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DIDACTIC UNITS DESIGN TO FOSTER LISTENING IN DETAIL

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Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación
Master in Education with Emphasis on Language Didactics
Bogotá, D.C.
2015

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NOTE OF ACCEPTANCE

Signature of Jury President

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Bogotá, D.C., October 2015

DEDICATION

To God for giving me patience and wisdom in this stage of my life.
To my parents, my sisters and Fernando my love,
for helping me when I need it, you are my support.
Thanks to them for encouraging me with their best wishes and prayers.

I want to give recognition to Universidad INCCA de Colombia
For providing me support in an economical way.
Nydia Romero Valencia

First to God for guiding me in this process and giving me strength to take the right path Then, to my parents who have provided me all what I have needed, you are my life and the best example to follow. And to my great love, to my husband and best friend thanks for all your love, support and patience.

Thanks to all of them because after a long journey full of joy and difficulties I finally reached the top of the hill.

Francia del Pilar Gavilán G.

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We would like to thank our advisor Wilder Nieto for guiding and assisting us throughout this process.

We want to give a special recognition to the Language Center of the Pedagógica University and to our students of Basic 3 level for assisting us in carrying out this research project successfully.

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RAE

Title: Didactic Units Design To Foster Listening In Detail

Authors: Nydia Romero Valencia and Francia del Pilar Gavilán Galindo

Key Words: Listening Skill, Listening in detail; Didactic Unit

Description:

This study has to do with the process of design and implementation of didactic units to foster listening in detail for students of Basic 3 level of a Language Center of a public University in Bogotá (Colombia), focused on Action Research and Case study. Hence, six didactic units were implemented and developed by three students with the aim of enhancing the practice of the listening in detail sub-skill process and get better comprehension.

With the aim of carrying out this study researchers based on the following research model: Identify the problematic situation, look for antecedents on the topic, state the objectives, work on the literature review, design the didactic units, implement the units, make analysis of findings and draw conclusions.

The instruments used to gather data were: Field-notes, diagnostic test and students'. The final outcomes of the study evidenced that an ongoing and guided practice of the listening skill contributed to the improvement of the listening in detail sub-skill process based upon the tasks provided on the didactic units and an ongoing guidance from the teacher's side.

Sources: Diagnostic Test, Field-Notes Format, and Students' Artifacts

Diagnostic Test: Evaluation from Language Center of the Pedagógica University

Field-Notes: Based on classroom observation (Merriam, 1998)

Students' Artifacts: Didactic Units implementation (Hubbard & Power, 1999)

Contents:

-Introduction: Being a good listener helps you see the world through the eyes of others, as consequence; it opens your understanding and enhances your capacity for empathy which is essential for having a good communication in the current global world. Therefore, many people have reflected on the importance of English language because it is one of the most spoken languages all over the world. Language of course, is knowledge, and in today's world, knowledge is one of the key factors in competitiveness. Hence, English Language Teaching policies advocate the development of communicative competence in the target language so as to be competitive in any social life situations.

-Theoretical Framework: The CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) brought significant developments in terms of Listening to L2. It emphasized authenticity of materials, contexts and responses. It used findings from research into pragmatics, discourse analysis and sociolinguistics so as to show how real communication takes place. Listening in detail refers to the type of listening needed to find errors or determine differences between one passage and another. It is not permitted to ignore anything because the listener does not know exactly what information will help to achieve a task.

There are also some activities essential for selective listening in detail in the classroom such as: Bingo, spot the difference, a story told twice, times, dates, numbers, mixed focus, and so on. (Wilson, 2008). There are six steps so as to generate a process when designing didactic units according to Estaire & Zanón, (1990): Select the topic., Specify the communicative objectives., Plan the final task(s) to achieve the objectives., Specify the thematic and linguistic components needed to complete the final tasks, Planning the process: sequencing of the steps to follow through “enabler tasks” “communicative tasks”, organized by lessons., Involved assessment as part of the learning process.

-**Research Methodology and Didactic Design:** Within this section researchers delved into the main concepts which permitted to frame the methodology implied to carry out this study. Thus, the term qualitative research, approaches to qualitative research, action research, and case study were defined with the intend to create own concepts to the development of the methodological design of this research.

The proposal of didactics units based on Estaire & Zanón’s model (1990) was adapted by the researchers, after the recognition of the problem. It was taken because it offered a set of stages that were framed within a Task-Based Approach which was aimed at enhancing communication in the EFL classroom.

-Participants: The target population of this study was presented in an English group of Basic 3 level composed by 25 students whose ages range between 17 to 55 years old. However three students were selected at random and they signed a consent form to agree on taking part in the study.

-Stages to implement the listening proposal: This research proposal purports to design, implement and evaluate some didactic units to foster listening in detail sub-skill in Basic 3 English students at the Language Center of the Pedagógica University.

Conclusions: This research was aimed at fostering the listening in detail sub-skill in an English Basic 3 level at the Language Center of the Pedagógica University.

The outcomes evidenced that with the implementation of the first didactic unit, the participants struggled with the linguistic aspects which interfered when listening to detailed information. Teacher researchers analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of the design, so as to provide changes for the next didactic units.

The three participant students improved their listening comprehension in detail progressively thanks to the activities stated in the didactic units, which favored this sub-skill.

In addition, the listening skill implies an ongoing practice from the students' side but also a frequent guidance from the teacher's stance. For this reason, it is very important that teachers follow the pre, while and post- listening steps.

October 29th, 2015

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Abstract

This research paper informs the process of design and implementation of didactic units to foster listening in detail for students of Basic 3 level of a Language Center of a public University in Bogotá (Colombia), focused on Action Research and Case study. Hence, six didactic units were implemented and developed by three students with the aim of enhancing the practice of the listening in detail sub-skill process and get better comprehension.

In order to carry out this study the researchers used empirical, theoretical and meta theoretical methods. Regarding empirical methods they were applied so as to diagnosis the problem, design and implement the didactic units based on three instruments used to gather data: Diagnostic test, Field-notes and students' artifacts which had to do with the six units of work developed.

The final outcomes of the study evidenced that an ongoing and guided practice of the listening skill contributed to the improvement of the listening in detail sub-skill process based upon the tasks provided on the didactic units.

Keywords: *Listening Process, Listening skill, Listening in detail, Task-based approach, Didactic Unit.*

Introduction

Being a good listener helps you see the world through the eyes of others, as consequence; it opens your understanding and enhances your capacity for empathy which is essential for having a good communication in the current global world. Therefore, many people have reflected on the importance of English language because it is one of the most spoken languages all over the world. Language of course, is knowledge, and in today's world, knowledge is one of the key factors in competitiveness. Hence, English Language Teaching policies advocate the development of communicative competence in the target language so as to be competitive in any social life situations.

Regarding the Colombian General Education Law (Ley General de Educación 115, Artículo 31: Parágrafo, 1994), mandatory and fundamental areas of knowledge and training will have to be offered in accordance with the curriculum in the educational basic and in more advanced levels. Besides the educational institutes will organize the syllabus in which the students will be able to intensify their studies among others, in foreign languages, in relation to their vocation and interests, as a guide to the selected major in higher education. At present, English is taught as a foreign language and the emphasis given focuses on the development of the communicative competence.

English teaching and learning practices in Colombia operate under the National Bilingualism Program 2004-2019. It follows the "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment", (Hereafter CEF), developed by the Council of Europe in order to adopt the programs and the syllabus to teach English.

Moreover the Languages Centers from the universities have to plan and adapt the syllabus according to the Basic standards of competences in foreign languages. Colombian English teachers have to follow those standards to guarantee the levels of proficiency set by The Common European Framework (CEF).

At the Language Center of the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional the descriptors of the CEF (from A1 to B2) frame the pedagogical and didactic practices to encourage the communicative competence. Thus, students are expected to read, write, listen and speak in a foreign language.

The Language Center of the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional is located in Bogotá, Colombia in the Chapinero zone. It was created as an institution which contributes to the development of our country by means of the implementation of educational and research programs related to the languages area, through the strengthening of the Colombian educational system.

In this way, what the institution pretends is to consolidate an academic community that supports the social and cultural development of Colombia thanks to the design of programs focused on the learning and knowledge of foreign languages.

The Language Center offers nine different levels to the public regarding languages like English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and so forth. Which are divided into three Basic, three Intermediate and three Advanced. The courses are offered from Monday to Friday (Intensivos), Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays (Semi-Intensivos), or on Saturdays (Semestrales for Children and Adults) with a total of 80 hours each level. In general terms the type of population who enrolls in the courses are university students or professionals of a socio-economical stratum of 3 or 4 level who are interested in learning English because of their jobs requirements or personal growth.

The Language teachers' staff is composed by about 120 teachers with a Bachelor Degree of Public and Private universities. In addition, some of them have Master's Degrees related to Foreign Language teaching. Particularly, the teachers involved in this study make part of the Basic 3 Semi-Intensivo program.

The problematic situation core of this study is concerning to the difficulty of a group of Basic 3 level students (A2 level CEF) that find hard to cope with the listening in detail sub-skill. In other words, the students face problems for comprehending very detailed information in relation to recorded material they listen to. This means that when they are doing a listening exercise in class they are able to get the main idea of a conversation; but, when they are asked for any particular or specific information, most of the time they cannot give an accurate answer.

Such a problem can be evident when students are evaluated in the exams and their performance in the listening skill is not as high as expected from them. For this reason, what the teachers researchers observed is that there is no a process to guide students in the listening skill practice since teachers do not devote enough time on it and just work on the textbook exercises which assesses mainly true-false questions or general information questions without paying much attention on details and what is more on activating learners' schemata and follow the before, while and post listening process suggested by theoreticians to make the listening skill a meaningful practice within a communicative approach.

This specific constraint is presented in an English group of Basic 3 level composed by 25 students whose ages range between 17 to 55 years old. There are 15 women and

10 men who study English from 6 to 9 p.m. three days a week. The main economical stratum for this group is 3; and, their occupations are varied. There are two high school students, about eight university students, and fifteen professionals of different areas like finance, advertising, engineering and arts.

Most of these people decided to enroll in the English course due to the need of improving or growing in a personal and professional way. Among the principal reasons exists the desire to travel soon to an English speaking country, the need to get a better position at work and the duty to achieve some English levels for getting a university degree.

Thus, from the Basic 3 group of English students, the researchers focused on three selected at random with the aim of looking into their progress in relation to their difficulty for listening in detailed information; due to the implementation of six didactic units during the development of the course. To do so, they filled out a consent form in which they signed and chose a pseudonym to be recognized during the research.

To characterize this target population, their profiles are: the first student was a woman aged 23 with a major in social communications who will be called “Caroline” from now on, the second student is a man aged 37 with a major in electronic engineering called “Tony”; and, the third is a man aged 36 majored in programming called “Elias”. As it was already stated they signed the consent format and agreed on participating on the study during the implementation stage of the didactic units.

First of all, for the diagnosis stage the researchers decided to examine the students’ performance in relation to the listening skill -focusing on the listening in detail sub-skill- taking into account what was observed in the daily teaching practice;

furthermore, three instruments were considered as a means to figure out learners' concerns on this skill and subsequent sub-skill.

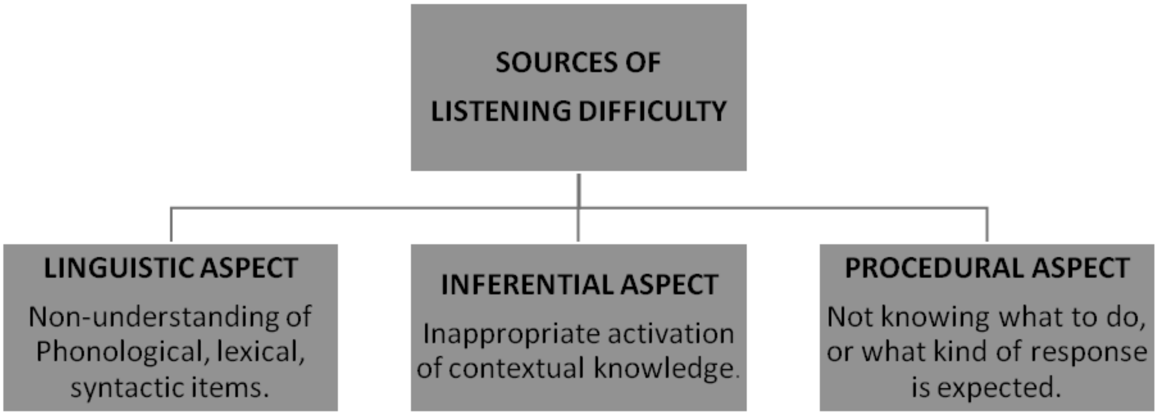
The first instrument corresponds to the first midterm exam of the course (See Appendix 4) in which the scores obtained by the learners was low so that of a maximum of 10 points, the average mark was **4,48**. In this exam, students had to answer questions related to main ideas and specific information. However, they pointed out it was difficult to understand and they felt frustrated because as some of them did not know the right answer they were forced to "guess" the answer.

The second instrument was a diagnostic test (See Appendix 1), developed in order to check students' listening comprehension as regards main ideas and detailed information. Of a total of 5 exercises the average score was **3,21** over 5,0 which reflects that most students did not answer some questions or they were just wrong. For instance, one of the exercises consisted of numbering some words in the order the students listened to them, which in general was good. Conversely, another exercise referred to complete the blanks of a dialogue with the word they heard (Listening in detail); but, most of them did not complete it, or they wrote incorrect words that were not mentioned in the recording.

The last instrument used was a survey to get students' impressions concerning their English skills learning process (See Appendix 2). In general the results evidenced that students consider the listening skill as the most difficult to study and the one that needs more practice for their learning process.

What the outcomes of the survey, of the diagnostic test and the average score of the listening section in the first term exam portrayed is that there is a lack of an ongoing, organized and deeper practice of the listening skill and specifically the listening in detail sub-skill in the classroom . This can be due to the fact that teachers do not devote enough time to practice listening in class, or when it is practiced there is no a process to work on it, like the pre, while and after listening phases. In addition, teachers are just dependent on what the textbook offers on this skill; and, apart from this, students are not guided on how to carry out the exercises and they do not receive an accurate feedback from the teacher.

This means, teachers do not analyze with students the results or answers of a listening activity which becomes the activity as another exercise in class without any purpose. Therefore all of this set of constraints can be summarized in three main aspects that outline the most common problematic issues that learners have to struggle with when practicing the listening skill in a foreign language classroom as posed by Rost (1999):


SOURCES OF LISTENING DIFFICULTY
LINGUISTIC ASPECT
Non-understanding of Phonological, lexical, syntactic items.
INFERENTIAL ASPECT
Inappropriate activation of contextual knowledge.
PROCEDURAL ASPECT
Not knowing what to do, or what kind of response is expected.

As a result, when analyzing the findings of such data gathering the following **RESEARCH ENQUIRY** was stated: *How does the design of didactic units contribute to foster Basic 3 English students' listening in detail sub-skill?*

With the aim of providing an answer to the aforementioned research query, teacher researchers looked into the literature within International and National level, so as to clarify concepts and build new insights in relation to the listening skill practice in the EFL classroom. Therefore, Gamboa & Sevilla (2014) underline in their research mismatches between theory and practice which often result in poor listening assessment in many institutions. Thus, they examined current listening testing practices by Ministry of Public Education (in Spanish, MEP) in bilingual secondary schools of the West Area of Costa Rica from the fourteen participant teachers. Then, tests were collected and analyzed and the results concluded that training on listening assessment had the greatest impact on test heading and test format, but insufficient test criteria, like general instructions or specific instructions which implies that new training efforts need to be carried out.

