014-2015”

### **3.2. Presentation**

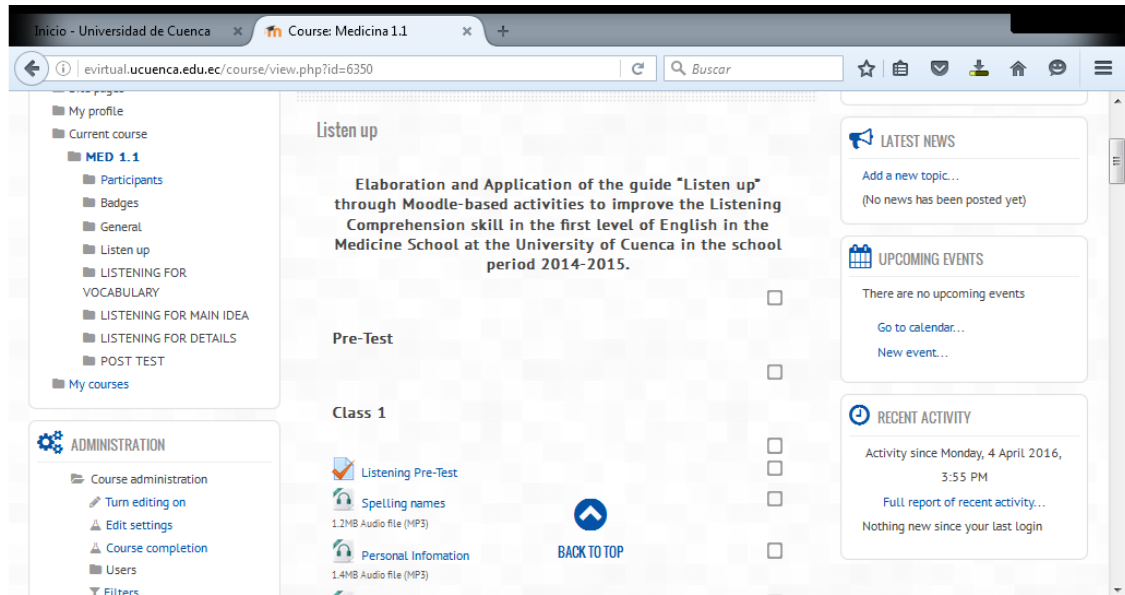
Different methodologies have been applied to learn English, and teachers must find pedagogical and didactic alternatives focused in students’ needs and motivation. A brief diagnosis executed with Medicine students at the University of Cuenca showed that they had a low level in listening skills due to the short time of its practice, their English learning background among other factors. As a consequence of the students’ poor listening background and the teachers’ assumption that listening is a skill that is developed by itself through the use of the CDs’ book instead of teaching how to listen to learn. The academic results from the last term evaluation have shown that students are not succeeding at acquiring the English listening skill; they are not achieving a quality level performance when understanding English.

Some of the probable causes taken into account to be solved in the application of the proposal were: 1. Students’ vocabulary, which is limited because they do not have enough input. 2. The students cannot understand the main idea; they only answer questions or complete some exercises from the book. 3. The students are not able to listen for specific details because they never work in this aspect constantly. To face this problem, this thesis will be focused on the improvement of the students’ listening comprehension skills with the creation of the guide ‘Listen-up’ through Moodle-based activities by the author of this thesis.

The University is attempting to enter into a ‘blended’ method of learning using traditional classes and self-study through the Moodle platform tools. However, the effort is not only focused just in the technology. Techniques and activities for listening comprehension improvement were carefully selected by the researcher to improve listening comprehension skills and not only to fulfill a chronogram or the

syllabus. In the following graphic, it is possible to see the image of the presentation of the course in the Moodle platform.

**Graphic 3.1. Course presentation**



Source: E-virtual Universidad de Cuenca, 2015

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

### 3.3. Description

This guide provides a group of exercises to improve the listening skill in first level Medicine students at the University of Cuenca. The course is divided in twelve classes and three sub-skills will be developed (listening to understand the main idea; listening to improve vocabulary and listening to look for specific details). The course starts with a pretest to diagnose students' needs and finishes with a posttest to measure their development.

### 3.4. EFL Methodological approach

The communicative approach method has been chosen to be the main EFL learning and teaching methodology (Richard, 2006). This focus develops the communicative competence in the following aspects of language:

-Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions.

-Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g., knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication).

-Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations).

-Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies) (Richard, 2006).

The communicative approach is useful for the course since the teaching-learning process emphasizes the interaction using the language through real communicative situations as interviews, games, information interchange, group and pair work, among other important elements.

### **3.5. Objectives**

#### **General:**

To apply the guide 'Listen-up' through Moodle-based activities to improve the students' listening skills.

#### **Specific:**

To elaborate the guide 'Listen-up' through Moodle-based activities to improve the students' vocabulary.

To apply the guide 'Listen-up' through Moodle-based activities to improve the students' main idea understanding.

To work with updated audio material through Moodle-based activities to improve the listening for specific details.

### **3.6. Theoretical fundamentals**

As we analyzed in the theoretical framework, Piaget's approach is important to establish that cognition is a process that depends on the relationship between acquired knowledge and knowledge we want students to acquire (Simatwa, 2010). This implies that the guide must be structured and presented as a series of logical steps that would end up in the acquisition of the new knowledge, in this case the language. In the same way, we explained that Krashen considers a difference between learning and acquisition and teachers must provide students enough tools to push them to be their own teachers so that they can acquire the language by their own means. In this way, the labor of the teacher is just monitoring students' development (Abukhattala, 2013). The Moodle platform should be the bridge to allow students go from the learning step to the acquisition one.

### **3.7. E-virtual Contents**

This section shows the division of the 'Listen-up' Guide that is focused in the process of learning and it was structured according to the research design which was based on the textbook called "Skillful Foundation" by David Bohlke (Bohlke, 2013). This is why it starts with a pretest. The following classes are separated allowing to make a difference among three listening sub-skills to be developed. Finally, the course finishes with a posttest applied to measure students' outcomes and improvement. The contents for the treatment and the process were adapted from the textbook called "Skillful Foundation" by David Bohlke. (Bohlke, 2013).

#### **PRETEST**

##### **CLASS 1**

##### **1. Listening Pretest**

1.1 Spelling names

1.2 Personal Information

1.3 Likes/Dislikes

1.4 Routine

## **2. Pretest Results**

### **LISTENING FOR VOCABULARY**

#### **CLASS 2**

##### **2.1 Useful Questions**

2.1.1 Greetings

2.1.2 Park Lake Library (address, personal information)

2.1.3 Victor's Personal Information

##### **2.2. Numbers**

2.2.1 Numbers

2.2.2 In the world today

#### **CLASS 3**

##### **3.1. Jobs**

3.1.1 Jobs

3.1.2. Jobs 2

##### **3.2. Family Members**

3.2.1 Family

#### **CLASS 4**

4.1 Activities

4.1.1. Daily Activities

4.1.2. Listening and Vocabulary

4.3. Comments

##### **4.4. Listening for Vocabulary Results**

### **LISTENING FOR MAIN IDEA**

#### **CLASS 5**

5.1 Daily Activities

5.1.1. Main idea

5.2 Daily Activities 2

5.2.1. Jack

**CLASS 6**

6.1 Family

6.2. Personal Information

**CLASS 7**

7.1 Personal Profile

7.2 Favorite Activities

7.3 Comments

**7.4 Main Idea Results**

**LISTENING FOR DETAILS**

**CLASS 8**

8.1. Marisa

8.2. Andrea and Joshi

**CLASS 9**

9.1 Perfect Daily Moments

**CLASS 10**

10.1. The top three festivals

**CLASS 11**

11.1. Conor's favorite festival

11.2. Comments

11.3. Listening for Details Results

**POSTTEST**

**CLASS 12**

12.1. Listening 1

12.1.1. Tina's secretary

12.2. Listening 2

12.2.1. Danny and Novva

12.3. Listening 3

12.3.1. Carmen

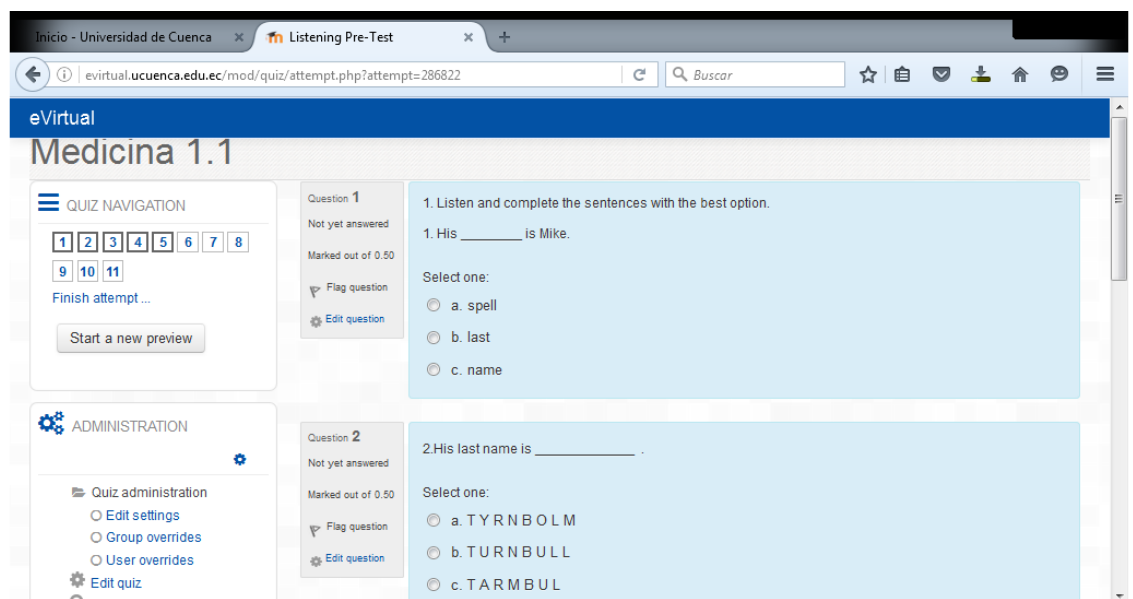
12.4. USA alive

## 12.5. Posttest Results

12.6. Final Survey

In the following graphics, it is possible to observe some of the exercises applied in the pretest. As it has been told, all of them were selected from a special bibliography and divided into three groups of exercises: Listening for the main idea, listening for specific details and vocabulary. The posttest has the same structure than the pretest using three groups of exercises to measure students' level of development.

### Graphic 3.2. Contents. Pretest



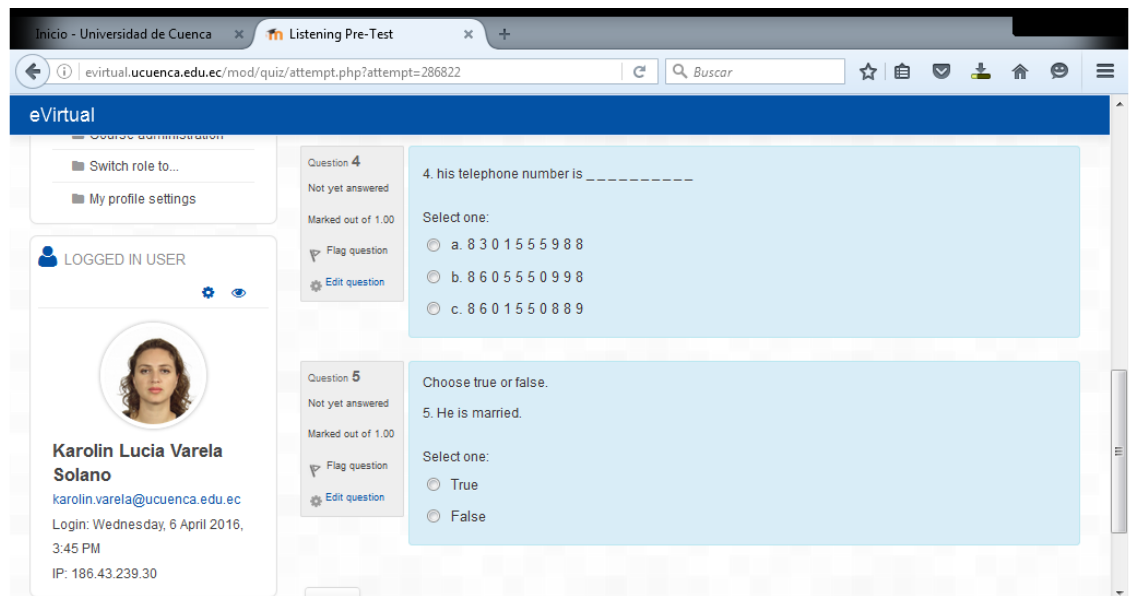
The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `evirtual.ucuenca.edu.ec/mod/quiz/attempt.php?attempt=286822`. The page title is "eVirtual Medicina 1.1". On the left, there is a "QUIZ NAVIGATION" section with buttons for questions 1 through 11, and a "Start a new preview" button. Below that is an "ADMINISTRATION" section with options like "Edit settings", "Group overrides", "User overrides", "Edit quiz", and "Review". The main content area displays two questions. Question 1 is "1. Listen and complete the sentences with the best option." with the text "1. His \_\_\_\_\_ is Mike." and three radio button options: "a. spell", "b. last", and "c. name". Question 2 is "2. His last name is \_\_\_\_\_ ." with three radio button options: "a. TYRNBOLM", "b. TURNBULL", and "c. TARBUL".

