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# **Diploma Paper**

**Theme:** Activities to strengthen the listening skill of the English language in the students of 8th grade at “Marcos Antonio Macias Monblanc” Junior High School.

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## PHRASE

“ An educator must not over feel satisfied his knowledge the most, be a self taught person, who constantly improves his methods of study and research”.

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## Abstract

This Diploma Paper is related to an important topic at the time of learning a foreign language nowadays. It refers to the development of one of the four abilities the students need so as to achieve the communication expected in the English language. This investigation offers some activities with the aim of contributing to strengthen in eighth grade students the listening skill. The activities will permit a better acquisition of the knowledge, developing the communicative competence on the students and at the same time provoking changes on their way of thinking and their behaviour on the bases of intercommunicative relationship.

For the development of the research work different methods were applied which permitted to diagnose the problem, elaborate the theoretical body, and in this way to elaborate the activities applied for getting the objective proposed.

## INTRODUCTION

Our national system of Education includes the teaching of foreign languages as part of the integral and harmonic formation of the new generation. To fulfil adequately its function through the study plans, it is necessary for the pedagogical personnel, to have strong convictions based on the Marxist Leninist ideology. The English teachers use the foreign language appropriately in order to teach the students as better as possible, taking into account all the necessary materials to strengthen the teaching learning process.

Since the triumph of the Revolution, our country has stated goals to spread out the educative process around the island, and in this way to eliminate the illiteracy and the capitalist ideology. Through the years, the education has acquired more development and its objective has been based on the instruction and education of the new generation. Nowadays, we can say that the Cuban education is carrying out a great development, and it is an example for all the countries around the world. For that reason, the teaching of foreign languages is very important in the formation of every scientific branch, also for the future specialists who prepare themselves to acquire knowledge for a better learning in every epoch of the educational system. The teaching of foreign Languages has as an aim to develop knowledge, habits and skills on the students that permit to increase their learning capacity.

To learn the English language it is necessary to make emphasis on the four linguistic skills, which are: speaking, writing, reading and listening. In this Diploma paper the author focuses his attention on the last one, the listening skill that consists on the understanding and comprehension of the reading or speaking material determined, being this a complex process, not only for the learners but also for teachers. For this reason, it has been the object of investigation of many investigators, such as Rosa Antich, Johnson Widdowson, Enrique O'Farrell, Sergio Font etc.

Because of its characteristics it has been presenting difficulties throughout the years. This permit to say that through the pedagogical internship there were detected the following insufficiencies:

- Lack of motivation on the students toward the listening activities developed in the subject.
- Poor development of the listening skill.
- Insufficient development of the students´ phonetic ear.
- Insufficient activities that help the students to understand the listening material.

These insufficiencies guided the author of this Diploma paper to recognize that it is necessary to strengthen the listening skill of the English language in the students of eighth grade. Taking into consideration these difficulties, it is proposed the following scientific problem: How to strengthen the listening skill of the English language in the students of 8th grade at “Marcos Antonio Macias Momblanc” Junior High School from Manuel Tames Municipality?

Objective: Elaboration of some activities to strengthen the listening skill of the English language in the students of 8th grade at “Marcos Antonio Macias Momblanc” Junior High School from Manuel Tames Municipality.

## Scientific questions

- 1- Which is the historical background of the listening skill in the English Language in eighth grade?
- 2- Which are the theoretical aspects that support the listening skill in the English Language?
- 3- What is the real situation of the listening skill in the English language in the students of 8th grade at “Marcos Antonio Macias Momblanc” Junior High School from Manuel Tames Municipality?
- 4- What activities could be elaborated to strengthen the listening skill of the English language in the students of 8th grade at “Marcos Antonio Macias Momblanc” Junior High School from Manuel Tames Municipality?
- 5- What’s the level of effectiveness of the activities to strengthen the listening skill of the English language?

## Scientific tasks:

- 1- Historical background of the listening skill in the English Language in eighth grade.
- 2- Systematization of the theoretical aspects that support the listening skill in the English Language.
- 3- Diagnosis of the real situation of the listening skill in the English language in the students of 8th grade at “Marcos Antonio Macias Momblanc” Junior High School from Manuel Tames Municipality.
- 4- Elaboration of the activities to strengthen the listening skill in the English language in the students of 8th grade at “Marcos Antonio Macias Momblanc” Junior High School from Manuel Tames Municipality.
- 5- Valuation of the effectiveness of the activities proposed.

In the development of this Diploma Paper, it was necessary to apply several methods of investigation.

1. - Theoretical level.

