



UNIVERSIDAD  
NACIONAL  
AUTÓNOMA DE  
NICARAGUA,  
MANAGUA  
UNAN - MANAGUA

## **Facultad Regional Multidisciplinaria, FAREM-Estelí**

**Undergraduate Research to opt to the Bachelor of Arts Degree in education, with Emphasis  
in English Language Teaching**

**Topic: The value of listening activities implemented by the English teacher to enhance  
listening comprehension**

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Estelí, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023





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“2023: SEGUIREMOS AVANZANDO EN VICTORIAS EDUCATIVAS”

### **Endorsement Letter of Approval**

Hereby it is stated that the students: **MARIO YORHANDY BELLORÍN TÓRREZ** and **LUIS ALBERTO RIVERA DÍAZ**, in compliance with scientific, technical and methodological requirements, have completed their undergraduate program in English Language. They have presented the work *The value of listening activities implemented by the English teacher to enhance listening comprehension* in accordance with the stipulated guidelines for undergraduate studies at the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua, UNAN – MANAGUA; in order to qualify for the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Educational Sciences, with a major in English Language Teaching.

Therefore, the aforementioned students are authorized to make the presentation and public defense of the undergraduate research project before any examining board that is deemed appropriate.

This letter is issued in the city of Estelí, on the third day of the month of February of the year two thousand and twenty-three.

Sincerely,

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**Wilmer G. Lagos Reyes, M.A.**

**Advisor**

**UNAN-Managua/FAREM-Estelí**

## **Acknowledgments**

Firstly, we would like to thank the almighty for giving us his blessings and providing us with patience, intelligence and wisdom during our university years. Besides, we desire to express our sincere gratitude to FAREM-Estelí University and our advisor MSc. Wilmer Lagos for his invaluable patience and feedback. We could not have undertaken this research process without his guidance and willingness to share his knowledge and expertise.

In addition, we appreciate the support received during these five university years in which our teachers motivated us to learn and develop our teaching and language skills. Lastly, we value our families' support during our learning process. Thank you for your sacrifices, prayers, love, and advice that kept us going.

## **Abstract**

This study analyzed the value of listening activities implemented by English teachers to enhance listening comprehension. Comprehension is crucial for production because we can produce oral/written language when we understand the input received. Teachers must identify the significance of their teaching activities and resources in their student's learning process because every change they make has a result that counts. It is also true that finding the best methodologies is not an easy task. Hence, we rely on teachers' perspectives to identify listening activities that could be effective. Carrying out this study required us to choose a qualitative approach and interview research which enabled us to describe the evidence obtained in the semi-structured interview. In addition, to obtain evidence, we used transcriptions from the interviews and processed the information through thematic categorization.

## **Resumen**

Esta investigación analizó el valor de las actividades auditivas implementadas por profesores de inglés para mejorar la comprensión auditiva. La comprensión es crucial para la producción, podemos producir idioma oral y escrito cuando entendemos las entradas del idioma percibidas. Los profesores deben identificar la importancia que tienen sus actividades de enseñanza y recursos en el proceso de aprendizaje de sus estudiantes, ya que cada pequeño cambio que ellos hacen cuenta en el resultado. Se sabe que no es una tarea fácil identificar las metodologías apropiadas, es por esta razón que nos apegamos en la perspectiva de los profesores para identificar actividades de comprensión auditivas que pueden ser efectivas. El desarrollo de la presente investigación utilizó un enfoque cualitativo y entrevista-investigación lo que nos permitió describir la evidencia obtenida a través de una entrevista semi estructurada. Además, para obtener evidencia utilizamos transcripciones de las entrevistas y procesamos la información a través de categorización temática.

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## I. Introduction

Teaching English in a foreign language classroom represents various challenges for teachers and students. One of these challenges English teachers may face in an EFL<sup>1</sup> classroom is the enhancing of students' listening comprehension. This misunderstanding of the language could be related to students' lack of self-motivation to learn the language, lack of time to practice speaking and listening, lack of resources to introduce new and attractive input in the class that engage students' learning, and so forth. Every single English student needs to enhance this skill in order to develop his/her comprehension about what he/she hears to produce the target language more effectively. That is why; teachers need to increase students' listening comprehension by implementing effective activities that may respond to students' language learning needs.

As mentioned above, Doff (1995) states that listening comprehension- understanding spoken messages- is essential for communication because it is a bridge for interaction and language learning. To develop this skill, students might experience difficulties understanding the input, for example, unknown vocabulary or unclear pronunciation. In this sense, some theories- like Krashen's theory- explain the relationship between input and output in language acquisition. Krashen's theory states that exposing students to an understandable language environment will develop in students a clear language oral production.

With this in mind, enhancing listening comprehension plays an important role in students' oral production. For this reason, the present research paper pretended to analyze

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<sup>1</sup> English as a foreign language



the value of listening activities that English teacher implements in the EFL classroom to enhance students' listening comprehension. We targeted this research by having as a support the perception of two English teachers at the National Institute Augusto Salinas Pinell of Somoto, Madriz. Firstly, to achieve this, we identified the listening activities implemented by the English teachers; and also, we described the difficulties that EFL students face when enhancing listening comprehension.

Additionally, in order to help English teachers to increase students listening comprehension and to overcome these aforementioned difficulties presented by the students we wanted to suggest a helpful tool for English teachers that is called "Narrow listening" by using comprehensible input. Narrow listening is an approach centered to acquire second language (L2) learners understand clearly the main idea of a single topic by the constant repetition of audio material, with the purpose to use it as background to understand different topics. So, by doing this research we want to provide a help for high school English teachers in Nicaragua and for future researchers who are researching about this important part of a second language acquisition "listening comprehension".

### **1.1. Problem Statement**

Learning a foreign language can be a complex and frustrating experience for those who begin this learning process, especially when they do not have access to proper learning-teaching resources and methodologies. For this reason, in the past few years, EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers have been thought to implement efficient activities and resources to develop students' language skills (Ahmadi, 2016).

Nevertheless, several recurrent factors related to both teacher and student may affect the development of listening comprehension, for example, lack of interest in the EFL subject, demotivation when performing activities, student misbehavior, overuse of grammar-centered methods, lack of practice and repetition, poor quality of audio-visual aids, inadequate environment (large classes- more than forty students- limited space to move, classrooms without windows, etc.), and limited exposure to input ( Nushi & Fereshte 2020, pp. 9). Moreover, EFL teachers have reported that some listening difficulties are unclear sound, resulting from a poor-quality CD player, unfamiliar vocabulary/topic, lack of interest in the content, and a noisy environment leading to lack of concentration.

According to Castro Cárdenas, (2012) the application of the teaching-learning discipline of this foreign language in Nicaragua is contemplated in the Basic National Curriculum so that students will learn and advance their English language abilities in secondary education. "The teaching-learning of the English language as a foreign language is to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic capacities that allow students to turn it into a useful tool for life" MINED, <sup>2</sup>(2009, para.37). According to the Ministry of Education, high school students must develop the English language skills in the secondary school in order to use these abilities to communicate in the real life using the target language. The reality is different, in the most of the cases only few students in Nicaragua high schools have the capacity to communicate in English when they finish their secondary education.

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<sup>2</sup> Ministry of education, Nicaragua (MINED).

In this regard, some language acquisition theories like Stephen Krashen's comprehensible input<sup>3</sup> provide an insight into how we acquire a second/foreign language, starting by being exposed to input (written/listening) that is comprehensible to produce output (speaking/writing). He states that "we acquire by understanding the language that contains structure a bit beyond our current level of competence" Krashen, (1987, p.22). He also remarks, that when communication is successful when the input is understood that part of the language is acquired automatically. A relevant aspect to point out is the use of "Narrow Listening" which encompasses little or no teaching of grammar, repetition, continuous exposure to input, interesting content, and familiar or little unfamiliar vocabulary. The implementation of theories like this one in a classroom setting represents a challenge because it exposes our weaknesses, but at the same time, it gives us guidelines on how we can create a more attractive and meaningful learning process, as well as, steps to leave our teaching comfort zone and find the solution to difficulties like the ones mentioned above.

Therefore, we pretend to analyze the value of listening activities implemented by the English teacher to enhance listening comprehension. Consequently, we have selected the following research question:

**How do English teachers perceive listening activities to enhance listening comprehension in the EFL classroom?**

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<sup>3</sup> Comprehensible input (CI): The capacity to understand the messages, what the people say and what the people read (Krashen S. , 1989).