Another study by Schweppe (2012), determined whether a task-based approach to L2 listening instruction with explicit instruction in meta-cognitive strategies, affected secondary ELs' L2 listening comprehension of science content, and enabled them to perform concrete tasks throughout the listening process based on the theme "environment" exploring reading, writing, and speaking activities. The findings of this study confirmed that integrated models such as content and task-based instruction positively affect student learning; by increasing Meta-cognitive Awareness of Understanding.

In the same line of thought Motallebzadeh & Defaei (2013) aimed at exploring the role of task-based listening activities in augmenting EFL learners' listening self-efficacy (what people believe about their capabilities). To this end, 50 male and female Iranian EFL learners participated in and experimental study. To measure the participants' level of listening self-efficacy at the pre- and post-tests, a listening self-efficacy questionnaire (20 items) was applied. The results of independent t-test revealed that the participants' levels of listening self-efficacy in the experimental group were significantly higher than those in the control group. Therefore, the experimental group, in which task-based activities were applied, benefited significantly from the treatment.

On the other hand, there was a research by Stella Liao (2006) that aimed to provide simple and clear teaching strategies for listening to help students actively comprehend spoken messages, work out implied meanings, and develop organized points of view in response in class in a cooperative way, and encouraged students to “listen actively” and “think out loud” as they worked to organize their ideas within the listening process. The findings illustrated that it is important to pre-teach vocabulary to give students some questions to follow not to spend too much time on grammar points.

What implies to the Colombian educational context in terms of developing listening skills, there are some research contributions made by Hernandez & Vargas (2013), who stated in their study a pedagogical experience carried out at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana to help pre-service teachers at an intermediate level of English to improve their aural comprehension by designing listening activities to be worked as micro-teaching sessions. The results then showed that students developed the ability to think critically and become more autonomous.

Furthermore, Reina (2010) presented an action research study applied in a second level EFL course at a University in Tunja, Colombia. The study examined the listening performance of students throughout the development of six workshops based on songs. Findings indicated that this type of material can foster listening skills and engage students in discussion about cultural and social issues as well as train students in the development of higher levels of comprehension.

Finally, Durán, J. et.al (2009), provided a comprehensive view of the history and development of the listening skill as a key process in language learning in order to guide readers how students can get better at it. This research did not present any pedagogical implementation it referred about the principles that underline teaching listening skill contributing to theoretical criteria to the development of didactic units.

Taking into consideration the concerns of those studies, there are similarities in relation to this research since it is evident how the listening skill has been relegated comparing to others as writing and reading. For this reason, students' motivation is in decline, that is, they are not well instructed on how to handle listening tasks so that it is taken for granted that this process just consists of being sitting on a chair, remaining silent and without thinking and activating their schemata which is alike to the researchers' personal teaching settings.

On the other hand, although undergraduate programs students are taught on how to develop the listening process in the EFL classroom; what most teachers actually do is to "omit" such a process framed on the excuses of lack of time, or the divergence with the institution's syllabus, etc; all of which generates frustration and failure as regards students' listening performance.

Therefore this research points out the first time to carry out an English Didactics study at the Language Center since there are no previous studies on this matter at the institution. As a consequence, this research is an innovation with regard to the listening skill in Basic 3 level students because of its scientific and practical relevance. The former has to do with the contribution to the literature which is limited on this topic; the latter consists of providing an answer to the stated research question that may benefit Basic 3 English students of the Language Center regarding their listening in detail comprehension.

Consequently, for the main purpose of this research –fostering listening in detail- the researchers adopted two main approaches to the design of the didactic units.

According to Wilson (2008), the students learn more effectively with Task-Based Learning (TBL) who cited a common sequence originally proposed by Willis (1996): Pre-Task, Task Cycle (task, planning, report) and Language Focus (analysis and practice).

In addition, the proposal of didactics units by Estaire & Zanon (1990) was adapted by the researchers, after the recognition of the problem taking into account students' needs, interests as well as the inner educational context of the Language Center. This suggested model was taken because it provided a set of stages that were framed within a Task-Based Approach which enhances communication in the EFL classroom. The steps considered for carrying out the didactic units can be seen as follows:

1. Select the topic.
2. Specify the communicative objectives.
3. Plan the final task(s) to achieve the objectives.
4. Specify the thematic and linguistic components needed to complete the final tasks.
5. Planning the process: sequencing of the steps to follow through "enabler tasks" and "communicative tasks", organized by lessons.
6. Involved assessment as part of the learning process.

Finally, concerning to the listening skill Wilson (2008) proposes a sequence to develop listening practice: Pre-Listening (Activating schemata), While-Listening (Monitoring Ss' work) and Post-listening (Giving feedback). Moreover, he highlights that learning a language is like assembling a jigsaw puzzle. Similarly, listening to a piece of extended discourse gives the students a whole, complete view of what English sounds like. Hence, the listening skill can provide a model, or an ideal, for students to aim at, copy or learn from.

For these reasons, listening in detail refers to the type of listening we need to find errors or determine differences between one passage and another. Learners cannot ignore anything because it is not known exactly what information will help to achieve a task. This refers to the type of listening students do when, for example, it is needed to find errors or determine differences between one passage and another.

In accordance with the literature review and the concepts built, teachers researchers designed a didactic design to foster listening in detail to Basic 3 level. ***The Object of Study*** is English listening process and the ***Field Action*** is the orientation of the listening in detail process to students in Basic 3 level of Language Center of Universidad Pedagógica Nacional.

Therefore, the **General Objective** is: Describe how the design of didactic units contributes to foster Basic 3 English students' listening in detail sub-skill.

Specific objectives are:

- To determine the current learners' listening in detail process.
- To select the most appropriated theoretical foundations in the listening in detail process.
- To design a didactic proposal to foster listening in detail.
- To implement and evaluate the design of the didactic proposal.
- To draw conclusions and implications from the implementation of the didactic proposal centered on the listening in detail sub-skill process.

In order to achieve the preceding objectives, it is necessary to complete the following tasks:

- Determine the learners’ listening in detail process.
- Identify the theory about listening in detail process.
- Design and analyze the proposal focused on the listening process in detail.
- Draw conclusions and implications from the application of the didactic design.

Regarding the methodological design, this study is framed within the action research process and at the same time, in the case study since the current research is focused on the process developed of three students. Hence, both processes are connected into the research, because the action research allows the researchers to find out the best ways of doing things through active problem-solving.

Likewise case study is a qualitative process, where teacher researchers can understand or visualize why things happened in a particular instance, or how learners accomplished their tasks during the implementation of the pedagogical design. The study is focused on an “Action case study” as stated by Stenhouse (1983) since it is being carried out in the own researchers’ educational context and there is an intention to transform its reality by attempting to solve observed problems supported by the theory and the expertise of teachers-researchers.

For these reasons, the planning and design of each didactic unit was determined in relation to what to do through the progress of students in the listening skill, considering the action research cycle from Kemmis and McTaggart (2000), in which the planning stage started to promote changes to the problematic situation. In this way, the first didactic unit was applied, teacher researchers observed the process and consequences that emerged from that implementation. After, the reflecting stage came into place so as to re-plan the forthcoming didactic units according to the learners’ performance and insights derived from the first unit; subsequently, more didactic units were designed, applied and observed for having the action research cycle once and once again.

To achieve the main objective of this study, researchers applied some methods to fulfill the different tasks posed for the research. Consequently, theoretical methods like analysis and synthesis (Nocedo, I. et Al, 2001) were used to register and describe learners' concrete situation. This was by means of the listening average score of the first term exam, a listening diagnostic activity and a survey for students with the purpose of analyzing the data collected and establishing the problematic situation to deal with.

In addition, Historical-Logical method was implemented so as to look into the literature to review the antecedents of the phenomenon studied according to the National and International fields. By the same token, Induction and Deduction were used to revise the theoretical criteria related to this research, and, therefore build up the theoretical framework which supports the pedagogical design.

Moreover, Empirical Methods (Nocedo, I. et Al, 2001), were applied to plan and implement the design. Thus, for data gathering, teachers' participant observations were registered in an instrument: A Field-Notes sheet (See Appendix 3) that intended to describe rigorously all aspects found during the development of the didactic units from the teachers' perspective as well as the students' process related to the listening in detail sub-skill carried out during the pedagogical design.

The second instrument was a diagnostic test (See Appendix 4) in which teacher-researchers aim at determining students' current situation regarding listening in detail comprehension in English based upon five exercises that required their answers about recognizing words and filling out clues of given dialogues.

A third instrument collected has to do with students' artifacts as they are the richest sources of data for teachers-researchers. That is, it is tangible evidence of what learners have done and their responses to the different learning tasks (Hubbard & Power, 1999).

By implementing a didactic design to foster listening in detail, the ***Practical Contribution*** refers to promote autonomous learning and improve listening skill in the EFL classroom.

This research report is structured as follows: the introduction–containing the problem description, the legal aspects, the antecedents of the phenomenon, the literature related to the problem, and the methodological design.

The first chapter includes the theoretical criteria related to Task-Based Approach, Didactic Units, listening process and listening in detail. The second chapter refers to the didactic proposal designed to foster listening in detail, methodological design, and data analysis. Finally, conclusions, recommendations, references and appendixes, appear at the end of this paper.

1. THEORETICAL CRITERIA TO FOSTER LISTENING IN DETAIL BASED ON A DIDACTIC DESIGN

This research aims at promoting the listening in detail sub-skill in the English class. Hence, in order to reach this goal, the next concepts are going to be clarified: the listening process, teaching listening, listening sub-skills, task and Task-Based Approach, and the definition and process of a didactic unit.

1.1. The Listening Process

First of all it is very important to make clear how the listening process works for any person. Therefore, the following stages summarize each element required in this procedure as stated by DeVito, J. A., (2000):

- The receiving stage of listening is the basic stage where an individual hears a message being sent by a speaker.
- The understanding stage occurs when a receiver of a message attempts to figure out the meaning of the message.
- The remembering stage is when a listener either places information into long-term memory or forgets the information presented.
- The evaluating stage occurs when a listener judges the content of the message or the character of the speaker.
- The responding stage occurs when a listener provides verbal or nonverbal feedback about the speaker or message.

The figure below illustrates those steps as a cyclical procedure to carry out in communication.

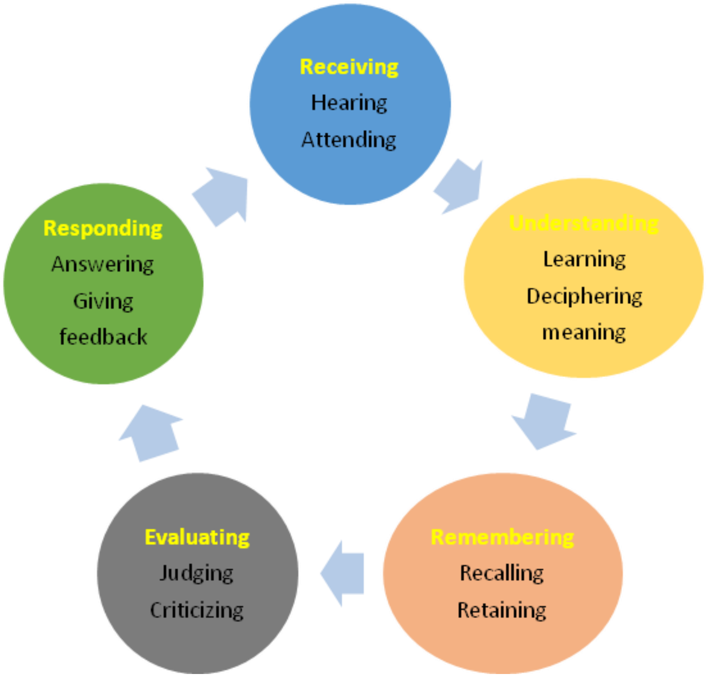

Receiving
Hearing
Attending
Understanding
Learning
Deciphering
meaning
Remembering
Recalling
Retaining
Evaluating
Judging
Criticizing
Responding
Answering
Giving
feedback

Figure 1. (The Listening Process DeVito, J. A. (2000)

As it can be noticed such a process involves a series of elements that are connected among them. Regarding the listening process in foreign languages, there are two distinct processes involved in listening comprehension. **'Top-down'**” processes when people use prior knowledge to understand the meaning of a message. Prior knowledge can be knowledge of the topic, the listening context, the text-type, the culture or other information stored in long-term memory as schemata. On the other hand, listeners also use **'Bottom-up'** processes when they use linguistic knowledge to understand the meaning of a message. They build meaning from lower level sounds to words to grammatical relationships to lexical meanings in order to arrive at the final message. Listening comprehension is not either top-down or bottom-up processing, but an interactive, interpretive process where listeners use both prior knowledge and linguistic knowledge in understanding messages.

1.2. Teaching Listening through History

It is said that people listen primarily for information and pleasure. There are actually two questions to look at the reasons for listening to English: “Why English… and Why listen…” The possible reasons are: for pleasure, travelling or tourism, work purposes and academic requirements.

It has been already mentioned why we should listen to English. But, it is paramount to highlight what is the actual role of listening within English language teaching. According to David Nunan as cited by Wilson (2008), listening is “the Cinderella skill” probably because it is the least understood, the least researched and, historically, the least valued.

In the past, foreign languages were learnt mainly by reading and translating rather than listening. In the second half of the twentieth century, however, increased research into how people learn both first and second languages, as well as developments in linguistics, sociology and anthropology, led to an understanding that listening is most likely the key initial skill.

Consequently, a new methodology called “Audiolingualism” emerged. It used recorded drills, because it was based on a premise from psychology called **behaviourism**, in which the subject responded to a prompt in order to gain a reward. Hence, the reward consisted of a better understanding of the language. The syllabus included structures of gradually increasing complexity.

After that, the well-known linguistic Noam Chomsky (2006) claimed the idea that people could learn languages through habit-formation. With the idea of generative grammar, in which people were capable of expressing an infinite number of thoughts, and that pedagogy should reflect this.

Then in the 1970s, the centrality of listening was reinforced by the work of Stephen Krashen. The **Input Hypothesis** according to Krashen (1982) is consistent with what we know about children's L1 acquisition. In other words, when people understand messages, he called it comprehensible input. During the **silent period**, referring when a child is taking in the language and, the brain is storing it all up in order to examine meaning. Then a few months later the child begins to speak. This was known as the Natural Approach.

The input hypothesis and the silent period also formed the basis for James Asher's (1969) methodology called Total Physical Response (TPR). The principles behind it were: learning L1 and learning L2 are similar processes; listening comes before speaking; delaying the need to speak alleviates stress on the learner; children and adults respond well if asked to react physically to speech.

The idea of input has been central in the elevation of listening to its recent status in language learning. Therefore it has to do with any aspect of the language. Input gives opportunities for incidental vocabulary learning when students pick up on words/phrases by chance and circumstance rather than by the design of materials written by the teacher.

Afterwards, the CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) brought significant developments in terms of Listening to L2. It emphasized authenticity of materials, contexts and responses. It used findings from research into pragmatics, discourse analysis and sociolinguistics so as to show how real communication takes place.

The other main development in listening in CLT stems from the ways, in which the passages are used, is what the students do with them. Listening in CLT has a communicative purpose in which the students are expected to use the information they hear, just as in real communication.

