Polo del Conocimiento

Aplicación móvil BBC Learning English como recurso didáctico para mejorar las habilidades auditivas en inglés

BBC Learning English app as a Didactic Resource to improve the English Listening Skills

Aplicativo móvel BBC Learning English como um recurso de ensino para melhorar as habilidades de escuta em inglés

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Resumen

La presente investigación considera la aplicación móvil BBC Learning English como un recurso didáctico en la enseñanza del inglés para mejorar las habilidades auditivas en inglés de los estudiantes, tales como escuchar lo esencial, los detalles, el estado de ánimo y la actitud. La investigación consiste en un enfoque cuantitativo-cualitativo, con un diseño de carácter descriptivo de tipo investigación-acción, realizada bajo el diseño de campo, no experimental, transversal. El objetivo del artículo es realizar un análisis de una intervención realizada con 34 estudiantes del nivel escolar secundario de la escuela secundaria "Abdón Calderón" en la localidad de Palmales, empleando una metodológica esencialmente cuantitativa que permitió la descripción de los eventos que ocurrieron durante su conducción. En la intervención se diseñó un sistema de actividades didácticas utilizando la aplicación BBC Learning English. Se ha producido un aumento del 41,18% de los alumnos en casi todas las destrezas auditivas, como la escucha de información específica, la comprensión detallada y el estado de ánimo/actitud, salvo un descenso del 17,65% en la escucha de lo esencial. Asimismo, los resultados revelaron progresos en las destrezas lingüísticas de los alumnos y un aumento de la motivación y la atracción por el inglés. Por lo tanto, BBC Learning English ofrece podcasts con auténticas conversaciones en inglés donde no sólo desarrollan sus habilidades de Listening, sino también el resto de habilidades en inglés, inmersos en un entorno de aprendizaje altamente motivado y provocando un conocimiento significativo y duradero para los alumnos.

Palabras claves: Proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del inglés; Aplicaciones móviles; sub-Habilidades auditivas en inglés; Sistema de actividades didácticas en inglés.

Abstract

The present research considers the BBC Learning English mobile application as a didactic resource in English language teaching to improve students' English listening skills, such as listening for gist, detail, mood, and attitude. The research consists of a quantitative-qualitative approach, with a descriptive character design of action research type, conducted under the field, non-experimental, cross-sectional design. The article's objective is to analyze an intervention carried out with 34 students of the secondary school level of the "Abdón Calderón" secondary school, during three sessions, in the town of Palmales, using an essentially quantitative methodology that allowed the

description of the events that occurred during its conduction. In the intervention. The learners carried out listening practice using podcasts from the BBC Learning English app, obtaining excellent student learning outcomes. there has been an increase of 41.18% of students in almost all the listening skills, such as listening for specific information, detailed understanding, and mood/attitude, except for a decrease of 17.65% in listening for gist. Also, the results revealed progress in students' English language skills and boosted motivation and attraction to English. Therefore, BBC Learning English offers podcasts with authentic English conversations where they cannot develop their Listening skills, but also the rest of English skills, immersed in a highly motivated learning environment and provoking significant and lasting knowledge for students.

Keywords: English teaching-learning process; Mobile applications; English listening skills; System of English didactic activities.

Resumo

A presente pesquisa considera o aplicativo móvel BBC Learning English como um recurso didático no ensino da língua inglesa para melhorar as habilidades auditivas dos alunos em inglês, como ouvir a essência, detalhes, humor e atitude. A pesquisa consiste em uma abordagem quanti-qualitativa, com delineamento de caráter descritivo do tipo pesquisa-ação, realizada sob o delineamento de campo, não experimental, transversal. O objetivo do artigo é analisar uma intervenção realizada com 34 alunos do ensino médio da escola secundária "Abdón Calderón", durante três sessões, na cidade de Palmales, usando uma metodologia essencialmente quantitativa que permitiu a descrição dos eventos que ocorrido durante sua condução. Na intervenção. Os alunos praticaram a audição usando podcasts do aplicativo BBC Learning English, obtendo excelentes resultados de aprendizagem dos alunos. houve um aumento de 41,18% dos alunos em quase todas as habilidades auditivas, como ouvir informações específicas, compreensão detalhada e humor/atitude, exceto por uma diminuição de 17,65% em ouvir essências. Além disso, os resultados revelaram progresso nas habilidades de inglês dos alunos e aumentaram a motivação e a atração pelo inglês. Por isso, a BBC Learning English oferece podcasts com conversas autênticas em inglês onde não podem desenvolver suas habilidades de escuta, mas também o restante das habilidades de inglês, imersas em um ambiente de aprendizado altamente motivador e provocando conhecimento significativo e duradouro para os alunos.

