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THESIS REPORT:

MOBILE PHONES AS TOOLS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE
LEARNING ACTIVATION OF A2 LEVEL STUDENTS AT PUCE
ESMERALDAS

TESIS DE GRADO:

TELÉFONOS MÓVILES COMO HERRAMIENTAS PARA LA
ACTIVACIÓN DEL APRENDIZAJE DEL IDIOMA INGLÉS DE LOS
ESTUDIANTES DEL NIVEL A2 DE LA PUCE ESMERALDAS

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Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation are contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copies of the dissertation to the Graduate College. I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

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STATEMENT BY THE AUTHOR

I, Byron Patricio Castro Mosquera, affirm that the following investigation in the present thesis report research is totally unique, authentic and personal.

The content of this research is a limited legal and academic responsibility of the author and PUCE Esmeraldas.

Byron Patricio Castro Mosquera

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ABSTRACT

Technologies are of paramount importance for language teaching because they may activate learning. With the purpose to use mobile phones (MP) as tools for English language learning activation, a descriptive qualitative-quantitative investigation was done with the use of the analytic, synthetic and hermeneutic methods; and the techniques of observation and survey which were applied to 70 students and 4 English teachers of the A2 level at PUCE Esmeraldas, from August to September 2018. The results revealed that although students showed interest in the use of MP, there was not a systematic use of them in the English lessons which was caused by a lack of methodological orientations on how to use this device to activate learning. This coincides with the results of previous studies about the use of technologies, specifically MP, in English teaching in order to activate the learning process. It is concluded that a methodological approach to carry out the use of MP as tools for learning activation is strongly needed. Thus, it is important that teachers take into consideration the most useful apps which may help to achieve this purpose without forgetting the students' English proficiency level.

KEYWORDS: technologies; mobile phones, English language; learning activation; teaching methodologies.

RESUMEN

Las tecnologías son una parte importante en la enseñanza de un idioma ya que éstas pueden activar el aprendizaje. Con el propósito de utilizar teléfonos móviles como herramientas para la activación del aprendizaje del idioma inglés, se realizó una investigación descriptiva, cualitativa-cuantitativa con los métodos analítico, sintético y hermenéutico; y las técnicas de observación y encuesta que se aplicaron a 70 estudiantes y 4 profesoras de inglés del nivel A2 en la PUCE Esmeraldas desde enero a septiembre del 2018. Los resultados revelaron que, aunque los estudiantes muestran interés en el uso de teléfonos móviles, no hay un uso sistemático de los mismos en las clases de inglés a causa de la falta de orientaciones metodológicas acerca de cómo usar este dispositivo para activar el aprendizaje. Esto coincide con los resultados de los estudios previos realizados con respecto al uso de las tecnologías, específicamente teléfonos móviles, en la enseñanza de inglés para activar el proceso de aprendizaje. En conclusión, se necesita un enfoque metodológico para llevar a cabo el uso de los teléfonos móviles como herramientas para activar el aprendizaje. Además, es importante que los profesores tomen en consideración las aplicaciones móviles más apropiadas para poder cumplir con este propósito sin olvidar el nivel de inglés de los estudiantes.

PALABRAS CLAVE: tecnologías; teléfonos móviles; idioma inglés; activación del aprendizaje; metodologías de enseñanza.

INTRODUCTION

Theme Presentation

The 21st century is definitely the era where technologies have reached a massive worldwide impact. During the years, information and communication technologies (ICT) have developed unlimited ways of uses for work, science, agriculture and educational environments as well.

Every branch has taken advantage of ICT as well as education. Since the way in which human beings communicate among them to the way they learn new things, ICT made things easier from the moment they appeared for the very first time. And it is more than obvious that nowadays, talking about education, the impact has been higher. However, it seems that teachers have not gone deeply enough on that, in such a way they think that ICT only refer to computers or web pages, and not to the extensive tools which they actually cover.

One clear example of this is mobile phones (MP), as their use has been greater, the idea that such technological devices may be useful as creative and innovative tools in the teaching-learning process has been increasing because they may not only provide the necessary motivation for students, but also for teachers who can take advantage of the teaching time by using them.

Problem Statement

Pre-professional practices have been helpful in order to diagnose the lack of use of MP in the English teaching-learning process. This happens because of the particular manner of teachers for teaching and also because they do not know how to use them when teaching.

In order to learn something new, it was necessary, for students, to be enabled to have capacities, knowledge, strategies and accurate abilities to accomplish this purpose. At the same time, teachers shall realize some important aspects such as:

how much students are involved during the teaching-learning process, to be sure that students must know the objectives that the teacher is expecting to achieve, and of course, to use reinforcements, specially the positive ones that allows to the teacher to design test in order to know the previous knowledge that students have.

Due to this, it is convenient to know the relationship between MP and English language learning activation for teachers to have a clear idea about the accurate way to integrate MP into their classroom in order to have successful results. Therefore, the following research question was posed as the main one: How can MP be used for English language learning activation?

The fact is that when talking about MP, not all the stuff they offer is useful to be introduced in a classroom as tools for English language learning activation because most of them could play a distractive role in the English teaching-learning process. That is why at the end of this investigation there will be some patterns which teachers should take into consideration when they want to use MP as tools for English language learning activation.

Justification

MP are part of everyone's daily life nowadays, and there is no way to put them aside because even for students as well as teachers, they are very useful. In addition, there is the possibility, mainly for teachers, to take advantage of MP and use them as tools for English language learning activation as students feel motivated while they learn.

Then, the principal contribution of this investigation focuses on the way of how to do it and what shall be considered by teachers of the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador in Esmeraldas, when they want to use MP with A2 level students as tools for English language learning activation.

