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Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación

**"Integrating Technology in ELT
at Secondary Schools in San Salvador de Jujuy".**

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Chapter 1

“Technology by itself does not guarantee learning. Rather, it is in how teachers and students use available technologies that determines whether transformative learning happens”. Driscoll, Marcy P.

1. Introduction

The present research work intends to show how technology enriches and improves the processes of learning and education. Nowadays, teachers and students are exposed to different changes regarding technology; therefore, they have the possibility to obtain more information and be in contact with real contexts and people from other parts of the world, which was not possible years ago. This technology evolution has impacted on the methodology of teaching a foreign language; that is why, foreign language teachers must ponder over the most useful approaches to combine them with technology. As the Author Chapelle points out “the bond between technology and language use in the modern world should prompt all language professionals to reflect on the ways in which technology is changing the profession of English language teaching”. (2003:3)

Moreover, the author Doggett states that “technology itself is not inherently good or bad; it is neutral. It is the use of technology that determines whether it is valuable to the learning process”. (2000:2) Technology opens the door to a wide range of materials that help teachers to enhance their students’ skills and self-confidence with the language they are learning. However, technology must be used with responsibility to make the most of it.

The contexts in which the present research work has developed its research proves the existence of pros and cons when integrating technology in English Language teaching, especially in English language classes at secondary schools of San Salvador de Jujuy. The data obtained during the investigation provided with certain details that were very useful to understand the benefits and negative outcomes of teaching English through technology as well as the opportunity to analyze and interpret the strategies that teachers use to incorporate technology in the teaching of English as a foreign language at secondary schools.

2. Keywords

The following keywords will be analyzed in depth in order to understand the scope of the research paper. The keywords are *technology, technology integration, advantages and disadvantages, Language, English Language Teaching, strategies, teachers' strategies, educational resources*

2.1 Technology

There are many concepts that can be taken into consideration when it comes to define the term technology. The Authors Sharma and Barrett state that the term technology refers to a set of new technologies such as the Internet, interactive whiteboards, laptop computers, etc. (2007) According to this concept, technology is not only the Internet or a computer but also any type of tools that can help in a class. However, the Author Gibert believes that "Technology relates to society, genre, politics and ideology." (2003:7) Besides, Gibert points out that "Technology is multifaceted and only recently coined term" (2003:9) and it is difficult to define due to the fact that it changes continuously.

Moreover, the author Braun (1998:9) defines "technology as the way and means by which humans produce purposeful material artifacts and effects [...] the material artifacts used to achieve some practical human purpose and the knowledge needed to produce and operate such artifacts". Thus, the term technology is much broader than the others considering as technology simple elements such as blackboards, chalks, pens, and so on.

2.2 Technology Integration

Cennamo K., Ross J. and Ertmer P. (2014:18) define the concepts of integration and technology integration. "To integrate is to combine two or more parts to make a whole while technology integration means to make technologies an integral part of the teaching and learning process that impacts resources, teacher and student roles, and instructional activities" (2014:18). It is important to mention that technology integration needs certain modifications in terms of many instructional components as the resources that are being used, teachers' performances as well as students' performances (Cennamo, Ross & Ertmer 2014)

2.3 Advantages and disadvantages

According to the Oxford dictionary the term advantage is “a condition or circumstance that puts one in a favorable position compared to other people”. The term disadvantage is “a negative point or condition; a thing that tends to prevent somebody succeeding, making progress, etc.” As an example of advantage, we can mention those suggested by Tozoglu D. and Varank I. (2001) who believe that technology has produced several positive outcomes in education; enhancement of motivation, attitude and enjoyment, new peer interaction patterns and learning performance. The idea that computer usage often enhances student’s motivation and attitude has been taken for granted in the recent years.

However, there are cons that need to be considered. Tozoglu and Varank (2001) also consider that “the technology implementations are not free of risk. Once the technology starts diffusing into schools it comes with unique problems. Some of the important problems are equity and access, time to plan and implement the technology and teachers’ resistance to change” (2001:464). They also explain that there are a number of impediments such as socioeconomic status, geographical region among other obstacles that would not allow equity in terms of technology access. “Some other factors also may determine the equal access, such as familiarity with hardware and software, the classroom structure, time, students’ skill levels and location of computers” (Tozoglu and Varank 2001:464).

2.4 Language

The author Brown (2000) suggests a number of definitions of the term “Language”. First, Brown mentions the concept of language as “a complex, specialized skill, which develops in the child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal instruction”. (2000:5) Moreover, Brown also states the following definitions and characteristics:

1. Language is systematic.
2. Language is a set of arbitrary symbols.
3. Those symbols are primarily vocal, but may also be visual.
4. The symbols have conventionalized meaning to which they refer.
5. Language is used for communication.
6. Language operates in a speech community or culture.
7. Language is essentially human, although possibly not limited to humans.
8. Language is acquired by all people in much the same way; language and language teaching both have universal characteristics. (Brown 2000:5)

2.5 English Language Teaching

The author Brown states that “teaching is guiding and facilitating learning, enabling the learner to learn, setting the conditions for learning” (2000:7).

“English language teaching at secondary level generally takes place during the school day, at schools either funded by the state or privately financed, and after school in language academies, where learners are sent by their parents for additional English classes, usually to reinforce the English being learned at school, or to help the learners prepare for a specific examination”. (Motteram 2013:45). Therefore, English language teaching could be defined as a guide provided by teachers in order to facilitate the students access to the learning of English.

2.6 Strategies

Strategy is a plan designed for a particular purpose. It is a particular style that a teacher applies to help students learn a new language, for instance. It is a plan, a method for obtaining a specific objective or result. Strategy is also a careful devised plan of action to achieve a goal.

2.7 Teachers’ strategies

The author Takač states that “teaching strategies are everything teachers do or should do in order to help their students learn” (2008:19). Considering the time available, the content, etc., the strategies used by educators to teach vocabulary can be planned or not. The planned strategies are those strategies which are defined, explicit and clear for the students; whereas, the unplanned strategies are the spontaneous and improvised ones. Both types of strategies are intended to help the students in any classroom activities (Takač 2008). Teachers use a large number of strategies, approaches, activities and tasks to help students comprehend the information given and make content easier to understand (Reiss 2005).

2.8 Educational Resources

“Educational resources can be divided into human and material resources. Human resources are the teachers, the teaching assistants and the management personnel. Material resources refer to the material composition of school facilities and education

funding, which is the material basis and financial support of education and teaching activities, including a variety of buildings, teaching instruments, equipment, transportation tools, and books and so on.” (Tan, 2012: 760)

3. General objective:

The present research work is meant to identify and describe the advantages and disadvantages of integrating technology in ELT at secondary schools.

3.1 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this research work are divided into three:

- To identify teacher’s strategies when integrating technology in their everyday practice.
- To discover whether the new technologies can be used for pedagogical purpose in a meaningful way at secondary schools.
- To know if new technologies can be successfully integrated into the ELT syllabus.

4. Research Problem

The problem of this research paper is the “advantages and disadvantages of integrating technology in language teaching at secondary schools in San Salvador de Jujuy.

4.1 Research Questions

According to the research problem arises the following research questions:
What exactly do teachers consider when they think of technology? Do they know and understand the concept of technology? Have teachers focused their attention on the social aspects of technology integration in ELT? What strategies do teachers apply when teaching English through technology? Do students make use of technology to learn English? What are the strategies that they use to learn English?

5. Methodology

The author Denzin (2000) suggests that the qualitative research gives the possibility to establish complex descriptions of the way people understand and get involved in certain research topics and to obtain the necessary information in order to

understand humans' emotions, opinions, thoughts, behaviour, etc. Moreover, the author Lichtman states that "the qualitative research relies on verbal and visual communication to answer questions. It examines humans in their natural settings rather than in experimental environments" (Lichtman 2013:4). These are the reasons why the qualitative methodology was the most suitable for the topic of investigation and was implemented to carry out the present research work.

5.1 Qualitative Method

The research was accomplished based on the information obtained from the observation of English language classes and teachers' points of view as well as their experiences when teaching English as a Foreign Language in different secondary schools situated in San Salvador de Jujuy. As it was mentioned above, it was decided to implement the qualitative methodology to get the necessary information which allowed the interpretation of real descriptions of how teachers integrate technology in their everyday practice.

