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THEME:

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE USE OF WHATSAPP GROUPS DURING
VIRTUAL CLASSES TO TEACH ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL FROM LATACUNGA.**

Research report before obtaining the bachelor degree in National and Foreign language
Pedagogy, English Major

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I CERTIFY THAT:

This research report has been fully revised and has the requirements and merits to be submitted for evaluation by the assigned revision Committee and its presentation and defense.

Pujili, February, 2023



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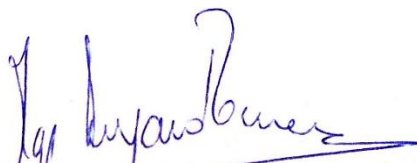
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The research report entitled “**Teachers’ Perceptions on the use of Whatsapp Groups during Virtual Classes to teach English as a foreign language in a Public School from Latacunga**”, has been revised, approved and authorized for printing and binding, before obtaining the bachelor’s degree in National and Foreign language Pedagogy, English Major; this meets the substantive and formal requirements to hand in for the presentation and defense.

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GRATEFULNESS

I would like to express my gratitude to God for giving me the capacity to complete this stage of professional career.

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Daniel Oñate

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this project to the most important people in my life. To my parents, Mauricio and Martha. For their constant effort and dedication, they gave me the most important things in my life.

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Febe Pullupaxi

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Daniel Oñate

ABSTRACT

During the covid 19 – pandemic, technology has increased their effect in education. Teachers and students were forced to change the traditional modality to conduct the classes in a virtual way. They had to use technological tools to maintain the communication via online. WhatsApp was considered as an app that supported the teaching English process in virtual classes. That is why the aim of this investigation is to determine teachers' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language in a public school from Latacunga. This investigation used a qualitative method. The research design was descriptive research. This study used an open interview that was applied to two teachers. To analyze the data, the researchers used thematic analysis. The results showed that WhatsApp had some advantages and disadvantages in the use of a pedagogical support in English language teaching. The advantages showed that WhatsApp served as a tool for communication between teacher and student. This app also allowed teachers to send assignments, links, teaching material and learning guides that students needed to do their work autonomously. This was of great help because the students who cannot connect to classes virtually through zoom can have access to the material and had the opportunity to work at home. On the other hand, the disadvantages showed that WhatsApp didn't become an effective English teaching-learning tool because it was not used in the appropriate way in order to develop English skills. The use of WhatsApp was focused purely on transmitting information and not to practice the skills. It is because the teachers didn't apply methodology correctly in a virtual mode. There were no activities to promote an interaction orally or written through WhatsApp and developing student's learning. Finally, accessibility was also a disadvantage, as many students could not connect to the classes as they did not have Internet or mobile devices which affects the performance of students in classes. Then, it is concluded that WhatsApp in this research was a useful tool to have quick communication between the teacher and the student to send resources. However, this tool was not used to develop and practice English Skills.

Key words: Covid-19 pandemic, teacher's perceptions, technology, virtual classes, WhatsApp.

RESUMEN

Durante el covid 19 - pandemia, la tecnología ha aumentado su efecto en la educación. Profesores y alumnos se vieron obligados a cambiar la modalidad tradicional para impartir las clases de forma virtual. Tuvieron que utilizar herramientas tecnológicas para mantener la comunicación vía online. WhatsApp fue considerada como una app que apoyó el proceso de enseñanza del inglés en clases virtuales. El objetivo de esta investigación es determinar las percepciones de los docentes sobre el uso de WhatsApp en clases virtuales para la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera en un colegio público de Latacunga. Utilizando método cualitativo, el diseño de la investigación fue descriptivo. Se utilizó una entrevista abierta que se aplicó a dos profesores. Para analizar los datos, los investigadores utilizaron el análisis temático. Los resultados mostraron que WhatsApp tenía ventajas y desventajas en el uso de un apoyo pedagógico. Las ventajas mostraron que, WhatsApp servía como herramienta de comunicación entre el profesor y el alumno. Esta app permitía enviar tareas, enlaces, material didáctico y guías de aprendizaje que los alumnos necesitaban para realizar su trabajo de forma autónoma. Esto fue de gran ayuda a los alumnos que no podían conectarse virtualmente a las clases a través de zoom para tener acceso al material y la oportunidad de trabajar en casa. Las desventajas mostraron que, WhatsApp no se convirtió en una herramienta eficaz de enseñanza-aprendizaje del inglés porque no se utilizó de la forma adecuada para desarrollar sus competencias. El uso de WhatsApp se centró puramente en transmitir información y no en practicar las destrezas. Esto se debe a que los profesores no aplicaron correctamente la metodología en una modalidad virtual. No hubo actividades para promover una interacción oral o escrita para desarrollar el aprendizaje de los alumnos a través de WhatsApp. Finalmente, la accesibilidad como desventaja mostró que muchos alumnos no pudieron conectarse a las clases por no contar con Internet o dispositivos móviles lo que afectó su rendimiento. Se concluye que WhatsApp en esta investigación fue una herramienta útil para tener una comunicación rápida entre el profesor y el alumno para enviar recursos. Sin embargo, esta herramienta no fue utilizada para desarrollar y practicar habilidades en inglés.

Palabras claves: Covid - 19 pandemia, clases virtuales, percepciones de profesores, tecnología, WhatsApp.

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Theme: Teachers' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp groups during virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language in a public school from Latacunga.

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2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Learning English is fundamental for the cognitive development of students, being a compulsory subject to take as it is of utmost importance in schools to learn a foreign language, since it facilitates the students to have an access to a variety of opportunities such as jobs, trips and scholarships. So, students need to develop their communicative competences but it got stuck due to Covid-19 pandemic. Schools were forced to stop teaching face to face and start a new way of teaching. Classes had to be changed to virtual modality with the objective to continue classes in all areas. Teaching English language had to use technological resources and look for alternatives. However, this process was very complicated because both teachers and students did not know about the use of technology and the kind of e-learning methods to teach virtually. Then, teachers decided to use technological resources such as: Zoom, Teams, Google classroom, and WhatsApp. WhatsApp has been one of the most used applications during virtual learning since this application the teachers were familiar with and they could manage to send messages, homework and workshops to parents to make students work at home.

In Ecuador, a study conducted in 2021 by the English Proficiency Index (EPI) shows that Ecuador is in 82nd place out of 111 countries with a low level of English. This is a fundamental factor for the evidence of the lack of methodologies and strategies for the teaching of the English language. This caused teachers not to be trained methodologically due to the change from face-to-face to virtual due to the pandemic. Thus, it affects the level of knowledge and learning English that students need to have. According to Constante (2020) states that there were at least 70% of students who had problems in virtual education in the country, the lack of technological resources and internet access has been one of the disadvantages of this learning modality, also the lack of training for teachers on the methodological use of technologies has affected the teaching-learning process. That is why teachers use WhatsApp as an alternative to teach English because it is really easy to manage. On the other hand, English teachers from Patria Educative Unit opted for easy applications that are helpful to use in the virtual education of their students. So, WhatsApp has been the application that teachers have implemented to somehow improve the quality of teaching-

learning in the school since this application is easier to handle and use. Teachers use it to send tasks and teaching resources through the WhatsApp group to have some contact to guide English teaching. That is why this research is based on the use of WhatsApp as a technological and pedagogical resource for English language learning. So, the objective of this project is to determine teachers' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language in a public school from Latacunga. This project pretends to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the teachers' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language?
2. What is the influence of the use of WhatsApp as a second language learning tool in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language?

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1. General Objective

- To determine teachers' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language in a public school from Latacunga.