## 1.2. Background of the Study

Researchers concerned with improving the quality of education have studied comprehensible input in the classroom through the implementation of listening activities to enhance language acquisition. In this regard, the research titled “Implementing Comprehensible Input Strategies in the World Language classroom” analyzed the use of these strategies to develop language skills. As a result, the study found that comprehensible input might be effective in language acquisition only when the English teacher is well-prepared to perform the strategies and has previous training in such ones DiSabatino, (2019, pp. 24-27). Therefore, teacher training is essential in creating flexible methodologies to enhance language acquisition.

On the other hand, the research titled “Influence of the comprehensible input in the development of oral expression” carried out in Guayaquil, Ecuador, identified the influence of the use of CI in EFL classrooms with A1.1<sup>4</sup> student’s level. The researchers designed a didactic guide to assist the student’s oral expression in English language development with the purpose of helping teachers with the implementation of comprehensible input activities focused on listening, motivate students to practice their oral production inside and outside the classroom and increase the development of oral expression in students to reach the A1.1 level. As a result, the study described that the implementation of listening activities having as basis comprehensible input may help students not only to have a good pronunciation, but also to understand what they read, to use correct grammar when they write and enhance the listening comprehension Alava Vera & Manzo Velez, (2021-2022). It is important to look

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<sup>4</sup> English level according to the National Curriculum in Ecuador, Specified by the Common European Framework of references for languages (CEFR) (Alava Vera & Manzo Velez, 2021-2022, p. 3).

for strategies that support the EFL students learning process. The implementation of comprehensible input may help to create motivated classes that provoke the student's motivation to produce the English language.

### **1.3. Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study will redound to society's benefit, considering that developing listening comprehension is a complex process for both teacher and student and at the same time essential in the production of oral language (output). So that, effective methodologies must be implemented in order to develop these skills naturally. Comprehensible input and listening activities have been analyzed through different studies by many researchers. One is the author DiSabatino, (2019) where she describes in three steps how an individual achieves oral production unconsciously by using a comprehensible input-centered methodology.

First, we are focused on acquiring a language rather than learning it.

Second, we acquire the new language by being exposed to the language that is one level beyond our current competence level ( $i + 1$ ). Lastly, production of the language being acquired emerges over time, it cannot be taught directly (p.35)

Besides, the great demand for professionals who speak a second or foreign language justifies the use of creative methods that facilitate the acquisition of the target language. Since English language is being globalized, people are in the need to communicate in English with high levels in their jobs, in this case people have to acquire the language in a natural way. Regarding with what have been mentioned, is justified to carry out this research about comprehensible input in the acquisition of a second language.

Additionally, for the researchers/teachers, the present study will uncover critical areas in the English teaching-learning process such as the teacher's perception in the implementation of listening activities, teacher's training, use of attractive methodologies, teacher's knowledge of the subject, response to learning needs, etc. In this regard, to improve education, it is important to find proper methodologies that facilitate teachers' performance and respond effectively to students' learning needs. By implementing comprehensible input in the EFL classroom, we want to suggest a methodology as a tool for English teachers to strengthen the student's skills, principally listening comprehension. Since several authors assert that comprehensible input, interaction, and output play an essential role in a second language acquisition one agrees with the theories of Krashen's exposure to input, Long's interaction, and Swain's comprehensible output (Zhang, 2009).

International researches have been conducted. They have analyzed what are the principal problems when developing listening comprehension in their specific secondary school. Nonetheless there was not found national research that has explored how CI in listening activities influences in the production of the language in EFL students in Nicaragua. It justifies the importance to carry out this present research in order to suggest the implementation of CI activities to enhance listening comprehension in Nicaragua's high school.

#### **1.4. Key terms.**

- **Listening comprehension**

Listening comprehension is the ability to comprehend and to construct the meaning about what is heard. Ashari, (2014) describes that this process is defined as an important part of communication where the people need to understand what the speakers try to

express in the target language. Listening comprehension is the interpretation of the spoken language; it is related to meaning understanding.

Doff, (1995) states that listening comprehension has an important role in communicative skills development such as speaking. In other words, we get input by exposing to the target language, if the English language learners have the ability to comprehend spoken English; it may be easier for them to communicate with English speakers.

In this regard, the authors Tran & Duong, (2020) describe that “Listening comprehension does not consist only in heard the words, or to recognize the speaker’s intonation and pronunciation” (p.79) on the contrary, it could be said that, this is a complex process, where the message that is being conveyed is decoded and a main idea is processed. As the aforementioned author Irfan, describes that this process not only consist in understanding the message, it also help us to prepare a posible answers for what have been told.

### **Comprehensible input**

Comprehensible input (CI) is the understanding of messages, this process can take place whether by reading a text or by listening to an audio. Through CI learners develop the comprehension about what is read and heard. According to Harmer, (2007, p.266) “The more we see and listen to comprehensible input, the more English we acquire”, in other words the exposure to an understandable input facilitates the interpretation of the information and helps to produce the English Language.

To summarize it, being exposed to comprehensible input help us to enhance our ability to understand about what we listen or read and our oral expression as well. Krashen, (1987) Remarks that, comprehensible input must be slightly above of our current level of understanding, so we acquire new knowledge through the knowledge that we already have.

### **Narrow listening**

Narrow listening was proposed by Stephen Krashen in 1996, this refers to the constant practice and repetition of listening material by focusing to the same author or the same type of information. According to Krashen, (1996) in narrow listening, learners need to be exposed to several listening materials such as recordings. He also describes that; they want to hear something that sounds interesting for them. The repeated listening of this material helps to create the input comprehensible. In other words, once learners understand the meaning about what they hear, they can develop the capacity of listening comprehension.

### **English language teaching**

The process of teaching a foreign language is a complex phase which involves many other steps; it has to be made by someone who makes a great effort trying to get the teaching purposes done. According to Marion & Wright (2009), the teaching process corresponds to the use of several activities by many teachers and learners trying to teach or learn a foreign language. This process is done by the English teacher following three determinate steps: Presenting, practicing and testing the language taught.

The aforementioned author also states that the teacher's job is to promote comprehensible teaching activities in order to practice the language and consolidate the



knowledge. By empirical experience of one of the researchers of this study, the teacher is the knowledge provider; the English teacher must help students to get confidence with the language, to foster the students' motivation to learn a second language and to be a guide in this complex process.

### **1.5. Objectives**

General Objective:

- To analyze the value of listening activities implemented by the English teacher to enhance listening comprehension.

Specific objectives:

- To identify the listening activities implemented by the English teacher for enhancing listening comprehension.
- To describe the difficulties students present when developing listening comprehension.
- To suggest the narrow listening activities to develop listening comprehension.

## **II. Theoretical framework**

### **Overview**

The present chapter is structured selectively by the literature consulted for the purpose of our research. The theory presented will help to address the objectives set at the beginning of this study. First, it presents the definition of listening comprehension, its stages, and difficulties when developing listening comprehension. Second, it explains the language theory developed by Krashen which supports the use of comprehensible input in the EFL classroom.

### **2.1. Listening Comprehension**

Developing listening comprehension is essential when learning a foreign language because it allows students to become good listeners and communicators (Mardhotilla, 2019). However, this competence could be complex because the listener requires exposition to input chosen based on their learning needs. Besides, such a process includes understanding pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and meaning (Gilakjani Pourhosein, 2016).

#### ***2.1.1. Stages of Listening Comprehension***

Learning activities centered on listening comprehension involve decoding spoken messages, interpreting intonation, and understanding context Vandergrift, (1999). Moreover, these activities have three stages: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening (Wilson J. J., 2008). Next, it will explain each one:

#### **Pre- listening**

The first stage is pre-listening, in which previous knowledge and new vocabulary are activated to generate interest and understanding of the activity. This stage prepares the student for what they are about to listen to and gives them chances to succeed when completing the listening task. In other words, pre-listening activates schemata to help predict the content of the audio/passage. In addition, to review background knowledge, the EFL teacher can use visual material (flashcards, realia, videos, readings, etc.), brainstorming, etc. As the initial stage, pre-listening is essential for the following stages. In the process, students and teachers might consider the following questions: "What do I know now? Why will I listen? And what can I expect to hear?" (Wilson J. , 2008).