Based upon this educational evolution, for this particular study the researchers purport to change the reality of the listening skill in their pedagogical context since the teaching of listening has been relegated to a second or even third place in the language practice. For this reason, the researchers advocate an ongoing, deeper and more frequent practice of listening within a communicative view of the target language.

1.3. Listening Sub-Skills

In terms of foreign language teaching, Wilson asserts that the primary purposes of human listening are information-gathering and pleasure, though there are other reasons, such as empathy, assessment and criticism.

As a result the types of listening or the listening sub-skills we might engage can be categorized as follows:

- Listening for gist. This refers, when students want to know the general idea of what is being said, as well as who is speaking to whom and why.

- Listening for specific information. It refers, when we need only a very specific part, and listen selectively for this specific information.

- Inferential listening. It refers to the type of listening done to know how the speaker feels; it may involve inferring.

- Listening in detail. This refers to the type of listening needed to find errors or determine differences between one passage and another. It is not permitted to ignore anything because the listener does not know exactly what information will help to achieve a task.

Psychologists have discovered some rather interesting things about the listening ability to focus on details at the expense of other information: listen for gist the first time or to listen for specific information for second time. In 1999 a psychological experiment at Harvard, participants watched a video of some students playing basketball. They were asked different questions in order to answer them in detailed information. The skill consists of extracting the information enhancing the ability to ignore most of what is heard and focus only on what is relevant.

There are also some activities essential for selective listening in detail in the classroom such as: Bingo, spot the difference, a story told twice, times, dates, numbers, mixed focus, and so on.

This sub-skill was selected by teachers-researchers because as it has produced a lot of difficulties to students when working on listening comprehension. In other words, learners can easily get main ideas or gist of a recording; but, they find very hard to comprehend detailed information from an audio. For instance, specific dates, times, someone’s statement, etc.

This kind of difficulty cannot be considered just because of the students. Conversely, what the researchers’ teaching experience can conclude is that most of the time English teachers do not pay attention to internal and external factors which may create problems when listening such as: the learners’ motivation, the class environment, the type of listening exercise that is being developed as well as an inappropriate methodology that does not permit students to succeed on a particular listening activity.

Hence, the proposal stated for this research was focused on fostering and developing the listening in detail sub-skill.

There are also two types of listening practice in the FL classroom known as **Intensive** and **Extensive Listening**. The former has to do with techniques which mainly focus on components (phonemes, words, intonation, discourse markers, etc.) of discourse; they include bottom-up skills that refer to using the incoming input as the basis for understanding the message.

As examples of intensive listening in the classroom are when students listen for cues in certain choral or individual drills, and the teacher repeats a word or sentence several times to "imprint" it in the student's mind. In addition, the teacher asks students to listen to a sentence or a longer stretch of discourse and to notice a specified element, e.g., intonation, stress, a contraction, a grammatical structure, etc.

On the other hand, the latter type of listening performance "Extensive Listening", relates to a wider range from listening to lengthy lectures to listening to a conversation and deriving a comprehensive message or purpose that aims at developing a top-down, global understanding of spoken language by using background knowledge to understand the meaning of a message. It may also require the student to invoke other interactive skills such as note taking or discussion for full comprehension.

1.4. Teaching Listening

Present-day educators as Wilson (2008) suggests that listening sequences should usually be divided into three parts: pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening.

Pre-listening

The pre-listening stages help students to prepare for what they are going to hear, and this gives them a greater chance of success in any given task. The first stage of pre-listening usually involves activating schemata, in order to help students to predict the content of the listening passage. The second stage is setting up a reason to listen. For instance there is an information gap that needs to be filled or an opinion gap or pre-set questions, or perhaps the students have asked questions based on things they would hope to hear.

While-listening

The students hear the input once, probably listening for gist, although of course there may be occasions when they need to listen for specific information or listen in detail. They check their answers in pairs or groups. This is to give them confidence and to open up any areas of doubt. They then listen a second time, either in order to check or to answer more detailed questions. It is important that the students should be required to do different tasks every time they listen.

It may be argued that in real life people might not get second and third chances. For teaching purposes, however, multiple opportunities to hear the input give students a safety net which helps to reduce their anxiety. There is a number of other factors concerning the passage that come into play: difficulty, length, the pedagogical focus and the potential for boredom. It may be the case that students only need to listen again to the part that they found difficult. If the focus is on close language analysis, it might be necessary to repeat several times, whereas if the focus is on listening for gist, it will not be.

Post-listening

The whole class checks answers, discusses difficulties such as unknown vocabulary, and responds to the content of the passage, usually orally, sometimes in writing. This may be done in plenary (with the whole class) or in pairs or groups.

A final stage may involve the 'mining' of the recording for useful language, a particular grammatical structure, vocabulary or discourse markers, for example.

1.5. Task-Based Approach

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) has been strongly advocated and promoted by many world-leading educators since the 1980s. When talking about language teaching, David Nunan's definition of task is as follows: "Task is a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, theory and practice in language studies producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than on form" (Nunan, 1989, p.10).

In this sense, the definition of a language-learning task requires specification of six components in accordance with Nunan (1989): *goals, input, activities, teacher role, learner role and settings.*

According to Wilson (2008), the students learn more effectively with Task-Based Learning (TBL). That is, when the lesson is based on a task the students complete it in groups. Hence during the interaction, the students find that they need certain grammar and vocabulary, and therefore the target language emerges from their needs of learning. Thus, he suggested a common sequence originally proposed by Willis (1996):

1. Pre-task: The teacher introduces the task and maybe lets the students listen to proficient speakers attempting it.

2. Task cycle: *Planning* **–** Firstly, the students do the task. Secondly, they plan how to explain their procedures and results to the class.

Report- Students tell the class how they achieved the task and compare results. The teacher may wish to play a recording of proficient speakers achieving the task at this point.

3. Language focus

Analysis **–** The class focuses on useful language that arose during completion of the task.

Practice **–** The students activate this language in a controlled or semi-controlled environment.

The task types include:

1. LISTING: Listing tasks tend to generate lots of talk as Ss brainstorm or fact-finding.

2. ORDERING AND SORTING. This involves four main purposes: Sequencing, ranking, categorizing and classifying.

3. COMPARING: These tasks involve comparing similar nature but different sources of information.

4. PROBLEM SOLVING: They make demands upon people's intellectual and reasoning powers.

5. SHARING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES: These tasks encourage learners to talk more freely about themselves and share their experiences with others.

6. CREATIVE TASKS: These are often called projects and involve pairs or groups of learners in some kind of freer creative work.

7. CLOSED TASKS: They are highly structured and have very specific goals. Eg. Work in pairs to find seven differences between two pictures.

8. OPEN TASKS: They are more freely structured, with a less specific goal. Eg. Comparing memories of childhood journeys, or exchanging anecdotes on a theme.

After reviewing these different TBL frameworks, it can be concluded at first that task is conceived as a manner of working in the foreign language in a meaningful way for students without drawing too much attention on the target language form. Secondly, the Task-Based Approach components might be called differently based on the author; but, what they have in common is that for carrying out a lesson focused on it, it is required to state some language and communicative goals, introduce any sort of input, diverse communicative activities, challenge learners with a final task or project to enhance their creativity and language use; and, promote assessment in a reflective way.

As a final point, thanks to some pedagogical research contributions the Task-Based Approach has been structured in the form of units of work or didactic units which articulate everything that was explained beforehand. Besides, they are the basis for the proposal of this research since the didactic unit model stated makes part of the pedagogical design adapted by the researchers in order to solve the research question specified at the beginning of the present study.

Consequently, the term didactic unit will be defined, the concept of task is going to be revised once more, and, a complete model of didactic unit is going to be displayed according to a Spanish educational proposal as follows:

1.6. Didactic Unit

As Escamilla (1993) states, the didactic unit is a way of planning the teaching-learning process around an element of content that becomes an integration of meaningful process. For this reason, the teaching of a foreign language through tasks is concentrated on a framework of making didactic units for teaching foreign languages with the following characteristics:

a. Adoption of task as a unit of design of the teaching-learning process and the structure, planning, articulation and assessment of different tasks.

b. Integrate coherently the objectives, contents, methodology and assessment.

c. Offer an ideal context for the integrated development of different dimensions of the communicative competence.

d. It is a practical instrument for the innovation and the research work in the teaching of foreign languages.

There are six steps so as to generate a process in making decisions by the teacher according to Estaire & Zanón, (1990):

1. Select the topic.
2. Specify the communicative objectives.
3. Plan the final task(s) to achieve the objectives.
4. Specify the thematic and linguistic components needed to complete the final tasks.
5. Planning the process: sequencing of the steps to follow through “enabler tasks” “communicative tasks”, organized by lessons.
6. Involved assessment as part of the learning process.

COMMUNICATIVE TASKS: They are framed under the communicative approach based upon oral or written tasks such as: problem-solving, information gap, decision making, etc.

ENABLER TASKS: They are centered on the development of the domain of the contents required to carry out the communicative tasks. e.g. introduction, exploration, explanation, discussion, practice and correction[1], etc.

As a result, the previous sequence according to the authors is an innovative proposal in which the stages order must be respected and in that way makes it unique. Moreover, the whole didactic unit is determined to achieve the final communication tasks.

Nonetheless, for the purpose of this research those steps were adapted to the teacher's educational context to suit the students' needs, interests; as well as the teaching-learning process carried out at Pedagógica University Language Center, as it will be seen in the design of the didactic units described in the following chapter.

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[1] Translation made by the authors of this paper.

2. A DIDACTIC DESIGN TO FOSTER LISTENING IN DETAIL

As the problematic situation core of this study was concerning to the difficulty of a group of Basic 3 level students that found hard to cope with the listening in detail sub-skill, that is, they faced problems for comprehending very detailed information in relation to recorded material they listened to. The researchers implemented the following methodological design to carry out the didactic proposal.

2.1. Methodological Design

Research is like a journey that must be planned, within this section researchers delved into the main concepts which permitted to frame the methodology implied to carry out this study. Thus, the term qualitative research, approaches to qualitative research, action research, case study, field notes, teaching logs and students' artifacts were defined with the intend to create own concepts to the development of the methodological design of this research.

2.1.1. Qualitative Research

According to Merriam (1998) qualitative research is an umbrella concept which covers several forms of inquiry that helps us understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with little disruption of the natural setting as possible.

Others as Parkinson & Drislane (2011) emphasize on an epistemological stance: Qualitative research is a type of study that uses methods such as participant observation or case studies which result in a narrative, descriptive account of a setting or practice. Therefore the researchers' role in the current study was done from observing a problematic situation held with a group of English students. This was totally concentrated on people's behavior and daily teaching-learning process. Consequently, data collection, interpretation, analysis, and findings were considered in a descriptive and naturalistic manner to promote educational change and further research on the topic.

Furthermore, Vasilachis (2009) states that the purpose of qualitative research can be distinguished according to the following characteristics:

1. *Characteristics referring to the people*: It means the actors the research is focused on and the researcher who carries out data gathering, interpretation and the production of a final report. For this study, it referred about the teacher researchers and the participant students.

2. *Characteristics referring to the contexts*: Referring to the observed social situations where relationships between actors take place. Concerning to this research, it was about observing the difficulty found on students and process of the didactic design to foster listening in detail at the Language Center of Pedagógica University.

As the purpose of this research is to focus on a particular approach, teacher researchers drew attention to action research and case study, which belong to qualitative research, as the main core of the project. Their rationale is highlighted below.

2.1.2. Action Research

As an approach to research, it has been around since 1940 when it first appeared in the social science literature (Lewin, 1946; 1948). Time later, it was adapted by educators such as Kemmis and McTaggart (1982), who defined it as follows: "The linking of the terms "action" and "research" highlights the essential feature of the method: trying out ideas in practice as a means of improvement and as means of increasing knowledge about the curriculum, teaching and learning. Hence it provides a way of working which links theory and practice into the one whole: ideas-in-action". (p.5)

Based on the above quote action research connects theory and practice. For the particular purpose of this study, it also entailed more than simply providing descriptive and interpretive accounts of the classroom. It was intended to lead to change and improvement in what actually occurred in the classroom.

In order to portray action research in language classrooms, Nunan (1992) emphasized the centrality of the teacher. He noted that this approach has things in common related to other types of research such as: posing questions, collecting data, etc. However, it differs by the fact it will be carried out by practitioners investigating their own professional context.

Similarly, Kemmis and McTaggart (1982) identified three defining characteristics of this approach: It is carried out by classroom practitioners, it is collaborative in nature, and it is aimed at bringing about change.

Consequently, Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) stated that action research is a participatory study consisting of a spiral of the following self-reflective cycles:

1. Planning in order to initiate change
2. Implementing the change (acting) and observing the process of implementation and consequences
3. Reflecting on processes of change and re-planning
4. Acting and observing

5. Reflecting

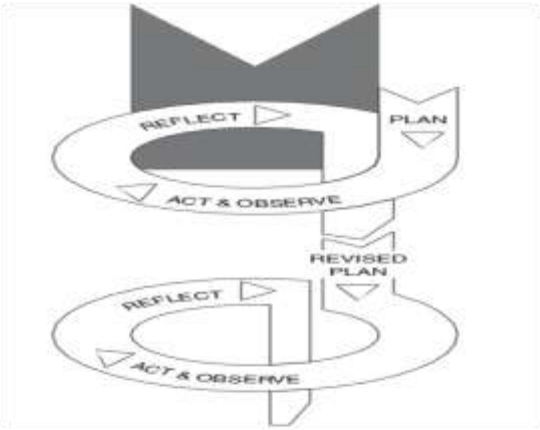


Figure 2 Action Research Spiral Kemmis and McTaggart´s (2000)

This spiral was adopted for this research project because its main advantage related to the opportunity of analyzing the phenomenon in a greater depth each time, consequently resulting in a better level of understanding of the problem. Thus, this action research cycle in regard to this particular research enhanced the reflection and self-reflection between the researchers in order to get better understanding of the phenomenon being observed and to overcome the drawbacks that arose while the intervention stage.

For these reasons, taking into consideration the stages proposed for this Action Research Cycle, it was an ongoing process for this study since based on the listening problem found, the teachers initiated the planning step to transform the actual situation; then the researchers provided a possible way to get better the problem with the piloting of one didactic unit. According to the observations done during the piloting stage, the results and reflection evidenced there was a need for modifying and re-planning the design of the forthcoming didactic units.

After the implementation of the first didactic unit , the reflecting stage came into place so as to re-plan the forthcoming didactic units according to the learners' performance and insights derived from the first unit; subsequently, more didactic units were designed, applied and observed for having the action research cycle once and once again.

Besides working on the required changes the participant teachers acted and observed by implementing the new didactic units, which were the students' artifacts, and registering data with the field notes and teacher's log sheets. Finally, the researchers reflected upon what was done, analyzed the information gathered, drew conclusions and enhanced further research to enrich and improve the process carried out before.