3.2. Specific Objectives

- To synthesize the theory about the use of WhatsApp in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language.
- To analyze the results of teachers' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language.
- To identify the influence of the use of WhatsApp as a foreign language learning tool in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language.

4. ACTIVITIES AND SYSTEM OF TASKS IN RELATION TO THE OBJECTIVES SET.

Specific Objectives	Activities	Means of verification
To synthesize the theory about the use of WhatsApp in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *To research papers according to the topic. *To read the papers. *To analyze important information. *To synthesize the information. *To underline important ideas of each paper *To summarize the ideas. *To write relevant information. 	Theoretical framework.

To analyze the results of teachers' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *To elaborate the interview. * To validate the interview. *To apply the interview to teachers *To analyze the results of teachers. 	Analysis and Discussion
To identify the influence of the use of WhatsApp as a second language learning tool in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *To analyze the results of the interviews. * To analyze the influence of the use of WhatsApp with the results. 	Results

5. JUSTIFICATION

This research focuses on determining teachers' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language in a public school from Latacunga. This project investigates the WhatsApp effectiveness during virtual classes to learn the English language. It pretends that the results of this research will help English teachers to know new strategies and its use to teach in a better English language.

A contribution of this research is to present information about WhatsApp in order that teachers become aware of the use of it as an educational medium for teaching the English language. In the same way, to know the benefits that the use of WhatsApp will have as a technological tool in the process of teaching English. Another contribution is that teachers can reflect on the advantages of using technological tools to teach English. In the same way, the use of WhatsApp establishes a good relationship among teachers and students. The use

of this app allows clear and fast communication. It can be used to share information and clear doubts in a more personal way to improve the teaching - learning process of English.

Students and teachers are the main beneficiaries of this research. Teachers can learn how WhatsApp is used and recognize the benefits of WhatsApp as a technological tool to teach English in virtual or even face to face classes. The implementation of new apps in the learning process can enhance the student's motivation to learn a foreign language. Other beneficiaries will be the parents because they become more involved in their children's education, and will be able to learn how technological tools can be used in the learning process of English.

This investigation wants to impact the proper use of WhatsApp as an educational tool to improve the teaching of English as a foreign language. Knowing the theory of the use of WhatsApp as an educational resource in teaching English, the teacher, teachers and students can apply this app in a better way in the English Learning process. Also, the impact focuses on applying suitable methodologies in virtual classes and also in face-to-face classes. For this reason, teachers need to be trained to know more about how to apply WhatsApp as an educational tool for teaching English, not only in virtual classes but also face-to-face classes.

6. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL FOUNDATION

6.1. Research Background

The research is based on the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for learning English. ICT are a group of tools that have been created in order to benefit mankind in certain aspects. The appearance of these instruments is part of people's daily lives and they have also been involved in the creation of new services to contribute to research and, above all, new teaching methods. In this case the use of WhatsApp as a technological tool facilitated the strategies and methodologies of teachers to teach, as well as helping students to use this tool for their learning. Rubio et al. (2021) state that ICT has been a tool that improves the teaching-learning process. Also, WhatsApp has contributed to teachers a better methodological performance so that students can learn using it.

On the other hand, in order to base the research, it is necessary to look for sources that facilitate the process and meet the objectives set out. There are some researchers that show the use of WhatsApp in the English teaching process as a reference.

Asmara (2017) wrote a journal article named “Teaching English in a virtual classroom using WhatsApp during Covid-19 Pandemic”. The aim of this study was to know the challenges of teaching English in a virtual classroom using WhatsApp. The author used a qualitative descriptive method, collected the data by questionnaires and interviews. The results showed that the student’s creativity, their critical thinking and learning autonomy were increased during the WhatsApp teaching process. However, there is a disadvantage, because WhatsApp is only used with Internet connection, this presents difficulties for: sharing materials, upload videos, submitting assignments, etc. In conclusion, the author claims that there are some challenges when a teacher uses WhatsApp. However, with the right knowledge of how to use this app the students’ academic performance will improve. It’s necessary to know: features, functions, sources, student’s level, connection.

Another study by Mei (2021) titled “WhatsApp Group as The Learning Media to Teach English at The Xith Grade of Sma Bakti Ponorogo During Covid 19” with the purpose to find out the ways and the problems to implement WhatsApp group as a learning tool during the pandemic. This research used a qualitative descriptive approach using: interview, observation and documentation to get data. The major finding demonstrated that the use of WhatsApp improves the student’s enthusiasm in each class because it’s a well-known and modern tool, easy to apply in the class lessons. The researcher concluded that there are 3 steps to apply WhatsApp as a learning media in: pre teaching, when teacher starts the lesson. Whilst teaching, in the core of the lesson. Finally, in post teaching when the teacher concluded the lesson.

Another study by Morales, (2021) aimed to determine the relationship of the implementation of Voice memos by WhatsApp in verbal locution of English. In which the author implements a descriptive correlational typology with a population of 33 high school students. For the collection of data, the author used an online survey, based on 3 alternatives. As a result, the use of WhatsApp has allowed effective communication between participants and reinforcing

collaborative work. Concluding that the use of Voice memos through WhatsApp reinforces communication thus improving pronouncement and fluidity.

The study carried out on WhatsApp as an educational communication tool between parents and teachers written by the authors Loor et al. (2022) whose objective was to determine the use of the WhatsApp social network as a tool for educational communication between teachers and parents of the "Antonio José de Sucre Cedeño Cortez" Educational Unit in Manabí. In which. They used a mixed methodology and a quantitative and qualitative approach. In addition, for the data collection method they applied an analytical method and a bibliographic method, applying a survey to 13 parents and conducting an interview with 14 school teachers. As a result, parents use WhatsApp as a communication method, while teachers use WhatsApp as a means to send activities so that students can access them. Concluding that this application serves as a communicative and learning strategies for students, teachers and parents.

6.2. Theoretical Framework

6.2.1. Virtual Learning

Virtual learning is an environment in which the teacher and the student use technological resources to teach and learn through them. Hue (2020) states that virtual learning makes the teaching-learning process student-centered because it is more effective, flexible and innovative. Furthermore, the researcher explained that virtual learning is a synchronous and asynchronous process because it uses some devices that help students to enhance the learning process.

Singh and Thurman (2019) state that synchronous learning is much more effective than asynchronous learning because in e-learning learners are in a live lecture environment, and teachers have considerably time to interact with learners and adequately remind them of a specific topic in order to enhance the teaching and learning process, on the other hand, asynchronous learning is more efficient than asynchronous learning because in e-learning

learners are in a live classroom environment, and teachers have much more time to interact with learners and remind them of a specific topic in order to improve the teaching and learning process.

Moreover, virtual learning has helped teachers to develop different ways of teaching in class, as this strengthens and stimulates their minds, as they are new strategies to attract attention and thus be able to have control of the class, through technology, as this modality increases the possibilities that they are interested in learning and developing their cognitive capacity. On the other hand, Solano et al. (2021) consider that virtual education is not only the implementation of the Internet and computers, but that teachers must seek and innovate their way of teaching, so that students can develop in a better way in a new way of teaching-learning. That is why they must be able to reflect and think about the ways in which students are involved in this mode of online learning.

6.2.1.1. Advantages in Virtual Learning

Zuhir et al. (2021) consider that the greatest advantages of virtual learning are the easy access to information, which benefits students and teachers to look for sources that help them to organize their ideas to learn and teach in a different way. In addition, the authors propose the following fundamental advantages in this learning:

- Virtual textbooks have been one of the fundamental tools for effective virtual learning
- e-learning, since this book serves as a pedagogical support for both teachers and students.
- Videos are also part of the advantages that teachers can present to their students, since through the computer, sound and video playback are in line with what the student has.
- Collaborative work is a tool that teachers have chosen as a source of learning, as the different research applications and didactic resources that students can find on the Internet facilitate this process of teamwork and learn in an interesting way.