5.2 Informants

In order to collect data, the informants chosen were teachers who work at high schools with different learning fields such as social sciences, computing sciences, natural sciences, and art. Besides, some of the informants work at technical schools where the students' learning is focused on the development of skills to obtain jobs as soon as they finish their studies. All the informants teach different levels of English as a Foreign Language such as foundation and elementary; for this reason, the vocabulary they have to teach and the structures of sentences of the language are not complex. Besides, they focus their attention on specific vocabulary as the ones used to describe tools or machinery, for instance.

The schools where the teachers interviewed work are situated in the city center, in the suburbs or in different neighbourhoods of San Salvador de Jujuy. Most of the schools located in the city centre have modern architectures, while the buildings of the schools situated in the suburbs are not new; as a consequence, the latter do not have facilities such as ICT rooms or language labs, and they also have poor internet access. Another important detail that needs to be considered is that the majority of the students who attend those schools come from the neighbouring areas, which in most cases are very poor.

5.3 Research Tools

The research tools used were interviews, and observations.

The teachers interviewed were asked to respond twenty-one questions presented to be answered from their experiences as English Language Teachers at secondary schools and they had to develop each question in an objective and truthful way. Besides, the information they were going to provide was confidential and reserved.

The teachers' interviews were semi-structured and consisted of several key questions that helped us to define the areas to be explored, in this case, the integration of technology in ELT in detail. As it was mentioned before, the questions were prepared in order to obtain specific information regarding the importance of technology when teaching a foreign language, the use of technological tools, the motivation, as well as the opportunities that schools offer in terms of "technological floors", which is a concept that will be analyzed in another chapter.

The data collection instruments were the interviews to ten teachers and observations of two lessons. The observations of the classes gave us the possibility to select and record teachers' and students' behaviors when implementing technology in their classroom environments. Besides the observations were primarily an interpretation and analysis of the reality that teachers and students face when learning English as a second language and the use of technology in teaching and learning situations which can present advantages or disadvantages.

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

6. Integrating Technology in ELT

It is undeniable that the growth of technology in language teaching has become a trendy topic of study. The Authors Dudeney & Hockly believe that “the integration of technology in ELT has undergone a dramatic shift” (2012:533). Besides, it is a well-known fact that technology is changing fast and that this change is affecting not only the way people communicate with each other, but also the ordinary way of teaching and learning a foreign language. The intention of this chapter is to clarify some concepts regarding technology, to show different methodologies applied when teaching a foreign language as well as the advantages and disadvantages of integrating technology in English Language Teaching that different authors state.

In order to understand the meaning of integrating technology in English Language Teaching, it is convenient to reflect on some key concepts. First, it is said that students are digital natives. “Digital natives can be described as the generation that has grown up in the digital society being considered natives since they are fluent speakers of the digital language” (Dunkels, Franberg & Hallgren 2011:98). In fact, they are part of a new generation which needs a school to give them the chance to use technological tools in their classrooms and this is a reality that cannot be denied. Dunkels, Franberg & Hallgren also state the concept of digital immigrants which “refers to users who do not have a native understanding of the Internet and the digital world.” (2011:98) Moreover, the authors state that digital immigrants need to keep up dated with new technological tools so that they can face the challenges of the new generation. (Dunkels, Franberg & Hallgren 2011) These concepts raise awareness of the importance of implementing technology in education and the relevance of teachers’ training.

Experts believe that Technology Integration should be neither regarded as a simple way of dealing with students when they misbehave nor used without an aim. On the contrary, they suggest that the objective of integrating technology in a class is to improve the way students learn (Erben & Sarieva 2013). For instance, the authors Erben and Sarieva (2013) say that technology gives students the possibility to get more information about a particular topic as well as the chance to interact with native speakers, which can be beneficial for them.

It is beyond question that “technology is now a prominent feature of education provision and practice in many countries and contexts” (Selwyn & Facer 2013:1).

Nowadays, teachers are taking into account students' real interests and are changing the techniques and methodologies to teach English as a Foreign Language. As the authors Erben and Sarieva suggest "foreign language teachers are now able to create meaningful tasks and communicative settings in which learners have an authentic goal and audience" (2013:15). Besides, it is said that technology usage is beneficial for both students and teachers since learners feel more confident with the language and educators are making adjustments to the way they teach the language. The authors Tozoglu & Varank believe that "teachers who are successfully employing the computers change their classical roles in the classroom, which are organizing, presenting and evaluating information" (2011:463).

Another aspect that needs to be considered is the one stated by Dudeney and Hockly (2012), who assure that technology integration at the beginning was really basic due to the use of word processors or activities to complete gaps. Nowadays, teachers and learners are able to "be globally connected, and globally educated" (Dudeney & Hockly 2012:533) thanks to the use of the Internet and social networks such as Facebook or Twitter and mobile telephony. Besides, the government in Argentina and "governments of nearly every country have well-established policy drives and programs seeking to encourage and support the use of digital technologies". (Selwyn and Facer, 2013:1) For example, students and teachers are able to use "netbooks" in almost every secondary state-run school in Argentina at present. The program that is being implemented is called "Conectar Igualdad" and it is promoted by the Ministry of Education; besides, "the British Council is co-funding English language learning content for these netbooks, as well as supporting teacher training" (Dudeney & Hockly 2012:540).

The purpose of the "Conectar igualdad" program is to introduce "the model 1:1, which consists in delivering laptop computers to both the students and teachers individually so as to have "a personalized, direct, unlimited and ubiquitous access to information technology simultaneously, creating a link between them and with other networks that exceeds the scholar day time" (Conectar Igualdad workbook 2011:9). The authors Sewlyn and Facer (2013) consider that implementing netbooks is a challenge since there is no need for language labs which, as a matter of fact, are very rare to find in schools in San Salvador; the objective that is in progress thanks to the Conectar Igualdad Program is to set up every classroom as a "technological floor (i.e., establishing adequate plug-ins and electric wiring) that allows the connection of up to 30 netbooks simultaneously" (Sewlyn and Facer 2013).

6.1 Teaching methodologies

As it was mentioned above, technology can be a powerful tool if teachers know its correct usage. The author Roblyer states that “educational technology is a combination of the processes and tools involved in addressing educational needs and problems, with an emphasis on applying the most current tools such as computers and other electronic technologies” (2006:9). Besides, the author believes that integrating educational technology is the procedure of identifying which electronic tools and methods of technology implementation are suitable reactions to specific classroom circumstances and issues (Roblyer 2006). “Language teaching methods have changed over the years, not just in response to the inclusion agenda but also to developments in education systems at large, changes in society, the demands of the global economy and widening participation” (Beltrán & Abbott 2013:8).

The Author Inoue states the idea that Foreign Language teachers wonder how useful it could be to implement technology in their language teaching and whether “students can learn their target language more effectively merely because they are using advanced technology” (2007:76). Teachers make use of different strategies and methods or even a combination of those methods with technology to teach foreign languages. Furthermore, it is unquestionable that “technology continues to be used for all sorts of specific language learning activities, such as oral practice and reading and writing skills development” (Motteram, 2013:18). Thus, the methodologies that teachers use are important in order to interpret the benefits of the combination of those methods and technology usage. According to some experts, the most well-known methods are the audio-lingual method, the grammar-translation method, the communicative method and the direct method among others.

“The Audio-lingual method, which was based on the learning theory of Skinner’s behaviorism and structural descriptive linguistics in 1970s” (Inoue 2007:76), was focused on learning the language mechanically, no mistakes were allowed, oral language activities were practiced first, then written activities were done, and words were better learned in contexts. Technology was introduced to language teaching since the audio-lingual method “relied heavily on advanced technologies of the time, including reel-to-reel tape recorders, movie projectors, and language labs” (Gonzalez 2008:49). Students had to learn the language through repetition and memorization in the language labs. The objective was to “provide students with audio-lingual structural lessons” (Inoue 2007:76) and for this reason a lot of money was invested in audio-lingual language labs in the US. “The language laboratory generally consisted of rows of stations, each equipped with a headphone and a microphone” (2008:49). However, it is said that the results of the

lessons were disappointing not because of the technological tools used to teach the language but for the audio-lingual method itself. (Gonzalez 2008)

A long time ago, the grammar-translation method and the audio-lingual methods were the main methods to teach English as a second language. “The grammar-translation method rested on the belief that language learning was largely an intellectual process of studying and memorizing bilingual vocabulary lists and explicit grammar rules” (Zenón, Monje, Romero 2011:92). “The Grammar Translation method was first introduced to teach modern languages in public schools in Prussia at the end of the eighteenth century” (James & Huckin 1997:5). In order to pass regular exams, students had to read and write classical materials. Moreover, students learnt the target language through the explanation of grammar rules in their native language.