Concerning the theoretical insights of the qualitative study and the action research, what was intended with this research was to provide a wide analysis of a given context (English group of Basic 3 level at Language Center of UPN). Thus, the process researchers followed aimed at accomplishing the stated objectives for this study. Therefore, the research model was congruent with the setting of the investigation, the participants and the characteristics of a qualitative research. As a result, researchers agreed on applying the below research model which summarized the steps developed to carry out this research:

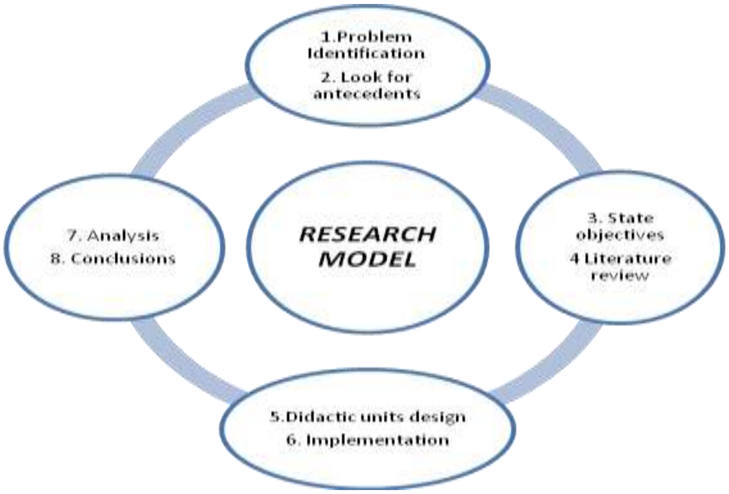

1.Problem Identification
2. Look for antecedents
3. State objectives
4 Literature review
5.Didactic units design
6. Implementation
7. Analysis
8. Conclusions
RESEARCH MODEL

Figure 3 Applied Research Model

2.1.3. Case Study Research

This kind of research has been tackled in different ways according to scholars. On the one hand, Yin (1984) argued that it is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. (p.23)

On the other hand, Merriam (1998) defined it as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit. They are particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic and rely heavily on inductive reasoning in handling multiple data sources.

Another definition of case study is tackled by Nunan (1992), who asserted it is a single instance of a class of objects or entities, and it is also the investigation of that single instance in the context in which it occurs.

Based upon these concepts they share some rationale to the extent to which case study is a bounded instance; that is, it has limits or borders like a particular group or a student. A second point in common is that the phenomenon is studied in context unlike formal experiments which control and manipulate variables; case study in contrast, is centered on description, inference and interpretation. (Nunan & Bailey, 2009).

Thus, for this research case study was carried out, from a Basic 3 group of English students of the Language Center of the Pedagógica University since the researchers focused on three selected at random with the aim of looking into their progress in relation to their difficulty for listening in detailed information; due to the implementation of six didactic units during the development of the course.

In the same line of thought, Stenhouse (1983) suggested the next case study typology:

1. *Neo-ethnographic*: In-depth investigation of a single case by a participant observer.
2. *Evaluative*: An investigation carried out in order to evaluate policy or practice.
3. *Multi-site*: A study carried out by several researches on more than one site.
4. *Action*: An investigation carried out by a classroom practitioner on his or her professional context.

In accordance with these different perspectives, the researchers focused on an “Action case study” since it was carried out in the own researchers’ educational context and there was an intention to transform its reality by attempting to solve observed problems of three participant students supported by the theory and the expertise of the teachers-researchers.

2.1.4. Research Methodology

In order to achieve the main objective of this study, researchers applied some procedures and instruments to fulfill the different tasks posed for the research. Consequently, theoretical methods like analysis and synthesis (Nocedo, I. et al, 2001) were used to register and describe learners' concrete situation. This was by means of the listening average score of the first term exam, a listening diagnostic activity and a survey for students (See Appendixes 1, 2 and 4) with the purpose of analyzing the data collected and establishing and explaining the problematic situation.

In addition, Historical-Logical method was implemented so as to look into the literature to review the antecedents of the phenomenon studied according to the National and International fields. By the same token, Induction and Deduction methods were used to revise the theoretical criteria related to this research, and, therefore build up the theoretical framework which defined the research problem and supported the pedagogical proposal.

Moreover, Empirical Methods (Nocedo, I. et al, 2001), were applied (by applying three instruments) to plan and implement the proposal and for drawing conclusions after the implementation. As well as meta-theoretical methods to analyze collected data in order to validate or reconstruct theory and pose implications for further research on the topic studied. Thus, for data gathering, teachers' participant observations were registered in an instrument: A Field-Notes sheet (See Appendix 3) that intended to describe rigorously all aspects found during the development of the didactic units from the teachers' perspective as well as the students' process related to the listening in detail sub-skill carried out during the proposal.

Field-Notes were based on classroom observation needed to be in a format that allowed the researcher to find desired information easily (Merriam, 1998). To the purpose of this research the field-notes format was designed by the researchers to shed light on the way a didactic unit lesson was developed, taking into account aspects such as: date, time, classroom, number of people present and absent, classroom arrangement, aim of the observation, number of observation, lesson description and the observer comments to the margin of the description. All of this with the objective of having a systematized record of what happened in the classroom. This instrument was applied each lesson with the aim of providing very detailed data in relation to the class development; and, in this way having a great source of information to the triangulation process.

The second instrument was a diagnostic test (See Appendix 1) in which teacher-researchers aim at determining students' current situation regarding listening in detail comprehension in English based upon five exercises that required their answers about recognizing words and filling out clues of given dialogues. This instrument was also considered in order to have a correlation between the results obtained and what was designed in the units to follow the process developed during the pedagogical proposal to foster students' listening in detail sub-skill.

On the other hand, the third instrument collected had to do with students' artifacts-activities students did by means of didactic units- (See Appendix 6) as they are the richest sources of data for teachers-researchers. That is, it is tangible evidence of what learners have done and their responses to the different learning tasks (Hubbard & Power, 1999).

The importance of this instrument relied on the fact that it served as a mode to link researchers' insights from the teacher's log and the field notes format respectively. Thus, the articulation of the three shed light on the way the didactic design was carried out so as to provide an answer for the initial research enquiry.

The procedure to validate information collected with the aim of analyzing data was a process called "Triangulation" which is paramount in qualitative data so as to offer a quality control strategy in social research whether diverse kinds of data lead to the same conclusion and as a result it presents more reliability. Hence, if the conclusions from each of the methods are the same, then validity is established. The figure below portrays the triangulation done according to the three applied instruments in this study.

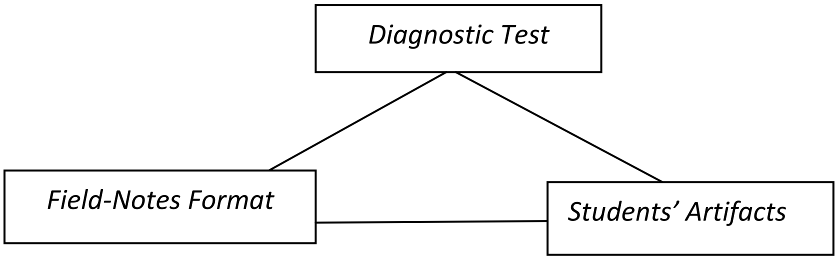


Figure 4 Methodological Triangulation

To carry out the triangulation process, first teacher researchers organized all sources of information (filed-notes, diagnostic test and students' artifacts). After that, field-notes were read several times to identify commonalities since researchers noted recurrent patterns which were identified by using color coding. Patterns emerged from observing and considering how the design of didactic units contributed to foster Basic 3 students' listening in detail sub-skill. By the same token, the outcomes derived from the diagnostic test and students' artifacts were then read and analyzed in order to find commonalities. Consequently, Guba & Lincoln as mentioned by Merriam (1998) stated that color coding is a procedure used in qualitative research to determine emerging categories from data gathered.

Subsequently researchers began to make associations among patterns that were connected to general categories. Hence, as a result of data analysis some categories came out that were linked in terms of answering the main research inquiry. This categorization is going to be developed in the data analysis section.

2.2. Setting and Population

This research purports to design some didactic units to foster listening in detail sub-skill in Basic 3 English students at the Language Center of the Pedagógica University.

The Language Center of the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional is located in Bogotá, Colombia in the Chapinero zone. It was created as an institution which contributes to the development of our country by means of the implementation of educational and research programs related to the languages area, through the strengthening of the Colombian educational system.

In this way, the institution aims at consolidating an academic community that supports the social and cultural development of Colombia thanks to the design of programs focused on the learning and knowledge of foreign languages like English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and so forth. Therefore, people will be able to face the upcoming needs and duties of social type within the educational and occupational fields.

The Center offers nine different levels to the public regarding the languages mentioned above which are divided into three Basic, three Intermediate and three Advanced. The courses are offered from Monday to Friday (Intensivos), Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays (Semi-Intensivos), or on Saturdays (Semestrales for Children and Adults) with a total of 80 hours each level. In general terms the type of population who enrolls in the courses are university students or professionals of a socio-economical stratum of 3 or 4 level who are interested in learning English because of job requirements or personal growth.

The target population of this study was presented in an English group of Basic 3 level composed by 25 students whose ages range between 17 to 55 years old. There were 15 women and 10 men who studied English from 6 to 9 p.m. three days a week. The main economical stratum for this group is 3; and, their occupations are varied. There were two high school students, about eight university students, and fifteen professionals of different areas like finance, advertising, engineering and arts.

Most of these people decided to enroll in the English course due to the need of improving or growing in a personal and professional way. Among the principal reasons, exists the desire to travel to an English speaking country soon, the need to get a better position at work and the duty to achieve some English levels for getting a university degree.

As this research was focused on three students selected at random as was previously mentioned, they were asked if they agreed on taking part in the study. To do so, they filled out a consent form (See Appendix 5) in which they signed and chose a pseudonym to be recognized during the research.

To characterize this case study population, their profiles are: the first student was a woman aged 23 with a major in social communications who will be called “Caroline” from now on, the second student is a man aged 37 with a major in electronic engineering called “Tony”; and, the third is a man aged 36 majored in programming called “Elias”. As it was already stated they signed the consent format and agreed on participating on the study during the implementation stage of the didactic units.

2.3. Diagnosis Stage

As was mentioned in the introduction Basic 3 level students found hard to cope with the listening in detail sub-skill because they faced problems for comprehending very detailed information in relation to recorded material they listened to. This means that when they were doing a listening exercise in class they were able to get the main idea of a conversation; but, when they were asked for any particular or specific information, most of the time they could not give an accurate answer.

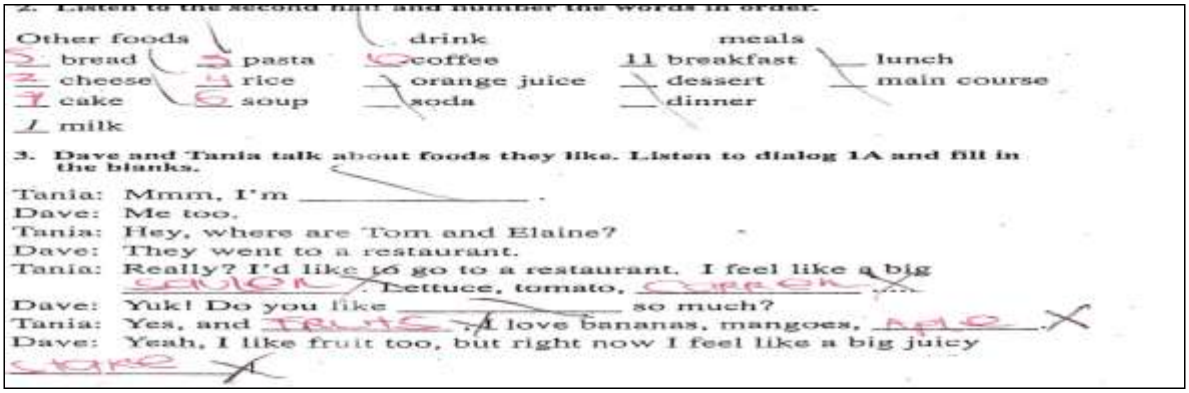
Such a problem was evident when students were evaluated in the exams and their performance in the listening skill was not as high as expected from them, besides at the Language Center students are required to master this sub-skill. For this reason, what teacher researchers observed is that there was no a process to guide students in the listening skill practice since teachers did not devote enough time on it and just worked on the textbook exercises which assessed mainly true-false questions or general information questions without paying much attention on details and what is more on activating learners' schemata and follow the before, while and post listening process suggested by theoreticians to make the listening skill a meaningful practice within a communicative approach.

Besides the observation of daily teaching practice, three instruments were considered as a means to figure out learners' concerns on the listening skill and subsequent listening in detail sub-skill.

The first instrument corresponded to the listening section of the first term exam (See Appendix 1) in which the scores obtained by the learners was low so that of a maximum of 10 points, the average mark was **4,48**. In this exam, students had to answer questions related to main ideas and specific information. It had a total of 10 questions, the first five were multiple choice and the last ones True-False questions. However students pointed out, it was difficult to understand and they felt frustrated because as some of them did not know the right answer they were forced to “guess”.

The second instrument was a diagnostic test (See Appendix 2) developed in order to check students’ listening comprehension as regards main ideas and detailed information. From a total of 5 exercises the average score was **3,21** over 5,0 which reflected that most students did not answer some questions or they were just wrong. For instance, one of the exercises consisted of numbering some words in the order the students listened to them, which in general was good. Conversely, another exercise referred to complete the blanks of a dialogue with the word they heard (Listening in detail); but, most of them did not complete it, or they wrote incorrect words that were not mentioned in the recording.

Taking into consideration the difficulties students faced when filling out some notes, researchers highlighted it was due to their lack of identifying different types of sounds and therefore whole words and even utterances, as shown in the below sample:



2. Listen to the second half and number the words in order.

Other foods
5 bread
2 cheese
7 cake
1 milk
3 pasta
4 rice
6 soup

drink
10 coffee
orange juice
soda

meals
11 breakfast
dessert
dinner
lunch
main course

3. Dave and Tania talk about foods they like. Listen to dialog 1A and fill in the blanks.

Tania: Mmm, I'm ______________ .
Dave: Me too.
Tania: Hey, where are Tom and Elaine?
Dave: They went to a restaurant.
Tania: Really? I'd like to go to a restaurant. I feel like a big SAULER . Lettuce, tomato, CHEEEN ...
Dave: Yuk! Do you like ______________ so much?
Tania: Yes, and FRUITS . I love bananas, mangoes, APLE .
Dave: Yeah, I like fruit too, but right now I feel like a big juicy STAKE

Figure 5 Sample Listening Diagnostic Test

The last instrument used was a survey (See Appendix 2) to get students' impressions concerning their English skills learning process. Its results can be seen as follows:

SURVEY QUESTION No. 1

Check the English skill you consider the most difficult when learning

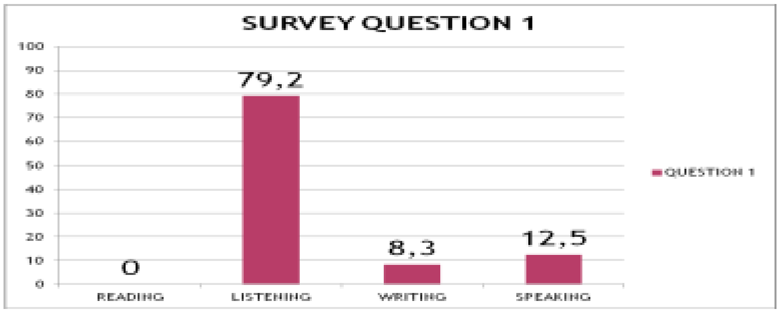


Figure 6 Results Survey 1st Question

SURVEY QUESTION No. 2

Based on your previous answer **mention 3 reasons** for your choice.

The most common answers from students were: “The people speak very fast”, “The British and American accents are very different”, “I don’t know the vocabulary and the topic of the listening”, “I need to educate the ear”, “I don’t understand the pronunciation”.