6.2.2. Methodologies in Virtual Learning.

6.2.2.1. Blended Learning

According to Collis and Moonen (2001) blended learning is a hybrid between traditional face-to-face learning and online learning, so that teaching is delivered both in the classroom and online. This type of learning is used because of the methodologies and strategies that teachers use to teach. For this reason, due to the pandemic and with the change of modality teachers were forced to implement methodological strategies that serve as pedagogical support to develop the class in a virtual way, following the steps that this blended learning generates.

Also, Kathleen and Gordon (2001) define blended learning as follows: "Blended learning systems combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction" (p. 5). This implies that teaching in schools generated a radical change in methodological implementation, education changed around the pandemic, that is where teachers through strategies allow to reach the student, encouraging a blended learning of face-to-face methodologies and technological tools in order to meet the teaching-learning process.

6.2.2.1.1. Blended Learning Strategies

Traditional strategies in blended learning are to reinforce content, develop skills and enable students to work better in groups in order to develop better thinking. On the other hand, blended learning strategies in e-learning are technological implementations of traditional learning, thereby helping to improve the teaching-learning process in the classroom.

In addition, Stauffer. (2022) considers that there are 6 most important points for blended learning, these are:

Using different learning materials: For blended learning, the teacher can provide a class using didactic materials that serve as pedagogical support for the student, for example textbooks, notebooks, among others, as well as complementing these

materials with technological resources such as videos, to increase the student's learning.

The use of technology: This strategy facilitates the teaching-learning process for the students as it allows them to learn new practical methodologies for learning.

Changing strategies: For teachers it is important to change the way they teach, as students quickly get bored, so the use of traditional techniques should be implemented with visual aids to motivate students to learn.

Maintaining traditional strategies: This is important as the learner must know different ways of learning, which is why reading a text or writing in a notebook are strategies that allow the learner to acquire learning.

Varying forms of assessment: In order to improve the teaching and learning of students, with blended learning strategies and resources it is helpful to change methodologies, such as a written test, which can also be changed to a virtual test, by varying these assessments it allows students to teach themselves to develop different ways of being assessed.

Mixing styles of group work: This enables learners to generate more communication skills among peers, either virtually or traditionally, giving their points of view, listening and developing work that allows them to acquire knowledge.

6.2.2.1.2. Blended Learning in Teaching English Language

According to Singh et al. (2021) mention that blended learning is a combination of methodologies that include learning through visual, additive and interactive tools, which generate that students learn in different ways. For that reason, teachers use different strategies to make students learn English. Pape (2010) mentions that in order to incorporate blended learning in classes it is necessary to use traditional methodologies and technology at the same time, thus generating a new way of student learning. The author recommends the use of didactic materials such as: notebooks, books, posters, as well as encouraging the use of blogs, podcasts, so that students can manage these two types of strategies. Also, making presentations in class can be a strategy that combines these methodologies, because the teacher decides the way in which this presentation can be done, either using posters or

PowerPoint. On the other hand, blended learning makes students more motivated to learn English because this method addresses the most important needs, such as developing reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, which are fundamental to learning English.

The authors Sing et al. (2020) consider blended learning as an effective way of teaching English due to the following points:

- The use of time spent on blended learning.
- Students feel more motivated.
- The innovation of this method.
- Students feel more confident and prepared.

6.2.2.2. Flipped Learning

Flipped learning is a methodology that helps teachers to prioritize active learning during class time by assigning students lecture materials and presentations to be viewed at home or outside of class. According to Hwang et al. (2015) is a methodology that allows teachers to adapt a learning strategy using videos or presentations that encourage students to learn in a new way. Technology is one of the most important factors in this methodology where the teacher uses these tools to generate knowledge in the student. On the other hand, it is essential for the teacher to motivate the student through videos and presentations in order to improve the skills needed to learn English.

6.2.2.2.1. Flipped Learning in Teaching English Language

In accordance with Soliman (2016) claims that flipped learning is based on how students participate in the application of content. Learning English with this method involves students being able to think critically, solve problems and express themselves to improve their cognitive abilities. On the other hand, a teacher's role is important in the performance of activities that make their students be immersed in learning the English language. Likewise, in flipped learning, teachers are in charge of creating different strategies such as the implementation of videos, or virtual classrooms in order for students to better manage this form of teaching and for students to be responsible for developing their own knowledge

through this method. Therefore, in flipped classroom processes, students play the role of active learners and teachers become facilitators.

Hwang et al. (2015) believe that teachers have adopted the use of flipped learning for the following reasons:

- The use of technology and the implementation of didactic materials for students facilitates the teacher's teaching as it is an innovative method for students.
- The use of video makes it easier for the learner to visualize to gain more information and knowledge in this type of learning.
- Innovating the curriculum on the topics to be covered and the implementation of teaching resources has also been one of the fundamental factors why teachers have used a flipped classroom.
- Discussion and interaction between teacher-student and student-teacher is the base for good management of flipped classrooms, as it generates more knowledge for the student and the teacher as a facilitator

6.2.2.2.2. Characteristics of Flipped Classrooms

According with Stone (2012) claims that are four important characteristics to take into account in flipped classroom these are:

- **Class time changes:** This characteristic is based on the use of videos and methods such as debates and projects that students can better develop their way of learning, generating in them the ability to think and analyze.
- **Outside class time:** Planned homework assignments generate more student self-learning, and the incorporation of technological resources such as watching videos reinforces student learning.
- **Teacher-student interaction:** The teacher is the one who guides the student to continue learning, being the main pillar to make the students able to think and analyze being them who with the experiences and knowledge they already have, encourage the students to develop themselves in a better way.

- **Use of technology:** The video implementation in class generates that the methodologies and strategies of the teachers make their students more motivated to develop their thinking, fostering in them the capacity to handle didactic materials and technological resources in a better way for their self-learning

6.2.2.3. M – Learning

As Vigil et al. (2020) mentioned that M-learning or also known as mobile learning is the implementation of electronic devices in the school. During the pandemic this type of learning was of utmost importance because through technological devices, classes could be taught. Teachers were in charge of creating a class and the students could connect through their devices. This facilitated virtual learning as children developed technological skills that benefited their learning. The author claims that M-learning have two important advantages to mention, these are:

- **Learning new vocabulary:** The use of mobile devices allows both the teacher and the student to send vocabulary in order for them to be able to understand new words in English.
- **Multimedia resources:** It allows the downloading of applications, videos, podcasts that help you learn English through the use of multimedia.

6.2.3. Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Information and Communication According to Ciroma, (2014) ICTs constitute a set of applications, systems, tools, techniques and methodologies associated with the digitization of analogue signals, sounds, texts and images that can be managed in real time. On the other hand, (Cox and Marshall, 2007) determine that they are a set of processes and products derived from the new tools (software and hardware), supports and communication channels related to the digitalized processing and transmission of information. of information.

Technologies are a set of tools created to benefit humanity in certain aspects. The appearance of these instruments is part of people's daily life. They have also been involved in the

creation of new services to contribute to research all new teaching methods. ICTs are a medium that is nowadays called "globalized", meaning that basically all over the world there is access to these means of communication and information. Many times, the importance is a great way to discover, innovate and above all to learn. It is important to mention that ICT is related to digitalization, which represents the evolution of technology along with education.

