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**TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN**



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**MAESTRÍA EN PEDAGOGÍA DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA**

**TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN**

**PREVIO A LA OBTENCIÓN DEL TÍTULO DE MAGISTER EN PEDAGOGÍA  
DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA**

**TEMA**

**The Effectiveness of Using Popular Format of Podcasts to Improve Listening Skills  
Among A2 Level University Students**

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**DEDICATION**

This whole study is devoted to our Lord, who has given us strength, direction, and support at every turn in this journey because of his majesty and love. To our family, for their unwavering love and support—without which we could not have accomplished this. This accomplishment is the consequence of a concerted effort by everyone in our life who has supported and believed in us, including our instructors for their necessary guidance and patience.

By: Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett



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We would first like to express our gratitude to God for his love and blessings, which enabled us to overcome many obstacles in order to complete this research. His magnificence also inspires us to confront and resolve any issues that arise during the course of our development as students and master aspirants.

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To everyone who has helped us attain our goal by believing in us.

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### **RESUMEN**

El impacto del uso de podcasts en inglés académico a nivel A2 en el desarrollo de las habilidades de escucha y las percepciones de los estudiantes es el tema del presente estudio. La investigación utiliza un enfoque experimental, con dos grupos focales: el de control y el experimental. Para medir el rendimiento y las actitudes de los estudiantes, se utilizan el pre-test y el pos-test.

El uso de podcasts en la enseñanza de idiomas y el desarrollo de habilidades lingüísticas se aborda en el Capítulo 1, que establece el marco teórico del estudio donde se abordan los fundamentos conceptuales y las investigaciones previas relacionadas con el uso de podcasts en la enseñanza de idiomas y el desarrollo de habilidades lingüísticas.

El diseño del estudio, los participantes y los instrumentos de evaluación utilizados, incluidos el pre-test y el pos-test, se describen en el Capítulo 2.

Los procedimientos para recopilar y analizar datos también se muestran. Los hallazgos se presentan y analizan en el Capítulo 3.

La propuesta implicó la integración de podcasts en las clases de inglés, utilizando material seleccionado y diseñado para mejorar la comprensión auditiva de los estudiantes. Se han observado mejoras significativas en las habilidades de escucha de los estudiantes después de la intervención con podcasts, así como un cambio positivo en su percepción de esta herramienta de aprendizaje. En el contexto del inglés académico, se resalta la importancia de los podcasts como



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herramientas pedagógicas para mejorar la comprensión auditiva. Se discuten los efectos de estos hallazgos en la práctica educativa y se hacen sugerencias para la investigación futura en este campo. En resumen, este estudio agrega evidencia empírica al cuerpo de conocimientos existente al proporcionar pruebas sobre la eficacia de los podcasts en la enseñanza del inglés académico y su impacto en las actitudes y percepciones de los estudiantes hacia el aprendizaje del idioma.

**Palabras clave:** podcasts, comprensión auditiva, aprendizaje de idiomas, metodología, resultados, propuesta.

podcasts, listening comprehension, language learning, methodology, results, proposal.



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**ABSTRACT**

The impact of using English academic podcasts at the A2 level on the development of listening skills and student perceptions is the focus of the present study. The research employs an experimental approach, with two focus groups: control and experimental. Pre-tests and post-tests are used to measure student performance and attitudes.

The use of podcasts in language teaching and the development of language skills is addressed in Chapter 1, which establishes the theoretical framework of the study, covering the conceptual foundations and previous research related to the use of podcasts in language teaching and the development of language skills.

The study design, participants, and assessment instruments used, including pre-tests and post-tests, are described in Chapter 2. The procedures for data collection and analysis are also shown. The findings are presented and analyzed in Chapter 3.

The proposal involved integrating podcasts into English classes, using selected and designed material to improve students' listening comprehension. Positive changes have been observed in the students' proximity, use and mastery of this learning tool, as well as significant improvements in their listening comprehension skills. The importance of podcasts as pedagogical tools to improve listening comprehension in academic English learning is highlighted. The effects of these findings on educational practice are discussed, and suggestions for future research in this field are made. In summary, this study adds empirical evidence to the existing body of knowledge by providing proof of the effectiveness of podcasts in teaching academic English and



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their impact on students' attitudes and perceptions towards language learning.

**Keywords:** podcasts, listening comprehension, language learning, methodology, results, proposal.



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**Introduction: The Effectiveness of using Popular Podcasts to Improve Listening Skills  
among A2 level University students.**

Since English has become a global language, many people around the world think it is necessary to learn it due to work, business, or studies. Besides, mastering English language skills simplifies communication between people from different cultural contexts. Besides, English is considered the most widely spoken language in the world. According to British Council reports, English is spoken by 375 million speakers as the first language, 375 million as the second language, and 750 million as a foreign language (Abdullaev, n.d.) On the contrary, it has been demonstrated that nations with a higher level of English proficiency tend to boost their exports, get better Internet access, and invest more in research and development (First Education, 2022).

Latin America's English proficiency rate is poor to moderate, ranking 18th out of 20 countries in the region. Ecuador ranks 80th out of 113 in the EF English Proficiency Index, lower than Argentina's 562. English is crucial for future professional training in Ecuador's universities.

In Ecuador specifically, the learning of this language has become a fundamental requirement for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as professionals, such as to access the different scholarship and teacher mobilization programs promoted by the Government or to apply for some placement jobs. However, given that a significant portion of scholars fight with listening comprehension as well as writing, (Saulo Villafuerte, 2020). The way that English is taught in



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Ecuador is making it more difficult for learners from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, especially those who come from indigenous communities in the Amazon. Students' comprehension and writing skills have suffered as a result of their lack of exposure to English before university and their preference for work in the oil business over further education.

In terms of educational quality, public and private universities in Ecuador typically charge lower tuition than private universities; these institutions comprise universities, polytechnics, technical institutes, and other specialized institutions. Admission to these institutions is typically determined by a competitive examination. However, the Amazonian region lacks public universities, and those that do exist are paid for, making them inaccessible to both students from urban areas and young people from rural areas. Due to population needs, a few private institutions have been created with professional training programs. However, these programs can help prepare students for the job market, not further education.

On the other hand, Orellana is the location of Ecuador's biggest oil industry, which includes the Amazonian oil reserves that provide many job opportunities for locals. Instead of pursuing a professional degree, a lot of young individuals would rather work in the oil business. Additionally, there is a diverse range of socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural backgrounds within the student body, representing all corners of the region. They have varying learning styles, profiles, backgrounds, languages, and cultures.

Due to the above, it should be mentioned that for teachers, it is a huge challenge to include the English language in their daily lives since their biggest problem is the lack of knowledge and



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learning of the language, finding a large number of students who have never been immersed in learning the English language in their previous studies.

In consequence, learning the English language implies the correct use of four main skills. However, this basic goal in language learning seems to need to be appropriately addressed, since priority is given to the treatment of grammatical structures.

According to (Ilyosovna, 2020), learning English can help students who are getting professional degrees have more career and job opportunities. It is necessary to mention that the job market is global. For instance, many companies and institutions need employees who can communicate with partners and clients all over the world. Very frequently, that means finding employees who speak English. By learning English, you could become a translator, a language teacher, or an English marketing professional for a global company. Learning English is an important step toward achieving all of your goals (Ilyosovna, 2020)

Students' proficiency with the English language can be enhanced by employing new technology. Since English is the most widely used language online, learning to read and understand it will increase the ability to access information, participate in forum conversations, stay up-to-date on global events, and communicate with a wider audience. Learning English will open a whole world of entertainment for everybody. For this reason, ICTs can be used to improve English teaching-learning processes by strengthening content, assessments, and knowledge development. This will raise the standard of the learning process.



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However, the skill with the greatest weakness detected by higher education students with an A2 level according to the range obtained under the Common European Framework standards is the listening skill.

The listening skill is directly affected by poor practice. When students do not understand what they are listening to, they cannot express themselves in English in terms of appropriateness of the language or use all the grammatical structures and vocabulary taught. This is a frequent problem for students at the early levels. Despite many efforts made to improve the students' development in the English language, it has been noticed that there is a lack of knowledge in the teachers' instruction concerning how listening skills influence the students' language learning process. Teachers and students can do more about this problem. The analysis and description of how listening skills influence the English language learning process may help to solve this issue.

It is common knowledge that listening skills are acquired over time, a long-standing practice. The skill mentioned can be acquired through specific exercises or training. However, the exercises in class are not enough because the development of these skills requires continuous practice with activities and appropriate tools to meet the current students' needs. It becomes essential to create strategies that will allow the problems to be resolved.

The academic obstacles faced by university students in the Amazon region are primarily related to their inadequate fluency in English. New methods are being investigated to help people become better listeners, such as podcasts, which are trendy and easily accessible media.



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As a result, based on the overall issue, the following has been selected as a research topic:  
How effective is the use of popular format podcasts in improving the listening skills of A2 level university students who have limited English language exposure before starting their university education?

The participants in our research project will be A2 level students from Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo, Sede Orellana. In each of the two study groups, there will be a control and an experimental group. The first group, or control group, with 24 students from Tecnologías de la Información Career will use the conventional teaching-learning approach, while the experimental group with 28 students from Ambiental Career will use blended learning tactics that include podcasts.

### **Figure 1:**

*Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo, Sede Orellana*



*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett



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Those podcasts are aligned with the research lines of Universidad de Orellana, regarding and supporting language acquisition and creating educational strategies that can benefit marginalized populations

The research object of this study is to examine the effectiveness of using popular format podcasts as a pedagogical tool to enhance the listening skills of A2-level university students, who have limited English language exposure before entering university. Following this General Research Line: Application of Technology in Education, and the Specific Research Line: Integration of Technology-Enhanced Language Learning Strategies.

### **Specific objectives**

- To analyze the existing listening proficiency levels of A2 level university students from the first semester in Escuela Politécnica Superior del Chimborazo – Sede Orellana.
- To investigate the potential benefits and challenges of using popular format podcasts in improving listening skills.
- To measure how well popular podcast formats improve A2-level university students' listening skills.

### **Description of the Variables of the Study**

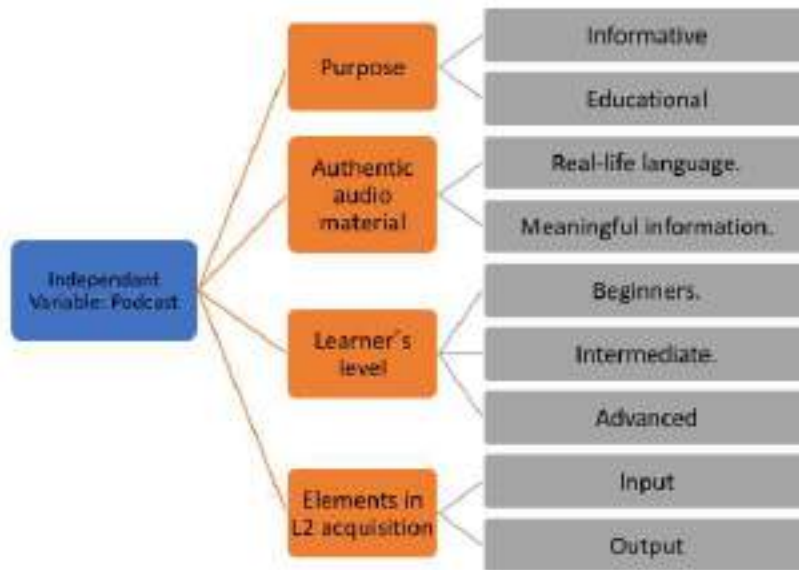
**Independent Variable:** The use of popular format podcasts

**Dependent Variable:** Listening skills



**Figure 2:**

*Independent variable*

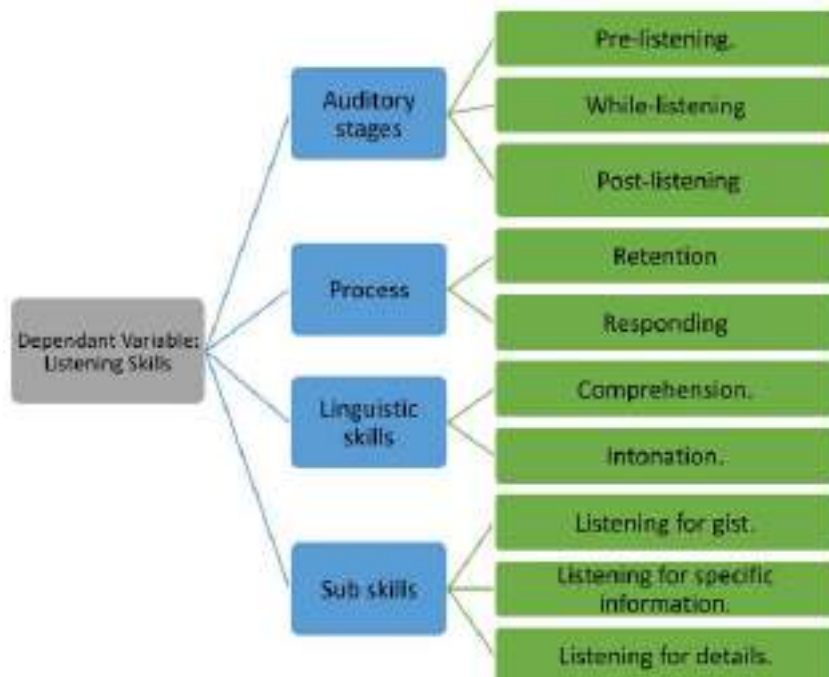


*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett



**Figure 3:**

*Dependant variable*



*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

In order to gather quantitative data, the study used a mixed-method research design. Pre- and post-tests were administered to participants in order to measure improvements in their listening skills between two groups (the experimental group participated in different listening activities through podcasts, while the control group did not receive any implementation during the study). On the other hand, qualitative data has been collected through surveys and observations made during classes taught by check list certified classes, which center on how teachers use technology to deliver teaching in the classroom. After receiving technology-integrated training, the



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experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in listening skills, according to the study's findings. The qualitative data also demonstrated the beneficial effects of technology on student engagement and active learning environments. Additionally, it was found by the assessments and observation checklist that using podcasts in the classroom promoted a more participatory and interactive learning environment. All things considered, the study showed that incorporating technology into English language training can improve students' listening abilities and foster a more dynamic learning environment.

Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador is committed to provide a holistic education in line with our goal of developing inclusive and innovative learning environments. As part of this commitment, we used popular format podcasts to improve listening skills and English language acquisition in students. This innovative, constructivist-based method actively involves the university community to promote cognitive growth and fits in well with our current research focus on educational technology development.

The research supporting this initiative was conducted in the Orellana province of Ecuador, with a focus on university students from rural indigenous villages. It is important to address the educational obstacles faced by indigenous university students in Ecuador's Amazon region since Orellana is a significant place where the oil sector has a significant influence on young people's career choices. Through investigating the efficacy of popular format podcasts, our research seeks to provide useful suggestions that improve students' listening abilities, raising their level of language competence overall and better preparing them for success in university and the workplace



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in the future. In addition to addressing current issues in education, this research supports a larger social need to strengthen underprivileged groups and promote cultural diversity in the classroom.



## **Chapter 1: Theoretical Basis of the Dependent Variable**

According to (English, 2019) communication plays a fundamental role in language development and its culture. In today's increasingly global, intercultural, and multilingual society, there is a growing demand for citizens who can communicate in more than one language. This implies applying the acquired linguistic and cultural knowledge (their mother tongue and foreign language) in everyday life situations.

### **Communicative Language Teaching**

In this sense, the "Communicative Language Teaching" (CLT) methodology is presented as an appropriate answer to the current challenges in language teaching by improving students' communicative competence so that they can apply the foreign language effectively inside and outside classrooms. Based on this, the authors (Akramy et al., 2024) have researched favorable results in language acquisition through the Communicative Language Teaching" (CLT) approach.

A study entitled "Communicative language teaching in teaching ESL for university students" done by (Thi & Hien, n.d.) mentions that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a language education approach that emphasizes communication as both the goal and means of learning, originating in the 1970s as a response to traditional methods. This means, that students in CLT classes gain creativity in classroom activities because the more they work hard the more benefits they can gain, which is supported by (Phoeun & Sengsri, 2021) in this study was found that flipped instruction with CLT activities significantly improved participants' listening abilities, leading to improved learning outcomes.



Moreover, communicative language teaching suggests that meaningful and genuine classroom activities and exercises simplify target language learning for students. It means that exercises must be real-life situations, because, communicative language teaching (CLT) has as a main purpose to provide students with opportunities to practice the target language effectively in everyday situations and real-life communications, enabling them to express their views clearly, and removing fear of judgment.

### **Tics**

For a long time, language teaching has focused on grammatical aspects, due to learning grammatical rules, memorizing vocabulary lists, and literal translations. However, thanks to new methodologies, English language teaching has evolved towards a more functional and contextualized approach, oriented towards real communication. However, to facilitate communication using English, other media are also needed to support English communication implementation such as technology and Information.

Since the early 1990s, the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education has grown rapidly. Research initially focused on computer learning, but later shifted to computer-assisted instruction (CAI) as mentioned (Jester & Rosali, 2020). It's now crucial to discern between different types of ICT applications and terms when discussing their use in education.

Syakur suggests a way of characterizing technology information with the word “new media” as an innovative term referring to the evolution of communication technology that has



significantly expanded human communication, leading to the era of modern mass media (Abd. Syakur et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, technology's role in language learning can vary. However, technology and education should coexist harmoniously where the assistance of e-learning can help significantly in optimizing the implementation of hybrid learning through the use of blended learning activities. The multiple advantages provided by e-learning can be achieved maximally to strengthen the connectivity between students and teachers in conventional learning obtaining a learning process integrated with technology. Furthermore, blended learning activities combine traditional and online learning, tailored to specific learning objectives, ensuring a seamless integration of technology and education (Puniatmaja et al., 2024).

Technology has significantly transformed the teaching-learning process, enhancing interaction between teachers and students. Besides, online learning technologies have the potential to enhance learning in a pedagogical environment. (Puniatmaja`s research mentioned on technology's introduction in classrooms at all levels shows varied results on effectiveness. However, the trend continues to support technology adoption in higher education. Mobile technologies offer greater freedom, accessibility, and flexibility in learning, allowing access to learning material anywhere and eliminating the need for computers in each home. Overall, the adoption of technology in education is gaining impetus.