- Historical and logical: It permitted to analyze the historical background of the problem, taking into account its logical characteristics.

- Induction – Deduction: It was applied to infer the information about the object of study and arrive at conclusions.

- Analysis and Synthesis: It was applied to determine the characteristics of the object of investigation, the relationship among its components and then synthesize them as a whole from the theoretical, methodological and psychopedagogical points of view.

2. - Empirical and Experimental level.

- Interview: It was applied in order to get the information from the teachers and the supervisor of the subject to diagnose the problem and to value the proposal.

- Inquiry: It was applied to get criteria from the students and the teachers so as to diagnose the problem and to value the effectiveness of the proposal.

- Observation: It was applied to diagnose the problem as well as to value the proposal applied.

3. - Mathematical statistic level.

Perceptual technique: it was used for counting the results of the instruments applied.

Universe and Sample

From a universe of 99 students that represents (100%), 40 students that represent (40%) were selected.

Two teachers who work with the subject were interviewed that represents 100%.

## Development

1 Historical background of the listening skill in the English Language in eighth grade.

To analyze the way listening skill of the English language has been treated since the moment it started in eighth grade, it is necessary to explain that in the process of teaching a foreign language, special attention has been paid to the development of the oral skills.

Within the oral skills to be developed in the students it can be mentioned listening skill and speaking. These two skills are very closely related as the development of one of them helps the development of the other. On the one hand, the students listen to a given piece of language, and at the same time they try to imitate what they listen to. On the other hand, as they speak they have other persons listen to what they say. Within the main objectives stated in the eighth grade syllabus, there is the one related to the emphasis on the oral aspects.

According to Piaget (1976) the objective of education is to instill in the man the ability to make new things day by day, not to repeat what is made, but to be able to create, to make up, to look into, to discover, to outline the novel.

An investigation made by the Britain Linguistic, Wilkins DA (1971) offer many ideas for find out the communicative focusing ofenglisfverd. Five year later, the teacher of teacher Rosa Antich de Leon established the problems of comprehension constitute one of the four abilities of the verbal activity we can develop, (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). Also, Enrique O'Farrell I (1999), Camacho Delgado A, (2004), Font Sergio (2006) establish the teaching of the English subject in the general education in Cuba have been an object of the process of substantial change approximately since year 2000 from our days, was in the past the structure view and tradition it that to ballast and in place of take on a

communicative conception of the process apprenticeship teaching that to pretend it to take on for to obtain a develop of the communicative competition of the students.

When referring to the teaching a foreign language, it can be considered the four basic linguistic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, or they can be split up into its main levels or components, which are the sound level, the morph syntactical level, and the lexico-semantic level. In methodological terms, people usually refer to the first one as pronunciation, to the second as grammar, and to the last one as vocabulary. It can be said that listening skill is as important as, or even more important than the oral expression, since one does not exist without the other.

Listening comprehension is an exceedingly important skill; it makes up almost one third of people's language activities. Besides, listening is a very difficult skill to acquire when learning a language, because the listener has no control over what he hears (language content, complexity or speech) the ability of listening comprehension is not acquired naturally; then, it must be taught. Listening practice is especially important in classrooms where English is taught as a foreign language.

#### What is listening skill?

It is practically impossible to have an only definition of listening skill. Different definitions are shown in varied texts. "For Teaching Second Language Listening Comprehension" defined the listening-in like: A mental invisible process, what does it hard to describe. People that listen must discriminate between different sounds, understanding the vocabulary and the grammatical structures, interpreting the emphasis and the intention, and retaining and interpreting all this so much within the immediate context eat of context cultural further ample member. (Wipf, 1984 , p. 345).

Taking into account what widdowson (Johnson 1983) said:

Listening is essentially a conscious, active process. Listening implies some conscious effort to the message; he has made a useful distinction between hearing and listening. He uses hearing to refer to the listener's ability to recognize language elements in the stream of sounds, and through his knowledge of the phonological

and grammatical systems of the language, to relate these elements to each other in clauses and sentences and to understand the meaning of these sentences.

He reserves listening to refer to the ability to understand how a particular sentence relates to what else has been said and its function in the communication. It is at this stage that the listener selects what is relevant to his purpose and rejects, what is irrelevant.

This distinction is similar to Rivers' (1968: 142) distinction between two levels of activity in a foreign, language: the recognition level and the selection level. Later on, Rivers (1977) uses the terms perception and reception: Perception is based on internalized knowledge of the rules of the language. The students have to abstract from a stream of sound units to assign these to categories, and to attribute to them functions in relation to other units, so that an intelligible message may be constructed from what they are hearing.