6.2.3.1. Characteristics of ICTs

As Castro et al. (2007) mentioned in their article ICTs have a number of characteristics with which we have been living with over time, these include:

- ICTs are innovative and creative in nature, as they provide endless tools for communication.
- The area of education is one of the areas that has benefited most from the creation and evolution of information technologies, because through them new methodologies that facilitate the teaching-learning process can be innovated.

It is necessary to know that ICTs are related to the Internet and to the area of computer science. and the area of computer science

6.2.3.2. ICTs in Education

Information and Communication Technologies have generated a historical evolution not only in the social environment but at a general level. Everyone has been favored with the creation, emergence and evolution of ICTs. It should be noted that the area that has been most benefited from technology has been educational since it has provided the vast majority in the development of the teaching-learning process.

As Castro et al. (2007) mention that classes must incorporate environments rich in media and resources, including ICTs, which allow the active and permanent construction of learning with the proactive student's participation. To take advantage of the communicative possibilities of the networks as access to learning media and resources of all kinds, including

electronic ones. Also, the presence of technology in the classroom brings dynamism and enrichment to the different activities that students develop, thus developing greater interest and stimulation in their teaching-learning process. (Vega, 2017).

As Castro et al. (2007) claims that ICTs or the use of technology contribute and positively influences the educational process since with the incorporation of these media digital, positive points can be achieved by the students. The arrival of ICT in education has had a positive evolution, a better student-teacher relationship has been seen, since it has facilitated their communication and, on the other hand, much more emphasis has been placed on new methodologies that allow a more participatory and enjoyable educational process to be carried out.

6.2.3.3. Objectives of ICTs in Education

Technology has become involved in educational processes and has had an impact in such a way that objectives have been set to improve certain aspects in what education happens. (Castro et al., 2007). There are two important aspects that Moreno and Paredes (2014) mention below:

- **Educational Quality:** Education is a right which has evolved and the competencies that have been required have changed over time and obviously with the evolution of technology. Over the years, new strategies and methodological techniques which facilitate to some degree certain processes of teaching-learning. Educational quality is centered on the three school levels: Primary, Secondary and higher education through the innovation of methodologies and has wanted to achieve that students improve their learning with the integration of ICT's.
- **Strengthen the teaching-learning process:** Frequently in the educational institutions, attempts have been made to strengthen education more and more and it is very gratifying to know that the faculty has been of great help in this process, since they have always sought the best for their students and have always wanted what better. One of the most influential purposes that ICTs have within education is

design strategies, pedagogical techniques that promote pleasant and correct learning (Castro et al., 2007).

6.2.3.4. ICTs in Learning English as a Second Language

English is now a compulsory subject to be taken from second grade (MINEDUC, 2014) That is why during the pandemic teachers had to look for different strategies to make students learn English. Technology has been a fundamental resource for the development of classes, which is why the authors Dudeney and Hockly (2007) suggest that in order to learn English through technology, the following should be implemented: different web sites that allow teachers and students to search for new activities that allow them to learn English. In addition, they suggested the use of communicative applications such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, etc, in order to improve their writing skills. Also, Saab and Admiraal (2021) mention that implementing teaching resources such as: presentations served the teacher to teach the subject of class, while the student paid attention and got feedback. In addition to this material was uploaded to platforms in which they worked as for example Google Classroom. This platform served the teacher as a method to upload videos, documents, tasks, presentations and many features for students to learn (Iftakhar, 2016). On the other hand, there are still teachers who limit certain technological aspects in their teaching and make students lack the necessary motivation. This is why students in many cases totally despise the subject because they find it difficult and their teachers make their classes too monotonous.

As stated, (Vega, 2017). One of the main problems that exists today in educational centers is that teachers use in their classrooms a language that is obsolete and even worse, some continue to use it to teach a generation using a new language. Therefore, according to what the author states, the teacher must innovate, improve their methodological strategies in the same way that they must establish a harmonious environment in which communication and participation by the educational agents.

6.2.4. Technological Tools for Teaching – Learning process in English as a Foreign Language

There are the possibilities of accessing a wide variety of technological instruments for learning a second language, to make learning much more feasible, they have been implemented both in the classroom and in virtual learning tools that motivate the students to follow in their process. As previously mentioned, students have various forms to learn a foreign language in a fun way and have the following mechanisms technologies for learning:

- **E-learning platforms:** This type of platform was created in order to teach long-distance virtual classes or courses. More learning is generated interactive between students and teachers, in the same way as the barriers of distance since it was developed globally. They are part of a traditional education in certain aspects since they consist of a detailed planning of the classes that will be taught within it and evaluations are also carried out to check the learning process of students (Benta et al., 2014).
- **BBC Learning English:** Through this resource, teachers have access to a variety of services that allow them to develop in their class dynamism and motivation. Generally, this type of learning platform is used by elementary and high school students. This platform helps them develop their listening, reading, writing and speaking skills through videos, courses and tests found on this website.
- **Kahoot:** Has been designed for educational and entertainment purposes, this is one of several educational platforms that have captured our attention. Within of this we can find a series of questionnaires or games that promote an interactive and less monotonous learning that as teachers is what most we would like to change According with Wang and Tahir (2020) mention that the creation of a game within this platform will fall mainly in the teacher, also this type of activities will encourage students developing their competency skills and abilities
- **Nearpod:** It is a technological resource that allows you to create presentations in a creative and interactive way, the task of creating certain tasks, quizzes, evaluations rests with the teacher. But equally students can use this medium for exhibitions of all

kinds and create conversations too. One of its advantages is that it goes at the pace that the teacher manages it, that is, respecting the learning rate of each of their students (De la Cruz, 2014).

Each of these tools that have emerged over the years have benefited the educational process and in the same way it has managed to implement a much more practical methodology. The activities to teach a second language through the technology also create structures that promote academic interaction among students and therefore provide an appropriate context for language acquisition.

It should be noted that at a certain point education and the teaching-learning process have been benefited. Many times, when we want to learn a foreign language we have become unmotivated completely, because the classes are usually too monotonous and interactivity is not necessary. It could be said that in future generations technology will advance much more and chances of learning are still much better than they are today.

6.2.5. Apps for Teaching – Learning Process of a Foreign Language

English has been a fundamental subject for learning, this is one of the reasons that applications have been used for teaching and learning implement with the aim of increasing students' knowledge, among the most useful apps are:

6.2.5.1. WhatsApp

World renowned WhatsApp is an app which allows communication between people. This resource enables sharing audio voice, images, texts, documents, links, emojis and creating groups with a 256-person limit (Blog WhatsApp, 2022). WhatsApp was founded in 2004 and from that moment on, its use has increased. This app is particularly popular due to its advanced features that allow users to interact in many different ways in order to provide a clear message (Khazaleh, 2022).

Nowadays it is almost impossible to find a person who does not use this app. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to claim that WhatsApp has effectively evolved into a program that is utilized on a global scale to address several social, political, and economic issues. (Shahid,

2018) Over time, this tool has been used in all areas of human life: education, business, interactions, work meetings, entrepreneurship, etc.

The use of computer and mobile technologies has considerably changed the way people utilize the information. Therefore, today, technology plays a significant role in educational environments in which emerging technological tools are used. It is a well-established issue in the literature that these tools can be used for language teaching and learning in several ways. Utilizing these tools in foreign language learning and teaching has caught more and more attention and thus, recently, numerous studies have explored the potential of these tools in language learning settings. WhatsApp has been used in educational settings including language learning and numerous studies portrayed the positive impact of WhatsApp in language learning. According to Andujar (2016) for instance, “WhatsApp constitutes a powerful educational tool to encourage second language interaction among participants and its tremendous potential to activate students' involvement remains one of the least exploited functionalities of mobile phones” (p. 63).

