



Facultad de Educación
Escuela de Educación en Inglés

ACTIVIDAD DE TITULACIÓN

**PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES FACED BY
SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS WHEN
USING ICTS TO TEACH SPEAKING AND LISTENING
SKILLS IN AN ONLINE/HYBRID CONTEXT**

TRABAJO DE INVESTIGACIÓN PARA OPTAR AL
GRADO DE LICENCIADO(A) EN EDUCACIÓN Y
TÍTULO DE PROFESOR(A) DE INGLÉS PARA
EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA Y MEDIA

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Santiago, Chile

2021

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Dedicación Personal

El presente trabajo investigativo lo dedico principalmente a mi padre Claudio Ahumada Silva, por su amor, trabajo, sacrificio y dedicación durante todos estos años, ya que haber llegado hasta este punto no hubiera sido posible sin él. Del mismo modo, quiero dedicar este trabajo a toda mi familia, a mi abuelo y abuela, a mi hermano y hermana, a todas(os) mis primas(os) y tías(os), a mi madre, y a todos quienes forman parte de esta familia, por el apoyo y cariño que me han brindado a lo largo de mi vida. Además, dedicarlo a todos mis cercanos(as) y amigas(as) por creer en mí y siempre brindarme palabras de aliento. De igual forma, dedicarlo a todas(os) las(os) docentes que fueron parte de este gran proceso y siempre creyeron en mí, brindándome sus mejores herramientas y consejos para ser un mejor docente y persona. Por último, dedico este trabajo a mis amigas y compañeras de este grupo de seminario por todo el esfuerzo dedicado y por no rendirnos a pesar de las dificultades.

Joaquín Justiniano Ahumada Sanhueza.

Este trabajo investigativo lo dedico principalmente a mis padres Sandra Plaza y Jorge Muñoz, quienes siempre estuvieron y demostraron su apoyo incondicional durante mis años de estudio con el propósito de dar lo mejor de mí y ser una gran profesora a futuro. Además, lo dedico a mis hermanas y hermano, por el apoyo que me han brindado durante esta ardua travesía. También, dedicarlo a los(as) docentes que fueron parte de mis estudios, pues ellos fueron los mayores pilares durante mi carrera universitaria, ya que además de enseñarme conocimientos pedagógicos, me enseñaron qué significa el estudiar y trabajar por

vocación con el fin de lograr ser una profesional de valores. Por último, quiero dedicar este trabajo a mis amigos(as) y compañeros(as) del grupo de investigación, ya que siempre me brindaron todo su apoyo y logramos cumplir la meta de escribir un seminario de grado a pesar de todos los percances que pudieran ocurrir.

Nancy Belén Muñoz Plaza

El presente trabajo investigativo lo dedico en primer lugar a mis padres Jorge Navarrete y Soledad Carrasco por ser mi apoyo incondicional durante todo este proceso, por ser quienes me motivan a mejorar día a día, y por todo el amor que me entregan. Además, lo dedico a mis hermanas que siempre me motivaron para seguir adelante, quienes son también mi inspiración para ser una gran profesional. Por otra parte, agradezco a mi grupo de seminario, ya que sin ellos no hubiera sido posible realizar esta investigación, y también a mis amigas que hicieron de este proceso algo más agradable. Finalmente, agradezco a todos los/as docentes que formaron parte de este proceso y por entregar sus conocimientos para formar buenos profesionales para el futuro.

María José Navarrete Carrasco

Quiero dedicar este trabajo de investigación a cada una de las personas que fueron parte de mi proceso formativo. En primer lugar, a Dios por ser mi fortaleza en todo momento y a mis padres Cristian Toledo y Magdalena Cortés, por toda la dedicación y amor incondicional que me han brindado, no sólo durante mi etapa universitaria, sino que a lo largo de toda mi vida. También, lo dedico a mis hermanos, por darme apoyo cuando más lo necesitaba, y a mi novio, por siempre creer en mí e impulsarme a no rendirme. A mi familia en general, amigos, pastores y

a mi familia de la fe Casa Sion. Asimismo, dedicarlo a cada uno(a) de los(as) docentes que contribuyeron durante mi proceso universitario, con conocimiento, consejos y con mucha vocación. Finalmente, dedicarlo a mis amigos(as) y compañeros(as) de este trabajo de investigación, quiénes han sido fundamentales en mi etapa universitaria.

Arlette Alondra Toledo Cortés

Acknowledgements

First of all, we thank God for allowing us to get to this moment, as well as the School of English Education Programme and the head department Miss Tamara Cortes Seitz, and their constant support in our training process. We would also like to thank our informant teachers, Sebastian Mercado and Eliana Barrios, for their great support and comments for the improvement of our work. Also, a special thanks to our guiding teacher Pamela Ramirez for guiding us so well in this seminar process. Furthermore, we would like to thank all those people who contributed to the construction of this research (friends, classmates, teachers, all those who wrote papers on which we supported our work, etc.). Finally, we would like to thank our family and all those closest to us for believing and supporting us.

Abstract

The following research presents a case study that describes the difficulties faced by teachers when using ICTs to teach listening and speaking skills in secondary education in a municipal school in Maipú in an online/hybrid context. This was done through a semi-structured online questionnaire with semi-open-ended questions and classroom observations with subsequent qualitative and quantitative analysis. The problems encountered were analyzed and discussed, as well as the factors that have influenced teachers' actual classroom practices. In the same way, these problems were categorized based on common characteristics, which subsequently helped to generate proposals for solutions to eliminate or reduce those problems. This study suggests that there are problems dealing with lack of ICTs' domain and knowledge, low implementation of the target language on listening/speaking skills, poor implementation of new teaching strategies, as well as problematic issues concerning ICTs and listening/speaking skills. In the same way, this study managed to propose possible solutions to these problems. Firstly, regarding ICTs, the proposals focused on autonomous learning, and the University, Schools and Ministry of Education's duties. Secondly, in terms of Language, the categories for the proposals were: the teaching of speaking and listening skills, and the implementation of methods that emphasize the significant importance of the use of English during the lesson. Finally, in relation to Lessons, the proposals dealt with the Theory of Constructivism in online lessons, and the implementation of self-assessments on the achieved or not achieved objectives.

Keywords: online education, hybridity, pandemic, difficulties, Chilean education, public education, listening skill, speaking skill, ICTs, digital resources.

La siguiente investigación presenta un estudio de caso que describe las dificultades a las que se enfrentan las y los profesores a la hora de utilizar las TICS para enseñar las habilidades de comprensión auditiva y expresión oral en la educación secundaria en un colegio municipal de Maipú en un contexto online/híbrido. Esto se realizó mediante un cuestionario online semiestructurado con preguntas semi-abiertas y observaciones de clases con un posterior análisis cualitativo y cuantitativo. Se analizaron y discutieron las problemáticas encontradas, así como los factores que han influido en las prácticas reales de las y los profesores en el aula. Del mismo modo, se categorizaron dichas problemáticas basadas en características comunes, lo cual posteriormente ayudó a generar propuestas de soluciones para eliminar o reducir dichas problemáticas. Este estudio sugiere que existen problemas relacionados con la falta de dominio y conocimiento de las TICS, la baja implementación de la lengua meta en las habilidades de comprensión auditiva/ expresión oral, la escasa implementación de nuevas estrategias de enseñanza, así como cuestiones problemáticas relacionadas con las TICS y las habilidades de comprensión auditiva/ expresión oral. Del mismo modo, este estudio consiguió proponer posibles soluciones a estos problemas. En primer lugar, en torno a las TICS, las propuestas giraron en torno al aprendizaje autónomo, y los deberes de la Universidad, las Escuelas y el Ministerio de Educación. En segundo lugar, en cuanto a Language, las categorías propuestas fueron la enseñanza de las habilidades de comprensión auditiva y expresión oral, y la implementación de

métodos que enfatizan la importancia significativa del uso del Inglés durante la clase. Finalmente, con relación a Clases, las propuestas trataron sobre la Teoría del Constructivismo en las clases online, y la realización de autoevaluaciones sobre los objetivos alcanzados o no alcanzados.

Palabras clave: educación online, hibridez, pandemia, dificultades, educación chilena, educación pública, comprensión auditiva, expresión oral, TICS, recursos digitales.

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Introduction

Since March of 2020, the world has been enormously affected by the covid-19 pandemic, which has caused a drastic change in the methodologies that teachers had been using, as the current educational system started to work through online classes. Hence, teachers along with the students have had to prepare themselves in order to be able to leverage the use of ICTs in a complete online context. Moreover, some difficulties regarding the lack of participation in listening and speaking activities in the current context of pandemic and online education were noticed in the pedagogical practice experience as students at the English Programme of the university. Therefore, this research is aimed to investigate the teaching of listening and speaking skills in secondary education in Chile's municipal schools in an online context by identifying how this may have created difficulties that hinder the teaching and learning process.

The teaching methodologies or pedagogical tools and techniques available for teachers may not be enough when teaching and improving speaking and listening skills due to the online context. For this purpose, it becomes essential to explore teachers' knowledge regarding the use of ICTs to learn the diverse skills, and in that form to carry them out in a better way in the teaching-learning process.