Listening is considered within the receptive skills to be developed in the students. That is why it is necessary to take into consideration the basic principle that, together with reading as another receptive skill, should be applied.

Basic principles of the listening skill

- 1- Content
- 2- Purpose and expectations.
- 3- Receptive skills.

The content have to be interesting because it is encouraging for any person, so what is read or heard should be motivating. Also it have to be useful because it should be educative, as the text is interesting something is learned from it.

Purpose is an efficient reading or listening depends on, having a purpose knowing what the student are going to read and what for.

Expectations is to have an idea of what will happen in the text before reading or listening to it.

Receptive skills. They have 6 sub skills.

- 1- Predicative skills.
- 2- Extracting specific information.
- 3- Getting the general picture.
- 4- Deducing meaning from context.
- 5- Inferring opinions and attitudes.
- 6- Recognizing functions and discourse patterns and markers.

Reception is an active process of constructing a message from a stream of sounds with what one knows of the phonological, semantic and syntactic potentialities of the language.

To understand what is said to him, the listener must associate both linguistic and non-linguistic sources of knowledge. It is only by applying his knowledge that he is able to decode, to divide the continuous stream of sounds into meaningful words, expressions or units and, by comparing them with his own knowledge, he can interpret their meanings.

#### Importance of listening skill

It would be able to be said that listening skill action has so much or more importance than the oral skill action, granted that one does not work without the other .It is very important because it constitutes one of the four abilities of the verbal activities to be develop in the students. The oral speech, that includes listening comprehension and the oral expression, and at the same time objective, content, and vehicle of teaching pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary are a bilateral process. Also it is important because has as objective to create in the students the so called linguistic ear and to continue its development through out the course.

Linguistic ear means to develop in the students the skills to identify sounds, words, expressions and after, to understand the message. The students have to learn to listen in a foreign language to be able to:

- 1-Pronouncing it correctly.
- 2-Understand the oral communication.
- 3-Read and write correct in a foreign language.

## Psycholinguistic Mechanisms of Listening skill.

Listening comprehension is a complex synthetic-analytic activity which is carried out on the ground of a series of psychical operations such as analysis-synthesis, deduction-induction, abstraction-concreteness, comparison and generalization. Listening understanding takes place on the ground of the temporal relations between the acoustic analyzer and the motor analyzer of speech. When they get to work together, the learners' inner speech decreases and, then, they start thinking in the foreign language.

The following processes make possible the successful development of listening comprehension:

- perception of the linguistic sign;
- identification of what is heard with a known reference pattern;
- decodification of the linguistic sign;
- establishing relationship between grammatical patterns;
- comprehension of the information heard;
- Self -control.

The teacher's task is to provide the learners with efficient guide and communicative practice in order to get these processes function spontaneously as a system.

A classification of listening skills has been proposed by different authors.

Here is a set of skills:

- 1.-Anticipate linguistic and/or situational elements (it also develops the mechanism of anticipation).
- 2.-Establish the parameters of the situation.
- 3.- Discriminate sounds, intonation and stress patterns.
- 4.-Establish sound-grapheme correspondence.
- 5.-Determine the meaning of words.
- 6.-Establish function-form relationships.
- 7.-Distinguish structural differences.
- 8.-Discern main ideas and secondary ones.
- 9.-Relate elements.
- 10.-Determine specific information.
11. - Retain the information and reproduce it (it also develops the mechanism

of memory).

12.-Decipher elements of the culture of the English speaking peoples (articulatory features)

13.-Evaluate the information of the text.

When teaching listening skill it is important to follow two directions:

1. - To teach the students to hear and to pay attention to the elements of the target language sound system in context. It means that the students should recognize these elements and identify their meanings. For this purpose, the teacher should design preparatory (language) exercises to draw the students' attention to both form and meaning. Preparatory exercises help the learners achieve the recognition level which involves the identification of words and phrases and their structural interrelationships. The students should learn to recognize sound patterns, grammatical sequences and tenses modifiers, function words and other language elements. It is only after the recognition of these general features has become automatic that the student can be expected to reproduce or respond to what he has heard in a long sequence.

2. - To train the students to understand information presented in the oral text. This training is carried out through communicative (speech) exercises which draw the students' attention to context, rather than to form. Speeches exercises permit the students get the level of reception in which they draw out from communication those elements which seem to express the purposes of the speaker or those which suit their own purposes.

There are different exercises to develop listening comprehension. Rivers (1968: 149) devises four stages in which the exercises should be carried out gradually: identification, identification and selection without retention, identification and guided selection with short-term retention, and identification, selection, and long-term retention.