6.2.5.2. WhatsApp as a Language Learning resource to Teach and Learn English

The teaching and learning of English as a foreign language has become paramount in recent years. With globalization, the implementation of technical resources was essential in education. According to Hamad (2017), affirms that WhatsApp is an innovative application to learn English since both teachers and students can interact and communicate in a way that generates knowledge, thus learning English through WhatsApp is one of the tools that has facilitated the learning process. teaching-learning.

Also, WhatsApp is used to learn a new language, improve speaking, (Siti et al., 2020) listening (Soledispa, 2016) reading (Sasmiadi1 et al., 2019) writing (Syarif1 and Zaim, 2021) skills. WhatsApp can be used as a helpful technological resource for learners to acquire the needed vocabulary, which is an important element to learn English language. A study conducted by Alhafeez (2017) considered that the use of WhatsApp messenger was a tool to improve communication in English and he considered that this tool was feasible and easy to

use, as it allows sending videos, audios, documents, and this generated that WhatsApp is a new way to learn English by implementing strategies that facilitate the teaching-learning process in students.

6.2.5.3. Advantages to use WhatsApp

The purpose of using WhatsApp in education is to meet learning objectives. That is why, Cetinkaya (2017) defines that this tool provides cooperation, increases socialization, attention and encouragement. Baishya and Maheshwari (2019) state that the WhatsApp groups improve the learning process to be able to exchange information.

(Zulkarnain and Febriyanti, 2020) create a list explain the advantages of using WhatsApp:

- Ease of use and access; at any time and time.
- Synchronous and asynchronous communication; it can be used in class or outside of it.
- Some functionalities: WhatsApp allows sharing images, videos, audio voices, files, etc.
- Increased motivation; being a worldwide app its use has increased the curiosity in education.
- Promoting student–student and teacher–student participation.
- Feedback; it has easy teacher access to resolve student's doubts.
- Generates a sense of belonging, it creates activities to reinforce in groups.

WhatsApp has benefits over other electronic resources used in the educational system, including affordability, clarity, connectivity, effectiveness, and language understanding. (Gon and Rawekar, 2017). The purpose of using WhatsApp in education is to meet learning objectives. Similar to how academic success is influenced by student-teacher interaction, feedback, and the ability to receive and communicate knowledge. Church and de Oliveira (2013) emphasize this fact and state that the features that WhatsApp has is related to its popularity. It has allowed several benefits in downloading this app. One of them includes the

possibility of sending messages in real time to one person or to several groups of friends at the same time, allowing a fast and clear communication.

6.2.5.4. Disadvantages of WhatsApp

Teenagers are the most important users of WhatsApp; they use it at any time and at any moment as their social life. (Costa and Guerrero, 2020)

Bensaleem, (2018) explains how difficult it can be to use WhatsApp without clear instructions in class. Distraction is the greatest risk that students have when using this app, since they carry out other activities on their cell phones such as: listening to music, playing on the cell phone, viewing other apps, or simply chatting. This complicates the learning process.

If teachers and students don't use it in a correct way, the use of WhatsApp can have a negative impact in the educational field. There are some research works which explain some disadvantages. The most notorious disadvantages are explained below (Zulkarnain and Febriyanti, 2020)

- Requires a network connection; it depends on the Internet. Distractions; when students use this app can be entertainment with other things.
- Addictive: it's necessary to control the time used on this app.
- Effect on spelling and grammar; in some cases the students use abbreviations or spelling mistakes that WhatsApp doesn't correct.
- Increased teacher's time dedication; at any time teachers can receive a student's message. This increases the teacher's stress.

6.2.5.5. Academic effects of WhatsApp

There are some researchers who mention the positive effects of using WhatsApp in education. The most important author is (Rashed, 2019) who explains in three parts the impact of this tool in the learning outcomes.

- First in the student's motivation when the teacher uses this tool during the class, students show enthusiasm for learning.
- Second is academic achievement; students work and express their ideas through this app in order to develop and improve their writing skill.
- Third effect is about students' and teacher relationships; WhatsApp allows the chance to participate and talk in groups or in an individual way

7. METHODOLOGY

7.1. Research Method

This project is a qualitative method with the purpose to identify the view of how teachers use WhatsApp during virtual classes due to Covid- 19. Cresswell (2012) mentions “Qualitative research relies more on the views of participants in the study” (p.16). States that, this method focuses on the experiences and opinions of the research subjects in this case: teachers. The purpose of the research is to employ a descriptive study. Manjunatha (2019) explains that this method describes the characteristics of the subjects in the investigation or the phenomenon to investigate focuses more to respond “what” rather than “why”. This method will allow the researchers to have in- depth information about the perception of teachers using WhatsApp during the virtual classes to continue teaching English in that mode.

This research is carried out in the Educative Unit “Patria” located on the Panamericana Norte km 12/5 in front of the Brigada Patria in Latacunga. The institution has 1011 students from kindergarten to third year of high school. There are 48 teachers who are divided into specific areas for teaching. The school has four teachers from the English area, who are highly qualified to teach classes.

The participants of this study were 2 English teachers from “Patria” Educational Unit. The head of the English area from this school is *Teacher 2*. She is 35 years old with a master's degree in linguistics applied to the teaching of English as a foreign language. She has been

practicing this profession for 13 years. However, in the educational unit she is about to fulfill only two years of service taking charge of 351 students between elementary and high school. Furthermore, the *Teacher 1*. She is 46 years old. She has a degree in Educational Sciences, specialty English. She has a 27-year professional career, working in the educational unit for 15 years with 67 students under her supervision.

7.2. Data Collection Method

Data was collected using a non - structured interview with two teachers from “Patria” Educative Unit. A face-to-face meeting was organized with the purpose to have teachers’ answer of the questionnaire about topics such as: the use of WhatsApp in EFL classrooms during virtual classes, the methodology applied in virtual modality, the kind of resources and activities used in virtual classes to teach English, the difficulties using WhatsApp, the development of English abilities during online learning using WhatsApp as a tool to teach English. (See Annex 2). The researchers used their information in this project with their permission by signing an informed consent.

7.3. Data Analysis Procedure

For data analysis, we are going to use thematic analysis for analyzing the important concepts from the interview. (Kiger and Varpio, 2020) explain that this technique is useful for analyzing qualitative data using codes. Through an in-depth reading of the data, researchers make sense of and interpret the information to classify it into categories with key concepts or common themes. After each interview, we transcribed the data in order to maintain the transcripts available to review them for feedback. (Linneberg and Korsgaard, 2019) explain that this technique summary the information into categories to make the data more accessible for analysis

Each research subject has a code in order to maintain the relevant information.

Tables and figures

Project research subjects

Code	Research Subjects
T1	Degree in Educational Sciences.
T2	Master's degree in linguistics applied.

8. Analysis and Discussion of the Results

To answer the first research question: What are the teachers' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language? We applied an interview, in which we analyzed the relevant information of the use of WhatsApp. The results showed some advantages about the use of WhatsApp during virtual classes. The main advantages were identified in the category: use of platforms and apps, use of WhatsApp and resources.