Today, this method is used in modified ways especially in technical schools, and technology has a lot to do with it. “Technological innovation has significantly expanded the range and the nature of texts for translation” (Baer & Koby 2003:211). When applying this method, teachers have to focus on developing their students’ reading and writing skills. Besides, students have to analyze grammar rules in detail so that they can translate sentences and texts into their native language, in this case the use of technological tools are a great advantage due to the fact that they can use cellphones and online dictionaries to translate the words. “CD-ROM versions of dictionaries change the way that information they contain can be accessed. Advantages of electronic dictionaries include speed of lookup, the ability to search using truncated word forms or to search the text of an entry for a specific word, the option of having multiple definitions open in multiple windows simultaneously [...] and the ability to paste directly into a translation” (Baer and Koby 2003:214).

The concept of integrating technology in a class is related to the concept stated by Nickerson & Zodiates who believe that “the importance of connecting in-school and out-of-school learning” (1988:6) is of great importance. The authors believe that it is difficult for the students to “connect” the concepts and ideas taught in a class with their everyday life experience. Despite the fact that there are new technology resources available in large quantity, many times English as a foreign language is taught with no connection the real world. Instead, some teachers prefer the use of chalks and blackboards to teach the target language. This is the reason why it is hard for both, teachers and students to connect this idea of new technology in the classroom.

It seems clear that teaching English is more than just explaining grammar and giving never ending lists of new words to be learnt. In order to avoid that, a method that is highly adopted by many teachers is the Communicative Approach. The activities prepared by teachers are focused on their students’ listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

The leading purpose is to help learners improve their linguistic competence and skills through the use of the language in a spontaneous and flexible way. (Flowerdew & Miller 2005) It is clear that priority is given to listening and oral practice especially with the use of technology, since there are many new programs that can be used to improve the students' skills. "Many language teachers claim this is their preferred approach [...] interpreting it in multiplicity of ways, in the belief that the flexibility of the approach caters best for the needs of mixed ability classes" (Beltrán, Abbott & Jones, 2013:9).

When applying the communicative approach, students face situations in which they have to use resources to express their thoughts. According to some experts, students do not need to say sentences perfectly well. That is, they do not have to use correct grammar structures compulsorily as long as the message is understood. "The general claim of the approach includes a focus on learner activity, all four skills but prioritise speaking, pupil as well as teacher target language use, authentic materials, tolerance of error and using language for real communicative purposes in collaborative scenarios inner alia" (Beltran & Abbott 2013:8). Furthermore, the use of Information and Communication Technologies in the EFL classroom could be a good way to give opportunities to our students to use the language with a communicative purpose. On the other hand, using computers in the English class should be much more than just doing some grammar practice or vocabulary on a screen. "Communicating with each other in a foreign language should be our goal" (Zanón, Monje & Romero 2011:95) and this teaching practice could be reinforced with the correct integration of new technological tools.

The authors Nickerson & Zodhiates suggest a number of themes that have to be taken into account when talking about the role of technology in education. First of all, the authors mention "constructivism" (1988:5) in which learning is a process of constructing mental models. The student's attitude towards language is active due to the integration of existing knowledge and the new information learned. However, "it is questionable whether there is such a thing as passive learning" (Nickerson & Zodhiates 1988:5).

Another method that must be studied is the Direct Method. The Direct Method is applied mainly with primary school children especially if teachers want them to learn vocabulary with gestures and visual elements. The way of teaching this method is the aural/oral system in which students have to develop oral skills through questions and answers. This system consists of using the target language during the whole lesson. Unfortunately, it is hard to use it when teachers have to explain complex structures since they have to use abstract vocabulary and it is not easy to find a gesture or a picture to make students understand what they want to say. (Flowerdew & Miller 2005)

The Naturalistic Approach to language teaching supports the idea of incidental vocabulary learning. This strategy refers to the way students guess the meaning of

different words from the surrounding context and the use of monolingual dictionaries trying to avoid the translation of lexical items. Nonetheless, the use of inferring word meaning is not so easy.

Throughout the investigation two concepts stood out “e-learning and blended learning”. The authors Sangra, Vlachopoulos and Cabrera believe that “e-learning is an approach to teaching and learning, representing all or part of the educational model applied, that is based on the use of electronic media and devices as tools for improving access to training, communication and interaction and that facilitates the adoption of new ways of understanding and developing learning” (2012:152).

According to Sharma and Barrett (2007) blended learning is a language course which combines a face to face classroom component with an appropriate use of technology. The authors explain that the word technology involves a large number of modern technologies. Computers are considered a means of communication which can make teachers and students’ courses highly motivating due to the fact that they can use chat, email, blogs, etc. Sharma and Barrett also state that “the growth of internet has radically changed English Language Teaching” (2007:8).

6.2 Disadvantages of integrating technology in ELT

There are a number of methods that can be implemented to teach English as a second language. However, the implementation of those methods combined with technology may bring certain drawbacks. It is said that technology provides opportunities for changes. Nowadays, it is not hard to include technology in the organization of a school; however, this implementation is hard to accept for teachers who are not used to the idea of integrating technology in an English language syllabus. Nickerson & Zodiates (1988:15) suggest that “computers are the latest new technology to be introduced into schools”; yet, after watching some lessons, they are not. The reality of secondary schools in San Salvador de Jujuy does not reflect the idea of Nickerson & Zodiates since most schools already have access to technological tools such as computers or “netbooks”, projectors, interactive whiteboards, etc. Nonetheless, in most schools the drawback of integrating technology rises in the lack of netbooks able to be used because of malfunctioning, breakage, lack of internet access, and lack of training to use them.

The absence of awareness of the benefits of integrating technology in ELT may involve certain misconceptions. The author Erben states that “some foreign language teachers view technology and its use as something that is troublesome and that technology is tinkered with on a Friday afternoon or used as a reward when class conduct has been good” (2013:13). To illustrate, teachers consider that in some schools there are

no support for integrating technology and there is a strong objection to any change, which should be the opposite if the objective is to improve the educational quality.

According to the author Blaz (2013:3), “technology is playing a larger and larger role in foreign language education: language laboratories are new and improved and funding for purchasing them is becoming more available”. If we ask English Language Teachers in Jujuy if there are language laboratories in their schools, most of their answers will be “No, there aren’t” as we will be able to read in many of the interviewees’ answers in the following chapter. Unfortunately, there is no room for any language laboratories in the organization of school buildings and teachers thank for the existence of one projector, if there is one, to share with many teachers at least.

Moreover, the author Blaz believes that “teachers take advantage of the new textbooks which come with interactive software programs” (2013:3). Unfortunately, connecting thirty netbooks simultaneously to use internet in order to do the extra activities that come in new books, for instance, is really difficult. Besides, the author argues that even though internet gives all these range of possibilities, to include this “wonderful technology” in a lesson is difficult (2013:3). This is something that is true in the development of an English lesson in Jujuy. If students do not have their netbooks or if they are blocked, if they have to spend some time going to the computer room (if there is one at school), it is very difficult to include technology in a lesson. These obstacles leave teachers and students with very little time to explain the tasks and fulfill the activities prepared to understand a new topic, for instance.

The combination of all the methodologies plus technology resources can benefit students in learning the English language. However, “If learners do not have direct access to the internet in their classrooms, or at home, teachers often do have and can provide additional resources to supplement the material offered via conventional means”. (Motteram, 2013:20) Regrettably, almost nothing is being done in some classes about the correct use of TICs in the classroom. Netbooks should neither be used as a hobby nor should be used to pass the time simply.

