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THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO TEACH LANGUAGE SKILLS IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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1. INTRODUCTION

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has played an important role worldwide in the last decades. As Dedja (2015, p.42) stated, “today’s society, defined as the knowledge society, has taken an irreversible way, that the human communication revolution which has its origin precisely in the massive use of the internet and new technological devices” and the teaching of foreign language has been benefited from this revolution. Nowadays, “it is probably difficult to find a classroom in which learners have not been exposed to computer technology” (Budiman, 2020, p. 247). In the fullness of time, as Sibi (2020, p.32) affirmed, “learners have slowly lost their interest in the traditional way of learning”. Since the advent of new technologies, the education sector has had to adapt its traditional methodologies to other updated methodologies that include new technologies as an important part of the teaching-learning process. Therefore, “teachers, learners and technology should form a lasting meaningful alliance” (Negoescu & Boștină-Bratu, 2016, p.26), a beneficial alliance that builds new learning opportunities.

The wide range of information, ICT tools and resources available for teachers to use in the foreign language classroom provide them with the most powerful tools to make lessons motivational, attractive and memorable. Mullamaa (2010, p.42) referred to a Chinese proverb affirming that “teachers open the door, but you must enter by yourself”, being teachers’ task to encourage students.

Naciri (2019, p.2) stated that “foreign language classrooms are the key to daily life setting in which language acquisition occurs”. In this line, as Budiman (2020, p. 260) exposed, “from free web resources and commercial programs that may support learners to practice and improve specific language skills (writing, speaking, reading, and listening) and language aspects (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary)”, these tools provide practitioners with the potential to change the process of teaching and learning foreign languages, leading the transformation of education around the world.

This is precisely what the present study attempts to achieve in the form of an evaluation of the current situation regarding the use of new technologies to teach language skills in primary education foreign language classrooms. The analysis centres on fundamental features regarding four major aspects: teachers’ perception over the effects that the use of ICT in the foreign language classroom has on their students’ level of linguistic competence, the factors influencing foreign language teachers in Spain to use ICT tools and resources when teaching the target language, the level of confidence and ICT skills of Spanish teachers using new technologies in the foreign language classroom, and the ICT resources foreign language teachers use to develop the different language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In the second section of the investigation, a comprehensive picture of Information and Communication Technologies in the educational sector as a useful

tool to develop students' competencies and language skills is devoted through the analysis of previous studies about the use of ICT in the educational system.

Section three begins with the justification of the investigation, greatly related to previous studies where the methodology used in the present study is detailed. Encompassed by the methodology, the objectives of the study, the research questions, detailed information about the sample participating in the study, the possible variables regarding personal and professional aspects of the participants, the instruments designed, validated and administered and the data collection procedure and the analysis of the data are outlined.

In the fourth section, prime focus is awarded to the results and discussion of the research, providing clear tables and graphs that elucidate data and percentages encompassing five main sections related to samples' personal information and a section related to each of the objectives and research questions of the study.

In line with the results, a final section reports on the principal conclusions of the quantitative and qualitative investigation including the limitations of the study and lines for further research.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Since the advent of the Internet in 1983 and the rapid evolution of ICT nowadays, they have unquestionably watershed and influenced everyone's life. Information and Communication Technologies have added a twist to the way people collect and process information, use information for any purpose and communicate with others worldwide. Hence, following Daniels' words (2002) as cited in Alkamel & Chouthaiwale (2018, p.30), "Information and Communication Technology is considered to be one of the basic building blocks of modern society" and therefore, it has become an incipient field of scientific research.

This section presents a review of recent literature on four main aspects regarding Information and Communication Technologies: the definition of ICT (section 2.1), typologies of ICT in education (2.2), the use of ICT in the educational field and ICT (2.3) and language development, including the latter four language skills - i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing (2.4).