In the same way, and according to the English teaching process in Chile, it is extremely important to teach and polish these skills, not only because they lead to building effective communication that helps in the teaching-learning process, but also they help in the comprehension and communication of other cultures through

language, for as Çakir (2006) mentions “communicating internationally inevitably involves communicating interculturally as well, since a language is a part of culture and a culture is part of a language” (p. 1). Moreover, being exposed to the language helps to process and learn it in a better way, as according to Bice and Kroll (2019), people who live in communities where multiple languages are spoken (speaking skill) can identify words (listening skill) in yet another language better than those who live in a monolingual environment. That is to say that by listening and speaking English or any language, students are more capable of achieving good and better results than just using reading and writing skills. However, in Chile the practice of Speaking and Listening skills is not common in public schools, and this is demonstrated in the case study of Aguilar (2017), where it is established that English and Spanish are used in the classroom, discarding the use of 100% English in the lesson, because it has been previously established that English in Chile is bad (p. 57). This demonstrates that, despite studies showing that exposure to a language other than the native one (“input, audio-lingual method”) is necessary to be able to learn it easily, in Chile this exposure is not given and the use of English in a 100% range is ignored.

This is further complemented by evidence that nationally standardised tests of English language proficiency, such as the SIMCE, do not put a main focus on the skills mentioned above, since listening does not have as much relevance as reading or writing, and the speaking skill is not even considered in this examination. Furthermore, the problem of not reaching a B1 level (CEFR) set by the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) (2015), nor the objectives proposed by MINEDUC might be

even more precarious due to the online context resulting from the covid-19 pandemic, in which many teachers may be limited in terms of technical and didactic tools, facing special difficulties to teach listening and speaking skills. Likewise, teachers' levels of English proficiency should be considered, as this might also be another factor that contributes to accentuate the issues. According to Cisterna et al. (2019),

In Chile, the training that future English teachers receive at universities is highly demanding because they must reach an advanced level of English proficiency. This supposed language proficiency is constantly monitored by MINEDUC through standardised measurements, which often indicate that this language proficiency is achieved by a very low percentage of the students. (p. 2)

The previous statement implies that the levels of language proficiency with regard to English teachers in Chile graduating from Chilean universities is low, and at least in the first year of teaching there is no monitoring to see whether these levels are maintained, raised or lowered.

Theoretical Framework

The use of English in Chile and in the world has always been important, yet it becomes even more relevant in a globalised world where being able to share ideas with other cultures that do not share the same language seems vital. It is for the above reasons that the teaching and learning of this language using new strategies and tools based on the use of ICTs may become a fundamental pillar for this globalised world. Moreover, to learn the language in a better and more effective way, it may be necessary to work on the skills that help us to be exposed to the language, such as listening and speaking.

Teachers' Levels of English in Chile and the Minimum Standards

English has become a crucial skill in a globalised Chile, as it is essential when it comes to sharing knowledge with other cultures and understanding them. In the same way, English is present in our daily lives, and it is for this reason that we must address it with the importance that it requires. Therefore, it is for the above reasons that Rojas et al. (2013) state that a deficient or non-existent mastery of this language is a major disadvantage for the incorporation of people into circulation networks of relevant and updated scientific information, along with the inclusion of people in the same international communities, since not knowing English limits communication.

Furthermore, and referring to English in the educational field, according to Education First (EF) (2021), Chile is ranked 47th out of 112 in the English Proficiency Index (EF EPI 516), which according to the rankings corresponds to a moderate

level. Additionally, according to the Agencia de Calidad de la Educación (2017), based on the presentation of the results of the Estudio Nacional de Inglés, 32% of the students assessed achieved or exceeded the basic level of the language (A2), which means that 7 out of 10 students in the third year of secondary education do not achieve the expected level of learning (p. 15). This shows that the levels students find themselves regarding the learning of English as a foreign language are indeed very low, and do not reach the norm or the established standards proposed by MINEDUC.

Moreover, the reasons why students do not reach the expected levels of the language may be based on a variety of factors, and to understand that, it is necessary to analyse the previously mentioned standards, and what educators should aim to do. Therefore, according to what is established in the National Curriculum (2015), teachers should be able to lead students into achieving a degree profile, in which they demonstrate the use of English as a foreign language at a level close to B1, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), implying they should be able to interact in basic communicative situations. In the same way, Vera (2008) establishes the following:

The new educational paradigms demand that English teachers must be better prepared to address major challenges resulting from the current educational tendencies and the processes of globalization. Nowadays, it requires that teachers become capable of making more decisions than before in the diagnosis, design, implementation and evaluation of the English as a

Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum and responding to a much larger range of competences. (p. 15)

Therefore, different initiatives have been implemented, such as the creation of programmes to help improve levels of English, such as the government's Inglés Abre Puertas programme, among others. In this regard, it is known that in the last two decades the Second Language Teaching Education has experienced rapid development that has led to an increase in the number of programs offered in the country. This development is the combination of several factors including the implementation of a free market model in higher education, national educational reforms and the growing pressure for competent English speakers who can participate more actively in a globalized world (Matear, 2008). All of this to improve the levels of English proficiency in Chile, and to reach the expected levels.

Moreover, another problem that can be found regarding to English levels and why these are so low is due to the social and economic differences that exist in Chilean schools, as it is known that in private schools the exposure to the foreign language is much higher than in municipal schools, which helps students to develop listening and speaking skills much faster. In fact, Agencia de Calidad de la Educación (2017) states that significant differences by socio-economic status are evident: only 9% of students in the low socio-economic group achieved certification, compared to 85% of students in the high socio-economic group (p. 10).

Furthermore, in the previous regard, an additional problem that may be affecting the English teaching-learning process in Chile is the level that teachers

usually reach in Chile. As mentioned above, teachers should be able to lead students to an English B1 level according to CEFR. However, a teacher who does not exceed that level cannot lead students to a higher level of English. In fact, according to a national study conducted by the Agencia de Calidad de la Educación (2019), 40% of English teachers only dominate the basic level of the language (A2), below the B2 required by MINEDUC as a minimum standard, which demonstrates that those minimum standards proposed by CEFR and MINEDUC are not being achieved.

All the problems mentioned may have implications on how teachers are teaching English and its respective skills, and thus the levels of English achieved by students in Chile. That is why teaching of English requires a rigorous initial training, which would integrate essential disciplines, such as grammar, phonetics, methodology, literature and culture, and other complementary disciplines, such as information and communication technologies (ICTs) and educational management (Vera, 2018), to achieve better and higher levels of English in the Chilean society, and reach the minimum standards.

National Curriculum and Teacher's ICTs Dominance

Nowadays, the world has been in a constant transformation due to globalization, which has generated diverse cultural changes, but the most essential dimension of that new cultural development is education which can be demonstrated in the huge growth and usage of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the educational system.

First of all, according to Iqbal et al. (2013), ICTs “are a set of different technological tools and resources that are used to communicate, produce, distribute, store, and manage information” (p. 38). Accordingly, when ICTs are related and/or connected with education, it means that the new and current education is making use of the communication technologies to assist and improve the delivery of information both to teachers and the students.

Moreover, digital literacy has been accepted as an imperative necessity and the type of jobs that require its achievement has been quickly spread out. Consequently, teachers’ role with the ICTs is not only to orientate the improvement of the students’ formation and their employability, but to participate and improve the construction of that new society. Furthermore, the changes, as the digitalization of contents, the shift from face-to-face classrooms to online or hybrid classrooms because of COVID, and even the changes of generations to a fully digital native one, that have been occurring has to be considered to properly motivate and teach students, implying the necessity of changes in the pedagogical practices which establishes demands regarding the competencies required by teachers. This means that teachers need to change their practices regarding the use of ICTs to leverage those tools and methodologies to improve the teaching-learning process and also, to promote an education more oriented to an integral human development (MINEDUC - ENLACES, 2011).

Thus, MINEDUC established standards about the technological knowledge that teachers must have as they help them to recognize what is expected about their professional function regarding the ICTs’ integration in their educational practice and

professional work; identify their teacher training needs regarding the ICTs; and define formative itineraries to follow to make progress of their professional development in relation to ICTs. Therefore, according to those dimensions, a teacher who integrates ICTs, is a teacher:

1. who does it as a form of improving the students' learning experiences (pedagogical dimension);
2. who knows and manages in a correct form the available technologies in order to support his or her role (technical or instrumental dimension);
3. who uses ICTs to improve the curricular process in its action field (management dimension);
4. who recognizes his/her responsibility in order for the students to have a greater and greater productive and current learning, by using or incorporating ICTs and as a teacher, he/she responsibly assumes his/her own updating and professional development with the potentialities that ICTs presents for his/her professional work (responsibility and professional development dimension) (MINEDUC - ENLACES, 2011, p. 17).

Nevertheless, a consequence that has been produced for the use of ICTs in the current educational systems is that it makes evident a gap in access to technology from different schools from different backgrounds. Firstly, schools that come from better economic contexts are roundly benefited using ICTs since their institutions do not have to face difficulties in order to be able to obtain the necessary

resources to make use of those new tools. On the contrary, schools with scarce resources tend to face the difficulty of not being able to have the necessary resources that allows them a better and bigger use of ICTs. So, it is sought that the teaching role can remove or reduce the existing gap by implementing methodologies that allows all the students, no matter what their contexts are, to make use of ICTs. Also, another problem that the educational system faces regarding the use of ICTs is that teachers are not fully prepared or lack knowledge regarding the use of them and moreover, it is demonstrated that students have more knowledge about the use of ICTs than the teachers, and the situation should be the other way around. (MINEDUC – ENLACES, 2011). For those reasons, in order to make a better use of ICTs in those different and complex contexts, according to Badilla and Parra (2014), the educational system could consider “the accompaniment as a horizontal pedagogical assistance which can be influenced by the technological resources’ availability, identifying an adequate profile of e-mentor to influence teacher adherence to the process, such as his communicative style, empathy, pedagogical and cognitive skills” (p. 629).