6.3 Advantages of integrating technology in ELT

Up to now the disadvantages of integrating technology in English Language Teaching have been discussed and the difficulties that some teachers have in their everyday practice have been mentioned as well; however, the integration of technology brings lots of benefits. According to the Author Erben (2013), technology gives access to real language material so that students have the opportunity to interact with native speakers, for instance. When students use interactive software they have the opportunity

to watch video clips, hear foreign accents, practice speaking and even play instructional games. When teaching a foreign language, teachers tend to use real tools that can help students gain confidence with the language. One of these tools is the Internet. Blaz (2013) states that the Internet gives a large number of new possibilities to students and teachers. It gives the possibility to be part of actual events as they are happening. "Students can get updated information and can do research on different topics" (Blaz 2013:3). Besides, as the author Motteram (2013:22) "technology also affords children the opportunity to record themselves for playback at a later time. Learners report that the ability to listen and play back recordings helps identification of grammatical errors and inaccuracy in pronunciation, encouraging self-improvement".

Creating a good learning environment is important due to the fact that when technology is integrated, students are able to develop skills and are encouraged to find, analyze, and make the correct use of the information they find. According to some authors, an advantage of integrating technology is that it can facilitate students' improvement of the four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). When integrating technology in English Language Teaching, the four basic skills must be taken into consideration due to the fact that these skills can be upgraded provided that the use of technology is applied correctly. For example, skills such as listening and reading are enhanced by the use of different digital audios or online texts.

Talking about advantages of integrating technology, Sharma and Barrett argue that using technology in class can be beneficial as well as motivating for students since "web-based exercises are more interactive than paper-based exercises" (2007:10). Students feel free while they are doing exercises on the web such as playing games with which they can make a revision of vocabulary, for instance. Moreover, "there is a general aspiration for exposing learners to English as a living language, providing natural opportunities to practice target language through the use of authentic texts and exposure to real models of spoken English" (Motteram, 2013:20).

Another advantage of integrating technology is the instant feedback that interactive activities provide. When students do interactive activities, they can see their scores and redo the activities if they have many mistakes. There are a number of easy programs that can be used by students especially those students who are not very well familiar with computer usage. The authors Sharma and Barrett explain that "online exercises, tests, games, and listening activities often require little programs that integrate with teacher's browser. These are known as plug-ins." (2007:36) Once again students' motivation play an important role when teachers decide what type of activities they have to choose and will interest students. Sharma and Barrett also state that "games are another electronic alternative to books and paper-based exercise" (2007:38).

There is a great variety of resources that can be used to teach English and improve students skills. To name a few, “interactive materials on the Web and on CD-ROMs offer opportunities to develop language skills, such as reading, speaking, writing and pronunciation” (Sharma and Barrett 2007:40) Besides, there are new materials which are offered on the market such as electronic boards also called “e.beams” that provide teachers and students with ideas to teach and learn the target language. For example, “learning resources, such as songs and poems, can be downloaded from the internet and practiced as a whole class via an interactive whiteboard prior to a live performance that can be filmed for posterity” (Motteram 2013:22). Moreover, students can use Microsoft Word as well as Microsoft PowerPoint resources to create oral presentations in order to foster their language abilities (Motteram 2013)

Besides, some experts say that “the internet can be a rich source of authentic oral models via recorded songs, talking electronic books, podcasts and video clips that help learners with pronunciation as well as acquisition and reinforcement of new vocabulary” (Motteram 2013:22). Students and teacher can communicate no matter time or distance. “If courses are supported by technology, there is more flexibility in both time and place” (Shrama and Barrett 2007:11). It is clear that students benefit a lot from technology and this can be considered an advantage.

There are at least two main considerations which need to be kept in mind regarding the use of technology for language teaching. These considerations are teachers’ self-motivation as well as students motivation when learning English. However, it is necessary to think about the fact that “teachers and learners may hold positive, negative or neutral attitudes towards technology” (Shrama & Barret 2007:12). For this reason, it is important to have clear objectives and goal when integrating technology in ELT. The authors Sharma and Barrett consider that “teacher training is a vital factor in the uptake of new technology. [...] they recommend that every teacher acquires basic knowledge about using technology in ELT and the skills to incorporate technology into their courses” (2007:12). Teachers might feel self-motivated to integrate technology due to the fact that they can complement their daily tasks with new and interesting activities found on the web in order to help the students practice the target language (Ushioda 2013). Thus, students might feel motivated as well if they are able to solve exercises by themselves with the help of technology and the teachers’ guidance. As the authors Sharma & Barrett (2007:45) believe “one of the greatest possibilities of electronic ELT materials is the increase in motivation some learners experience”.

Thinking of all the diverse number of activities that can be found on the internet, teachers have the determination to start using technology in their lessons. Sharma & Barrett (2007) state that internet access gives teachers the possibility to find a wide range

of electronic material for ELT such as downloadable materials that can be printed, online materials available if students and teacher have access to computers connected to internet at home. Students, who for some reasons cannot attend classes, can have access to what is being taught in a lesson thanks to Virtual platforms which is the last term that needs to be understood. VLE stands for Virtual Learning Environments. According to the authors Sharma and Barrett (2007:108), “a VLE is a sophisticated learning platform” that has a large number of benefits. A Virtual Learning Environment is a “unifier of tools” (Sharma and Barrett 2007:108). This means that students are able to use different online resources such as wikis, blogs, chats, etc. One of the most VLE’s significant benefits is that “it opens the possibility of creating a blended-learning course involving face-to-face teaching, supported by online teaching using the synchronous and asynchronous tools within the system” (Sharma and Barrett 2007:108). Besides, students find VLE extremely beneficial since they have the chance to access online material provided by teachers at any time and at any place (Sharma and Barrett 2007).

Moreover, the authors Sharma and Barrett state that “the use of technology outside the language classroom can make students more autonomous” (2007:11). Students can decide when and where to study the language and practice doing different activities; thus, students can be autonomous when learning a language or other subjects since “technologies like the internet can provide access to large quantities of authentic input material and at the same time can provide opportunities for practice” (Motteram 2013:20). Besides, students can solve problems regarding pronunciation such as listening and playing back sounds of different words which can help them notice pronunciation and grammar mistakes and most importantly they can feel that they are improving since they do not feel under pressure. (Motteram 2013) The integration of technology in and outside classes can be beneficial for students as well as for teachers since creating material on the web can be time saving and all the information that students have access to is updated.

Chapter 3

Data Analysis

7. Teachers' interviews

As it was mentioned in chapter one, ten teachers were interviewed and two classes were observed in order to obtain the necessary data to know how technology is integrated in teachers' every day practice. The interviews provided data that helped to identify and interpret the advantages and disadvantages that arise due to the use of technology to teach English as a foreign language. The responses given by the colleagues are the following:

7.1 Importance of technology usage

When teachers were asked about the importance of technology usage, it was clear that most teachers emphasized the great significance of implementing technology in English Language Teaching. They believe that technology is valuable and important since learners are surrounded by technology and if the activities are organized with it, students feel motivated when learning the target language. Besides, they suggest that technology usage is important in English Language Teaching since this may enrich lessons and encourage students to learn the language. Their responses have to do with the idea stated by the author Motteran (2013) which was mentioned in the theoretical framework. The author believes that activities that can be found on the web are useful in order to foster oral, reading and writing skills.

As other teachers stated, technology is important when teaching a foreign language because students can be in contact with real life language and they can also use online dictionaries to work at school and at home. To understand the concept of "being in contact with real life", it is important to reflect on the English as a Foreign Language lessons where the role of technology can provide a significant addition to the other more conventional tools such as blackboards, textbooks, cassette players, etc. that are still found in classrooms around the world.

Some authors' concepts, mentioned in the previous chapter, state that teachers' roles are being changed by the successful use of technology and most teachers' answers agree with these concepts since they say that technological devices are a useful tool in the process of teaching-learning. Most teachers believe it is important to bear in mind that this is the "technological era" so they need to be able to take advantages of it in relation to their students. Other teachers mentioned that technology has become the universal language for the new generations and a large number of websites are in English which

can also make their job slightly easier. For example, one of the interviewed teachers explained that, in his experience, he has found that once you get students on board, assigning homework to be done online is preferable for everyone. These teachers believe that technology also encourages research and autonomy. In addition, most teachers interviewed admit that the use of technology makes English Language classes more appealing. However, some other teachers consider that technology in ELT is very important but not essential. From time to time it is a useful tool to improve or catch students' attention.