### **While-listening**

This stage requires greater participation from the student; it is the process of understanding and constructing meaning from the input. The relationship between both stages, pre-listening, and while-listening, is that the learner uses their background knowledge (vocabulary/grammar structures) to comprehend. In this regard, Srilakshmi, Purnachandra, Veliventi, & Maithreyi, (2022) explain that this process involves assessing listening comprehension through a variety of exercises. During this stage, the teacher's role is essential to identify the student's difficulties and to help them complete the listening task.

In addition, some of the activities implemented during this stage might be: explaining the task, interactive activities to increase students' interest in the topic, and clarifying doubts. In this stage, the listeners may ask themselves: "Are my expectations met? Am I succeeding in the task?" (Wilson J. J., 2008, p. 61).

### **Post-listening**

Post listening is the phase in which the teacher helps students to summarize the listening experience. This activity happens after pre and while listening. In this respect, Srilakshmi, Purnachandra, Veliventi, & Maithreyi (2022) claim that “post-listening exercises allow not only the teachers to test and review students' knowledge and assess their comprehension, but also the students to expand understanding beyond the literal level to the interpretative and critical levels” (p. 1503). Therefore, in this stage the listener may also appropriate unknown vocabulary in order to improve their competence to use what they acquire by meaning understanding (listening comprehension).

There are some activities that teachers may apply when doing post listening activities, Wilson, (2008) describes these activities as: Reflecting, checking and summarizing, discussion, creative responses, critical responses, information exchange, problem-solving, deconstructing the listening text, reconstructing the listening text.

In addition, this final stage, post-listening, involves the summarizing of the three stages pre, while and post listening. In this process English learners may increase their capacity of listening comprehension, also once students are exposed to a comprehensible input, they may develop a good output, and they will be able to produce what they acquire by the meaning understanding of the context.

### ***2.1.2. Difficulties in Listening Comprehension***

Despite the essential role of listening in a foreign language, learners might face some difficulties that affect the development of listening comprehension when listening to the spoken language. For instance, some students fail to understand what a native speaker

says. The misunderstanding of spoken messages causes a lack of meaning construction, hence, oral production (Gabrilla, 2021).

Other difficulties might be understanding volume, speed, sentences and phrases, accent, intonation, and pronunciation. Some of these difficulties are caused by the student's attitude toward the target language. Consequently, students might experience stress, frustration, and demotivation because they do not understand the input. That is why, teachers and students need to make a great effort to overcome these difficulties together (Mardhotilla, 2019).

Additionally, these difficulties are connected with some factors that provoke the students' misunderstanding of the input. Some of them are connected with the audio material that they are exposed such as: the audio quality and unknown vocabulary presented in the audio. Another difficulty when developing listening activities is the noisy environment which causes lack of concentration. It is essential to say that at the moment to develop listening activities students must be interested and concentrated on the topic. Having interest in the topic or the audio material they hear, it will allow learners to comprehend what they want to produce inside the English class but also, outside the classroom.

## **2.2. Language Acquisition theory: Krashen's comprehensible input**

Stephen Krashen is a linguist and professor known for theories on second language acquisition. Prominent among them; are his five language acquisition hypotheses: the learning-acquisition distinction, the natural order hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis and the affective filter hypothesis. In this regard, Krashen claims that the

input and affective filler hypotheses explain second language acquisition and the listener's response to comprehensible input (Krashen, 1987).

In addition, he states that the process of acquiring a second and native language is the same. He also differentiates learning from the acquisition. For the first one, the learner is aware of the process and the steps taken to achieve a specific goal, but the second one is an unconscious process Krashen, (1987). In this concern, the book "**How languages are learned**" describes how native language acquisition occurs. Its authors Lightbown & Spada (2013) describe how babies start making the involuntary sound of crying when they are angry. After that, we start hearing the cooing and gurgling when they are happy, and they continue distinguishing sounds, such as **pa** and **ha**. Therefore, babies start recognizing sounds to produce them. Another example is when they understand the word **bye** by waving their hands.

When babies are twelve months old, they usually master two or three words. At age two, they already use at least fifty words, being able to produce and understand them. Moreover, they start combining words such as mommy juice and mommy baby fall Lightbown & Spada, (2013). Progressively, at age three, toddler produces spoken language in a better way than when they were two. However, they still miss some structures like adverbs and tenses. Such a process is considered one of the first stages of language acquisition. The natural order hypothesis describes these changes as stages involved in language acquisition Krashen, (1977). For that reason, Krashen and more hold that we may acquire a second language by experiencing the same process children experience in their native language. This experience can be possible through exposure to comprehensible input in the target language.

### **2.2.1. Hypotheses**

Exposing students to optimal input based on their learning needs and the language level is crucial for language acquisition. Therefore, teachers should question how to choose the best resources that respond to students' needs. In this regard, Krashen (1977) states that when the acquirer does not understand the message, there will be no acquisition, which means that incomprehensible messages will not be received and processed.

To identify comprehensible input, we can look for some principles. It has to be easy to understand or based on students' needs and have well-articulated speech. Besides, the message behind the input has to be simple but challenging so previous knowledge is activated and new knowledge is acquired. In this case, the student pays attention to the message but not the form. Also, the message has to be relevant and attractive to the listener. The acquirer is not just learning about a topic but learning a second language unconsciously (Krashen S. D., 1977).

#### **1. The input hypothesis**

Krashen highlights this hypothesis because it explains how language acquisition happens when the input provided is slightly above the listener's current level of competence and understanding. An example could be when a tourist or foreigner tries to communicate with someone who knows little about their native language; the speech tends to be clear and understandable. (Krashen, 1987).

If the natural order hypothesis is correct, people develop grammatical structures naturally, from simple to complex. In this regard, a paradox has surged: **how come an individual understands knowledge when he has not yet learned it?** The answer is that

comprehensible input is understood not just through the current level, but several factors influence and help us to understand the message. One example could be linguistic competence, context, extra-linguistic and para-linguistic information to understand spoken language.

It claims that ESL learners first study grammatical structures and vocabulary to produce output (writing/speaking). In this respect, Krashen describes that “acquirers first understand language through comprehensible input, then they study the structures” (Krashen , 1977). In this respect, ESL/EFL teachers might guarantee their students acquire and understand the input provided in class with methods like the total physical response proposed. This method states that listeners give a physical answer (doing the action) when they understand the message (Asher, 1996). For example, commands like:

- ✓ Erase your name from the board.
- ✓ Take the pencil and give it to her.
- ✓ Write your name on the paper.

They could help because the student is supposed to respond with an action. In this way, EFL teachers may realize if they are providing comprehensible input.

An appropriate way to produce comprehensible input is by identifying the acquirer's current level. At that point, Harmer (2007) describes EFL teachers as the principal provider of comprehensible input. Since input outside the classroom might appear incomprehensible, especially for beginners. This implies students frequently face incomprehensible input, so the role of the teacher is to modify and make it comprehensible for them.

## 2. The Affective Filter hypothesis



This hypothesis describes affective factors in second/foreign language acquisition. These factors are motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. For Krashen (1987), such factors are crucial for language acquisition. For this reason, Krashen claims that demotivated students will not search for input based on their learning needs. Instead, they will experience anxiety because they do not understand it. In this regard, this hypothesis explains that if students experience stress and anxiety, they develop a high affective filter, and acquisition cannot occur.

Moreover, the affective filter hypothesis describes the teacher's role as one who creates an enjoyable classroom environment in which they reduce stress and students might develop confidence. With interactive activities, teachers can enhance students' extrinsic motivation and reduce stress. For instance, when they encourage participation with rewards (praising them) or foster curiosity through challenges and topics of interest. Considering this aspect, the book "Influence of Learner's Motivation and Attitudes on Second Language Teaching" analyzes the significance of intrinsic- which comes from the student and extrinsic motivation-which comes from the environment. Therefore, English teachers must pay attention to the affective filter when performing the lesson so students develop their language skills (Zhao, 2015)

Concerning motivation, the theory of "Possible selves" describes how our brain works when we feel motivated and can predict future situations. Similarly, the book titled "Motivation Language Identity and the L2 self" classifies three possible selves: what we aspire to be, what we could be, and what we are afraid to be (Zoltán & Ushioda, 2009). It emphasizes the power of imagination to make a decision. Therefore, picturing a future

situation when establishing objectives might facilitate the achievement of a goal (Markus & Ruvolo, 1989).