Objectives

General Objective

- To analyze the use of MP as tools for English language learning activation of A2 level students at PUCE Esmeraldas.

Specific Objectives

- To determine the teaching methodologies for teachers to use MP as tools for English language learning activation of A2 level students at PUCE Esmeraldas.
- To analyze the most useful applications for MP to be used in English language learning activation of A2 level students at PUCE Esmeraldas.
- To determine the benefits that MP, used as tools for English language learning activation, provide to the A2 level students at PUCE Esmeraldas.

CHAPTER I:

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. ICT in the 21st Century

There is no doubt that nowadays ICT are part of the technological culture where human beings are surrounded by, they are mainly important in such a way that people have the necessity to use them in order to accomplish different activities in a fast and easy manner.

To argue this, there are thousands of ways where ICT can be applied. Since the moment they appeared, the way of communication among human beings has dramatically changed. But then, what do ICT have to deal with? Perhaps an obvious question to answer, but it makes a lot of sense, though. According to Mahapatra, Sahu, Nanda, Kaur, and Prahar (2017), “ICT deals with how digital information passes between the devices. The most prolific example is the Internet, a worldwide network of computers linked together by telephones lines.” (p. 5) However, depending on the needs, there are many other examples such as tablets, smart TVs, digital books, DVDs, MP and so on.

Whatever the types of a device by means of people make use of ICT; the goal is still the same: to take advantage of the activities offered by technologies. Independently to this, there are some plus statements to take into consideration when talking about ICT. One of them is the introduction to interaction, not only to keep in touch worldwide but also to know and get more information about different cultures.

However, ICT can also be double-edged swords because if people are not responsible enough with what technologies offer, it is highly possible to obtain in that variety of information fake data which may harm people’s minds in all the areas where they are working in.

1.1.1. The Impact of ICT on Education

ICT are extremely influencing every developing discipline and that includes Education. Thus, it is affecting every aspect of education from the teaching-learning process as well as the assessment and evaluation. There are tons of benefits of using ICT in educational terms such as the improvement of the effectiveness of education, also it facilitates research and scholarly communication, etc.

That is why the impact of ICT and their potential for the education field is widely huge. However, and as it is well known, in many educational institutions technologies are used as course-books in order to support and improve the teaching-learning process, or at least that is the purpose to integrate ICT in education. González (2015) argues that technologies should be a complement to traditional education. Then, the use of it in daily classes may improve the quality of them. Nevertheless, it does not mean that technologies are well applied at all by teachers because, as Woodson (2014) states despite the fact people are involved in the technology era, many teachers are uncomfortable with the idea of integrate technologies into the classroom. This is due to several factors, including the absence of tools and preparation, negative judgement about technology in general and a lack of acceptance regarding the effectiveness of classroom technologies.

Regardless of this, it is quite important to mention that teachers, who are thinking about the use of ICT in their classroom instructions, need not necessarily to master but to know how to do it. On the contrary, if teachers do not do it as it is supposed to, it may frustrate the whole learning process. This means that technologies in terms of educational uses must be the prior responsibility for teachers as heads of the delivery of information into the classroom environments.

1.1.2. The use of Mobile Phones in English Language Learning

English is one of the most common languages taught all around the world and it is also considered as the connecting language of the business world (González, 2016). Since the moment when very young learners take their first steps into the

educational institutions, they start to learn English and even beyond higher education. For this reason, it is essential that teachers accurate their instructions by making use of the different devices that ICT offer.

One of those devices is MP. In this case, it is very common to hear a teacher tell students: "put away your cellphones" during a presentation, at the beginning of the class and even that is one of the compulsory rules students have to follow to when teachers introduce their classes for the very first time. However, González (2016) argues that "there is a new tendency in English classes where teachers promote the use of the cellphone as a compliment in their English learning process." (p. 5). Then, it is clear that the main purpose is to use mobiles as tools for activating students to learn the English language and, believe it or not, teachers encourage students to feel motivated by using something they master through a variety of methodologies and applications to accomplish it.

Nalliveettil and Alenazi (2016) argue that MP with internet connectivity can look for hundreds of web pages and give details of a high degree of exactness for teachers as well as students. They sensibly refund reference books and keep away from the physical labor of visiting university libraries which is not something bad, but it may cost a waste of time in order to find the precise information according to the purposes. In spite of their effectiveness in assembling information for classroom responsibilities, there are also professors and parents who may not foster their children or pupils to use MP in the classroom_because the distraction of them can be tremendously hard to be controlled.

That is why Nalliveettil and Alenazi (2016) are in agreement when they say that this may frustrate students from activating cognitive skills because of an over-dependence on mobile devices such as brainstorming and recalling that are necessary for creativity. This can be the origin for students to may not find it necessary to store the acquired facts in their minds because they already have quick and easy access to the information. There are some researchers who are of the opinion that the information which would actually have to be stored in the pupils' minds is already stored in their MP. Shudong and Higgins (2006) point out that in order to display images and text in a better way, MP makers have made

their screens larger, yet the big deal is that these screens cannot be made too sizable because MP would not be portable enough, and in this way, they would not accomplish with an academic purpose.

A really big disadvantage of using mobile technology is that pupils often waste considerable hours chatting with their classmates on social media sites and browsing on web pages with any non-academic purpose, and that affects their academic performance. Kuznekoff and Titsworth (2013) are of the opinion that the high potential distraction caused by learners using their MP has become an affair to many classroom instructors. However, the availability of no paid language learning software apps in the latest MP makes it an important tool for EFL students to learn English.