2.1. Definition of ICT

The definition of the term Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has experienced slight modifications during the last decades as a result of the growth of technology. Consequently, its definition has been developed throughout the years as detailed by researchers such as Negoescu & Boștină-Bratu (2016), and older guides of UNESCO cited by Alkamel & Chouthaiwale (2018), Andreiko et al. (2021) and

García & Marin (2013, cited in López Henao, 2017), providing UNESCO with its completest definition in 2009. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), defined ICT in 2009 through its book *Guide to Measuring Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Education* as Information and Communication Technologies, as follows:

Information and communication technologies (ICT) is defined as a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to transmit, store, create, share or exchange information. These technological tools and resources include computers, the Internet (websites, blogs and emails), live broadcasting technologies (radio, television and webcasting), recorded broadcasting technologies (podcasting, audio and video players, and storage devices) and telephony (fixed or mobile, satellite, visio/video-conferencing, etc.) (2009, p.120).

2.2. Typologies of ICT

Taking into consideration the definition of ICT detailed by UNESCO (2009), Information and Communication Technologies encompass an ample variety of different tools and resources. These devices, supplies and software promote linguistic skills practice as a result of using ICT activities, games and simulations (Dedja, 2015) in the language classroom.

Many researchers in the educational field have brought with them a classification of Information and Communication Technologies tools and resources that can be used in the teaching and learning process. Although some authors classify

ICT tools into two general categories (Alkamel & Chouthaiwale, 2018), namely, non-web-based and web-based learning tools, some others increase the list of tools and resources taking into consideration mobile applications (Budiman, 2020), and other specific technologies including computer, multimedia, telecommunication and computer network technology (Aeni et al., 2021). Hence, a detailed classification of ICT tools and resources has been compiled and is detailed in the following paragraphs.

Non-web-based tools are considered those software, tools and resources that do not require an internet connection to operate. Non-web-based tools include classroom equipment such as monitor screens, overhead projectors, scanners, printers, speakers, data processors, keyboards, mouse, films, storage media (hard disks, pen drives and memory cards), multimedia technology (sound and video players, digital cameras), telecommunication technology including radio, television, telephones, among many others.

On the contrary, web-based tools are considered those tools and resources that require an internet connection to operate and they contribute to implementing creative and affordable learning opportunities in the classroom (Khan, 2005, as cited in Alkamel & Chouthaiwale, 2018). Web-based tools include classroom equipment such as computers, laptops, interactive whiteboards and tablets; learning web resources such as online dictionaries, writing labs, e-mail, Youtube, Skype, Quizziz, Grammarly, Webnode, Schoology, e-journals, e-magazines, podcasting, etc; social platforms

including Facebook, Edmodo, Twitter and blogs; and classroom management platforms as Google classroom or ClassDojo as examples. Granting that computers can be said to be the most common ICT tool used in the classroom, the recent inversions of educational ministries in Information and Communication Technologies for schools have included a great number of tablets to be used during classroom routines and activities with a clear purpose.

2.3. The use of ICT in the educational field

The field of education in general is in permanent evolution and transformation in order to encounter the revolution the digital era has brought to society. Education has the commitment to prepare and readjust itself in order to be congruent with the globalized society learners are involved in (Isisag, 2012). Although prior studies have driven discussion over the use of ICT in education and the high exposition of learners to screens, some authors as Budiman (2020, p. 248) have declared that “governments in most developing countries have responded to the worldwide proliferation of ICT by initiating national programs to introduce computer technology into education”.

A large number of existing studies in the literature have provided the advantages and educational potential that ICT raise in the educational field. As a precise example, a qualitative study was conducted by Braslauskienė, Šmitienė & Vismantienė (2017), on the advantages of ICT use in primary education and how ICT influence students' and teachers' experience in the teaching-learning process, providing shreds of

evidence for conscious and unconscious learning, active lessons, the extent websites that offer educational practice outside schools and the advantages ITC offer to learners' specific educational needs, this latter as a key point in the use of ICT in education exposed by Negoescu & Boștină-Bratu (2016). Furthermore, some other authors have also suggested that the use of ICT in education brings “enjoyment, acquisition of knowledge and motivation” (Montelongo & Herter, 2010; and Zhong & Appleman, 2014, as cited in Fernández Batanero et al., 2021, p. 8); “offer students the opportunity to communicate, collaborate, and interact with course materials in different ways” (Negoescu & Boștină-Bratu, 2016, p. 23); and “provide interaction between teachers and learners, provide comprehensible input and output, help learners to develop critical thinking skills” (Naciri, 2019, p. 4).