## **Web 2.0**



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It is important to mention that, technology integration in teaching-learning processes has meaningfully transformed education, enhancing teacher-student interaction. Web 2.0 applications have become global among university, secondary, and primary students, enabling their inclusion in almost all teaching-learning processes.

Moreover, the author Alaghbary refers to Web 2.0 as the second generation of the World Wide Web, categorized by dynamic content generation, online collaboration, and information exchange. It is widely recognized as an effective mechanism for interactivity and communication, improving collaboration, cooperation, and online communication among people, and helping in teaching and learning processes with many applications (Alaghbary, 2021).

The term Web 2.0, which offers an interesting mix of stability and disorder term, it was created by Tim O'Reilly in 2005., it is a term used to describe the quick growth of projects and platforms on the World Wide Web. It has been used in several media, including conference publications and news anchors. The new services provided with these technologies have improved, as well as the number of users that use them.

According to Sfetcu (2020) the concept of Web 2.0 was proposed by O'Reilly (2005), it emerged from a brainstorming session at a conference in 2004, when he and other web inventors debated the future of dot-com companies. However, what Web 2.0 means today is still controversial. On the other hand, Sfetcu (2020) in his research says that web 2.0 is the evolution of the World Wide Web, focusing on simplicity and interactivity, requiring no technical knowledge or computer skills. It encompasses all technical features and uses of the web,



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particularly interfaces that enable users with little knowledge to adopt new functionality (Sfetcu, n.d).

Similarly, (Vásquez et al., 2022) state that Web 2.0 is a social network based on the active participation of its users, so if the facilitator, considering its philosophy, uses its services as a didactic means, it favors collaborative learning. The participations arise from group and individual ideas, and from there each student creates more complex knowledge about the topics studied. Therefore, it is essential to help students to develop the skills leading to the effective use of Web 2.0 services. Moreover, it is relevant to take advantage of the benefits of Web 2.0 trends applied to the educational environment, since it is based on the principles of participation and collaborative work, because through this technology resources and different educational contents can be shared; according to López et al. (2021), technological environments function is to provide tools to stimulate learning motivation. Hence, they can be considered as valuable support tools for student learning. Besides, teachers can be immersed in the technological world, integrating students into virtual communities, where they can contribute their ideas and share them, thus promoting participation.

With the use of Web 2.0 trends, in the educational context, both teachers and students become active protagonists through their participation together with the necessary skills to create and share knowledge. As expressed by Piña (2020), they enhance the co-generation of information in truly vertiginous times. Taking into consideration that interactive learning is required within a global and changing environment, which requires the student to assume responsibility in the face of the present changes. In this way, university institutions in their



institutional goals incorporate technologies from a viewpoint of educational transformation, providing students with the conditions to access technological resources, and facilitating active participation in scientific-technological knowledge, which must be accompanied by innovation in pedagogical thinking to give meaning to the implementation of technologies, where relevant topics are addressed to understand the use of the Web 2.0 trends, such as the virtual platform in education, virtual environments for university teaching and innovation in pedagogical teaching thinking (Traverso Hugo Emilio et al., n.d.).

### **Podcasts**

In this section, the intention is to explore the podcast process and its pedagogical use, including its potential for innovative education and language teaching, its advantages in listening comprehension, and its disadvantages, while also discussing their role in learning and teaching.

A study carried out by (Bounaama University et al., s.f.) highlights the effectiveness of using podcasts in an integrated ESL class in which the improvement of listening and oral skills was evident. In their study, 20 intermediate-level ESL students were the participants and a quasi-experimental design was applied. The final results showed significant improvement in listening and speaking skills, and the use of podcasts showed meaningful improvement.

Similarly, Stefancik and Stradiotová (2020) in their research titled “Podcasting in a Virtual English Course for Academic Purposes: Student Motivation”, say that podcasts are downloadable digital audio collections and can easily be used to teach listening skills. We can find them in categories with language variations and levels, and they can be listened to on



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computers, MP3 players, or mobile phones. Teachers can choose suitable audio files based on students' needs and levels. This research will focus on using podcasts as a listening instruction technique (Stefancik & Stradiotová, 2020).

On the other hand, (Syahabuddin & Khaira Rizqa, 2021) studied the effect of podcasts and students' learning styles on listening skills, as well as their confidence in using podcasts to learn a foreign language. The study is titled: “Improving student’s listening skills using podcasts”. Podcasts offer authentic language learning materials and are a new medium that offers information and entertainment. They have potential for language learning and can be easily downloaded, copied, shared, and edited, giving learners more control over their learning. As Syahabuddin & Khaira Rizqa (2021) mention in their study, they say that today many multimedia tools have been created to use in teaching listening skills, however, it is important to select the most appropriate media to improve these skills in the students.

Furthermore, according to (Asoodar et al., 2016) in their research titled “Podcasting in a virtual English course for academic purposes”, the impact of the use of podcasts in online English courses with university students was evident. The research used a mixed research guide, with 179 participants and the results showed that the female gender deduced that podcasts are more relevant and attractive while women were more satisfied with their mode of use and application. Students without previous experience in podcasting were more satisfied, this was evidenced through interviews, course forums, emails, class group blogs, podcasts and open questions that were applied to the investigated group. Podcasting proved to be effective in motivating students to learn online.



After having read all the studies, it can be concluded that they prove the impact of using podcasts and how they can improve the development of listening skills a statement similar made by O'Bryan and Hegelheimer (20019) for whom Podcasts are a powerful tool for language learning, offering authentic content such as songs, jokes, stories, poems, and specific language skills. As Eka Putra & Dianti (2022) mention in their study, highlighting that, podcasts can be applied as part of the Institutional curriculum or as complementary audio material allowing the students to manage their time and access authentic learning materials freely. Additionally, podcasts offer free access to audio and video material, allowing students to choose what, how, and when they want to listen, practice, and learn from the content. This means that podcasts are a perfect medium for both students and teachers. To highlight something else about podcasts, according to the author Penelitan et al. (2020) define podcasts are digital audio or video files accessible online, allowing listeners to download, play, and listen to them without Internet access. They support the teaching and learning processes, promoting student success

Before detailing the different types of Podcasts, it is relevant to highlight that this kind of application is classified in a wider category of typologies: (a) Internet radios, (b) web radio, (c) Podcasting, (d) Online players.

According to the Podcast website (2019), there are four categories of Podcasts according to the application and the content: (a) Podcast of entertainment, (b) Podcast of Information, (c) Podcast of Training, and (d) Podcast of Persuasion On the other hand, according to the ideas of (Stephen, 2023) podcasts are classified: as audio podcasts, video podcasts, enhanced podcasts, and screencast podcasts. Audio podcasts in MP3 format can be recorded as they are compatible



with different players. In addition, video podcasts, also called vodcasts, are similar to videos. Nowadays it is said that many podcasts are being combined with audio podcasts with synchronized images, archiving a narrated presentation, since live links or web pages can be added for good functionality.

The creation of podcasts does not require sophisticated equipment, the use of personal technological devices is sufficient, allowing teachers to create and publish podcasts, and thus increase their alternative teaching methods, thus improving student participation. These statements are reflected in a study developed by Digitalcommons@hamline & Charles (2022) in which they mention that podcasts are focused on auditory learners and those who use alternative learning styles.

### **Philosophical Foundations**

To develop and support the research, it was necessary to analyze various learning theories. Specifically, the study considered the constructivist theory of learning, a modern epistemology that recognizes the challenges in the formation of human knowledge. This idea was mentioned by (Suhendi et al., 2021) since constructivism asserts that a person's knowledge is shaped by past experiences, mental structures, and beliefs, which allow them to construct their reality or take actions (O'Connor, 2022). Furthermore, this theory appears in opposition to the positivism of behaviorism and information processing; Therefore, reality is seen as the internal development of the individual. According to (Chaurasia, 2021), ICTs promote self-learning and



knowledge development through constructivist theory, allowing apprentices to elaborate knowledge through actions on reality.

According to constructivism, which has its origins in philosophy, psychology, and cybernetics, it is trying to explain that the constructivist theory posits that a piece of knowledge is an adaptive process, actively constructed by individuals, organizing their experiential world based on their personal and subjective experiences.

This means that Rusinovci mentions that constructivism is a part of actively building knowledge structures through experiences, without assigning meaning to the individual. In other words, authentic learning focuses on real-world problems and solutions with the application of problem-solving activities, role-playing, case studies, and group participation. This means that it goes beyond the content and uses multidisciplinary approaches, diverse aspects and forms of application. Additionally, classroom practices can include well-reasoned stories, problem identification, and readings with recorded materials of real-life situations (Rusinovci, X. 2022).

### **Theoretical Basis of the Dependent Variable**

According to Hamad (2020), it mentions that listening is an essential mechanism of communication since it is key to establishing relationships, solving problems, and achieving goals. However, listening skills can be affected by a series of factors, such as cultural background, individual personality characteristics, and the nature of the communication itself. To accurately measure the impact of listening skills on communication outcomes, researchers and experts can develop more effective strategies for improving communication and achieving



successful outcomes by taking a referent approach to analyzing listening skills as (Yinet et al., n.d.) explain in his study about Methodological strategy to improve the scientific communication of research results of university professors.

### **Receptive Skills and Language Acquisition**

Receptive skills in language learning are described as the ability to absorb and process information without having to produce language; these are considered passive skills. These skills include listening and reading. Improving these skills is crucial to mastering a language. In the context of learning English, it highlights the importance of listening comprehension in the comprehensive command of the language development. According to Newton (2020), active learning involves dynamically participating in the language-learning process. This contains reading activities, podcasts for listening activities, and writing in the target language, allowing students to take control of their learning process and proactively motivate themselves to improve their language skills.

Learning a new language is an advantage in improving cognitive dexterity and brain flexibility, as it also promotes verbal and mental skills, cognitive flexibility, and processing speed. Furthermore, the advantage of acquiring a non-native language can delay the onset of diseases such as dementia. Nozima mentions that there is no specific age to learn another language, but it has been shown that acquiring it naturally before the age of 10 is a little easier. The advantage is that multilingual people develop more problem-solving skills due to good functioning in analytical thinking functions.



## **Communication**

On the other hand, communication is the basis of language learning. It includes ideas exchange, information, and emotions, emphasizing the interactive nature of language acquisition. This is understood to mean that successful communication depends on receptive skills, particularly listening, forming a link between the decoding of auditory information and meaningful participation in linguistic interactions.

(Shirayev et al., 2020) mentions in their article that, in the modern world, people interact in a global community that involves intercultural communication. Modern life is enriched with a variety of technological resources (ICT) contributing to the educational needs of man. However, sometimes intercultural communication can be complex when it involves intentional miscommunication. This can create significant challenges for people in general.

As mentioned by (Newton et al., 2020), good communication is influenced by different factors, such as location, emotions, cultural context, and the medium of communication, since this involves the exchange of thoughts and ideas while understanding the perspectives of others. It covers the effective use of language to create and interpret signals, which is crucial in language learning. The procedure of transmitting and understanding meaning contains the main key components: feedback, the environment, context, interference, source, message, channel, and recipient.

## **Language**



Language is the ability of the human being to express and communicate using various sign systems, such as oral, written, or gestural. One of the primary characteristics that distinguishes an animal from a human is language. It is an innate ability that every person possesses; it starts to develop during pregnancy and solidifies in the bond an individual maintains with the social environment in which they grow.

As mentioned, (Roger, 2022) listening is considered as an essential receptive skill, allowing students to understand spoken language, and focus on meaningful communication. For this reason, interaction between listening and other linguistic skills is relevant to achieve excellent linguistic competence. For instance, language, as a dynamic communication system, perceives different mechanisms, including receptive skills

## **Listening Skills and Receptive Competence**

### ***The Relevance of Listening Skills***

According to (Newton et al., 2020) auditory skills occupy an essential position in the range of language acquisition. Since they are considered a factor in the understanding of spoken language, playing a primary role in the development of mastery of other linguistic skills, such as writing, speaking and reading. The reciprocity between them is evident in the early stages of learning. During the learning stages, learners build a solid foundation for understanding and communicating in English, achieving solid foundations for more advanced mastery of the language.



### ***Receptive Skills in English Learning***

Reading and listening are both considered receptive skills when it comes to learning the English language. As a receptive ability, listening helps students comprehend spoken English and develops a greater comprehension of vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence usage in context. In the initial phases of learning, there is a clear connection between the development of receptive abilities and language acquisition.

In language learning, the connection between receptive and productive abilities is essential. While productive skills, like speaking and writing, involve producing language, receptive skills, like reading and listening, concentrate on absorbing language. Both skill sets must be developed for students to become fluent in a second language, according to (Roger et al., 2022). Students can concentrate on learning the language without having to generate it when new vocabulary and grammar are introduced to them through the use of receptive skills. On the other hand, the newly acquired grammar and vocabulary are practiced and solidified through the use of productive skills.

### **Theoretical Integration: Listening Skills in Language Acquisition**

In aligning the theoretical framework with the broader constructs of communication, language, and receptive skills, it becomes evident that effective English language learning relies heavily on developing proficient listening skills. As A2-level students embark on their language learning journey, honing these skills becomes paramount for comprehensive linguistic



competence and successful communication in the English language according to (Newton et al., 2020)

This comprehensive theoretical framework sets the stage for the empirical exploration of the impact of popular format podcasts on listening skills within the specified population. Subsequent chapters will delve into the practical application of this framework, bridging theoretical underpinnings with empirical investigation.

## **Dimensions of Listening Skills**

### ***Auditory Stages***

Learning is a dynamic process that unfolds through different listening stages. These stages include three main steps to improve listening skills (Newton et al., 2020):

The cognitive preparation phase prior to exposure to auditory material is known as pre-listening. It is essential to activate relevant prior knowledge and set the cognitive stage for effective listening.

During listening: actively engage with the auditory content in real time, enabling comprehension and interpretation.

After listening: After exposure, the reflective phase involves consolidation of information, analysis and formulation of responses.

(Newton et al., 2020) refers to these auditory stages emphasizing the significance of processing speech elements, comprehending linguistic patterns, and drawing conclusions about



the speaker's intent and the context of the spoken word. They also highlight the complexity and interdependence of skills needed for effective listening comprehension in EFL.

Concerning the listening process, two essential components are recognized:

- Retention: the capacity to retain and store information gathered during the listening experience, contributes to the complexity of comprehension.
- Responding: the dynamic interaction with audio content, reflecting the listener's ability to respond, interpret, or apply the learned information.

### *Linguistic skills*

As mentioned by (Newton et al., 2020), in their study, they refer to the listening skill as encompassing the linguistic dimension, which for this study were taken as follows:

Comprehension: the general understanding of language, which encompasses both literal and inferred meanings.

Understanding: deeper cognitive processing involving the interpretation and integration of new information into the prior knowledge base.

#### Listening sub-skills

To further delineate the linguistic dimension, specific sub-skills are identified:

Listening for gist: ability to extract the main idea or general theme from the oral content.

Listening for specific information: ability to identify and extract particular details from aural material.

Listening for details: ability to understand nuanced or specific information embedded in spoken discourse.



These sub-skills of listening comprehension are crucial for improving learners' listening proficiency as they facilitate more effective comprehension of spoken English. As noted by (Newton et al., 2020), in their research, these subskills play a crucial role in helping learners understand the main idea, extract specific information, or focus on complicated details within the spoken language, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of the language. In conclusion, this chapter provides a complete theoretical framework for subsequent research on the effectiveness of podcasts in applying popular formats to improve listening skills among A2-level English learners. Furthermore, the next chapter investigates the practical application of this framework through the design, implementation, and analysis of an empirical study. design, implementation, and analysis of an empirical study. Moreover, the chapter highlights the communication skills importance in language acquisition, emphasizing the students needs to move beyond grammatical rules and rote memorization toward practical application in real-life situations.

Additionally, the chapter emphasizes the use of technology in education, focusing on the integration of Web 2.0 tools. The studies presented point out the potential of podcasts to improve listening comprehension skills, studying the theoretical foundations of listening skills within the framework of constructivism. This theory highlights the active construction of knowledge based on individual experiences, so by integrating podcasts into the learning process, students can actively engage with authentic listening materials, fostering a deeper understanding of the English language.



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Finally, it covers the listening skills and their stages in the listening process, linguistic skills, and sub-skills. By understanding these components, teachers will be able to create meaningful learning experiences that focus on specific aspects of listening comprehension.



## **Chapter 2: Methodology For The Development Of Research and Diagnostic Study**

This chapter examines the diagnostic and pretest given to first-semester students at Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo (ESPOCH). The sample was classified, and a mixed method was employed in this proposal of research, based on the outcomes of the diagnostic tests. The diagnostic test was based on ESPOCH educational parameters to provide teachers with valuable insights into the overall English proficiency of Level 1 students, helping instructors tailor their teaching approach to meet the needs of the class as a whole, knowing students' strengths and weaknesses, and becoming the final results as a baseline for measuring students' progress throughout the course. The diagnostic test was focused to measure the four main English skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking). The stratified random sampling method was applied **to** select the sample, dividing it into 2 groups. The group with the highest average (control group) and the group with the lowest average (experimental group). In addition, the students took a pre-test to determine the improvement in their English language learning prior to the start of the intervention with the application of the podcasts.

In this research proposal, a research design called the mixed method was applied, which involves a combination of numerical quantitative data from the diagnostic test according to ESPOCH English subject area guidelines, surveys, and standardized tests; and non-numerical qualitative data through teacher surveys. By integrating these approaches, it resulted in data specific to the research topic. Combining the data during the analysis allowed for a more concrete examination of the research topic, establishing a holistic view that applies the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.



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Combining qualitative and quantitative research methods has a number of important advantages. First of all, it offers a more comprehensive and in-depth grasp of the subject matter being studied. Researchers can get an extra comprehensive understanding of the subject matter by combining qualitative and quantitative data. This simplifies the detection of patterns, associations, and fundamental meanings that may be missed with a single technique and allows for a deeper and more in-depth analysis of the data. Furthermore, by contrasting and comparing data from several sources, data triangulation adds to the validity of findings and strengthens the dependability and trustworthiness of study conclusions. In conclusion, by combining the distinct advantages of both approaches, research that integrates qualitative and quantitative methodologies enhances interpretations and validates findings.