1.1.2.1. Connectivism

This learning theory explains how Internet technologies have created new opportunities for people to learn and share information across the World Wide Web and among themselves (Siemens, 2005). These technologies include all the ICT devices mentioned before which enable people to learn and share information among others.

However, it is important to take into consideration a key feature of connectivism which is that in connectivist learning, the teacher shall guide learners to information and answer as many questions as needed, in order to support students' learning and sharing on their own. Learners are also encouraged to look for information on their own devices and express what they find. A connected community around this shared information often results.

In other words, the starting point for learning occurs when knowledge is caused by learners connecting to and participating in a learning community. Siemens (2005) defines the term learning communities as the group of similar areas of interest which enables interaction, sharing, dialoguing and thinking together.

Besides, in the connectivist model, the learning community is described as a node, which is always part of a larger network. According to Siemens (2006), nodes emerge from the connection points found on a network and they may also be organizations, libraries, journals as well as databases or any other sources of information.

However, Siemens (2006) argues that with this theory, there is no real concept of transferring knowledge, making knowledge or even building knowledge, but it emerges from the connections that are formed during network activity instead. Therefore, filtering to networks of human and technological nodes helps to face the rapid expansion of available knowledge.

1.1.2.2. The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching

Littlewood (1981) explains that this approach makes teachers aware that it is not enough to teach learners to manipulate language structures, but to develop strategies for relating these structures to their communicative functions in both real situations and time.

Then, the Communicative Approach is based on the idea that learning a language successfully comes through having to communicate real meaning. So, when learners are involved in an environment that allows them to use real communication; therefore, their natural strategies for language acquisition will be used and they will be able to learn to use the language as well, and that is called communicative competence.

In order to emphasize this concept, Richards (1985) argues that the communicative competence refers not only to the knowledge of some grammatical rules of a language that helps to form grammatical sentences but also to know when, where and to whom to use these sentences in a speech community.

Moreover, Das (1984), talks about the "What" and "How" of language teaching and learning in the Communicative Approach. The 'what' refers to the contents to

be taught to the learners where the emphasis is more on the use of language for communication of meaning than learning the language structures, including language forms and vocabulary. However, this does not imply that the grammatical and lexical aspects are neglected. In fact, they do have a place in the Communicative Approach of language teaching.

On the other hand, Das (1984) explains that the manner in which language is taught and learned refers to certain procedures and techniques used in order to acquire in an unconscious way and also learn in another conscious one a language through communication. Due to this reason, accurate and fluent use of the language by the exploitation of communicative activities would be facilitated.

According to Wan (2017), “Communicative activities refer to the techniques which are employed in the communicative method in language teaching.” (p. 2). Those activities such as games, exercises, practices, and projects, involve doing things with language by making use of the target language. The language using activities for communication may not be restricted to a conversation, but it may involve the four well-known skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing or integration of two of them.

1.1.2.3. The Sociocultural Approach

Vygotsky (1978) developed one of the most important approaches in language learning, which was: The Sociocultural Approach. He believed that learning has its basis in interacting with other people. Once this has occurred, the information is then integrated on the individual level.

The Sociocultural theory focuses not only on how adults and peers influence individual learning but also on how cultural beliefs and attitudes impact the instruction and learning take place. According to Vygotsky (1978), children are born with basic biological constraints on their minds. Each culture, however, provides what he referred to as 'tools of intellectual adaptation.' These tools allow children to use their basic mental abilities in a way that is adaptive to the culture

in which they live. For example, while one culture might emphasize memory strategies such as note-taking, other cultures might utilize tools like reminders or rote memorization.

However, Gee, Hull, and Lankshear (2018) affirm that the focus of learning and education in a sociocultural approach is not children or schools, but human lives seen as trajectories through various social practices in many social institutions. Therefore, if the idea that learning has to be powerful, then what a child or adult does as a learner must be attached in meaningful and tremendous stimulating ways with mature versions of social practices they have already lived.

1.1.2.3.1. The Zone of Proximal Development

An important concept in the sociocultural theory is known as the zone of proximal development (ZPD). According to Vygotsky (1978), the ZPD is the distance between the current development level as determined by self-governing problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult leadership or in collaboration with additional capable peers.

Essentially, it includes all of the knowledge and skills that a person cannot yet understand or perform on their own yet, but is capable of learning with guidance. As children are allowed to stretch their skills and knowledge, often by observing someone who is slightly more advanced than they are, they are able to progressively extend this ZPD.

For making this statement a little bit more clear, Wells (1999) explains that “the zpd may apply in any situation in which, while participating in an activity, individuals are in the process of developing mastery of practice or understanding of a topic” (p. 333).

Moreover, Chaiklin (2003) affirms that a key element of the ZPD, which is not realized as important, is that developmental levels are defined by the present sociocultural contexts. Then, in order to identify a students’ ZPD, it is necessary

to identify the sociocultural context first. Students' prior knowledge and capabilities cause effects on their interactions within their sociocultural context, thereby allowing them to progress towards developmental expectations.

Students take advantage of material and conceptual resources in their environment as well, including more knowledgeable others in idiosyncratic ways as individuals of a society. Then, the ability to respond to environmental supports helps them to get to the next level of knowledge.

1.2. Applications (apps) for MP to be used as Tools for English Language Learning Activation

Again, Woodson (2014) lists some apps which both teachers and students can use in the English language instruction. It is essential to point out that these apps may fit according to the purpose of the teacher's syllabus and, of course, to what is pretended to teach.

1.2.1. FluentU

FluentU allows students to learn the target language using real-world interactions and videos. It is especially helpful in the fact that it gives students quality independent practice, and it also offers valuable exposure in a way that is fun and effective.