Source: E-virtual Universidad de Cuenca, 2015

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela



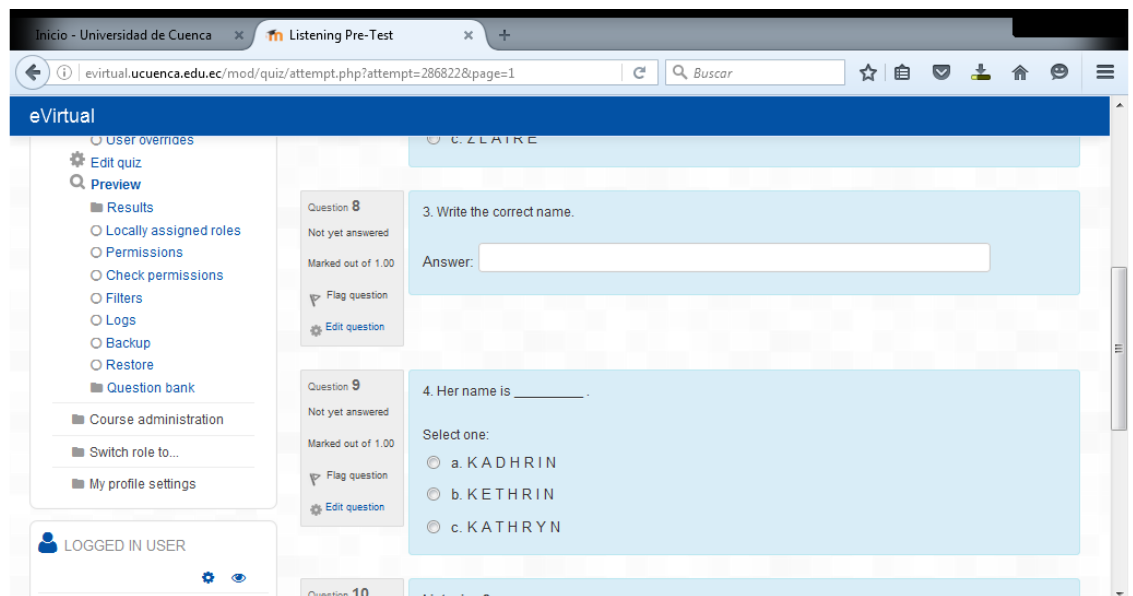
### Graphic 3.3. Contents. Pretest



Source: E-virtual Universidad de Cuenca, 2015

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

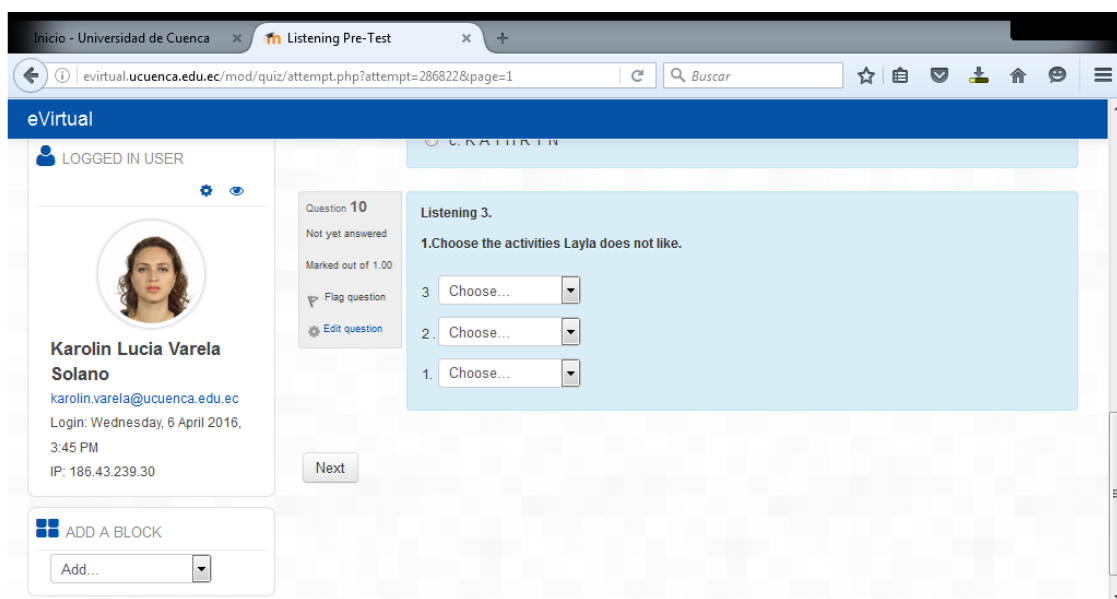
### Graphic 3.4. Contents. Pretest



Source: E-virtual Universidad de Cuenca, 2015

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

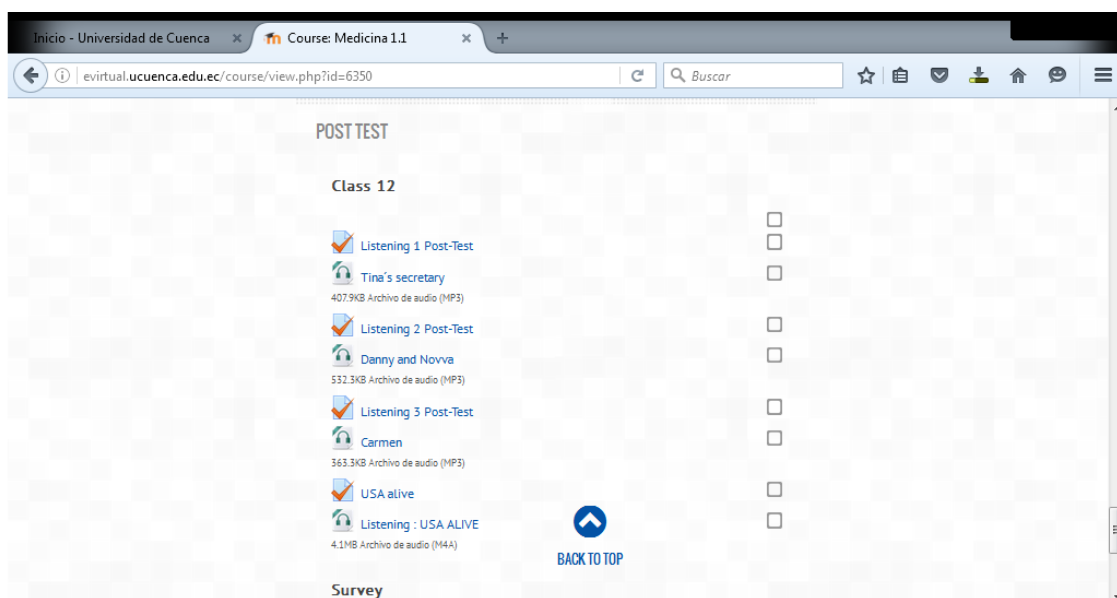
### Graphic 3.5. Contents. Pretest



Source: E-virtual Universidad de Cuenca, 2015

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

### Graphic 3.6. Contents. Posttest



Source: E-virtual Universidad de Cuenca, 2015

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

### 3.8. Operational aspects

The structure of the syllabus follows the institutional parameters of the University of Cuenca. And it takes into account four basic skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking but it is also divided into learning achievements, learning indicators, lexical and grammatical contents, and evaluation. Despite of the content of the syllabus, most of the time and effort was put on the listening part, trying to develop this skill above the others.

## SILLABUS



### PHILOSOPHY FACULTY

### LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

Academic Period: September 2015 – February 2016

**SUBJECT:** English

**CODE:**

7341

**OFICIAL SIGNATURE NAME:** Credits English I

<b>CAREER</b>	Language Department
<b>SEMESTER</b>	First – English Language

<b>FORMATION AXIS</b>	Basic-Mandatory
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**SEMESTER CREDITS:**

THEORY	
PRACTICE	
THEORY-PRÁCTICE	6 credits
TOTAL	6 credits

**MODALITY:**

PRESENCIAL	✓
DISTANCE	
BLENDED	

**TEACHER:**

Lcda. Karolin Varela
----------------------

**SUBJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The level 1 of credit courses focusing on a balanced development of the four basic skills: reading, listening, speaking and writing. Everything through a variety of activities and communication tasks to lead students to acquire a level A1 of the European Framework.

A special characteristic of this course is that emphasizes the practice of the language, not only in the class, but also the development of online activities that allow an autonomous learning.

Finally, the course offers to the students some linguistic sections and sessions of learning skills for the life in general.

PRE-REQUIREMENTS		CO-REQUIREMENTS	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Code</b>
N/S		N/S	

**SIGNATURE OBJECTIVE:**

<p><b>General Objective:</b></p> <p>The student will be able to understand and use daily expressions and basic phrases aimed to satisfy immediate needs, how introduce himself, ask and give personal information, talk about his personal things and interact with other people in a simple way.</p>
---

**LEARNING ACHIEVEMENTS, LEARNING INDICATORS, CONTENTS AND EVALUATION**

LEARNING ACHIEVEMENTS	LEARNING INDICATORS	LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL CONTENTS	EVALUATION
<p><b>LISTENING</b></p> <p>Identify and extract words, basic phrases and the main idea in familiar and everyday topics listening to different audio material.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the main points and specific information in different audio exercises.</li> <li>• Answer questions about different audio exercises presented.</li> <li>• Report the topic and main ideas of different audio exercises presented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Classroom language</li> <li>➤ Personal information/details (yourself and others)</li> <li>➤ Family</li> <li>➤ People we know (celebrities, friends, family members)</li> <li>➤ Everyday items</li> <li>➤ Hobbies and interests</li> <li>➤ Daily routines</li> <li>➤ Free time (weekend) activities</li> <li>➤ Shopping habits and preferences</li> </ul>	<p>Classwork Homework On line tasks Oral and written tests Midterm exam Final exam</p>
<p><b>READING</b></p> <p>Identify and extract basic information and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answers questions about the different readings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Food habits and preferences</li> </ul>	<p>Classwork Homework On line tasks</p>

<p>the main idea in daily familiar issues and through different reading material.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the main points and specific information in different readings.</li> <li>• Identify the main points and specific information in different readings.</li> <li>• Report the main ideas of the readings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Other topics related to students' field of interest</li> <li>➤ Present tense of be</li> <li>➤ Simple present tense</li> <li>➤ Articles</li> <li>➤ Possessive adjectives</li> <li>➤ Possessive pronouns</li> <li>➤ Subject and object pronouns</li> <li>➤ Demonstrative pronouns</li> <li>➤ Frequency adverbs</li> <li>➤ Time expressions</li> <li>➤ Prepositions</li> <li>➤ Connectors</li> </ul>	<p>Technical Readings Oral and written tests Midterm exam Final exam</p>
<p><b>SPOKEN INTERACTION</b></p> <p>Interact in short and simple conversations about familiar and daily topics through different communication situations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• React to the interaction with the listener using vocabulary and phrases according to the situation.</li> <li>• Communicate using grammatical structures according to the situation.</li> <li>• Communicate fluently.</li> <li>• Pronounce clearly.</li> <li>• Use intonation according to the context.</li> <li>• Interchange information about himself.</li> </ul>		<p>Classwork Homework On line tasks Conversations in pairs and in groups Presentations Oral and written tests Midterm exam Final exam</p>
<p><b>SPOKEN PRODUCTION</b></p> <p>Describe familiar and daily topics in different communicative situations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the issues with organization and a coherent sequence.</li> <li>• Communicate using grammatical structures according to the situation.</li> <li>• Communicate fluently.</li> <li>• Pronounce clearly.</li> </ul>		<p>Classwork Homework On line tasks Dialogues Role plays Projects Oral and written tests Midterm exam Final exam</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use intonation according to the context.</li> <li>• Use vocabulary and phrases according to the topic.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>WRITING</b></p> <p>Write simple, basic and short texts about daily topics through different writing materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use punctuation</li> <li>• Usa conectores de contraste, adición y ejemplificación para entrelazar ideas.</li> <li>• Use contrast connectors, addition and modeling to connect ideas.</li> <li>• Mantiene consistencia en el uso de estructuras gramaticales.</li> <li>• Maintain consistency in the use of grammatical structures.</li> <li>• Describe the texts with organization and coherent sequence.</li> <li>• Use words and phrases according to the topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Mechanics of writing (capitalization and punctuation: commas, period)</li> <li>➤ Profiles</li> <li>➤ Online ads</li> <li>➤ E-mails</li> <li>➤ Reviews</li> <li>➤ Simple and short texts</li> <li>➤ Forms</li> <li>➤ Notes</li> <li>➤ Postcards</li> <li>➤ Informal letters</li> </ul>	<p>Classwork Homework On line tasks Tests Written folder with short and simple texts. Midterm exam Final exam</p>

**SESSION NUMBER, LEARNING STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES**

<b>SESSION NUMBER</b>	<b>LEARNING STRATEGIES (activities)</b>	<b>LEARNING RESOURCES</b>
The course is developed in 96 hours divided into 4 sessions of half an hour daily for 16 weeks.	Discussions Dramatizations  Listen to the audios and develop the activities Reading and comprehension activities Vocabulary exercises Oral presentations Dialogues in pairs and in groups Grammar exercises Games and competitions in pairs or groups Pronunciation exercises Online activities	The SKILLFUL FOUNDATION, teacher's guide, copies, worksheets, classroom, board, CD player, projector, computer lab, virtual platform.

**CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION OF THE SUBJECT**

	<b>Partial Grades (25)</b>	<b>Midterm Exam (20)</b>	<b>Partial Grades (25)</b>	<b>Oral and Written Final Exam (30)</b>
<b>Exams</b>	_____	<b>20</b>	_____	<b>30</b>
<b>Listening</b>	<b>5</b>	_____	<b>5</b>	_____
<b>Reading</b>	<b>5</b>	_____	<b>5</b>	_____
<b>Speaking</b>	<b>5</b>	_____	<b>5</b>	_____
<b>Writing</b>	<b>5</b>	_____	<b>5</b>	_____



<b>Grammar and Vocabulary</b>	<b>5</b>	_____	<b>5</b>	_____
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### TEXTS AND OTHER REFERENCES FOR LEARNING

<b>Texts.</b>				
<b>Author</b>	<b>Text</b>	<b>Edition</b>	<b>Published year</b>	<b>Editorial</b>
Bohlke, David	SKILLFUL FOUNDATION	1	2013	MacMillan

### Internet Documents

<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Text</b>	<b>URL Address</b>	<b>Date</b>
MacMillan Education	Macmillan Education Everywhere	Skillful Foundation Listening & Speaking Digibook 2.0	<a href="http://www.skillfuldigibooks.com/">http://www.skillfuldigibooks.com/</a>	2015
MacMillan Education	Macmillan Education Everywhere	Skillful Foundation Reading & Writing Digibook 2.0	<a href="http://www.skillfuldigibooks.com/">http://www.skillfuldigibooks.com/</a>	2015
Instituto Universitario de Lenguas	Database Credits 1	Database Credits 1	<a href="http://evirtual.ucuenca.edu.ec/course/view.php?id=5192">http://evirtual.ucuenca.edu.ec/course/view.php?id=5192</a>	2015

Mst. Rosita Torres Ortiz

**LANGUAGE INSTITUTE DIRECTOR**

Mst. Ximena Orellana Mora

**CREDITS COORDINATOR**

Cuenca, September 14th, 2015

## **SAMPLE VIRTUAL GUIDE**

This guide contains a sample of the series of exercises practiced by students to improve their level of the listening skill. As it has been said, this guide is divided into three sections to develop every listening sub-skill: listening for main idea, listening for details and vocabulary acquisition. It also includes a first part with a pretest and it ends with a posttest. This guide was created by the author of this thesis and it compiles several exercises from many authors but it is based on the textbook used by the University of Cuenca called “Skillful Foundation” (Bohlke, 2013).

**Elaboration and Application of the guide ‘Listen-up’ through Moodle-based activities to improve the Listening Comprehension skill in the first level of English in the Medicine School at the University of Cuenca in the school period 2014-2015.**

### **LISTENING FOR VOCABULARY**

#### **CLASS 2**

#### **GREETINGS**

##### **A. Listen to the questions and choose the correct answers for each.**

##### **1. Bye. Have a good evening.**

- Thanks. You too! \_\_\_\_\_
- Hi. How are you? \_\_\_\_\_
- You too, Good night. \_\_\_\_\_
- Bye. I am tired \_\_\_\_\_
- Good. Thanks \_\_\_\_\_
- Bye. See you next week \_\_\_\_\_

##### **2. Hi. How are you?**

- Thanks. You too! \_\_\_\_\_
- Hi. How are you? \_\_\_\_\_
- You too, Good night. \_\_\_\_\_
- Bye. I am tired \_\_\_\_\_
- Good. Thanks \_\_\_\_\_
- Bye. See you next week \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Bye, see you later.**

- Thanks. You too! \_\_\_\_\_
- Hi. How are you? \_\_\_\_\_
- You too, Good night. \_\_\_\_\_
- Bye. I am tired \_\_\_\_\_
- Good. Thanks \_\_\_\_\_
- Bye. See you next week \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Hey, Oscar!**

- Thanks. You too! \_\_\_\_\_
- Hi. How are you? \_\_\_\_\_
- You too, Good night. \_\_\_\_\_
- Bye. I am tired \_\_\_\_\_
- Good. Thanks \_\_\_\_\_
- Bye. See you next week \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Good-bye. Have a nice day**

- Thanks. You too! \_\_\_\_\_
- Hi. How are you? \_\_\_\_\_
- You too, Good night. \_\_\_\_\_
- Bye. I am tired \_\_\_\_\_
- Good. Thanks \_\_\_\_\_
- Bye. See you next week \_\_\_\_\_

**VICTOR'S PERSONAL INFORMATION**

**Is he member of the gym?**

- vlopez6@cup.org
- No, he isn't
- 6465553048
- Yes, he is
- Plopez60@cup.org
- 6465551348

**His phone number is \_\_\_\_\_**

- vlopez6@cup.org
- No, he isn't
- 6465553048
- Yes, he is
- Plopez60@cup.org
- 6465551348

**His e-mail is \_\_\_\_\_**

- vlopez6 @cup.org
- No, he isn't
- 6465553048
- Yes, he is
- Plopez60@cup.org
- 6465551348

### **PARK LAKE LIBRARY**

**Her first name is \_\_\_\_\_**

- JRINE
- GREENE
- Jlg8724 @cup.org
- Jackie
- glj8724 @cup.org

**Her last name is \_\_\_\_\_**

- JRINE
- GREENE
- Jlg8724 @cup.org
- Jackie
- glj8724 @cup.org

**Her e-mail address is \_\_\_\_\_**

- JRINE
- GREENE
- Jlg8724 @cup.org
- Jackie
- glj8724 @cup.org

### **LISTEN FOR MAIN IDEA**

#### **CLASS 5**

#### **DAILY ACTIVITIES**

**Listen and choose the topic Megan talks about.**

### **Musashimaru**

- Famous people
- Like sports
- Has a long day
- Jodies´ and Musashimaru´s daily routines.

### **Jodie**

- Famous people
- Like sports
- Has a long day
- Jodies´ and Musashimaru´s daily routines.

### **Megan talks about**

- Famous people
- Like sports
- Has a long day
- Jodies´ and Musashimaru´s daily routines.

### **JACK**

**What is Jack talking about?**

**Select one:**

- a. His favorite day. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Relaxing activities \_\_\_\_\_
- c. A day with Layla \_\_\_\_\_

### **LISTENING FOR DETAILS**

#### **CLASS 8**

**Listen and answer the question.**

**When does Marisa watch TV?**

Select one:

- a. She watches TV in the morning and at night
- b. She watches TV all day.
- c. She watches TV in the afternoon
- d. She sometimes watches TV having lunch
- e. She hardly ever watches TV

## **ANDREA AND JOSHI**

**Listen and choose the correct options.**

### **1. What does Andrea use her computer for?**

Select one:

- a. she watches a lot of concerts online.
- b. She listens to music every day.
- c. She spends a lot of time in her web site.
- d. She sends emails to her friends everyday

### **2. What does Joshi use his computer for?**

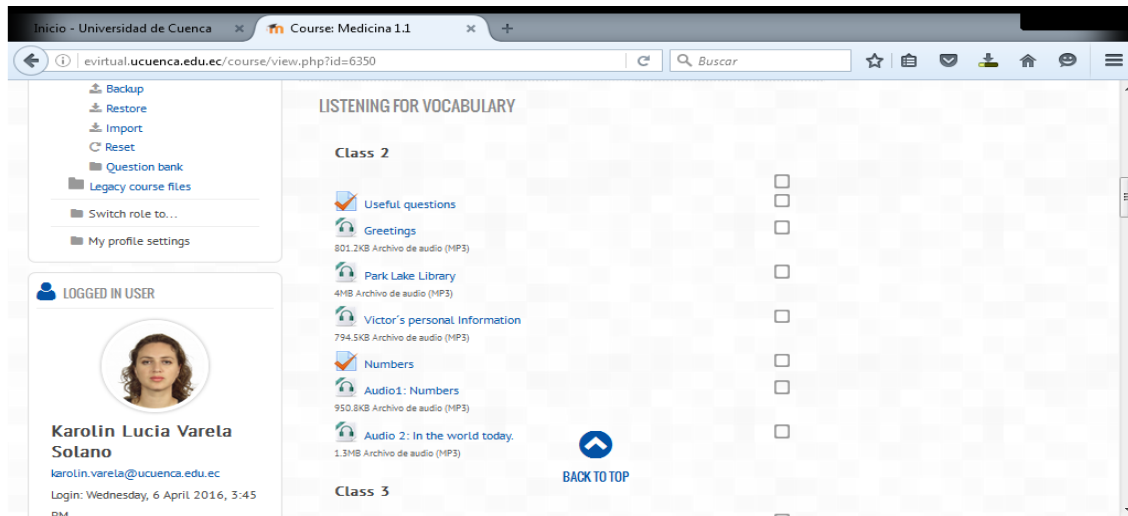
Select one:

- a. He does pay bills online
- b. He shops books online.
- c. He spends money online.
- d. He studies English online every day.
- e. He downloads and looks digital photos.