Speaking and Listening Skills

Communication is important to get in contact with people, and language is a tool for communication. To make the communication process easier and more effective, we can talk and listen. When we communicate with other people, we can share our ideas by talking and we can listen to what others want to say by listening. Moreover, according to Helgesen (2003), “Listening is an active, purposeful process of making sense of what we hear” (p. 24), which means that listening is in our daily

activities and through listening we can interpret the meaning of what other people are saying. On another part, according to Brown et al. (1997), "speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information" (cited in Nawshin, 2009, p. 9), meaning that speaking is the process we made to express ourselves and give our opinions or ideas to others. For that reason, when people are learning a new language, it is important to focus on the four skills, which are listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In the Chilean context the listening and speaking skills are the principal focus to be achieved by students of 12th grade or at the end of the educational process at school. The previous is demonstrated since according to the Programa de estudios, when students learn English, they are expected to achieve interactions with others by manifesting comprehension and expression in an integrated manner, also the learning objectives of the course seek comprehension and expression in order to communicate intelligibly, fluently and effectively (MINEDUC, 2021, p. 23), meaning that students should be able to talk to other people and understand what the other people are communicating.

Besides, according to the learning objectives of the 12th grade, the four objectives are related to understanding relevant information in oral and written texts; Producing clear oral and written texts; using their knowledge of English in the comprehension and production of oral and written texts; producing and understanding oral and written texts with fluency (MINEDUC, 2021, p. 28). The previous demonstrates that even though speaking and listening are considered the priority for comprehension and fluency when communicating with others, the

objectives presented are more focused on speaking, writing and reading rather than listening. Hence, listening skills are not highly prioritized, as well as the others in the National Curriculum, so students are not able to develop this skill in the same way as the other skills.

However, when teachers teach speaking and listening skills there can be certain problems or difficulties. According to the research made by Nawshin (2009), which focuses on the problems that students of West Bridge, an English medium school which is situated in Uttara, had while speaking, and also the problems of teaching this skill in the classroom, shows the following students' speaking problems: "1. Lack of interesting topic, 2. size of the class, 3. anxiety of making mistakes, 4. peer response, 5. lack of motivation, 6. teacher's talk vs. students talk, 7. student participation, 8. lack of opportunity to use the target language" (pp.17-20). The previous study shows that students need an interesting topic for the lessons and less students in a classroom so as to be able to speak in English. Besides, when students speak in a foreign language, they get nervous and afraid of making mistakes, so they need a good response from their peers. Moreover, teachers need to motivate their students to speak and change their classes' style since in a teacher-dominated classroom the students are given less or no time to talk. Finally, the students found it difficult to speak in the target language because they do not use it in their daily life. All the problems mentioned above made the process of speaking a new language difficult for students.

Following with the problems or difficulties when teaching listening, according to Hayrapetyan (2016) it was found that these difficulties come firstly from the

listeners and secondly by the listening material. Moreover, it is mentioned that “The first problem students have involves: making predictions about what the speaker talks about; guessing unknown words or phrases; recognizing points. The second problem involves: unfamiliar topics; different accents; authentic material; colloquial words; speed of speech” (Hayrapetyan, 2016, p. 20). What was mentioned before means that different aspects can produce problems or difficulties when teaching and learning listening such as from the listeners and from the material used to teach listening, and the problems related to the listening materials are about the topics that are not known or interesting for students, the different accents that can be listened in a class that can be confusing for students, and the speed of speech that can complicate a class if students are not used to listening to the language. These are things that produce difficulties for students at the moment of listening to their teachers or any person when they are learning a new language.

Listening and Speaking through Online Learning During the Pandemic

The pandemic has changed the perception of teaching and learning. New methodologies and the use of technology have been developed during this period of time. Even though it is difficult to depend on online education, all humans have the right to continue education in times of disaster, crisis, and violence. That is why educational institutions started to shift distance education programs or online learning, improving the teaching-learning process in each subject

In the case of English lessons, distance education challenged English teachers to find new platforms and methodologies to achieve the objectives

proposed with each class. Regarding the impact of pandemic in listening and speaking skills, Hazaymeh (2021) mentioned:

Online distance learning enhances digital students' communication and collaboration skills, the process of cooperating and publishing with peers, it helps improving students' critical thinking skills, use digital tools and explore alternative solutions for authentic problems. Moreover, students revealed positive perceptions of using technology to achieve efficient learning of English language skills, it provides educators and learners with a better alternative for practicing flexible and interactive learning. (p.514)

In this way, it is possible to say that the pandemic improved and increased the use of ICTs in English classes. Also, it has become an important tool since many years ago, as according to Bruce, Peyton and Batson (1993),

Technically speaking, computer-mediated communication has been in practice since the 1960s, when users of a single mainframe computer could exchange messages in both synchronous and asynchronous modes. Only with the development of LANs on the Internet, however, was this technology put into pedagogical use for teaching collaborative L1 writing, for providing practice in second language, and for instructing deaf learners in 'written conversation'. (Cited in Chapelle, 2001, p. 20)

Moreover, according to Peachey (2016) there are different tools that can be used by using digital media which can improve the current pandemic context which has been characterized by online classes. The tools are the following:

1. Infographics. They have become a predominant part of the way people choose to communicate information online and as such we need to help our students understand this genre of communication and work with it effectively. In addition, infographics are a very effective means of conveying dense statistical information in a much more visual way that is less dependent on explanatory text which makes them be very well suited to screen-based mediums of communication. Also, helping students to use graphic materials both to understand and communicate information can reinforce their academic study skills and enable them to be more successful students, especially when they reach tertiary level.
2. Create questionnaires. In most of the students' lesson plans they are asked to create their own research, so it is crucial for students to be able to create questionnaires since questions are the most natural form of expressing people's understanding of the world which should be at the basis of any education system as it certainly encourages critical thinking. Therefore, the process of creating research polls engages students in a wide range of cognitive and linguistic processes with a number of educational and 'real world' benefits which are the following: it engages students with language at a deep level; students learn how to gather and collect data; helps students to a better understanding of how data and statistics can be used and manipulated which requires the development of a range of critical thinking and technical tools besides just collecting and identifying information; and can be a very useful tertiary study skill and real world employability skills as

the ability to collect, critically analyze and disseminate data forms a significant part of many professional occupations in the 21st century.

3. Use presentations. Getting students to create and deliver presentations where they present or teach what they have learned can be a very effective way of more deeply embedding the learning and developing additional skills which the most valuable skill to develop is standing up and speaking in front of an audience, especially in a second language, since it requires the speaker to think about how to use their voice and paralinguistic features of communication. Moreover, they need to think about the words they choose to use, how and which word they give emphasis to (p. 51). The previous is crucial since students will be using a foreign language and the most important thing when presenting is that the audience is able to understand and/or decode the information presented. Hence, using presentations as a digital tool will be useful for learners to develop skills.

The tools mentioned before are important because they make the students understand in a more effective way the communication and those tools connect them to real situations. By this way, it is possible to mention that they improve the development of listening skill with questionnaires due they listen to the answers of the participants and speaking skill is improved by presentations. Those points allow students to be more confident and feel comfortable with English when it is used in real life situations.

Problems about Teaching the Speaking Skill in the EFL Classroom During the Pandemic

Referring to speaking skill in EFL classroom, it is essential to mention that if there is a proper educational context, teaching and learning in online lessons becomes one of the most efficient strategies in terms of developing speaking skill. Even Ying, Siang and Mohamad (2021) mentioned that since the use of digital resources in lesson delivery is becoming the standard, there are plenty of tools available for educators who use e-learning in education, especially in the teaching and learning of speaking skills (p. 1510).

Nevertheless, there are difficulties with teaching speaking skill when there are factors that affect students' learning, and in this case, the pandemic brought a lot of consequences which challenged the learning and teaching process. For instance, the lack of wealth of knowledge from a diversity of online tools make the students not participative during speaking activities. Also, when there is no proper guidance in terms of online education, there is not good access to information outside the class, delaying learners' independence, flexibility and immersive learning. Furthermore, distance education in the pandemic context made students less confident about their abilities and developing of speaking skills (Ying, Siand & Mohamad, 2021).

Problems about Teaching the Listening Skill in the EFL Classroom During the Pandemic

Listening skill is more used in EFL lessons than the other skills of language, since listening competence is universally larger and versatile (Vernier et al., n.d.). By

this way, it is possible to say that, as well as speaking, listening skill has difficulties or negative consequences when thinking about pandemic context. For instance, one of the debilities of listening skill focusing on online lessons is that distance could not allow to provide a proper input to students', which means that they will guess about what the speaker is talking about, making predictions or guessing words that they do not know (Hayrapetyan, 2016). According to Sivaniswar and Lubna (2020) based on the input in terms of listening which the learners have acquired, they will be exposed to the process of applying the gained knowledge through the output, which means that it has consequences in other skills such as speaking and writing (p. 4). The previous emphasizes on the importance of input during classes, a concept that has been difficult to handle in EFL classrooms.

Research Problem

All the above leads to the question of whether teachers had enough knowledge concerning the implementation of an online/hybrid classroom system during the pandemic. Therefore, the aim is to investigate if there were and what were the problems and difficulties faced by municipal secondary school English teachers when using ICTs to teach speaking and listening skills in an online/hybrid context, knowing how the teaching-learning process should work according to what has been studied and investigated.