In this study, we explore how podcasts can improve listening abilities. Podcasts, which are digital files that can be downloaded, have multiple uses in education and entertainment.

As mentioned, (Harvey, J. 2020) the podcasts offer educational content on several subjects, supplementing classroom learning or providing entertainment through humor, suspense, or thought-provoking content. Moreover, podcasts develop strong listening skills that are crucial for effective communication and are evaluated as a key component of this study. According to (Gonulal, T. 2020) podcasts offer exposure to diverse accents and speaking styles, improving language comprehension in countless contexts. Regular listening practice trains the brain to focus on the speaker's message, pick up details, and anticipate upcoming points.



In the tables below, it is possible to have a general view of variables operationalization.

**Table 1**

*Conceptualization and Operationalization of Variables - Independent Variable*

<b>Variable Operationalization Matrix</b>				
<b>Title:</b> The Effectiveness Of Using Popular Format Of Podcasts To Improve Listening Skills Among A2 Level University Students.				
<b>Objective:</b> "Podcasts" Aims To Evaluate Its Effectiveness In Enhancing Listening Comprehension Among Beginner Language Learners.				
<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>Conceptual Definition</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Techniques / Instruments</b>
Podcasts	Podcasts are digital files available on a website page, they can be downloaded and listened to on electronic devices without the Internet. They are often used for different <b>purposes</b> like entertainment, marketing, and education, as interesting <b>authentic audio material</b> becomes an excellent way to learn a new language according to the <b>learner's level</b> in an easy way to facilitate listening comprehension in <b>second language acquisition</b> , promoting independent learning.	Purpose	Informative	<b>Survey</b>
			Educational	
		Authentic audio material	Real-life language.	Sometimes
			Meaningful information.	Most of the time
		Learner's level	Beginners.	Always
			Input	<b>Observation</b>
Elements in L2 acquisition	Interaction	<b>Checklist</b>		
	Output	Direct questions related to using technologies in the teaching-learning process in institutional English teachers.		



Note. Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

**Table 2**

*Conceptualization and Operationalization of Variables - Dependent Variable*

<b>Variable Operationalization Matrix</b>					
<b>Title:</b> The Effectiveness Of Using Popular Format Of Podcasts To Improve Listening Skills Among A2 Level University Students.					
<b>Objective:</b> "Listening skills," targets to evaluate language learners' proficiency in comprehending and understanding auditory input.					
<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Conceptual Definition</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Techniques / Instruments</b>	
Listening skills	Listening is a compound communication <b>process</b> of receiving, attending, responding, and remembering through the cognitive and <b>auditory processes</b> created for teaching other languages. Besides, the listening skill is the most fundamental component of interpersonal communication and a driving medium for integrating other <b>sub-skills</b> using different <b>activities</b> to construct an	Auditory stages	Pre-listening.	<b>Survey</b> <b>Observation</b> <b>Checklist</b>	
			While-listening		
			Post-listening		
		Process	Retention	Never Sometimes Most of the time Always	
			Responding		
		Linguistic skills	Comprehension		Standardized test
			Understanding		
		Sub skills	Listening for gist.		
			Listening for specific information.		
			Listening for details.		



	oral message to be transmitted and shared.			
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*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

## **Research Approach**

### ***Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Components***

The rationale for applying this type of mixed methods approach is that it facilitates a more complete understanding of complex issues. It collects both qualitative (non-numerical) and numerical (quantitative) data, which allows different aspects of the topic to be explored and enriches the analysis and interpretation of the results.

Combining different types of research methods, such as numerical and qualitative methods, allowed us researchers to compare and validate the findings from different viewpoints, according to (Strijker et al., 2020) in rural studies, this process strengthens the accuracy and dependability of the research results. Numerical data gave us a clear understanding of how well or not the podcast intervention works, while qualitative data provided personal insights into how participants felt and what they thought about the intervention.

### ***Research focus***

The quantitative approach, in harmony with (Oliveri et al., 2021) in the research, examines numerical data to identify trends, calculate averages, assess correlations, and provide projections. To objectively quantify students' listening skills before and after application with podcasts, a diagnostic test was used at the beginning of the semester, in addition to a pre- and post-test.



According to (Ritter et al., 2023) pointed out in his work, qualitative research has as a priority to understand the complexity of human knowledge, prioritizing a deeper examination over statistical generalization.

Before the intervention, a survey was conducted to find out more about how students' opinions, attitudes, and experiences with podcasts impacted their ability to listen to language in context. Furthermore, the teachers responded to a survey concerning the use of TIC in the classroom to enhance students' listening skills.

### ***Methods used and their Purposes in the Research Context***

The Inductive Method was employed in the improvement of the goals as well as in the choice and employment of the tools for the study.

The synthetic method was crucial in academic research developing introductions, presenting findings, and making to conclusions by synthesizing existing information, integrating data sources, and condensing essential insights.

Empirical methods such as Observation allowed for understanding the student's perception of the object of study.

This study related to the practice of podcasts to improve the students' listening abilities lightly relies on experimentation. It provides quantitative and qualitative data to enhance our comprehension of the phenomenon and guide instructional approaches, allowing for a direct evaluation of the impact of podcasts.

### **Design of the Mixed Methods Study**



### ***Sequential Exploratory Design***

The study employed a step-by-step methodology to integrate quantitative and qualitative data. Initially, data was gathered and analyzed from the diagnosis test. Subsequently, more detailed data was collected and analyzed. Through participant interviews, the study validated the preliminary results created from the data, which facilitated the simplification of the research.

### ***Data Collection Procedures***

Quantitative data were collected through surveys, diagnostic tests, and standardized tests. These instruments measured listening skills, comprehension skills, and other variables related to before and after the podcast intervention.

### ***Qualitative Data Collection***

Qualitative data were obtained through a survey administered to the English teachers and a satisfaction survey administered to the students in the final intervention. These methods provided the participants' perceptions, experiences, and views regarding the use of the podcasts.

### ***Data Analysis Procedures***

Quantitative data were analyzed through statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and regression analysis. These analyses examined the impact of podcast use on listening skills and comprehension levels.

Qualitative data analysis: Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis.

### **Concurrent Triangulation Strategy**

Because the data was concurrently collected in both phases of the inquiry using both



quantitative and qualitative instruments, this strategy was carefully chosen following the mixed-method approach chosen. Additionally, the triangulation of data was used to examine the integration of the qualitative and quantitative findings.

### **Description of Instruments Based on the Selected Research Approach:**

#### ***Diagnostic test***

The diagnostic test was applied specifically to all students in the first semester of ESPOCH with a population of 122 students from 5 different Engineering majors, enrolled in Level 1 courses in the subject of English at ESPOCH University, for the selection of the sample a stratified random sampling was applied, selecting from the entire population of 122 participants corresponding to 5 different courses, Two courses were specifically chosen based on the final listening skill scores obtained in the diagnostic test, for which the highest and lowest scores in the listening skills diagnostic tests were selected: the experimental group, in which 28 of the students with the lowest scores participated, obtaining an average of 29.92%, and the control group, in which 24 of the students with the highest scores participated, obtaining an average of 52.39%. Stratification reduces bias by avoiding underrepresentation in the sample, providing a more unbiased view of overall listening skills.

#### ***Perceptual Survey***

For the perception survey, a perceptual experience survey questionnaire was designed to obtain data on the participants' opinions on the use of podcasts before and after their application.



To objectively measure participants' opinions, attitudes, and behaviors toward podcast-based language learning, this instrument focused on multiple-choice questions and Likert scale items

### ***English Teachers Checklist Application***

The checklist aimed to assess the combination of technology in the classroom by English teachers, focusing exclusively on the execution of listening activities and the use of authentic audio materials, such as podcasts. In addition, it was evaluated whether teachers effectively manage audio resources to improve student motivation and engagement, as well as considering the application of stages of listening skills in the teaching process. This tool serves as a valuable means to collect comprehensive data on instructional practices related to listening skills among teachers

### ***Pre- and post-standardized test***

Standardized listening tests were administered at the start and conclusion of the intervention period in order to evaluate the listening abilities of the students. These assessments, which were developed using defined procedures and found on websites like <https://www.examenglish.com/PET/index.html>, provide a methodical framework for assessing different facets of listening comprehension. The exams specifically assessed the students' ability to listen for gist, listening for details, and listening specific information from audio passages. This methodical approach guaranteed the validity and repeatability of the evaluation procedure, allowing for a thorough examination of students' listening skills over an extended period of time.

### ***Validation***

According to (Gomes et al. 2022), researchers emphasized how content validity is



frequently used by investigators to guarantee the accuracy of data-gathering tools. Subject-matter specialists use a variety of standards and procedures to carefully examine each piece that has to be validated in this approach. These professionals offer wise recommendations and input about the suitability, applicability, and completeness of the instrument's content since they have extensive knowledge and experience in the right sector.

By incorporating the guidance and insights of these specialists, the instruments used by researchers may be improved in terms of validity and quality. Therefore, the stringent process of expert opinion validates the reliability and validity of the research findings derived from the data collection instruments.

### **Description of Participants and their Characteristics**

The students chosen for the sample have different educational backgrounds and levels of English instruction. Some only have a few classes a week while others have no English instruction. The university tested all 122 students with a diagnostic exam based on A2 level skills from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) to assess their English proficiency.

The test checked students on four key language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening evaluated how well students understood spoken information in everyday situations while speaking looked at their ability to communicate verbally in simple scenarios. Reading tested their understanding of written texts, and writing measured how well they could express themselves in writing. Results showed in Table 5, about 64.75% of students scored below



7 out of 10, while 35.25% achieved an A2 level score.

**Table 3**

*Student's percentage of Diagnostic test A2 level score*

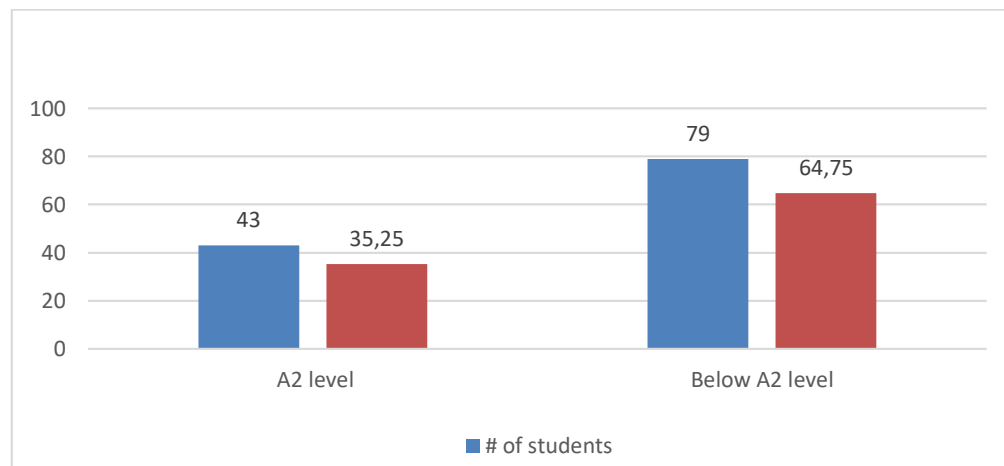
Students	# of students	Percentage
A2 level	43	35,25
Below A2 level	79	64,75
<b>Total</b>	122	100,00

*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 4 )

**Figure 4**

*Student's percentage of Diagnostic test A2 level score*



*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

From the total population of 122 participants who took the diagnostic evaluation, 35% are



at an A2 level of proficiency, while around 65% are in the group below the A2 level. This demonstrates that the majority of the student population does not dominate the English language at a level higher than A2, with only a small percentage reaching the desired level.

At Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo - Sede Orellana, students at the A2 level were selected to take part in a research project. There were two groups involved in the study, a control group and an experimental group. The experimental group, made up of 24 students studying Informatics Technology Career who had lower scores and under A2 level, used blended learning techniques such as podcasts. On the other hand, the control group, which included 28 students from the Environmental Career with higher scores, followed a more traditional teaching approach.

### **Strength**

A2 level students from Escuela Superior Politecnica del Chimborazo - Sede Orellana participated in the study project, guaranteeing the sample's representativeness within the intended educational setting. Furthermore, a direct comparison between blended learning and traditional teaching methods was made possible by splitting participants into control and experimental groups. The primary instrument, a diagnostic exam, gave an unbiased evaluation of the students' starting listening proficiency and laid the groundwork for assessing the effectiveness of the podcast intervention.

### **Weakness**

However, the non-random assignment of students to study groups could have introduced



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potential biases and limited the generalization of the results to other student populations or educational contexts. Additionally, the lack of randomization in participant selection could have affected the equivalence between groups, which might have influenced the observed results. These limitations could decrease the external validity of the study and restrict its applicability to other educational settings.

### **Population and study sample**

Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo (ESPOCH) - Sede Orellana, recognized for its academic excellence, provides quality higher education to the youth of the Amazon region. It offers a wide range of third-level careers, endorsed by the SECRETARIA NACIONAL DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR, CIENCIA, TECNOLOGÍA E INNOVACIÓN (SENESCYT), covering various areas of knowledge. ESPOCH distinguishes itself by promoting academic quality, research, and community involvement, all of which contribute to the holistic education of its students.

In the process of selecting the population and sample for our study, the quality standards of ESPOCH - Orellana Campus were considered. 122 first-semester students from Agronomics, Tourism, Environmental, Zootechnical, and Information Technology careers were identified, representing the academic diversity of the institution.

After reviewing the diagnostic test results to determine the sample, a decision was made to group participants into two sets of higher score levels showing an A2 level, and the lower one. In this respect, it is important to mention that the experimental group comprises individuals



whose skills seem least developed while their peers from the control group are possibly better skilled in linguistic competency. Such division goals at the meaningful comparison of auditory aptitude in the two sets in that way guarantee an equitable demonstration of listening skills among the population we are studying.

We were able to divide the population into subgroups according to their degree of language proficiency by using a stratified sampling approach, which allowed for a more accurate selection of each group. This methodology ensures a reasonable representation of linguistic abilities in our sample by facilitating a meaningful comparison of listening skills between the groups. Our study's internal validity and reliability are improved by the deliberate application of stratified sampling, which also offers a strong framework for investigating the relationship between language proficiency and listening abilities.

#### **Table 4**

*Diagnostic test overall score 1st-semester students*

<b>Diagnostic test overall score</b>	<b>Average</b>
Environmental	7,18
Tourism	6,36
Information technology	4,97
Agronomics	6,54
Zootechnical	7,01

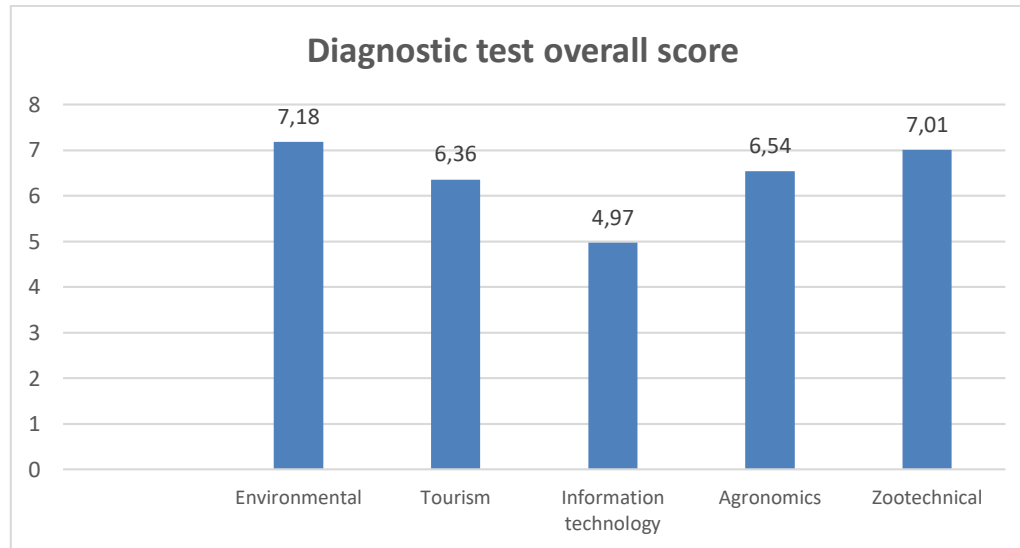
*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 6 )



**Figure 5**

*Diagnostic test overall score 1st-semester students*



*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

The analysis reveals that the highest overall score among all thematic areas corresponds to the Environmental career, with a mean of 7.18, while the Information Technologies career presents the lowest average, with 4.97. Therefore, for the proposed study, the career with the lowest average is chosen as the experimental group, and the career with the highest score as the control group.

**Table 5**

*Diagnostic test average Listening Skills*

Careers	Score out of 2,5	%
Environmental	1,33	52,39



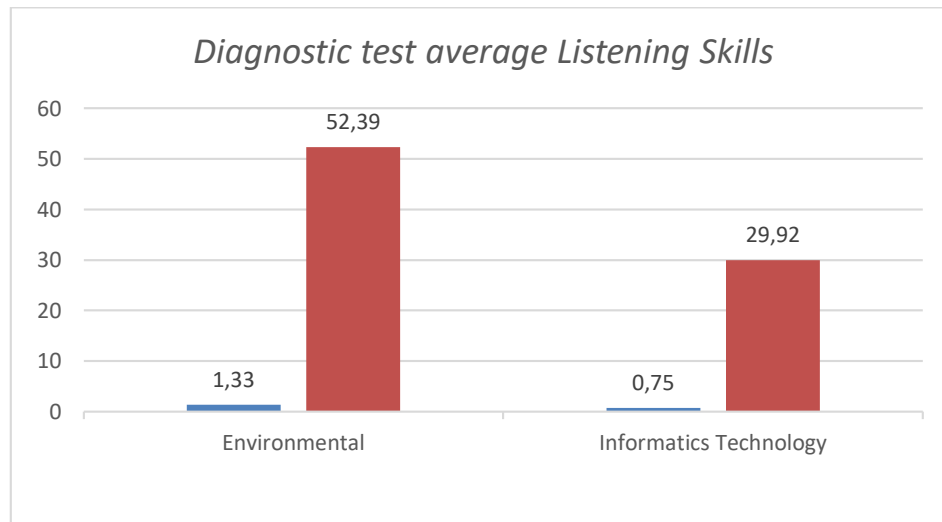
Informatics Technology	0,75	29,92
------------------------	------	-------

*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 6)

**Figure 6**

*Diagnostic test average Listening Skills*



*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

The analysis reveals a significant disparity in performance between evaluated courses, with the Environmental career scoring higher at 1.33 out of 2,5/10 (52.39%) and the Information Technology course at 0.75 out of 2,5/10 (29.92%). This may be because each profession has specific content and skill requirements, which highlights the need for educational interventions that are contextually appropriate.