This app sorts the videos by skill levels. The interesting fact is that words come up with sample definitions and sentences, so pupils are able to add them to their personal vocabulary lists and even figure out how the words are used in other videos.

1.2.2. Storybird

This is another cool and interesting app that allows students to build stories using images. This increases students' motivation and they enjoy practicing their reading and writing skills.

Storybird lets students and anyone make visual stories in seconds. It's a simple idea that has attracted millions of writers, readers, and artists to this platform. Families and friends, teachers and students, and amateurs and professionals can create more than 5 million stories.

1.2.3. Digital Textbooks and e-Readers

Woodson (2014) argues that digital textbooks can be less expensive than traditional textbooks most of the time, and since they can be accessed on MP, they are practical. That is why nowadays there are many digital textbooks that allow students to interact with the text digitally, find out more information about any topic, or even explore key places virtually.

Despite all its advantages, technology can be abused even in the educational context. However, Woodson (2014) affirms that teachers should not limit the experiences of pupils simply due to this alarm. Rather than avoid technology combination, there are actions that teachers can take into consideration to make them need to be both, responsible and productive.

One place to start is by examining responsibility use policy in detail with the students. Moreover, it is quite important to take into consideration if the educational institution where the teacher is working, has a policy that allows the educator feel free to include the use of MP in the English classes.

1.3. The Activation of a Language

Ferlazzo and Sypniewski (2018) argue that when students access to what they already know, they are able to learn better. Hence, this plays a big part in upgrading English language learners' academic literacy. Therefore, by means of

activating prior knowledge, it refers to obtain what students already know and build from what they need in order to access upcoming information easily.

In the English teaching-learning process, it is not a bad idea at all for students to use something they master, such as MP, in order to acquire the new language because they feel comfortable and relaxed at the moment to learn.

Ferlazzo and Sypniewski (2018) explain that one way to do it is by showing students, several times before to begin a new unit or text, a related video or slideshow, or display a photograph on the document camera. Also, by asking pupils to write or talk about it with a partner is a good way to measure prior knowledge, build background, and spark interest instantly. A not complicated prompt could be "What have you noticed?" or "What have you found interesting?" Now there are tons of resources at one's fingertips and they can be used to build a background in an engaging way. However, this can obtain better results if all of this previously can be done directly on their MP.

With the intention to make this concept clear, Alba (2004) explains that the activation of the teaching-learning process consists, in a few words, in making the teaching process more dynamic, assigning the student the active role, considering it to be a subject and not an object of the process. In order to achieve this purpose, the teacher must conduct the learning at all times and can only do it correctly when it is based on the self-activity of the student, as the subject of their own learning.

In the same way, Alba (2004) argues that in order to achieve meaningful learning, the teacher must carry out his instructional task through the provision of strategic supports, for him and for the students, achieving a superior solution to the problem to be learned. These strategic supports or instructional strategies are those developed and used by the teacher to carry out the development of the teaching-learning process, whose functions consist of activating or developing prior knowledge and helping to achieve deeper and more efficient processing of the information. in the students.

1.4. Previous Studies

For this investigation to be done, there were taken into consideration other similar studies regarding the use of ICT in English language learning activation. One of them was "Investigating attitudes towards the use of mobile learning in higher education" done by Al-Emran, Elsherif & Shaalan, (2016) which was aimed at exploring students and educators' attitudes towards the use of M-learning in higher educational universities within Oman and UAE in order to predict their intention of using M-learning technology in the educational context.

To serve this purpose, two survey questionnaires were conducted. One was aimed for students and another for educators. The participants of this study were 383 students and 54 instructors from five universities. In this study, different factors were examined in order to test where there is a significant difference among students and educators' attitudes towards the use of M-learning, such as age, gender, level of study, country, smartphone ownership, major in terms of students and age, country, academic rank, academic experience, and smartphone ownership in terms of educators. The results revealed significant differences among the students' attitudes towards M-learning regarding their smartphone ownership, country, and age. Furthermore, results also indicated that M-learning can be one of the promising pedagogical technologies to be employed in the higher educational environments within the Arab Gulf countries.

Another one was from González (2016) and his research called "The integration of ICT in English classes in the XXI century: Motivating English Learning". This investigator highlights the importance of ICT in the teaching-learning process of the English language in two universities of Colombia. He actively integrated MP in English classes as useful tools into four selected groups ranged between 25 to 30 students and was done in two different periods of the university year. This was with the purpose of creating a very modern environment in which most students are immersed nowadays.

In this investigation, MP were actively integrated into classes as a useful tool. What basically students did during this period was looking for new words in

online dictionaries. Besides, they sent some paperwork and they also took pictures of some of the presentations given in the classroom. MP were also used in an activity where students were challenged to write as fast as they could and answer some questions by working in small groups.

There was an observation regarding students' active participation in both face-to-face and virtual classes. Plus, the teacher was always looking for new and different technology tools for integrating them in the academic routine environment.

The study and evaluations of students' final achievements at the end of his research investigation demonstrated not only how powerful the integration of technology in the teaching-learning process has become nowadays, but also how useful the integration of different kinds of technology tools is in order to activate students' motivation towards the English language learning process by making use of MP, computers, tablets and so on.

Another previous study that was taken into consideration was one done by Rahimi and Miri (2014), called "The Impact of Mobile Dictionary Use on Language Learning" which is aimed to investigate the effect of using mobile dictionaries on language learning in comparison to using the common paperback dictionaries. The findings of this research reflect that learners, who use mobile dictionaries, improve their ability to learn the English language better and more than those who used printed dictionaries.