Use of Platforms

T1: Nosotros trabajamos con Zoom y WhatsApp. [We applied Zoom and WhatsApp]

T2: He utilizado varias, una de ellas es la plataforma de Word Wall la cual es muy buena y además gratuita, sin embargo, los chicos no utilizaban las plataformas debido a que no tenían el acceso al internet ni a computadoras, ellos se conectaban a zoom mediante sus datos móviles. Otra de las aplicaciones que utilice fue Kahoot pero a través de mí, debido a los problemas antes mencionados, además utilice Duolingo en el lapso de tiempo que te dan de prueba, a pesar de que impartía clases a niveles superiores debido a las circunstancias debía dar temas de educación básica media. [I have used several, one of them is Word Wall platform which is very good and also free, however the kids did not use the platforms because they did not have access to the internet or computers, they connected to zoom through their mobile data. Another of the applications I used was Kahoot but through me, due to the problems mentioned above, I also used Duolingo in the period of time they give you for testing, even though I was teaching at higher levels due to the circumstances I had to teach subjects of basic secondary education.]

Teachers of the Educational Unit used the Zoom video conferencing platform as a means of synchronic teaching. This platform permits students to be connected in classes and continue learning about the content. It contributes to having an environment of learning. The study conducted by Saudi (2021) mentions that the use of Zoom and WhatsApp in a virtual classroom generates a better working environment between teacher-students, in which these platforms allow better communication between them. However, according to the teachers interviewed, mentioned that the use of the zoom in a freeway has some limitations that cause that there is not a good interaction to develop English skills. In some cases, this statement is contradictory. The study by Minhas (2021) who used the paid zoom application was effective for English language teaching in virtual classrooms because this platform has the complete tools to interact the teacher with the students, benefiting to develop English language skills. Nevertheless, it should be clarified that there are differences between the use of the free platform and the paid platform, which is reflected in the teachers' responses. On the other hand, they use breakout rooms, digital boards that create a good and entertaining way to learn. Because of this lack of tools to zoom in the freeway, teachers decided to use other Apps to promote learning in virtual classes such as: WhatsApp, Kahoot, Wordwall and Duolingo. These tools allowed them to have students entertained, motivated and have direct communication with explain some language during this virtual modality. As mentioned by Cil (2021) in his article, in which he states that the use of these applications has made students more motivated and more confident in increasing their vocabulary, thus generating a positive aspect in learning English in a new way during virtual classes.

Use of WhatsApp

T1: Fue fácil el uso del WhatsApp para la enseñanza del inglés porque se reforzaba de manera personal actividades como las tareas. Incluso, cuando necesitaba conversar con un alumno de manera personal optaba por las videollamadas. Por otro lado, es mucho más fácil para mis estudiantes usar el WhatsApp pues manejan mejor la tecnología. [The use of WhatsApp was easy for teaching English because it reinforced in a personal way the activities like homework. Therefore, when I needed to talk only with a student I chose the video calls.

On the other hand, it is easier for my students to use WhatsApp, because they handle technology better.]

T2: Fue un mecanismo más práctico debido a que los chicos con 1\$ ellos ya podían tener acceso a WhatsApp con ello yo enviaba el link de clase y ellos mediante su celular ya podían ingresar, y cuando explicaba la guía que enviaba por WhatsApp ellos podían seguir utilizando para su uso. [It was a more practical mechanism because the kids with 1\$ could have access to WhatsApp with it. I sent the link to class and they could enter through their cell phone, and when I explained the guide, I sent by WhatsApp they could continue using it for their use.]

According to participants' responses, the use of WhatsApp was easy and helpful in the class. As a result of this use, the students were the main beneficiaries because the teachers used the application to send links, tasks, make video calls to reach the student and establish conversations in order to provide feedback on some content and make students learn English. As Wahyuni et al. (2019) in their article mentions that WhatsApp is a very important tool for learning English, as it improves communication, helps them to practice English through the implements that teachers send, making them more sociable and it is easier to maintain contact with students to improve the teaching-learning process.

Resources

T1: El material con el que trabajamos mediante WhatsApp fueron fichas pedagógicas, en las cuales se anexaron websites, material extra que el estudiante necesitaba. Nos apoyamos mucho en Google para investigar, obtener información y para que los estudiantes mismos puedan crear su propio material para la clase. [We worked with pedagogical sheets. In these sheets, some websites and extra material was attached if the students needed it. We support Google for research information and for the students themselves to create their own material for the class.]

T2: Mediante las guías que se enviaban por WhatsApp y links con actividades en línea para aquellos alumnos que tenían las capacidades de acceder a ellos y poder seguir practicando la materia de Inglés. [Through the guides that were sent by WhatsApp and links with online

activities for those students who were able to access them and continue practicing the English subject.]

T2: También se hacía el envío de links de YouTube con el propósito de que los estudiantes se auto preparen mediante el recurso audiovisual. [YouTube links were also sent to students in order to allow them to prepare themselves through audiovisual resources.]

T2: Yo me encargaba de enviar los links de clases, las guías y comunicados pertinentes mediante WhatsApp [I was in charge of sending class links, guides and relevant communications via WhatsApp.]

The resources sent by the teachers through WhatsApp allowed the students to follow the process of learning in an asynchronous way. The use of WhatsApp allowed teachers to send materials easily and quickly to work during class. The main resources sent were: the guides, websites, videos, worksheets. This was of great help because the students who cannot connect to classes virtually can have access to the material and had the opportunity to work autonomously and easier. Alhafeez (2017) considers that this App generated a better way to communicate with students because it allows sending: videos, audios, messages, note voices, documents, pictures and so on. In virtual classes, teachers relied on technology to find out what type of resource was good for the class. That is why Salah and Sriram (2014) states that technology has become indispensable. Likewise, choosing the material according to the level is necessary to fortify students' learning and motivation. Like Lebeničnik (2015) explains that didactic resources in this modality are important to create an interactive environment with students.

The researchers also found some disadvantages in the use of WhatsApp. The main of them were based on: methodology in virtual classes, accessibility, activities, skills and motivation

Methodology in virtual classes

T1: Cómo hablamos de clases virtuales, un método específico no aplique, porque se ha trabajado con una combinación de todos. Por ejemplo, yo aplico el natural approach pero también apliqué audiolingual method, incluso el grammar translation method. Entonces

podría ser un eclectic method. [When we talk about virtual classes I didn't apply a specific method because I worked with a combination of all of them. For example, I applied the natural approach, audio lingual and grammar translation method. So, it could be an eclectic method]

T2: El método que apliqué en el tiempo de las clases virtuales fue el flipped classroom en donde los chicos eran los principales actores del aprendizaje. Además, el learner-centered approach, en donde el estudiante siempre es el centro de aprendizaje debido a la realidad pues, los chicos eran kichwa hablantes ellos debían entender el inglés por adquisición más no por materia. Por tal razón yo escogí estos dos métodos. [The method I applied during virtual classes was the flipped classroom in which the children were the main actors in the learning process. Also, the learner-centered approach, in which the student is always the main focus of learning due to reality, since the children were Kichwa speakers, they had to understand English by acquisition but not by subject. For this reason, I chose these two methods.]

The methodologies used by the teachers in the virtual classes were different. This category shows that there is a certain lack of knowledge about the type of methods that can be applied to a virtual modality. Teachers applied traditional methodologies such as Grammar Translation method, natural approach and audiolingual method. Also, they applied methodologies focused on virtual modality such as flipped classrooms. However, the teachers know these methodologies in an informative -theory way and not how to put them in practice in virtual classes. Teachers didn't use the methodologies correctly in virtual mode so, the activities were not focused on developing student's learning. This causes demotivation in the students; they don't learn the English language as they did in face-to-face classes. An investigation carried out by Montiel, 2018; Jin et al. (2021) show that the bad application of methodologies within the virtual environment can cause students to lose enthusiasm to engage in the class.