SURVEY QUESTION No. 3

Check (✓) the skill **you prefer the most** for practicing English.

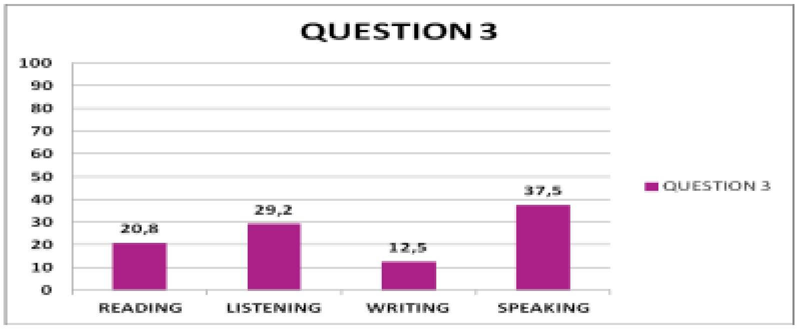


Figure 7 Results Survey 3rd Question

SURVEY QUESTION No. 4

Check (✓) the English skill **you work less**.

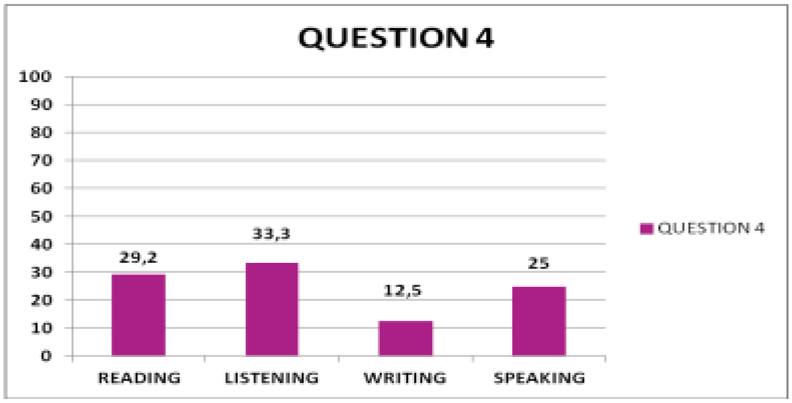


Figure 8 Results Survey 4th Question

SURVEY QUESTION No. 5

Check the skill you consider you need more work

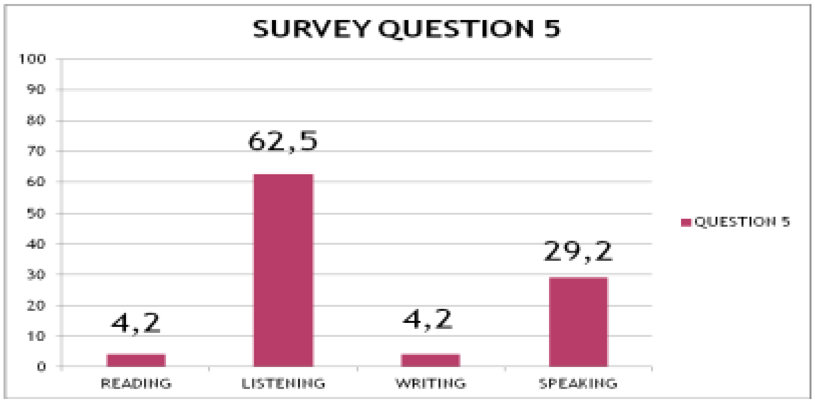


Figure 9 Results Survey 5th Question

What the outcomes of the survey, of the diagnostic test and the average score of the listening section in the first term exam portrayed is that there was a lack of an ongoing, organized and deeper practice of the listening skill and specifically the listening in detail sub-skill in the classroom . This could be due to the fact that teachers did not devote enough time to practice listening in class, or when it was practiced there was no a process to work on it, like the pre, while and after listening phases. In addition, teachers were just dependent on what the textbook offers on this skill; and, apart from this, students were not guided on how to carry out the exercises and they did not receive an accurate feedback from the teacher. This means, teachers did not analyze with students the results or answers of a listening activity which became the activity as another exercise in class without any purpose.

All of this set of constraints can be summarized in three main aspects that outline the most common problematic issues that learners have to struggle with when practicing the listening skill in a foreign language classroom as posed by Rost (1999):

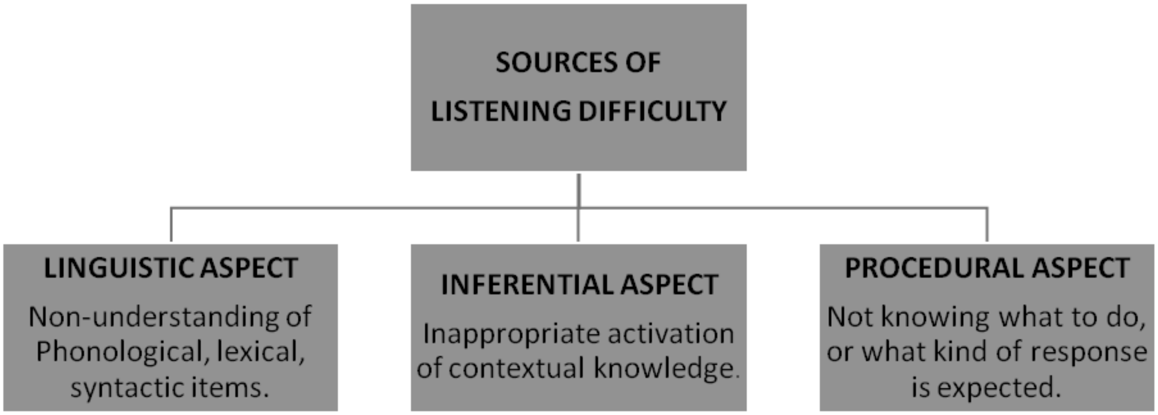

SOURCES OF LISTENING DIFFICULTY
LINGUISTIC ASPECT
Non-understanding of Phonological, lexical, syntactic items.
INFERENTIAL ASPECT
Inappropriate activation of contextual knowledge.
PROCEDURAL ASPECT
Not knowing what to do, or what kind of response is expected.

Figure 10 Sources of Listening Difficulty (Adapted from Rost, 1990)

As a result, when analyzing the findings of such data gathering the following research enquiry was posed: *How does the design of didactic units contributes to foster Basic 3 English students' listening in detail sub-skill?* Hence, with the aim of answering this question in the next section the didactic proposal or pedagogical design will be described in terms of what the researchers attempted to achieve and found with it.

2.4. Design of Didactic Units

With the aim of providing an answer to the aforementioned research question, teacher researchers proposed a series of six didactic units (See Appendix 6) in order to foster the development of the listening in detail sub-skill.

Thus, the proposal of didactics units based on Estaire & Zanón's model (1990) was adapted by the researchers, after the recognition of the problem. It was taken because it offered a set of stages that were framed within a Task-Based Approach which was aimed at enhancing communication in the EFL classroom. The steps considered for carrying out the didactic units can be seen as follows:

Steps of the Didactic Unit *(Adapted from* Estaire & Zanón*, 1990)*

1. Select the topic.

2. Specify the communicative objectives.

3. Plan the final task(s) to achieve the objectives.

4. Specify the thematic and linguistic components needed to complete the final tasks.

5. Planning the process: sequencing of the steps to follow through “enabler tasks” “communicative tasks”, organized by lessons.

6. Involved assessment as part of the learning process.

As it was already stated, such a model was adapted for this study taking into account students’ needs, interests as well as the inner educational context of the Language Center. In other words, those steps were reorganized so as to adjust them to the educational setting the research design was going to be implemented. Hence, each didactic unit established in its first section the following specifications: Topic, Grammar worked, Communicative Objective, Materials, Learning Outcomes, Thematic and Linguistic components. Then, the first activities consisted of providing input and contextualizing learners on the main topic of the unit. After that, the “Before, While and Post-listening” stages were developed. Subsequently, the next section was called “About Yourself” to get students involved with the main issue of the unit in a meaningful way for them.

At the end, the Final task was introduced with the corresponding planning procedure; and, finally the self-assessment and the teacher’s assessment grids were presented to generate self-reflection and critical thinking from students about their learning process.

Moreover one important aspect within the didactic units was the articulation of the process of task-based learning such as: pre-task, task planning and post-task to get the final task, and of course to reach the communicative goal. As well as including the steps of before, while, and post-listening that permitted the practice of the listening ability and so, the improvement of the listening in detail sub-skill based upon an integrated approach and not the practice of an isolated skill.

The didactic units were implemented for two months (May and June) with duration of about four hours each. Teacher researchers designed six didactic units since those were in total the main topics specified in the Basic 3 program. In every unit, during the first session (3 hours) the students worked on the introductory and the pre, while and post-listening activities, as well as the “About Yourself” section; and in groups prepared the planning of the final task which was presented in the next lesson.

Furthermore, teacher researchers decided to make use of the grammar topics established in the program within a real life context to encourage at first the listening in detail sub-skill, as well as the communicative approach which is the one implemented at the Language Center. Consequently, the units were designed based on the next themes:

a. Didactic Unit 1: Vacation Plans (Be going to)

b. Didactic Unit 2: Giving a Tour (Present Simple & Present Continuous)

c. Didactic Unit 3: Last Holidays (Past Simple)

d. Didactic Unit 4: Telling Stories (Past Simple & Past Continuous)

e. Didactic Unit 5: Job Interview (Present Perfect)

f. Didactic Unit 6: Let's Save the Earth (Modal Verbs)

Thus, this set of didactic units was designed keeping in mind some key aspects:

1. Task-Based Approach: Enhances the communicative competence among learners framed within real life situations to get students involved and think of their needs and interests.

2. Steps of the Didactic Unit: Adapted from Estaire & Zanón's, (1990) design.

3. Creation of more activities related to the listening skill -graduating their level of difficulty as well as introducing different registers and accents- since it is the core of this study.

4. Articulation of the rest of the skills (Reading, Writing, Speaking) so that the units were developed on an integrated approach.

5. The implementation and subsequent assessment of the didactic units were considered to foster the listening in detail sub-skill, to promote the communicative competence and to review the grammar topics mentioned above.

2.5. Data Analysis

In order to analyze the gathered data teacher researchers examined the three instruments used: Diagnostic Test, field-notes and students' artifacts. Hence based upon the whole work done during the implementation of the six didactic units by the three participant students of this study, teacher researchers observed and registered information on the field-notes format based upon the implementation of each didactic unit and contrasted it with the information gathered from the diagnostic test and the listening tasks developed in the didactic units.

The objective of observing and registering information relied on students' didactic unit exercises completion in relation to the listening skill and listening in detail sub-skill taking into account the pre, while and post listening process focusing on providing an answer of the research question posed at the beginning of this paper.

In addition, teachers as researchers registered detailed observations during the implementation of each of the didactic units, took notes with regard to the situations encountered in all applied units with the objective of identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the implemented strategy; and in this way, make the required adjustments and make decisions to re-plan the design.

After analyzing the gathered data from the three instruments applied, researchers labeled some patterns found in the raw data (by using color coding technique), as mentioned in the research methodology section, which referred to the commonalities encountered in the description of the information collected from the diagnostic test, field-notes and students' artifacts which gave as a result three emerging categories identified by different colors: *Replay listening (orange), sounds recognition (blue) and vocabulary recognition (green).*

Replay Listening has to do with the several repetitions of a recording students asked for completing a listening task. For instance, at the beginning of the intervention the three participants repeated audios for about four times since they stated they needed to listen again in order to be able to accomplish the task.

It proved that foreign language learners require listening several times so as to identify who are taking part in the conversation, what it is about and where it is taking place since the answer of these questions make part of basic listening process; and, therefore constitutes the basis for developing listening in detail.

Sounds Recognition refers about the process of decoding sounds and being able to discriminate them to convert them in meaningful utterances. Regarding the participant students it was observed when they struggled with sounds discrimination so that they failed to distinguish similar sounds (minimal pairs), contractions (reduced forms) accent and pronunciation.

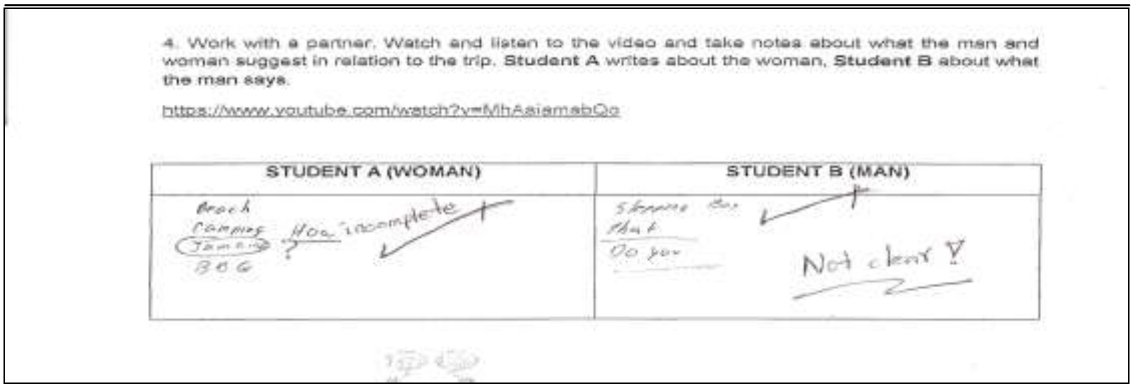
In accordance with Rost (2011) vocabulary recognition consists of lexical items that the listener can recognize and interpret readily without contextual clues. Thus, during the development of the listening tasks in the didactic units, students needed to be guided towards their comprehension by reviewing previous knowledge, helping them with clue words, giving synonyms, showing videos that helped them to construct meaning from images and checking their understanding.

The following table depicts those main categories including two columns. The first portrays some samples or excerpts taken from the field-notes as well the participant's pseudonym and the number of didactic unit referenced, and the second indicates the sort of specific category the sample belongs to:

SAMPLE	CATEGORY
It was hard for her to discriminate some of the words. (Caroline, Didactic Unit 2) She felt a bit confused because of reduced forms (contractions). (Caroline, Didactic Unit 5) There was confusion of some words because of their similar pronunciation. (Minimal Pairs) (Elias, Didactic Unit 2)	SOUNDS RECOGNITION
The student didn't remember the structures of the past simple and the past continuous and also some vocabulary was unknown for her. (Caroline, Didactic Unit 4) The st had to listen to a song five time because it was difficult for him since he had problems with the vocabulary (Elias, Didactic Unit 3)	VOCABULARY RECOGNITION
The student had to listen to the activities three or four times, because she didn't remember all the information. (Caroline, Didactic Unit 1) He had to listen about five times to fill in the gaps. (Tony, Didactic unit 2) In the exercise "While listening" he had to repeat the audio four times to get the answers. (Elías, Didactic Unit 2)	REPLAY LISTENING

Table 1 Description of Emerging Categories

Furthermore, the results of the implementation of the whole proposal based upon students' artifacts also highlighted the performance of each student with regard to their progress in relation to the listening skill in every didactic unit. On the one hand, at the beginning of the intervention of the didactic units design Caroline and Elias needed more practice in this regard so that they evidenced it was hard to cope with some exercises provided in the didactic units. It might be because they found difficult to develop some activities since they did not know some of the lexical items (vocabulary recognition) presented; and as a result when they worked on some activities which implied listening in detail they did not succeed at all in accomplishing the objective. The picture below illustrates a sample related to this finding.