Rogova (1983: 180) distinguishes two types: language exercises and speech exercises. The first type is divided into exercises to overcome linguistic difficulties (phonetic, lexical, and grammar exercises), and exercises to eliminate psychological difficulties: exercises to develop the learner's auditory memory, his attention, visual imagination, and logical thinking. Pinca (op. cit.: 81) concerns with exercises to listen for the message and information, exercises on grammar and vocabulary and exercises to cope with the sounds of English. In this chapter, we will follow the classification which broadly corresponds to the two directions mentioned above: preparatory exercises and speech exercises. Both types focus on some aspects of listening skills. The following examples illustrate the function of each type in the teaching-learning process: to pave the way for listening or to train listening comprehension.

The author of this Diploma Paper agrees with the classification made by Antich de León, R. She proposes two types of exercises that, to some extent, coincide with the ones mentioned above. They are:

a. - Language exercises: They are aimed at eliminating the linguistic and psychological difficulties that do not allow the students concentrate on the content of the listening text. On the one hand they permit to acquire habits of perception and adequate recognition, and, on the other hand, they develop the mechanisms of anticipation and memory. Within this type of activities, there appear those to work with isolated words that are aimed at developing the linguistic ear. So, it can be mentioned the following:

1. - Exercises to develop the acoustic analyzer.
2. - Exercises to practice the mechanism of anticipation.
3. - Exercises to develop mediate and immediate memories.

b. - Speech exercises: The exercises that permit the students to develop the habit to understand the oral instructions in similar conditions to those that are produced

in reality. They are aimed at having the students learn to:

- Determine the part of the instruction that has more information.
- Infer meaning of the unknown words from context.
- Divide the text into parts and identify the main idea of each of them.
- Fix the essential aspects of the text in written form.

Within this group, there can be mentioned the following exercises:

1. - Exercises to develop the ability to understand a dialogue in which the students do not participate.
2. - Exercises to develop the ability to understand in which the students participate.
3. - Exercises to develop the ability of listening comprehension of a monologue.

Apart from these considerations, it can be said that a listening lesson is usually divided into three phases: before listening, while listening and after listening.

#### Before listening

This phase covers things to do before the students listen to the passage, to help them get the most out of what they are going to hear. The teacher sets up the challenges that will give the students a reason to listen to the passage. This may involve telling them something about the passage and asking them to think about the information they are going to hear. The students may predict the content of what they will hear. The teacher may, sometimes, need to take a look at the exercises for the while- listening phase. Pre- teaching should be avoided whenever possible. However, there are some cases where the students need a help on language elements or content before listening.

#### While-Listening

The aim of this phase is for the students to understand the message of the text. As a first step, they should try to get a broad picture. What is the speaker talking about? How will he discuss his subject? This will help the students limit the data they will absorb. The students do something analogous to what they can do as readers. The difference is that in reading they can reread. In listening they cannot listen again.

The second step is for the students to focus on specific information as well as on the linguistic form in which it is expressed. The students can be asked to handle pure facts as dates, numbers, weights, ages, etc., or they could be asked to say something about the context.

### After listening

In this phase, students use, with another purpose, the information they got from the passage. They may summarize the information orally or discuss it. They may write the information or use it to fill a chart.

The teacher can also guide the students' attention to relevant points about the grammar, vocabulary and sound system of the language. The students can make a language analysis which may end with oral drill exercises or a communicative practice. Nevertheless, the teacher should not forget that the main Objective here is to show the students how the linguistic elements may interfere their understanding or interpretation of the information. The point is not to take any structure and to drill it, but to work on those relevant for the students' listening comprehension.

In fact, the objective of listening comprehension practice in the classroom is to have the students learn listening in real life situations. This being so, it makes sense to examine, first of all, what real-life listening is, and what sorts of things the listener needs to be able to do in order to comprehend satisfactorily in a variety of situations.

3- Diagnosis of the real situation of the listening skill in the English language in the students of 8th grade at "Marcos Antonio Macias Momblanc" Junior High School.

To obtain the necessary information about the real situation of the listening skill of the English language, different instruments were applied. With the diagnostic test applied at the beginning of the course, it could be detected the amount of difficulties the students have according to this important ability of the English language, that is listening skill.

It was seen the students presented problems. Most of them can not understand the listening materials. Sometimes, this problem is related to the limited phonetic ear they have and, in most of the times, they do not know too much about the topic. The difficulties were detected in the students by the inquiry and through the observation of classes. From a universe of students of 8Th grade, 40 students

were inquired. Two professors were interviewed. Ten classes were visited, and all of them were drilling lessons, in order to diagnose the way in which the professors strengthen the listening skill in the students through the English classes.