The population and sample of this study were chosen with the variety of students at



Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo - Orellana Campus in mind. The university's two distinct fields were represented by the two groups that were chosen: the information technology group and the environmental group. The implementation of a stratified sample enabled fair gender representation in both groups, hence enhancing the ability to compare the results. Furthermore, the study's conclusions were able to be more resilient and dependable since the probabilistic sampling approach guaranteed the validity and representativeness of the data that were produced (Crespo, 2022).

### **Data analysis procedure and ethical considerations**

Before the project started, the institution gave authorization to include first-semester students in December 2023, as described in Appendix [5]. These students did not need additional permission from legal representatives because they were older than eighteen. Following an analysis of the findings of the diagnostic examinations that included the entire population, research groups were then formed in order to facilitate the identification of the sample.

A mix of quantitative and qualitative data analysis methodologies was used to guarantee the findings' validity and dependability. Throughout the whole investigation, ethical issues were of the utmost importance. Strict precautions were taken to protect the participants' privacy and confidentiality, and all gave their informed permission. There was no need for further parental consent because the participants were of legal age. Adherence to ethical norms guiding data collection, processing, and presentation was prioritized, with a focus on participant welfare and integrity.



### Pre-test

As (HADI, 2023) details, the standardized English listening tests offer a systematic, reliable, and comprehensive way to assess students' listening skills, which is a crucial component of overall language proficiency. This can provide valuable insights to improve language instruction and learning.

This pre-test was applied at the beginning of this study on December 2023, to analyze the initial domain of the listening skills, the results we got were:

**Table 6**

*Pre-test results*

Career	Total pre-test (10 pts)
Environmental	4,91
Information technology	3,66

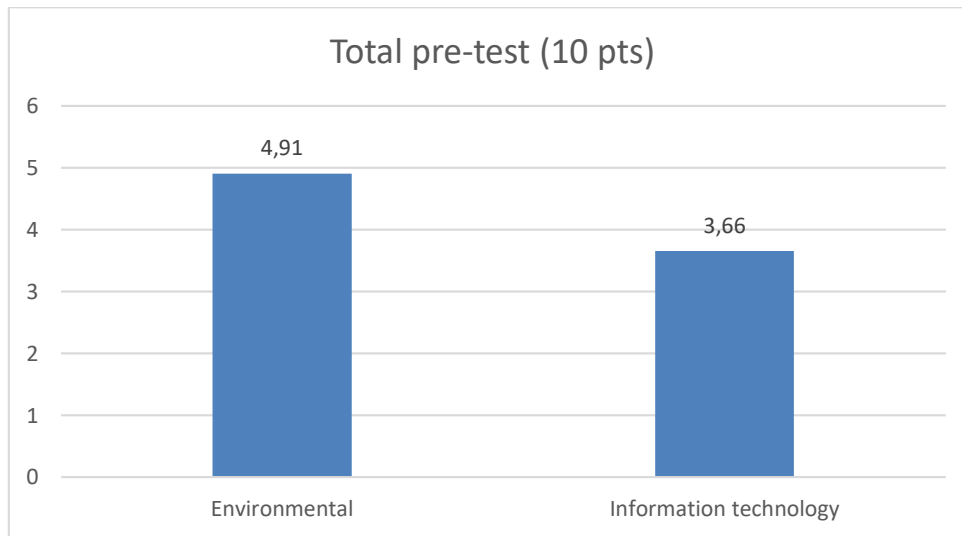
*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 8)



**Figure 7**

*Pre-test results*



*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

The results of the pre-test on students' listening skills are shown in Table 8, where it is evident that the environmental students received a score of 4,91 out of 10, and the information technology students received a score of 3,66 out of 10. Based on these results, it is confirmed that both of the evaluated groups kept scores close to the results of the diagnostic test, with the environmental students receiving the highest score and the information technology students receiving the lowest.

To make a deeper analysis of this pre-test, the listening skill was divided into 3 sub-skills, as (Azran Azmee, 2022) explained, listening for the Gist, Listening for Main Ideas, Listening for Details, Listening for Inferring Meaning, and Listening for assessing the listener's attention are the five general indications of listening abilities. But just three strategies, listening for main ideas,



listening for details, and listening for gist were used in this study, which is based on listening skills from Longman's The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

**Table 7**

*Pre-test results sub-skills*

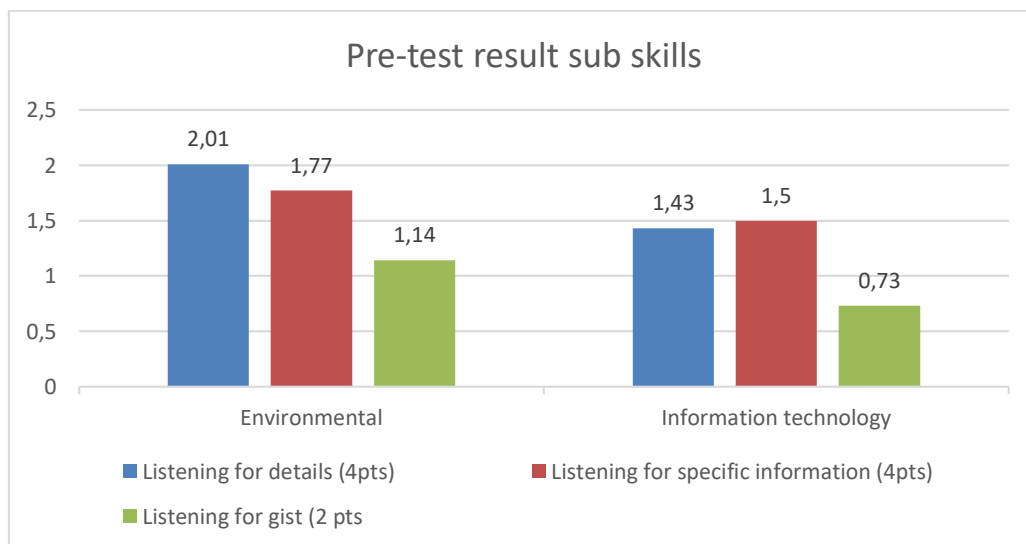
Pre-Test Average	Listening Or Details (4pts)	Listening For Specific Information (4pts)	Listening For Gist (2 Pts)
Environmental	2,01	1,77	1,14
Information technology	1,43	1,50	0,73

*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 8)

**Figure 8**

*Pre-test results sub-skills*



*Note.* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett



According to the analysis, students in the Information Technology program scored higher in listening skills compared to Environmental Science students. In detail listening, IT students scored 2.01 out of 4, 1.77 out of 4 in specific information listening, and 1.14 out of 2 in listening to generalities. According to the analysis, students in the Information Technology program scored higher in listening skills compared to Environmental Science students. In detail listening, IT students scored 2.01 out of 4, 1.77 out of 4 in specific information listening, and 1.14 out of 2 in listening to generalities. With 1.43 out of 4 for hearing for details, 1.50 out of 4 for listening for particular information, and 0.73 out of 2 for listening for the gist, students studying environmental science, on the other hand, scored the lowest. These findings show that while participants did poorly in the ability of assessing overall understanding or meaning, they did better in the sub-skills involving listening and remembering specific information. As a conclusion, this second chapter of the research enlightens us about the procedure used in the approach to study development and diagnosis among ESPOCH first-semester students. This explains a mixed-method approach employed in this research involving both quantitative as well as qualitative methods.

In conclusion, this chapter describes a concrete methodological approach to demonstrate the effectiveness of using podcasts to improve listening skills among university students at the A2 level of English at ESPOCH University. The mixed methods design was applied, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques, in which a complete understanding of the research problem was obtained. Furthermore, the study sample was carefully selected through stratified random sampling, dividing the population into control and experimental groups based on their



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diagnostic test scores. This approach ensured representative and unbiased samples, improving the validity and reliability of the findings.

Additionally, a variety of data collection instruments, including diagnostic tests, standardized tests, surveys, and checklists, were used to compile both numerical and non-numerical data. The sequential exploratory design allowed for the systematic integration of quantitative and qualitative data, facilitating a complete understanding of the research topic. Regarding the data analysis procedures, they were rigorous and statistical techniques were used for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data. It is important to highlight those ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the research process, guaranteeing the protection of the privacy and confidentiality of the participants.

Overall, the methodology chapter provides a comprehensive framework for investigating the research question, indicating a well-designed and carefully executed approach. Finally, the methodological approach used in this research was appropriate to address the research objectives and contribute valuable knowledge to the field of language learning and teaching, particularly about the use of podcasts as a technological tool to improve skills. auditory in university students.



### **Chapter 3: Presentation And Validation Of The Proposal**

#### **Presentation**

This study focused on investigating how useful the use of podcasts as a tool to improve their listening skills could be for A2 level students in Espoch - Sede Orellana, in order to improve their listening skills. Podcasts are digital audio files uploaded in different sites or platforms that allow students to work with real context materials, authentic pronunciation, and common or everyday topics. These files can be downloaded in different devices to be used offline according to the student's necessities. This tool (podcasts) is easy, predictive, and enjoyable to learn new things as well as languages. By implementing podcasts in the language learning process, the students can potentially enhance their skills due to exposure to natural language, several accents, or real-life conversations; those characteristics contribute significantly to their proficiency development. When the use of podcasts is integrated into the learning process, the dynamic of assimilation of the new strategies to develop their skills enhances the overall language learning experience for the students.

#### **General Objective Of The Proposal**

Evaluate the effectiveness of using podcasts to improve the listening skills in A2 level students at Escuela Superior Politecnica del Chimborazo, ESPOCH -Sede Orellana.



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### *Proposal Specific Objectives*

Evaluate the impact about the use of podcast as a tool to enhance the listening skills in A2 level students.

Examine the effects of using the podcast to track students in the control and experimental groups' improvement in their listening abilities.

Analyze the perspectives and experiences of teachers and students by integrating the podcast into their educational process.

### **Theoretical Foundation For The Proposal**

The theory of constructivism and blended learning serve as the theoretical basis for this research proposal. According to Ng'ambi & Lombe (2024), in their article "Using Podcasting to Facilitate Student Learning: A Constructivist Perspective", students must actively participate in the construction of their own learning through their experiences and interactions. Students can develop their learning independently and promote language learning by using genuine materials in audio format or podcasts.

Combining traditional education with a variety of digital resources that are accessible on different websites or online platforms is the foundation of blended learning. Different learning styles and preferences might be enhanced by the personalization and flexibility offered by these tools. This kind of learning demonstrates how learning outcomes may be greatly enhanced when



approaches for instruction are in line with current trends in education and make use of technology.

Use podcasts to teach English more effectively (Fachriza A, 2020) according to his research, about the impact do audio podcasts have on students' capacity to infer meaning while teaching listening comprehension. The following five stages are mentioned as being crucial for consuming podcasts and improving listening skills:

**Select appropriate content.** The content should include topics that are engaging and relevant to students based on their proficiency level and personal interests. as indicated in their research (Fachriza A, 2020).

**Preparation and explanation.** This refers to selecting material based on content, vocabulary, and objectives to prepare students before listening to the podcast. as indicated in their research (Fachriza A, 2020).

**Active Listening.** While playing the podcast, active listening is crucial as students focus on listening carefully to the pronunciation. they intone and take notes of the aspects they believe are relevant. as indicated in their research (Fachriza A, 2020).}

**Reflection and discussion.** After listening to the podcast topics, students reflect and discuss important points, as well as share their opinions and experiences from working with the podcast. as indicated in their research (Fachriza A, 2020).



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**Feedback and Assessment.** To assess students' auditory development, feedback and assessment should be provided through hands-on activities, projects, or assessments related to the skills developed. as indicated in their research (Fachriza A, 2020).

A podcast on the improvement of language skills, particularly listening abilities, is used in this study. As previously indicated, it is accessible in MP3 audio format (Retno Rahayuningsih et al., 2021). Students may access these podcasts in an easy and flexible way since they are audio files that can be played on a range of devices, including computers, tablets, smartphones, and sound players. Additionally, their format is simple to download and distribute via messaging, social networks, and web sites. Students may listen to it whenever they want and from any location, which makes it easier for them to study and improve their listening comprehension on their own schedule.

### **Characteristics Of The Proposal**

In order to evaluate the usefulness of using the podcast to improve listening skills as indicated in their research (Fachriza A, 2020). The following Attributes have been taken as a basis:

Concentrating on improving a particular ability aids in enhancing comprehension and identification of the primary idea of comprehensive material.

Use of genuine podcasts, which provide students a true listening experience by offering real information in MP3 format and representing real-world scenarios.



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Teachers may collaborate to make sure that podcast material satisfies students' needs and subject learning objectives by using collaborative design.

Before and after the podcast intervention, a methodical, standardized assessment will enable examination of the several elements that impacted the growth and acquisition of listening abilities, as well as possible consequences.

The data analysis technique employed a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative analysis to provide a full understanding of the effect of podcast implementation on the development of listening abilities.

### **Description of the type of proposal**

Determining if the podcast is a useful digital instrument for fostering the growth of listening comprehension throughout the English teaching process is the primary goal of this proposal. Standardized hearing test results are the main source of data, both before and after adoption. To find out how students react when following the directions in the podcast, a quantitative analytic technique will also be employed, along with qualitative research based on checklists and satisfaction questionnaires.

The communicative language learning (CLT) component of the constructivist educational method is the main focus. It is employed in relation to Web 2.0 communication techniques, which make it easier to pick up weaker knowledge and abilities. Using the pre- and post-



assessment method, it enables us to demonstrate how students' listening abilities have improved as a consequence of immersion in the podcast-based activities.

The investigation's primary emphasis A thorough explanation of the process of choosing the sample, weekly work schedules along with the assessments for each one at the conclusion of the week, data analysis, and interpretation are given.

In general, the proposal seeks to advance the area of language education by offering empirical proof of the potency of podcasting as a teaching aid for improving language learners' listening abilities.

### **Forms of application, implementation, and evaluation**

In accordance with the CEFR standards and provided as free material for the British Council, the MP3 files were selected from the website <https://www.examenglish.com/PET/index.html> for application. Additionally, a Google Site was created to compile the information; the link is <https://sites.google.com/view/ingles-1-epoch-orellana>. All of the information in this material was carefully analyzed from a variety of online sources in order to assess its accuracy and usefulness in the development of listening skills. These resources were specifically created to improve listening skills in their particular sub-skills, such as "listening for gist," "listening for details," and "listening for specific.",

This approach used existing material to streamline the teaching process by providing proven and ready-to-use classroom implementation resources.



Regarding the execution, the usage of podcasts was suitably included into the usual class schedule, with a weekly distribution of thirty minutes divided into ten-minute classes; one of those periods was set aside expressly for an assessment. In order to provide a smooth and acceptable transition for students from Spanish to English classrooms as well as an engaging one to the target language, these podcast procedures were employed as immersion time. Regular English sessions resumed after that, making the most of the enthusiasm and focus created by the earlier listening experience.

There was an evaluation which took place on the final day of the week based on the activities done on podcasts in the previous hours. The podcast skills absorbed and progressed were measured as a result of this assessment. These enabled problems to be identified and pedagogical changes made in order to grow the capabilities of the students. This process was started out on December by carrying on for five weeks up to January.

In order to determine whether our podcast goals could be achieved, we offered you another test during the sixth week that was identical to the previous one except that it focused only on listening. It examined how listening for the main idea, listening to specifics, and hearing for details improved as sub-skills; as a result, it provided an unbiased assessment of the contribution podcasts make to students' listening skill development.

## **Table 8**

*Schedule of proposal activities*

**Table 8**

*Schedule of proposal activities*

Activities	November					Dec		January				
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 1	Week 2	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Search of the podcasts												
Planning the activities of the podcast												
Pre-test application												
Implementation of the proposal												
Post-test application												

*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

## Budget Of The Proposal

**Table 9**

*Budget for the implementation of the proposal*

General Budget of the Proposal			
Expenses in Human Resources			
Activity	Time Assigned	Salary	Person in charge
Design of Interactive page	5 days	\$50	Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos
Planning 5 podcasts activities sessions	2 days	\$25	Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos
Existing Podcasts	5 days	·0	Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos



(subscriptions)

Ramos

**Total** **\$75**

**Expenses in tools**

<b>Tools</b>	<b>Implementation Activities</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Laptop	It was used to plan podcasts activities and design the interactive webpage.	\$400
Printer	It was used to print podcasts activities and plannings	\$60
Mobile phone	It was used to video-record, and take photos of the sessions to give feedback, take out conclusions, and give recommendations.	\$100
Various resources	Board, markers, paper, pencils, printing ink, etc	\$20
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$580</b>

**Amenities**

<b>Amenity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Mobilization	A particular car was used to move to the institution	\$40
Break	A sweet was given to the students each session	\$25
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$65</b>

*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos



## Resources

This proposal outlines the costs and resources associated with incorporating podcasts into English classes at Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo (ESPOCH) – Sede Orellana. For this reason, Podcasts activities were designed to be implemented with simple and available material in the classroom utilizing existing computer labs with internet access for recording and editing. By a main and effective resource was designed an interactive webpage, placing the podcasts activities link in order to make easier the development of each class, becoming podcasts a cost-effective and engaging way to enhance students learning.

## Discussion Of Results

### *Results of the Pre and Post-Test.*

During the data analysis process, a thorough review of the participants' performance in the pre-tests and post-tests has been conducted, both in the control and experimental groups, focusing specifically on the listening sub-skills.