To conclude, several authors (including Krashen) explain the crucial role of affective factors in second/foreign language acquisition. They remark on the significance of being aware of how the acquisition process happens by establishing objectives, increasing motivation and interest in the target language, and avoiding stressful experiences and environments.

### ***2.2.2. Comprehensible input activities to enhance listening comprehension***

Throughout history, English teachers have been implementing different activities for language development. In this regard, some studies have shown the effectiveness of comprehensible input activities. These studies describe how teachers might use comprehensible input in the EFL classroom. First, teachers introduce new vocabulary for one week, for example, reading a letter or paragraph (Seneca's letter, a description of his room over the baths). Second, they prepare simplified versions of the input provided in the first week. Third, after reviewing vocabulary: students might read the letter fluently Patrick M., (2021). Another example of comprehensible input in the classroom is when students ask about the meaning of words, and the teacher answers by providing a simple definition in the target language. These activities increase students' participation and create a dynamic environment to learn in which language acquisition might be possible. Students use language they know to understand and interpret linguistic components (meaning and grammar structures) (VIPKid, 2017).

### **Short Stories**

In the English language teaching process teachers must implement different activities in order to help students to develop their English language skills for example listening comprehension. The use of short stories is one of them, Hansen (2022) defines short stories as a short narration of a specific topic with the purpose to have a significant message. By implementing these activities in the English lessons, students may be exposed to vocabulary that may be unknown for them, this experience also allows them to hear new phrases that may also be learned and learners may produce them in real life situations.

The authors Rahmawati & Rakhmawati, (2022) claim that:

Short stories are significantly effective for engaging students in listening practice and it further positively gives impact on listening skills. Therefore, short story could be an alternative genre used in the classroom as it possibly enthralls students to engage in listening activity (p. 45).

Through the use of short stories, learners may increase the capacity to understand simple messages. Short stories are good activities which bring students the opportunity to practice listening activities and to develop their listening comprehension. When they comprehend what they are hearing, they will be able to produce the target language.

Short stories are a good alternative when trying to use different activities in the classroom; however, it is needed to point out that these short stories must be contextualized with the students' current language level.

### **Role plays**

Harmer, (2007) defines role plays as activities that involve the practice of listening and speaking skills. In a role play activity learners use their imagination to be in a specific situation and a specific character and act it out. Some examples in a role play activity may be the imitation of: a teacher with the students, a touristic guide, a person ordering food in a restaurant, someone asking for directions, someone being a police officer, etc.

In the implementation of these role play activities, learners must use vocabulary previously taught by the English teacher so, every student play a specific role and they use their background knowledge that they can produce. Role plays allows students to use their knowledge to adequate their role according the level they have and to learn about something which may be new for them.

The practice of this type of activities is an important element to increase learners' interest and creativity to participate in the English lessons, it allows students the share their experiences orally which may help them to foster their learning capacity to develop listening comprehension, because they are producing what they comprehend.

### **Songs**

According the author Harmer, (2007) "Using songs is a useful activity that allows teaching speaking and listening skills" (p. 320). An important point that teachers should consider when presenting a song, is that the song must contain known vocabulary by the students, this will help them to have a better listening comprehension from the audio they hear.

The aforementioned author in his book “The Practice of English Language Teaching” also claims that:

There are two ways of dealing with this problem: the first is to have students bring their own favorite songs to class. If they do this, however, the teacher may want to have time (a day or two) to listen to the song and try to understand the lyrics. Some of the songs may deal with issues and language which the teacher is not keen to work with. Another solution is to use older songs, and to ask students whether they think they still have merit - whether they like them, despite their antiquity. Teachers can then choose songs which they like or which are appropriate in terms of topic and subject matter, and which they themselves think pass the test of time (p. 320).

Additionally, using songs must be interesting for every student who listens something that he/she want to learn, Wilson, (2008) describes that:

The key to using songs may lie in what you do with them. If they are seen as merely a break from routine, they will probably not carry much value with adult students beyond lightening the mood of the class (though this can be very valuable!). If they are treated as seriously as any other text, then they will be similarly valued while also containing the entertainment factor that all students - but especially young learners – need (p. 52).

English language teachers must consider what do they want to achieve when using song as resources in the class. If the audio material has a value for them, they will be concentrated when hearing the song. Using songs may help learners to practice the vocabulary they have but also to acquire new words and phrases by their listening

comprehension from the input, when they comprehend the material they may use it in real life situations.

## **Games**

In the English language teaching-learning process in EFL schools teachers have the task to look for different activities that may be helpful in the students' learning. One of these activities is the use of games with educational purposes. Mubaslat, (2011-2012) States that games in education have an important role when teaching English:

One useful strategy to encourage learning a foreign language is using language games. When using games in the classroom, it is beneficial for teachers to have a complete understanding of the definitions of games, which usually are defined as a form of play concerning rules, competition, and an element of fun. Teachers should also consider the advantages of games: the ability to capture students' attention; lower students' stress; and give students the chance for real communication (p. 4).

In this regard, using games offers the students the opportunity to have fun while they are involved in a learning activity. Games allow students to interact using the target language, it is important for every student because they practice in an interesting activity the oral skills (listening and speaking).

Using games in class is a challenge for every teacher; English teachers tend to think that these games are a waste of time when developing the activity. However, games are also a challenge for students that they want to achieve, it provokes the students' motivation to participate in the designed activity to develop their English language skills.

### ***2.2.3. Narrow Listening Activities to enhance listening comprehension***

Krashen carried out studies on narrow reading and listening. In this concern, this type of listening consists of the listener focusing on one subject for extended periods in which they can listen to inputs of the same author. In other words, narrow listening is the repetition-crucial in language acquisition of a single topic until students understand it. In addition, researchers explain narrow listening might benefit beginner and intermediate-level students because they might use previous basic knowledge to understand the subject and master vocabulary.

There have been studies which have researched the repetition process in the mastering of vocabulary in a foreign language. One example is the research conducted by Nation & Kyongho, (1989) where they demonstrated that repeating new vocabulary in several series of stories in newspaper helped their students understood new words in the target language. In accordance the aforementioned author, in order to help students acquire new vocabulary, there must be provided input by several times using the same vocabulary until this becomes clearer.

Additionally, some advantages of narrow listening might be exposure to relevant subjects, language in context, dynamic role plays, realistic and rewarding teaching activities, students managing their learning process, diverse didactic material/sources, and motivation among peers ( McClendon, et al., 2004).

### **III. Research Design**

#### **Overview**

This chapter presents the process carried out to conduct this study. It covers four main points that are fundamental for the development of any scientific study. First, it describes the approach and type of research. Second, it identifies the participants who took part of the study. Third, the instrument (semi-structured interview) to gather information that was analyzed with data analysis strategies, sematic coding. Finally, it describes the ethics principles that this research took into consideration during the written process.

#### **3.1. Research approach**

This qualitative research approach uses only one method of data collection such one is a semi-structured interview. According to Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, (2012) “qualitative approach refers to make emphasis on holistic description—that is, on describing in detail all of what goes on in a particular activity or situation rather than on comparing the effects of a particular treatment”. On the other hand, the author K. Yin, (2011) mentions that:

By now, qualitative research has become an acceptable, if not mainstream, form of research in many different academic and professional fields. As a result, the large number of students and scholars who conduct qualitative studies may be part of different disciplines. Qualitative research represents an attractive and fruitful way of doing research. (p. 6)

The qualitative approach provides the opportunity to discuss and to describe the situation with the participants of this study. We identified the participants who took part in



the study in order to complete the process of this research. Besides, this qualitative research is very significant in the analysis of existing literature about listening activities.

### **3.2. Ethical Issues**

According to K. Yin, (2011), respecting ethical issues principles is to follow steps in a determinate order to show credibility in the research. Such steps, were followed in the process that we implemented to gather information. This study kept ethic and transparency for those who participated in the process. That is the case of recording our participants' interview. Before recording them we firstly asked for permission to record the whole interview and to sign a consent form for their participation in the research, also they were aware of the use of such audios. We have written evidence to support our findings.