## **3.9. Activities in the platform**

The Moodle platform allows the presentation of communicative works in classroom. The student is able to construct their own learning by using sounds, songs, videos of conversations, audios, and other audio material. Students are also able to learn by practicing listening comprehension and evaluate their progress.

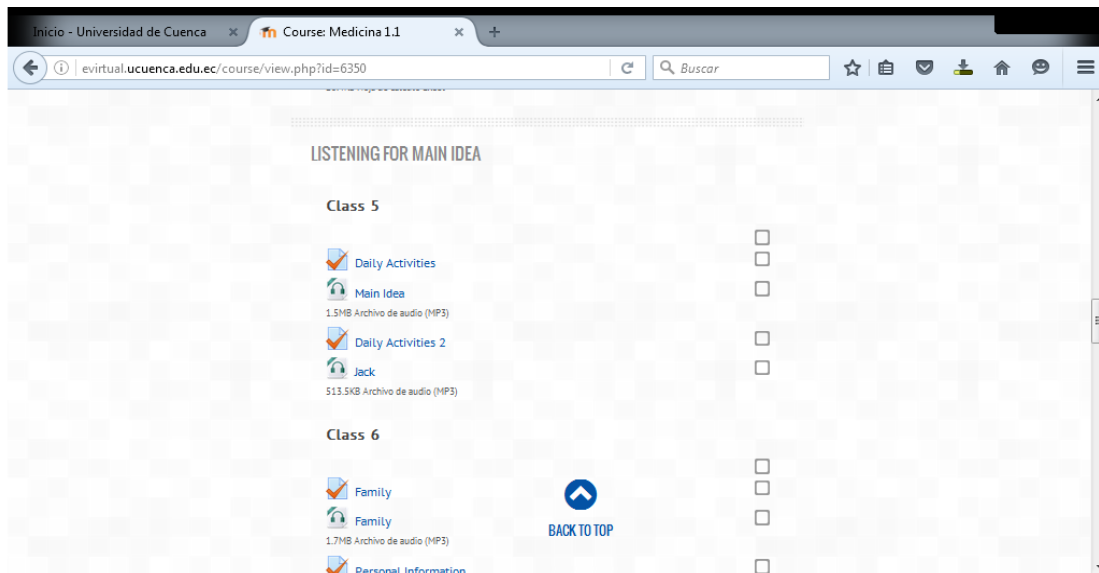
### Graphic 3.7. Listening for vocabulary



Source: E-virtual Universidad de Cuenca, 2015

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

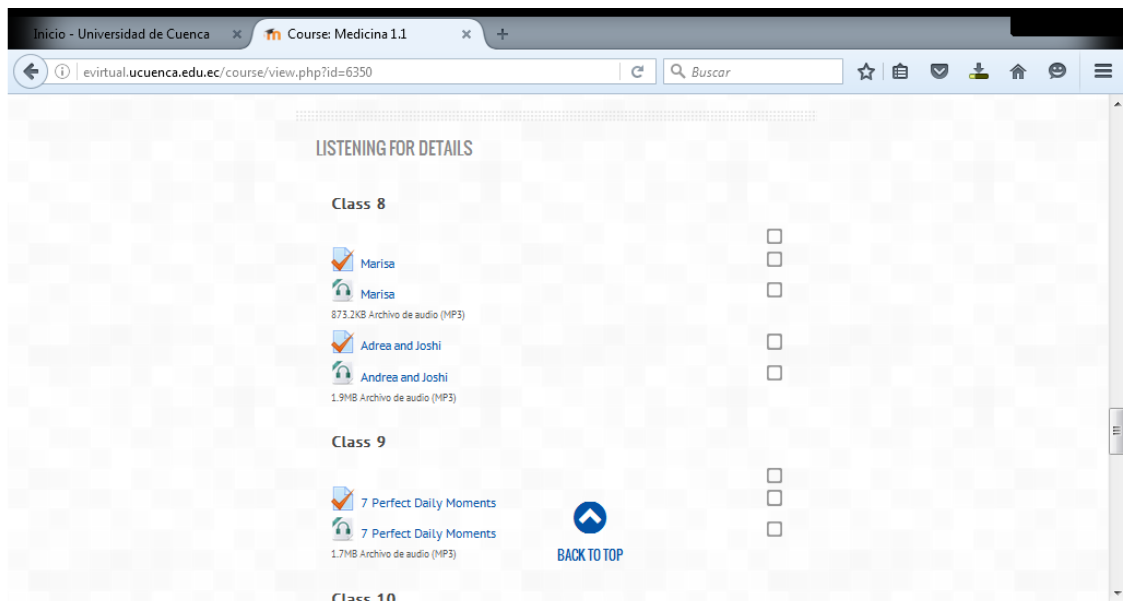
### Graphic 3.8. Listening for main idea



Source: E-virtual Universidad de Cuenca, 2015

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

### Graphic 3.9. Listening for details



Source: E-virtual Universidad de Cuenca, 2015

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

### 3.10. Evaluation

The activities were evaluated through rubrics and matrixes of measure. These rubrics are in relationship with each group of exercises. The scale of evaluation was made with a quantitative focus. The evaluation of results was made through a special test design to measure each ability according parameters given by the University of Cuenca. The system allows to get a lot of information about grades and results



**CHAPTER IV**  
**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

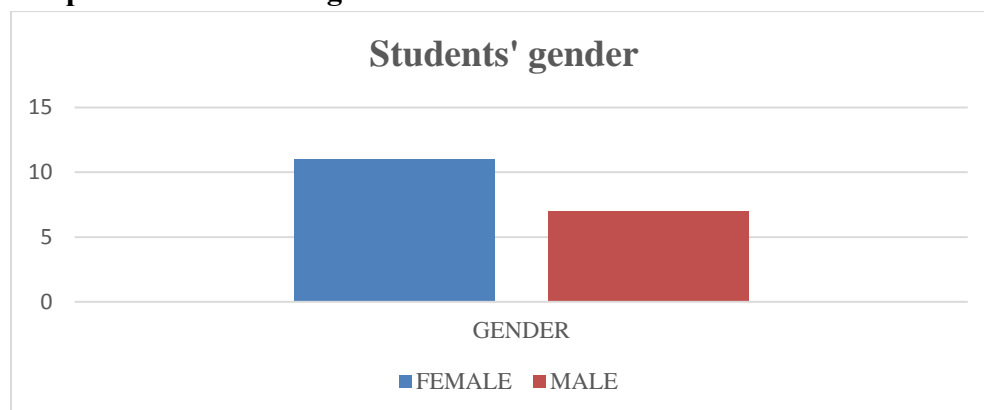
To present the results of the research, this chapter has been divided in three sections. The first one is dedicated to the analysis of the survey applied to the group of the students who took part of investigation. In the second section, the results of the pretest and the posttest are described in each dimension studied, reflections and possible explanations for the outcomes were established; the test was validated by experts in research (See Annexes) and the hypothesis was validated through a Chi Square Test ( $X^2$ ). Finally, in the last section, an analysis is developed to explain if the treatment administered was successful and possible ways to improve the proposal.

## 4.1. General data

The information collected for this section shows that the group of research has similarities in several aspects. Consequently, the treatment was administered to a homogenous group in elements like gender, age, self-identification, and years of English studies.

### 4.1.1. Background

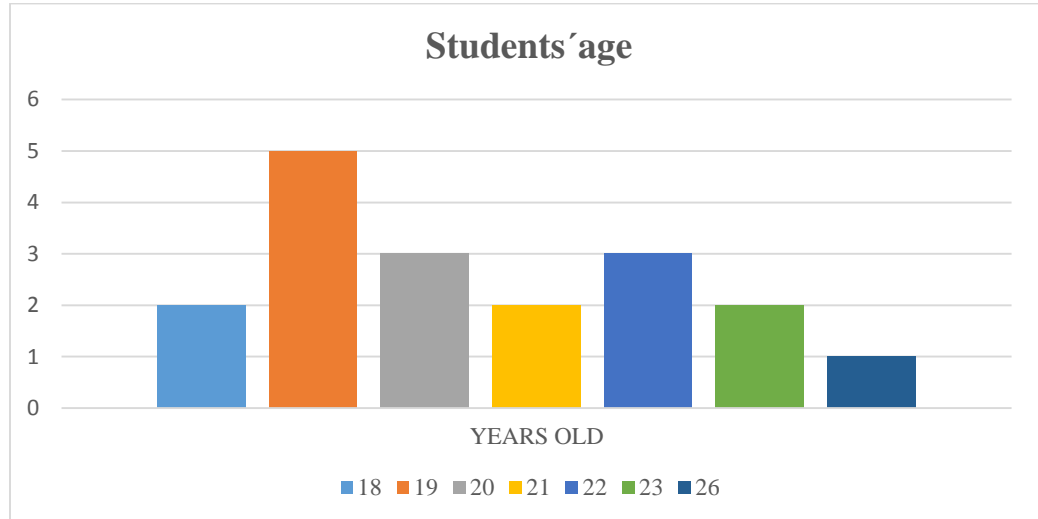
**Graphic 4.1. Students' gender**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

The first graphic shows that there are more female students than male students but the difference of number is meaningless since the results showed that male and female students had similar levels in the pretest and posttest. Consequently, it is possible to say that the gender factor has no significant influence in the final results.

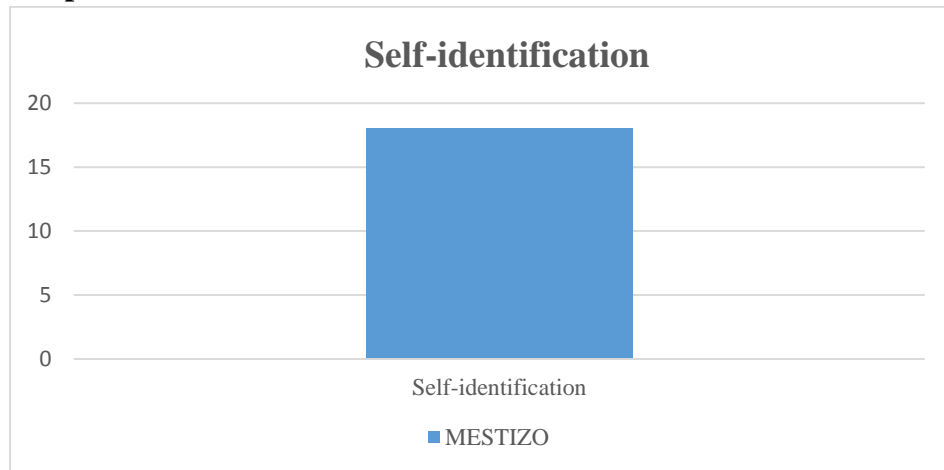
**Graphic 4.2. Students' age**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

Something similar happens with the age of students. It is difficult to establish if age has a significant effect in the use of the platform. Most of students are teenagers or they are in their twenties what makes us realize that they are part of the 'interactive generation' (Aguaded-Gómez, 2011) and one of its characteristics is precisely the use of technology.

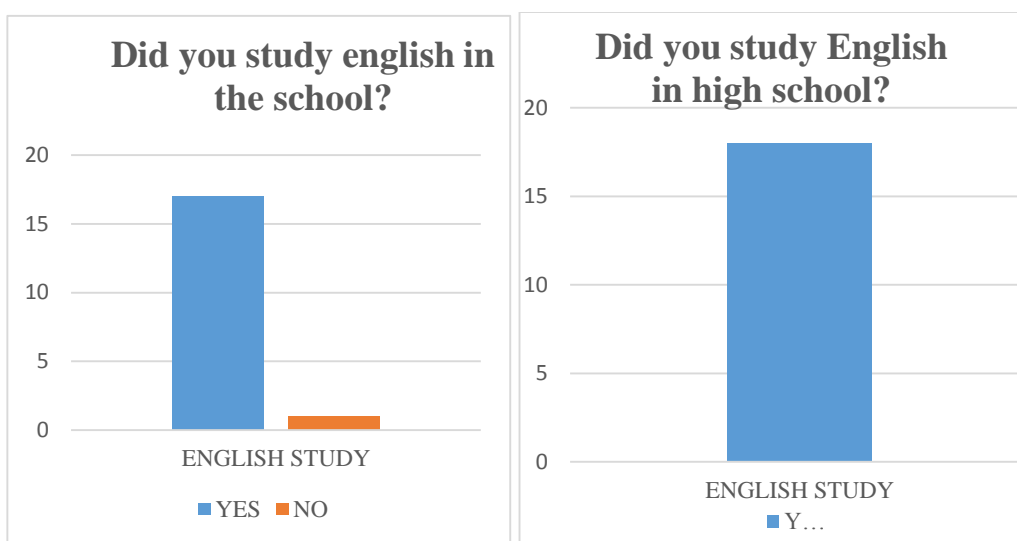
**Graphic 4.3. Self-identification**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

In the same way, the whole group was presented as 'mestizo' in the self-identification section. This is important since rural education has several problems with technology and English due to cultural reasons and national budget. However, in this particular case, the factor is no present.

**Graphic 4.4/4.5. English studies background**



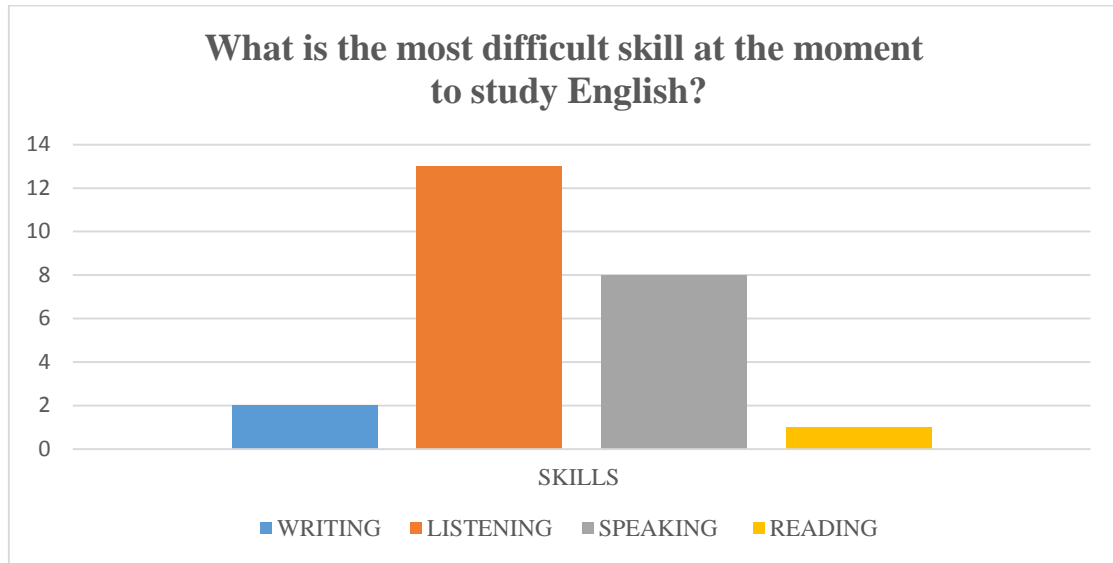
**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

It is important to establish the learning background that students have. Sometimes it is difficult to analyze if the years of English learning in school were productive due to the quality of the learning-teaching processes in some schools. At least, we can observe that almost the whole group has studied English in the school. In the case of high school, the national system is just starting changes and probably the results will be seen in a couple of years but, most of students have accomplished with six years of education in English.

#### **4.1.2. Students' perception about English learning**

Some of the aspects analyzed to create the guide 'Listen-up' through the Moodle platform were taken from this survey with the subject 'students' perceptions about English learning'. The questions aimed to gather information about what students think of English and their former experiences. If students had good memories of their English education, they could be able to collaborate in their own learning; the opposite would be another obstacle to overcome.