So, according to the interview to the professors it can be said that they are not doing enough to develop the listening skill in the students. The author considers, if the teachers want the pupils increase the phonetic ear, they should devote more time to this ability.

With respect to the inquiry to 8 th grade, it was detected that most of the students like English, so, this is an advance, and it favors the work of the teachers, but the majority of the students can not communicate in class, what indicates they have a poor development of the ability proposed and it means, also, it does not have to much treatment.

The main objective of this subject is to develop the oral skill, but this aim is not fulfilled. The students of the school mentioned before, do not have a good develop of the English skills.

### Results of the inquiry to the students.

The inquiry to the students (annex# 1) was made with the objective of analyzing the main aspects that could bring difficulties in the strengthening of the listening skill in 8 th grade.

In question # 1 which ask the students if they comprehend in listening form in English among them, 15 students that represents (37,5%), answered that usually, 19 students, that represents (47,5%) said never and 6 students that represents(15%) said always. Analyzing that, it can be said that the majority of the students can not communicate in classes.

According to question # 2 which asks the students if they comprehend English in class or out of it, 19 students that represents (47, 5%) said yes they comprehend in class, 13 that represents (32, 5%) did it out of the class. 4 students that represent (10 %) comprehend English in both contexts, the rest 4 students which represents (10 %) do not comprehend in any contexts.

Concerning question # 3 the author asks if the teachers helped them to speak English in class, 7 students that represents (17,5%) said always, 13 students, that represents (32,5%) said sometimes and 20 students that represents (50%) said never.

In question # 4 which asked the students about the activities their professor develop in class, 35 students that represents (87,5%) said that the professor develop dramatization and role plays, never use tape recorder or reading etc. The rest that is (12, 5%) did not give any answer. It seems that the teacher do not do any other activities.

In question # 5 it was asked to the students if the activities their teachers developed in class motivated them, 15 students that represents (35,5%) said yes, 18 students that represents (37,5%) said not, and 7 students that is (17,5%) said sometimes.

The matter is that the Teaching Learning Process of English is being treated mechanically due the kind of activities developed by professors. This shows the necessity of developing new role plays, linguistic games, listening abilities and some others to motivate the students and increase their listening skill.

### Results of the interview to teachers.

From a universe of two teacher (annex# 2) r that represent (100%) with the objective of verifying the preparation they have in the subject and mainly in the communicative approach so as to develop the students listening skill.

In question # 1 the author asks to the teachers, how they valued the listening skill in their pupils, and they answered that it is very hard task for them. It is easy to see how difficult it is for the teachers to work with the development of this ability, because they do not know how to use the appropriate methods.

In question # 2 they were asked if their students could understand what they are talking in the classroom. One teacher that represents (50%) said that they almost could not, the other that represents (50%) said that they could but with a lot of difficulties, committing big mistakes and changes the ideas.

Concerning question # 3 if they develop the four abilities of the language in classes, a teacher that represents (50%) said that yes, but emphasizing in oral expression, and the other teacher said that he tried, but it was not easy for him.

According question # 4 who asked if students were able to speak their ideas in classes, the teacher that represents (50%) said they tried, but they have a poor knowledge, they do not have enough vocabulary to talk.

In question # 5 asked about the activities the professors of 8 Th grade develop the most to improve the listening skill, the professor that represents (50%) said that he developed dramatization and roles plays. Those activities are not sufficient, is necessary to develop listening activities.

### Results of the observation.

Ten classes were observed (Annex# 3) from these classes it was obtained the following results:

Among the activities, the professor carry out to develop the students listening skill, there are just transpositions, role plays and descriptions. The students do not develop listening activities as such, and the teachers do not use the correct methods in the classes. It was seen the professor do not have the necessary professional performance to deliver a good class. That's why the students are not motivated for the English lessons. Also the classes are not developed in term of the students and in some of the cases they do not know what to speak. For all the things analyzed before, it is important to say the teachers of this school are not sufficiently prepared at the time to work with the listening skill. And the author develops the following activities.

4. Elaboration of the activities to strengthen the listening skill in the English language in the students of 8th grade at “Marcos Antonio Macias Momblanc” Junior High School.

To strengthen the listening skill in the English language in the students of eighth grade at “Marcos Antonio Macias Momblanc” Junior High School, there was elaborated a group of activities to be applied in the lessons.

The activities were elaborated taking into consideration the three moments described above: Before listening, while listening and after listening. It consists in a group of nine exercises, three per unit.