Research Objectives

Research Question

What are the problems and difficulties faced by secondary school English teachers when using ICTs to teach speaking and listening skills in an online/hybrid context?

General Objective

Describe the difficulties that teachers deal with at the moment of using ICTs to teach listening and speaking skills in secondary education in municipal schools in an online/hybrid context through online questionnaires and class observations.

Specific Objectives

- Survey the teachers through a semi-structured online questionnaire with semi-open-ended questions.
- Observe the class of the surveyed teachers by means of observation guides.
- Describe the difficulties faced by the teachers of English in relation to the use of ICTs in their online lessons while teaching listening skills.
- Describe the difficulties faced by teachers of English in relation to the use of ICTs in their online lessons while teaching speaking skills.
- Categorize the identified difficulties based on their common characteristics by means of analysis.

- Suggest ideas or pedagogical and/or technical tools that help to reduce or to eliminate the difficulties faced by teachers of English when teaching listening and speaking skills in online classes.

Methodological Framework

Type of Investigation

The following research used a methodological procedure known as case study, which according to Hancock and Algozzine (2006) is “a detailed analysis of a person or group, especially as a model of medical, psychiatric, psychological, or social phenomena” (p. 85) which will be directed to a social problem within a pedagogical context. Moreover, case studies are divided into stages that help to build up the investigation while answering the research questions. Some of these stages are the following; setting the stage, determining the knowledge on the subject, selecting a research design of what will be investigated, collecting the information from various sources, to evaluate and interpret the information found, and to report and confirm the findings.

Methodology

The methodology and investigation technique used for this research is a case study with a qualitative and quantitative analysis of data.

It is qualitative as it seeks to describe, analyze, and categorize specific characteristics of the previously determined group (high school English teachers) regarding the teaching of listening and speaking skills for the learning of this language in online contexts, and from this analysis to propose solutions that will help to address the difficulties. This type of approach is based on an inductive logic and process since it explores and describes phenomena in order to generate theoretical

perspectives. In other words, it goes from the particular to the general. Which characterizes this type of methodology is that it utilizes data collection without numerical measurement, as a means to discover research questions in the interpretation process. Hence, through this data collection, the perspectives and points of view of the participants are obtained, which means that this methodology is based on the interpretation of the participants regarding their own realities. Indeed, this is achieved since the qualitative investigators, in spite of acquiring a more “internal” stance (inside the phenomenon), keep an analytical perspective in front of the investigation as they do not interrupt, disrupt or impose an external point of view which induces that the investigation shows what the actors actually perceive of the social system. Consequently, the subjective reality itself is the object of study as the investigator keeps a perspective where the explicit, conscious and manifesto aspects, as well as the implicit, unconscious and underlying aspects (Hernández et al., 2014). Moreover, a qualitative approach might be more useful as it attempts to explore a host of factors that may be influencing a situation, in contrast to the quantitative approach which only investigates and identifies the effects of a few variables (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 8). Thus, it is believed that it is appropriate to use this type of methodology during the investigation as it allows us to be involved inside the phenomenon to be investigated which helps us to understand how the participants indeed feel in front of the investigation problem through an instrument of data collection without numerical measurement whereby the participants are permitted to express their opinions and/or points of view without having stipulated options.

In addition to the above, this research also employed, on a smaller scale, a quantitative analysis, since this helps to measure how many times certain issues occurred and to be able to obtain percentages for that. According to Kenton (2020), “a quantitative analysis is a technique that uses mathematical and statistical modeling, measurement, and research to understand behavior. Quantitative analysts imply a given reality in terms of a numerical value”. Furthermore, when this type of analysis is used alongside qualitative analysis it works as a complement to the research in process, as it helps to better understand what is being investigated from a more statistical point of view.

Participants and Sampling

The problem of research is related to the difficulties that English teachers suffer in an online context, focusing on the consequences of the process of teaching-learning during the pandemic. All of this, based on problems that the students of secondary education teachers may develop in terms of the lack of knowledge, due to the eventual difficulties that teachers may be facing. Moreover, the expected participants for whom this research is intended are two secondary school female teachers with 40 years of work for the most experienced, and 9 months for the less experienced, from an educational foundation in a municipality in the Metropolitan region, in which they teach all secondary grades. However, in this research were investigated the 9th grade and 11th grade levels where teachers teach respectively. This is due to the fact that this group of people in this specific context may present greater gaps when accessing resources and tools that facilitate the use of ICTs in the classroom when teaching communication skills, as it is an

educational context where there is a middle and lower-middle class social reality, with a very wide diversity of social, cultural and dissident realities. In addition, this research is conducted in this specific context because in Chile there are a great number of municipal and public schools for whom this research and possible solutions could present a guide for the same problems in similar contexts.

Phases of the Research

The process of this case study is designed to achieve the proposed objectives in an inductive form from the particular to the general that is why four stages have been designed for the research, which are the following: conducting the questionnaires and class observations, data analysis, categorization of problems, and solution proposals.

Figure 1

The case study process was the following:



Note. This figure shows the process of this case study.

Data Collection Techniques

The process conducted had two main steps, the first of which was the gathering of information, which was accomplished through a semi-structured online

questionnaire with semi-open-ended questions to be answered by teacher participants. The questionnaire was structured in 4 sections, which were Teacher Characterisation, Difficulties and Challenges Caused by the Pandemic, Use of ICTs, and Listening and Speaking Skills, these sections helped us to organize the questions to be used. Moreover, The questions chosen were useful because it helped to obtain concrete answers on the issues to be investigated, as well as to avoid value judgements on the performance of each of the teachers. Similarly, 90-minutes classroom observations were carried out without interventions to identify the problems related to the teaching of certain skills. These observations were guided by an observation guide developed based on the questionnaire results, and focused on the use of ICTs, their issues and the dimensions of ICTs standards for the Chilean teaching profession. Subsequently, all the gathered information was analyzed by a code table generated based on the teachers' answers on the questionnaires and the theoretical framework regarding the Use of ICTs dimensions. This in order to identify the problems encountered, followed by a detailed report and analysis of the different difficulties. Finally, with all the collected, analyzed and reported information, there were proposed solutions or guides to address these problems in order to facilitate the teaching and learning process.

Expected Results

After obtaining all the required information through this case study, it was expected:

- To find difficulties regarding the use of ICTs while teaching listening and speaking skills.

- To find challenges faced by teachers in an online context.
- To find out how the teachers managed to cope with a drastic change of context (face-to-face to online to hybrid).
- To find out how the teachers managed to handle the technological tools.
- To provide a source of information for other research regarding the difficulties teachers have encountered while teaching during the current pandemic context.
- To suggest tools and options to work around the encountered difficulties seeking to address them in order to make the online teaching process more effective and accessible for teachers.
- To guide teachers to improve their educational practices and thereby eliminate or reduce possible problems.
- To suggest methodologies that contribute to the practice of teaching listening and speaking skills that are poorly taught or neglected in this type of contexts.
- To open doors for those teachers who will be investigated and for all those who may see in this case study a support to improve their lessons and the teaching of English as a foreign language.

Data Analysis Procedure

For the purpose of gathering data in the investigation, two instruments were applied to the participants of the investigative process who will be referred to as Teacher 1 (T1) and Teacher 2 (T2). The first instrument was a semi-structured online questionnaire with semi-open-ended questions (see Appendix A). Therefore, the second instrument was a classroom observation guide (see Appendix B). Consequently, in this section it is shown the analysis and interpretation of the implementation of the mentioned instruments, which consists of a quantitative and a qualitative analysis.

Quantitative Analysis

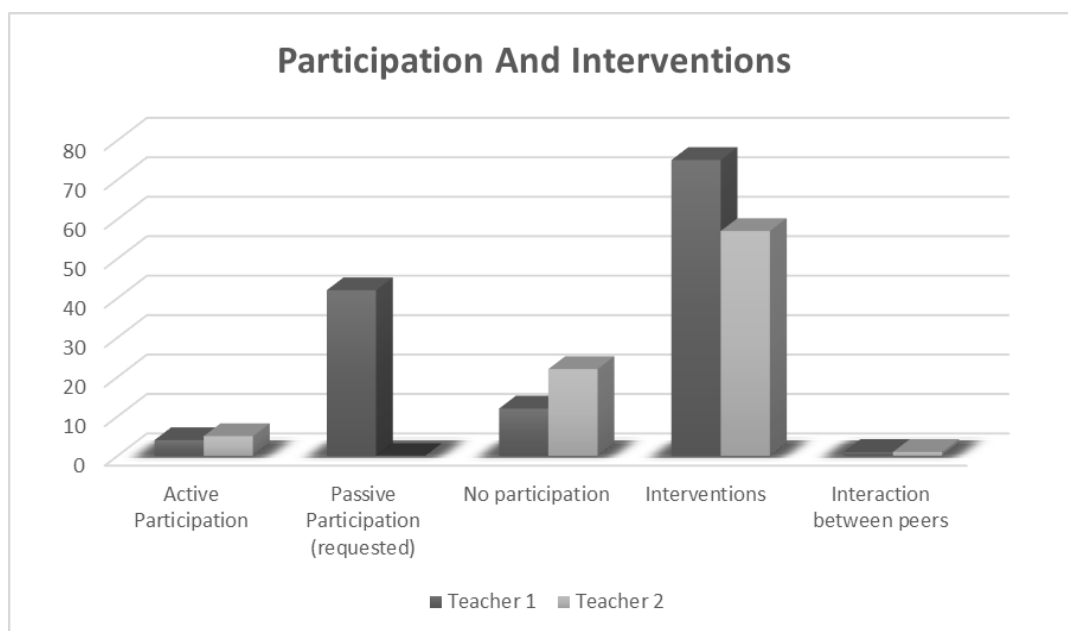
To analyze and interpret the data collected it must be understood that the information for this analysis was obtained from the classroom observations through the observation guides, which were done in conjunction with the questionnaires. This analysis will help to understand how often some problems occur in the classroom. For this purpose, 3 categories were used, which consisted of students' participation during class and their interventions, class time and how it was used, and the use of materials and how often problems were present.