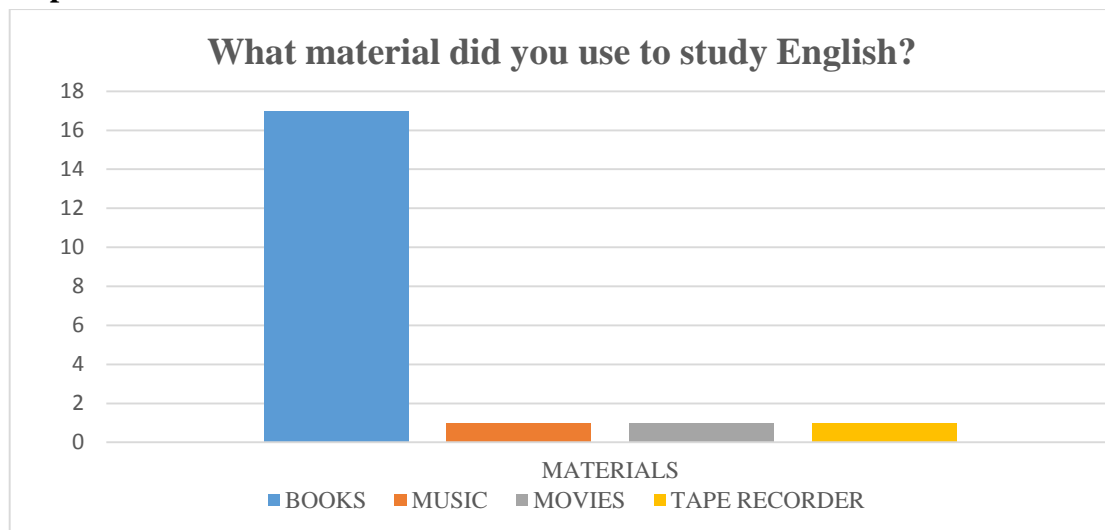
**Graphic 4.6. Skill difficulties**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

This first question was the proof that the previous elaborated diagnosis to create the guide was right. Most of the students answered that the listening skill is the most difficult one to develop and some of the reasons were already exposed in the introduction of this research.

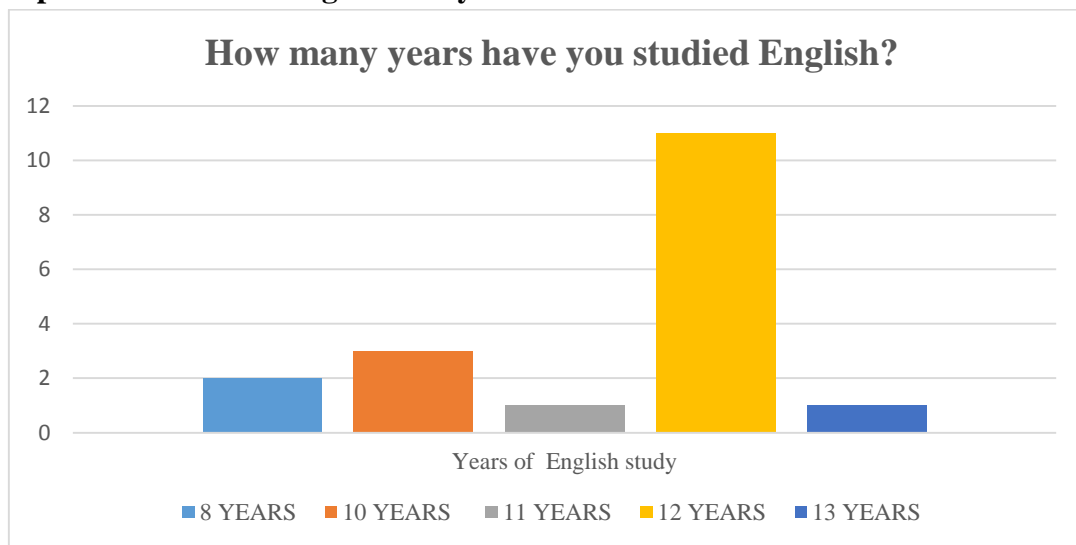
**Graphic 4.7. Materials**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

Another aspect that is important since the base of this study is the use of a technological tool is the materials students used in different English courses along their lives. They answered that most of the materials teachers used were mainly books, music, movies or tape recorders. This means that students did not have relationship with tools like e-learning platforms as in this case, Moodle.

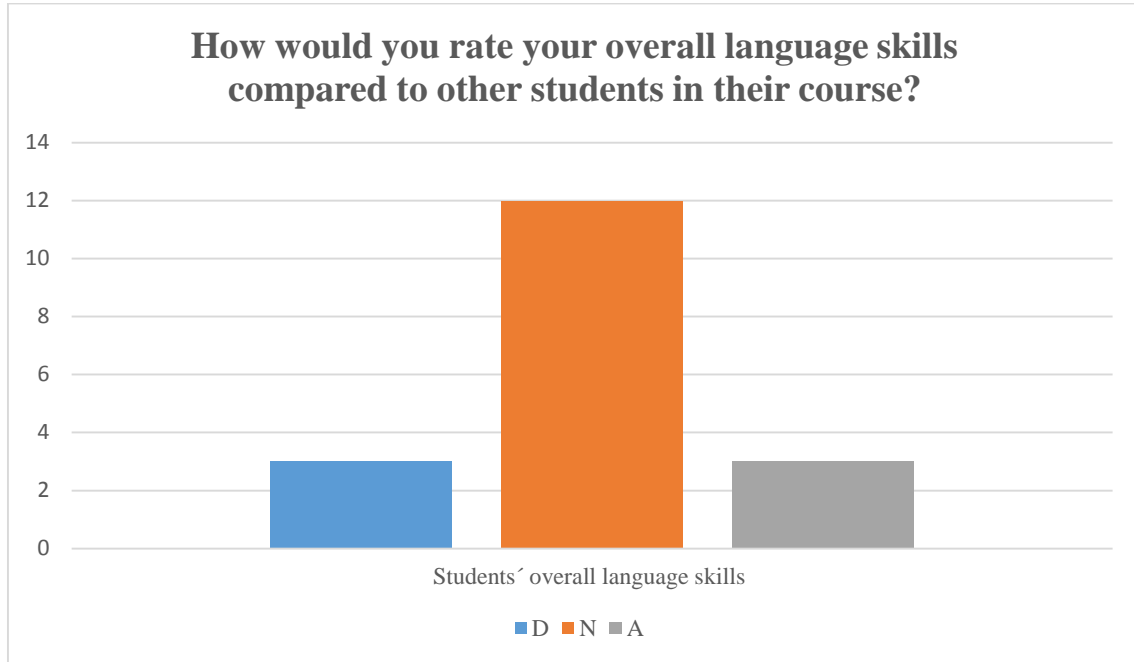
**Graphic 4.8. Years of English Study**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

In general terms, most of students have studied English more than ten years but this does not mean that the quality of their learning was good. As we have said before, the national system of education is being reformed and teachers are being trained in these years, so it must be considered that university students, at this stage, have a low level of development of their English skills.

**Graphic 4.9. Students' overall language skills**



Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

Most of the students also think that their language skills are not superior or inferior to their partners in other courses. Therefore, they do not consider that the problem of their low level of English is related to their own conditions but to a general context of learning.

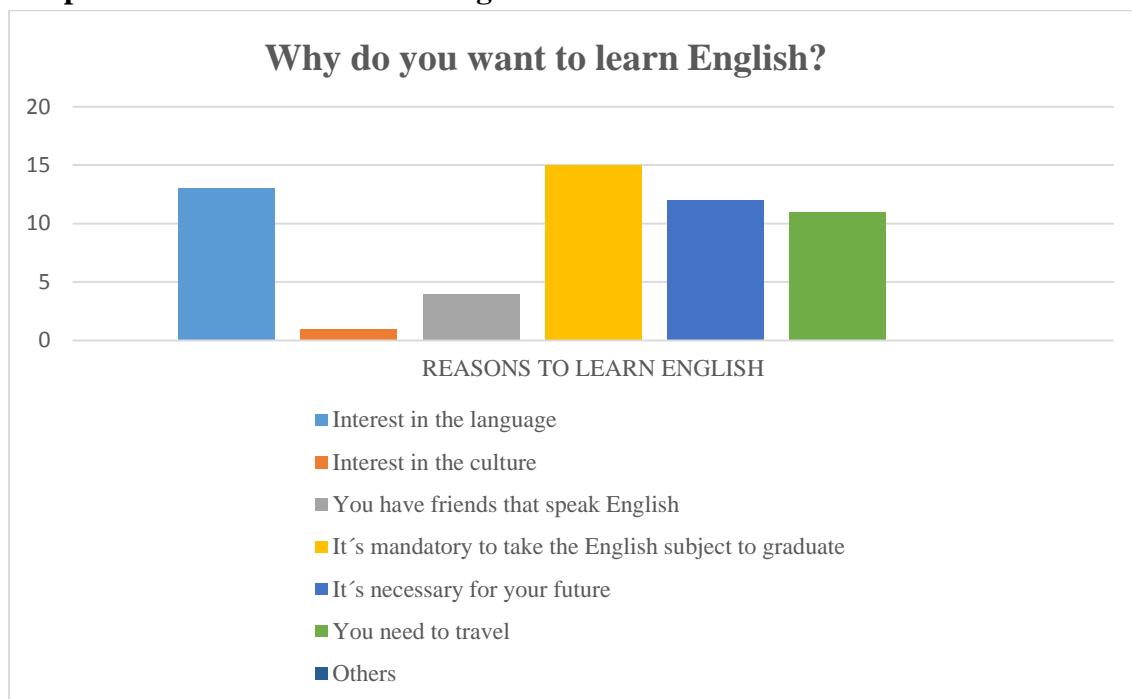
**Graphic 4.10. Importance of English language**



Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

It also an important fact that most of students believe that learning English is important for their lives, especially because of the latest requirements to get registered in a master program in which a B2 level of English is required. Nowadays, it is difficult to study in another country if students have no proficiency in English, so they know it is a significant part of their lives.

**Graphic 4.11. Reasons to learn English**

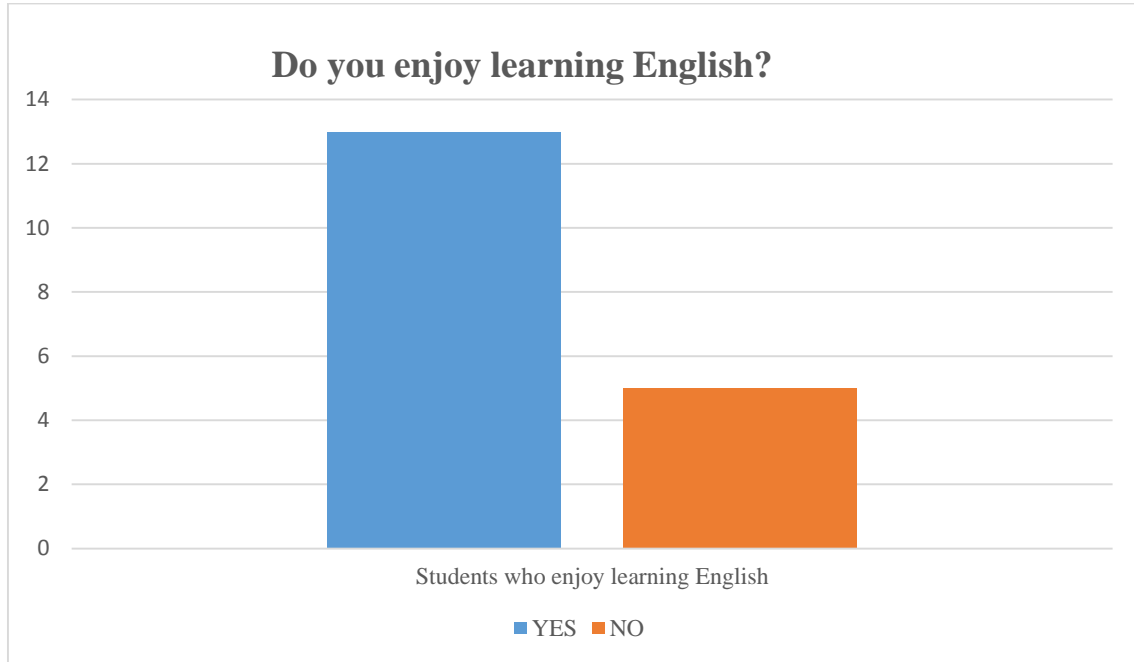


**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

The reasons to study English just confirm what was explained in the last paragraph. They know that it is a necessary learning for their future and that they are going to need it to continue their studies. However, there is a percentage of students who answered that it is a mandatory subject to get graduated and the obligation is not always a good motivation but it would be a good topic for another research.



**Graphic 4.12. Learning English enjoyment**

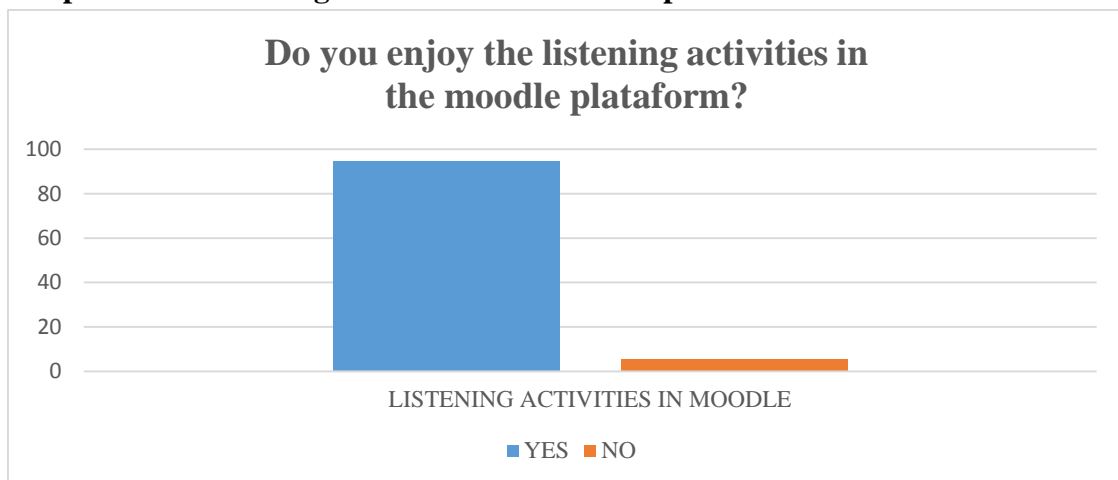


**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

Most students said that they enjoy studying English. This is important since they can have the will to do the activities and the motivation to learn through a different proposal and this was one of the reasons to explain the positive results of the treatment administered as we would see in the posttest analysis section.

#### **4.1.3. Students' perceptions about the Moodle Platform**

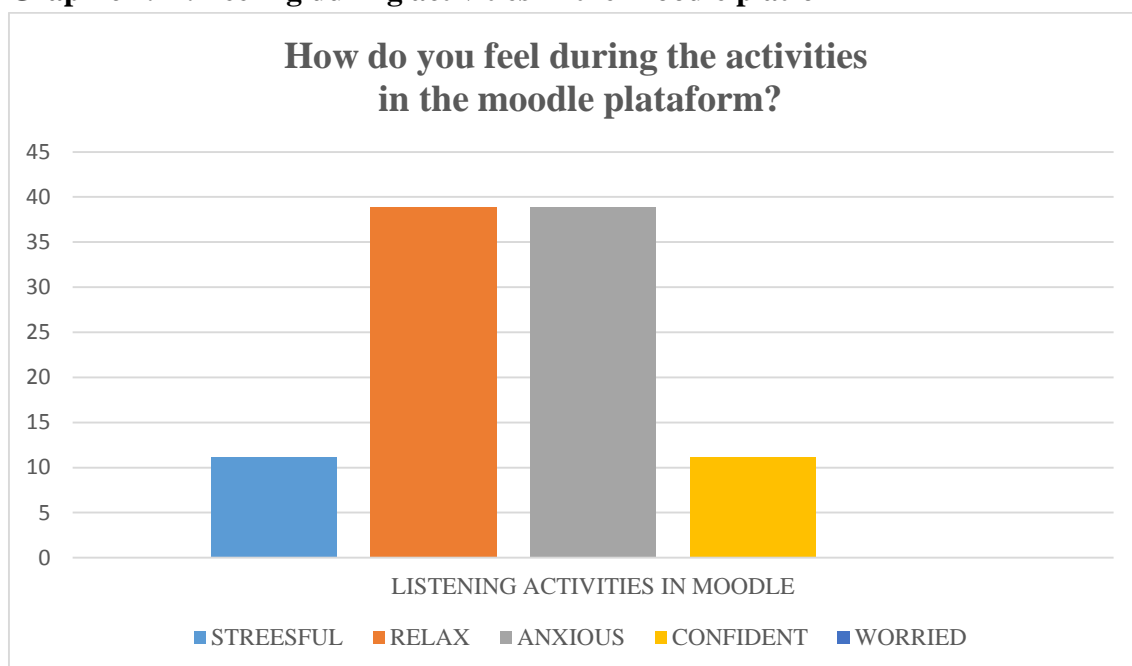
**Graphic 4.13. Listening activities in the Moodle platform**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

One of the positive aspects of the survey was that the students confirm that the Moodle platform turned to be a fun activity. More than 90% of the students answered that they enjoyed doing the listening activities in the Moodle platform. They were required to add an explanation of their answers and some reflections showed that students are happy about learning with fun. They also think that it is interactive, entertaining and easier to manage.