The activities will have the following structure:

1. Activity
2. Unit
3. Title
4. Objective
5. Ability
6. Procedure
7. Evaluation

Activity # 1

Unit # 1 “Back to school”

Title: Listen to, identify and repeat.

Objective: Identify the words that contain the sounds /dz/ and /ts/ so as to have them comprehend the listening material.

Ability: Listening and speaking.

Procedures: First of all, the teacher will have the students listen to some words so that the students can identify those words that contain the sounds /dz/ and /ts/.

After the students identify the words, they should repeat them one by one, and the teacher will have them say sentences with one of the word. All the students must

pay close attention to the sentence one of the students say and all the students will repeat it.

/ts/ useful, children, quite, teach, learn, such, national.

/dz/ July, work, age, wrote, jack, beautiful, job, book.

Evaluation: orally

Activity# 2

Unit# 1” Back to school”

Title: Listen to and answer.

Objective: Answer questions related to the text in order to strengthen the students listening skill.

Ability: Listening and speaking.

Procedure: The students are going to listen to the audiotext and they are going to answer the following questions about it. One of the students is going to ask the question while the other is going to answer it.

Evaluation: Orally

Questions:

- 1- What important book did Marti write for children?
- 2- Is this book only for the Cuban children?
- 3- When did he publish it?
- 4- Are the dialogues in the book difficult? Why?
- 5- Is The Golden Age an interesting book for adults too?

### Activity# 3

Unit# 1 Back to school

Title: Going beyond the listening material.

Objective: Apply the content of the audiotext in real life situations giving their valuation about it.

Ability: Listening and speaking.

Procedures: After listening to the audiotext the students should give their valuation about it, being guided by some questions.

Evaluation: orally

Questions:

1- Have you read "The Golden Age"?

2- What's your valuation about this book?

3- If you had the opportunity to change the title of this book, which one would you give it? Why?

### Activity# 4

Unit# 2 what do you like?

Title: Listen to and guess.

Objective: Identify the word that does not have a relation with the rest so as to strengthen their listening skill.

Ability: Listening.

Procedures: First the students should listen to the words and say which of them does not have relation with the rest taking into consideration its meaning. After the students answer they should make sentences with two of them and read it aloud.

Evaluation: Orally

Words: sports, team, baseball, newspaper, game, playing.

Book, homework, pencil, notebook, TV program, paper.

Activity# 5

Unit# 2 what do you like?

Title: Listen to and choose.

Objective: Comprehend the dialogue in order to strengthen the students listening skill.

Ability: Listening

Procedures: The students are going to choose a or b according to the information given in the dialogue. After finishing the activity, they should practice them.

Evaluation: Orally

a) Frank is \_\_\_\_\_ watching a TV program.

b) Peggy is \_\_\_\_\_ in the sports field.

\_\_\_\_\_ is inviting someone to come to watch the game.

\_\_\_\_\_ is asking about the homework.

\_\_\_\_\_ is speaking about the school baseball team.

## Activity# 6

Unit# 2 What do you like?

Title: Use what you learned

Objective: Use the information got in the listening material to write their own dialogue, reinforcing the students listening skill.

Ability: Listening, writing, and speaking.

Procedures: The students are going to work in pairs. They are going to write a similar dialogue to the one they listened to, this time using their own information

Evaluation: Orally

## Activity# 7

Unit#3 let's have a party.

Title: Listen to and train your memory.

Objective: Identify the missing elements (words) in the sentence strengthening the student's memory.

Ability: Listening.

Procedures: The students should listen to a pair of sentences and then they are going to say what's the missing word in the second sentence.

Evaluation: Orally

First sentence: I came back from Cuba last week.

Second sentence: I came back last week.

First: I saw many interesting places.

Second: I saw many places.

## Activity# 8

Unit#3 let's have a party.

Title: Listen to and analyze.

Objective: Comprehend the letter in order to strengthen the students listening skill.

Ability: Listening and speaking

Procedures: The students should listen to the letter, and circle T (true) or F (false) in every items.

Evaluation: Orally

- |   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| a) Robert came back from Cuba last week.        | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| b) He thought it was bigger than their country. | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| c) There, he did not go to any places.          | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| d) He saw interesting plants.                   | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| e) He thanked her for her long letter.          | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |

## Activity# 9

Unit# 4 let's have a party.

Title: Give an end.

Objective: Apply the students' knowledge about the letter to give an end to it, so as to strengthen the students' listening skill.

Ability: Listening, writing.

Procedures: After the students listen to the letter they should be able to change the final part of it.