**Table 10**

*Pre-test and ost-test scores*

Career	Pre-Test Exam	%	Sd	Post-Test Exam	%	Sd
Environmental	4,91	49,1	1,39	4,09	40,9	1,23
Information Technology	3,66	36,6	0,89	9,74	97,4	0,69

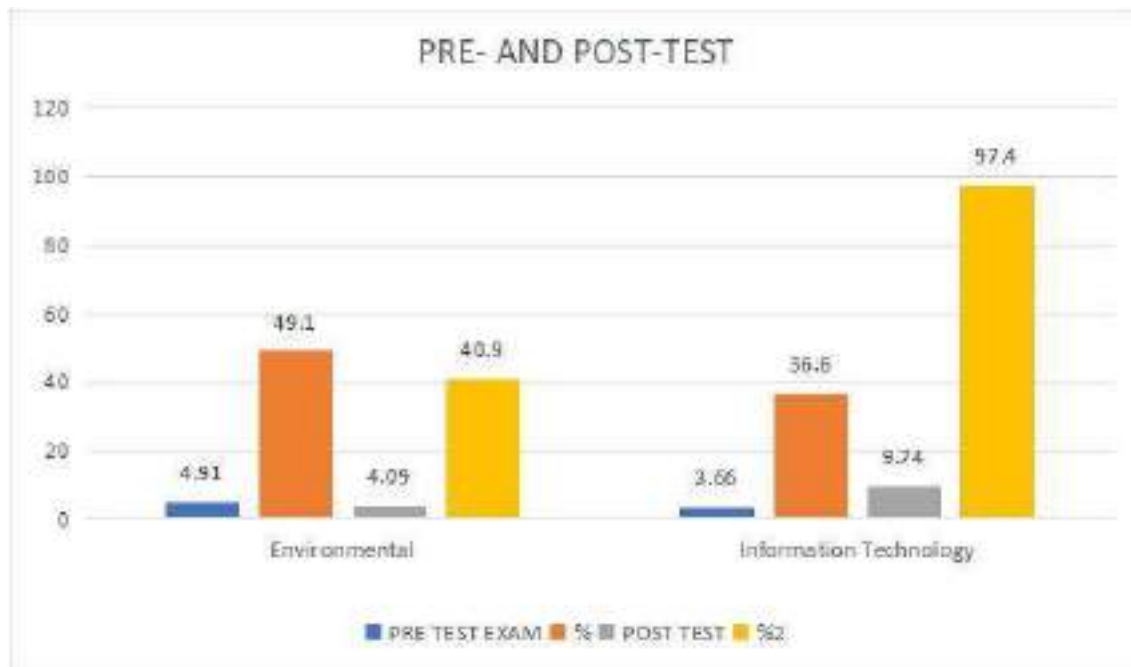
*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos



Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 9)

**Figure 9**

*Weekly score results*



*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

According to the results, the environmental career obtained a mean of 4.91 in the pretest, which is equivalent to 49.1 percent with a standard deviation of 1.39, while the information technology career obtained a mean of 3.66 in the pretest, which is equivalent to 36 percent with a standard deviation of 0.89. After the launch of the podcast, the environmental career data underwent a significant change. The average decreased to 4.09 and the standard deviation was 1.23. However, the IT career experienced a significant increase with a mean of 9.74 and a standard deviation of 0.69.



By interpreting the results of this study, we can see a significant difference in the results of the podcast application. In the environmental major, the results did not have significant differences, but in the IT major, the intervention proved to be effective and was adapted to the needs and learning contexts of the students.

The results of this study show a significant difference in the results of the IT podcast implementation. The mean of the results shows that there was no significant difference between the environmental career and traditional methods, while the IT intervention proved to be effective and adapted to the students' learning needs and contexts.

To better understand the results, it is necessary to analyze the results of the weekly evaluations made to the students of the experimental group. The objective of these evaluations was to measure the progress in the development of the students' skills and, in turn, to correct or reformulate the methodological strategies used for the development of the implementation.

**Table 11**

*Weekly score results*

Criteria	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Mean	4,85	6,27	7,38	8,58	8,42
Standard Deviation	1,28	1,62	1,41	0,65	1,25
Percentage	48,50	62,71	73,75	85,83	84,17

*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 10)



**Figure 10:**

*Weekly Assessment Scores*



*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

According to the evidence about the students' performance over weeks, the average score increased progressively as a result of an intervention that lasted five weeks. This highlights a starting point at Week 1 when the mean score was 4.85, signifying one of the oldest data points in this data set having standard deviation of 1.28, While in the following week that is week 2, on the other hand, an average score of 6.27 indicates high variability (1.62) indicating not only better average performance but broader dispersion too (mean). During the third week, the average rose even higher at 7.38 having a reduced standard deviation of 1.41 denoting that the performance is becoming more consistent on average but the spread of scores is narrowing slightly. The mean score for week four was 8.58 while its standard deviation was 0.65 showing that there was



pronouncedly good performance among pupils and lower variations in results obtained than before. With a standard deviation of 1.25, the mean dropped slightly in week five indicating lower overall levels of achievement before announce was restored to higher variability.

Interpretation of these results suggests that: the intervention with the use of the podcast was effective in improving performance, demonstrated by the steady increase in mean scores from week 1 to week 4, the first few weeks showed progressive improvement, showing that although many students were achieving improved skills during the intervention, their rates of learning were varying, the highest point turned on was in week 4, Although they received a high uptake, there was a decline in week 5 because most performed well but some students began to struggle. Acceptance is generally positive, with a small drop-off. This analysis highlights the importance of maintaining continuous monitoring of adaptive strategies to maintain and improve the level of student learning. Week 1 scored 48.5% and week 4 scored 84.17%.

**Table 12**

*Analysis pre-test and post-test by sub skills listening for details*

Career	Pre-Test Sub Skill - Listening /Out Of 4		Post-Test Sub Skill - Listening /Out Of 4	
	For Details	%	For details	%
Environmental	2,01	50,25	1,61	40,25
Information Technology	1,43	35,75	3,98	99,5

*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 11)



**Figure 11:**

*Listening for details*



*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

These data show the students' performance in the sub-skill of understanding details in the pre- and post-tests. The environment major scored a mean of 1.77, representing 44.25%, while the information technology major scored a mean of 1.50, representing 37.5%. The post-test data for the environmental career obtained a mean of 1.43, which represents 44.25%.

These data show that the participants' performance in the listening sub-skill had very significant variables; in the pretest, the environmental career showed a percentage of 50.25%, but was reduced to 40.25% in the post-test. However, in information technology, a marked



improvement was found, going from 37.75% in the pretest to 99.5% in the post-test, showing that the intervention had a positive impact on the listening sub-skill.

**Table 13**

*Analysis Pre-Test And Post-Test By Sub Skills Listening For Specific Information*

CAREER	Pre-Test Sub Skill – Listening		Post-Test Sub Skill – Listening	
	/Out Of 4		/Out Of 4	
	For Specific Information	%	For Specific Information	%
Environmental	1,77	44,25	1,43	35,75
Information Technology	1,50	37,5	3,84	96,00

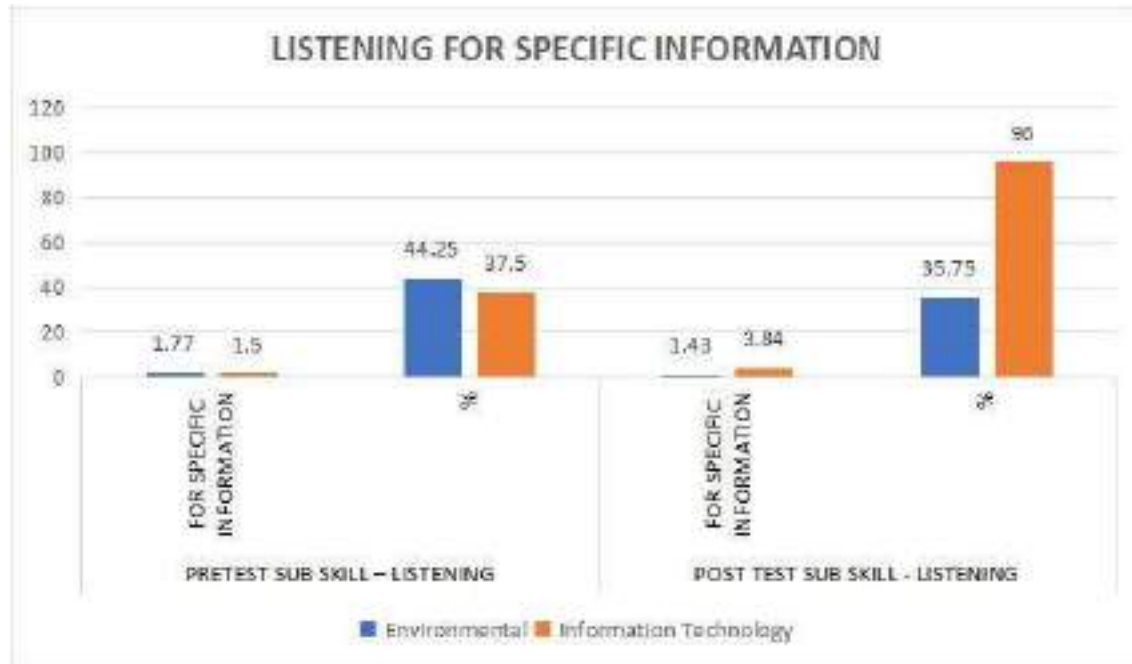
*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 12)



**Figure 12**

*Analysis pre-test and post-test by sub skills listening for specific information*



*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

These data show the students' performance in the sub-skill of understanding details in the pre- and post-tests. The environment major scored a mean of 1.77, representing 44.25%, while the information technology major scored a mean of 1.50, representing 37.5%. The post-test data for the environmental career obtained a mean of 1.43, which represents 44.25%.

The pre-test and post-test data of the results of the sub-skill "Listening to specific information" show that students improve significantly. The average score of the environmental group in the post-test results showed a slight decrease from 1.77 (corresponding to 44.25% of the sub-skill) to 1.43 (corresponding to 35.75% of the sub-skill) showing an advance in the



understanding of specific information, although more moderate compared to the experimental group of information technologies. In contrast, the information technology group experienced a significant increase in the final average from the pre-test to the post-test, going from 1.50 (equivalent to 35.75% of the sub-skill) to 3.84 (equivalent to 96% of the sub-skill), which means important progress in understanding specific information.

The magnitude of improvements between groups varies significantly depending on the interpretation of these results. Arguably, the variation could be influenced by the students' level of friendliness, coherence and interest in the topics covered, as well as by the structure of the content and the pedagogical techniques used. Furthermore, compared to the environmental group, the more significant improvement in oral comprehension ability observed in the posttest could have been caused by the greater exposure to technical terms and concepts related to their career.

**Table 14**

*Analysis pre-test and post-test by sub skills Listening For Gist*

Career	Pre-Test Sub Skill – Listening		Post-Test Sub Skill – Listening	
	/Out Of 2		/Out Of 2	
	For Gist	%	For Gist	%
Environmental	1,14	57,00	1,05	52,5
Information Technology	0,73	36,5	1,92	96,00

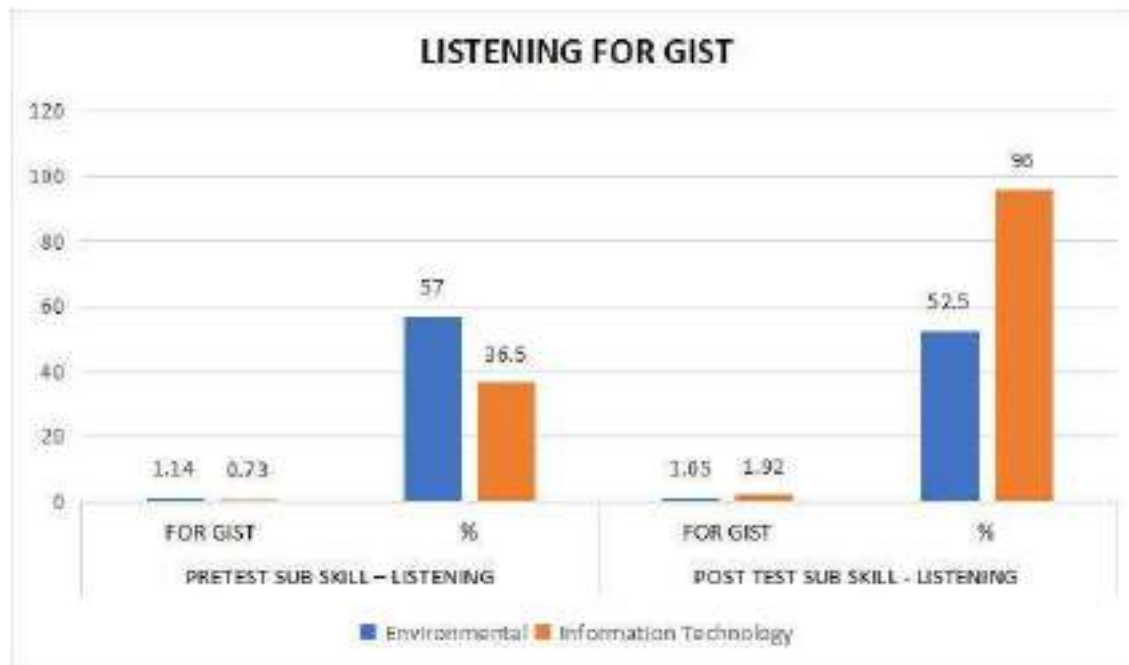
*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 13)



**Figure 13:**

*Listening for Gist*



*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

The study reveals a decrease in the ability of the participants to obtain the general meaning or Gist, in the careers of Environment a decrease is observed from 1.14 or 57% in the pre-test to 1.05 or 36.5% in the post-test, while in Information Technology, which goes from 0.73 or 36.5% to 1.92 or 96%, thus this study reveals that the intervention methods vary according to the career, since in Environment a slight decrease is observed in the capture of general meanings, but in Information Technology significant advances are observed.

***Results of Students satisfaction survey***



Comparing the survey's results is crucial because it was conducted both before and after the idea was put into action. After then, the survey's first and last moments were examined.

**Table 15**

*The use of podcasts as a learning tool seems interesting to me.*

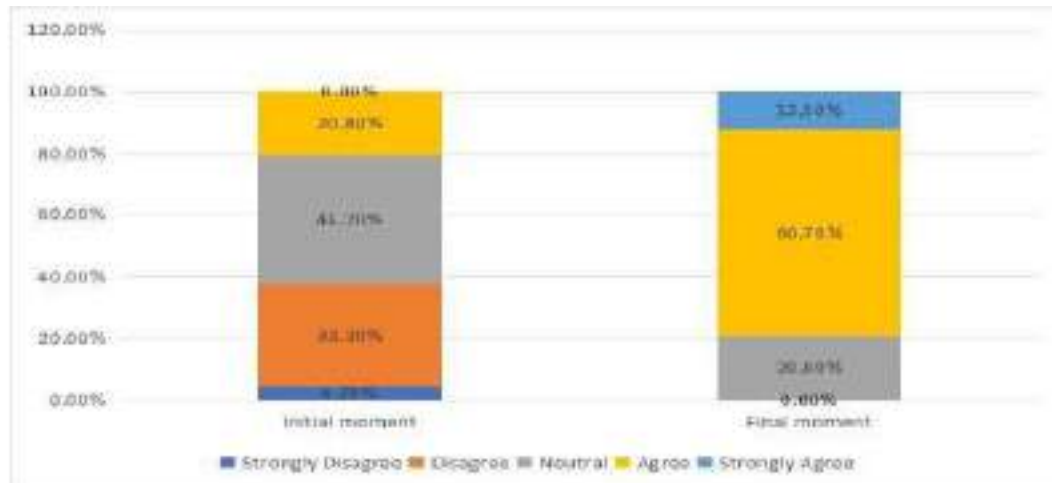
Time	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Initial moment	4,2%	33,3%	41,7%	20,8%	0,00%
Final moment	0,00%	0,00%	20,8%	66,70%	12,5%

*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 14)

**Figure 14**

*The use of podcasts as a learning tool seems interesting to me.*



*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos



The data showed that students' perceptions of the questions posed at the beginning and at the end of the podcast intervention period changed positively. First, 42.7% of the students were unbiased, while 4.2% strongly disagreed. However, at the end of the podcast application, 0.8% were neutral, while 66.7% agreed and 12.5% strongly agreed. This showed that the intervention was very well received by the IT students, who claim that the use of various tools increases interest in learning languages.

**Table 16**

*I believe podcasts will improve my English listening comprehension.*

<b>Time</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Initial moment	0,00%	20,8%	66,7%	12,5%	0,00%
Final moment	0,00%	0,00%	33,3%	50%	16,7%

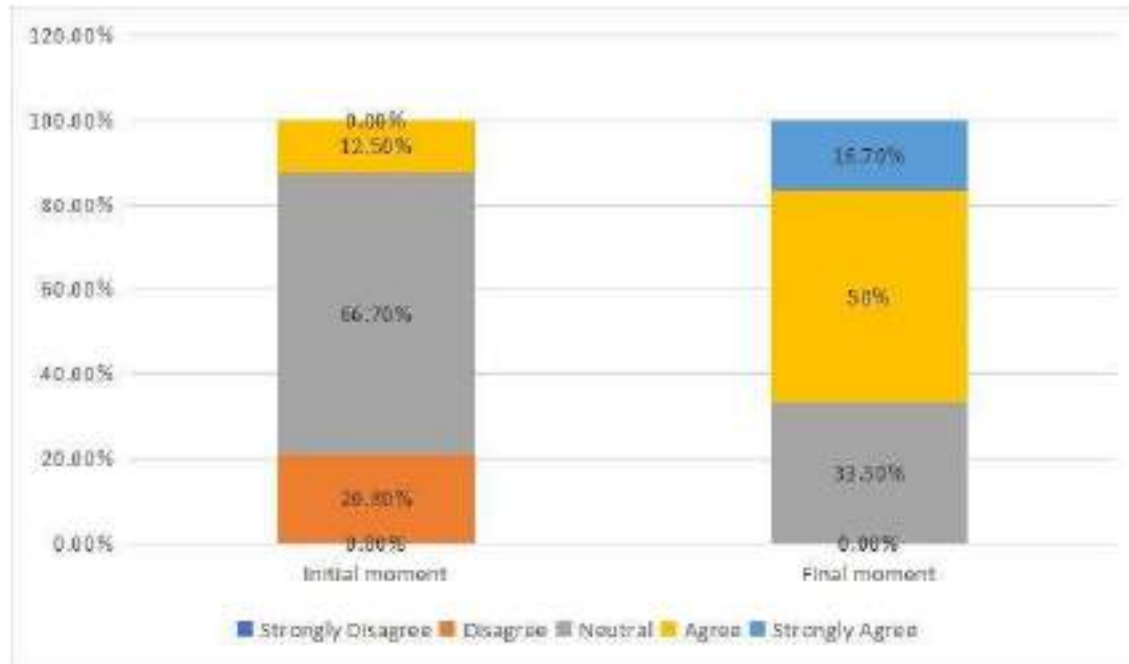
**Note:** Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 15)



**Figure 15**

*I believe podcasts will improve my English listening comprehension.*



**Note:** Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

These data show the students' responses to the statement, "I believe that podcasts will improve my auditory comprehension of English," both at the beginning and end of the intervention period. No student chose "Strongly Disagree" at the beginning; 20.8% chose "Disagree"; 66.7% chose "Neutral"; 12.5% chose "Agree"; and no student chose "Strongly Agree". Nevertheless, by the end of the term, not a single student disagreed with the assertion; 33.3% were indifferent, 50% agreed, and 16.7% agreed with it entirely.