In this study, 34 lower-intermediate learners participated. They were divided into two groups: experimental group, with 17 students and the control group, with 17 students as well. Also, there were used two instruments in this study: for the experimental group, the fifth edition of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE) installed on their MP was used. On the other hand, the control group was asked to use the LDOCE printed version. Both groups were tested. The language achievement test consisted of 5 parts including grammar, listening, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing. This test was delivered twice, prior to the study and at the end of the course, and it was scored out of 100. The results revealed that the group who used the dictionary on the MP obtained better

results than the other groups who used the printed version. It means that learners who used the mobile dictionary to learn English improved their language ability more than those who used the printed dictionary.

On the other hand, Nalliveetil and Alenazi (2016) did a study which examines the impact of MP on English language learning skills of fifty-two male university undergraduate students that were studying in the sixth, seventh and eighth levels, respectively, with English as their major subject participated as volunteers. All the students were natives of Saudi Arabia, and of course, their mother tongue was Arabic.

For students, a questionnaire that gave a description of personality traits was applied and it consisted of two yes-no questions and twenty-eight self-report allegations. On the other and, a questionnaire consisted of four open-ended questions in order to provoke five English teachers' notions about the effectiveness of MP in improving undergraduates English language skills was used.

The findings of their study revealed that 86% of the students used their MP for translating English words and sentences they were not able to understand. On the other hand, the results of their study also inferred that 67% of the students think that MP can improve their English spelling skills, and 45% of them hold that they need not learn English spelling because they can always use an MP. Also, the English teachers who participated in their study were of the opinion that MP can absolutely increase students' communication abilities and also make them independent of the teacher. Moreover, they also think that students can work out independent learning habits and access resources repeatedly from various sources available on the internet.

Finally, in relation to the improvement that MP may cause or nor in students' English language learning ability, the results of their study revealed that English teachers who participated in the survey were of the opinion that MP can boost students' English language learning abilities.

1.5. Legal Foundation

According to the Ministry of Education of Ecuador (2012), it is the responsibility of the Ecuadorian State to fortify public education and co-education; guarantee a standing improvement of quality, the expansion of coverage, the physical infrastructure and the necessary equipment of public educational institutions.

Besides, the Ecuadorian State is responsible to eradicate illiteracy, functional and digital, and backup processes of post-literacy and lifelong learning for adults, and overcoming the educational delay by incorporating ICT in the educational process, as well as the encouragement of the teaching link with the productive and social activities (Ministry of Education of Ecuador 2012).

Therefore, the higher education system aims to the academic and professional training with a scientific, humanist and technological perspective that innovates, promotes, and develops the dissemination of knowledge and cultures by constructing solutions to the problems of the country. This also means that educational institutions shall be legally recognized as bilingual, according to the provisions of Article 111 of the General Regulation to the Organic Law of Intercultural Education (LOEI) of the Ministry of Education of Ecuador (2012), offer the curricular contents in both languages, native and foreign, provided that the compliance with national standards.

Plus, the article 31 of the Regulation of the LOEI of the Ministry of Education of Ecuador (2012), states that Senior High Educational Institutions may include additional subjects to the national curriculum that they consider pertinent according to their Institutional Educational Project increasing the time load of the instrumental areas such as Language and Literature, Mathematics and Foreign Language, as well as scientific areas such as Social Sciences and Natural Sciences, depending on the needs presented by their students.

Moreover, the Ministry of Education of Ecuador (2012) argues that the Ecuadorian State shall promote the educational centers to the regular improvement

in the teaching-learning process through the application of ICT emphasizing quality education with the inclusion of the updated technological tools.

Whiting objectives of the curriculum of English as a foreign language in according to the Ministry of Education of Ecuador emphasizes the importance of the application of new technologies or ICT where focus on the development of personal competencies, social and intellectual which are needed in order to reach its potential and to take part in an increasingly globalized world technologically that operates in other languages.

CHAPTER II:

MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Type of Investigation

This investigation was a descriptive qualitative-quantitative one. It was developed with the General English students at PUCE Esmeraldas from August to September 2018.

2.2. Population and Sample

The Population of this research study was 70 General English students and 4 teachers of General English. On the other hand, the Sample for this investigation was formed by 41 A2 English level students and 3 English teachers.

2.3. Operationalization of Variables

As it is shown in Appendix A, there were used two variables for this investigation: the independent one which is “The use of MP as tools”, and it has indicated the periodicity of vinculation of MP in the English lessons and the desire of students to work with MP. On the other hand, the dependent variable is the “English language learning activation” which has indicated the students’ engagement in the English lesson, as well as the desire of students to work with MP.

2.4. Methods of Investigation

The methods used were: Analysis, to analyze the bibliography as well as the results through the different instruments and Synthesis, to synthesize the most important theories about the use of technologies to activate students’ English language learning. It was also used to analyze the results and synthesize the most relevant information.

The hermeneutic method was also used for interpreting the most relevant information analyzed in the theoretical framework. Besides, it helped to interpret the results obtained with the application of the techniques. Finally, the descriptive statistics method was used to process the data obtained with the application of the techniques.

2.5. Techniques of investigation

The techniques used were a survey which was applied to the 41 A2 English level students at PUCE Esmeraldas as well as an observation which was applied to the same students in the same higher educational institution. The teacher who was responsible for this group of students was asked to provide 1 period of his class for students to complete the survey. On the other hand, the observation was done three times during different periods of classes in order to contrast the information obtained with the applied survey.

2.6. Instruments

To collect the data, the instruments designed were according to the different techniques that were used: For the technique of the survey, a questionnaire for students was used, which contained two open and four close questions in relation to the indicators to be evaluated. There were three final values: A high level which represents 80 points or more, a medium level which represents 60 to 79 points and a low level which represents 59 points or less.