Teachers' Classes Findings.

Students' Participation.

Figure 2

Participation and Interventions



Note: *This graphic shows how participation works in the class.*

Regarding participation itself, there were some differences and similarities, which may/may not represent a problem. Firstly, active participation was similar within both teachers' classes. In T1 class, of all the 20 students who were attending, only 4 of them actively participated and without the need of asking them to do so. On the other hand, in T2 class, out of all the 27 students who attended the class, only 5 of them actively participated, with the difference that in T2 class there was no need of asking students to participate.

Secondly, dealing with passive or requested participation, T1 had to ask students to participate 42 times during the lesson, by directly asking different students to respond or participate in different activities. In contrast, in T2 class it was not necessary for the teacher to request participation from the students, since most of the class flowed in Spanish and the teacher usually ended their sentences with a question, and the students always responded without the need to be directly asked. That is to say that the class flowed like a conversation, but it only occurred in Spanish.

Thirdly, in T1 class, of all the students who participated either actively or at the teacher's request, there were 12 of them who did not participate even once (6 face-to-face and 6 online). Similarly, in T2 class, 22 of all students did not participate even once (5 face-to-face and 17 online).

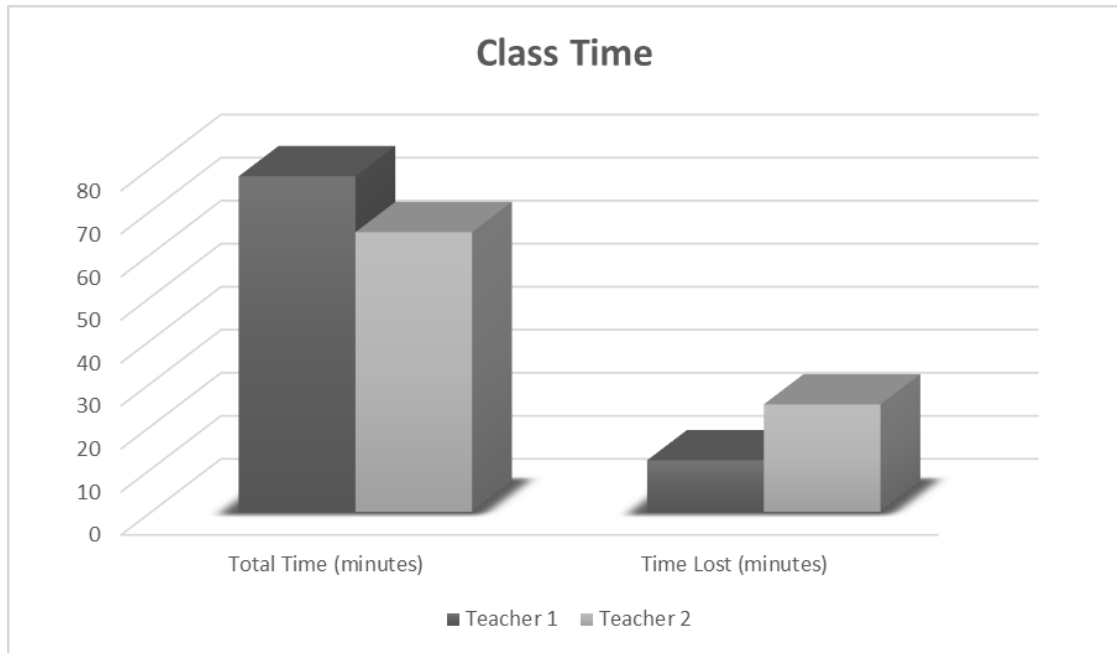
Fourthly, regarding interventions, it was observed that during T1 lesson, students did a total of 75 interventions, either at the teacher's request or autonomously. Unlike T2, whose class students made interventions about 57 times.

Finally, in relation to the interaction of the students among themselves, in both teacher classes there was only one interaction between the students in person, whereas online interaction was not observed even once. Moreover, the interactions were short, no more than 2 minutes long, and were conducted entirely in Spanish, discussing a topic of the class. Thus, it demonstrates that there was a problem of participation and it may be due to various factors such as lack of interest in the topic covered in the class, among others.

Lesson Usage Time.

Figure 3.

Class Time Use.



Note: *This graphic shows how class time works.*

Regarding time itself, both teachers' classes were conducted in 2 blocks of 1 teaching hour each (45 minutes per block). T1 used a total of 78 minutes between the two blocks to complete the entire class, while T2 used a total of 65 minutes between the two blocks to complete the entire class. Moreover, in T1 class there was not a serious problem with the use of time, as out of the total of 90 minutes only 12 minutes were lost while the teacher entered the classroom and set everything in order. However, contrary to T1 class, T2 presented a serious problem to the use of time, as 25 minutes of the total class time were lost due to the teacher arriving in the room and preparing everything, as in the beginning of both blocks it could be seen

that they arrived late. Therefore, as Martinic and Villalta (2015) state in their article on time management in the classroom, in schools with a full-day school project that have been in operation for more than eight years, the teacher's interventions in the classroom are characterized by: a) more time for exposing subject content; b) more time for instruction on procedures; and c) less time for interventions related to discipline. This means that teachers with more years of experience who have been exposed to the full-day school project have better notions and results on how to manage classroom time to obtain better results. That is why, exceeding 15 minutes in preparation for the start of the class can become a big problem, as valuable learning time is being lost. This may be due to the fact that T2 is a novice and has been working for about 9 months and has not been exposed to the full-day school programme like the other teacher. In relation to that, and as mentioned before, ICTs standards for the teaching profession establishes that the use of ICTs should be for scheduling, managing and controlling the time dedicated to teaching (MINEDUC - ENLACES, 2011), and that criteria is not being met.

Resources used in the Lessons

Table 1.

Materials and Its Problems.

RESOURCES				
Type of Material	Problems		Times	
	T1	T2	T1	T2
Physical (computer, data show, camera, microphones, classroom, etc.)	1. Environmental sound. 2. Use of Microphone.	1. Turning on the Microphone. 2. Use of microphone	2	2
Digital (Video conference platform accounts, online pages, wordwall, kahoot, google presentation, etc.)	1. Reproduction of an audio. 2. Finding controls.	1. Internet connection. 2. Google presentation.	4	2

Note: This table shows the problems dealing with materials.

Regarding the materials of the classes, it was possible to find computers, data show, cameras and microphones, as well as complementary platforms such as video conference platforms accounts, online pages of didactic resources such as Word Wall, and the use of the google presentations page, as well as Kahoot. Besides, all these platforms and resources are used in this class to conduct the lesson, otherwise it becomes impossible because of online students.

Regarding the materials and their use, some problems were identified. Firstly, in T1 class, it was observed that there was a problem with the reproduction of an

audio and the classroom's environmental sound, as the teacher did not manage to reproduce the audio immediately because they did not know how to do it, and after that when they managed to reproduce it they forgot to ask the students to be quiet, so the audio could not be heard properly, thus making it necessary to reproduce it a second time. Secondly, there were problems with the use and management of the digital platforms, as the teacher did not find different controls, and also had to ask for help to switch between platforms. Thirdly, there were problems with the use of microphones, as in T1 class there was interference and online students could not hear clearly, while in T2 class it was not possible to turn on their personal microphones since they are supposed to be left charging the day before, and this was not done. That is why, the teacher decides to do the lecture with the camera microphone instead, but that microphone does not sound loud and clear to the online students. Moreover, sometimes, there were problems with the internet connection, which made it difficult to make effective progress in the class, as for example the google presentation took a long time to load. However, some of these problems are beyond teachers' control and what they can do about it, yet they still represent a difficulty.

Qualitative Analysis

Regarding the analysis and interpretation of the gathered data, it is necessary to mention that the analysis process was based on two elements: the semi-structured online questionnaires with semi-open-ended questions, and the classroom observations through the observation guides. It is important to note that the analysis was qualitative, and for this purpose criteria were generated, as well as

codes based on the questionnaire, which were implemented in the classroom observation, thus generating categories of analysis based on the dimensions of the ICTs Competences and Standards for the Teaching Profession (MINEDUC - ENLACES, 2011).

Semi-structured Online Questionnaire and Class Observations Analysis

For the analysis of the questionnaire, codes were generated (see Table 2) based on the theoretical framework and what the teachers communicated. Based on these codes, where identified the following problems regarding the use of ICTs: pedagogical issues, including the teaching of the speaking and listening skills in the EFL classroom; technical and management issues; and responsibility and professional development issues. On the other hand, for the analysis of the class observations, it was based on the observations carried out on November 2, 2021, with a 78-minute and 65-minute duration each. The observations were made in the ninth and eleventh grades, where there was a total of 20 and 27 students respectively, in charge of T1 and T2. In the same way, the analysis and interpretation will be based on the codes based on the theoretical framework (see Table 2).