In the same way the authors Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, (2012) describe that it is important to protect the people who participate in the research to make the study valid and reliable: That is why, pictures taken for our research were not taken directly to the face of our participants. We used the names of our two participants in their description because they gave us the permission. Such aforementioned action made our participants feel confident and comfortable to be part of our research study. The aforementioned authors also state the following:

It is a fundamental responsibility for every researcher to take into account all of these issues aforementioned. Such issues ensure that participants in a research study are protected from physical or psychological harm, discomfort, or danger that may arise due to research procedures. (p. 63)

We relied on the support of our thesis advisor who gave us clear explanations and supportive material which helped us to respect our participants in this research. Such explanations were taken into account, and we proceeded to ask for permission in order to carry out this research.

### **3.3. Types of research design**

Interviews are an appropriate method when there is a need to collect in-depth information on people's opinions, thoughts, experiences, and feelings Jaber , Holstein, Marvasti, & Mckinney, (2001). Such interactions and communication with participants can be conducted online or in this case Face-to face. We decided to carry out a face-to-face interview in order to create a natural conversation. With a natural conversation our participants felt confident and comfortable when they talked about the Listening activities they implemented in the teaching of English Language.

The aforementioned authors also describe Interview Research approach as the one that is based on interviewing participant for a specific purpose, in this case researching about teacher's perception in listening activities to enhance listening comprehension. Moreover, this approach allowed us to do a deep analysis into the teachers' perception about listening activities. Using this approach helped us in the analysis of aspects such as: influence of listening activities in the enhancement of students' comprehension and the difficulties students present when developing listening skills, and how teacher overcome such difficulties.

### **3.4. Context of the study and participants**

#### ***3.4.1. Setting***

This research is directed in one of the central high schools of the Department of Somoto. Before it was called Institute National of Madriz but currently it is known as Institute National Augusto Salinas Pinell (INASP). In this institute there are imparted classes every day in two sessions: morning and afternoon. In the INASP there are around 1500 students and approximately twenty-five teachers for every class, which means there is a large number of students.

Institute national Augusto Salinas Pinell was rebuilt in the year 2011, now it is structured with: twenty-five classrooms, three bathrooms, one auditory-room, one ICT<sup>5</sup>, one direction room and a library. The library is available for students and teachers, so they can look for information every time they need. The ICT counts with thirty-eight modern tablets, around fourteen computers and one projector. Such resources may be used by English teachers in order to create successful Listening activities. Using these resources in an appropriately way teachers may create comprehensible and attractive classes.

#### ***3.4.2. Participants***

Our research study took place with the experience of two English teachers from the afternoon shift in the Instituto Nacional Augusto Salinas Pinell.

A male teacher with the name of Ramon Garcia who have been teaching English during seventeen years so far. He was taught English by an American professor who came to Nicaragua when he was ten years old. Years later he went to the university and got a

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<sup>5</sup> Information and Communication Technology

Master degree in English education. In honored to the person who trained him in this language, he started running an academy with his name “English Academic **Mielky**”. Ramon Garcia is currently teaching English in the National Autonomous University of Leon, UNAN-LEON from Somoto and the Instituto Nacional Augusto Salinas Pinell as well. Additionally, Ramon Garcia designed a strategy called **the four workstation** a strategy that gave him the first place in the contest the best teacher of Nicaragua. In conclusion, this professor knows what may be the best listening activities to enhance students’ comprehension because many students had gotten the language in his academy. From now on we are going to call him: teacher one.

The second participant is a female teacher with the name Jesking Pineda who graduated in the year 2010 in the university Martin Lutero in the major of English. One year later, she started teaching the English language. It means, she has eleven years of experience teaching the language, in this regard; she has met different students with different learning styles. It could be said, she knows about some of the factors that may affect the development of this language. As researchers, we observed different strategies applied in the classroom by her. The teacher used to implement from pictures strategies to provide a clear understanding to reading activities that contribute to the enhancement of reading comprehension. Reading activities also help in extending students’ vocabulary. From now on we are going to call her teacher two.

### **3.5. Data collection methods**

#### ***3.5.1. Semi-structured interview***

Our choice for semi-structured interview as our instrument to collect data made sense in this research study, since Anne, (2013) defined semi-structured interview as “repertoire of possibilities”

The semi-structured interview, valued for its accommodation to a range of research goals, typically reflects variation in its use of questions, prompts, and accompanying tools and resources to draw the participant more fully into the topic under study. Semi-structured interviews incorporate both open-ended and more theoretically driven questions, eliciting data grounded in the experience of the participant as well as data guided by existing constructs in the particular discipline within which one is conducting research (Anne, 2013, p. 24).

The Semi-structured interview allowed us to focus specifically in listening comprehension and helped us to cover it with natural conversation, our participants felt confidence and comfortable when answering the questions. Carrying out a semi-structured interview also allowed us to learn about the motivation behind our participants’ choices, beliefs and attitudes in enhancing students’ listening comprehension. Moreover, this kind of interview was beneficial for both, teachers and researchers, before starting the conversation, first we explain them about the theory of comprehensible input, the stages of listening, and the importance of developing this skill; consequently, they shared with us the Listening activities they used and the difficulties students present in understanding the language.

### **3.6. Data analysis**

Data analysis in qualitative research is a process that involves reducing large amounts of written, visual and spoken information “Researchers can obtain these data from interviews, observations, or focus groups” (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012, p. 436). For this research, we gathered data from a semi-structured interview which required us to record our conversation with the participants and transcribe the audio. In this regard, the type of qualitative analysis selected was thematic coding which consists of creating and assigning codes to categorize data to make it more manageable when representing and interpreting it. Fundamentally, coding required identifying data from the semi-structured interview to illustrate theoretical concepts, and we linked these data by a common theme or idea to categorize them. After identifying the type of analysis, we followed three phases: data reduction, data reorganization/rearrangement, and data representation

As aforementioned, the first phase was data reduction which consisted of isolating patterns, repeated concepts, and differences identified to reorganize them in the following phase. For example, we identified main concepts like difficulties, listening activities, and listening comprehension to summarize concepts within our data related to our objectives. The second phase is data reorganization, for which we distinguished keep terms and reflected on our assumptions and ideas before and when collecting data. In the last phase, we displayed data through meaningful and representative quotations about the findings.

## **IV. Results and Discussion**

### **Overview**

This chapter had two components: results and discussion. First, it is presented the main findings of the data collection and analysis we conducted to achieve our three specific objectives. It began by identifying the listening activities used by the English teacher to enhance listening comprehension in the EFL classroom. It continued describing the difficulties presented by students when developing listening comprehension. Answering these two objectives was crucial to suggest narrow listening activities for listening comprehension since all of these objectives are connected. Second, after objectively reporting findings in the discussion section, we wrote our interpretation and observations on each result.

### **4.1. Results**

- Identifying the listening activities implemented by the English teacher for enhancing listening comprehension.

For English teachers, enhancing listening comprehension requires preparation to implement engaging and effective activities and resources (Ahmadi, 2016). To identify teachers' perspectives on listening activities, we implemented a semi-structured interview with two high school English teachers from Somoto city, whom we called Teacher One and Teacher Two. During this interview, they expressed that developing listening was crucial in the acquisition/learning of a foreign language. For instance, teacher one told us the following: “I boost a lot of listening that comes alongside the speaking skill. I always tell my students, if you understand the language, then you will enhance your speaking skill”.

In this regard, exposing students to optimal input or appropriate listening activities based on students' learning needs, and on their language level, are crucial for language acquisition (Krashen, 1987). On this case, through the semi-structured interview we could found that, teachers try to give their best in developing students' listening comprehension through different listening activities such as: Reported speech, Use of online slide sheet, Listen and point, listen and match, flashcards, songs, role plays, TPR (...) So, according to teacher one and teacher two these kinds of activities help students in the development of listening comprehension and that is why they usually implement them in most of their lessons.

According to the information gathered from the teachers' interviews Listening activities offers advantages in the teaching of English language, for example teacher one explained the following: "I use reported speech because in this way I realize if my students are understanding me" he also explained that through this activity students practice their speaking skill and described the following, "I got them repeat just what I have said but in their own words". Teacher two supported the aforementioned by explaining the following, "I use these kinds of activities to help the students' increase their capacity to understand what they hear". So, using listening activities in English learning is useful either for teachers and students. The use of resources such audios, videos and online games were also mentioned by the teachers, wherein both of them told us that such resources help them in creating attractive and interactive classes.

- Describing the difficulties students present when developing listening comprehension.