Palavras-chave: Processo de ensino-aprendizagem de inglês; Aplicações Móveis; Habilidades de escuta em inglês; sistema de atividades didáticas de inglês.

Introduction

Listening is one of the language skills that are very important in foreign language learning. Researchers have reported numerous accounts of how listening skills help to convey meaning from spoken language. According to Acosta 2020, knowing a second language needs proficiency in active and passive language skills to interact with others.

In this regard, Wilkin (1984), quoted in Al-Jawi (2010), mentions: "The transfer of linguistic knowledge from receptive to productive is probably a relatively slow process, but it does take place, as the study of language acquisition shows." Therefore, the time spent experiencing listening and reading training will ultimately lead learners to increase their English language production. A study by Lee and Muncie (2006) of 48 secondary students in Greater Vancouver showed advanced vocabulary development. These new words were found in texts and used by learners later in writing compositions due to the initially explicit teacher's explanation and elicitation of lexical items.

However, a qualitative study by Maulida (2018) of 188 secondary students and one teacher in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, argued that "Listening was frequently neglected in their school. It was only taught twice or three times in one semester," causing limited listening practice and thus poor understanding of language input. Hamouda (2013) argues that teaching listening skills has been barely developed and undervalued by educators in teaching and learning contexts.

By recognizing that a problem exists and by addressing the issue, Ahmadi (2018) posits that technology needs to be integrated into the education system to guarantee successful learning outcomes. Thus, high-tech artifacts have gained ground in today's education to cooperate in English teaching-learning dynamically, enthusiastically, and collaboratively.

Gangaiamaran and Pasupathi (2017), indicate that mobile phones have produced a completely new and significant effect on bilingual education regarding their usefulness and portability, replacing conventional and old-fashioned didactic resources.

All authors aforementioned suggest implementing this educational app to promote student learning and motivation in regular English classes and, even better, avoid considering technological devices as distractors. Still, teachers can employ them as a tools to achieve learning goals. Thus, this research aims to implement a system of English sessions using the BBC Learning English app as

a portable tool to grow independence in learning English, using real-life didactic resources. The research question arises: How to boost senior students' listening comprehension at "Abdón Calderón Muñoz" high school in Palmales town, during the 2021 school term?

Finally, this study provides critical insights into digital technologies, namely the BBC Learning English app, which can have a tremendous impact on student's development of listening skills; for this reason, thousands of language teachers can benefit from the findings of this research work.

Theoretical framework

The pedagogical bases of this study are Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory in Second Language Acquisition, Information Communication Technology, and Mobile-assisted Language Learning (MALL). Vygotsky's theory is the basis for the rest since he views learning as the final result of engaging in meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences.

Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory in Second Language Acquisition

Vygotsky's social-cultural theory (1978) as quoted in William and Burden (1997) mentions that this theory focuses on a task-based approach where learning can only happen if collaborative work and meaningful experiences interwoven. That is, the more learners are immersed in exciting group activities, the better will be the training results in language acquisition.

Estébanez (1992) posits that all training need to be interactive and connected with individuals' surroundings. Additionally, Al Hamdani (2013) argues that "learning is seen as a process of actively constructing knowledge by integrating experiences into the learners' prior knowledge; the learner plays an active role in building his/her knowledge" (p. 667). Thus, it is highly recommended to plan a system of classes using the BBC Learning English app replacing traditional teaching methods. Al Hamdani (2013) points out that "Learning with mobile indicates the use of mobile devices as a tool/cognitive tool to promote higher-order thinking skills (...)" (p.665). The Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) theory aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which suggests that teaching methods should encompass technology in their daily practices to meet modern students' learning needs.

Mobile-assisted Language Learning (MALL)

Stockwell and Hubbard (2013) state that Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) has gained ground in all language learning environments due to its comfort, ease, portability, and affordability for stakeholders in education. Bustillo, J. et al. (2017) point out that "There is a wide variety of applications such as for the development of linguistic competences, listening, in reading, and writing" (p.56).

Riska and Rakhmadiah (2021) states, "MALL is really effective media for learners one of them is in increase the listening comprehension. The researcher from the data above also proved that MALL is also become a solution for us to increase our skill in English.". Considering this principle, the BBC Learning English app offers students active and collaborative learning opportunities to sharpen their English competencies unlimited times and ways, being the student the protagonist of their knowledge.