Table 2.

Classification and Coding of The Instruments' Topics and Subtopics.

Categories/Subcategories
Use of ICTs
Problems Or Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pedagogical Dimension.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Speaking Skill○ Listening Skill● Technical and Management Dimension● Responsibility and Professional Development Dimension

Note. This table is used to specify the subcategories at the moment of the analysis.

Findings.

Use of ICTs Issues. Regarding the use of ICTs, were identified the following problems: Pedagogical Issues; Technical and Management Issues; Responsibility and Professional Development Issues (see Table 2); and Social, Ethical and Legal Issues.

Regarding Pedagogical Issues:

Deficient Integration of ICTs, Lack of Effectiveness, Limited Use of English, and Teaching of Speaking. In the first place, it is a general concern among teachers in Chile about how to integrate ICTs in the planning of learning environments and experiences (MINEDUC – ENLACES, 2011). The previously

mentioned matches the worries the teachers expressed in the questionnaires, as T1 stated that *“one challenge about the teaching owing to the pandemic is to know the handling of ICTs, the domain of online platforms such as Kahoot in order to motivate and diversify the activities”*. Moreover, through the class observation it was possible to find that T1 presents problems that had to do with the reproduction of an audio file and the classroom's sound environment. Firstly, it was difficult for the teacher to reproduce the audio because they did not know if they had to press a button, go to another page or if it played automatically, which took some minutes to reproduce it. Furthermore, the teacher, while being complicated with the audio playback, forgot to ask the students to be quiet, making the audio difficult to listen to, since the noise in the room produced by some students was quite loud, thus the teacher decided to play it a second time. Therefore, according to Helgesen (2003), for the listening skill teaching to be successful it must have a communicative purpose since that skill is in people's daily activities and also, people are able to interpret the meaning of what other people are saying or trying to communicate which is the main focus of the EFL classroom.

In the second place, another challenge in the teaching owing to the pandemic was demonstrated by T2 who stated that *“the structure and the classroom's regulations are lost. In addition to the rules of interaction between the students, the participatory dynamics in the lessons and the student's motivation”*. Moreover, in the class observation of T1 it was possible to see that the teacher had problems with the students' participation since the teacher had to ask multiple times for them to respond or participate in the activities of the lesson and there were students that did

not participate at all during the lesson. Therefore, the previous statements demonstrate that both teachers had problems to strengthen the students' learning and to contribute to develop a motivating working environment between the students in their learning process with the digital resources they selected or adapted. In addition, according to MINEDUC – ENLACES (2011), teachers should be able to develop learning experiences that facilitate the students' comprehension and reflection about the interaction in communication modalities mediated by electronic devices. Furthermore, it demonstrates that distance learning does influence the cognitive styles and the information processing system since the learners who were not able to keep up with it had lack of motivation to further on the language learning (Chen & Hwang, 2020).

In the third place, another problem was observed in T2 class about the time of the class. The lesson was divided into two blocks of 45 minutes each. However, T2 lost around 25 minutes at the beginning of the lesson because of some problems with the microphone, wasting important time to develop the teaching and learning process. This directly affects a criterion of this dimension which establishes that the use of ICTs should be for scheduling, managing, and controlling the time dedicated to teaching (MINEDUC - ENLACES, 2011), as the proper use of time is not being met.

In the fourth place, T2 demonstrated that there existed problems regarding the students' performance with the speaking skill, since they stated that "*The receptive skills get better grades rather than the productive ones*". The previous statement demonstrates that students performed at a lower level in the speaking skill

in online context rather than the context previous the pandemic since distance education in the pandemic context made students less confident about their abilities and less participative during the development of speaking skills (Ying, Siand & Mohamad, 2021).

In the fifth and last place, another issue that increased in the online context was the use of English. The previous problem was mentioned by T2 who stated that *“Due to the educational context of the school, I’m mixing [Languages]”*, which means that the teacher uses English and Spanish during the lessons. Moreover, the problem could be observed in T2’s class observation since the teacher translated everything, not giving the students a chance to analyze or interpret the information heard. In addition, the teacher did not ask the students if they understood or comprehended what they heard in English, yet they kept translating everything instantly. This happened not only with the worked text used for the listening activity, but also throughout the whole class. Using only the learners' mother tongue results in them failing to learn the target language, as they are not being exposed to it, which demonstrated that online educational practices during Covid-19 brought many challenges in terms of learning and teaching process (Sivanisswar & Lubna, 2020). Also, communication is essential for close relationships in a society, material, and thoughts from one place to another. This process involves initiation reception and response that serve as feedback (Ahmad, 2016). Therefore, using English with communicative purposes will help the students to be able to express and to communicate with others and to improve their level of the language.

Moreover, in both teachers' classes could be observed that when the students did not understand the questions in English, and the students that comprehended them tended to answer in Spanish, and because of this the teachers had to start asking in Spanish without trying other methods to get the students to understand or answer in the foreign language. In relation to that, and as stated before, "in today's world, teachers are required to be able to make more decisions about the design and implementation of English as a foreign language (EFL) in the class than ever before" (Vera, 2008). Unfortunately, this problem occurs throughout the whole class, making students respond to most things in Spanish without exposing themselves to speaking or attempting to speak in the foreign language. The previous causing a failure of this dimension's criterion that addresses the development of higher order cognitive functions in students through the integration of ICTs in the development of learning activities (MINEDUC - ENLACES, 2011). In addition, English as a foreign language teaching requires rigorous training, which should integrate essential disciplines, such as grammar, phonetics, methodology, among others, such as information and communication technologies (ICTs), as well as educational management (Vera, 2018).

Regarding Technical and Management Issues:

Lack of Digital Resources and Platforms' Domain and Knowledge, And Technical Issues Beyond Teacher's Control. Through observations and research, it was discovered that there was a deficiency in access to digital resources and knowledge on how to use them. The previously mentioned

matches the concerns T1 expressed since they were concerned about the correct form of using the available technologies to support their teaching role. For example, regarding the challenges about the teaching owing to the pandemic, T1 stated that *“knowing the handling of ICTs, online platforms domain such as Kahoot, among others”*. The previous denotes that the teacher knew that in the current online and/or hybrid context, the use of ICTs is indispensable in the teaching-learning process. However, the teacher had problems about how to manage and use technological and digital resources for the teaching-learning process. This is demonstrated since it could be observed that T1 found it difficult to manage the digital platforms in their class, as they did not manage to find different controllers, nor did they manage to make changes in the activities on the platforms used. Similarly, the teacher had to ask for help to switch between platforms. In addition, it was difficult for the teacher to start the class because they had to admit the students who were in the waiting room on the video conference platform. This directly affected the development of the use of technological and digital resources for teaching and learning processes and for other teaching tasks, as well as the use of digital communication systems to interact with their students (MINEDUC - ENLACES, 2011). This represents a problem, as it is known that knowledge of ICTs allows teachers to plan and implement activities and to gather information for educational purposes in the current online context. In other words, lack of knowledge about the use of ICTs makes teachers not able to use them to improve and renew curricular management processes, since that allows teachers to participate in the management of the institution in relation to the educational

community and especially with the school-family relationship (MINEDUC - ENLACES, 2011, p. 31).

Furthermore, there were some problems beyond teachers' control. For example, in T2 class, it was found that the teacher failed when having to turn on the microphones, because those are supposed to be left charging the day before by the last teacher who used them, and that was not done. Therefore, they decided to do the class with only the camera microphone, but by using that microphone the class did not sound loud and clear to the online students. Moreover, sometimes, there were problems with the internet connection, which made it difficult to make effective progress in the class. Similarly, at the beginning of T1 class the microphones did not work, as there was usually interference. In addition, there was a problem with the T2 PowerPoint presentation which took a long time to load, but it was fixed. Moreover, regarding the hybridity of T1 class, there were observed a few problems, including that few online students participated, and when they were asked, they did not answer. As mentioned before, the criteria for the use of technological and digital resources for teaching and learning processes and for other teaching tasks was not being met because of those issues surrounding the use of technology in the classroom (MINEDUC - ENLACES, 2011). Furthermore, as Hazaymeh (2021) states, "it enhances students' communication and collaboration skills. In addition, students can achieve efficient learning of English language skills when they perceive the use of technology positively" (p. 514), meaning that it is important to use and know how to use online learning correctly and wisely.

Regarding Responsibility and Professional Development Issues:

Low ICTs Training, Poor Implementation of New Teaching Strategies, and Low Use Of The Target Language. According to the questionnaire and class observation analysis, it was observed that there were different problems in terms of responsibility and professional development issues.

In the first place, there were problems with low ICTs training. The previously mentioned matches the worries the teachers expressed when they were asked if they had subjects related to ICTs during their teaching training programmes. Firstly, T2 stated that they got subjects related to the use of ICTs but T1 stated that they did not get subjects related to its use. Hence, as T1 did not have preparation about the knowledge and use of ICTs, they were asked to give their opinion about what ICTs were. Therefore, T1 stated that *“effectively knowing the domain of ICTs so as to prepare lessons and give investigative works but I believe to know something only to get by, I can’t justify. I’m sorry”*. The previous statement demonstrates that even though the use of ICTs is primordial in the current teaching-learning process, the teacher did not have greater knowledge about what ICTs were. As a result, it confirms that the teacher has not applied strategies and processes for the management of knowledge mediated by ICTs with the purpose of improving the teaching practice and the teacher’s own professional development to appropriately integrate ICTs (MINEDUC – ENLACES, 2011, p. 89).