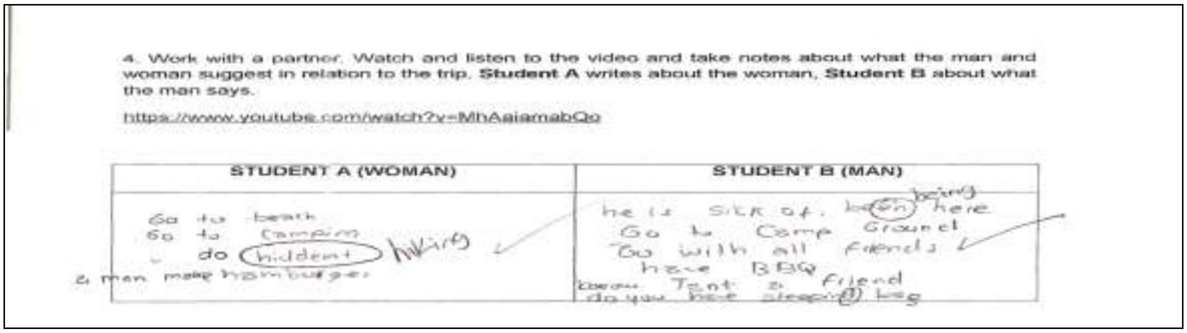
4. Work with a partner. Watch and listen to the video and take notes about what the man and woman suggest in relation to the trip. **Student A** writes about the woman, **Student B** about what the man says.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhAsiamabQo

STUDENT A (WOMAN)	STUDENT B (MAN)
Beach Camping Jamming BBQ How? incomplete	Sleeping bag that Do you Not clear!

Figure 11 Sample Elias' First Didactic Unit

On the other hand, Tony evidenced although he did not have a complete command on the vocabulary presented (vocabulary and sounds recognition), he used inference due to his background knowledge to fulfill some activities like completing charts or blanks. The following sample portrays this situation:



4. Work with a partner. Watch and listen to the video and take notes about what the man and woman suggest in relation to the trip. **Student A** writes about the woman, **Student B** about what the man says.

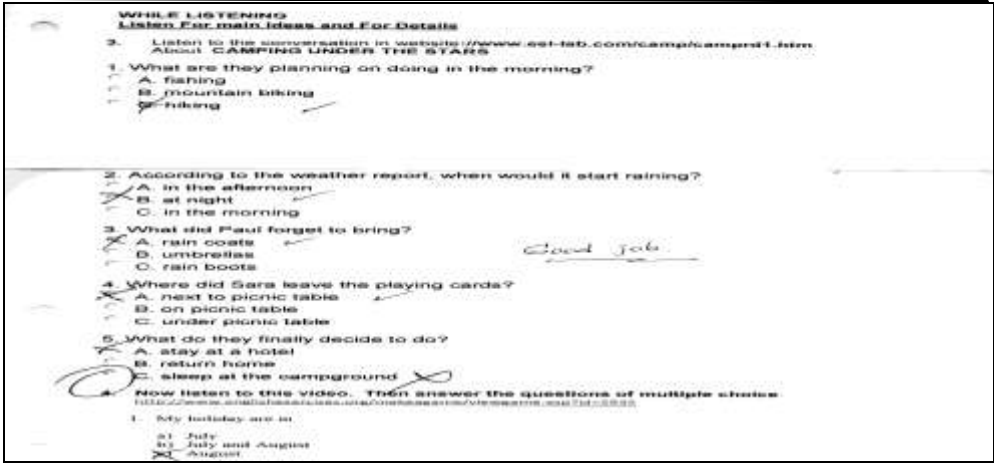
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhAsiamabQo

STUDENT A (WOMAN)	STUDENT B (MAN)
Go to beach Go to camping do hiddent hiking & man make hamburger	he is sick of. been being here Go to Camp Ground Go with all friends have BBQ [illegible] Tent a friend do you have sleeping bag

Figure 12 Sample Tony's First Didactic Unit

These yielded outcomes from the beginning of the intervention drew attention to the importance on focusing more on the unknown lexical items so as to give students more confidence regarding the forthcoming didactic units they were going to develop.

For this reason, every time a didactic unit was developed the progress appeared significantly for each of the three participant students. Thus, the next samples support this assertion, bearing in mind that in every case such a progress differed based upon the student's language level, learning style and background knowledge. In addition, the core of this study "Listening in detail" was fostered in all units as it was the main purpose; and, the participant students showed improvement in the development of this sub-skill.



WHILE LISTENING
Listen For main ideas and For Details

3. Listen to the conversation in website://www.esl-lab.com/camp/camprd1.htm
About **CAMPING UNDER THE STARS**

1. What are they planning on doing in the morning?
A. fishing
B. mountain biking
[✓ C. hiking]

2. According to the weather report, when would it start raining?
A. in the afternoon
[✓ B. at night]
C. in the morning

3. What did Paul forget to bring?
[✓ A. rain coats]
B. umbrellas
C. rain boots

Good Job

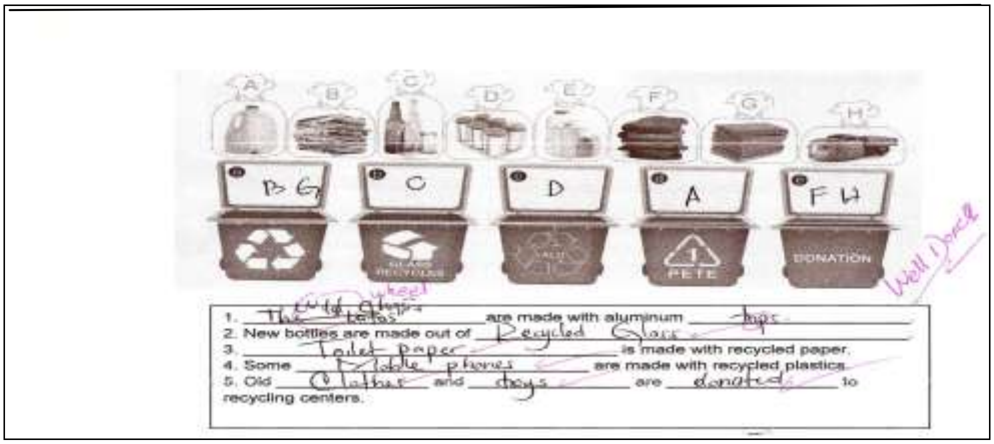
4. Where did Sara leave the playing cards?
[✓ A. next to picnic table]
B. on picnic table
C. under picnic table

5. What do they finally decide to do?
A. stay at a hotel
B. return home
[✓ C. sleep at the campground]

4. **Now listen to this video. Then answer the questions of multiple choice**
[illegible]

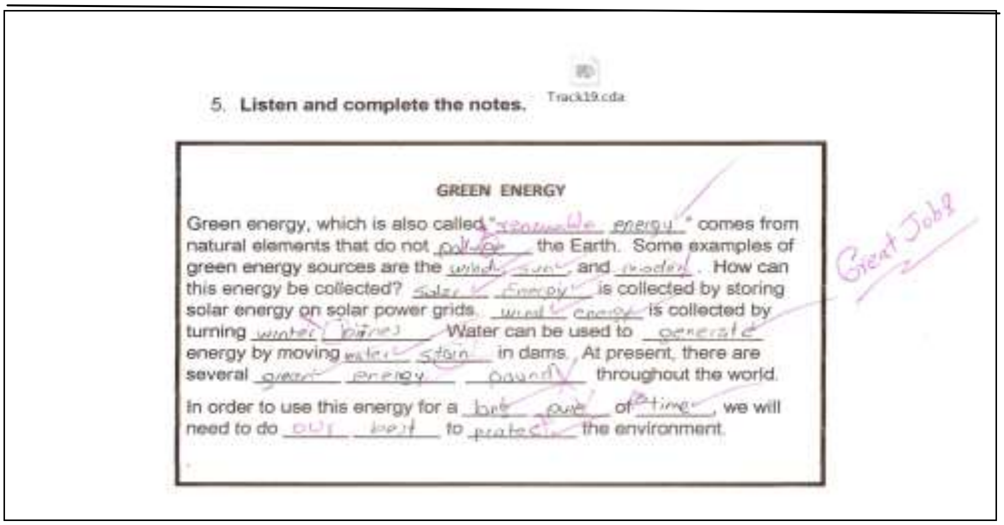
1. My holiday are in
a) July
b) July and August
[✓ c) August]

Figure 13 Sample Elias' Fourth Didactic Unit


A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
B G
C
D
A
F H
GLASS RECYCLING
ALU
PETE
DONATION
Well Done!

1. The ~~telas~~ are made with aluminum tops.
2. New bottles are made out of Recycled Glass
3. Toilet paper is made with recycled paper.
4. Some Mobile phones are made with recycled plastics.
5. Old Clothes and toys are donated to recycling centers.

Figure 14 Sample Caroline's Sixth Didactic Unit


Track19.cda
Great Job!

5. **Listen and complete the notes.**

GREEN ENERGY

Green energy, which is also called "renewable energy" comes from natural elements that do not pollute the Earth. Some examples of green energy sources are the wind, sun, and wooden. How can this energy be collected? Solar Energy is collected by storing solar energy on solar power grids. wind energy is collected by turning winter bines. Water can be used to generate energy by moving water storm in dams. At present, there are several great energy pound throughout the world.

In order to use this energy for a bit pair of time, we will need to do our best to protect the environment.

Figure 15 Sample Tony's Sixth Didactic Unit

Otherwise as it was stated in the diagnosis stage, the sources of listening difficulty found during this step (Linguistic, Inferential and Procedural aspects) were then analyzed and contrasted with the initial results of the diagnostic test, the outcomes of the listening tasks of the didactic units and the registered data on field-notes, after applying the six didactic units in order to observe the way in which each student faced them during the development of the units. The beneath table informs about this concern in general terms according to the results obtained:

PARTICIPANTS	**LINGUISTIC ASPECT**	**INFERENTIAL ASPECT**	**PROCEDURAL ASPECT**
Caroline	At the beginning of the intervention she struggled with lexical and syntactical elements. Therefore, it was required to emphasize more on these aspects for the student to achieve the posed objectives. After that, the teacher guided the student more about it and in this way she evidenced a better listening comprehension because she was familiarized with such issues.	As the didactic units were designed based on the Task-Based Approach and the before, while and post-listening steps, the student was usually exposed to activate her schemata. However, in some cases she was not cooperative at all since she felt frustrated because she did not know how to express her ideas; due to the lack of vocabulary in spite of she was contextualized with the topic.	During the development of the six didactic units, in every task or activity the student was told on what to do and it was reinforced with the teacher's oral explanation. Nevertheless, in some specific exercises in which was necessary to discriminate information she did not do what was asked. This could be because she did not pay attention or she was not concentrated on the task.
Tony	At the beginning of the intervention he had some trouble when dealing with some unknown words from the listening tasks. But, he overcame them since he made use of inference to guess meanings of the words in accordance with the context provided. Thus, every time a didactic unit was applied he demonstrated his improvement on this, so that the teacher's guidance contributed to it too; and, the listening comprehension was	As posed above, the design of the didactic units permits the activation of students' schemata. For this reason, he participated a lot during the introductory activities that let him to contextualize on what he was going to listen later with some recordings. Hence, as he allowed himself to be involved in the main topic he found easier to accomplish the listening tasks presented in the didactic units.	The activities' instructions were explicit in all units; the teacher also monitored the student's job to check that he was doing the right things. In addition, when an instruction was not clear at all, the student asked the teacher so as to clarify what the exercise was about, or what he was expected to do with it.

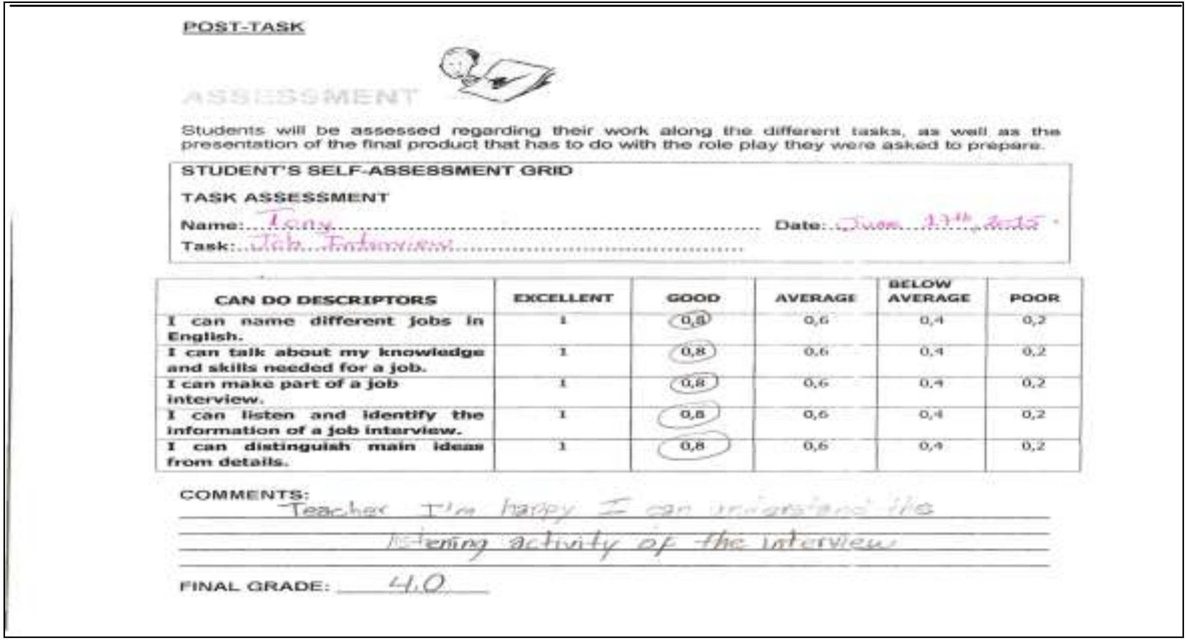
	better in each task.		
Elias	From the beginning to the end of the implementation of the didactic units, he reflected significant problems with regard to the linguistic aspect. For instance, he faced a lot of difficulties with lexical and syntactical elements which made part of the listening tasks. Consequently, the teacher had to clarify vocabulary, grammatical structures and guide him during the development of the activities. In that way he tried to it better each time.	Based on the linguistic problems evidenced before, at the moment of starting the contextualization of the suggested topic, he presented drawbacks for understanding or conveying his ideas. Nonetheless, as the purpose was to foster the listening skill within a confidence environment, the teacher gave support to his work and guided him along the development of the different tasks. Then, at the end he showed he trusted in himself more and this was displayed in the last two units.	As it was already mentioned, the students were usually told on what to do in each activity. Thus, he was very attentive in each case since he was aware of his language problems. Besides, the teacher monitored his work in order to check he was right and understood what the task consisted of. Therefore, the procedural aspect for him was successful in general terms.

Table 2 Findings Sources of Listening Difficulty after Didactic Proposal Implementation

The above results clarify that the sources of listening difficulty can be different according to the student. That is, one can be more predominant than other depending on students' characteristics. Nevertheless, taking into consideration what the table reports, from the three participant students the *linguistic aspect* was the one outstanding of the three. This finding remarks the importance of providing a great source of input at the beginning of the listening task with the aim of checking vocabulary and grammar features that might be relevant for the development of the proposed activities.