Evaluation: Orally

## Valuation of the application of the activities proposed.

For getting the purpose of this investigation, it was necessary to develop a deep work since the beginning of this course. For carrying out this experiment, it was selected one group of 8<sup>th</sup> grade from Marcos Antonio Macias junior High School. Taking into account the diagnostic test applied at the beginning of the course, the author could observe the amount of difficulties the students had according to this important ability of the English Language, which is the listening skill.

The experimental group has a register of 40 students. The author considers that the results were really relevant, and the experimental group could eliminate most of their difficulties at the time of listening.

To be sure about these results, on March, there was applied another diagnostic test to check if the exercises were successful or not. But also it was necessary to apply different techniques like: an inquiry to the students, an interview to the teacher and a systematic observation of the teaching-learning process. For beginning this valuation, it's proposing the following results:

In the inquiry applied to the students (Annex# 4), it was made with the objective to check how far the students comprehended the given activities.

In question # 1: The students were asked if they enjoy while learning listening activities, 35 students that represents 85.5% said yes, 5 students that represents 12.5% said no. It means the majority of the students like English as a subject, and they enjoy while developing this type of activities.

In question # 2: which ask the students if the activities help them to clarify their listening skill, 30 students, that represents 75% answered always, 10 students, which represents 25% said sometimes.

In question # 3: The author asks the students if the sounds are difficult to pronounce, 28 students that represents 70%, said yes, 12 students that represents 30% answered no. It shows the teacher has to work a lot in order to help the pupils in the development of this ability.

In question # 4: The students were asked if the sounds are similar to the ones in the mother tongue 40 students, that represents 100% answered that some of them .

In question # 5: Which asked the students if while developing these activities, what do these permit them at the time to use the foreign language, 19 students, that represents 47.5% said for making new friends, 11 students that represents 27.7% answered for communicating with others, and the rest 10 students, that represents 25% said for increasing their knowledge.

All these information show, the pupils are clear that the English language is a beautiful subject for increasing their cultural degree, such as the rest information they selected before.

The interview to the teachers (Annex# 5), was made with the objective of knowing the teachers point of view concerning to the activities developed in this investigation.

In question # 1: The teachers were asked if the author gave a good motivation in the activities. Two teachers, which represent 100%, said yes, the activities are very useful.

In question # 2: The author asks the teachers if they believe the activities are done thinking in term of the students. One teacher, that represent 50% answered yes because the activities have an appropriated vocabulary, taking into account their level. The other one was in agreement with this answer, letting know that these activities can easily develop the skill that leads this investigation.

In question # 3: The teachers were asked if they notice any advance in the students. Two teachers, which represent 100% said yes, now that, taking in mind the present situation the students had at the beginning of the school year suffer a positive change, because through the activities could be seen the cognitive develop level accomplish by the pupils.

In question # 4: They were asked if the teacher gave a good use of methods. They said from their point of view at the time to teach any type of activities many methods must be taken in mind, and in this case the teacher put into practice the adequate ones to correct and teach the students.

In question # 5: The author asks the teachers if the activities need a change to be done. They both said in a general way, the activities had a quite good motivation that is very important at the time to teach any kind of activities. They also express the activities had a very well form structure, making clear what the teacher really expect to get from the pupils. That is why; the activities had all the necessary things to contribute to strengthen the listening skill.

The observation of classes (Annex # 6) was made with the objective of knowing if the activities proposed were useful to reinforce listening skill in eighth graders.

It should be recognized the actual work carry out for the new teacher's generation. So, this deep investigation proves how well prepare they are.

During the development of this Diploma Paper the author could observe many classes, in which many aspects were taken in mind to check the teacher's performance while delivering a class. Talking about this, the professor should keep working to improve their way to communicate with the students that is the most important step to teach a foreign language. Focussing in the class as such, not always the relationship between the motivation and the content of the class was achieved by the teachers side, what entail a bad fulfilment of the aim of the class, as well as a misunderstanding by the majority of the students. Continuing in this part, the author could see the professors have a clear mastery of the content, but in some occasion they don't know how to use the correct methods and procedures in every classes, and it cause the low participation of the students. Just the advantage students can develop the listening activities.

## Conclusions

After developing this research work the author arrived at the following conclusions:

- 1- The listening skill plays a fundamental role in the teaching learning process because it develops habits and abilities that contribute to eliminate limitations and barriers towards communication on the student's part. They should be a real example while expressing feeling, transmitting messages, ideas among other things.
- 2- English teachers have the responsibility of creating the necessary activities which contribute to increase the listening skill and in one way or another to develop the communicative skills, so as keep the students motivated and interested towards the English lessons
- 3- The proposal applied demonstrated that the students can understand any listening material depending on the teacher's creativeness.
- 4- The activities designed contributed to the bettering of the teaching of English and really made the students get interested towards the subject.