7.2 Technology as a means to achieve different objectives when integrating technology in ELT

Another topic that is important to discuss is the fact that technology offers a lot of opportunities when it is integrated into English Language Teaching. First of all, based on the teachers' responses, it can be said that internet provides a wide range of tools that can be very helpful not only for students who must practice the language but also for teachers who do not feel confident with their teaching abilities. Furthermore, most teachers are convinced that technology offers lots of opportunities indeed. Just to name a few, it can be said that technology offers opportunities such as listening to native speakers, listening to new songs, having fun while solving exercises, improving the interaction between teachers and students, learning about other countries and cultures while watching videos, etc. This had to do with the concept mentioned in chapter 2 by the author Motteram who states that to "listen and play back recordings helps identification of grammatical errors and inaccuracy in pronunciation, encouraging self-improvement". (Motteram 2013:22)

Moreover, the teachers interviewed strongly believe that technology can offer many different possibilities for both teachers and students such as the advantage that technology can reduce the use of paper for tasks or tests; in the same way, it can simplify the evaluation stages using interactive material. As for students, it can help them to demonstrate their abilities to use different tools and programs as well as to develop original ideas for the presentation of the different tasks. This also reflects the concept mentioned in the previous chapter which states that "technology and associated software affords early readers the opportunity to practice reading in a non-threatening, supportive environment, where the quality of feedback has been shown to be particularly beneficial" (Mottergam 2013:32). Moreover, teachers are entirely certain that the use of technology may reinforce the collaborative work in the classroom and strengthen relationships while working since students themselves may help each other at the moment of working with it.

As it was remarked above learners have the possibility to communicate with native speakers thanks to technology, so teachers believe that to present information or contents in a more creative and attractive way using technology motivates students. Besides, teachers are entirely sure that technology usage gives the students the opportunity to learn more meaningfully and get a different perspective of what is being taught. They also said that by working with technology, their classrooms are happier places. That is to say, students are excited about being able to use technology and therefore have a better attitude to learn. As a result, students become more responsible and take control on their own learning.

7.3 Technology Motivation

Technology motivation is another topic that teachers always think about when they have to decide whether to use or not technology in a language lesson. Most teachers interviewed conclude that the students feel highly motivated when they make use of technology continuously. Furthermore, teachers are certain that technology improves motivation, engagement and interest when students use multimedia programs and software designed to develop skills and knowledge which clearly has to do with the idea stated by the authors Sharma & Barrett (2007:45) who believe that “one of the greatest possibilities of electronic ELT materials is the increase in motivation some learners experience”. Most teachers have the initiative to use technology in their lessons for they consider it is essential to encourage students when they are learning English. Besides, teachers assure that they feel self-motivated to integrate technology due to the fact that they can complement their daily lesson plans with new and interesting activities.

Teachers agree that technology helps learners feel greatly motivated to acquire the target language. All of them said that students love working with technology, especially if they have to use their cell-phones or their net-books to do the activities assigned. In addition, according to most teachers, technology is meaningful and positive because it offers a great variety of activities and resources that they can use according to their pedagogical needs and their students’ interests. Furthermore, most teachers said that it is undeniable that the information and the amount of interesting material that they can find on the web is very useful to help students realize that learning a language is not as difficult as it seems and, as a consequence, they will be able to engage more in the learning process.

7.4 Normalizing Technology

Another question asked to the informants refers to the types of technologies that are normalized in a teacher's daily teaching practice and the technologies that are normalized in a learner's daily life. The teachers interviewed knew that the term "normalized" is to make something standard; that is to say, the technological tools that teachers and students use every day of their lives such as mobile technologies, wireless networking such as internet and intranet, iPods, scanners and printing machines, mp3 players, PlayStations, etc. which have become part of their daily lives. They also listed other normalized technologies in their teaching practice and their students' lives such as cell-phones, netbooks, intranet connection, projectors, and TV sets.

However, one of the teachers observed a negative aspect of integrating technological tools. The teachers assured that the main reason to avoid using technology in every lesson has to do with previous preparation. It is very easy to press play in a CD player to do listening activities; nonetheless, it takes more time to prepare activities using other kinds of technological devices in order to teach English. Other teachers are completely certain that students use their cell-phones and netbooks to play videogames, listen to music, or chat with friends, which is something that makes teachers wonder whether technological devices provided by the government are being used properly.

The teachers interviewed are convinced that the use of mobile phones with modern features can be very useful when planning tasks since they have applications that allow users to take photographs, make video clips and store and play mp3 audio files. Besides, teachers considered that the main opportunity offered by mobile phones is the ability to play digital audio files. These files can be downloaded using a cable connected to a computer or emailed as an attachment with some other smartphones. Teachers strongly believe that learners can listen to different recordings which can help them improve their language skills while they are doing other activities for these devices are part of their everyday lives.

Some other teachers consider that computers are the trendiest technological devices in their daily teaching practice, especially for those teachers who teach translation at Technical Schools. They allow students to use some programs and electronic dictionaries to translate words and sentences. Some other teachers use laptop computers in their classes because they have an input for microphones, and some laptop computers have built-in microphones that are used to record sounds or voices which is very useful when teachers want their students to improve their pronunciation. Teachers are convinced that internet access is essential if they want their students to listen to native speakers. Besides, students can watch videos available on YouTube in order to hear different

accent, for instance. This idea has to do with the statement of the authors Sharma & Barrett (2007), mentioned in the previous chapter, who point out that internet access gives teachers the possibility to find a wide range of electronic material for ELT such as downloadable materials that can be printed, online materials available if students and teacher have access to computers connected to internet.

7.5 Deciding whether to use or not technology in language teaching

There are many factors that influence teachers' decisions whether to use or not different technologies for language teaching. The teachers interviewed strongly believe that their lessons are aimed to enhance students' learning of the English language. Since they are certain that the use of technology improves their students' learning, they try to use it as much as they can always taking into consideration the availability of resources at school and the students' enthusiasm to use technology. They are convinced that there are a number of positive aspects of technology integration. Most teachers interviewed claimed that they decide to use technology for language teaching in order to call their students' attention for their interests are based on social networks, for instance. However, other teachers use technology depending on the contents that are going to be taught. If teachers use an approach based on technology, they definitely make use of technological tools so that students learn the language through realia or interactive tasks, which may have very good results. Besides, teachers believe that internet has wonderful resources for a large number of topics. Nevertheless, they have to select or design activities carefully in order that technology usage becomes truly educational.

Another positive aspect that encourages teachers to make use of technology is that it can be time saving. When students have to translate words or phrases they do it much faster with the online dictionaries than with the ordinary ones. Teachers pointed out that the use of technology can be time saving depending on the type of activities they want their students to do and the technological tools that teachers want them to use. Some listening activities and videos can be time saving but activities requiring intranet connection are time consuming if the connection does not work correctly.

Some other teachers do not agree that technology can be time saving for they believe that technology is time consuming instead. They consider that there is an overwhelming amount of information available online and that the process of identifying which activities are more suitable for their students is troublesome. However, once they start building their own portfolio of resources and materials, teaching a language using technological tools is a lot easier. On the one hand, some teachers admit that technology is time consuming; on the other hand, they are sure that integrating technology in their

everyday practice is part and parcel of being a teacher as well as the curiosity and thirst for knowledge.

Another negative point that other teachers, who make use of technology in their lessons, commented is that many technological devices that they use such as laptops, projectors, speakers, music players, TVs, and so on work with electricity or need internet connection or have some intricate set of cables to connect that may not work well when needed. Consequently, internet connection may be down or the devices may break down because they are very fragile, and this fact definitely consumes or makes teachers waste time.

Unfortunately, some teachers insist that they have faced a number of problems when integrating technology in ELT. For example, some of the teachers said that in some secondary schools, head teachers deny the use of projectors arguing that students may break them down. Besides, another problem that arises is the lack of internet access and, instead, there are intranet connections at schools which unfortunately are very poor. It is very difficult for some teachers to connect more than twelve netbooks in order to do activities online. In most schools, teachers have to work with large groups, and sadly, students' behaviour does not help. Although classrooms are set up as "technological floors" (Sewlyn and Facer 2013) as it was mentioned in the previous chapter, teachers said that they encounter a lot of problems when using netbooks. Teachers mentioned that many students do not know how to use the programs that are installed in their netbooks such as Power Point, Corel, Audacity to name a few or what it is even worse some of the students' netbooks do not work properly. Moreover, other teachers consider that the best activities require internet connection; regrettably, most schools do not have internet access or if there is a wireless connection, students and teachers are unbelievably not allowed to use it.