Literature review

Ministerio de Educación (2013) states, "English language teaching and learning, it is expected that Ecuadorian students in the public educational system will be able to achieve meaningful objectives such as accessing information published in English in different fields (i.e. science, commerce, technology). "Leaving behind a conventional lecture-based learning approach may help teachers to develop a more advanced tech-based learning approach where students can achieve learning goals more successfully by interacting in a dynamic and collaborative learning environment.

The Ecuadorian National Curriculum embraces technology in the teaching-learning process to develop English language skills. Unfortunately, their affordances have not been adequately exploited in EFL sessions due to factors such as a lack of Internet access, teacher expertise in technology, and availability of handheld devices (Solano, Cabrera, Ulehlova, and Espinoza, V, 2017).

From mentioned above, teachers perceive the importance of technology in EFL settings classroom Dabbagh, Fake, and Zhang (2019) found out that the smartphones are one of the most beneficial devices over laptops by learners to support learning. Therefore, there is no point in considering smartphones as distractors, but rather as tools that provide learners with opportunities to grow in

their second language knowledge. So, students can sharpen their language skills and entertain themselves simultaneously.

In a quantitative study made by Miranda (2022) with a group of 13 fifth-level University students at Universidad Técnica de Ambato in Ecuador, the results showed that BBC Learning activities had a positive effect on the development of vocabulary and also boosted their preferences and motivation to learn a foreign language. Moreover, in a qualitative and quantitative study by Davydenko (2021) with a group of first-year University students at Gogol State University in Ukraine, BBC Learning podcasts helped improve listening comprehension for University students. Students carried out special BBC Learning podcast activities at different lesson language stages: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. The results showed that these online activities significantly improved student listening understanding and boosted their motivation toward English learning.

Likewise, in a case study conducted by Herlisna, Rohayati & Faridah (2022), the results revealed that in a group of 6 twelve-grade students in a secondary education course, the BBC Learning YouTube Channel could be used as a real-life didactic resource to improve their language input. Also, the study revealed that they showed positive attitudes toward English. Kresnawan (2012) employed news records from BBC Learning English with tenth-grade students in a quasi-experimental study design. The results showed that BBC Learning makes the English teaching-learning process more interactive and facilitates student listening comprehension.

Methodology

Design of the study

This research combines quantitative and qualitative methods to collect information in the teaching-learning process. The main instruments employed were the observation guide, the teacher interview, and the pre-test and post-test.

Participants

The study population consists of 34 senior English students at "Abdón Calderón Muñoz" high school in Palmales town. The students received instruction on BBC Learning English app during three sessions during a period of three weeks.

Instruments

Observation sheet

Kawulich, (2006) argues that observation guide allows the researchers to get information about factors that influence the subject of study, in this case, the listening skills in a natural context. For this purpose, an observation guide as a qualitative data collection tool lets getting the information needed. It consists of two sections, each of these contains four items whose statements were designed based on the variable subject of study.

Teacher survey

They are a group of questions associated with teacher's benefits on problems on the education system. Government or institutions receive feedback on teachers' degree of instruction, favorite teaching methods and beliefs. This instrument holds four questions regarding the listening skills.

Pre-test and post-test

In this non-experimental research, there was nonrandom assignment of subjects to the treatment. The listening skill variable was measured before (pre-test) and after (posttest) the treatment or condition. The pre-test and post-test were compared. Finally, the table 1 shows a mark distribution for students' scores both in the pre-test and post-test. This distribution aims at classifying the students according to their test scores.

Table 1.

Mark distribution

Levels	Value
Excellent	2.5 marks and above
Very good	2 – 2.49 marks
Good	1 – 1.99 marks
Poor	less than 1

Researchers carried out the observation guide and the teacher interview two weeks before the instruction started. Later, on the first day of intervention, leaners had the diagnostic test. At the end, after the 3-week instruction, students took the post-test to determine if there was any

improvement in the students' listening skills. The listening tests were given with the assistance of the classroom teacher to avoid subjectivity.

Results

Observation guide

Regarding the skill "listening for gist", students reached a good level because they rarely understood the gist from oral texts. In addition, in listening for specific information, the students scored a good level, as they rarely managed to find specific information from oral texts. Additionally, in the skill "listening for detailed understanding," students demonstrated a very good level, as they understood deeper comprehension from oral texts. Finally, in the skill "listening for mood/attitude", students got a very good level, as they always control to identify the speaker's mood/attitude in oral texts.