For the technique of observation, an observation guide form was used, which contained three aspects to be observed: teachers' domain upon the use of MP, students' response and classroom general aspects. Those items were graded with a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 means bad and 4 very well.

2.7. Data processing

The obtained information from the application of the different techniques was tabulated manually. The data were represented by pie chart figures and using the Microsoft Excel program.

CHAPTER III: RESULTS

3.1. Results of the survey applied to A2 English level students

First of all, students were asked if they have or not MP provided by internet access. Most of them do have MP with WIFI connection; however, meanwhile they were answering this question, it was noticeable to hear them say that the WIFI connection provided by the university was not good as they would like and need.

Also, in this survey there is an item which tried to measure how much the English teacher allows students to use MP in order to solve any type of exercise, as stated in Figure 1, 58% of students argued that their teacher never allows them to use MP in the English classes instruction. On the other hand, 42% of them argued that they are allowed to use MP in the English classes sometimes.

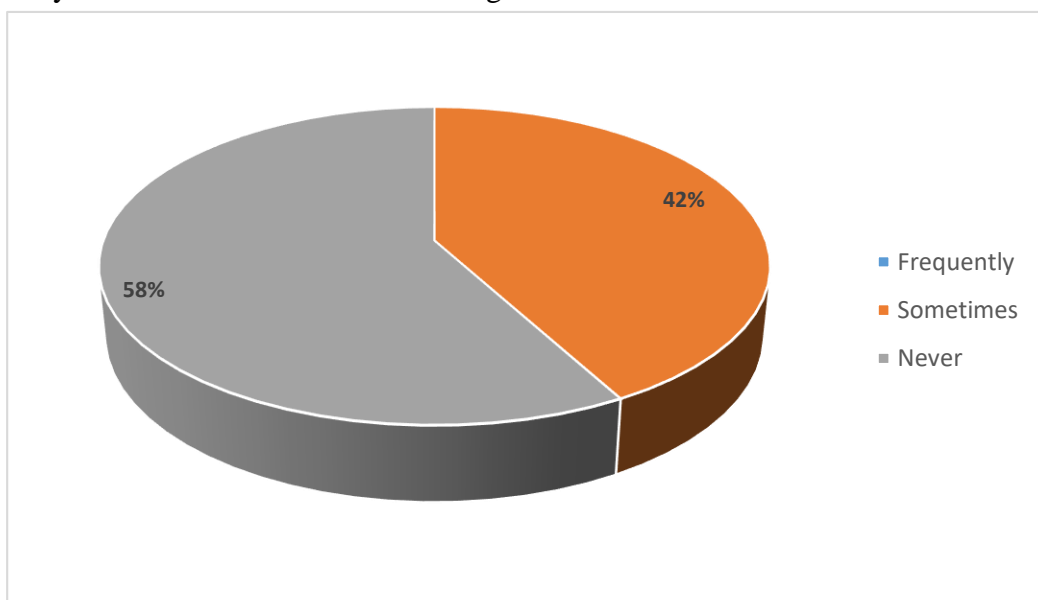


Figure 1: Frequency of the use of MP in English classes

Source: Survey applied to A2 English level students at PUCE Esmeraldas

On the other hand, concerning to the teacher's MP domain in the English class (Figure 2), the applied survey revealed that 66% of students think that the teacher has a perfect domain of MP. Even though, there is not a complete interaction between the English classroom activities and the use of MP, because the teacher does not allow to use them at all.

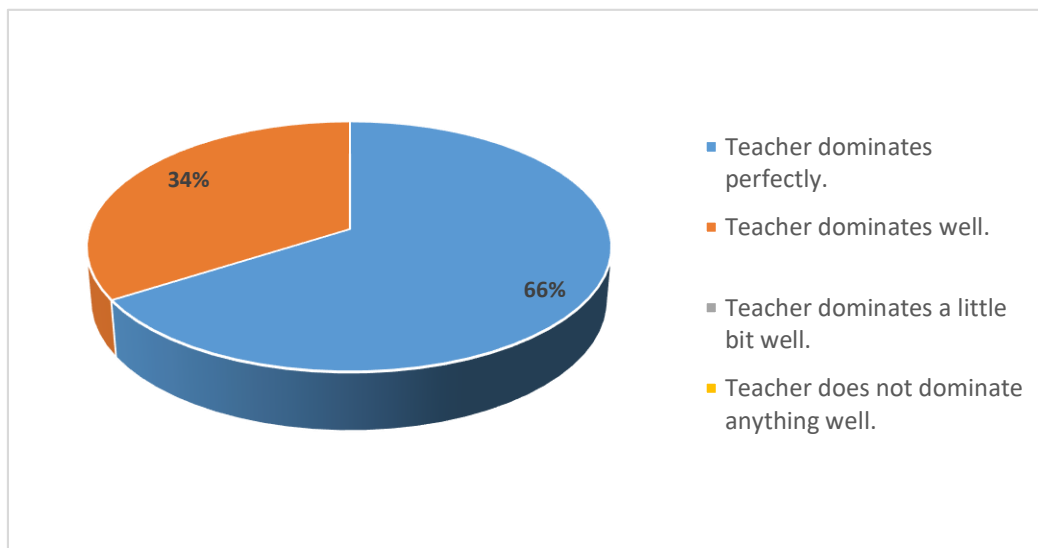


Figure 2: The teacher’s MP domain in the English language class

Source: Survey applied to A2 English level students at PUCE Esmeraldas

Besides, all of the students were in agreement while they were answering an item regarding if they think that MP can make the class more entertaining. There was an affirmative answer to this statement because they said, while they were answering this item, that it would be good to use technologies sometimes.