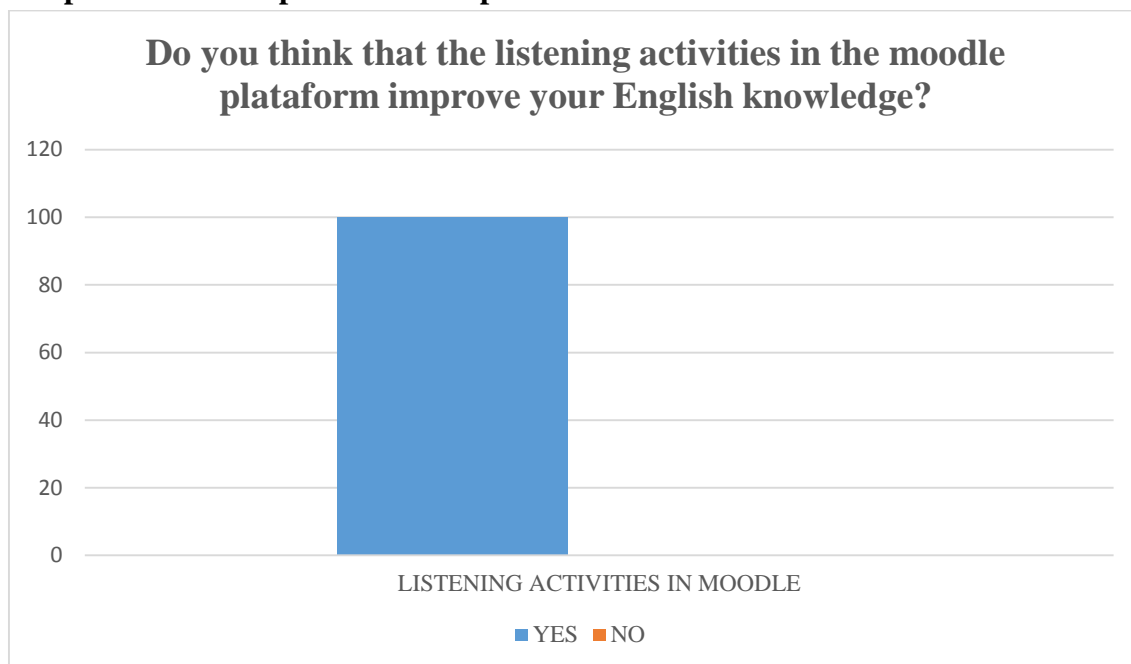
**Graphic 4.14. Feeling during activities in the Moodle platform**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

This was an important element to analyze since some of the students felt anxious and stressed during the activities in the Moodle platform. The possible reasons could be the first interaction with a new way of learning and the complications of technology. Some of the students were not able to manage the platform successfully at the beginning and they did not have good performances. Some of the students also responded that the problem was not the technology but the language difficulties.

**Graphic 4.15. Perception about improvement**



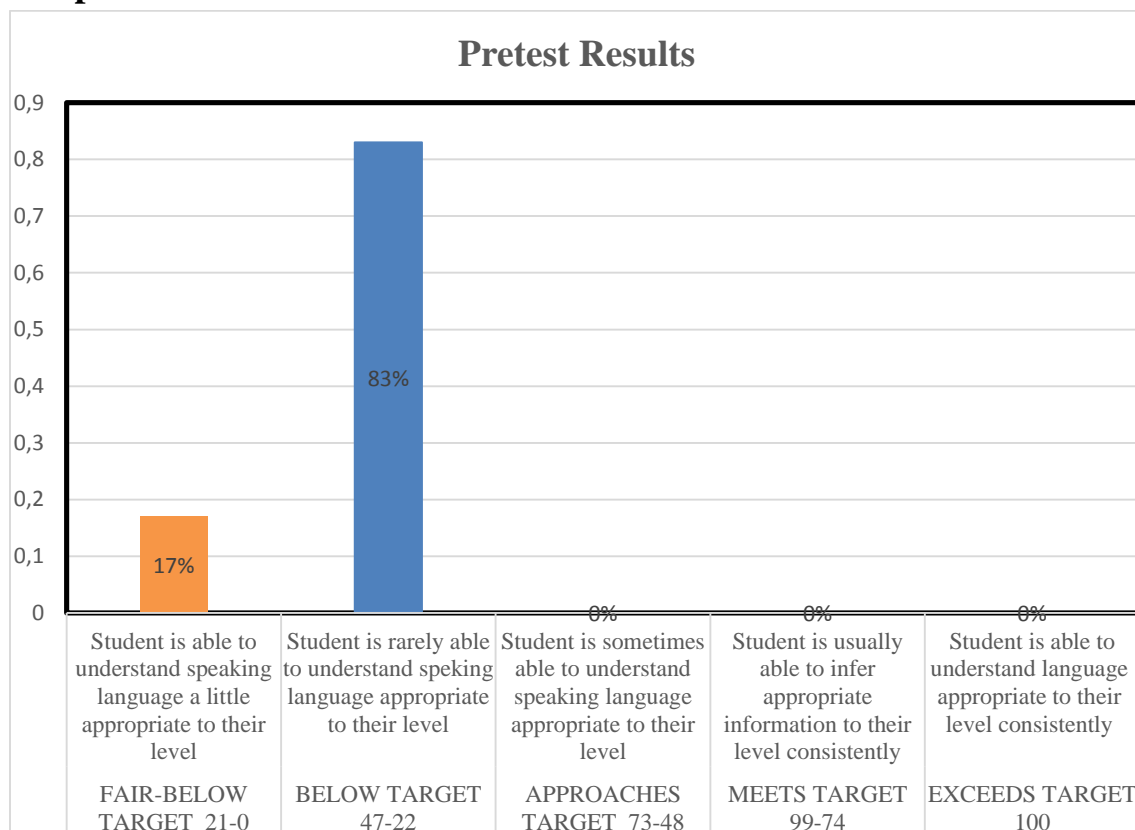
**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

Finally, the whole group of students agrees that the Moodle platform helped them to improve their language skills. They consider that it helps them with grammar and vocabulary issues. Some students think that they got better in their abilities to understand words and relate ideas to the vocabulary and grammar structures learned. Students said that the platform was also useful to correct their pronunciation and manage with different learning problems since they could contact their teacher through the platform.

## **4.2. Pretest and Posttest results analysis**

The pretest was elaborated according to the main objectives of the syllabus proposed to the students in the listening section and it was applied using the Moodle platform. As it was explained before, there were three elements that were evaluated: a) listening for vocabulary; b) listening for the main idea; c) listening for details. To establish the level of the students, it was considered the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

**Graphic 4.16. Pretest results**



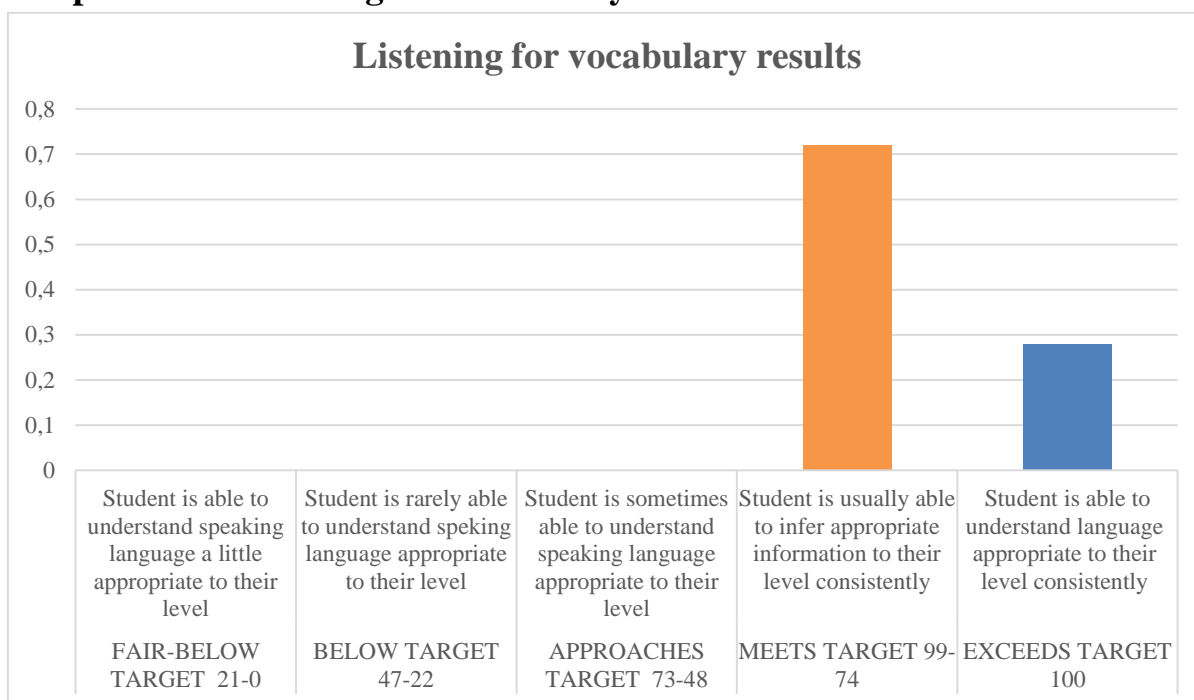
**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

In the pretest results, it was possible to demonstrate that most students (83%) are not able to understand the language in an appropriate level and there are a few of them (17%) who are fair below the target what means that their skills were not developed at all.

Some considerations are related to the students' background, it means that students come from schools and high schools that are not fully prepared for a meaningful English program with all the necessary to have good results. These schools have no support by the institutions whose principals do not consider that English is an important subject and pay more attention and provide more resources to Math or Sciences. Besides, most of students have some boring experiences with English since teachers used books or multimedia tools for learning.

Moreover, they never had contact with tools like e-learning platforms and their experience learning another language is zero. Despite of this poor start, the students were motivated to change their English learning experience. The use of the Moodle platform and the guide ‘Listen-up’ collaborated to improve their listening skills in different areas and practically all of them showed improvement.

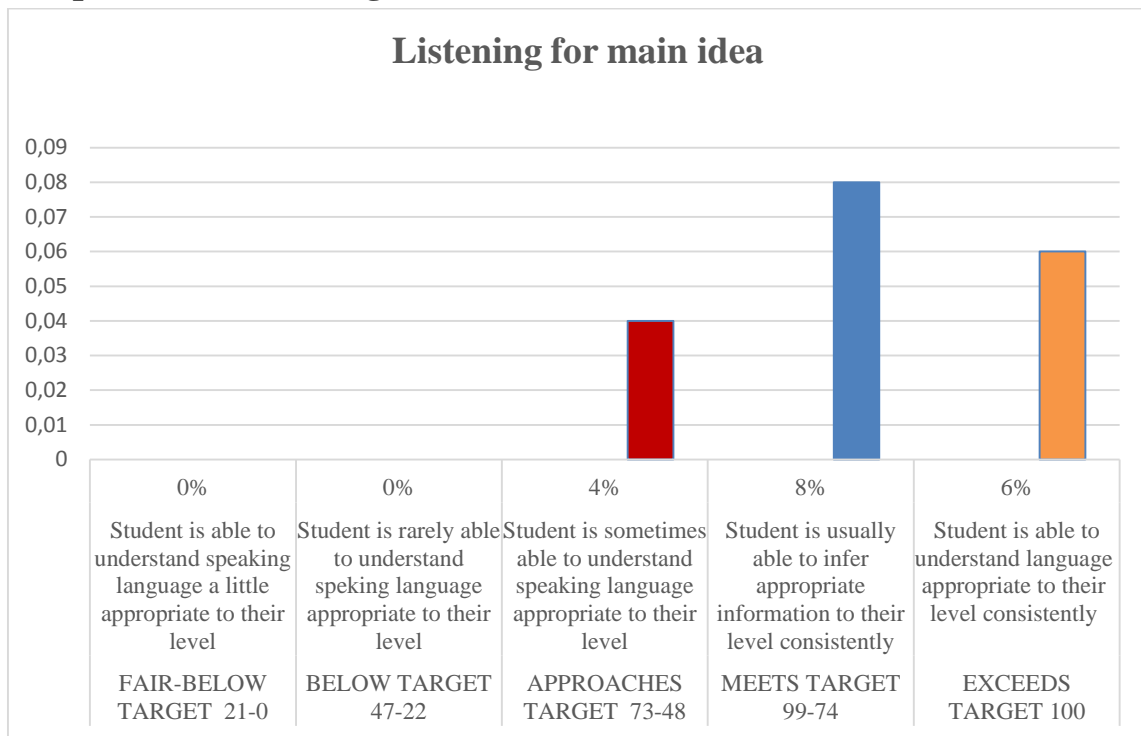
**Graphic 4.17. Listening for vocabulary.**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

In the vocabulary section, the main objective is that students must acquire more words. One of the problems in English learning is to obtain knowledge about different groups of words. The Moodle platform and the guide ‘Listen-up’ have different audios with tasks to learn vocabulary in the context of dialogues or conversations. It is also helpful because students can hear the correct pronunciation of the words and different accents from around the world. The results were obviously successful since most of students advanced to ‘meet the target’ position and some of them were in the ‘exceeds the target’ group.

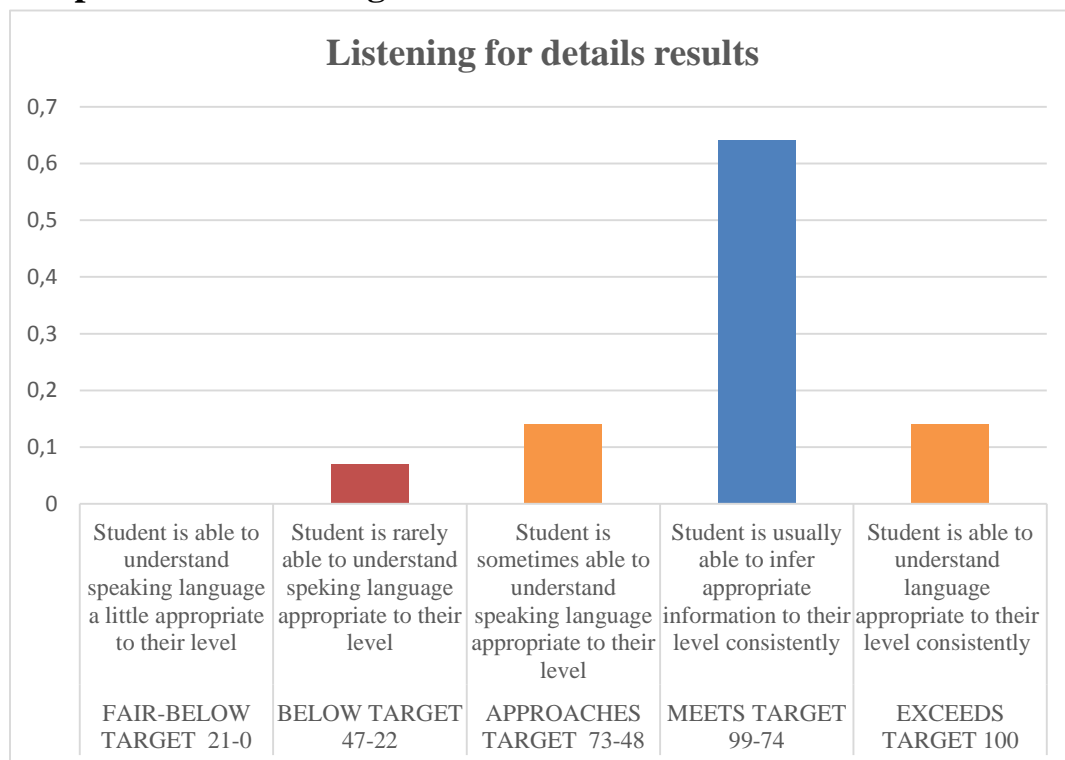
**Graphic 4.18. Listening for main idea**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

Something similar is possible to analyze in the listening for the main idea element. In this part, most of the students were able to ‘exceeds the target’ and ‘meet the target’. To listen for the main idea means that the students are able to know what a monologue, dialogue or a conversation is about. This is a difficult skill since students must know vocabulary and grammar structures to infer the correct idea of the audio. Obviously, students could practice with different audios and multiple choice questions in the Moodle platform.