**Table 17**

*I am excited to use podcasts in my English studies.*

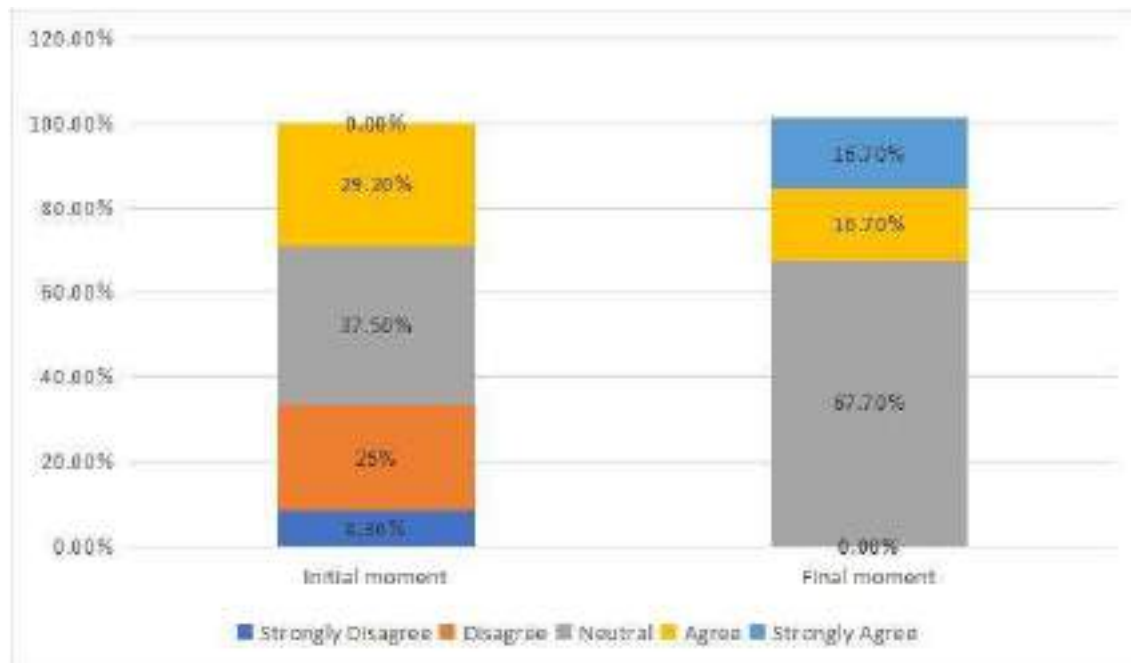
Time	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Initial moment	8,3%	25%	37,5%	29,2%	0,00%
Final moment	0,00%	0,00%	67,7%	16,7%	16,7%

**Note:** Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 16)

**Figure 16**

*I am excited to use podcasts in my English studies.*



**Note:** Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos



These data indicate the students' responses to the statement, "I'm excited to use podcasts in my English studies," at the beginning and end of the intervention period. At the beginning, 8.3% of students chose "Strongly Disagree", 25% chose "Disagree", 37.5% chose "Neutral", 29.2% chose "Agree", and not a single student chose "Strongly Agree". However, by the end of the time, not a single student disagreed with the assertion; instead, 67.7% of students were neutral, 16.7% agreed, and 16.7% completely agreed.

**Table 18**

*I think podcasts will be useful for my English learning.*

Time	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Initial moment	0,00%	25%	54,2%	20,8%	0,00%
Final moment	0,00%	0,00%	20,8%	58,3%	20,8%

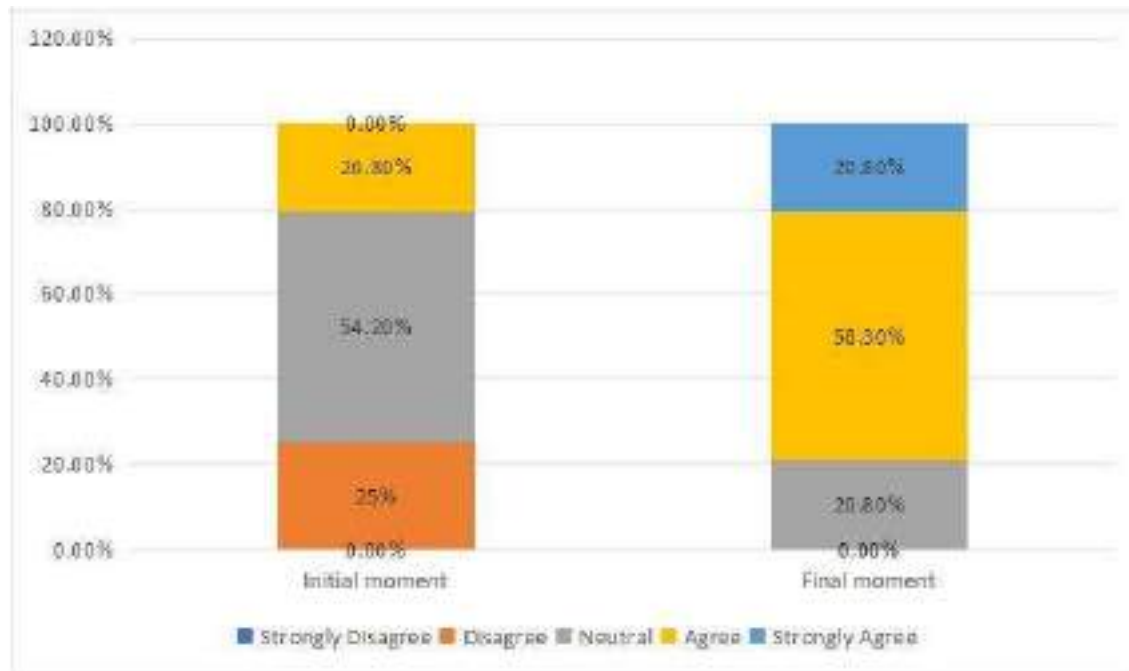
**Note:** Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 17)



**Figure 17**

*I think podcasts will be useful for my English learning.*



**Note:** Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

The replies of the students at the start and conclusion of the intervention period to the statement, "I believe that podcasts will improve my auditory comprehension in English," are shown in these statistics. Initially, 25% of the students responded with "Disagree," 54.2% with "Neutral," 20.8% with "Agree," and no students chose "Strongly Disagree" or "Strongly Agree". Finally, no student was in disagreement with the statement; 20.8% was neutral, 58.3% was in agreement, and 20.8% was completely in agreement.

**Table 19**



*I am satisfied with my experience using podcasts as a learning tool.*

**Table 19**

*I am satisfied with my experience using podcasts as a learning tool*

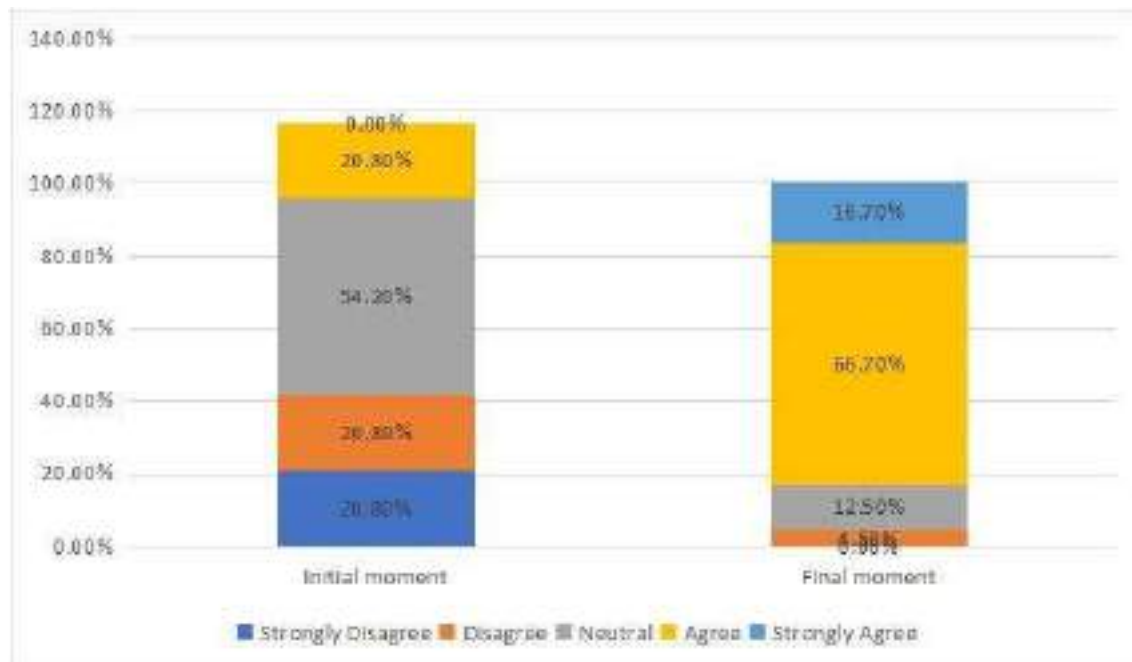
Time	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Initial moment	20,8%	20,8%	54,2%	20,8%	0,00%
Final moment	0,00%	4,5%	12,5%	66,7%	16,7%

**Note:** Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

Below this data can be seen in graphics (Figure 18)

**Figure 18**

*I am satisfied with my experience using podcasts as a learning tool*





*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

These data indicate the students' responses to the statement, "I'm satisfied with my experience using podcasts as a learning tool," at the beginning and conclusion of the intervention period. Early on, 20.8% of students were in "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree", respectively, while 54.2% of students were in "Neutral" and 20.8% were in "Agree", with no responses in "Strongly Agree". However, by the end of the session, just 4.5% of students were in utter disagreement, 12.5% were neutral, 66.7% were in agreement, and 16.7% were completely in agreement with the assertion. No student, however, was in whole disagreement.

### **Budget of the proposal**

**Table 20**

*Budget for the implementation of the proposal*

<b>General Budget of the Proposal</b>			
<b>Expenses in Human Resources</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time Assigned</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Person in charge</b>
Design of Interactive page	5 days	\$50	Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos
Planning 5 podcasts activities sessions	2 days	\$25	Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos
Existing Podcasts (subscriptions)	5 days	·0	Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$75</b>	
<b>Expenses in tools</b>			



<b>Tools</b>	<b>Implementation Activities</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Laptop	It was used to plan podcasts activities and design the interactive webpage.	\$400
Printer	It was used to print podcasts activities and plannings	\$60
Mobile phone	It was used to video-record, and take photos of the sessions to give feedback, take out conclusions, and give recommendations.	\$100
Various resources	Board, markers, paper, pencils, printing ink, etc	\$20
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$580</b>
<b>Amenities</b>		
<b>Amenity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Mobilization	A particular car was used to move to the institution	\$40
Break	A sweet was given to the students each session	\$25
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$65</b>

*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

## Resources

This proposal outlines the costs and resources associated with incorporating podcasts into English classes at Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo. For this reason Podcasts



activities were designed to be implemented with simple and available material in the classroom utilizing existing computer labs with internet access for recording and editing. By a main and effective resource was designed an interactive webpage, placing the podcasts activities link in order to make easier the development of each class, becoming podcasts a cost-effective and engaging way to enhance students learning.

**Table 21**

*General Budget for the implementation of the proposal*

<b>General Budget for the implementation of the proposal</b>	
<b>Type of expense</b>	<b>Expenses</b>
Human expenses	\$75
Tools expenses	\$580
Amenities	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$720</b>

*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

### **Results of the checklist questionnaire**

The content analysis method was employed to analyze the final results of the checklist questionnaire focused on listening activities inside English teacher's classrooms at Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo - Sede Orellana, the content analysis method was applied. According to (Luo, 2022) this method involves identifying and classifying patterns and themes in qualitative data. The checklist was applied to 4 english teacher's at ESPOCH - Sede Orellana through a short class observation. Below a deep analysis of teacher's ' checking to each question:



**Table 22**

*Teachers' Checklist Questionnaire Results*

Description	Level of Frequency (Liker scale)		
	Always	Sometimes	Almost never
Do teachers use listening activities regarding students' levels?		2	2
Do teachers use audio focused on real-life situations?	1	1	2
Do teachers use audio materials to engage students' high concentration?		1	3
Do students comprehend the listening activities significantly?		2	2
Do teachers follow the auditory stages (pre-while-post) in listening activities?		1	3

*Note:* Elaborated by Paulina Méndez and Licett Ramos

To improve the explanation, it is necessary to interpret the results of the verification questionnaire applied to four English teachers at the Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo - Sede Orellana, in relation to daily English teaching practices and student participation. A barchart shows the data, with questions in the x-axis and frequency levels ("Always", "Always" and "Approximately never") in the y-axis. The findings showed that teachers often use listening activities focused on real-life situations, audio materials to engage students' attention, and follow-up activities after listening tasks.



Instead, they rarely use related listening activities to ensure that students understand the listening activities in a meaningful way. Teachers may use audio materials and follow-up activities, but they may not adapt listening exercises to students' levels or prioritize comprehension assessment of students' listening comprehension tasks.

### **Beneficiaries**

The direct beneficiaries are the A2 English level students of Environmental and Information Technology careers to be part of this research. However, this strategy can be applied for the benefit of students throughout the institution in foreign language classrooms as part of their learning-teaching curriculum. Due to this, podcasts can significantly improve auditory comprehension in English A2 students by offering a variety of accents, rhythms, and intonations, enhancing their ability to understand real-life situations, allowing students to learn at their own pace and time, promoting self-learning.

Other potential beneficiaries can be utilized by teachers as a supplemental teaching tool, providing students with opportunities to practice listening comprehension, as it is a tried, tested and proven tool served as authentic English materials, helping students become familiar with the language in real-world contexts. Podcasts can be used to assess students' listening comprehension, differentiate instruction based on ability levels, and promote independent learning, encouraging students to learn English outside the classroom.



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Finally, with the implementation of this proposal in Orellana City Educational institutions can improve student learning outcomes in English, increasing students' achievements, becoming more satisfied with their English learning experience which can help enhance an educational institution's reputation.

As a conclusion this chapter is dedicated to a comprehensive analysis of the results obtained through the evaluations applied to both the students in the experimental group and those in the control group. These evaluations were conducted weekly during the last period of each week, after implementing the podcast activities, allowing for the direct measurement of the impact of this intervention on student learning. The analysis includes a detailed examination of the means and standard deviations of the pretest and post-test results in both Information Technology and Environment careers.

### **Conclusions**

In the context of academic English, the use of podcasts, an innovative tool, has proven to be an effective strategy for improving listening skills. This intervention has been successful in improving students' specific language skills as well as strengthening their ability to understand and apply academic content. This dynamic and participatory approach through the use of the podcast promoted in the classroom as a space of ambience to the use of English fosters greater student participation and autonomy, which in turn leads to better and stronger academic performance.



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The advantage that students access podcasts from various environments such as laboratories, computer centers, classrooms, homes and on different devices such as tablets, computers or smartphones , demonstrates the adaptability and flexibility of this teaching and learning tool. This variety of learning environments powered by the avatars of their own career may have helped students to have a more meaningful, enriching and personalized learning experience at their learning pace, which can be particularly beneficial in a diverse educational environment.

The development of a specific lesson program for each week, focusing on various listening sub skills, demonstrates careful attention to planning and structure by the teachers. The overall success of the intervention was likely contributed to by this structured approach, which enabled students to work on specific areas of improvement progressively and systematically.

During the final period of each week, students had the opportunity to improve their comprehension and development of listening skills through the proposed study material, thanks to the weekly evaluations following the development of the sub-skills activities. Long-term success in the mastery of foreign languages depends on the commitment and responsibility of the students through this approach, which is based on the active participation of the students as promoters of their learning.

English listening comprehension, communication and language skills are significantly improved by using podcasts as a learning tool. In this study, it is hypothesized that adding



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podcasts to language learning could significantly improve students' A2 listening comprehension. Podcasts encourage active participation in the learning process and are intuitive, dynamic, and easily accessible tools for learners.

The results of the satisfaction survey that was used at the beginning and conclusion of this study show that students' opinions about using podcasts as a learning tool have improved. During the intervention period, most of the students showed a favorable, positive attitude and increased satisfaction based on their experience of using podcasts in their English learning. Some, for the most part, were reluctant or discouraged about their use.



## Recommendations

Once the study has been carried out, the following recommendations are suggested:

It is recommended to incorporate the use of podcasts as a regular part of the Espoch - Orellana Headquarters curriculum in the classrooms of levels 1,2,3, and 4 of the English subjects, especially to develop listening comprehension skills, facilitating an organized lesson plan focusing on the different listening sub-skills. This systematic approach will help students progressively improve several aspects of their listening skills.

In addition, it is suggested to encourage students to apply podcasts in different learning environments, such as computer laboratories or also on their personal devices, to promote flexibility and have the opportunity to experience personalized learning with results. positive.

It is recommended to implement weekly evaluations so that students demonstrate their progress in understanding and applying the podcast content, encouraging active participation with the commitment and responsibility of the students.

Motivate the use of podcasts to improve other linguistic skills, such as speaking or vocabulary, becoming a dynamic tool for language learning.

Another recommendation is to conduct follow-up studies or collect long-term data to evaluate the sustainability of the improvements in listening skills and academic performance achieved through the use of podcasts.

Finally, it is recommended to share the implementation strategies and findings of this proposal with other language teachers and public or private institutions to promote the application of podcasts as an effective tool for academic English learning.