In spite of the fact that teachers are completely aware of the importance of integrating technology in ELT, some teachers interviewed declare that they feel afraid of using technology in their lessons or they underestimate their students and believe they will not be able to do certain activities because of their misbehavior, lack of interest or simply because students do not know how to open a hyperlink, for instance. Besides, some other teachers confessed that they are not well trained to use technological tools and that is why they do not use much technology in their lessons.

7.6 Schools offering opportunities to use technology in English classes

As it was mentioned above, the use of technology is well accepted in most school but not in every school. One of the teachers interviewed told us that he works at two secondary schools and that he faces two different situations. Both schools are situated in San Salvador de Jujuy, the head teacher of one of the schools offers lots of opportunities to use technology. Teachers can use the TV set, the projector, the tape-recorder, the computers and the audio system which are available to be used at all times. Moreover, the personnel and the technology teachers are always very happy to help. On the contrary, the head teacher of the other school restricts the use of technology. Every time the teacher tries to make use of the school's technological resources he is not allowed to use them.

Other teachers also explain that they have experienced similar situations. For example, in some schools there is only one projector to share with many teachers which sometimes does not work. If teachers want to explore the programs installed in the students' netbooks, they cannot do it since they are infected with computer virus and there is only one person in charge to solve that kind of situations. Some other teachers mentioned that most schools do not have the necessary tools to work with technology, some schools do not even have sockets to connect a tape recorder so the fact that the students were given the netbooks has, in a way, facilitated the use of technology in the class for many teachers because they can charge the batteries at home.

One of the teachers said that there is an ICT room in the school but it is not very easy to use because some other students have IT classes when the English class is being developed, so the room is always busy. There are some lucky teachers who have the possibility to use the netbooks with their students in order to work with audacity and movie maker programs. Besides that, they can use the DVD player, LED TV, or the projector. Some schools are adept at keeping up with those changes, while many others are falling far behind, creating a digital division based largely on the quality of educational technology, rather than just simple access to the Internet.

7.8 Online activities appealing for students. Do teachers create their online material? Students making use of technology outside the language classroom

Access to the Internet is essential when intending to apply online activities in English Language Teaching. The informants interviewed are well aware of this fact since they suggested that games, quizzes, multiple choice tests, social networks, blogs among

other online activities can be appealing for their students. They believe that students can find it easy to work with technology using certain types of programs. This idea has to do with the authors Sharma and Barrett's explanation which is that "online exercises, tests, games, and listening activities often require little programs that integrate with your browser. These are known as plug-ins." (2007:36) Some teachers know that the plug-ins are very useful for those teachers who want their students to do other activities and not just watching videos on YouTube, for instance. Teachers know that there are lots of appealing online activities but as most of the schools where they work do not have internet connection they cannot use them.

Students like social networks; for this reason, some teachers have tried to implement Edmodo with some groups but the problem is once again as they stated the lack of internet connection at schools. One solution that has been found by teachers who want their students to work with online activities is that the students that have internet access at home can do the activities suggested and the rest of the students can do the activities in cyber cafés.

Teachers are convinced that students can improve their language abilities doing activities online and this allow them to have access to real context where they can listen to natives as it was stated in another chapter "interactive materials on the Web and on CD-ROM offer opportunities to develop language skills, such as reading, speaking, writing and pronunciation" (Sharma and Barrett 2007:40). Thus, some teachers are convinced that the activities in which students can express themselves by telling a story or an anecdote are appealing for them. In that way, students practice most of the grammar rules and the phonetics that they have learned. However, some teachers consider that a factor that does not make their teaching practice easier is the slow internet or intranet connection which should be definitely improved so that teachers can incorporate online activities when teaching English.

Some teachers interviewed strongly believe that creating online material is not an easy task. They argue that many teachers neither create nor use online material due to the weakness or lack of internet connection at schools; to make matters worse some students do not have internet access at home, so they cannot do any online activities. For this reason, teachers admit that they only plan activities using technology at school if they are completely certain that the internet connection works properly. However, there are many other teachers who spend their time creating blogs and even Facebook accounts to give the students practical assignments since they know that their students can long in using their mobile phones or sharing their devices wireless signal with the netbooks.

As it was just mentioned, students might not have internet access at home through conventional wireless connections; yet, they are constantly communicating with their

classmates thanks to their mobile phones. Unfortunately, using mobile telephony in class may bring some problems. Some teachers confessed that they do not know how to plan a lesson using applications of mobile phones for pedagogical purposes. They are convinced that students use their cell phones just for fun and entertainment.

When including technology in ELT, teachers also bear in mind the social aspects of technology integration and the social reality of their students. Some teachers suppose that many students make use of technology outside the classroom for communication purposes only. Some other teachers know that an 80% of students have access to social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Skype, etc. which is something positive if they plan activities using mobile phones since students do not need their netbooks to know what the trendy topics on social networks are. Besides, teachers are certain that students can learn through online games suggested by different editorials; moreover, teachers assure that some students, who want to improve or further their knowledge, surf the web to look for information to fulfill tasks assigned by teachers of different subjects and that there are students, who are more curious about technology, attend courses on video edition that are offered at schools at the moment.

7.9 ELT materials used in classes

When talking about ELT material, teachers are certain that there is a difference between the wide range of online material that has been mentioned above and the common material that most teachers use to teach the English language every day. Some teachers still believe that this technological era is not suitable for them; that is why, they make use of photocopies of reading texts, pictures or flashcards to teach vocabulary without translating every single word, which is something very useful for visual learners. Some other teachers use workbooks, recorders, netbooks, paper and electronic dictionaries to practice translation and pronunciation of words and texts, music, power point presentations, and videos. Since most textbooks nowadays provide with CD-ROMs and online web pages to download tests, for instance, some teachers believe that using course books is very convenient if they can complement them with some other activities so as to make the lesson more interesting for students. Other teachers consider that no course books are completely ideal or perfect; for this reason, they combine the activities suggested by textbooks with technology; that is to say, they incorporate songs, Power Point presentation, etc. to strengthen the topics learnt by the students.

7.10 Use of electronic dictionaries, Word-processing software to practice vocabulary and interactive whiteboards

In terms of electronic dictionaries, teachers had different views and opinions. For example, some teachers argue that students' dictionaries uploaded in their cell-phones are not helpful; that is why, they do not allow students to use them in class; teachers confessed that they prefer their students to translate using the traditional dictionaries that are available at the schools' libraries. On the contrary, some other teachers find the use of electronic dictionaries very practical. Teachers let the students type words, sentences, and paragraphs in their netbooks; after that, they had to use the spelling and grammar checker of the Word-processor to verify their writing. As a consequence, students find this activity useful when they are translating or simply checking meaning. Besides, other teachers mentioned that they have used the Microsoft word processor to make "Pictionaries" so that students have their own dictionary available at all times.

Regrettably, when teachers were asked if they have had the chance to use electronic boards, most of their answers were negative. They do not even know what electronic boards are and to make matters worse they do not even know if there is one at school or they just consider that it is not an essential tool. For the few teachers whose answers were positive, electronic boards are considered a fantastic source of learning since they can make teachers' daily activities slightly easier and students can write symbols or check spelling, for instance, and these can be saved on the computer for future use. Teacher also admit that if teachers are well trained to use the electronic boards, they can make the most of them as it was mentioned in chapter 2 "learning resources, such as songs and poems, can be downloaded from the internet and practiced as a whole class via an interactive whiteboard prior to a live performance that can be filmed for posterity" (Motteram 2013:22).

7.11 Lessons planned using portable devices such as mobile phones, MP3 players, digital cameras or digital recorders

It has been discussed so far that ELT materials and online activities used properly can be very effective when teaching a language. Hence, it is essential to mention the activities that teachers actually do in their lessons using technological tools such as mobile phones, MP3 players, digital cameras or digital recorders from their own point of view and which they consider rich and varied. For example, some teachers have used mobile phones, MP3 players, and the Movie-maker application of the net-books to do different activities such as storytelling, describing the parts of the cell phones in order to learn specific vocabulary, creating video clips to interpret the lyrics of songs where the

students have the chance to become actors, listening activities identifying different accents, for instance, among others.