Through the application of the semi-structured interview, we could notice that developing listening skills in Nicaraguan high schools is a complicated task for English teachers. That is the case of the teacher one where he described the following: “Understanding English is hard for them”. In this regard, though the information gathered from the teachers’ interview we could find, that many factors influence in the development of such skill, such factors are: “Students’ shyness”, “students’ anxiety”, “the lack of vocabulary to understand the class”, “The lack of practice”, “Students’ aptitudes”, “Overcrowded classrooms”, and “time for the lessons”. Beside both of the teachers mentioned, that, “The speaker’s speed” and “Speaker’s intonation” are also factors that have to do with the students’ understanding.

Despite all of the challenges presented in the development of students’ listening comprehension, both of teachers told us, that, this is one of the skills they try to enhance the most in their students because if students comprehend a little bit of the language, they will be able to learn unconsciously when communicating through the target language. On this regard, teacher two described the following “listening is a very important skill that all students must enhance”, since, with a good understanding of the language students will be up to communicate inside and outside the classroom.

Teacher one and two have described that despite these aforementioned difficulties high school students face, they implement different listening activities because they consider that by implementing comprehensible input activities these difficulties may be faced, for example activities such as: listen and point, listen and match and flashcards are activities in which students are exposed to different types of vocabulary, so, by practicing these activities they acquire new vocabulary.

On the other hand, activities such as: use of online slide sheet may help EFL teachers in Nicaragua to create attractive and interactive classes so students may feel motivated to face their shyness when speaking English. Also, with this activity teachers may face the student's misbehavior and the practice of the target language may be better. By an extensive practice of listening activities students may understand what the speaker says because repetition provides them the opportunity to practice until they understand the speaker's intonation, speed and pronunciation of words and phrases. When students really understand the message they are able to produce a good output inside and outside the class.

- Suggesting the narrow listening activities to develop listening comprehension.

As aforementioned, findings obtained from the first and second objectives were relevant to answer the third one. We took data from the first objective, which explains that the activities chosen by the English teacher must be **flexible and vary** to achieve a specific learning goal, (e.g., to enhance listening skills). Besides, in the semi-structured interview, teachers one and two mentioned that these listening activities “should use **comprehensible input**”; thus, they should be easy to comprehend and appeal to the students' language level. For example, some of the activities mentioned by the teachers were: reported speech, use of online slide sheet, listen and point, listen and match, use of flashcards, completing the lyrics of the songs, role plays, and the total physical response method, among others.

In addition, teachers explained that those activities have another characteristic: **repetition**, which is a crucial factor for enhancing listening skills. Concerning the second objective, we found that some difficulties students present could be: a lack of vocabulary, a

lack of comprehension, a lack of time to practice repetition (three hours a week), and the type of input chosen (speaker's intonation and speed).

After some research, we found in Krashen's comprehensible theory a strategy combining both repetition and input chosen based on learning needs and language level-narrow listening. Krashen explains this strategy is suitable to be implemented in language classrooms because it promotes repetition (e.g., vocabulary, intonation, accent, speed, etc.) of a subject for extended periods. Therefore, students can improve their listening skills faster by using previous basic knowledge to understand and process new information. This aspect was crucial for us to suggest this strategy because it is well-known that repetition is essential for language acquisition.

#### **4.2. Discussion**

The implementation of a semi-structured interview helped us to realize that high school teachers face several difficulties when teaching listening comprehension to their students, to get sense of it, some of them are: little amount of time to impart their learning lessons, demotivated students, large groups just for one classroom (more than 40 students), students' misbehavior, lack of students' vocabulary to understand the class and so forth.

Through this research study, we could identify that through comprehensive activities students do not need to go by the hard way, they do not need to memorize long list of words to start communicating in English because the learning takes place unconsciously. Also, through the implementation of listening activities teachers are allowed to teach and correct indirectly to their students.

In the research of Alava Vera & Manzo Velez, (2021-2022) we could realize that the implementation of listening activities having as basis comprehensible input may help learners not only to have a good pronunciation, but also to understand what they read, to use correct grammar when they write and enhance the listening comprehension. Likewise, through this present research we were able to identify that through Listening activities teachers have the alternative to connect the auditory learning with visual learning and beside get students exposed to an English environment where students reduce their anxiety and stress, at the same time their motivation goes up. It means that, EFL teachers should be well trained before teaching listening comprehension

Taking into consideration as has been described all the difficulties described in our research theory and same difficulties found through this research's results, it could be said that, developing listening comprehension in high school students is challenging for most English teachers-experienced and inexperienced. They must be aware of the difficulties they might experience before performing their lessons. For example, to enhance listening, students need repetition, but in Nicaraguan high schools, English is taught only twice a week- less than three hours of exposure to the language. Therefore, most teachers choose and modify their activities to achieve their teaching-learning goals. In addition, when time in the classroom is limited, some teachers opt to motivate their students to practice listening at home, but this is not always the case. Through the interviews implemented, we could find out that students do not have the proper amount of time to be exposed to the target language, what makes hard for them understand different kinds of input, firstly because they do not have enough practice and second, they do not have enough vocabulary beside input's speed and intonation is not usually appropriate for their language's level. In this

regard, such factors provoke students' confusion when they listen to the language and get stressed when don't understand.

In this sense, Motivation is crucial for language learning because when students feel motivated to learn, they feel comfortable interacting with the language. In this concern, comprehensible input and the relationship established with the teacher (affective filter) are relevant to engage students in their learning process. When these two factors exist, learning becomes enjoyable and natural for students.

Teacher one explained that "when facing all these difficulties, teachers should work hard to give a proper listening-centered lesson". He refers to developing a student-centered lesson in which teachers teach students to understand listening comprehension activities independently, so they can continue practicing listening at home (watching movies, listening to music and podcasts, etc.).

As aforementioned, the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language represents a great challenge for every teacher and student because it is a complex process which involves the extensive practice of the English language skills such as listening comprehension. In this regard, English teachers have the task to look for different activities to implement in the English lessons in order to help students to increase their capacity to understand the language. Through the Krashen's theory we may know that every activity implemented in the EFL classroom must be comprehensible, in this is the case to provide learners a comprehensible input that they can decode to produce it in their real life.

High school students in Nicaragua should be more exposed to extensive practice of English to master very well the language and at the same time English teacher should

consider what they want to achieve with their students. In this regard, listening comprehension may be practiced by implementing narrow listening activities in the English classrooms. English students should practice a lot of listening to understand clearer the language, narrow listening is one of the options they have because it involves the practice of listening through the repetition of the topic, so when students understand this target language, the output they produce will be better.

Through this study we have identified that English teachers and students face many challenges in the teaching-learning process. So, it is the main reason to suggest narrow listening activities by using comprehensible input in order to help English teachers and students to facilitate this complex process and also to increase the student's listening comprehension.

In addition, through this research we have noticed that the participants of this study perceive listening activities as an effective tool when helping students to enhance student's listening comprehension. In spite of the difficulties that are present in the process of teaching listening comprehension, EFL teachers in Nicaragua attempt to overcome such difficulties with the implementation of listening activities. For example, EFL teachers use reported speech to motivate students engage with the class, so students practice their oral expression and at the same time their listening skill, EFL teachers also do use online slide sheet (technology) to get students interact with the language, in the same way they avoid students' misbehavior since students are entertained with attractive and relevant learning's strategies. Activities such as: listening point, listening match and flashcards are used by EFL teachers to provide students a clearer understanding of the words and phrases of English language by having the students practicing in the target language. These types of

listening activities also may help English teachers in Nicaragua to face the students lack of vocabulary to understand the input they hear. When they understand what they hear, they feel motivated when enhancing English language skills; in this case, they may be able to enjoy the enhancing of listening comprehension.

## **V. Conclusion**

During this research, we could identify the significance of learning from the teachers' perspectives on educational subjects. Their viewpoints combine background, knowledge, and expertise, which are crucial when interacting with their students and performing their lessons. The value they give to the activities and resources they apply comes from what they have seen and done in their classrooms and the results they have

obtained. For that reason, educational systems need to rely on their teaching staff to determine difficulties, challenges, and strengths to improve the quality of education.