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By following these recommendations, educators can harness the potential of podcasts by creating an engaging, self-contained, and effective learning environment to improve students' academic English listening skills and language proficiency.



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## **Appendix 2:**

### **Research Plan**

“Plan De Investigación Para La Propuesta, Que Deberá Ser Revisado Y Aprobado Por La Comisión De Titulación De Cada Programa Al Concluir El Taller I”

Title Of The Proposal: **The Effectiveness Of Using Popular Format Of Podcasts To Improve Listening Skills Among A2 Level University Students**

Authors (2): Mendez Cazco Paulina Fernanda, Ramos Idrovo Silvia Licett

### **Introduction**

#### **Research Background And Contextualization**

The Effectiveness Of Using Popular Format Of Podcasts To Improve Listening Skills Among A2 Level University Students

Since English has become a global language, many people around the world think it is necessary to learn it due to work, business, or studies. Besides, mastering English language skills simplifies communication between people from different cultural contexts. Besides, English is considered the most widely spoken language in the world. According to British Council reports, English is spoken by 375 million speakers as the first language, 375 million as the second language, and 750 million as a foreign language (Abdullaev, n.d.) On the contrary, it has been demonstrated



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that nations with a higher level of English proficiency tend to boost their exports, get better Internet access, and invest more in research and development (First Education, 2022).

Latin America's English proficiency rate is poor to moderate, ranking 18th out of 20 countries in the region. Ecuador ranks 80th out of 113 in the EF English Proficiency Index, lower than Argentina's 562. English is crucial for future professional training in Ecuador's universities.

In Ecuador specifically, the learning of this language has become a fundamental requirement for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as professionals, such as to access the different scholarship and teacher mobilization programs promoted by the Government or to apply for some placement jobs. However, given that a significant portion of scholars fight with listening comprehension as well as writing, (Saulo Villafuerte, 2020). The way that English is taught in Ecuador is making it more difficult for learners from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, especially those who come from indigenous communities in the Amazon. Students' comprehension and writing skills have suffered as a result of their lack of exposure to English before university and their preference for work in the oil business over further education.

In terms of educational quality, public and private universities in Ecuador typically charge lower tuition than private universities; these institutions comprise universities, polytechnics, technical institutes, and other specialized institutions. Admission to these institutions is typically determined by a competitive examination. However, the Amazonian region lacks public universities, and those that do exist are paid for, making them inaccessible to both students from urban areas and young people from rural areas. Due to population needs, a few private institutions



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have been created with professional training programs. However, these programs can help prepare students for the job market, not further education.

On the other hand, Orellana is the location of Ecuador's biggest oil industry, which includes the Amazonian oil reserves that provide many job opportunities for locals. Instead of pursuing a professional degree, a lot of young individuals would rather work in the oil business. Additionally, there is a diverse range of socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural backgrounds within the student body, representing all corners of the region. They have varying learning styles, profiles, backgrounds, languages, and cultures.

Due to the above, it should be mentioned that for teachers, it is a huge challenge to include the English language in their daily lives since their biggest problem is the lack of knowledge and learning of the language, finding a large number of students who have never been immersed in learning the English language in their previous studies.

In consequence, learning the English language implies the correct use of four main skills. However, this basic goal in language learning seems to need to be appropriately addressed, since priority is given to the treatment of grammatical structures.

According to (Ilyosovna, 2020), learning English can help students who are getting professional degrees have more career and job opportunities. It is necessary to mention that the job market is global. For instance, many companies and institutions need employees who can communicate with partners and clients all over the world. Very frequently, that means finding employees who speak English. By learning English, you could become a translator, a language



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teacher, or an English marketing professional for a global company. Learning English is an important step toward achieving all of your goals (Ilyosovna, 2020)

Students' proficiency with the English language can be enhanced by employing new technology. Since English is the most widely used language online, learning to read and understand it will increase the ability to access information, participate in forum conversations, stay up-to-date on global events, and communicate with a wider audience. Learning English will open a whole world of entertainment for everybody. For this reason, ICTs can be used to improve English teaching-learning processes by strengthening content, assessments, and knowledge development. This will raise the standard of the learning process.

However, the skill with the greatest weakness detected by higher education students with an A2 level according to the range obtained under the Common European Framework standards is the listening skill.

The listening skill is directly affected by poor practice. When students do not understand what they are listening to, they cannot express themselves in English in terms of appropriateness of the language or use all the grammatical structures and vocabulary taught. This is a frequent problem for students at the early levels. Despite many efforts made to improve the students' development in the English language, it has been noticed that there is a lack of knowledge in the teachers' instruction concerning how listening skills influence the students' language learning process. Teachers and students can do more about this problem. The analysis and description of how listening skills influence the English language learning process may help to solve this issue.



It is common knowledge that listening skills are acquired over time, a long-standing practice. The skill mentioned can be acquired through specific exercises or training. However, the exercises in class are not enough because the development of these skills requires continuous practice with activities and appropriate tools to meet the current students' needs. It becomes essential to create strategies that will allow the problems to be resolved.

The academic obstacles faced by university students in the Amazon region are primarily related to their inadequate fluency in English. New methods are being investigated to help people become better listeners, such as podcasts, which are trendy and easily accessible media.

As a result, based on the overall issue, the following has been selected as a research topic: How effective is the use of popular format podcasts in improving the listening skills of A2 level university students who have limited English language exposure before starting their university education?

The participants in our research project will be A2 level students from Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo, Sede Orellana. In each of the two study groups, there will be a control and an experimental group. The first group, or control group, with 24 students from Information Technology Career will use the conventional teaching-learning approach, while the experimental group with 28 students from Environmental Career will use blended learning tactics that include podcasts.

## **Figure 1**

*Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo, Sede Orellana*



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*Note:* Elaborated by Mendez Paulina and Ramos Licett

Those podcasts are aligned with the research lines of Universidad de Orellana, regarding and supporting language acquisition and creating educational strategies that can benefit marginalized populations

The research object of this study is to examine the effectiveness of using popular format podcasts as a pedagogical tool to enhance the listening skills of A2 level university students, who have limited English language exposure before entering university. Following this General Research Line: Application of Technology in Education, and the Specific Research Line: Integration of Technology-Enhanced Language Learning Strategies.

### **Specific objectives**

- To analyze the existing listening proficiency levels of A2 level university students from the first semester in Escuela Politécnica Superior del Chimborazo – Sede Orellana.

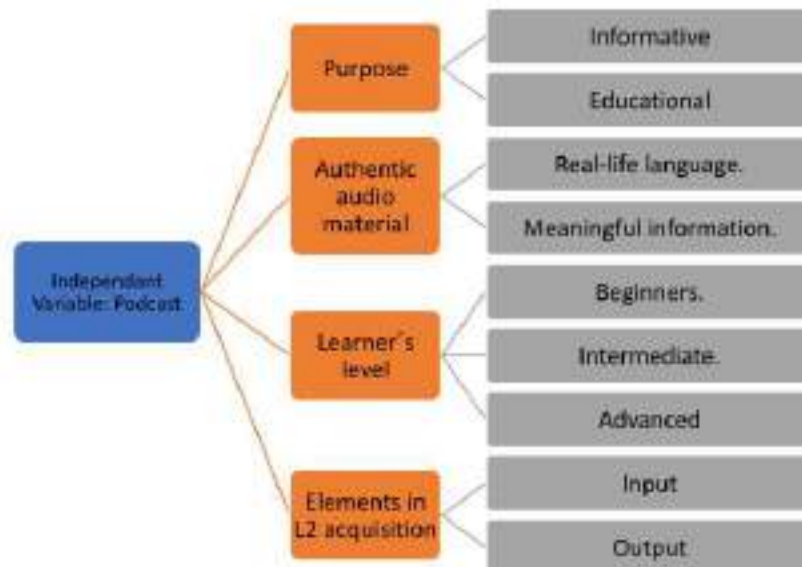


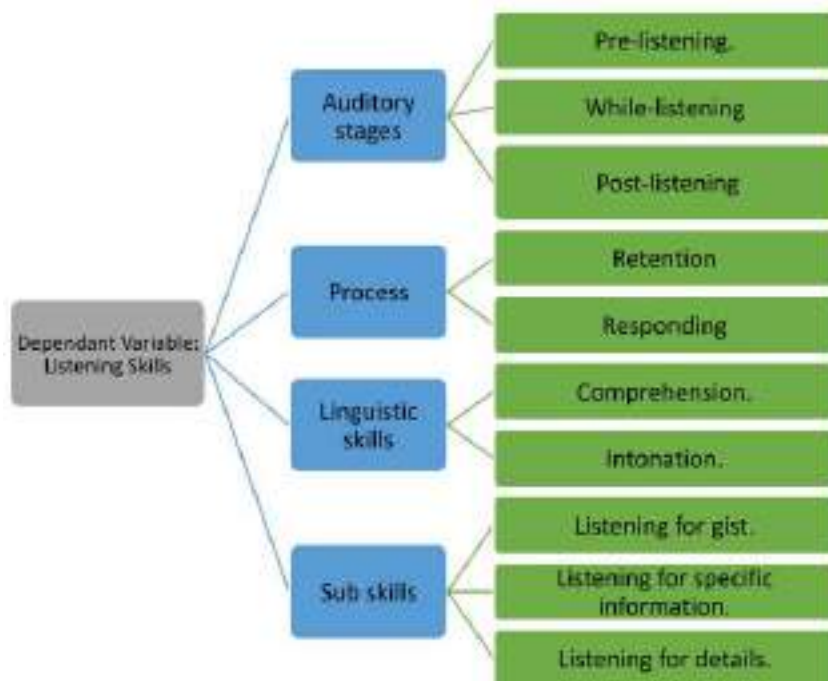
- To investigate the potential benefits and challenges of using popular format podcasts in improving listening skills.
- To measure how well popular podcast formats improve A2 level university students' listening skills.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

**Independent Variable:** The use of popular format podcasts

**Dependent Variable:** Listening skills





The research methodology used in this study was mixed-method. Quantitative data was collected through pre and post assessments to measure the participants' listening skills improvement, employing a quasi-experimental design comparing a control and experimental group of students. Qualitative data was gathered through surveys and a conducted CHECK LIST class observation was applied to identify factors relating to the use of technology in the teaching-learning process inside ESPOCH English Teachers classes.

After receiving technology-integrated training, the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in listening skills, according to the study's findings. The qualitative data also demonstrated the beneficial effects of technology on student engagement and active learning environments. Additionally, it was found by the questionnaires and observation checklist



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that using podcasts in the classroom promoted a more participatory and interactive learning environment. All things considered, the study showed that incorporating technology into English language training can improve students' listening abilities and foster a more dynamic learning environment.

Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador is committed to provide a holistic education in line with our goal of developing inclusive and innovative learning environments. As part of this commitment, we used popular format podcasts to improve listening skills and English language acquisition in students. This innovative, constructivist-based method actively involves the university community to promote cognitive growth and fits in well with our current research focus on educational technology development.

The research supporting this initiative was conducted in the Orellana province of Ecuador, with a focus on university students from rural indigenous villages. It is important to address the educational obstacles faced by indigenous university students in Ecuador's Amazon region since Orellana is a significant place where the oil sector has a significant influence on young people's career choices. Through investigating the efficacy of popular format podcasts, our research seeks to provide useful suggestions that improve students' listening abilities, raising their level of language competence overall and better preparing them for success in university and the workplace in the future. In addition to addressing current issues in education, this research supports a larger social need to strengthen underprivileged groups and promote cultural diversity in the classroom



## Appendix 6

### Needs Analysis in Research Context

By Licett Ramos and Paulina Méndez

**Research topic:** The effectiveness of using popular format podcasts to improve listening skills among university students of A2+ level.

#### Context of the research

This research investigates the use of popular podcasts as a tool to enhance listening skills in university students at an A2+ level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Popular podcasts offer an engaging format, authentic language exposure, and accessibility, making learning more enjoyable and motivating. The study aims to investigate whether listening to popular podcasts can effectively improve listening comprehension skills, how specific podcast features influence the learning process, and student engagement and preferences related to using podcasts for language learning.

**Objective:** To gather information about potential problems our students are experiencing through a process called a needs analysis for the diagnostic stage of this research.

#### Instruction:

The research proposal will be carried out in Orellana Province at Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo located in El Coca City. It is a public university. There are 1115



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students attending to different undergraduate careers such as Agronomy, Environmental, Zootechnics, Tourism, and Information Technology Engineering. This educational university offers a structured English language program with 4 hours per week with a duration of 120 minutes for each class. There are no English laboratories but there are 2 informatics labs with full equipment and free internet access and a projector is available in each classroom.

### **POSSIBLE BENEFICIARIES OF THE RESEARCH**

This research suggests that podcasts can be beneficial for language educators, podcast creators, and university students. It suggests that understanding the needs of A2+ learners can help tailor content, such as slower speech and clear pronunciation, to enhance comprehension. The research also suggests that podcast features that resonate with learners can be leveraged to make content more engaging. It also suggests that podcasts can be used as an independent study tool, empowering students to practice listening outside of class. The engaging nature of podcasts can also improve motivation and consistency in practice. Ultimately, podcasts can build confidence in students, preparing them for real-world English communication.

### **SPECIFIC NEEDS**

As specific needs, it is relevant to say that, the institution requires English language knowledge for graduation requirements, professional preparation, and understanding technical literature. The Ministerio de Educación Superior Politics mandates a minimum fourth English language level for graduation. English proficiency is integrated into students' program



curriculums to access resources, collaborate with international colleagues, and use English in their professions. Additional needs include understanding technical literature for research materials, textbooks, and software interfaces, and effective communication for international conferences and presentations. By understanding these specific needs, educators can tailor instruction to equip students with the necessary English language skills for academic success and future careers.

### **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS DETAIL TO THESE NEEDS.**

Identifying the needs of ESPOCH – Sede Orellana University students and the potential benefits of popular podcasts can help develop solutions. Educators can incorporate podcasts into the English Language Curriculum by curating playlists and designing listening activities. Podcasts can be assigned as homework or used for in-class discussions, allowing students to prepare for content analysis and debate. A student-led podcast club can be formed to encourage students to recommend podcasts and practice creating their own short English podcasts.

Leveraging podcasts for independent learning can be achieved by creating a podcast listening guide, providing a curated list of popular podcasts, and encouraging peer learning. Technology resources can also be utilized to enhance learning. Informatics labs can create platforms for accessing curated podcasts, learning materials, and discussion forums. Recording short teacher podcasts can be a valuable resource for revisiting material outside of class. Online podcast resources can also be explored to enhance learning.



The effectiveness of these solutions depends on ongoing needs analysis and student feedback. By tailoring the approach to the specific needs and interests of students, popular podcasts can significantly improve their English listening skills.

### THE MUNBY (1978) NEEDS ANALYSIS MODEL

#### (SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH)

John Munby's Communicative Syllabus Design (1978) is, probably, the most thorough and widely known work on needs analysis. In his work, Munby introduced a very well detailed set of procedures for discovering target situation needs. He called this set of procedures the Communication Needs Processor (CNP). The CNP is formed by a group of questions related to key communication variables (topic, participants, medium, and others) which can be used to spot the target language needs of any group of learners.

#### TARGET SITUATION ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

GENERAL QUESTIONS	SPECIFIC QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
Why is the language needed here? (Purposive domain)	for study? for work? for training? for a combination of these? for status? for examination? for promotion?	English language knowledge is needed in this Institution because it is part of students specific planning studies, and fourth English language levels must be approved in order to continue with their professional careers, according to Ministerio de



	for some other purposes?	Educación Superior Politics.
How will the language be used? (instrumentality)	<p><b>Medium:</b> speaking, writing, reading, listening.</p> <p><b>Channel:</b> Telephone, face to face</p> <p><b>Types of text or discourse:</b> Academic text, lectures, catalogues, conversations, small talks</p>	The main purpose of this analysis is to set up the appropriate basis to make students facilitate their listening skill in order to reinforce due to the lack of proficiency of this important skill. It will be carried on with face-to-face class combined with home assignments applying the technological resources specifically the use of the most popular podcasts which guarantee better results at the end of this researching.
What will the content areas be?	<p><b>Subjects:</b> Medicine, biology, commerce, shipping, or just general English</p> <p><b>Level:</b> technician, craftsman, undergraduate, graduate. postgraduate, A1, A2, B1, C1</p>	The content areas will be General English with a variety of interesting topics like, science, environment, wheatear, music, etc. The level will be focused on A2+ university students.
Where will the language be used?	<p><b>Physical setting:</b> Office, lecture theater, hotel, workshop, library, school.</p> <p><b>Human context:</b> Meetings, demonstrations, on the telephone, formal interactions, informal interactions</p>	The language will be used mostly inside English classrooms, however autonomous assignments will be carried on as homework activities through the use of mobile applications downloaded in their cell phones in order students be in contact



	<b>Linguistic context:</b> Own country, abroad.	with the English language the majority of the time as possible.
When will the language be used?	Concurrently with the ESP course or subsequently. Frequently, seldom, in small amounts, in large chunks	The language will be used at the beginning of the academic term ( a month approximately) in order to get the necessary data collection.

**Note:** Hutchinson and Waters (1987) indicated that this model only considers the point of view of the analyst but neglects the point of view of the students and the institutions. This model does not consider learning needs or make a distinction between necessities, wants, and lacks.

### HUTCHINSON AND WATERS (1987) NEEDS ANALYSIS MODEL

#### (LEARNING-CENTRED APPROACH)

The needs analysis (NA) process often involves gathering information to have the necessary foundation to develop a course that meets the needs of a particular group of learners. Richards and Platt (1992) stated that NA is "the process of determining the needs by which a group of students acquires a language and ordering those needs according to their priorities." Hutchinson and Waters (1987) identifies two types of needs: Target needs and Learning needs.

#### TARGET NEEDS

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) target needs are mainly related to *'what the learner needs to do in the target situation'*. To answer this statement, practitioners should gather



information about the learners' necessities, lacks and wants.