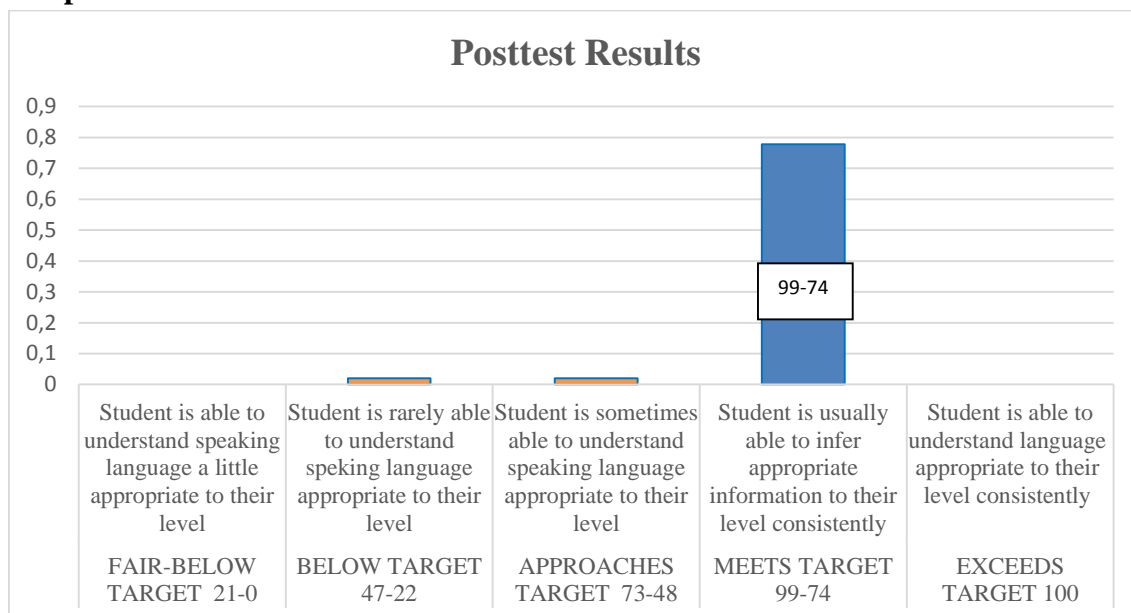
**Graphic 4.19. Listening for details**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

The last skill that was developed is listening for details. It means that the student should be able to locate specific data when the student is doing the activity. In this case, students developed this ability and most of them were able to place themselves in the ‘meet the target’ section. The Moodle platform has certain characteristics that help students to practice this skill like stopping the audio whenever they want, cues to listen for the right word and lots of similar exercises.

**Graphic 4.20. Posttest results**



**Elaborated by: Karolin Varela**

As it was possible to observe, the posttest results demonstrated that the treatment administered was effective since most of the students are in the ‘meet the target’ group that is a great improvement if it is compared to the pretest results, where most of the students were in the ‘fair-below the target’ and ‘below the target’ group. Most of the reasons to explain the success of the treatment were already explained; however, it is necessary to relate these results to the theoretical researches.

### **4.3.Discussion**

The results were very clear and they showed the successful use of the ‘Listen-up’ Guide through the Moodle platform to improve listening skills in the students who took part of the research. Citing Krashen’s input theory (Abukhattala, 2013). It is possible to say that students were submerged in a process of acquisition of the language since the communication and the language they used in the platform was natural. Students did not only listen to their teacher but to different people speaking with their own accents, idioms and expressions.



It was also noticed that taking into account the cognition process with Piaget's approach, the students were able to gradually improve their skills, going from a low-level in their listening skills where they were not able to understand the main idea, details or vocabulary of audio-tracks with conversations to master basic listening skills where students could perform and do activities effectively and acquire language.

Now, not everything was a success in the treatment. In the survey, students said that the use of technology made them feel anxious and stressful sometimes because they met e-learning for the first time and due to deathliness and the difficulty of activities. Probably, some forms to work on the improvement of the guide is to have a wider program with more English courses to get used to the platform before they start to use it.

However, there are other external problems that continuously affect any kind of proposal. If schools and high school do not accomplish their own goals and send students with a good level of English, the universities' work to prepare them to take international exams and pass will not progress any sooner.

#### **4.4.Hypothesis validation**

##### **General Hypothesis:**

- **Hi:** The use of the 'Listen-up' guide through Moodle-based activities improves the students' listening comprehension skills.
- **Ho:** The use of the 'Listen-up' guide through Moodle-based activities does not improve the students' listening comprehension skills.

##### **Level of significance:**

Level of significance Alfa = 0.02 with 4Gl. ( $X^2$  table = 4,533334)

$$G1 = (p-1) (q-1)$$

Where:

P= Number of rows

Q= Number of columns

G1 = (5-1)(2-1) =4x1=4

**Statistical test:**

For the analysis of the test, the X<sup>2</sup> Test (Independence Test) was chosen:

$$\chi^2_{[(r-1)*(s-1)]} = \sum_{i=1}^{n=(r*s)} \frac{(o_i - e_i)^2}{e_i}$$

Where:

X<sup>2</sup>= Chi Square

O=Frequency Obtained

E=Frequency Expected

**Chart 4.1. Results obtained**

Attribute S/Attribute R	PRE TEST	POST TEST	Total
<b>FAIR BELOW THE TARGET</b>	3	0	<b>3</b>
<b>BELOW THE TARGET</b>	15	0	<b>15</b>
<b>APPROACHES TARGET</b>	0	2	<b>2</b>
<b>MEETS TARGET</b>	0	2	<b>2</b>
<b>EXCEEDS TARGET</b>	0	14	<b>14</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

**Chart 4.2. Results expected**

Attribute S/Attribute R	PRE TEST	POST TEST	Total
<b>FAIR BELOW THE TARGET</b>	1	1	<b>3</b>
<b>BELOW THE TARGET</b>	1	1	<b>15</b>
<b>APPROACHES TARGET</b>	3	3	<b>2</b>
<b>MEETS TARGET</b>	6	6	<b>2</b>
<b>EXCEEDS TARGET</b>	7	7	<b>14</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

**Chart 4.3. General Hypothesis Validation**

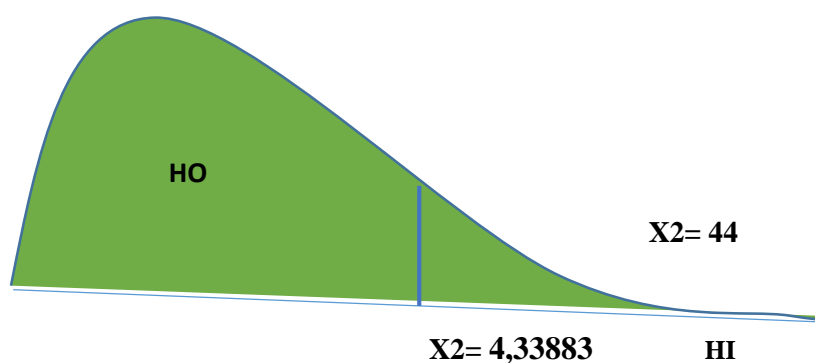
O	E	O-E	(OE <sup>2</sup> )	Total
3	1	2	4	2
15	1	14	196	98
0	3	-3	6	3
0	6	-6	36	18
0	7	-7	49	24,5
0	1	-1	0	1
0	1	-1	0	1
2	3	-1	0	1
2	6	-4	16	8
14	7	7	49	24,5
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>44</b>

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

$X^2 = \text{Chi Square } 4,33883 < X^2 = \text{Chi Square } 44$

The  $X^2 = \text{Chi Square}$  is 4,33883 that is minor to the  $X^2 = \text{Chi Square}$  obtained. Consequently, the  $H_1$ : The use of the ‘Listen-up’ guide through Moodle-based activities improves the students’ listening comprehension skills” has been proven and it is accepted under the conditions explained in this research.

**Graphic 4.21. General Hypothesis**



Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

## Specific hypothesis

### A) Hypothesis listening for vocabulary

Chart 4.4. Listening for vocabulary

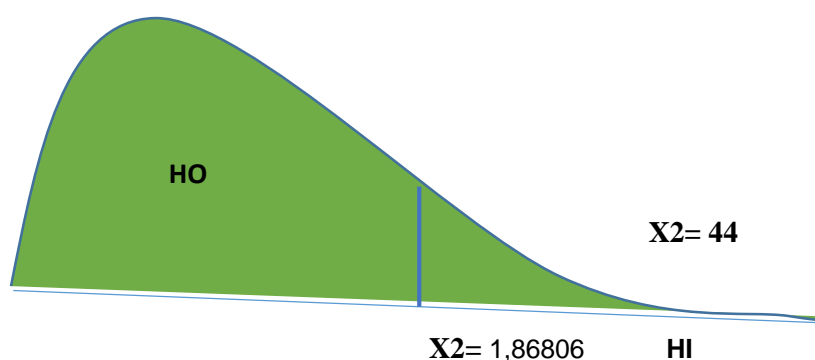
O	E	O-E	(OE2)	Total
3	1	2	4	2
15	1	14	196	98
0	3	-3	9	4,5
0	6	-6	36	18
0	7	-7	49	24,5
0	1	0	0	0
0	1	0	0	0
0	3	4	16	8
13	6	-5	-5	12,5
5	7	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>			<b>44</b>

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

$X^2 = \text{Chi Square } 1,86806 < X^2 = \text{Chi Square } 44$

The  $X^2 = \text{Chi Square}$  is 1,86806 that is minor to the  $X^2 = \text{Chi Square}$  obtained. Consequently, the  $H_1$ : “The use of the ‘Listen-up’ guide through Moodle-based activities improves the students’ listening comprehension skills” has been proven and it is accepted under the conditions explained in this research.

Graphic 4.22. Listening for vocabulary hypothesis



Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

## B) Listening for main idea hypothesis

**Chart 4.5. Listening for main idea**

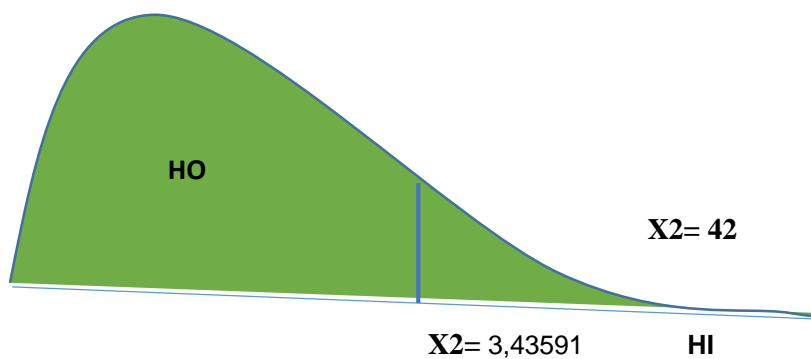
O	E	O-E	(OE2)	Total
3	1	2	4	2
15	1	14	196	98
0	3	-3	9	4,5
0	6	-6	36	18
0	7	-7	49	24,5
0	1	-1	0	0
0	1	-1	0	0
4	3	1	0	0
8	6	2	4	2
6	7	-1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>			<b>42</b>

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

$X^2 = \text{Chi Square } 3,43591 < X^2 = \text{Chi Square } 42$

The  $X^2 = \text{Chi Square}$  is 3,43591 that is minor to the  $X^2 = \text{Chi Square}$  obtained. Consequently, the  $H_1$ : “The use of the ‘Listen-up’ guide through Moodle-based activities improves the students’ listening comprehension skills” has been proven and it is accepted under the conditions explained in this research.

**Graphic 4.23. Listening for main idea hypothesis**



Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

### C) Listening for details hypothesis

**Chart 4.6. Listening for details hypothesis**

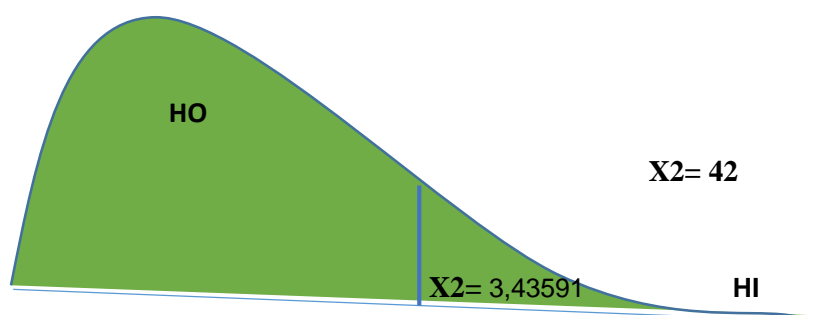
O	E	O-E	(OE2)	Total
3	1	2	4	4
15	1	14	196	14
0	3	-3	9	9
0	6	-6	36	36
0	7	-7	49	49
0	1	-1	0	0
1	1	0	0	0
2	3	-1	0	0
9	6	3	9	9
6	7	-1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>			<b>42</b>

Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

$X^2 = \text{Chi Square } 3,43591 < X^2 = \text{Chi Square } 42$

The  $X^2 = \text{Chi Square}$  is 3,43591 that is minor to the  $X^2 = \text{Chi Square}$  obtained. Consequently, the  $H_1$ : “The use of the ‘Listen-up’ guide through Moodle-based activities improves the students’ listening comprehension skills” has been proven and it is accepted under the conditions explained in this research.

**Graphic 4.24. Listening for details Hypothesis**



Elaborated by: Karolin Varela

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS**

## CONCLUSIONS

As a final summary of our research, we have come up to four important conclusions

- 1) One important conclusion in this research has to do with the importance of diagnosing the students' level and weaknesses to work properly and meaningfully. Teachers have to make a deeper analysis of the students, institution, curriculum, etc., but because of the time and context, these actions are not always carried on in the right way. Teachers need to use all the techniques, strategies, and methods in order to get the correct information from students, educational programs, courses, institution interests, etc. In other words, teachers have to make a diagnosis to identify the right procedures to start a learning process and obtain the best results at the end of it. It is the teacher's responsibility to know about students' social context, previous knowledge and abilities, their needs and achievements. Then teachers will be able to prepare a plan with strong goals, appropriate objectives, active and motivated activities in order to fulfill students' requirements and address the needs of their potentiality.
- 2) Nowadays e-platforms are important tools in education but they are useful if they are based in strong epistemological fundamentals, the right methodology and the appropriate approach. In this research, it was proven that most of the students succeeded in their improvement of listening skills in listening for a main idea, listening for details and listening for vocabulary acquisition. Practically, most of them went from 'below the target level' to 'meet the target' or 'exceeds the target' level demonstrating that the use of the 'Listen-up' Guide through the Moodle platform was a valid tool to improve listening skills in the group of Medicine students.



- 3) The students' survey demonstrated that most of them agree that the Moodle platform had fun activities that differ from the typical tasks using just the book and some audio-visual material like CDs or tape recorders. The students were able to participate and practice more frequently since they could access the platform any time they wanted and could contact their teacher during the day. These are part of what was explained in the theory with Piaget and Krashen since the Moodle platform and the guide allow students to be their own monitor and they can acquire knowledge by themselves.
- 4) As a result of the applied treatment, students changed their perception of English learning and they learnt that they can study by themselves. They listened to different conversations with natural accents and pronunciations and not just the teacher, giving them the opportunity to improve their listening skills that they were practicing during the treatment applied. The process of learning was more dynamic and the interaction among students and the teacher was continuous and meaningful since they were able to get in contact with their teacher whenever they had problems.

## RECCOMENDATIONS

- 1) The institution and teachers must organize programs of research to develop e-platforms to help teachers and students in diverse areas of knowledge and it is suggested that technicians and professionals of education should work together to improve technology and create new educational environments.
  
- 2) It is highly recommended to apply the 'Listen-up' Guide through the Moodle platform in other courses to establish if the results are successful. The Institute of Languages of the University of Cuenca should implement a wider program of study through the use of the platform. Some of the students will be benefited of the application of similar programs of study to learn English. It is even suggested to think about distance learning programs to take advantage of the platform.
  
- 3) Activities that diminish the degree of anxiety and stress should be integrated to the guide since students mentioned that they felt in that way during the application of the treatment. It is suggested to increase the number of activities like games or puzzles in combination with more serious tasks to decrease these feelings towards e-learning.
  
- 4) Finally, it is suggested to establish a pilot program with some high schools of the city of Cuenca to implement the 'Listen-up' guide through the Moodle platform so students could be able to familiarize with more sophisticated ways of learning English that go beyond books and basic audio-visual materials.

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## **ANNEXES**

### **Annex 1. Approved Project**



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE CHIMBORAZO**  
**VICERRECTORADO DE POSGRADO E INVESTIGACION**  
**INSTITUTO DE POSGRADO**

**PROGRAMA DE MAESTRIAS EN LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA AL**  
**APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLÉS**

**DECLARACION DEL PROYECTO DE INVESTIGACION**

**TEMA:**

Elaboration and Application of the guide 'Listen-up' through Moodle-based activities to improve the Listening Comprehension skill in the first level of English in the Medicine School at the University of Cuenca in the school period 2014-2015.

**PROPONENTE:**

Karolin Lucía Varela Solano

**RIOBAMBA-ECUADOR**

**AÑO**

2014-2015



## **PROJECT GRADUATION**

### **1. TOPIC.**

Elaboration and application of the guide 'Listen-up' through Moodle-based activities to improve the Listening Comprehension skill in the first level of English in the Medicine School at the University of Cuenca in the school period 2014-2015.

### **2. PROBLEM DEFINING.**

#### **2.1 Research Location**

This investigation is going to be developed in the University of Cuenca, in the Medical School in the first level of English in the school period 2014-2015.

#### **2.2 Problematic Situation**

Teaching a foreign language is a task that requires lots of effort but especially lots of time. In Ecuadorian schools, especially in Cuenca, students are exposed to a reduce number of English classes. This is the reason why teachers do not have enough time to apply activities to help students develop the listening skills and the students arrive to the university with lack of practice and reduce exposure to the target language, producing in them frustrated situations at the moment to study English.

This problem is observed in the University of Cuenca, in the Medicine School where the students from first level of English have to take this subject because it is mandatory. The students are in the credits' system which consists in six hours of classes per week. They must work four hours in the classroom with the teacher and two hours of self-study in the Moodle platform where they frequently practice only reading, writing and grammar due to the limited time, leaving the listening skill to practice in the classroom with the DCs from the book thinking that is the best to develop this skill, but actually the materials on the CDs are usually read by English speaking people which includes different accents, difficult idioms and

unfamiliar language chunks in their speaking, causing difficulties to understand and their evaluation is always poor.