Concerning the value of listening activities implemented by the English teacher, the main findings reflect those teachers perceived listening activities as effective, since, they are able to prepare their students in understanding the main message from someone else's speech. Teachers exposed their students to listening activities in the most of their classes because they believe that if students understand the language, the speaking skill will come naturally. Teachers expressed that, they boost a lot of listening activities during their lessons, activities which help them in creating a natural environment. Such activities are: Reported speech, use of online slide sheet, Listen and point, listen and match, flashcards, songs, role plays, TPR<sup>6</sup> (...). These activities are perceived as effective because they are supposed to help overcome the following difficulties found in the EFL classroom: "Students' shyness", "students' anxiety", "the lack of vocabulary to understand the class", "The lack of practice" and "Student's aptitudes".

Taking into consideration, the difficulties and activities described by the teachers, we found a similar activity (narrow listening) which fosters extensive listening focused on one single topic. Consequently, we suggested narrow listening as a possibility for the English teachers to enhance listening comprehension. Through narrow listening teachers create an enjoyable classroom and students feel confident beside they learn naturally.

In the teaching-learning process in an EFL classroom, motivation plays an essential role in language acquisition- "Motivation is usually understood to refer to the desire to

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<sup>6</sup> Total Physical Response: Language teaching method built to coordinate action with speech (Asher, 1996).



initiate L2 learning and the effort employed to sustain it” (Zoltán & Ushioda, 2009, p. 198)

. When high school teachers and students feel motivated, the development of students’ listening comprehension may be better because students and teachers make a great effort when teaching-learning English. Also, students enjoy learning the target language.

To conclude, as aforementioned English teaching-learning process is a very complex process for teacher students. Therefore, it represents several difficulties for students, one of them is the misunderstanding of the language. That is the case English teachers should consider these difficulties when implementing different activities to response students’ learning needs.

In addition, there are varied activities to be implemented, but to be effective, repetition must be present, and they should be adaptable to students’ language level (comprehensible input). For that reason, we suggested Narrow Listening; this approach exposes students to the language through repetition, which facilitates comprehension.

## **5.1. Recommendations**

The findings of this research describe that enhancing students’ listening comprehension requires the use of different activities in the classroom. We recommend English teachers to continue implementing effective activities to foster students’ listening comprehension. These activities should be flexible and comprehensible to generate students’ interest on learning English.

We suggest to MINED to continue training English teachers in Nicaragua with good methodologies that may increase students’ second language acquisition.

Based on the findings found through the semi-structured interview, we could recommend that every English teacher takes into account the students' learning needs when implementing activities in the English class. Finally for the students, to have interest to learn the language, to enjoy the process and to be motivated when participating in different activities to produce English in their real life.

Due to a lack of time, there are some gaps in our research that we could not fill. For example, we could not observe teachers performing listening activities, so we relied on their perspectives and experiences to guide our research. We would have liked to have an in-depth observation of the performance of these listening activities, as well as students' responses and the identification of comprehensible input. For that reason, our recommendation for further research is to explore these aspects that could not be observed due to a lack of time.

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## VI. Annexes

### 6.1. Semi-structured Interview

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua

UNAN-Managua

Facultad Regional Multidisciplinaria

FAREM-Estelí

School's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear teacher, we are fifth-year students of the English major at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua UNAN-Managua, FAREM-Estelí. We are researching about the value of listening activities implemented by the English teacher to improve listening comprehension at the National Institute Augusto Salinas Pinell during the second semester of 2022. We ask you to be part of this research because we are interested in your opinion about the English language, how English is taught and learned in the language program in secondary schools, Nicaragua. We are also interested in identifying activities implemented in the classroom that aim to enhance students listening comprehension and how these activities influence the learning process in the classroom. Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research and feel free to answer the following questions.

1. What's your name?

2. How long have you been teaching English?
3. How has your experience been teaching English in secondary school?
4. How has your experience been teaching listening to enhance your students' listening comprehension?
5. What are some of the difficulties that students present when enhancing listening comprehension?
6. What activities do you implement in the English class to enhance listening comprehension?
7. How do you implement these activities with your students?
8. What activities do you implement focus on the comprehensible input theory?
9. What advantages do you consider that students have when you provide them comprehensible messages?
10. Based on your experience as an English teacher what activities do you recommend to enhance students' listening comprehension in secondary schools in Nicaragua?

## 6.2. Evidence

### *Teacher one's interview transcription.*

**Interviewer:** Good morning, we are students from Farem Estelí university and we are researching about how do secondary school teachers perceive listening activities to enhance listening comprehension. So, I as we talked beforehand, we are going to proceed *with the questions*.

**Interviewer:** first of all, we would like to know, what's your name?

**Interviewee:** Ramón Garcia

**Interviewer:** as second question we have, how long have you been teaching English?

**Interviewee:** More than 17 years so far.

**Interviewer:** our third question is how has your experience been teaching English in secondary education?

**Interviewee:** In secondary school, for me has represented an outstanding experience because here is where I have gotten the most of my knowledge. I believe, that I was born to do this, I was gifted from my God. I was trained under the Philosophy and the experience of this man, Jim Mielky, who was a teacher in the US for 40 years and he taught more than 40 000 students in a community college. He transmitted his knowledge, his pieces of advice, to me. So, as I have told you, secondary school has been the booster for me, to be renown in this city and also to displayed my ability for teaching and to share with my students the knowledge that I have gathered.

**Interviewer:** How complex is to teach the language's skill in the students?

**Interviewee:** It has represented for me, I little bit of a challenge, since as you said some of the students are not motivated. It is one of the factors that would influence in the learning of this language. We have to bring up compelling activities, so students are able to change and shift their motivation toward this language. Let me share one of the experiences that I had in a nearby community of Somoto, Santa Isabel, I was teaching there for two years. One of the advantages that I had there, was that I only had 11 students, and here in secondary school I have 40 and even more than 50 students in each classroom, beside students may show up in different ways, they have different learning styles. In the place with little amount of students, I was able to teach English at a communicative level, they were able to communicate among themselves. Teaching in this kind of environment was easy for me teach the language. In the city, one of the factors that affect are overcrowded classrooms

and we just have twice a week English classes. I considered that teaching English in overcrowded classrooms must have at least the five days a week, two hours per day, so they would really get into it.

**Interviewer:** now, can you share how has your experience been teaching listening to enhance Listening comprehension?

**Interviewee:** It is one of the questions that I have wondered during my entire career, since I have an academy, where I boost a lot of listening that comes alongside the speaking skill. I always told to my students, if you are able to understand the language, then your speaking will be enhanced.

What I have done in my school is to teach the IPA, because even most of the teachers mispronounce simple words (February), and it is because they just really want to be understood and get the message across. I do this, because I know if the teacher pronounces correctly the words, the students will pay attention and understand the message. (When there is a well-articulated speech, students will produce good speaking), I use others resources such as audios and videos. Actually, I designed a strategy which I called, four work stations, this strategy is based on Garner's theory (multiple intelligences). With this strategy I broke up my class in four stations: one station goes for visual learners, the second one goes for auditory learners, the third one goes for kinesthetic learners, and the last stations goes for technology. I do all of this because of student's aptitudes.

**Interviewer:** can you share what are some of the difficulties that students present when developing listening comprehension?

**Interviewee:** Understanding English is hard for them, because they sometimes feel shyness, beside they have low level of anxiety. Another factor is the lack of vocabulary to understand the class, the lack of practice as well, so what I do is to motivate them, because when teachers do not motivate students, they block out totally. So, when teachers face all these difficulties, they must work very hard in giving a better listening lesson.

**Interviewer:** Can you mention what activities do you implement in the English class to enhance listening comprehension?

**Interviewee:** I like to be creative, actually, every now and then I like to bring out new and innovative activities. One of them is the reported speech, I bring out a topic where a speak in a comprehensive way, then I ask one of my students to describe what I have said with his own words, so doing that I realize if they are understanding. Once I have developed this activity, I give them feedback. Additionally, I work with an online slide sheet, what I can do there, is to give them commands and they have to touch the picture on it, when they

touch or click on it they have the pronunciation again. (The most of the students have access to devices such as cell phones and tablets to develop this kind of activity).

I like to use technology in order to create interactive and attractive classes for my students.

**Interviewer:** teacher how do you implement these activities with your students?

**Interviewee:** Reported speech, first I go by speaking and then I got them repeat just what I have said with their own words. I also use worksheets where I give them portions of short text with an audio material (about verbs in the past), I used this instead to write them in the board. I tell them go and listen to the audio and then find the verbs in the worksheet (spelling and pronunciation).