## Recommendations

Talking into account the results obtained with this investigation about the listening comprehension, we feel able to give the following recommendations:

- To apply the activities suggested in this paper with the objective of achieving a better motivation during the development of the listening skill in the English Lessons.
  
- To develop methodological activities in the English department related to the three moments while developing a listening lesson, making emphasis on the “Before listening” moment.

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First inquiry to the students.

Objective: To analyze the main aspects that could bring difficulties in the development of the listening comprehension in 8 Th grade.

- 1- Do you comprehend when you listen any material in English?
- 2- Do you comprehend English in class and out of it?
- 3- Does your teacher help you to speak English in class?
- 4- Which are the main activities that your teachers develop in classes to make you understand the English language?
- 5- Do you feel motivate to learn English during the lessons?

First interview to the teachers.

Objective: To verify the teacher's preparation in the subject and mainly in the communicative approach so as to develop the student's listening skill.

- 1- How do you value the listening comprehension in your pupils?
- 2- Can your students understand what you are talking in the classroom?
- 3- Do you develop the four abilities of the language in classes?
- 4- Are your students able to speak their ideas in classes?
- 5- What kind of activities do you develop to improve the listening comprehension?

First guide of the observation to classes.

Objective: To get a view of whom the teachers work with the phonological aspects to influence on the development of the listening comprehension.

Guide:

- 1- Type of class.
- 2- Use of the language.
- 3- Exercises the teachers carry out to develop the student's listening skill.
- 4- The way the teachers encourage the students to talk in and out of the classroom.
- 5- Relation of the exercises with the listening comprehension.
- 6- Methods and procedures used by teachers to develop their classes.

Second inquiry to the students.

Objective: To check how far the students comprehended the given activities.

1-Did you enjoy while learning these activities?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ and why?

2- Do you think the activities help to clarify your listening skills?

Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_ Always\_\_\_\_\_ Never\_\_\_\_\_

3- Were the sounds in the activities difficult to pronounce?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ support your answer.

4- Are the activities' sounds similar to the ones in the mother tongue?

All of them\_\_\_\_\_ None of them\_\_\_\_\_ Some of them\_\_\_\_\_

5- While developing these activities, what will permit you at the time to use the foreign language?

To make new friends\_\_\_\_\_ To communicate with others\_\_\_\_\_

To increase your knowledge\_\_\_\_\_

Second interview to the teacher.

Objective: to know the teachers point of view concerning to the activities developed in this investigation.

1-Taking in mind the complexity of the skill developed; did the teacher give a good motivation in every activity?

2-Do you believe the teacher elaborated the activities thinking in terms of the students?

3-After the development of the given activities did you notice any advance in the students?

4-While delivering the activities did the teacher give a good use of methods?

5-From your point of view did the activities need a change to be done?

### Second guide of observation

Objective: to know if the activities proposed were useful to reinforce listening skill in eighth graders.

#### Guide

- 1- Teacher's performance.
- 2- Relationship between the motivation and the content of the class.
- 3- Mastery of the content by teachers.
- 4- Correct use of the methods and procedures.
- 5- Student's participation.

### A great book.

In July, 1889, Jose Marti published a very instructive and useful magazine for all Latin American children. This magazine was The Golden Age. Our National Hero wrote it for children, that 's why the dialogues are quite clear and easy, but adults can learn a lot from it, too.

Marti worked for a long time on the projects before he wrote The Golden Age, afterwards it was a book. There you can find many interesting and educational articles and stories, such as. "Three Heros," "The Black Doll," and "Meñique." This beautiful book entertains the reader and also teaches how to think.

Frank is speaking with Peggy by phone.

F: Hello! It is Frank.

P: Hi, Frank. It is Peggy.

F: Are you still doing your homework?

P: No. Now I am watching a TV program.

F: I am at the sports field. Our school baseball team is playing at the moment. Why don't you come to watch the game?

P: O.K. That a good idea! Wait for me.

Robert's letter.

Dear Diana,

Thank you very much for your long letter. It was very nice to hear from you. I came back from Cuba last week. I thought it was smaller than our country, but it's really bigger. There, I went to many interesting places. I went to the Botanical Garden. I saw many interesting plants. I went to the aquarium, too; and I saw the dolphin show. It was terrific.

Well, that's all for you. All the best to you.

Love, Robert.