Taking into consideration all the previous advantages of the use of ICT in the educational field, some authors have discussed the teaching transformation Information and Communication Technologies have originated, declaring that “Technology and digital tools are transforming teaching methods” (Andreiko et al., 2021, p. 13). Pedagogy has been unquestionably influenced by technology transforming classroom communication and educational strategies in the classroom (Gilakjani, 2013, as cited in Naciri, 2019). As Ibrahim (2010) as cited in Drigas & Charami (2014) discusses, ICTs have transformed the teaching-learning process, from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach, also suggesting that the roles of learners in the classroom have suffered a turn of 180 degrees “from passive

to active with the integration of technology” (Ozerol, 2009, as cited in Gilakjani, 2017, p. 98).

Despite the fact that there are more advantages than disadvantages on the use of Information and Communication Technologies in the educational field, an important aspect to be remarkable is that, as Budiman (2020, p. 248) stated, “the fact that the teachers tend to use traditional methods they are comfortable with makes a little use of technology”. Other authors have brought some information about the background of the problem and have considered the relationship between the usage of ICT in the classroom and teachers’ level of ICT competence. In order to implement technology in the classroom, teachers need to be skilled and confident not only for the simple application of technologies in the classroom but also for the complete and meaningful teaching-learning process (Bin Noordan & Yunus, 2022) and concluding that schools and educational institutions that encounter difficulties and are quiescent in integrating technology in their classrooms, they “will be unable to meet the needs of knowledge-based societies and as a result will not survive the change in paradigm of education” (O’Neil, Singh & O’Donoghue, 2004, p.320, as cited in Al-Mahrooqi & Troudi, 2014, p.1).

2.4. ICT and foreign language development

Technological advances and the challenges of a globalized world have led to an educational transformation in which Information and Communication Technologies are one of the key points. As a consequence, ICTs hand-by-hand with digital practices in the foreign language classroom have become one of the education community preferences in the digital society (Houcine, 2011). During the last decade, a proliferation of research and literature has been published on the role of Information and Communication Technologies in the teaching and learning process of a second/foreign language. Some studies have considered the numerous benefits ITCs contribute to language learning, the importance of teaching the language in context and the meaningful learning that can be acquired through the use of ICTs in the language classroom (Yunus, Aqsha & Pei, 2009; Mullamaa, 2010; Houcine, 2011; Isisag, 2012; Al-Mahrooqi & Troudi, 2014; Drigas & Charami, 2014; Dedja, 2015, Negoescu & Boștină-Bratu, 2016; Gilakjani, 2017 and Alkamel & Chouthaiwale, 2018; Andreiko et al., 2021).

On the one hand, many academics acknowledge that using ICTs in the language classroom has several advantages for language learning. Following (Solanki & Shyamleel, 2012, as cited in Gilakjani, 2017, p.95), "Technology satisfies both visual and auditory senses of the learners", increases language retention (Yaverbaum, Kulkarni and Wood, 1997, as cited in Al-Mahrooqi & Troudi, 2014), facilitate students to learn at their own pace regulating their learning (Zamani Farahani, Bahamiriyani &

Sadeghi, 2015, as cited in Gilakjani, 2017), the use of technologies “make the learning process more interesting and challenging” (Mullamaa, 2010, p. 39), “more interactive, flexible and innovative” (Harper & Milman, 2016, as cited in Bin Noordan & Yunus, 2022, p. 2056). A study conducted by Yunus, Aqsha & Pei (2009) has revealed that students are conscious of the advantages ICTs provide in learning a second language such as helping them improving ICT skills, helping them to communicate and develop their linguistic knowledge.

On the other hand, the use of Information and Communication Technologies in language teaching provides teachers and students with an extensive number of up-to-date materials in the target language (Vález Vidal & Yamá, 2010, as cited in Pizarro Chacón & Cordero Badilla, 2013) that bring up to the language classroom an authentic context that could be inaccessible without the advancement and use of ICT in the educational institutions. The involvement of technologies in authentic language context and meaningful tasks offers students the possibility to put into practice in daily situations outside the language classroom what they learn inside (Towndrow and Vallance, 2004, as cited in Budiman, 2020).