You Know, this strategy is the association of sound with the written word. Here students connect auditory learning with visual learning. This is one of the strategies that has worked so well for me.

**Interviewer:** Basically, Comprehensible input is the implementation of a comprehensible language in the classroom that help students to have a better comprehension of the language. What activities do you implement focused in the comprehensible input theory?

**Interviewee:** I like this theory a lot because this theory claims: the same input students have is the same output they will produce. So, it is really important to give our students well-articulated speeches.

**Interviewee:** remarks, I understand the theory very well, I know that teachers don't have to bring them speeches as robots instead they have to bring them comprehensive ones and act upon them.

**Interviewer:** of course, for example:

I tell my students listen and circle by acting upon the action.

I tell my students make circle by doing gestures.

**Interviewee:** that is also one of the activities I use TPR. I also know it is really important to provide a good pronunciation to our students because the input they have is the same speaking they will get, that is called output. I totally agree with what you are saying guys.

**Interviewer:** what advantages do you consider students have your comprehensible messages or comprehensible input activities?

**Interviewee:** You know, one of the advantages that I have noticed in my students is that they do not have to go by the hard way. They do not need to memorize long list of vocabulary in order to comprehend and start speaking the language. If the comprehensible

input theory is correct, you just have to bring them comprehensible speeches and they will learn naturally.

Actually, this is the way people should learn a second language for me. For example, native speakers or you know, when we are children just get exposed to the environment with several repetition and the speaking comes naturally.

For example, what I do in my classes is: I enter to my classroom happy excited and everything and if I want to teach the verb drop.

What I do the first day is drop something intentionally, for example my marker and say “oh my gosh I dropped my marker”. Then the second day I do the same, I dropped my marker intentionally again and say the same phrase. So indirectly, I am teaching them the verb when I drop something.

Another example is when I say, I am going to erase the board and erase the board. Next day what I do is the same and tell one of my students, now you erase the board. So, in this way without having me taught this verb directly students get the meaning. That is one of the advantages, students learn through acting upon my comprehensible input.

Once they are confident into it, their anxiety level goes down, they are confident and calm so they are ready to start speaking, you cannot push your students to speak, it is out of their context.

**Interviewer:** and as our last question we have, based on your experience as an English teacher, what activities do you recommend to enhance students' listening comprehension?

**Interviewee:** I would recommend teacher start using what you are promoting (comprehensible input), this one of the most outstanding. One of the activities that I promote the most is the IPA (university, school and academy) because I recommend teacher first to enhance in their pronunciation in order to provide well-articulated speeches. Also, what I do is to correct my students indirectly, I correct them just by repeating what they said, but with correctly pronounced.

For example, if they mispronounce the word vision, I use it in a different sentence or context. In this way the brain is picking the language without the awareness of the students because their anxiety level is in zero and motivation is ongoing

**Interviewers** thanked for the whole interview.

**Interviewee:** the pleasure is mine.

***Teacher two's interview transcription.***

***Interviewer:*** So, good afternoon. We are students from FAREM-Estelí University and today we want are doing this interview with you because we want to know your perception about the teaching process of English in Nicaragua, especially the teaching of listening comprehension to your students. So please, feel free to answer the questions and first of all we want to know what your name is?

***Interviewee:*** My name is Jesking Pineda

***Interviewer:*** How long have you been teaching English?

***Interviewee:*** I have been working for MINED during 11 years.

***Interviewer:*** Well, now we want to know: How has your experience been teaching English in secondary school?

***Interviewee:*** For me it has been a very good experience, it has allowed me to share and interact with all my students using different strategies such as games. It has been a nice experience because through each year, it has come to evolve as much as a teacher and also to know several strategies, how to innovate them. I have learned to know my students, their characteristics and learning styles that they have.

***Interviewer:*** Now taking specifically about one important skill, how has your experience been teaching listening to enhance your students' listening comprehension?

***Interviewee:*** Well, I think that it is a very important skill that all students must enhance it and it is part of our day by day in the practice. I try to implement different activities and strategies in the class in order to help them to enhance listening skills.

***Interviewer:*** What are some of the difficulties that students present when enhancing listening comprehension?

***Interviewee:*** In the most of the cases, it happens when the student does not know the vocabulary, when they hear words that they have never heard. Another difficulty that I see is when I speak quickly or they do not know the intonation. Maybe the student has heard some words but if someone pronounces these words with another intonation they are going to get confuse.

**Interviewer:** What activities do you implement in the English class to enhance listening comprehension?

**Interviewee:** well, I try to implement different activities with my students to help them to learn the language. Some of them are: Listen and point, listen and match, flashcards and songs related the topic. These kinds of activities help to increase the students' capacity to understand what they hear.

**Interviewer:** How do you implement these activities with your students?

**Interviewee:** To enhance listening I apply different strategies because English is taught daily so in my lesson plan, I have to add an activity for listening. I implement an activity which is called "listen and point", in this activity the student listens and point the correct word, sentence or picture. I also use "flashcards" where the student identifies through visual aids by hearing the correct word; I think is a very effective way because the student recognizes the vocabulary and he/she practices listening. Another one is "listen and match" where the student listens and joins the correct structure on the board. Through the use of songs students get fun and they enjoy the music, I think using songs is an effective way to practice listening.

**Interviewer:** Well, let me share with you something. There is a theory with the name of comprehensible input. This theory is based on using comprehensible language in the classroom that causes in your students a better comprehension. For example, the combination between speech and gestures to explain the action. As I said is the use of comprehensible language so, what activities do you implement focus on the comprehensible input theory?

**Interviewee:** In my case I implement that theory in different ways, one of them is by using words according the context the students are for example words that they may use in their real life, vocabulary related environment, daily routines. These are words that they use daily and they can practice every day.

**Interviewer:** Okay thanks for your answer. What advantages do you consider that students have when you provide them comprehensible messages?

**Interviewee:** One of the ways is the daily practice. The use of mobile devices in the classroom makes the students improve their comprehension of the topics. The use of commands that they everyday hear in the English class help them to enhance their communicative competence.

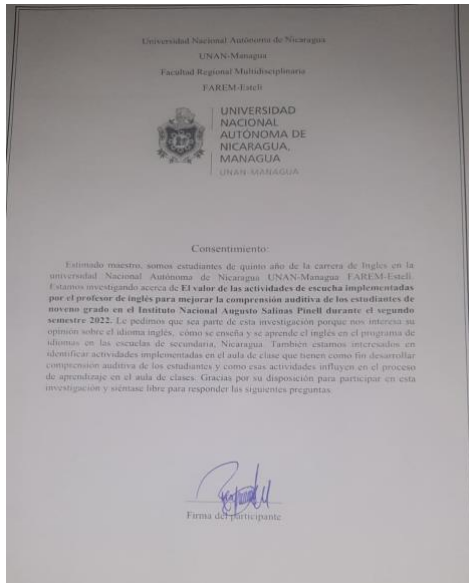


**Interviewer:** Based on your experience as an English teacher what activities do you recommend to enhance students' listening comprehension in secondary schools in Nicaragua?

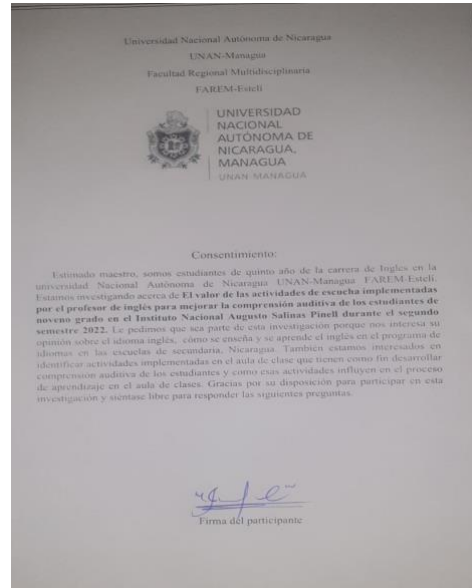
**Interviewee:** I think the way we usually implement activities is the use of music, through games to practice listening, the use of role plays, discussions between the teacher and students. For example, we see in the classroom and any other places that the knowledge we have we may use anywhere in order to practice speaking and listening. The use of videos is another way to help students to improve their English language skills.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you so much for your help and willingness to participate in this study.

**Interviewee:** It's a pleasure.



Photograph 1. Signed consent by teacher one.



Photograph 2. Signed consent by teacher two.