In the second place, according to the questionnaire a new problem was found, which was related to a poor implementation of new teaching strategies. In this

way, it can be said that teachers failed to glimpse in the recognition of their responsibility in order for the students to have a greater and more productive learning, and, at the same time, a current learning when incorporating ICTs. For example, when asked what the challenges about the teaching owing to the pandemic were, T2 stated that *“the structure and the classroom’s regulations are lost. In addition to the rules of interaction between the students. Also, there is a change in the participatory dynamics in the lessons and the students’ motivation”*. Therefore, it shows that the teacher approaches the issues focusing on the students’ behavior instead of deciding what they should do as teachers to improve their lessons, being their responsibility searching for strategies and methodologies so as the students develop in a better form.

In the third place, another problem was observed in the class about the low use of target language. In this regard, even though the tools and platforms were generally in English, T1 did not ask the students to answer in that language and moreover, translated the materials used. Even though this dimension establishes that the use of ICTs should be implemented, using virtual environments, communication strategies that facilitate interaction (MINEDUC - ENLACES, 2011) in the target language. The previous information means that the teacher did not use the tools available to allow the students to analyze and understand what was being presented there.

In the fourth place, a problem was found regarding the connection between ICTs and the use of the target language. For instance, in T2 class, it was analyzed that the teacher incorporated ICTs as if the students did not know any

English. This could be demonstrated since everything the teacher said or read was immediately translated into Spanish, which results in students achieving poor learning. This could have happened because listening skills are not given a high priority in the National Curriculum causing students to not develop this skill in the same way as others (MINEDUC, 2021). Likewise, it may be due to different factors, such as those mentioned in the theoretical framework, which are related to the students' interest in the topic presented, the accent of the speakers, and the speed of the speech (Hayrapetyan, 2016). Although L1 may have been used in classes before the pandemic, this was increased during the first and second year of the pandemic because the students' knowledge levels decreased, as it is mentioned in Schmelkes del Valle (2021), the pandemic affected in many cases the learning knowledge of students, that is to say learning was not achieved, and the previously acquired learning knowledge was lost because of lack of application and use, which is why, it was noted the loss of school learning (pp. 8-9). And in relation to ESL, this directly affects the use of the target language, because due to the loss of school knowledge and learning, many teachers may decide to use it to a smaller extent in order for students to be able to understand the lessons.

Regarding Social, Ethical, And Legal Issues:

Poor Engagement With Students' Interests. Although it is not in the table generated by the results of the questionnaires, in the class observations it was possible to find problems in relation to this dimension, which according to MINEDUC-ENLACES (2011), establishes that when ICTs are integrated it is done as a means of social inclusion, attention to diversity, ethical and legal action with

respect to their use and care for health and the environment. Moreover, this was observed in T1 class, as the teacher did not manage to engage with the students, since they did not manage to respond, and showed a negative attitude towards the lesson. Also, T1 did not manage to use the topic of the class to include the diverse students in the classroom. As mentioned before, it is important for students to work with interesting topics they feel significant to talk about, and not only the established ones, as Hayrapetyan (2016) suggests to “design task-oriented exercises to engage the students’ interest” (p. 211), which means that class activities should be designed and implemented around the students’ interests. Furthermore, regarding T2 class, it was observed that the teacher failed to interpret the diversity and realities of the classroom. This occurred because most of the examples mentioned about the class topic were almost unattainable or were not based on the students’ reality; as for example, there were asked questions about backpacking and one of the girls said that she as a woman could not really do that kind of travel, as she felt vulnerable in a society like this, thus she told the teacher to ask questions about family travel, yet the teacher continued to ask questions in relation to the topic of backpacking. The above indicates failures in the competence about incorporating ICTs in line with practices that promote respect for diversity, equal treatment, and healthy conditions in the access and use, in this dimension, as it was not possible to observe a connection with the contextual reality of the classroom (MINEDUC-ENLACES, 2011).

Categorization Of The Problems

The following is the categorisation of all the found difficulties based on their common characteristics.

1. ICTs: Deficient Integration Of ICTs.

Poor Management on Digital Resources Integration.

Lack of Digital Resources' Domain and Knowledge.

Lack of Digital Platforms Domain.

Low ICTs Training.

2. Language: Limited Use of English.

Teaching of Speaking and Listening.

Low Implementation of the Target Language on Listening and Speaking Skills.

Low Use of the Target Language.

3. Classes: Lack of Effectiveness.

Technical Issues Beyond Teacher's Control.

Poor Implementation of New Teaching Strategies.

Poor Engagement with Students' Interests.

These categories were designed to suggest proposals around them.

Proposal of Educational and Methodological Improvement

The final objective of this investigation is to suggest methodologies or pedagogical and technical tools that will help to reduce or to eliminate the difficulties faced by teachers of English when teaching listening and speaking skills while using ICTs in online classes. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to provide the proposal of diverse tools which will help as a support for teachers that work in the Chilean educational system.

These proposals are given in order to improve teachers' pedagogical practices, as well as to maintain those existing good practices. In addition, it is important to mention that there were some advantages dealing with the good practices in the class. Firstly, one advantage or good practice dealing with Teacher 1 has to be with the duration of the class, because of the 2 pedagogical hours provided, it is used as much time as possible for the development of the class, with a total of 78 minutes, taking into account breaks and delays to start the sections. The teacher is capable of managing the class time to support her role as a teacher in the classroom, this may be due to the fact that the teacher has more years of experience and knows how to organize her time better. As mentioned before, Martinic and Villalta (2015) state in their article on time management in the classroom that teachers with eight or more years of experience who have been exposed to the full-day school project have better notions and results on how to use classroom time in order to obtain better results, while novice teachers and teachers that has been exposed to only online classes, may not manage to have good notions on how to use that time. Secondly, regarding T2, it was possible to analyze as an advantage in

the technical or instrumental dimension that the school has resources for a good realization of hybrid classes. These resources are an internet connection, microphones, cameras, computers, projectors, and also the zoom platform. Besides, the teacher knows how to use the zoom platform, as well as the microphone and the materials provided for the class. Even though these materials may have certain flaws that can be detrimental to the class, the teacher knows how to continue the class in a good way.

Moreover, the following proposals will be made according to the previous categorisation of the problems encountered;

1. ICTs: To improve the problems related to Deficient Integration Of ICTs, Lack Of Digital Resources' Domain And Knowledge, Lack Of Digital Platforms Domain, there are two proposals. These proposals will be divided in four categories: autonomous learning, University, Schools, and Ministry of Education.

In the first part about autonomous learning, it was decided to propose that the teachers watch Youtube videos in an autonomous way to learn about the use of new platforms that can be applied in their classes. For this proposal, Youtube videos were considered because teachers in the questionnaires answered that they tend to use this platform a lot, for that reason it would be an easy access tool for them. To make this process easier for teachers a Youtube channel will be recommended, and the name of the channel is *The Digital Learning Consultant*. This Youtube Channel will help teachers to learn how to use platforms such as Kahoot, Google Docs, Padlet, among others, with the purpose of increasing their knowledge and skills to use

different platforms.

The second proposal will correspond to the Universities. These should teach mandatory courses within the English Pedagogy Programme about the implementation and use of ICTs in the classes, the contribution that these means within the learning process, how to create didactic material using technologies, among others. In addition, these courses must be part of the common plan of the programme, this means that the courses must be taught throughout the programme, not just once. This will allow teachers to graduate prepared to use ICTs, and thus over time they will be able to update themselves according to new platforms that emerge.

The third proposal will be in charge of the schools. For this, the schools must offer courses or webinars that allow teachers to improve and increase their knowledge on the use of ICTs. These courses will be a support for teachers to be updated in terms of new technologies or platforms, and thus remain active in the use of ICTs.

The final proposal must be created by the Ministry of Education. In this case, The Ministry will have the power to constantly evaluate whether teachers use ICT in their classes for the purpose of analyzing the level of ICT knowledge. Also, seminars or congresses should be held by the Ministry to enhance teachers' knowledge. These congresses or seminars could be held online (videoconference) in order to reach as many teachers as possible.

2. Language: To improve the problems about Teaching of Speaking and Listening and The Low Implementation of the Target Language, there are two

proposals. First, the teaching of speaking and listening skills should be worked to ensure that the students could apply them in their daily lives. On the other hand, it is suggested the implementation of methods that emphasize the meaningful importance that the teacher makes use of English during the whole lesson.

In the first problem of Teaching Of Speaking and Listening the proposal is that the skills of listening and speaking should be taught in a way that they can be applied in daily life situations. It can be said according to the mentioned by Zulfugarova (2018) "The aim of teaching listening comprehension is (or should be) to help learners of English cope with listening in real life." (p.53) which means that learners should be exposed to listening to English through different types of listening in real life such as conversations, role plays, listening songs, and watching TV or series. For another part, speaking should be also implemented in real life situations. Speaking can be used in many ways in real life such as talking to someone through the phone or face to face, asking and answering questions or directions, and buying something (Zulfugarova, 2018). For that reason, applying speaking and listening skills in a real life context will allow students to be prepared for spontaneous communication in any situation.