In order to prove the previous statement, there was an item regarded to the benefits of MP in the English classes in which students were allowed to select more than one option, and 62% of them, as shown in Figure 3, agreed that MP are very useful tools to look for information. Plus, 25% of them stated that MP are useful to work by teams or groups in a way they can share and deliver information or content across and among them.

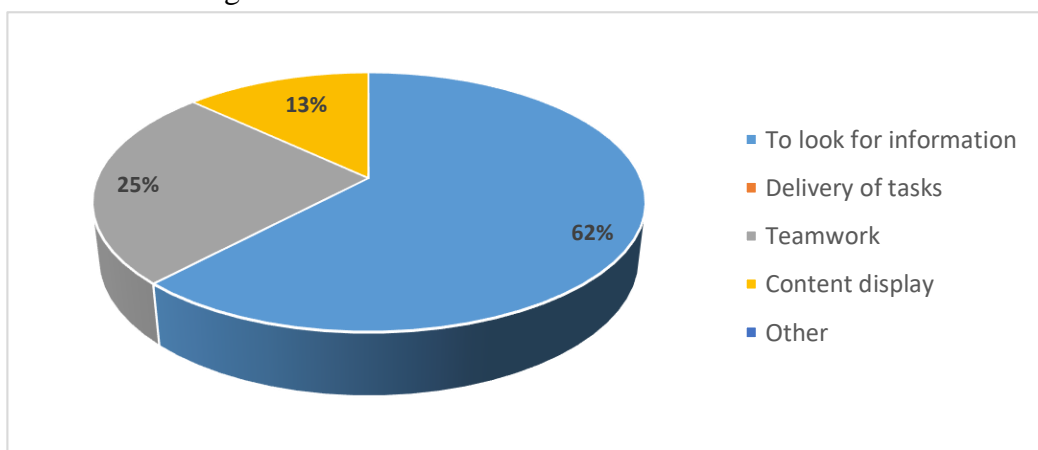


Figure 3: The benefits of MP in the English classes

Source: Survey applied to A2 English level students at PUCE Esmeraldas

To finish the survey, students were asked if they know about apps for MP which help them to improve their academic performance in the English language. If their answers were affirmative, they had to list the apps they know. Most of the students did not know apps that help them to improve their English skills, but the few who pretended to know wrote down apps such as Duolingo, Busuu and Google Translator as one of those helpful improving apps. Nevertheless, translating from one language to another is not one of the best ways to learn a new language because it does not challenge a student's language learning activation.

3.2. Results of the Observation

As was previously explained, an observation form was used in order to contrast the obtained information with the applied survey and valuing three essential aspects for this study: teachers, students, and classrooms' aspects. Each of them contained several items that were taken into consideration at the moment to value the appropriate conditions in order to use MP for activating English language learning. Besides, the results of those items helped to reinforce the previous data obtained in the applied survey because they were linked.

Accordingly, the results of the technique of observation indicated that there was no evidence of English language activation throughout the use of MP as tools. Therefore, it was not possible to measure how much the teacher domains MP in order to serve this purpose and to see which were the adequate teaching methodologies to use MP either.

Going deeper with this explanation, with the three observations done in this study, the use of MP as tools was not present. Even though, it was really noticeable that students had a strong desire to work with them. Besides, students tried to translate little parts of passage sometimes, and they used to do this while they were working by pairs.

Another important aspect to take into consideration was the environment where both, students and the English teacher were surrounded by, which is the

classroom. And although the use of MP was not visible, there was order in the class and both, students and the teacher worked in an environment of respect, the internet access in order to work with MP was not the appropriate one.

On the other hand, in order to make a comparison between both techniques, survey and observation, all the results obtained in the questions or items presented in the survey coincided with the technique of the observation, except one. In Figure 2, related to the teacher's MP domain in the English language class, most of the students represented by 66% said that their teacher has a perfect domain of MP. However, the results obtained with the technique of observation concerned with the teachers' aspect revealed that teachers never implemented MP in order to activate students' English language learning. For this reason, it was impossible to measure if teachers actually domain the use of MP to accomplish this purpose.

CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION

Basically, what González (2016) argued in his investigation regarding the integration of ICT in English classes was that one of the characteristics of using technology successfully is when students work more with their choices than with their teacher's direction. Just for the fact to give students the opportunity of exploring different ways where they can listen, watch and practice English, activate their curiosity in such a way that they can boost the improvement of their learning. Besides, in relation to teachers, those ones who are motivated and have a strong commitment to their students' learning and their own professional development integrate technologies as they are teaching. However, the situation with teachers at PUCE Esmeraldas cannot be considered similar because the real fact is that three observed teachers from general English do not use MP in their English classroom lessons in a way that they can help to improve their students' language learning activation.

Besides, as Al-Emran, Elsherif & Shaalan (2016) argue in their study related to the attitudes towards the use of mobile learning, that learning through technology is a quite important factor which has made learners to learn, collaborate and share ideas among the class. Once again, the idea of integrating technologies, such as MP, into the English classroom instruction is not far from the general objective of language learning. If there was the possibility to accomplish it at PUCE Esmeraldas, students would enjoy learning with something they master.

On the other hand, as Rahimi and Miri (2014) have investigated the use of mobile technologies for language learning, they coincide with the idea that a simple app, such as a mobile dictionary, makes learners' time efficient and helps them to acquire vocabulary. Then, it is clear that there is a variety of apps that can be useful not only for learners but for English teachers, and both can take advantage of the teaching time, especially when they are in big classes.