Finally, at the end of each didactic unit the students were encouraged to do their self-assessment which intended to foster self-reflection upon students, in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses during the development of the whole unit centered on the listening skill and in detail sub-skill. In general the outcomes showed a small change from the first to the last unit since the average indicator in students' assessment was "Good".

This means, the participants considered they were doing a good job and just needed some reinforcement. The next sample evidences this:



POST-TASK

ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed regarding their work along the different tasks, as well as the presentation of the final product that has to do with the role play they were asked to prepare.

STUDENT'S SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID

TASK ASSESSMENT

Name: Tony Date: June 17th 2015

Task: Job Interview

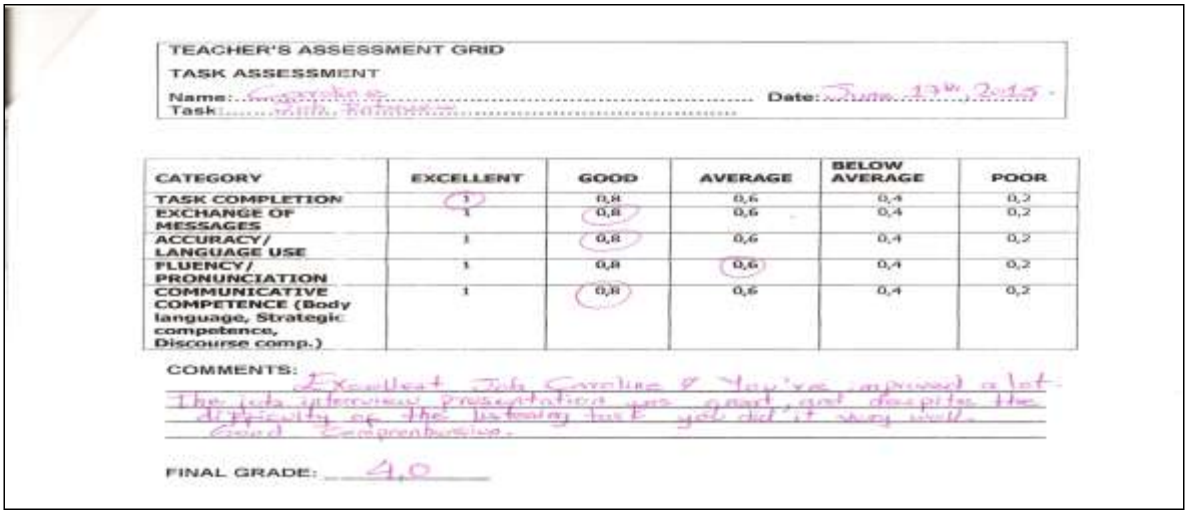
CAN DO DESCRIPTORS	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE	POOR
I can name different jobs in English.	1	[✓ 0,8]	0,6	0,4	0,2
I can talk about my knowledge and skills needed for a job.	1	[✓ 0,8]	0,6	0,4	0,2
I can make part of a job interview.	1	[✓ 0,8]	0,6	0,4	0,2
I can listen and identify the information of a job interview.	1	[✓ 0,8]	0,6	0,4	0,2
I can distinguish main ideas from details.	1	[✓ 0,8]	0,6	0,4	0,2

COMMENTS: Teacher I'm happy I can understand the listening activity of the interview

FINAL GRADE: 4.0

Figure 16 Sample Tony's Self-Assessment Fifth Didactic Unit

On the other hand, the teacher's assessment grid was designed to check students' work and progress in every didactic unit. The indicators suggested were posed generally to check the whole completion of the stated objectives of the didactic units. In addition, at the end of the grid there was a part to write the teacher's comments in relation to the students' performance. Those comments were mostly written with the purpose of encouraging the participants to work on their weak points and praising their progress in the listening skill activities for maximizing their confidence and increasing motivation. The following sample describes this type of assessment.



TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT GRID

TASK ASSESSMENT

Name: Caroline Date: June 17th, 2015.

Task: [illegible]

CATEGORY	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE	POOR
TASK COMPLETION	[✓ 1]	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,2
EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES	1	[✓ 0,8]	0,6	0,4	0,2
ACCURACY/ LANGUAGE USE	1	[✓ 0,8]	0,6	0,4	0,2
FLUENCY/ PRONUNCIATION	1	0,8	[✓ 0,6]	0,4	0,2
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (Body language, Strategic competence, Discourse comp.)	1	[✓ 0,8]	0,6	0,4	0,2

COMMENTS: Excellent Job Caroline ! You've improved a lot. The job interview presentation was good, and despite the difficulty of the listening test you did it very well. Good Comprehension.

FINAL GRADE: 4,0

Figure 17 Sample Teacher's Assessment Grid Caroline's Fifth Didactic Unit

Taking into account the emerging findings after the implementation and the research question posed at the beginning of this study, it can be concluded that the design of didactic units contributed to foster listening in detail for Basic 3 level students since it is at first a dynamic design which allowed students read, listen, write and speak as an integrated approach. Second, the participant students evidenced a progress from the implementation of the diagnostic test to the end of the didactic units. Such a progress was seen when in the last two units they showed better results in terms of their listening in detail comprehension since they did not present a lot trouble with vocabulary and sounds recognition and they did not asked for several repetitions of the recordings like at the beginning.

Students also asserted that they could notice a gradual improvement as regards their listening in detail comprehension observing a great change when developing listening activities. For this reason although a final listening test could not be done to determine their listening in detail progress because of lack of time at the institution, they pointed out that thanks to the development of the proposed exercises in the units and the permanent guidance and monitoring of the teacher they felt a positive evolution (which should continue in progress) in relation to their listening comprehension which also let them to promote a communicative environment in class too.

Moreover the implementation of the six didactic units as the pedagogical design of this research was a challenge to the students and teachers, since in the Language Center there was not any background on units of work like the ones applied. Besides, they encouraged not only to strengthen the listening skill practice but also the link between this skill with the rest of them (reading, writing, speaking); thus, the ongoing practice of the communicative competence, which is a must in the Center, was developed thanks to carrying out the didactic units that led the listening skill to a broader perspective from being the “Cinderella” to become the “bridge” that eliminates the gap between it and its counterparts.

The role of the students in all didactic units was that of an active subject who negotiated the target language worked through the tasks proposed, who conveyed meanings and interacted with partners to make language use as real as in daily life; and, reflected upon their own language learning process too. Otherwise, teacher’s role was that of counselor along the development of the tasks, also monitored students’ job, gave the students clues to get the answers of exercises when they were in trouble , controlled the time of each activity, and accompanied learners in reviewing and assessing what was worked.

Consequently, as Wilson (2008) stated, listening is “the Cinderella skill” probably because is the least understood, the least researched and, historically, the least valued. Therefore, with the didactic units design the researchers purported to contribute in the research and didactic fields so as to foster its practice, development and understanding by exploring different forms of valuing this very important skill.

Regarding the insights yielded of this implementation, the fact of emphasizing on three participant students in order to generalize findings from an instance, and to identify commonalities and differences among them, permitted to the researchers to visualize that the listening skill requires a lot of practice but also creates improvement when it is seen as a purposeful practice in the EFL classroom which is guided by the teacher and really valued by the students.

Conclusions

This research was aimed at fostering the listening in detail sub-skill in an English Basic 3 level by means of the design of didactic units at the Language Center of the Pedagógica University. Teacher researchers looked into theoretical foundations in relation to the listening skill and development of didactic units regarding the local, national and international instances. After the literature review, the researchers designed a didactic proposal focused on listening in detail made up of six didactic units which were then implemented and evaluated. At the end, they drew conclusions and implications according to the emerged findings from the proposal.

Through the data analysis stage, researchers described and interpreted collected information from instruments applied (Diagnostic test, field-notes and students' artifacts). The outcomes evidenced that at the beginning of the implementation with the first didactic unit, the participants struggled with the linguistic aspect presented in the activities like lexical, syntactic and phonological items which interfered when listening to detailed information and in this way completing the tasks.

In addition, collected data was analyzed and researchers found common patterns which were labeled in three categories: Listening replay, sounds and vocabulary recognition. Thus, based on these commonalities teacher researchers analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of the design so as to provide changes for the next didactic units and give support to the development of the listening in detail sub-skill for learners.

As a consequence, teachers reflected on this concern and prepared students in advance as regards linguistic aspect. Hence students were exposed to more input, that is, presentation of new vocabulary, practice on pronunciation and review on grammar topics as well as the activation of their prior knowledge. Therefore, this opening and controlled practice contributed to the development of the activities proposed in the rest of the didactic units implemented and to lower anxiety among students, too.

At the end of the implementation the didactic units design was evaluated and it was concluded that preparing students about lexical, syntactical and phonological items, providing different types of input, graduating the complexity of the tasks and giving immediate feedback contributed to foster the listening in detail sub-skill in participants due to an ongoing and guided practice by the learners and teachers' side respectively.

Furthermore based upon the results of the implementation, researchers determined that the three participant students of this research improved their listening comprehension in detail progressively thanks to the activities stated in the didactic units, which favored this sub-skill. For instance: diagrams, tables, contextual clues, spot the difference between participants or situations, and organize events were the sort of activities that fostered and stimulated the practice of detailed information from an audio since they permitted students to know the purpose of the exercise, to be more concentrated and to realize on the how to discriminate data that was relevant to solve a particular task.

In accordance with the mentioned findings researchers suggested four main implications to bear in mind when teaching listening in English. First, it is paramount that teachers as listening material designers consider the sort of input that is provided to students and the level of complexity it has. That is, it is necessary to link the institution's language teaching approach with the topic(s) being taught and the students' needs, age and interests so as to offer a great variety of materials such as: videos, songs, weather forecasts, informal and formal conversations, lectures, etc.

Second, teachers must be aware that every student is different. According to Skehan (1991) each learner has a general predisposition, voluntary or not, toward processing information in a particular way that is known as “learning style”. Therefore, it is required to create listening tasks in which the learning styles are encouraged in order to be inclusive and allow students to experience the target language in regard to their preferences for learning.

Third, designing materials to practice listening in detail requires teacher’s analysis, expertise and creativity. This means that whatever listening task might not have the right criteria in order to practice and develop the listening in detail sub-skill in the EFL classroom since lesson objectives and students’ needs and interests determine that. Consequently, being aware of this also helps to avoid confusion, boredom or frustration on learners.

Finally, the listening skill is one that implies an ongoing practice from the students’ side but also a frequent guidance from the teacher’s stance. For this reason, it is very important that teachers follow the pre, while and post- listening steps in order to activate learners’ schemata, to monitor students’ job, and to increase confidence and motivation for the coming tasks. It is also important to foster the listen in detail sub-skill by following the next stages: getting the main idea, listening for specific information afterwards and for detailed information at the end.

Fostering a continuous practice of the listening skill in the foreign language classroom is definitely one of the best elements to get students engaged with the new language they are learning, since this not only provides a model to follow, as Wilson

(2008) asserted, but also offers the opportunity to create or produce language meaningfully based on interactions among learners.

Recommendations for Further Research

The implementation of didactic units is not a new issue in the foreign language teaching field. Nevertheless, it was the first time a proposal like this was carried out in the Language Center. Hence, based on the experience of this didactic proposal, it is advisable to design didactic units of this nature to any kind of population and language level integrating all language skills or perhaps emphasizing just on one or two.; since it is a powerful tool that can be considered as a complement or even substitute of the current textbooks used in class.

However to prepare and design didactic units is a time consuming activity which implies several working hours for teachers because it needs some specific features such as: looking for the right activities which have to be linked together to assemble a whole body of elements, they also must be visually attractive and come in different sorts of activities to avoid repetition and boredom. As a consequence, this brings sometimes tiredness but also satisfaction when at the end it is noticeable that thanks to the units learners could practice language in a communicative and innovative way to leave monotony behind.

In addition, apart from the communicative practice of the target language due to interaction, to implement didactic units serves as a way to promote critical thinking among students since at the end they are required to assess themselves in order to evaluate their process during the didactic units' development. Besides it is a pertinent tool to enhance autonomous work for students to monitor their own listening learning process.

Finally, making use of didactic units in the foreign language entails constant monitoring from the teacher in two aspects. First, students should be frequently observed so as to check they are working well and see whether they have any problem or question in relation to the task they are working on. Second, applying a whole didactic unit can take too much time if teachers do not control it and this can disrupt the development of the syllabus within the institution.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1 Listening Diagnostic Test

The aim of this diagnostic test is to determine your listening in detail comprehension in English.

1. Listen to the first half and write the missing words.

vegetables __________ ____________________
_________ __________ __________ __________
_________ __________ __________ chicken____
_________ bananas___

2. Listen to the second half and number the words in order.

Other food	**meals**	**drink**	
__ bread	__ pasta	__ coffee	11 breakfast
__ cheese	__ rice	__ orange juice	__ dessert
__ cake	__ soup	__ soda	__ dinner
1 milk			__ lunch
			__ main course

3. Dave and Tania talk about food they like. Listen to the dialogue and fill in the blanks.

Tania: Mmm, I'm ____________________
Dave: Me too.
Tania: Hey, where are Tom and Elaine?
Dave: They went to a restaurant.
Tania: Really? I'd like to go to a restaurant. I feel like a big ____________. Lettuce, tomato, ______________....
Dave: Yuk! Do you like ______________ so much?
Tania: Yes, and _________, I love bananas, mangoes, __________.
Dave: Yeah, I like fruit too, but right now I feel like a big juicy ____________!
Tania: Oh, do you eat a lot of red _____________?
Dave: Oh yeah, I don't like vegetables much, but I really enjoy a nice piece of steak or ____________. Are you a vegetarian?

4. Tom and Elaine are in a restaurant. Listen to the dialogue and circle True or False.

a. Tom says, "Hey, could we have the menu please".	True	False
b. Elaine usually has apple juice for breakfast.	True	False
c. Elaine eats fish for lunch.	True	False
d. Tom says, "Mmm, sounds delicious".	True	False

5. Tom and Elaine are still talking in the restaurant. Listen to the dialogue and check the person who…

a. asks what is good in the restaurant	Tania	Dave
b. says the fish is excellent.		
c. loves fish.		

Adapted from: Listen! Gravier & Harrington, 2001

Appendix 2

Survey about English Skills

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGOGICA
NACIONAL
Educadora de educadores

CENTRO DE LENGUAS
BASIC 3 (ADULTS)

NAME: ____

AGE: ___________ **OCCUPATION:** ______________________

The following survey aims at inquiring about the learning process of the English skills as a foreign language.

Please answer the next questions. Be as honest as possible.

1. Check (✓) the English skill you consider **the most difficult** when learning.
   a. Reading
   b. Listening
   c. Writing
   d. Speaking
2. Based on your previous answer **mention 3 reasons** for your choice.
   a. ____
   b. ____
   c. ____
3. Check (✓) the skill **you prefer the most** for practicing English.
   a. Reading
   b. Listening
   c. Writing
   d. Speaking
4. Check (✓) the English skill **you work less**.
   a. Reading
   b. Listening
   c. Writing
   d. Speaking
5. Check (✓) the English skill you consider **you need more work**.
   a. Reading
   b. Listening
   c. Writing
   d. Speaking

Thanks for your time!