Regarding the second problem, which is called The Low Implementation of the Language Target On, it can be said that the teachers should apply the Input Theory during their lessons due to the fact that the input is an important part of learning, which provides evidence from which learners can develop linguistic abilities (Gass & Mackey, 2014). It means that while teachers make more use of the language, the learner will be more exposed to the sound and pronunciation of

English, which allows the student to feel confident at the moment of using the language.

3. Classes: In order to improve the problems of Poor Engagement With Students' Interests and Lack Of Effectiveness, there are some proposals to solve these issues. First, there is a proposal in which teachers should make use of Constructivism Theory in their online classes and the other proposal is focused on doing self evaluations about achieved or non-achieved objectives.

Regarding the first problem, it is suggested that teachers apply Constructivism Theory, which states that learning has to be connected with the experience of the learner (Ertmer & Newby, 2013). It refers to the fact that the teacher could focus the activities on students' interests with the purpose of providing a more meaningful knowledge. In the case of online lessons, a proper strategy to create a relevant teaching-learning process is using different types of platforms in which students keep their attention during the lesson. What was mentioned before demonstrates that Constructivism Theory improves the online learning context, due to the fact that during the last years, technology has been a significant and helpful way to learn for young learners.

Related to the second problem, the proposal is based on creating instances of self-evaluations in which teachers could identify if the objectives were achieved or, in other words, the effectiveness of the teacher's methodologies or strategies. The previous proposal is fundamental in order for the teachers to be able to improve their professional development.

In conclusion, all these suggestions would help teachers to improve the development of their classes, so that their students pay more attention and feel more interested in learning a foreign language. In addition, by having more domain of ICTs, teachers can make their classes more didactic and focused on the students' interests in order to generate significant learning.

Final Reflections

All of the exposed, studied, and analyzed in this case study allowed us to reach the following conclusions and reflections;

Through the investigation, several problems and difficulties were found around the use of ICTs and the teaching of listening and speaking skills in an online/hybrid context in a school in Maipú in the classes of 2 teachers, problems that deal with the use and management of ICTs, the use and management of the target language, and the development of the classes themselves. For this purpose, 3 categories were created following the previous, and in them are listed all the problems found, which sum up a total of 14. Furthermore, different proposals were made around these problems to help reduce or eliminate them, in order to improve the teaching-learning process.

Therefore, the aforementioned suggests that there were problems in relation to the use of ICTs, not only when teaching listening and speaking skills, but also in relation to the use of ICTs in general. In this sense, the following diagnosis is made.

The encountered problems presented a major problem when carrying out the teaching-learning process, because they directly affect the dimensions of the ICT Competences and Standards for the Teaching Profession. The problems identified affect the Pedagogical Dimension; the Technical and Management Dimension; the Responsibility and Professional Development Dimension (see Table 2); and the Social, Ethical and Legal Dimension (MINEDUC - ENLACES, 2011, p. 17).

Additionally, through the investigation it was possible to find that despite the found difficulties, the teachers were able to accomplish the teaching-learning process despite all the issues that could be present along the lesson.

Moreover, even though ICTs have been used for a very long time in the teaching-learning process, it is crucial that the teaching community keeps investigating the issues that teachers may face at the moment of teaching the speaking and listening skills in the EFL classroom with the use of ICTs because depending on the context, more problems could be found and, as a consequence, teachers could investigate and find different solutions that allow the development of the teaching process. Also, it is imperative that alongside those investigations, the teaching community could suggest more proposals regarding the investigated topic.

For all those reasons, it is expected that through the proposals of educational and technical improvement, they will function as a help for the participants of the investigation (EFL teachers) and the Chilean educational system. Since teachers should be able to have a better understanding and use of ICTs for the teaching-learning process, as it helps to cope and diversify the ideas or pedagogical and/or technical tools used in the classroom at the moment of teaching English in the Chilean schools, and also, to adapt the classes to the students' knowledge regarding its use.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire

The following questionnaire is conducted by final year students of Pedagogy in English from Universidad Católica Silva Henríquez, belonging to the case study “Problems and difficulties faced by secondary school English teacher when using ICTs to teach speaking and listening skills in an online/hybrid context”. It is aimed to describe the main difficulties faced by English teachers from Maipu’s School in the seventh and twelfth grades in relation with the use of ICTs in online/hybrid lessons at the moment of teaching the listening and speaking skills. The previous will be done in order to propose possible solutions, as well as methodological and pedagogical tools so as to decrease the difficulties that may be encountered.

The information you provide for this questionnaire is extremely valuable and vital for our study case and its results’ development. Similarly, this questionnaire is confidential and will be strictly used for investigative purposes for the previously mentioned project. Consequently, your personal or the school’s information will NOT be shared. In the same way, the given information will not be shared to third parties or people that do not belong to the investigative group. All your answers will be used for investigative purposes and exclusively academic, with no value judgment about them.

The questionnaire consists of 14 questions, divided into 4 aspects to investigate which are the following: teaching characterization; difficulties and challenges caused by the pandemic; use of ICTs; and listening and speaking skills. Also, this questionnaire’s deadline is October 24.

We greatly appreciate your cooperation and participation with our project.

Teaching characterization

1. How many years have you been teaching English?
2. How many years have you been working in your current educational institution?

Difficulties and challenges caused by the pandemic

3. What changes or transformations have you evinced in the last time about your teaching practice for the development of the teaching-learning process, in relation with situations such as the social outbreak and the COVID-19 pandemic? Show examples.
4. Do you think that new challenges about teaching due to the pandemic have arisen? If that is the case, which challenges and what is your opinion about them?
5. In relation to the drastic change caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, how have you addressed your new teaching role from the beginning of the pandemic?
6. How do you see your teaching role by the end of the pandemic? Do you consider remaining in the classroom in the future considering all the changes caused by the pandemic? What are the changes you could discern?
7. What is the main difficulty/challenge that you face in order to do an effective lesson in the pandemic context?

Use of ICTs

8. Did you have any subject related to the use of ICTs in your teaching training programmes?

YES

NO

8.1. If you answered YES in question 8, what did this curricular activity consist of?

8.2. If you answered NO in question 8, what do you think this subject is about?

9. Do you know how ICTs work? Justify.

10. Have you got the possibility of attending workshops that help to improve the use of virtual platforms?

YES

NO

10.1. If you answered YES in question 10, do you think that those workshops have helped you to improve your teaching? Justify.

10.2. If you answered NO in question 10, do you think that this kind of workshop will help to improve your teaching? Justify.

11. Did you use ICTs or tools related to them in your lessons before the pandemic? Show examples.

Listening and speaking skills

12. Regarding the listening and speaking skills, how did you teach them before the pandemic and how do you address them now? Has any significant change occurred?
13. How do you implement ICTs when you teach the previously mentioned skills?
14. How is the students' performance in the teaching-learning process regarding the listening and speaking skills when they are taught in an online and/or hybrid context? Does there exist any difference between their performance in online format with the format before the pandemic (utterly in-person)?

Thanks for your answers and participation.

Appendix B: Observation guide

Date:

First period: 00:00 – 00:00 hrs.

Second period: 00:00 - 00:00

hrs.

Lesson's duration:

1. How many students attend the lesson?
2. How many times does the teacher ask for participation during the lesson?
3. How many times do the students participate during the lesson?
4. How many students actively participate during the lesson? How many students do not participate even once?
5. Does the teacher achieve interaction between the students both online and in-person?
 - 5.1. If the answer is YES, how many times and how long the interactions were?
 - 5.2. If the answer is NO, why could it not be achieved?

ICTs difficulties

6. What type of didactic tools does the teacher use for the lesson?
7. In relation to the didactic tools, does the teacher use support material to teach the listening skill?
 - 7.1. Does the teacher show difficulties with the materials' use? If it is the case, how many times did they occur?
8. In relation to the didactic tools, does the teacher use support material to teach the speaking skill?

8.1. Does the teacher show difficulties with the materials' use? If it is the case, how many times did they occur?

Regarding the following dimensions, answer the following questions.

- a. Pedagogical dimension
- b. Technical or instrumental dimension
- c. Management dimension
- d. Social, ethical and legal dimension
- e. Responsibility and professional development dimension

9. Does the teacher show difficulties regarding the ICTs dimensions? Which dimensions?

10. Is it possible to see difficulties regarding hybrid lessons? What are the difficulties?

Extra comments:

Appendix C: Informed consent

_____ ,

DNI: _____ announce to be informed and invited to participate in a study case named “Problems and difficulties faced by secondary school English teacher when using ICTs to teach speaking and listening skills in an online/hybrid context”. The previous is a scientific investigative project that has the support of the Escuela de Educación en Inglés from Universidad Católica Silva Henríquez.

I understand that this study looks to describe the difficulties teachers face when teaching the listening and speaking skills in secondary level from municipal schools in an online context. The previous will be done through a questionnaire and class observations. Also, I know that my participation will be carried out through an online questionnaire, in a schedule that I will determine, and it is through to be answered in 30 minutes. In the same way, my participation will also consist of class observations which will be carried out by a member of the investigative group in one of my English lessons. Moreover, it has been explained that the registered information will be confidential, and the participants names will not be shared so as to not be recognized by other people or to be identified at the moment of publishing the results.

I am aware that the data will not be delivered to me, and it will be no payment for my participation in the study. On the other hand, I am aware that the given data will benefit in an indirect form and therefore, has a benefit for the targeted society in the investigation.

Likewise, I know that I can reject my participation or move away at any stage of the investigation, without expression of cause nor negative consequences for me.

Yes. I voluntarily accept to participate in this study and to have received a copy of the present document.

Participant's sign: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____