Other teachers believe that students are very creative. For this reason, they ask their students to take photos of themselves or better known as “selfies” when students are doing their daily activities. Students have to use those pictures to make a movie about a day in their lives in order to practice the simple present tense. Teachers are sure that students have fun with this kind of activities but at the same time they learn grammar in a different way. Most teachers state that students work quite well with their digital cameras and mobile phones and, thus, they learn more. At technical schools, for instance, one of the teachers said that the students from first year had to describe their mobile phones to compare not only their special features but also the specifications. Some teachers are convinced that it is not necessary to think of activities that require the use of internet; on the contrary, students can do a number of activities using other resources. For example, one of the teachers said that many activities can be done using digital cameras. The teacher created an interesting project which consisted on the creation of short films using digital cameras. The students had to film a trailer of a movie they adapted which they had to present as a project at the end of the school year.

There are many activities that can be done to motivate students using technological tools. However, it is essential for teachers to be well trained when they decide to apply all those modern devices if they want their students to learn the target language successfully as it will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

7.12 Teacher training is vital when implementing new technology in ELT. Factors that would contribute to integrate technology successfully

According to some teachers interviewed, implementing technology in a lesson successfully is very difficult but not impossible. Some teachers consider that the factors that would contribute to a successful integration of technology are students and teachers' training in the use of new technologies, a good quality of internet connection, availability of technology in every classroom (projectors, tape recorders, CD players, speakers, etc.), schools providing a language classroom, and the implementation of technology with a meaningful purpose.

Most teachers are totally convinced that training is fundamental if they want their students to improve their abilities when learning English. This idea has to do with the interpretation of some experts who say that “teacher training is a vital factor in the uptake of new technology. [...] they recommend that every teacher acquires basic knowledge

about using technology in ELT and the skills to incorporate technology into their courses” (Sharma and Barrett 2007:12). Teachers affirm that both teachers as well as students need to be well trained in the use of technological tools. They say that some students do not know how to use educational programs and it is even more difficult for students to solve tasks if teachers use specific vocabulary such as open hyperlinks, read different wikis, among others.

As stated in some other teachers’ responses, experienced teachers are not very technology friendly as young teachers are, which does not mean that age is a negative factor. Some teachers consider that no matter if teachers are young or old, there is always time to learn. Moreover, they reflect on the fact that there are always opportunities for teachers to benefit from some kind of training on the use of technology in the classroom. However, this training needs to be specific and provide a good foundation so that teachers can develop their own way of implementing technology in the classroom as they know better the needs of their students.

Successfully integrating technology in a class is a big challenge as it was mentioned before. Some of the interviewed teachers agree with the point that technology usage improves the teaching practice and enhance students’ learning. However, there are other teachers who do not agree with this idea since they consider that the use of technology is not enough to improve teaching. Teachers who make use of technology in ELT are not better than those teachers who never use it. On the contrary, other teachers consider that educators have to bear in mind that life is constantly changing so be updated in the use of technological tools is very important. They also consider that technology is a powerful tool to improve learning; thus, students benefit from it.

7.13 Virtual Learning Environments

As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, the authors Sharma and Barrett state that “a VLE is a sophisticated learning platform” (2007:108). Besides, “it opens the possibility of creating a blended-learning course involving face-to-face teaching, supported by online teaching using the synchronous and asynchronous tools within the system” (Sharma and Barrett 2007:108). However, do teachers know what a Virtual Learning Environment is? Some teachers are completely aware of what a VLE is. They are certain that a VLE gives both teachers and students a hundred of possibilities. Educators can teach their students according to their interest making the class more enjoyable since virtual platforms give the possibility of teaching and studying beyond the limits of a classroom. According to the teachers interviewed timetables and distance are not teaching boundaries anymore thanks to VLEs. Besides, teachers believe that Virtual

Learning Environments constitute a great advantage since the students can manage their time according to their necessities. They also know that a VLE provides opportunities for students to have some independent learning that they may apply into the classroom.

Some other teachers think that a Virtual Learning Environment is a very interesting and useful way to develop teachers' and students' skills and abilities in technology usage. Depending on the design and variety of activities available, they are a magnificent resource and the way forward in education. They can be useful as they provide a lot of practice and self-correction in many cases.

8. Report on the observations

At the beginning of this chapter, it was said that apart from analyzing teachers' responses of the way they implement technology in English Language Teaching, a description of two English classes that had been observed in two different secondary schools of San Salvador de Jujuy would be described. The aim of the observations was to have a better understanding of the way teachers make use of technology in their everyday practice, and how they come up with activities to teach English as a foreign language. Some important details were taken into account whether there were wireless devices on the walls or not, desktop computers inside the classroom, laptop computers inside the classroom, whether students were allowed to use their mobile phones during the class, the use of any electronic devices, interactive whiteboards, and the use of textbooks or other types of ELT material.

One of the classes that was possible to observe was in a Technical school. It was a first year so the students' level of English was very basic. There were thirty-two students in the classroom and their ages went from twelve to fourteen. The class that the teacher was conducting was one on translating a text from a photocopy that described the parts of a computer. It was clear that they had to finish the translation they had started the previous class. When the lesson started, the teacher asked them to use the electronic dictionary already installed in their laptop computers. The dictionary is called Babiloo. It appeared that it was hard for the students to translate short sentences using those electronic dictionaries. Unfortunately, most of the students did not have the possibility to use their computers because they were broken or with low batteries. For this reason, one student went to the library to ask for paper dictionaries and in that way they could keep on doing the activity. As regards wireless devices, there were two on the wall next to the

entrance door. Apparently, those devices provided with internet and intranet connection, but the teacher did not ask the students to use online translators.

Moreover, devices such as mobile phones were not allowed to use in class, and that was made clear by the teacher at the beginning of the lesson. As the class was watched only one time, it could not be seen if they use textbooks every day. Besides, students were not observed using other types of ELT material. As regards the students' attitude, it could be seen that they were a little bit naughty. It is thought that they misbehave not because of the lack of interest in the subject but due to the lack of material to do the task. However, the students who were doing the activities were very interested in the topic of the text they were translating.

Another class that was observed was in a secondary school with no specific orientation. There were twenty-one students in the classroom and their ages went from sixteen to eighteen. The first aspect that was noticed and called very much attention was to see the teacher entering the classroom carrying a CD player, which meant the students were going to do listening activities. The class that the teacher was conducting was one on reading comprehension of a text taken from the book *Headway* 3rd edition. Most students had a photocopy of the book and seemed to be interested in doing the activity. Apparently, it was not a new topic since there were no grammar explanations so it was clear that the topic was presented the previous class. As it was a reading comprehension text, first the students heard a native speaker reading the text and then they had to answer the questions suggested by the book.

Regarding wireless devices, there were two on the wall next to the entrance door as in the room of the first class observed. It was also noticed that there were students trying to use their mobile phones to check vocabulary but they were not allowed to use them in class. As in the previous lesson, students did not make use of other types of ELT material apart from the textbook. As regards the students' attitude, it could be seen that they paid attention all the time and that they did the activities without misbehaving. Besides, the teacher checked every student's answers to see if they made spelling mistakes.

Books can tell a lot about the use of technologies and all the benefits of using them in the classroom; however, the realism posed by the teachers interviewed and the realism watched in the lessons observed show a different reality to the one described by various authors. It cannot be denied that, there are many positive aspects of integrating technology in ELT that teachers take into account when deciding to use technology in

their lessons. However, there are a lot of negative aspects that teachers have to face before determining to apply technology or not.

It was possible to observe that teachers have the initiative of using at least one technological device that could make the class more appealing for students. Despite the fact that problems such as lack of internet access, netbooks broken, students' misbehaviour, among other problems may arise, some teachers are convinced that the use of technological tools in English Language Teaching can make the difference.

9. Conclusion

The arguments presented about the implementation of technology in ELT suggest that there are a great number of advantages and disadvantages. Different visions were discussed of how useful it could be to integrate technological tools to teach a language and the processes and details teachers need to consider and think about before making use of online materials, electronic devices, etc. It is also clear that teachers are aware of the existence of a wide range of possibilities that the web offers to teach languages.