Accessibility

T1: Fue sumamente complicado para aquellos que no tenían un acceso directo. El principal problema fue la conexión a Internet. Muchos estudiantes se conectaban con datos, y estos no abastecen para el uso del WhatsApp. Por ejemplo, hubo estudiantes que tuvieron que retirar el material en la institución. Yo les entregaba las hojas que debían realizar y después las volvían a traer. [It was extremely complicated for those who didn't have direct access. The main problem was the Internet connection. Many students connected with data, and these didn't supply for the use of WhatsApp. For example, there were students who had to pick up the material at the institution. I would give them the worksheet that they had to do and then they would bring them back.]

T1: Por otro lado, había estudiantes que utilizaban los dispositivos de sus representantes, ellos necesitaban el dispositivo en su jornada laboral y la conexión de los estudiantes era limitada pues solo accedían cuando los padres retornaban a la casa. [On the other hand, there were students who used their parent's devices, but they needed their cellphones in their working hours and the connection of the students was limited because they only had access when their parents returned home.]

T2: WhatsApp no me presentó problemas. Sin embargo, las dificultades fueron por parte de los estudiantes ya que algunos no poseían los recursos económicos necesarios para poder recibir clase y utilizar WhatsApp. [WhatsApp did not present any problems for me. However, the difficulties were on the students' side because some of them did not have the necessary economic resources to be able to receive classes and use WhatsApp.]

According to the participants, there are several difficulties that have affected the English Language in virtual classes, among them is the accessibility to the Internet, which is one of the fundamental factors that has affected the learning of English, as mentioned by the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC) cited in (Torres, 2020) in which it mentions that more than half of the population in Ecuador does not have access to the Internet. On the other hand, Omeris et al. (2012) consider that the lack of technological resources affects the performance of students in classes, generating more difficulties to learn in this modality. Technological resources are fundamental to online learning. However, as evidenced by the results of the participants, it was a great disadvantage for most of the students since they did

not have a cell phone or a computer on which they could access classes. So, technological resources are fundamental to online learning. As mentioned by Torres and Cabezas (2020) in their article, in which they clarify that this lack of technological resources has affected children's learning. Many of them, due to this lack of resources, opted to withdraw from schools, since it was impossible to have access to them and the Internet.

Activities

T1: En las fichas pedagógicas ya teníamos que especificar todas las actividades que iban a realizar los estudiantes. En el caso de necesitar actividades extras, ellos enviaban videos o audios en los grupos de WhatsApp o de manera personal a mi chat. [In the pedagogical sheets we already had to specify all the activities that the students were going to do. In the case of needing extra activities, they would send videos or audios in the WhatsApp groups or personally to me.]

T2: Considero que las actividades que se enviaban eran muy buenas, porque adjuntaba links que no solo plasman actividades a realizar sino más bien links audiovisuales. Por otro lado, para aquellos estudiantes que no tenían la posibilidad de acceder mediante su teléfono, yo me encargaba de hacerles llegar el material y lo realicen de manera manual. [I consider that the activities that I sent were very good, because I attached links that not only showed the activities to be done but rather audiovisual links. On the other hand, for those students who did not have the possibility of accessing through their phone, I was in charge of sending them the material and they could do it manually.]

The activities carried out via WhatsApp were simple and basic. This application was mostly used to give instructions to students. The teachers didn't know how to do activities using WhatsApp to develop English skills. They chose to send links for students to do work on other platforms but they didn't use WhatsApp as a tool for teaching English. Wiramihardja and Uden (2002) mention that if the teachers don't know how to use WhatsApp for teaching English, the implementation of activities don't achieve the student's learning objectives. The activities carried out for teachers didn't demonstrate students' progress because it was not used to make students practice speaking through voice-mail discussions, writing comments

or opinions through this App. It was because teachers were not familiar with the advantages that WhatsApp has for students. Zayed (2016) explains that the design of some activities through the use of WhatsApp increases students' confidence to remain active during class. However, teachers decided to use WhatsApp to communicate and send activities but not to work in class through this app. This result is different from (Williams, Birch, and Hancock, 2012 cited in Chokri, 2015) stated that the use of WhatsApp was effective in developing English language skills because teachers use this app as a way to send resources and tasks and receive messages related to the content and tasks. They concluded that this App is even more effective when it is used as a blending learning and face to face classes.

English skills

T1: Lastimosamente, el speaking fue la destreza más baja pues no teníamos contacto con los estudiantes como en las clases presenciales y esto no permitía una efectiva producción del idioma. En lo que más se trabajó fue en la escritura, lectura y un porcentaje menor la habilidad de escuchar, pues ellos practicaban esta destreza solo escuchando la clase. Para mejorar la escritura, yo tomaba una captura de pantalla de los textos que los estudiantes escribían y le daba instrucciones para que tome en cuenta la puntuación, vocabulario etc. Para mejorar el habla los estudiantes enviaban videos cortos y concisos. Por ejemplo, realizamos en el tema de la comida les mandé de tarea realizar un video de la preparación de cualquier comida, y yo les enviaba un audio para corregir cualquier error en la pronunciación. [Unfortunately, speaking was the lowest skill because we didn't have contact with the students as in face-to-face classes. This didn't allow an effective production of the language. What we worked on the most was writing, reading and a smaller percentage of listening skill, as they practiced this skill only by listening to the class. To improve writing, I would take a screenshot of the texts that the students wrote and give instructions to take into account punctuation, vocabulary and so on. To improve speaking, students would send short and concise videos. For example, in the topic of food, I sent them homework, they had made a video of the preparation of any food, and I would send them an audio to correct any mistakes in pronunciation.]

T2: Las habilidades que realmente se han manejado en esta modalidad virtual ha sido la lectura, y la pronunciación para que mejoren su fluidez. Yo me encargaba de enviar textos en inglés para que los estudiantes puedan mejorar su comprensión lectora. Además, enviaba mensajes de voz leyendo un texto a los niños para que ellos sean capaces de escuchar y repetir dicho audio para mejorar su pronunciación. Por ende, yo poder testear sus avances. [The skills that have really been handled in this virtual modality have been reading, and pronunciation to improve their fluency. I was in charge of sending texts in English so that the students could improve their reading comprehension. I also sent voice messages reading a text to the children so that they would be able to listen and repeat the audio to improve their pronunciation, thus I could test their progress.]

T2: Yo pienso que el WhatsApp es más informativo, por ello considero que los estudiantes no mejoran su gramática y vocabulario con la utilización de esta aplicación. [I think that WhatsApp is more informative, therefore I consider that students do not improve their grammar and vocabulary with the use of this application.]

T2: Los mensajes de voz sirvieron para que los estudiantes mejoren su pronunciación, pero no como un método de comunicación porque para ello necesitaremos tener una charla interactiva, pero no fue el caso. [The voice messages were useful for students to improve their pronunciation, but not as a method of communication because for that we will need to have an interactive chat, but this was not the case.]

As a result, the skills to be mastered in the English language have not been fully taught since teachers did not know how to implement WhatsApp to develop these skills in students and help them learn the English language. While it is true that reading skill and pronunciation were better managed in virtual classes, but not with activities that promote those skills. Therefore, they did not advance on their learning due to the lack of teachers' knowledge about the use of WhatsApp as a method to develop English skills. This study of Ajid et al. (2018) where they state that WhatsApp is an effective application to develop English skills through the good management of strategies and activities that facilitate the students' learning that allows students to learn English in a better way and develop the English skills.