In concordance with what has been previously elucidated, making students part of their language learning process as well as the tools used to be able to communicate with others worldwide involves a positive and unique motivational atmosphere in the language classroom. “Motivation plays a significant role in the process of learning any

language” (Sibi, 2020, p.31), and the contribution of ICTs to bring up students with new experiences has been an object of study considering the relationship between motivation and language learning. In the same line, a study by Theobald (2006:1) as cited in Mullamaa (2010, p.38), pointed out that “students need extrinsic tools to increase their motivation” that is, students stand in need to find meaning, purpose and importance about what they are accomplishing, learning and using in order to do so (Mullamaa, 2010). Moreover, Towndrow (2007) as cited in Budiman (2020, p.259) stated that “language teachers need to be clear about what they want their students to do or learn”.

2.4.1. Language skills development through technologies

As relevant as the four language skills are to learn and be able to communicate with others using a second/foreign language and the development of language skills through the implementation and use of Information and Communication technologies in the language classroom, there has been relatively little literature published compared with other fields in education. Despite this fact, data from several studies have identified that “the integration of technology into the classrooms considerably improves the learning and teaching of English language skills” (Gilakjani, 2017, p.95), covering receptive skills including listening and reading skills; and productive skills including speaking and writing skills.

2.4.1.1. Listening

Listening skill is considered “the primary process of learning any language” (Sibi, 2020, p.32) and one of the most challenging language skills to learn (Field, 2008; Lynch, 2009 & Ur, 1984, as cited in Spataro, 2015). The teaching and practice of listening comprehension has encountered a transformation during the last decades as a result of the role of Information and Communication Technology. In the process of teaching and learning listening skills, the exposure of students to different accents as native English speakers and non-native English speakers may be achieved through the use of ITCs (Jati, 2017), students hence becoming “active listeners in real life” (Amir, 2018, p.53).

Some studies, as cited in (Gilakjani, 2017, p.99-100), have been performed on developing listening skills using Information and Communication Technologies (Jones & Plass, 2002; Wagner, 2006; Diao, Chandler & Sweller, 2007; Field, 2008 and Mohamadkhani, Nazari Farokhi, and Nazari Farokhi, 2013). A study on the effect of using audio files on improving listening comprehension was conducted by the latter as cited in (Gilakjani, 2017, p. 99) demonstrating that the use of ICTs has a positive impact on listening skills. Helping learners to broaden their listening skills can be accomplished at the hand of exposure to audio materials (Houcine, 2011), digital stories, recordings, podcasts (Drigas & Charami, 2014), whiteboards, videos, presentations or websites (Amir, 2018).

2.4.1.2. Reading

The evolution of technologies has also affected the way students develop reading skills. Printed texts were the unique base by means reading skills were processed and learnt in the foreign language classroom. Fortunately, the influence of Information and Communication Technology has developed these circumstances into the use of digital tools and resources, ensuring that “learners comprehend comprehensions better” [sic] (Bin Noordan & Yunus, 2022, p. 2056).

Several years ago, studies were conducted to promote the use of ICTs in language classrooms to improve students’ reading abilities. A study performed by Karamti (2006) as cited in Bin Noordan & Yunus (2022) has concluded that students who were taught reading comprehension skills employing ICTs succeed in contrast to students who were taught reading comprehension technology-free. Furthermore, research conducted by Yudashevna & Tuhtayevich (2020) as cited in Bin Noordan & Yunus (2022, p.2064) on the positive effect of ICT on the English language learning and teaching, “concluded that ICT had benefitted the most on the students’ performances”.

Reading comprehension is considered a needed skill in the 21st century in which “the reader has an active role and employs cognitive skills” (Van Dijk; Kintsch, 1983 as cited in Fernández Batanero et al., 2021, p. 2), that can be easily developed through

the use of ICTs such as reading online newspapers, reading ebooks (Drigas & Charami, 2014; Sibi, 2020), interactive stories, storytelling and reading blog posts (Ohler, 2009; Tyner, 2014, as cited in Budiman, 2020). The demands of technology and the use of motivational and real-life tasks involved in the process of reading can “take all that stress away and turn it into enjoyment” (Castek, 2006, as cited in Drigas & Charami, 2014, p. 6).