However, as it was mentioned above, the use of internet is magnificent but it has to be used with responsibility and professionalism. Most secondary schools in San Salvador de Jujuy have internet or intranet connection and students have their own netbooks. However, there is something else that has to be done to incorporate not only netbooks but also other types of resources in every class. It was also possible to analyze different points of view, concepts and ideas of distinct authors about technology integration and teachers' opinions regarding the pros and cons of technology usage. Classroom observation allowed to witness teachers' real experiences when implementing technology in ELT and the interviews gave the possibility to hear their actual opinions about the topic of investigation.

Furthermore, there is evidence on how the Argentinian government is trying to implement a program in every secondary schools of the whole country and the good and bad results of that implementation. Besides, the results of this investigation show that there will be other technological tools in the future and students will have other opportunities as when decades ago the audio-lingual method provided with technics to teach a foreign language in language labs.

To summarize, there are many advantages and disadvantages when making use of technology in English Language Teaching. However, teachers' decision whether to use technology or not in their lessons has to do with the objective that is to help students' succeed in the use of the English language. Besides, teachers are convinced that the methodologies and strategies to teach a language as well as cultural exposure are necessary, and if they apply teaching strategies and technology usage properly, the goals to aid students in increasing their self-reliance and have a good command of the language will be achieved.

9.1 Difficulties encountered

The main difficulty encountered was when trying to obtain the data in state-run schools. It was hard to find teachers willing to share their experiences as language

teachers. As regards the observation of the classes, it was very difficult to find teachers who would accept the request to watch their lessons. Unfortunately, in most cases it was not possible to watch the lessons because head teachers did not give their permission to enter the school buildings. The situation in private schools was similar; regrettably, teachers did not like the idea of being observed in their lessons.

9.2 Final Comments

Despite the drawbacks faced, I am convinced that all those obstacles are very useful as a learning lesson for future investigations. As a final point it is important to highlight that this work allowed me to realize the importance of Research for the professional and personal life. I think this is the beginning to take initiative and continue leading investigations that contribute to the English Language teaching process and share the results with colleagues, students and school authorities.

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11. Appendix

Interview (Sample)

1. Do you think it is important to use technology in English language teaching? Why or why not?

I believe it is important to use technology in ELT since this may enrich our lessons and not only motivate but also encourage our students to learn the language.

2. What kind of opportunities does it offer?

It can offer many different opportunities for both teachers and students, as regards teachers it can reduce the use of paper for tasks or tests; in the same way, it can simplify the evaluation stages using interactive material. As for students, it can help them to demonstrate their abilities to use different tools and programs as well as to develop original ideas for the presentation of the different tasks. Moreover, the use of technology may reinforce the collaborative work in the classroom and strengthen relationships while working since students themselves may help each other at the moment of working with it.

3. In what way do you think technology is motivating?

To my point of view, technology is motivating for the information and the amount of interesting material you can provide your students' with. By means of it, students can realize that learning a language is not that difficult and thus they can engage even more in the learning process.

4. What technologies would you say are normalized in your daily teaching practice?

I would say that the use of the computer is the most used in my daily teaching practice specially some programs and the electronic dictionaries due to the fact that I teach ESP at Technical Schools.

5. What technologies would you say are normalized in your learners' daily life?

I would say that the technologies that are normalized in the majority of my students' daily life are the use of mobile phones together with the use of the netbooks but only for playing video games or listening to music.

6. What influences your decisions to use or not to use different technologies for language teaching?

I decided to use technology for language teaching in order to call my students' attention since their interests are based on it and most technology tools are familiarized with English language teaching.

7. Does your school offer opportunities to use technology in your English classes? If so, can you describe which those opportunities are?

Recently, one of the schools I work in has offered me the opportunity to use internet in the classroom and to use the network within the class. Unfortunately, most schools do not have the necessary tools to work with and some do not even have a plug to connect a tape recorder. The netbooks have facilitated me the use of technology in the class since students can charge the batteries at home.

8. What kind of online activities can be appealing for your students?

I believe that grammar and vocabulary interactive activities are the most useful online activities for learning. Students are engaged with social networks the use of learning programs with a similar format are of great interest for them such as Edmodo and the use of blogs.

9. Do you know if your students make use of technology outside the language classroom? What is it that they do with it?

I am certainly sure they do so, they usually tell me about it. They tend to play video games in their mobile phones and netbooks, and they also chat with friends by text or by Facebook.

10. Do you think that the use of technology can be time saving? Why or why not?

I believe it can be both time saving and a waste of time. I am quite sure that it can be time saving in the classroom once you have put everything together and you are ready to work because you can use the netbooks, a projector or a tape recorder to develop your class but sometimes students may forget their netbooks, or they may not know how to work with certain computer programs or they just cannot catch up a listening and then you have to figure it out and solve this time consuming issues. I consider that if every school had their own language classrooms and all the necessary technology in it, language lessons would be more fruitful and technology itself would be time saving.

11. Do you think that teacher training is a vital factor in the uptake of new technology?

Definitely! Otherwise, we would not be able to update ourselves to the new technological advances.

12. Which, in your opinion, are the factors that would contribute to the successful integration of technology?

There are many factors that would contribute to the successful integration of technology such as schools providing a language classroom, or at least the tools to work with in the classroom since some teachers have to carry their own tape recorders or projectors from one school to the other.

13. Do you consider that the use of technology improves teaching and enhance learning?

Yes, I do. Otherwise, teachers become obsolete and thus lessons are extremely ordinary and boring.

14. What kind of ELT materials do you use in your classes?

In order to teach a topic, I usually use images of tools and objects for fixing when teaching vocabulary, the students check meaning by using their workshop materials. As regards reading, I use product reviews taken from articles and some machinery manuals. Furthermore, I use photocopies from different books and in order to practice any topic I use the Paint program, the Microsoft word program, the Windows Media processor and the electronic dictionary to practice translation and pronunciation of words and texts.

15. Do you combine technology and course books?

Yes, I do. I try to complement each other so as to make the lesson more interesting for students.

16. Do you create your own online material?

Not at the moment, because there is no internet connection at schools and some students do not have an internet connection at home. So, I try to do everything at school.

17. Have you ever used electronic dictionaries?

Yes, I have. Students find it useful to work with for their translation activities or just to check meaning. My students use electronic dictionaries.

18. Have you ever used a Word-processing software to practice vocabulary? If so, which one have you used?

Yes, I have. I've used the Microsoft word processor to make pictonaries so that students have their own dictionary.

19. Have you ever used an interactive whiteboard? If so, do you think it is a useful device? Why?

No, I haven't. But I would like to use one since I think it can be very useful and attractive for students.

20. Have you ever planned a lesson using portable devices such as mobile phones, MP3 players, digital cameras or digital recorders?

Yes. My students from first year had to describe their mobile phones not only their special features but also compare their specifications with their classmates'. As for my second year students, I asked them to use a digital recorder to present a project.

21. What do you think of Virtual Learning Environments?

From my very own experience, I believe that Virtual Learning Environments are very interesting and useful ways to develop our skills and abilities in technology use, as well as to practice the use of different software programs for learning and studying.

Classroom Observation Worksheet (Sample)

Teacher in charge of the class: Ana Valeria Llanes
 School: E.T.P. N.º 1
 Number of students: 32 (1st year)

Observation worksheet	Yes	No
Active group	X	
Wireless connections inside the classroom	X	
Desktop computers inside the classroom		X
Laptop computers (more than twenty)		X
Laptop computers (less than twenty)	X	
Use of mobile phones inside the classroom		X
Use of mobile phones to do activities		X
Use of electronic material	X	
Use of Interactive boards		X
Use of course books		X
Use of other types of teaching material		X

Notes

No internet access - The students have photocopies of a book. They are translating a text Babiloo (electronic dictionary). Students misbehave when teacher explains the task.

Teacher in charge of the class: Daniel Arroyo
 School: Bachillerato N.º 16, Pasa de Jona
 Number of students: 21 (5th year)

Observation worksheet	Yes	No
Active group	X	
Wireless connections inside the classroom	X	
Desktop computers inside the classroom		X
Laptop computers (more than twenty)		X
Laptop computers (less than twenty)	X	
Use of mobile phones inside the classroom		X
Use of mobile phones to do activities		X
Use of electronic material	X CD player	
Use of Interactive boards		X
Use of course books	X	
Use of other types of teaching material		X

Notes

No internet access. Students are not allowed to use their phones. Book: Headway 3rd edition