Nalliveettil and Alenazi (2016) also point out that the ineptitude of the various available language translating software to give a precise meaning to some English sentences can obstruct students' understanding of accurate meaning.

It is true that MP can be useful to stay in touch with people living in other countries. On the contrary, a disadvantage of using MP in English classes is that the students' language learning abilities may be hindered when translation apps show precise meanings of a given English word or sentence. To argue this statement Nalliveettil and Alenazi (2016) agreed that "Lack of guidance while using these translation software programmes can lead to students comprehending inaccurate meanings and thus leading to the breakdown in the communication process" (p. 270).

Nalliveettil and Alenazi (2016) also argue that students are often frustrated with the traditional teaching methodologies in EFL classrooms, and it is time for English teachers to attempt and test mobile technology integrating activities to help students develop a positive stance towards language learning. Therefore, English teachers should encourage students to work in a productive and cooperative way on language learning activities, using MP in the classroom. This can increase the amount of students' participation and create a positive language learning environment in the classroom as well.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

- MP need to be included as tools into English classes for activating students' language learning and improving the quality of the class for students of A2 English level at PUCE Esmeraldas.
- Teachers from General English at PUCE Esmeraldas need strategies and teaching methodologies that help them to use accurately MP as tools for the English language learning activation.
- Apps, in order to activate and challenge students' language learning, are needed and the use of them have to be monitored by the teacher to avoid any chance of distraction in students.
- The benefits of using MP as tools for English language activation increase students' motivation and desire to learn that language in a way that encourages them to look for information, deliver tasks and work in the team successfully.

CHAPTER VI: RECOMMENDATIONS

- To English teachers, to take into consideration the Connectivism theory as guidance in order to develop an accurate teaching methodology that helps them to integrate MP as tools for the English language learning activation in the classroom. As it was already discussed in the Theoretical Framework of this investigation, if students are provided with a connectivist learning, they will be able to share information across and among them which may improve their English proficiency level.
- To English teachers, to follow up-graded programs which may be workshops that provide them different online collaboration tools, such as the one used with Google Apps, which allow both, students and teachers, to share information and knowledge. It is expected with each workshop to achieve goals such as cultivate a community learning in which students exchange and acquire information as well as to design activities that allow teachers to explore and share their pedagogical interests and specific areas of expertise.
- To investigators, to continue this research with the design of accurate workshops for English teachers' up-grading on the use of MP to activate language learning in their students.
- To educational institutions, to provide an excellent internet connectivity for students and teachers to access contents and apps without problems, using their preferred devices, such as MP, anywhere, at any time, connected to a new generation of smart networks.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Operationalization of Variables

VARIABLE	CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	OPERATIONAL DEFINITION	DIMENSIONS	INDICATORS
The use of mobile phones as tools (IV)	It is the practical vinculation between technology and the English teaching-learning process.	It is the use of phones as tools in the English Language Teaching-Learning process.	Frequency of the use.	Periodicity of the vinculation of mobile phones in the English lessons.
				The desire of students to work with mobile phones.
English language learning activation (DP)	It is to boost students' English learning using a variety of instruments, methods, and methodologies.	It is the way in which students get motivated and feel interested in English learning.	Students' motivation.	Students' engagement in the English lesson.
			Students' interest in English learning.	The desire of students to work with mobile phones.

Appendix B: Survey

SURVEY AIMED TO STUDENTS OF A2 ENGLISH LEVEL AT PUCE ESMERALDAS

Objectives:

- To determine if students are allowed to use mobile phones to activate their English language learning.
- To determine teachers' domain upon mobile phone use.
- To determine which mobile phone applications are useful for students to improve their English language learning.

INSTRUCTIONS

- **Tick (✓) the answer you consider appropriate for each question.**
- **On question with an asterisk (*) at the end (#5), you can select more than one option.**

1. Do you have a mobile phone with internet access?

- a. Yes, with mobile data
- b. Yes, with WIFI
- c. No

2. How much does your teacher allow you to use your mobile phone in English classes to solve any type of exercise?

- a. Frequently
- b. Sometimes
- c. Never

3. Does your teacher easily master the use of the cell phone in the English classes?

- a. The teacher dominates perfectly.
- b. The teacher dominates well.
- c. The teacher dominates a little bit well.
- d. The teacher does not dominate anything well.

4. Do you think the cell phone can make the class more entertaining?

____ a.Yes

____ b.No

5. If YES, how? *

____ a. To look for information

____ b. Delivery of tasks

____ c. Teamwork

____ d. Content display

____ e. Other _____

6. Do you know mobile applications which help you improve your academic performance upon English language? If YES, which of them?

____ a.Yes

____ b.No

Appendix C: Observation Form

Professor's name: _____ Date: _____

Educational Institution: _____ Level: _____

Topic's name: _____

Objective:

- To confirm the obtained information from the applied survey.

1 = BAD	2 = REGULAR	3 = GOOD	4 = VERY GOOG
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TEACHER'S ASPECTS	VALUE			
	1	2	3	4
Frequent mobile phones implementation				
Mobile phones domain in the English language learning activation				
Creative mobile phones apps use				
Students' participation promotion				
Enthusiasm and interest transmission				
Adequate teaching methodologies to use mobile phones				
STUDENTS' ASPECTS	VALUE			
They feel enthusiastic and motivated while using mobile phones				
They carry out the activities accurately using mobile phones				
They ask for information every time				
They interact with other classmates				
They look for information using other resources with mobile phones				
CLASSROOM ASPECTS	VALUE			
There is order in the classroom				
It works in an environment of respect				
Easy Internet Access				

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