<b>Necessities</b>	<b>Lacks</b>	<b>Wants</b>
They are the academic or occupational requirements of the target situation. What students need to know to function effectively in the target situation (Robinson, 1991).	They have to do with what students ignore or cannot do in English (Robinson, 1991).	These are the personal expectations of the students and hopes towards acquiring English. What they would like to get from the language course. These needs are very personal (Robinson, 1991).
<b>GENERAL QUESTIONS</b>	<b>ANSWERS</b> This study will adopt a mixed-methods research approach. Quantitative data will be collected through pre- and post-assessments (standardized test) to measure the participants' listening skills improvement. Qualitative data will be gathered through a semi-structured survey and focus group discussions to gain insights into the students' experiences, challenges, and perceptions related to using popular format podcasts.	<b>WHAT PROCEDURES OR INSTRUMENTS DID YOU USE TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?</b> Observation guides, interviews, questionnaires, online surveys, checklists, consulting to experts, a diagnostic test



Why is the English language needed here?	The English language is required because it is part of students specific planning studies, and fourth English language levels must be approved according to the contents of Institutional Syllabus and Curriculum.	Syllabus / Curriculum /Ministry of Education
How will the English language be used?	It will be collected through pre and post-assessments (standardized test) to measure the participants' listening skills improvement.	Diagnostic test Writing (low scores) Observation guide, checklist
What will the content areas be?	General English of First level learners A2+ specially listening skill development with interesting real – situation podcasts topics focused on learner´s needs and interests.	Syllabus, curriculum, documents from the Ministry of Education
Who will the learner use the language with?	First level learners will use the language with their teachers, classmates, relatives in other countries, tourists in our country or meeting new people in social medias pages.	Documents from the MOF Curriculum & syllabus
Where will the English language be used?	The English language will be used in the University and beyond the classroom in formal and informal speaking interactions in order to activate the listening skill to be improved at the end of the research.	Descriptors of the level CEFR A2  Syllabus & curriculum
When will the English	GE: School year 2022-2023 (September to	MOF



language be used?

June)

ESP: They will use the language everyday

## LEARNING NEEDS

Learning needs is the gap between the learner's current level of knowledge and skills, and the level of knowledge and skills required to perform a task or a set of tasks. This framework focuses on numerous factors such as who the learners are, their socio-cultural background, learning background, age, gender, prior knowledge of specialized content, prior knowledge of English, attitudes towards English, and attitudes towards cultures of the English-speaking world.

Hutchinson and Waters suggested asking the following questions to analyze learning needs:

**GENERAL  
QUESTIONS**

**SPECIFIC QUESTIONS**

**ANSWERS**

**WHAT  
PROCEDURES  
OR  
INSTRUMENTS  
DID YOU USE TO  
ANSWER THESE  
QUESTIONS?**

Observation guides,  
interviews,  
questionnaires,  
online surveys,  
checklists,  
consulting with  
experts, a diagnostic



			test
Why are the learners taking the course?	<p>Compulsory or optional?</p> <p>Apparent need or not?</p> <p>Are status, money, and promotion involved?</p> <p>What do students think they will be able to do when they acquire the knowledge?</p> <p>What would be the attitude of the students towards the course?</p> <p>Do they really want to improve their English?</p>	<p>It is a compulsory subject in the career where they need to be approved 4 levels of language.</p> <p>The ESPOCH students come from different social statuses and economic situation</p> <p>At the end of the 4 levels, the students will be able to get a certification in order to continue with their professional studies.</p> <p>Their attitude towards the course is not positive because most of the time, they take it just for</p>	<p>SURVEY sent by mail</p>



		a need. The purpose for them is only to get a final certification.	
How do the learners learn?	What is their learning background? What is their concept of learning and teaching? What methodology will be attractive to them?	CLIL APPROACH ESP APPROACH CLT APPROACH TASK BASED LEARNING APPROACH	Syllabus, curriculum Observation Listening Doing Seeing
What resources are available?	Number of teachers with an international certification? The attitude of teachers towards this group? Knowledge and attitude of teachers towards the content of the subject? Knowledge and attitude of teachers towards the resources for the subject? Opportunities for activities outside of class?	Platforms, gamification.	Syllabus, curriculum



Who are the learners?	Age/Sex/Nationality? What do they already know about English? What knowledge do they have of the matter? What are their interests? What teaching styles are they used to? What is their attitude towards English? What is their attitude towards the cultures of the English-speaking world?		Surveys Questionnaires
Where will the course take place?	Are the surroundings pleasant, dull, noisy, cold?		Syllabus curriculum
When will the course take place?	Time of day? Every day once a week? Full-time, part-time? Concurrent with need or pre-need?		Data of your proposal

**Note:** Hutchinson and Waters (1987) also recommend the use of multiple methods of data collection – such as interviews, observation, and informal consultations with sponsors, learners and others involved – to deal with the complexity of target needs.



**THE DUDDLEY-EVANS AND ST. JOHN (2009) NEEDS ANALYSIS MODEL  
FOR AN ESP COURSE**

<b>GENERAL QUESTION</b>	<b>SPECIFIC QUESTIONS</b>	<b>ANSWERS</b>	<b>WHAT PROCEDURES OR INSTRUMENTS DID YOU USE TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?</b> Observation guides, interviews, questionnaires, online surveys, checklists, consulting to experts, a diagnostic test
<b>Professional information about the learners</b>	The tasks and activities students will do with the English language (target analysis and objective needs)		



<b>Personal information about the learners</b>	Factors that may affect the way they learn, previous learning experiences, cultural information, reasons for attending the course and expectations of it, attitude towards English, desires, primary and secondary needs (wants, means, subjective needs)		
<b>English language information about the learners</b>	Information on students' English proficiency and skills Current language use Present situation analysis		
<b>The learners' lacks</b>	What is it that students don't know? What can't students do? What skills are not well developed?		DIAGNOSTIC TEST



<b>Language learning information</b>	How has learning developed? Effective ways of learning the skills and language		QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEYS OBSERVATION GUIDES
<b>Professional communication information about the learners</b>	How they will use the language and skills in the target situation. Linguistic analysis, discourse analysis, and gender analysis		
<b>What is wanted from the course</b>	The course must help students to write, speak, read, interact, decode messages		
<b>Information about the environment in which the course will be run</b>	In a place where English is spoken, where English is not spoken, where English is a second or foreign language		



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### ANNEXES

#### Anex 1: Diagnostic test



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**ESCUELA SUPERIOR POLITÉCNICA DE CHIMBORAZO**

**SEDE - ORELLANA**

**Diagnostic test**

**PAO: 1**

**Profesor: SILVIA LICETT RAMOS IDROVO**

**Asignatura: INGLES I**

**Período Académico: 10 OCTUBRE 2023 - 4 MARZO 2024**

#### **Reading Section**

- 1. Read the paragraph and answer the questions.**

*"Sarah is a student at Greenfield High School. She loves playing basketball and spends most of her free time practicing at the local court. Last weekend, she participated in a regional basketball tournament, and her team won first place. Sarah dreams of becoming a professional basketball player one day."*

- 1. Where does Sarah study?**

**1. Greenfield High School**



2. Blue Valley College
3. Redwood Elementary
2. What sport does Sarah enjoy practicing?
  1. Soccer
  2. Basketball
  3. Tennis
3. What did Sarah do last weekend?
  1. Went shopping
  2. Participated in a basketball tournament
  3. Watched a movie
4. What place did Sarah's team secure in the tournament?
  1. Second place
  2. Third place
  3. First place
5. What is Sarah's dream?
  1. To be a dancer
  2. To become a professional basketball player
  3. To be a famous singer

#### Listening Section

**B. Listen to the audio recordings and answer the questions that follow.**

6. What is the main topic of the conversation?
  1. a) Planning a trip



2. b) Cooking a recipe
3. c) Discussing a movie
4. d) Talking about a book

7. What does the speaker suggest the listeners do next?

1. a) Go to the gym
2. b) Make a reservation
3. c) Call a friend
4. d) Start a new project

8. Where did Alex go on his last vacation?

1. a) Spain
2. b) Italy
3. c) Greece
4. d) France

9. What time does the museum open on Sundays?

1. a) 9:00 AM
2. b) 10:00 AM
3. c) 11:00 AM
4. d) 12:00 PM

What did Emma buy at the supermarket?

1. a) Milk
2. b) Bread



3. c) Eggs
4. d) Apples

**Writing Section**

**C. Write a short paragraph (3-5 sentences) on the following topic.**

11. Describe your favorite holiday destination and explain why you like it.

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**Speaking Section**

**D. Speak about personal preferences (at least 1 minute).**

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Need to improve	Score
Grammar usage	The ideas do not contain any grammatical errors.	The ideas present some grammatical errors.	The ideas present a lot of grammatical errors.	



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<b>Ideas organization</b>	The ideas do not present any error in the organization of ideas, there is no problem in identifying the topic of the speaking	The ideas are well organized, but there are complications when identifying the topic.	The ideas are not very organized. The topic of the speech cannot be identified	
<b>Vocabulary usage</b>	The ideas contain a variety of vocabulary usage	The use of vocabulary is evident, but some errors are found at the time of use.	The use of vocabulary is inadequate, with several errors.	



- A six weeks.
  - B seven weeks.
  - C eight weeks.
- 2 The problem last year was that...
- A few people wanted to attend.
  - B there were too few workers.
  - C there was nothing to do on rainy days.
- 3 This, year, for the first time, children will...
- A do creative activities.
  - B do new outdoor sports.
  - C organize events.
- 4 Molly doesn't think children will come for six weeks because...
- A it's too expensive.
  - B they will do the same activities again and again.
  - C their parents will want to spend time with them.
- 5 The course isn't open to teenagers because...
- A Molly thinks they aren't interested in the activities which are available.
  - B Molly thinks they should spend time with young people of a similar age.
  - C: Molly's staff think that teenagers are difficult to please.
- 6 It's important that parents of children attending the course...
- A: pay the full amount immediately.
  - B: choose the activities the child wants to do when they apply.
  - C: inform Molly about any food the child cannot eat.

Listening part 3

Look at the six questions for this part. You will hear a man called Steve and a woman called Caroline talking about summer jobs. Decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect. If it is correct, select Yes. If it is not correct, select No.



1 Steve hasn't arranged any work for the summer yet.

- Yes
- No

2 Caroline's work will allow her to have free time during the day.

- Yes
- No

3 Caroline's work will be located in a city.

- Yes
- No

4 Caroline found out about the job from the internet.

- Yes
- No

5 Caroline says that work at music festivals is badly paid.

- Yes
- No

6 Caroline does not have to pay for her accommodation.

- Yes
- No



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## Annex 9: Podcast Lesson Plans

### LESSON PLAN WEEK 1

#### PODCASTS FOR IMPROVING THE LISTENING SKILL

Topic: “Manage my free time”

Skills: Listening, reading, writing and speaking

Time: 30 minutes

Level: CEFR level A2

Learning outcome:

Students will listen to the radio interview to do the exercises to practice and improve their listening skills.

Vocabulary:

Sequence words: First, then, after that, finally / clock time / daily activities/ months of the year/ days of the week/ leisure activities.

---



## ACTIVITIES

### Activity 1:

#### Task 1

- Match the words with their definitions

#### Task 2

Check understanding with Gap Fill sentences.

- True or False?

#### Task 3

- Listen and complete the gaps with the correct word.

### Activity 2:

#### Task 1

- Listen to the conversation and match the words with the corresponding pictures.

#### Task 2

- Listen to a conversation and choose the correct answer.

## INSTRUCTIONS:

General instructions about the topic will be presented.

Do the preparation exercise before students listen, then do the tasks to check students' understanding.

## WARM UP:

- Flash the picture!



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- Flash or show the picture for a very short time.
- Ask students to say what they see.
- Repeat steps 1 and 2.
- Show the picture for three or four seconds.
- Repeat step 2.
- Display the picture and keep it in full view: elicit comments: What is shown? What is he/she doing? What is the time? Who is in the picture? Students motivate to continue talking about the pictures

### PREPARATION:

Match the words with the definitions.

### MATERIAL:

Podcast link: <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening/intermediate-b1-listening/organising-your-time#>

<https://www.esl-lab.com/day1/day1.htm>



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## LESSON PLAN WEEK 2

### PODCASTS FOR IMPROVING THE LISTENING SKILL

Topic: “The extended family”

Skills: Listening, reading, writing and speaking

Time: 30 minutes

Level: CEFR level A2

Learning outcome: Students will listen to the speakers talking about important people in their lives and do the exercises to practice and improve their listening skill.

Vocabulary: Family members, descriptive adjectives, physical appearance adjectives.

Resources: Podcast link - Computer - Projector - Speakers.



## ACTIVITIES

### Activity 1:

#### Task 1

- Match the phrases with the definitions.

#### Task 2

- Listen to the speakers talking about “important people” in their lives. Match the phrases with the correct definitions.

#### Task 3

- Listen to a conversation between Carl and Pancho and select the correct answer.

#### Task 4

- Listen to the conversation again and complete the gaps with a word from the box.

### Activity 2

#### Task 1

- Listen to the conversation again and circle True or False the following sentences

#### Task 2

- Listen to the description and chose the correct answer

#### Task 3

- Discuss with your partner which people have been important in your life?

## INSTRUCTIONS:

General instructions about the topic will be presented.



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Do the preparation exercise before students listen, then do the tasks to check students' understanding.

### WARM UP:

- Describe your partner!
- Teacher divide the class into pairs.
- Give each student the letter A or B.
- Tell the students A to close their eyes and put their heads on their arms or desk. Tell the A students that they should now try to describe their partners B's appearance to him or her from memory.
- B should help by asking questions and commenting. If there is time, reverse roles and student B should try to describe the front and back of the classroom (or the teacher's appearance).

### PREPARATION:

Match the words with the definitions

### MATERIAL:

Podcast link:

<https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening/b1-listening/important-people>



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### LESSON PLAN WEEK 3

#### PODCASTS FOR IMPROVING THE LISTENING SKILL

Topic: “ On vacations ”

Skills: Listening, reading, writing and speaking

Time: 30 minutes

Level: CEFR level 2A

Learning outcome: Students will listen to the conversation about plans for the weekend and do the exercises to practice and improve their listening skill.

Vocabulary: Locations and directions, sports, the weather.

Resources: Podcast link - Computer - Projector - Speakers.



## ACTIVITIES

### Activity 1:

#### Task 1

- Check understanding : Picture Matching “sports”

#### Task 2

- Check understanding : Picture Matching “the weather”

#### Task 3

- Listen to the conversation about plans for the weekend and do the exercises to practice and improve your listening skill.

### Activity 2:

- Check understanding: Multiple choice

#### Task 1

- Do this exercise while you listen, which six activities do the speakers say they are going to do? Tick (✓) all the correct answers.

#### Task 2

- Do this exercise while you listen, circle the best option to complete these sentences.

#### Task 3

- Choose the correct option to complete the sentences.

### Activity 3:

#### Task 1



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- Check understanding vocabulary: Vocabulary box

### Task 2

- Write any new words you have learnt in this lesson

### INSTRUCTIONS:

General instructions about the topic will be presented.

Do the preparation exercise before students listen, then do the tasks to check students' understanding.

### WARM UP:

- Surprise!
- The teacher brings a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen to class in order to introduce students to a new topic about VACATIONS. First, students have to guess why the teacher decided to bring all these things to class, and then, they have to ask questions to guess the place she or he is going to visit.

### PREPARATION:

Match the words and pictures.

MATERIAL: Podcast link:

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening/intermediate-b1-listening/weekend>



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TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

## LESSON PLAN WEEK 4

### PODCASTS FOR IMPROVING THE LISTENING SKILL

Topic: “ Going to the movies ”

Skills: Listening, reading, writing and speaking

Time: 30 minutes

Level: CEFR level 2A

Learning outcome: Students will listen to the speakers talking about their favorite films and do the exercises to practice and improve their listening skill.

Vocabulary: Movie genres, entertainment and cultural events.

Resources: Podcast link - Computer - Projector - Speakers.



## ACTIVITIES

### Activity 1:

#### Task 1

- Match the types of film with the pictures

#### Task 2:

- Listen to a conversation and decide which film are Mario and Tamara going to see?

### TASK 3:

- Listen again to the speakers about their favorite films and write the correct answer in each picture.

### Activity 2:

#### Task 1

- Check understanding : Gap fill
- Complete the gaps with the correct speaker

#### Task 2

- Checking understanding: Match the speaker to the gender of film

## INSTRUCTIONS:

General instructions about the topic will be presented.

Do the preparation exercise before students listen, then do the tasks to check students' understanding.

## WARM UP:



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## TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

- Teacher cut some cards before class.
- Teacher prepares one role play card per student.
- Teacher prepares a list of movies with images.
- Teacher divides the class into groups of four. Write this question on the board: “What makes you want to see a movie?” Have students discuss the question. Elicit some of the students’ thoughts. The discussion questions are about movies in general, for example:
  - What is your favorite genre of movie?
  - Who are some of your favorite actors?
  - What kind of movie is best for a date?
  - Mention your favorite scary movie

### PREPARATION:

Do this exercise before you listen, write the correct words in the boxes below the picture.

MATERIAL: Podcast link:

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening/intermediate-b1-listening/my-favourite-film>



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## LESSON PLAN WEEK 5

### PODCASTS FOR IMPROVING THE LISTENING SKILL

Topic: “ Personal care and appearance ”

Skills: Listening, reading, writing and speaking

Time: 30 minutes

Level: CEFR level 2A

Learning outcome: Students will listen to the conversation about the human body and do the exercises to practice and improve their listening skill.

Vocabulary: Parts of the body, Healthy food, personal care products.

Resources: Podcast link - Computer - Projector - Speakers.



## ACTIVITIES

### Activity 1:

#### Task 1

- Check understanding : Multiple choice

#### Task 2

- Do this exercise while you listen, circle the best option to complete these sentences.

### Activity 2:

#### Task 1

- Check understanding: Gap fill typing

#### Task 2

- Do this exercise while you listen, complete the sentences with a word or words

## INSTRUCTIONS:

General instructions about the topic will be presented.

Do the preparation exercise before students listen, then do the tasks to check students' understanding.

## WARM UP:

- The teacher shows a variety of color flashcards about the parts of the body.
- Students look at the picture and try to tell in English in order to activate their prior knowledge.



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## TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

- Divide in 2 groups the class, and give a list of words about parts of the body and a picture sheet in order to paste in the correct position the part of the body.
- The group who finish first are the winners.

### PREPARATION:

v Match the vocabulary with the correct definition and write a–d next to the numbers 1–4.

MATERIAL: Podcast link:

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening/intermediate-b1-listening/amazing-facts>