Teacher survey

The teacher said that his students' listening skills development reached a score of sixty over one-hundred. The instructor considers that most of his students can listen for the general idea, specific details, detailed understanding and mood and attitude in listening activities. In other words, students are able to understand more effectively conversations, dialogues, songs, etc.

Pre-test and post-test

To assess to what extent the use of the BBC Learning English app influenced on the senior students' listening skills at "Abdón Calderón Muñoz" high school, in a test containing four listening comprehension questions.

The test consisted of multiple-choice and gap-filling questions. In the evaluation, each question/item has a correct answer for each possibility valued at 1 point; however, sometimes, it is also possible to have an approximation to the right solution, valued at 0.5 points, while the other possibility is 0.

Table 2 shows the number of students classified by their scores on each listening skill in the pre-test. Regarding listening for gist, 97% of students reported their highest scores at an 'excellent' level, while concerning listening for specific information, 67.6% of students reported low scores

at a 'good' status. These two groups are 29.4% apart, so they can be considered the two most representative groups of the exam.

Table 2.

Pre-test results

Listening skills	Number of students			
	Excellent	Very good	Good	Poor
1. Listening for gist	33	0	0	1
2. Listening for specific information	10	0	23	1
3. Listening for detailed understanding	12	1	19	2
4. Listening for mood/attitude	11	21	0	2

Table 3 reveals significant improvements in almost all students´ listening skills in the post-test, except for the listening for gist. For example, 41.18% of students scored higher in listening for specific information, detailed understanding, and mood/attitude. From the results above, the Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) of BBC Learning English improved learners' listening skills significantly.

Table 3.

Post-test of English listening skills

Listening skills	Number of students			
	Excellent	Very good	Good	Poor
1. Listening for gist	27	0	0	7
2. Listening for specific information	24	0	5	5
3. Listening for	26	0	5	3

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detailed understanding				
4. Listening for mood/attitude	25	0	0	9

Discussions

Kannan and Meenakshi (2023) agree that MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) enables learners to overcome internal and external barriers such as time, place, work, and study. Also, they can exploit the electronic gadgets' functionalities in favor of their improvements in English language skills with particular emphasis on auditory and oral competencies.

Similarly, in this research, there has been an increase of 41.18% of students in almost all the listening skills, such as listening for specific information, detailed understanding, and mood/attitude, except for a decrease of 17.65% in listening for gist. Similarly, Nurislami (2022) conducted action research in two terms. The mean of students' scores on the D-test in time I and the test in term II. The mean of the test in term I (84,19) is higher than in the D-test (75,48). Then, the mean test of term II (93,55) is higher than in term I (84,19)—the score improvement of term I to term II (9,36) or 9%. The results showed a significant improvement in students' listening skills by BBC Learning English media.

In addition, Davidenko (2021) agrees that podcasts on the BBC Learning English app helped students improve their English learning competencies by instructing EFL students with podcast activities in every English lesson. In this study, podcasts were used to encourage students to listen to real-life conversations among native speakers, listen for details in conversations, and form mental pictures of what is happening in these conversations.

Conclusions

The level of listening development skills was nearly 35%; however, after this intervention, they could reach 76%. Thus, the BBC Learning English app positively benefited the student's listening skills. Indeed, many English Foreign Language (EFL) classes can incorporate this app into their English lessons as an alternative to traditional teaching resources such as textbooks, wallcharts posters, or flashcards.

Additionally, the findings of this research highlight the effectiveness of podcasts from BBC Learning English in the development of all four language skills in general. Therefore, technology is an extraordinary asset to consider whenever English teachers wonder how to use technology to

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extend instruction and learning outside the classroom. It is well-known that not all EFL learners can have the opportunity to talk to native speakers after their English classes. This interactive app may be an excellent alternative to ineffective traditional teaching methods.

Finally, BBC Learning English app positively affects student satisfaction and motivation toward English. Highly motivated students will be more apt to learn English and reach learning outcomes successfully.

Limitations

This research proved the excellent results of using the BBC Learning English app in EFL settings and improving language skills such as speaking, writing, and reading. However, further studies could improve deficiencies in terms of the short duration of this study and sample size. These factors may affect the reliability of the test results. Also, the pre-test and post-tests may be affected by subjective teacher assessment.

Another limitation is using more BBC Learning English app features, not just podcasts. It would be nice to see their functionalities and utility to boost language learning; thus, take advantage of them as much as possible.

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