As a consequence of the students' poor listening background and the assumption of the teachers that listening is a skill that develops itself through the CDs' book instead of teaching how to listen to learn as the other ones, the academic results from the last term evaluation have shown that students are not succeeding at acquiring the English listening skill; they are not achieving a quality level performance understanding English.

Some causes could be: 1. The students' vocabulary is limited because they do not have enough input. 2. The students cannot understand the main idea; they only answer questions or complete some exercises of the book. 3. The students are not able to listen for specific details because they never work in this aspect.

To face this problem, this thesis will be focused on the improvement of the students' listening comprehension skills with the creation of the guide "Listen up" through Moodle-based activities.

**2.2.1. Diagnosis:** Students are not succeeding at acquiring the English listening skill; so they are not achieving a quality level performance understanding English.

## **2.3 Problem Formulation**

To what extent can the 'Listen-up' guide through Moodle-based activities help the student enhance the listening comprehension skills?

## **2.4 Derived Problems**

- The students' vocabulary is limited which negatively affects the listening comprehension.
- The students cannot understand the main idea.
- The students are not able to listen for specific details.

### 3. JUSTIFICATION

The data collected from the survey applied to a group of students from First Level of English, (see annex 1) the 90% of students confirmed that the most difficult skill at the moment to study English is listening, being one problem the time to practice during the learning process, the lack of input, and the material in this case CDs' book. Also the results based on previous grades the students have obtained, show that the necessary area to be improved is listening comprehension skills. This research will be useful to establish a different approach for teaching and learning the listening comprehension skills. The 'Listen up' Guide will give students and teachers a tool to solve problems that have been identified from a previous EFL background. Students and teachers cannot waste more time trying to overcome these problems with the traditional methods based only in textbooks. Through the use of Moodle-based activities, it is expected that students in the first level of the Medical School will develop better abilities in their listening comprehension skills.

The investigation and the application of the Moodle Platform guide is the most adequate form to solve the listening comprehension problem. The University is attempting to enter into a 'blended' method of learning using traditional classes and self-study through the Moodle platform tools. However, the effort is not only focused just in the technology. Techniques and activities for listening comprehension improvement will be carefully selected by the researcher to improve listening comprehension skills and not only to fulfill a chronogram or the syllabus.

Academically, it is important since a research like this has not been executed in an education center in Ecuador. Tools and guides have been developed through the use of the Moodle platform, however, their effectiveness is not been proven. Therefore, this research constitutes the perfect opportunity to create a guide to help students improve listening comprehension skills, and to demonstrate if the Moodle-based activities are really useful. Moreover, the teachers will have access to the guide to assist students who need extra help. Data and results will be a contribution to the EFL studies in listening comprehension, linked to technology

and the effectiveness of the Moodle virtual platform. This investigation is originally developed in spite of the previous studies made around the world. This study contributes to the teaching program and suggests a specific and updated method which is applied around the world.

This thesis is feasible because there is much information available from the Internet, academic articles, documents and original data, as well as many bibliographies. The Master formation in linguistics and didactics allows the researcher to carry on the process and analyze the information. The time projected to develop this thesis is enough to get the objectives stated in this research. The creation of the Moodle-based activities is scheduled for one month with 3 units to be applied. The collection of data is scheduled for five months, the process and analysis of the information is scheduled for three months. All the costs related to this thesis will be assumed by the researcher. The research is supported by the University through the Language Department and human resources including teachers, secretaries and students who will be available to participate.

The beneficiaries of this investigation, through the elaboration and application of the 'Listen-up' guide, which includes the use of the Moodle platform, will be the students, the teachers from the English Department of the University of Cuenca, the authorities, and society in general. Each student studying English as a second language will have access to this guide to help improve their listening comprehension skills. Finally, the process and results obtained will be meaningful in my career as teacher and researcher since it will be done in the institution where I work.

## **4. OBJECTIVES**

### **4.1 General Objective**

- To determine the extent to which the guide 'Listen-up' through Moodle-based activities help students to improve their listening comprehension skills.

## **4.2 Specific Objectives**

- To elaborate the guide ‘Listen-up’ through Moodle-based activities to improve the students’ vocabulary.
- To apply the guide ‘Listen-up’ through Moodle-based activities to improve the students’ main idea understanding.
- To work with updated audio material through Moodle-based activities to improve the listening for specific details.

## **5. THEORETICAL FUNDAMENTS**

### **5.1 Antecedents**

In different studies, like in Bärenfänger (2005), it has been noticed that the role of educational activities in the classroom, especially in EFL learning, has been complemented with online references, asynchronous web-based learning, email, online assessment and testing, mentoring and tutoring. The new tools satisfy the needs of learners by improving quality of the learning experience, decreasing the time to accomplish goals, and improve content and materials.

Other studies carried out in Italian secondary schools showed that many students do not like to practice at home because they consider that working with textbook material is not useful. However, in the same investigation, some students did not want to work at home online, spending time in social networks or chatting. The research concluded that there is a lack of planning to organize activities online to be worked by students. Most of the teachers in this study send homework online in different web pages, but with no accuracy and communication problems (Proietta, 2010). Students do not have a guide during activities getting confused and frustrated.

In South America people are studying and learning English through a multimedia-program called “OPEN ENGLISH” which offers the opportunity to study anywhere because it is a course to work online any time and it is based on interactive material which includes a lot of listening tracks, audios, and videos.

So the tendency to study through computer is increasing every day (Open English, 2015).

## **5.2 Scientific fundamentals**

### **5.2.1. Philosophical fundamentals**

My thesis project is based on the Theory of the Constructivism according to Piaget, because it is a theory that espousing humans to gain knowledge from their experiences, and learn in a manner influenced by these experiences. Also the individuals learn by their own experiences, this experiential level contributes to the subject matter to be learned. Each individual is his or her own teacher and gains more knowledge from their own life experiences, this also states an individual learns from his own set of values and mores. Constructivism is not a specific way of learning but an educational theory. Jean Piaget (1896-1980) believed that children's play had an important role in constructivism and learning. His theory expounds that we learn through assimilation and accommodation.

### **5.2.1. Epistemology fundamentals**

This work has bases in the epistemology, which is based on the Complexity Theory developed by Morin. It is said that something is complex when the image of something extremely complicated is produced, or it is a difficult issue or it is a tangled affair. The intention is that students try to develop their thinking always looking for a solution to the problems they face when they are learning a new language. They must be able to detect what skills are more difficult for them in the learning process, and then they must take advice and apply an innovative new strategy that will serve as a tool to develop their learning process (Morin, 2004).

### **5.2.3. Sociological fundamentals**

The basic concept is developed in the non-positivist theory of Max Weber to observe how human behaviors relate to cause and effect in the social realm. For Weber, sociology is the study of society and behavior and must therefore look at the heart of interaction. The theory of social action, more than structural functionalist positions, accepts and assumes that humans vary their actions

according to social contexts and how it will affect other people; when a potential reaction is not desirable, the action is modified accordingly. So this research work has a social character because students will learn in a different way, they will receive classes in a laboratory and they have at their disposal the technology as a tool to study in an updated way. Any act for the benefit of others as giving a class, undoubtedly contributes a social act. (Weber, 2005).

#### **5.2.4. Pedagogical fundamentals**

This thesis is based on the Piaget's Cognitive Theory which is related to the development of human intelligence. Piaget's idea is primarily known as a developmental stage theory that deals with the nature of knowledge itself and how humans gradually come to acquire, construct, and use it. Piaget J. (2012).

Piaget said that everything has a process, everything develops in stages, so as learning English through listening is essential when a second language is studied step by step and it will be developing in according to the activities to be implemented through various technological tools.

#### **5.2.5. Axiological fundamentals**

This research field is based on the theory of axiology, which is built on the foundation of "Ontology", it tries to clarify the existence of the purpose of creation and the essence of value created through the give-and-take action between relative elements. Thus this theory's goal is to define the structure of value as fundamental principles of standard ethics as well as individual morals. (Kant, 2011). This thesis is developed with ethic and everything that is written here is taken from different sources which are mentioned with their respective author. The information is clear and transparent, nothing is copied or invented.

#### **5.2.6. Legal fundamentals**

This work meets the requirements dictated by the constitution as shown in the following articles from several laws:

**LOES. Art. 9.** Higher education and good living. Higher education is essential to building the right of good living condition in the context of multiculturalism, respect for diversity and harmonious coexistence with nature.

**Law No. 18.437 of the General Education Law** in the following articles says:

**Article 11.** (From academic freedom). - The teacher, as a professional, is free to plan their courses making responsible, critical and informed choices of the themes and educational activities, respecting the objectives and content of the plans and programs of study.

**Article 36.** (From distance education and semi-presencial). - The distance education, online or assisted, understand the processes of teaching and learning that do not require the physical presence of students in classrooms or other similar units, to dictation of their regular courses, once the teacher provided material and technological resources specifically developed to obviate their presence, and ensures an academic organization and a management system and specific assessment designed for that purpose. The blending learning, in addition to the above features, required classroom actions.

### **UNACH Regulation**

Characteristics and organization of Master program studies:

**Art. 74.-**The Master studies should be based on the scientific research, aimed at deepening of an area of knowledge with scientific and academic purposes.

### **5.3 Theoretical framework**

In the topic related to English learning through a computer there are a lot of bibliographies which presents the inference of the use of computer at the moment to learn a second language, the different applications to practice in and out the classroom, the improvement of listening skill, and information about how the Moodle platform has influenced in the teaching and learning process.



### **5.3.1. Moodle Platform**

Moodle means: “A modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment. It is open-source software that provides the ability to create, deploy and manage e-learning websites and applications.” (Lopes, 2014). They were initially developed by an educator and are now maintained by Moodle Community and Moodle HQ. Moodle course management provides the functionality to create and manage educational courses online.

Moodle's features include the ability to develop courses, enroll students, manage assignments, and provide quizzes, grading, wiki and discussion forums for thousands of virtual students at a time. Besides education, Moodle is used for various other related environments such as business communication and employee or system training. Moodle can also be used as a generic knowledge management system (Jansen, 2015).

Moodle can make an environment to study in any moment anywhere, if students have access to a computer. Course administrations results easier and helps to reduce time of delivering instruction. Besides, some activities or additional work outside class can be provided.

Modular object-oriented dynamic learning environments are a type of learning management system (LMS) or online learning system (OLS). They were initially developed by an educator and are now maintained by Moodle Community and Moodle HQ.

Moodle course management provides the functionality to create and manage educational courses online. The Moodle environment is entirely free to use, is available under General Public License (GPL) and is developed in PHP.

Moodle facilitates student-centered and anytime-anywhere learning. Moreover, it makes course administration easier and helps to reduce the cost and time of delivering instruction.

The tools provided by Moodle can be used to integrate any level course, provide additional work outside the class and experience cooperative learning. According to Brandl 'as a courseware package and learning System, Moodle has great potential for supporting conventional classroom instruction, for example, to do additional work outside of class, to become the delivery System for blended (or hybrid) course formats, or even to be used as a standalone e-learning platform' (Brandl, 2005).

Moodle and its platform can thus be used to integrate the school course, inviting the students to join the modules and try the new experience. They can be asked by the teacher to attend the platform and receive credits or marks, which will contribute to the end-of-year evaluation. The result of this kind of experience may contribute to support the use of new technologies in secondary schools, and increase foreign language proficiency.

Since the intention is not to substitute the textbooks, CDs or CD ROM, but to integrate them with an e-learning environment, the following steps may be followed, to create the module or sections in the platform and provide the interaction needed:

The teacher chooses some Units of the textbook (or textbooks) that can be more easily considered as Learning Objects (modular digital resources that are uniquely identified and can be used and reused to support learning. The main idea of 'learning objects' is that educational content is broken down into small chunks that can be reused in various learning environments).

Some of the audio material (tracks) on CDs can be saved as audio files in a directory to be used as a resource.

Short video sequences can offer dialogues corresponding to the units chosen. Many sites such as the site of the BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish> and other sites (e.g. <http://www.lingual.net/lingualproductitems/details.php>) provide this sort of video material that can be linked or downloaded from the platform.

Additional audio material should be prepared, such as listening exercises, whose solutions and answers could be sent via e-mail to the teacher for correction or recorded by the students and put in an area of the platform where other students could access for listening and discussion in a chat room.

### 5.3.1.1 Moodle terminology

**Course:** a “course” is a sub-section on a Moodle platform and a protected area, comparable to a classroom with a teacher and the course participants. On a Moodle platform, a teacher can have several courses. A “course” can be filled with a few exercises or complete units. This is left to the course teachers and their individual needs. Fig. 1 below shows a new course in editing mode.

**Course sections:** courses can be divided into “sections” to organize resources and activities for students. Each section can have a description and can contain as many activities and resources as the teacher desires. The course in fig. 1 has 5 course sections in topic format (as compared to a weekly format that lists sections by dates).

**Editing mode:** mode in which someone with course editing rights can change the appearance of a Moodle course (e.g. add resources and activities).

**Moodle:** Moodle is a learning management system and software developed from a social constructivist perspective. One can find many “Moodles” on the web as they are installed and offered by many educational institutions. One usually talks of “Moodle” when referring to the tool and software or “the Moodle platform” when referring to an individual Moodle as provided by one institution or organization, e.g. the WiMi Moodle.

**Teacher:** in Moodle terminology, teacher always refers to the Moodle “teacher role”. A teacher has full editing and administration rights in his or her course.

**Computer:** A computer is a device that accepts information (in the form of digitalized data) and manipulates it for some result based on a program or sequence of instructions on how the data is to be processed.

**Internet:** means of connecting a computer to any other computer anywhere in the world via dedicated routers and servers. When two computers are connected over the Internet, they can send and receive all kinds of information such as text, graphics, voice, video, and computer programs.

### **5.3.3. Listening Comprehension Skill**

Listening is considered an invisible mental process, making it difficult to describe. Listeners must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intention, retain and interpret this within the immediate as well as the larger socio-cultural context of the utterance. Rost (2002) considers that listening is a process composed of three stages: receptive orientation, constructive orientation, collaborative orientation and transformative orientation. Listening is a complex, active processes of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with what they already know.

To define what listening is, some statements can be presented in the following. Brown J. Donald et. al. (2000) states that listening is “receiving, analyzing and interpreting oral signal that come to some-one and creating messages of the speaker.” Judi Brownell (2000) defined listening as “a definite, usually voluntary, effort to apprehend acoustically.” Listening also can be defined as the activities of hearing the symbols of speaking with fully attentions, acquiring, appreciation, and interpretation to get information, gathered the message, also to get the meaning from communication which have applied the subject though a verbal language.

English Hearing is different from listening. Hearing is physical ability while listening is a skill. Listening skill allows one make sense of and understand what another person is saying. In other words, listening skill allows you to understand what someone is talking about. Moreover, listening skill involve etiquette, asking for clarification, showing empathy and providing an appropriate response.

To sum up, listening is an activity that involves receiving, deciphering and perceiving a message with intent to respond. Based on the statements above, it can be state that listening is more than just being able to hear and understand what someone else says. Also continuously respond it.

### **5.3.3.1 Listening processes**

There are two distinct processes involved in listening comprehension that this thesis project is going to take into account. The first one is: Listeners use 'top-down' processes when they use prior knowledge to understand the meaning of a message. Prior knowledge can be knowledge of the topic, the listening context, the text-type, the culture or other information stored in long-term memory as schemata (typical sequences or common situations around which world knowledge is organized).

Listeners use content words and contextual clues to form hypotheses in an exploratory fashion. On the other hand, listeners also use 'bottom-up' processes when they use linguistic knowledge to understand the meaning of a message. They build meaning from lower level sounds to words to grammatical relationships to lexical meanings in order to arrive at the final message.

Listening comprehension is not either top-down or bottom-up processing, but an interactive, interpretive process where listeners use both prior knowledge and linguistic knowledge in understanding messages. The degree to which listeners use the one process or the other will depend on their knowledge of the language, familiarity with the topic or the purpose for listening. For example, listening for gist involves primarily top-down processing, whereas listening for specific

information, as in a weather broadcast, involves primarily bottom-up processing to comprehend all the desired details (Vandergrift,2000).

## 6. HYPOTHESIS

### 6.1 General hypothesis

- The use of the guide ‘Listen-up’ through Moodle-based activities improves the students’ listening comprehension skills.

### 6.2 Specific hypothesis

- The use of the guide ‘Listen-up’ through Moodle-based activities improves the vocabulary acquisition.
- The application of the guide ‘Listen-up’ through Moodle-based activities improves the student’s main idea understanding.
- The use of updated audio material through Moodle-based activities improves the listening for specific details.