Motivation

T1: Les enviaba videos de Tik Tok que en ese entonces estaba en auge en los jóvenes para que llamen su atención. También websites para que revisen y tratar en lo máximo de ayudarles y despertar en ellos el interés en el inglés. Fue complicado, hubo un porcentaje muy bajo de estudiantes que interactuaron conmigo diciendo “Me gustó esto” La mayoría se dedicó solo a enviar las fichas pedagógicas. [I would send them videos of Tik Tok which at that time was booming among young people to get their attention. Also, websites for them to review and try as much as possible to help them and awaken their interest in English. It was complicated, there was a very low percentage of students who interacted with me saying "Teacher, I liked this" Most of them just sent the pedagogical sheets.]

T2: No fue necesario motivar a los estudiantes, debido a que los estudiantes ya tenían en conocimiento en cómo se usa y para qué se usa WhatsApp. [It was not necessary to motivate students, because the students were already knowledgeable in how WhatsApp is used and what it is used for.]

Students were motivated through videos, images and links. However, teachers did not plan activities to work together with the resources they had sent. This causes students to lose the interest in learning and they don't have the necessity to participate in the activities sent by WhatsApp. Students concentrated only to fill the requirements of the guide, but without any educational purpose. As mentioned by (Vigil, 2020) the success of learning is the motivation that the teacher gives through innovative activities. If the teacher doesn't create an environment that allows students to motivate themselves, they will not be motivated to work. Teachers did not use WhatsApp to carry out activities that motivate students to learn English.

To answer the second question: What is the influence of the use of WhatsApp to teach EFL language learners in virtual classes? The researchers analyze the question and focus on this topic in the interview there is a category about: influence of WhatsApp.

Influence of WhatsApp

T1: Si hablamos de efectividad yo considero que WhatsApp fue una herramienta de apoyo muy buena, ya que para nosotros los docentes nos sirvió para conocerla, en cómo se utiliza, y las herramientas que nos ha brindado han sido buenas debido a que en la aplicación podíamos comunicarnos rápidamente con los niños y padres de familia. [If we talk about effectiveness, I consider that WhatsApp was a very good support tool, because for us as teachers it helped us to know it, how to use it, and the tools it has given us have been great because in the application we were able to communicate quickly with children and parents.]

T2: Más que efectiva considero que WhatsApp es una aplicación informativa, en el caso en que los estudiantes tengan su celular o WhatsApp en Inglés ahí podría ser más efectiva, ya que ahí podrán observar y aprender palabras técnicas, por otro lado, no considero que sea una herramienta tan efectiva para aprender inglés. [More than effective I consider that WhatsApp is an informative application, in the case that students have their cell phone or WhatsApp in English it could be more effective, because they can observe and learn technical words, on the other hand I do not consider that it is such an effective tool to learn English.]

According to the teachers' responses, WhatsApp was not an effective tool for the development of English skills because the teachers used this application to send information and resources for students to learn English, but they did not create activities to let them know if the students used the resources correctly to obtain the learning. It is concluded that the teachers used WhatsApp for informational purposes but not for a practical means to learn and strengthen English language learning. This result is different from Munir et al. (2021). He stated that the use of WhatsApp has generated the student to work better and be more motivated to develop different activities to learn the language and develop their skills.

Summary

There are several good points in which the use of WhatsApp is important as a technological tool for teaching English in virtual classrooms. It allows teachers to create a communicative environment with students to develop their English skills because it is an easy and simple application to use. In addition, using all the resources that this application allows both teachers and students to improve the teaching-learning process of English language.

However, in the research the use of WhatsApp was not a tool focused on English language teaching because the application was only used to send activities, videos and links for students to view and develop task. WhatsApp served as a communication resource between teachers and students, but this did not generate optimal learning through this application. So, the teachers opted to use other applications to teach English and make the students learn.

9. IMPACTS

This research has an educational, social, and technological impact. In the social environment is the relationship between WhatsApp, teacher and student, since they were the main actors in the teaching-learning process of the English language in the virtual modality. In the educational environment due to the pandemic WhatsApp was a tool that allowed teachers to send assignments, guides, communications, videos to generate an effective and innovative learning environment. In addition, giving a positive impact on how this application was used for media since WhatsApp is an application that helps to strengthen the communicative environments between teacher and student in order to teach and learn through technological resources that could be accessed in virtual classrooms. Finally, the impact of technology has meant that both teachers and students need to know how to manage technological resources so that they can teach and learn English through different strategies and methodologies that facilitate the teaching-learning process through technology.

10. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1. Conclusions

WhatsApp is an innovative app to learn English since teachers and students can interact and communicate easier. WhatsApp has become one of the main technological tools for sharing and receiving information. It has several functionalities and advantages that allow teachers to use it in an easy way during the educational process. The correct use of WhatsApp can facilitate students' English learning process. That is why it is considered a pedagogical support tool in teaching and learning English.

This app allowed teachers to send assignments, links, teaching material and learning guides that students needed to do their work autonomously. However, in the methodology, the teacher had a lack of knowledge of how to put into practice virtual teaching methods. This caused the teachers not to carry out learning activities and for this reason English skills were not developed in an effective way.

WhatsApp was not an effective tool for the development of English skills because the teachers used this application to send information and resources for students to learn English, but they did not create activities to let them know if the students used the resources correctly to obtain the learning

10.2. Recommendations

It is recommended that WhatsApp continues to be used for English language teaching. Using technological resources in face-to-face classes can enhance the learning process of students. Knowing about the advantages of this application, teachers can better manage their class to create more didactic activities to engage the students to learn English.

It is recommended that teachers update the use of WhatsApp to have better results in learning English and the application of methods in virtual classes. In addition, to look for more methodologies that facilitate the development of all English skills, the teachers must use technological resources to support the learning in virtual classes, so that students can learn English in a new way.

Employ activities that allow students to be more interested and know the correct use of these to improve their learning. This will encourage both teachers and students to learn through resources that enable them to learn English in a new way. Also, the improvement of technological training in teachers helps to increase their knowledge and provide them with a

good teaching procedure in the correct use of apps and tools in order to develop the English skills.

This project will be used for future research. The use of WhatsApp as a tool for learning English is very interesting and more information should be sought to make this resource more effective when applied in the classroom. The results of this research can be used to further investigate how WhatsApp can be used pedagogically for English language teaching.

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12. ANEXES

12.1. Interview Guide

Introduction.

Aim: The aim of this interview is to find out your perception on the use of WhatsApp in virtual classes to teach English as a foreign language. The information obtained will help us with the analysis for the research.

Instructions: Questions will be asked which you will be able to answer openly. You will have the opportunity to relate your experiences to provide more detail.

Interview Questions

1. What method did you apply during virtual classes?
2. What platforms or Apps did you use to teach English during Covid-19 pandemic?
3. Was WhatsApp easy for you to teach English during virtual classes?
4. Was WhatsApp easy for your students to learn English during virtual classes?
5. What were the problems using WhatsApp in the English teaching process?
6. What are the problems faced by students when they use WhatsApp?
7. How did you guide your students using WhatsApp?
8. How did you use WhatsApp for teaching English?
9. What kind of material did you send to students through WhatsApp?
10. Based on the material you send, what kind of material helped students to learn English using WhatsApp?
11. How good were the activities sent by the students through WhatsApp?
12. What were the activities that you used to improve the learning English skills using WhatsApp?

13. What skills did students improve using WhatsApp?
14. Did student's grammar and vocabulary increase during virtual classes using WhatsApp?
15. Did you perform WhatsApp Voice Messages, oral presentations, written /oral questions and answers, discussions or points of view?
16. Did WhatsApp Voice Messages help students practice English speaking skills?
17. What did you do to increase the student's motivation using WhatsApp?
18. Is WhatsApp an effective application for teaching - learning process of English?