Appendix 3
Field-Notes Format

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGOGICA NACIONAL
Educadora de educadores

CENTRO DE LENGUAS
BASIC 3
FIELD NOTES FORMAT

<table>
<tr><td>DATE</td><td>No. OBSERVATION</td><td>TIME</td><td>CLASSROOM</td></tr>
<tr><td>No. ATTENDEES</td><td>No. ABSENT</td><td colspan="2">CLASSROOM ARRANGEMENT</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">AIM OF OBSERVATION</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">LESSON DESCRIPTION</td><td colspan="2">OBSERVER COMMENTS</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
</table>

Appendix 4
Listening Section First Term Exam

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGOGICA
NACIONAL
Educadora de educadores

LANGUAGE CENTER 2015
LEVEL: BASIC III
FIRST TERM
TOTAL SCORE: 50 POINTS
FORM B

LISTENING SECTION (10 Points)

1. Listen to two people talking about their life experiences and circle the correct information about them. (1 EACH, 10 POINTS)

1) He liked the ______ .
a) nature
b) weather
c) both

2) He says the food was ____
a) delicious
b) spicy
c) inexpensive

3) He traveled with ____ .
a) family
b) a friend
c) classmate

4) He visited _____ .
a) Taipei
b) the west
c) a university

5) He wanted to learn about _____ .
a) the language
b) the economy
c) the culture

2. Listen again and answer true (T) or false (F).

6. Daniel didn't like the food.____

7. Daniel liked the Taiwan because is similar to his town ____

8. Daniel made a friend in Taiwan who helped him _____

9. He wants to know about western cultures ____

10. He decided to travel to Taiwan because he likes Asia.__

Appendix 5

Consent Format

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGOGICA NACIONAL
Educadora de educadores

A PROPOSAL TO FOSTER STUDENTS' ENGLISH LISTENING IN DETAIL SUB-SKILL IN BASIC 3 LEVEL AT THE LANGUAGE CENTER OF UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL

CONSENT FORMAT

Dear Student:
We are English teachers working on a research project called: "A proposal to foster students' English listening in detail sub-skill in Basic 3 level at the Language Center of Universidad Pedagógica Nacional".

This research aims at fostering the development of the listening in detail sub-skill in the English language for Basic 3 level students of the Language Center of the university. Hence, the data collection will be carried out during this semester based upon class observations done by the researchers and the students' artifacts which consist of six didactic units worked during the course to achieve the purpose of the study.

For this reason, your participation is of great importance for this project; and, it is voluntary too. We also guarantee the following aspects:
1. The use of pseudonyms to keep your identity secretly (if you prefer like that).
2. Accuracy with the gathered information.
3. The results of this research will not influence the final grade of the course.

We are very thankful for your cooperation and authorization to show your work during the development of the study. Finally, fill out the next information, please.
Nydia Romero Valencia
Francia del Pilar Gavilán Galindo

FULL NAME ____

AGE __________ **SUGGESTED PSEUDONYM** ___________________________

LEVEL ________________ **TIME** ________________

SIGNATURE ______________________________

DATE ________________

Appendix 6

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGOGICA NACIONAL
Educadora de educadores

Didactic Unit No. 5

CENTRO DE LENGUAS
LEVEL: BASIC III
TEACHER: FRANCIA GAVILÁN

GROUP	**DATE**	**TIME: About 4 hours**	**No STUDENTS**
TOPIC: JOB INTERVIEW		**GRAMMAR WORKED: Past Tense and Present Perfect**	
COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVE: During the unit, the student will be able to describe appropriately what happens in a job interview and what the requirements for a job interview are in short written texts and oral exchanges.			
Materials: Tape recorder, Computers, Handouts			

ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS
The student will be able to:

- ✓ Name different jobs in English
- ✓ Discuss about jobs and personal skills
- ✓ Listen to and identify a job interview
- ✓ Distinguish main ideas and details
- ✓ Make part of a job interview

COMPONENTS REQUIRED
Thematic Components
- ✓ Vocabulary related to jobs
- ✓ Jobs skills
- ✓ Personal and Professional information
- ✓ Personality features

Linguistic Components

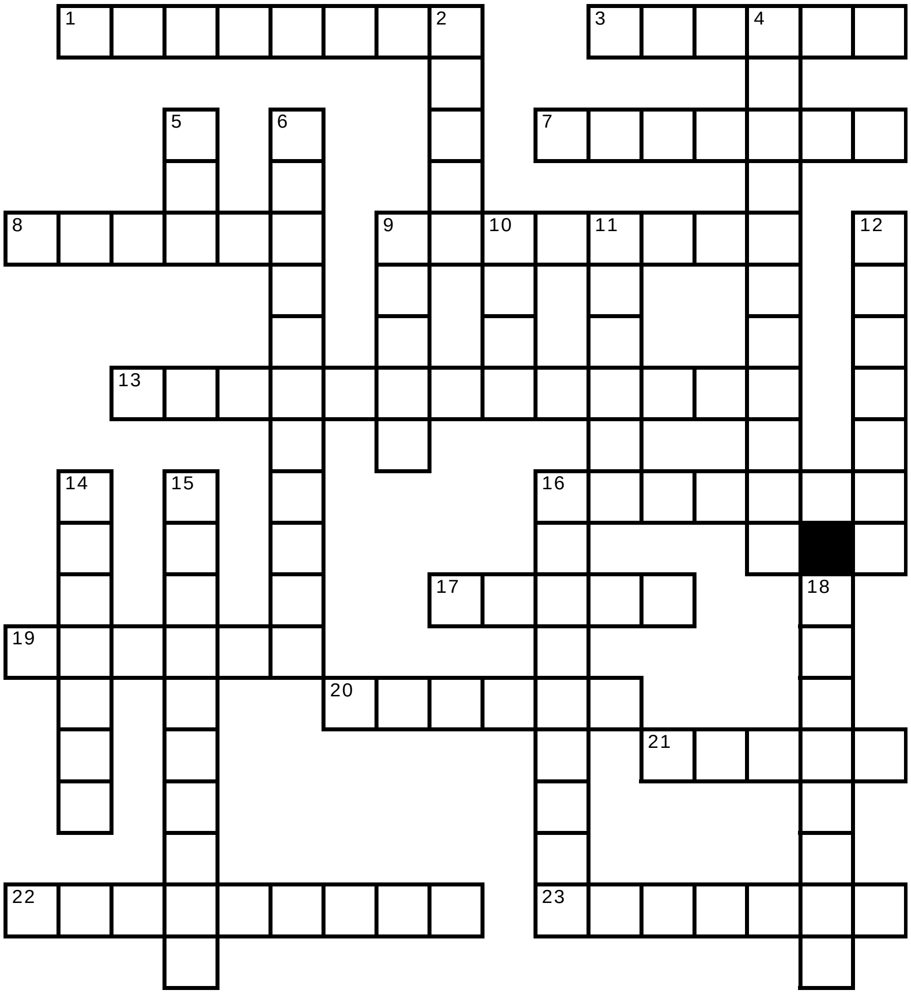
CONTENT NOTIONAL FUNCTIONAL	EXPONENTS OF FUNCTIONS	GRAMMAR CONTENT	LEXICON CONTENT
Ask for, produce and understand information related to: - Jobs - Skills - Personal and Professional life	When did … ? Have you ever …? What have you done…? Where have you worked … Why did you …?	Past and Present Perfect Tense.	What did you study? How long did you work there? When did you quit your last job? Which are your good and bad points?

Jobs Crossword

1. Complete the jobs crossword according to the clues.

Across

1. Somebody who plays an instrument.
3. Someone who grows crops.
7. Somebody who fixes teeth.
8. A person who serves food.
9. Someone who fixes cars.
13. Somebody who catches criminals.
16. A person who plays sports.
17. Someone who stars in a movie.
19. A person who sings songs.
20. Somebody who helps sick people.
21. Somebody who flies airplanes.
22. A person who does experiments.
23. Somebody who teaches.



Down

2. A person who helps a doctor.
4. Someone who delivers mail.
5. Somebody who helps sick animals.
6. Somebody who puts out fires.
9. Someone who digs for metal ore in the ground.
10. Someone who cooks food.
11. A person who paints pictures.
12. A person who protects a country.
14. Someone who cleans buildings.
15. A person who makes computer games.
16. A person who goes to outer space.
18. A person who tells us the news.

Taken from: www.booglesworldesl.com

Job Interview

1. Read the next job interview with a partner and answer the next questions:

- *What job position is Palmer applying for?*
- *How long has he had his license?*
- *Has he ever had an accident? What happened?*
- *Has he ever been in jail? Why?*
- *Has he had any job experience?*
- *Would you recommend him for a job? Why?*

Ms. Green: Have you ever had an interview with us before?
Palmer: No, I haven't.
Ms. Green: Can you drive?
Palmer: Yes, I've had my license for five years.
Ms. Green: Have you ever had an accident?
Palmer: I crashed once while trying to park.
Ms. Green: I see. Have you ever been arrested?
Palmer: I was arrested once for drinking and fighting.
Ms. Green: I see. Mr. Palmer, why do you want to work for us?
Palmer: I've never driven a truck before. I think it might be fun.

Ms. Green: Have you ever been seriously ill?
Palmer: I was in the hospital once after somebody stabbed me with a knife, but I've never been sick.
Ms. Green: I see. Well, thanks for coming.
Palmer: But we've just started the interview.
Ms. Green: Yes, but I think I've heard enough. We'll let you know if anything becomes available.
Palmer: I've always been a hard worker.
Ms. Green: I'm sure you have. Thank you for dropping by.
Palmer: I've never missed a day of work, except when I've been in jail.
Ms. Green: I'm sure you're very reliable. It's been a pleasure.
Palmer: I've only been in jail three or four times in my whole life.
Ms. Green: That's wonderful news. Our secretary will help you find the door. Bye-bye!

Taken and Adapted from: *www.eslprof.com/handouts/Info/presentperfectinfo.doc*

LISTEN!!!

BEFORE LISTENING

1. Talk about the following questions in pairs:

1. Have you ever been in a job interview? When? How was it like?
2. Which are the most common questions in a job interview?
3. What you should and shouldn't do during the interview?

WHILE LISTENING

2. Listen to a job interview and answer the questions below:

- Has the man had a lot of job experience? Why?
- What's the woman reaction about his qualifications and educational background?
- Would you say that the man has been honest about his answers?
- Do you think he might get the job? Why?

Taken from: http://www.esl-lab.com/jobinterview/jobinterviewrd1.htm

3. Listen to the conversation again and complete the extracts with the words you hear.

Woman: Oh, wow. That's pretty ________________ what ______________________there? What kind of work?
Man: Well, I worked full time, um, for a private language school in Tokyo for the first two years, and then I _____________________________ at a community college.

Man: Well, well, I know it sounds like an unusual combination, but I completed a program in ________________________before I got my, uh, English and psychology degrees.

Woman: Oh, Wow. You_________________________, haven't you? [*Yeah.*] So, what exactly, um, how did you teach and what exactly did you do?

Woman: Wow. That's, that's pretty impressive. That's interesting. [*. . . and tasty.*] Oh, I bet. So, why ____________________ to the United States? How long ________________________?

Man: I __________________________for, uh, probably _________________________ now.

Woman: Really? What's the name of the restaurant?

Man: Well, it's called Flying Sushi. Have you ___________________of it?

Woman: Yes, I __________________there. Their food is fabulous; it's top-notch. It's really hard just to get a reservation there.

Woman: Good. So, what would you say would be a third reason?

Man: And finally, I __________________________________ . . . .

Woman: Four? Wow! What languages do you speak?

Man: Well, I speak _________________________________at an advanced level. [*At an advanced level? Wow.*] And I also speak _________________________________level.

AFTER LISTENING

4. Fill in the next chart with the requested information based on the job interview you listened to:

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE TALKING?	WHAT ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT?	WHICH ARE HIS STUDIES	WHERE HAS HE WORKED?	WHICH ARE 3 REASONS WHY HE IS A GOOD CANDIDATE?

ABOUT YOURSELF!!!

Look at the CV (Curriculum Vitae) sample. Then, fill out yours.

Nisa Thaoto CV

I am a nurse with qualifications and experience. I am looking for a job in healthcare in Beechen.

Personal details

Address: 391 Newbury Road, Beechen, BE2 3AC
Email: nisathaoto@wow.com
Phone: 07746 128 497
Date of birth: 30 April 1992

Education and qualifications

2010-2011: Boromarajonani College of Nursing, Bangkok (Thailand). Diploma in Nursing
2012-present: Beechen College. ESOL course. I will take Entry 1 exams this term.

Work experience

2011-2012: nurse at Bumrungrad International Hospital, Bangkok
2013-present: volunteer assistant at Help the Aged (charity shop), 14 High Street, Beechen

Skills

Languages: Thai (fluent); English (elementary)
Computers: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel and PowerPoint)
UK driving license

Interests

I enjoy football and played for the women's team at school.

References

Mr Mark Hargreaves, ESOL Lecturer, Beechen College: mhargreaves@beechen.ac.uk
Ms Pikul Dangda, Head of Nursing, Bumrungrad International Hospital, Bangkok: pikul_dangda@bumrungrad.com. Ms Dangda was my supervisor when I worked at BumrungradAs you have already seen the sample, complete the CV below with your information. You can create some data too!

____ ***CV***

I am a ____

I am looking for ____

Personal details

Address: ____

Email: ____

Phone: ____

Date of birth: ____

Education and qualifications

____

____

____

____

Work experience

____

____

____

____

Skills

Languages: ____

Computers: ____

Interests

____

____

____

____

References

____

____

____

____

____

Signature

FINAL TASK

PRE-TASK

Watch the next video about a woman who was in a job interview but she did it in two different ways. Complete the chart regarding the differences you noticed in both interviews.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UN0SLzFNpDs

INTERVIEW 1	INTERVIEW 2

TASK PLANNING

Work in groups of 3 to role play a job interview in front of the class. Student A will be the interviewer and Students B and C the interviewees or candidates for a determined job position.

Now, in order to create your conversation, take into account the following aspects:

- ✓ Which position you are applying for.
- ✓ Which sort of company the interview is going to be held
- ✓ The interviewer should ask and the candidates should answer questions about:
- ✓ Personal information (full name, age, marital status, family, etc.)
- ✓ Educational background
- ✓ Job Experience
- ✓ Personal Skills
- ✓ Good and Bad personality characteristics
- ✓ Reasons why the person is the best candidate
- ✓ Reasons why the candidate wants to work for that company
- ✓ Salary expectation
- ✓ Future expectations

Don't FORGET!

Don't forget that apart from these issues, it is important to provide the scenery required for an interview. Like the one of an office and the presenters' clothing style.

ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed regarding their work along the different tasks, as well as the presentation of the final product that has to do with the role play they were asked to prepare.

STUDENT'S SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID

TASK ASSESSMENT

Name:……………………………………………………………….. Date:…………………………

` Task:……………………………………………………………….

CAN DO DESCRIPTORS	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE	POOR
I can name different jobs in English.	1	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,2
I can talk about jobs and skills needed for a job.	1	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,2
I can listen and identify the information of a job interview.	1	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,2
I can distinguish details from main ideas.	1	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,2
I can make part of a job interview.	1	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,2

COMMENTS:

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FINAL GRADE: _______________

TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT GRID

TASK ASSESSMENT

Name:…………………………………………………………….. Date:…………………………
` Task:……………………………………………………………

CATEGORY	**EXCELLENT**	**GOOD**	**AVERAGE**	**BELOW AVERAGE**	**POOR**
TASK COMPLETION	1	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,2
EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES	1	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,2
ACCURACY/ LANGUAGE USE	1	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,2
FLUENCY/ PRONUNCIATION	1	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,2
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (Body language, Strategic competence, Discourse comp.)	1	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,2

COMMENTS:

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FINAL GRADE: _______________