## 7. HYPOTHESIS OPERATIONALIZATION

### 7.1 Specific hypothesis operationalization 1.

INDEPENDIENT VARIABLE	CONCEPT	CATEGORY	INDICATOR	TECHNICS
Use of the guide ‘Listen-up’ through Moodle based activities	The characteristics of the performance at using the Moodle platform to improve listening comprehension	Administration of studying time	Hours of using the platform a day	Survey
		Mastering the Moodle platform	Knowlledge of technology; knowledge of Internet;	

			Knowledge of the purposes of the platform; Knowledge of the tools of the platform to improve English skills; knowledge	
		Motivation using the Moodle platform	Stimulus, self-worth; success; Self-realization	

<b>DEPENDIENT VARIABLE</b>	<b>CONCEPT</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>TECHNICS</b>
Vocabulary acquisition	Group of new words used accurately by the students during the learning process	Accuracy in word usage. Meaning	Number of new words used correctly in context.  Use of words productively in different situations  Recombining words	Pretest and Posttest

			<p>Placing new words into a context</p> <p>Familiar words and expressions recognition</p> <p>Recognize high frequency words and academic words</p> <p>Recognize cognates</p> <p>Recognize reduced form of words</p> <p>Recognize word order pattern</p> <p>Recognize stress and</p>	
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			<p>rhythm patterns, tone patterns, intonational contours.</p> <p>Retain chunks of language in short-term memory</p>	
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**7.2 Specific hypothesis operationalization 2**

<b>INDEPENDIENT VARIABLE</b>	<b>CONCEPT</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>TECHNICS</b>
Use of the guide 'Listen-up' through Moodle based activities	The characteristics of the performance at using the Moodle platform to improve listening comprehension	Administration of studying time	Hours of using the platform a day	Survey
		Mastering the Moodle platform	Knowledge of technology; knowledge of Internet; Knowledge of the purposes of the platform; Knowledge of the tools of the platform to improve English skills; knowledge	
		Motivation using the Moodle platform	Stimulus, self-worth; success; Self-realization	

<b>DEPENDIENT VARIABLE</b>	<b>CONCEPT</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>TECHNICS</b>
Main idea understanding	A main idea is important information that tells more about the overall idea of a paragraph, audio, or section of a text.	Differentially relevant information and details  Identify the purpose and ignore the rest	Student picks up on relevant information  Retells the information  Rephrase the information  Detect key words, such as those identifying topics and general ideas  Summarizing the general idea  Accurate comprehension of a general message	Pretest and Posttest

### 7.3 Specific hypothesis operationalization 3

<b>INDEPENDIENT VARIABLE</b>	<b>CONCEPT</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>TECHNICS</b>
Use of the guide 'Listen-up' through Moodle based activities.	The characteristics of the performance at using the Moodle platform to improve listening comprehension	Administration of studying time	Hours of using the platform a day	Survey
		Mastering the Moodle platform	Knowlledge of technology; knowledge of Internet; Knowledge of the purposes of the platform; Knowledge of the tools of the platform to improve English skills; knowledge	
		Motivation using the Moodle platform	Stimulus, self-worth; success; Self-realization	

<b>DEPENDIENT VARIABLE</b>	<b>CONCEPT</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>TECHNICS</b>
Listening for specific details	Listen more specific and relevant information,	Listen to selectively	Listen for specific information  Picking out special words, terms, names  Students write specific	PreTest and Posttest

			<p>answers to the questions</p> <p>Identify the details required and ignore the rest</p> <p>Listen selectively the details on the context and fill in the gaps exercises</p> <p>Highlighting details</p> <p>Checklist the details they listen to</p>	
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## 8. METHODOLOGY

### 8.1. Type of research.

It is a Quantitative research because it is a formal, objective, systematic process in which numerical data are used to obtain information necessary for this investigation. Also it uses graphics and statistic to show the results

obtained. This research method is used: to describe variables; to examine relationships among variables; to determine cause-and-effect interactions between variables.

The process in this investigation would be:

1. apply the survey
2. apply the pretest
3. apply the posttest
4. tabulate the data
5. present the results

## **8.2 Investigation Design.**

This investigation is Quasi-experimental. It will be worked with an intervention group and a comparison group. It is based on the analytic and scientific method.

The scientific method is the set of logical procedures that follows the research to find internal and external processes of natural and social reality relationships.

The analytical method is one method of research that involves the dismemberment of a whole, breaking it down into parts of elements to observe the causes, nature and effects. This method allows us to know more of the subject matter, which can be: to explain, make analogies, better understand their behavior and establish new theories.

## **8.3 Population and sample**

The population to work is about 50 students who will be observed. It has two groups of 25 students who attend to the first English level from the Medicine School. One group is the intervention and the other is the comparison group. This statement can be verified in the next statistical chart:

### **Chapter No. 1.1**

### **Strata of the Investigation**

<b>Strata</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Students	50	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: English Department- Medical School**

**Made by: Karolin Varela**

#### **8.4 Sample**

Due to the population is not large, the whole population is considered the sample for this research.

#### **8.5 Research methods**

It is based on the analytic and scientific method in which a problem is first identified and observations, experiments, or other relevant data are then used to construct or test hypotheses that purport to solve it.

The inductive method is also used as a working tool because it is a process in which, starting with data, just reaching the theory. Therefore, we ascend form the particular to the general, as is the case in this investigation.

#### **8.6 Techniques to collect data**

A survey is going to be applied to collect the necessary data for this research.

A pretest and a posttest will be applied at the beginning and at the end of the period to determine the result. Consequently, questionnaires will be elaborated by the researcher.

## **8.7 Techniques and procedures for the analysis results**

After applying the survey and the pretest and posttest, the information collected will be organized, analyzed and interpreted using charts and graphics of percentages to observe the results.

## **9. HUMAN AND ECONOMICAL RESOURCES**

### **9.1. Human resources**

This research will be guided by a tutor. It will be worked with a sample of about 50 students from first level in the Medical School, and it also counts with the support of the authorities of the University, the English Department, and the Medical School.

### **9.2. Material resources**

Office Materials

Copies

Texts

Books

Magazines

Printed and bound

### **9.3. Technological resources**

This thesis project counts with the respective permission to use the technological resources of the university, for this semester the students will have classes in the lab with individual computers, earphones, internet, flash memories and with the Moodle platform which includes the guide 'Listen-up'.

#### 9.4. Economical resources

The costs of the investigation will be paid for the researcher; it does not represent an obstacle to develop this thesis project.

<b>Resources</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Unit value</b>	<b>Total value</b>
<b>Sheets</b>	500	0.01	<b>5.00</b>
<b>Observation registers</b>	10	0.10	<b>1.00</b>
<b>Copies</b>	200	0.01	<b>20.00</b>
<b>Internet</b>	X	25.00	<b>25.00</b>
<b>Books</b>	2	35	<b>70.00</b>
<b>Printed</b>	5	20	<b>100</b>
<b>Bound</b>	5	25	<b>125</b>
<b>Administrative Costs</b>	150	150	<b>150</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$496</b>



## 10. CRONOGRAM

ACTIVITIES	PERIOD 2014-2015																																			
	Mes 1				Mes 2				Mes 3				Mes 4				Mes 5				Mes 6				Mes 7				Mes 8				Mes 9			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1. Elaboration of the thesis plan work <i>(during the tutorial thesis module; responsible: facilitator and master program student)</i>																																				
2. Approval of the thesis theme <i>(responsible: the tribunal and master program student)</i>																																				
3. Designation of the Tutor. <i>(responsible: Director of the Master Program)</i>																																				
4. Review and approval of the thesis work plan by the Tutor. <i>(responsible: Tutor and student)</i>																																				
5. Elaboration of the Theoretical framework <i>(responsible: Tutor and student)</i>																																				
6. Design and validation of research instruments. <i>(responsible: Tutor and student)</i>																																				
7. Fieldwork: application of the instruments.																																				



## 11. LOGIC MATRIX

<b>PROBLEM FORMULATION</b>	<b>GENERAL OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>GENERAL HYPOTHESIS</b>
To what extent can the “Listen up” guide through Moodle-based activities help the student to improve the listening comprehension skills?	To determine to what extent the “Listen up” guide through Moodle-based activities can help students to improve their listening skills.	The use of the “Listen up” guide” through Moodle based activities improves the students’ listening comprehension skills.
<b>DERIVED PROBLEMS</b>	<b>SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS</b>
The students’ vocabulary is limited which negatively affects the listening comprehension.	To elaborate the “Listen up” guide through Moodle-based activities to improve the students’ vocabulary.	The use of the “Listen up” guide through Moodle-based activities improves the vocabulary acquisition.
The students cannot understand the main idea.	To apply the “Listen up” guide through Moodle-based activities to improve the students’ main idea understanding.	The application of the “Listen up” guide through Moodle-based activities improves the student’s main idea understanding.
The students are not able to listen for specific details.	To work with updated audio material through Moodle-based activities to improve the listening for specific details.	The use of updated audio material through Moodle-based activities improves the listening for specific details.

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<http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/listening-types.html>

## 14. ANNEX 1



# UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE CHIMBORAZO

## INSTITUTO DE POSTGRADO

### Maestría Aplicada al Aprendizaje del Inglés

Por favor conteste a las siguientes preguntas, coloque una X en el espacio correspondiente. Todas las preguntas deberán ser contestadas. La información es confidencial y no se utilizará sino exclusivamente para los propósitos de esta investigación.

Formulario # \_\_\_\_\_

#### DATOS GENERALES:

1. Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Cédula: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Ciudad donde nació: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Ciudad donde reside: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. Sexo:

5.1 Masculino

5.2 Femenino

#### 6. Edad:

#### 7. Etnia:

7.1 Blanco

7.2 Mestizo

7.3 Indígena

7.4 Afro-ecuatoriano

7.5 Montubio

7.6 Otros

**DATOS ACADÉMICOS:**

8. ¿En qué colegio estudió?

---

9. ¿Tuvo como materia Inglés durante la primaria?

Si  No

10. ¿Tuvo como materia Inglés durante la secundaria?

Si  No

11. ¿Cuántos años lleva usted estudiando Inglés? # de años

12. ¿Cuántas horas de Inglés tuvo durante el colegio? # de horas

12.1 ¿Cuál es la destreza más difícil al momento de estudiar Inglés?

---

12.2 ¿Qué material usó para aprender Inglés?

---

**INFORMACIÓN EXTRA:**

13. ¿Hablan sus padres inglés?

Si  No

14. ¿Chatea con amigos o extranjeros en inglés?

Si  No

15. ¿Chatea con parientes en Inglés?

Si  No

16. ¿Conversa vía Skype con amigos extranjeros en Inglés?

Si  No

17. ¿Conversa vía Skype con parientes en Inglés?

Si  No

Muchas gracias por su colaboración

Fecha de aplicación: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Firma de la Investigadora

## Annex 2. Collecting Data Instruments

### LISTENING PRE-TEST LEVEL I

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Listening 1- Track 1.

1. Listen and complete the sentences with the best option.

1. His \_\_\_\_\_ is Mike.

Select one:

- a. spell
- b. last
- c. name

2. His last name is \_\_\_\_\_ .

Select one:

- a. T Y R N B O L M
- b. T U R N B U L L
- c. T A R M B U L

3. He is \_\_\_\_\_ years old.

Select one:

- a. 17
- b. 26
- c. 27

4. His telephone number is \_\_\_\_\_

Select one:

- a. 8 3 0 1 5 5 5 9 8 8
- b. 8 6 0 5 5 5 0 9 9 8
- c. 8 6 0 1 5 5 0 8 8 9

Choose true or false.

5. He is married.

Select one:

- True \_\_\_\_\_  
False \_\_\_\_\_



## Listening 2- Track 2.

6. Her name is S T E W A R T.

Select one:

True \_\_\_\_\_

False \_\_\_\_\_

7. Her name is \_\_\_\_\_ .

Select one:

a. C L I A R E

b. C L A I R E

c. Z L A I R E

8. Write the correct name.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Her name is \_\_\_\_\_ .

Select one:

a. K A D H R I N

b. K E T H R I N

c. K A T H R Y N

## Listening 3. Track 3.

10. Choose the activities Layla does not like.

Shopping \_\_\_\_\_

Dancing \_\_\_\_\_

Doing homework \_\_\_\_\_

Jogging \_\_\_\_\_

Sports \_\_\_\_\_

## Listening 4. Track 4

11. Listen and choose the correct answer.

A. What is Megan talking about?

• Daily activities \_\_\_\_\_

• A day in the life of Jodie \_\_\_\_\_

• Two best friends \_\_\_\_\_

• He walks and cleans the house \_\_\_\_\_

- He eats Italian and Chinese food \_\_\_\_\_

**B. What does Musashimaru does in the afternoon.**

- Daily activities \_\_\_\_\_
- A day in the life of Jodie \_\_\_\_\_
- Two best friends \_\_\_\_\_
- He walks and cleans the house \_\_\_\_\_
- He eats Italian and Chinese food \_\_\_\_\_

## LISTENING POST-TEST

### Listening 1- Track 1.

#### LISTEN AND CHOOSE THE CORRECT ANSWER

##### 1. Who do you think answers the telephone?

Select one:

- a. Tina's mother
- b. Tina's friend
- c. Tina's secretary

##### 2. Where can she meet John?

Select one:

- a. At the office
- b. Dan's Burgers
- c. Lauren's Bar

##### 3. Match the sentences with correct answer.

###### A. Who does Lauren want to speak to?

Tina \_\_\_\_\_

Lauren \_\_\_\_\_

Ryan \_\_\_\_\_

###### B. Who is calling Ryan?

Tina \_\_\_\_\_

Lauren \_\_\_\_\_

Ryan \_\_\_\_\_

##### 4. What day of the week is Ryan's dinner?

Select one:

- a. Monday
- b. Wednesday
- c. Sunday
- d. Friday

## Listening 2- Track 2.

### LISTEN AND COMPLETE THE SENTENCES.

5. Danny is the class of \_\_\_\_\_ (year in numbers)

6. Danny is currently working in \_\_\_\_\_

Select one:

- a. Australia
- b. Sidney
- c. Germany

7. Match the questions with the answers

A. Her reunion isn't until the year \_\_\_\_\_

2012 \_\_\_\_\_

2002 \_\_\_\_\_

2000 \_\_\_\_\_

B. Candice's class reunion is for students from \_\_\_\_\_

2012 \_\_\_\_\_

2002 \_\_\_\_\_

2000 \_\_\_\_\_

8. Choose TRUE or FALSE

1. Candice works as a teacher.

Select one:

- True
- False

## Listening 3- Track 3.

9. Choose the correct answer

Jhonathan and Jenny are talking about \_\_\_\_\_ .

Select one:

- a. work reference
- b. Carme's positive qualities

c. Carmen's talent

**10. Choose TRUE or FALSE.**

**Jenifer and Billy have jobs and they both take care of their daughter.**

Select one:

True

False

**11. Choose TRUE or FALSE**

**A. Today, men do not do more of the housework and childcare, and more women go to work outside the home.**

True

False

**B. Workers take a break of twelve minutes, then it's back to work.**

True

False

**C. Today, in the United States, people work more hours and have less time to spend with their families.**

True

False

**12. Listen and choose the correct sentence.**

Select one:

a. Jenifer sometimes works 40 hours a week.

b. Jenifer always works 60 hours a month.

c. Jenifer works 40 hours a week.

d. Jenifer always works 60 hours a week.

**13. Choose TRUE or FALSE**

**A. Billy plays the drums 20 hours a month**

True

False

**B. Billy spends a lot of time with his daughter in his job.**

True

False

**C. Billy cooks, cleans, does the laundry and does the dishes**

True

False

**14. In 10 words tell me the main idea of the audio "USA alive".**

## Annex 3. Validation

### Listening 2

Pregunta	Puntaje	Destreza a evaluar / objetivo específicos que busca alcanzar: 1-2	Sí / No	Sugerencias
Preg. 1	2	Listening for vocabulary	Si	
Preg. 2	2	Listening for details	Si	
Preg. 3	4	Listening for details	Si	
Preg. 4	2	Listening for details	Si	

### Listening 3

Pregunta	Puntaje	Destreza a evaluar / objetivo específicos que busca alcanzar: 3	Sí / No	Sugerencias
Preg. 1	10	Listening for main idea	Si	

### Listening 4

Pregunta	Puntaje	Destreza a evaluar / objetivo específicos que busca alcanzar: 2-3	Sí / No	Sugerencias
Preg. 1	1	Listening for details	Si	
Preg. 2	4	Listening for details	Si	
Preg. 3	1	Listening for main idea	Si	
Preg. 4	3	Listening for main idea	Si	
Preg. 5	1	Listening for main idea	Si	

Firma y cédula:

  
1302408804

Pregunta	Puntaje	Destreza a evaluar / objetivo específicos que busca alcanzar: 1-2	Sí / No	Sugerencias
Preg. 1	2	Listening for vocabulary	Si	
Preg. 2	2	Listening for details	Si	
Preg. 3	4	Listening for details	Si	
Preg. 4	2	Listening for details	Si	

Listening 3

Pregunta	Puntaje	Destreza a evaluar / objetivo específicos que busca alcanzar: 3	Sí / No	Sugerencias
Preg. 1	10	Listening for main idea	Si	

Listening 4

Pregunta	Puntaje	Destreza a evaluar / objetivo específicos que busca alcanzar: 2-3	Sí / No	Sugerencias
Preg. 1	1	Listening for details	Si	
Preg. 2	4	Listening for details	Si	
Preg. 3	1	Listening for main idea	Si	
Preg. 4	3	Listening for main idea	Si	
Preg. 5	1	Listening for main idea	Si	

Firma y cédula:



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