2.4.1.3. Speaking

In the foreign language classroom, speaking skills usually “represent a challenge to the majority of students” (Naciri, 2019, p. 3) generating a concern for teachers and educational institutions. For the purpose of making themselves communicative competent, students should be provided with multiple situations where the target language is used (Jati, 2017) and is practised in real-life situations inside and outside of the classroom walls (Zakaria et al., 2019, as cited in Suryani & Argawati, 2023). Exposure to real-life situations can be easily achieved through the use of Information and Communication Technologies including digital videos, online speaking classes, producing films (Drigas & Charami, 2014), social media, podcasting (Naciri, 2019, p. 3-4) and collaborative tasks (González-Lloret, 2002) among others.

This view is supported by Jati (2017), who in his article *Perspective on ICT in teaching and learning listening & speaking in the 21st Century* argues that the use of

technology in the foreign language classroom has provided “richer resources, greater access to resources, greater interactivity and greater opportunities for the students to manipulate and use language” (Jati, 2017, p.18).

In the same line, a special mention can be made to González-Lloret (2020), who conducted tandem projects with students from two different institutions through collaborative technology-mediated tasks where the author advocates that in the course of telecollaboration “we can promote productive language output (spoken and written) and the type of interaction that facilitates language learning and motivates students to continue improving their language skills” (González-Lloret, 2020, p. 260).

2.4.1.4. Writing

Traditionally, any foreign language has comprised writing as the main skill to be developed. With the evolution of society and education practices, writing skill has lowered its presence in the language classroom to the same level as other language skills. Moving from paper-based lessons towards the use of new technologies in the language classroom has brought students new and challenging possibilities to learn and practice writing skills at the same time as they interact with other students (López Henao, 2017).

According to Hughes as cited in Cushing (2002, p.1) “the best way to test people’s writing ability is to get them to write”. With the boost and stimuli of using Information and Communication Technologies, writing production has been for students an easier and more accessible skill to be developed. As López Henao (2017, p. 40) stated in his research *The Influence of ICT in the Development of Writing Skills through an Online Platform*, “students have more time to think, rethink, revise, edit and incorporate feedback into their writing production” and “improve learners’ difficulties to provide students’ growth in the writing skill” with the use of Information and Communication Technologies in the foreign language classroom.

3. METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodology that has been used to carry on this case of study where the research design will be presented (section 3.1), detailed information will be exposed about the sample participating in the case of study (3.2), the variables regarding specific details about the sample that characterized the study will be disclosed (3.3), the instruments used to collect the data will be described (3.4), and finally the data collection (3.5) and the analysis of the data (3.6) will be developed.

3.1. Research design

3.1.1. Justification and relevance of the study

The development of Information and Communication Technologies in the Spanish educational field has led teachers to adapt themselves to the current educational moment: an education system in which the integration and use of ICTs are an essential part of the regular learning-teaching process. Information and Communication Technologies are increasingly still becoming a vital factor in the teaching and learning process of Spanish education and therefore, a fundamental and widespread interesting field to study. The results of the present study may provide a pearl of wisdom into the Spanish education system regarding the use foreign language teachers give to the ample technological tools and resources that are within their reach.

3.1.2. Objectives

The principal aim of this study is to get an insight into the current situation regarding the use of new technologies to teach language skills in primary education foreign language classrooms in the Spanish territory. Therefore, several objectives have been developed for the present study to be carried out:

1. *To appraise teachers' perception over the effects that the use of ICT in the foreign language classroom has on their students' level of linguistic competence.*

2. *To evaluate the factors influencing foreign language teachers in Spain to use ICT tools and resources in teaching the target language.*
3. *To determine the level of confidence and ICT skills of Spanish teachers using new technologies in the foreign language classroom.*
4. *To examine what ICT resources foreign language teachers use to develop the different language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.*

3.1.3. Research questions

Taking into consideration the four main objectives of the present study, four major research questions have been raised, each one to reach an answer to each of the research objectives developed.

- A. **RQ1:** *What is the relationship between the use of ICT and foreign language learning?*
- B. **RQ2:** *What are the main factors influencing foreign language teachers to use ICT resources in teaching?*
- C. **RQ3:** *Do foreign language teachers feel confident and skilled to implement ICT in the language classroom?*
- D. **RQ4:** *What ICT resources do Spanish foreign language teachers use to develop the four language skills?*

3.2. Sample

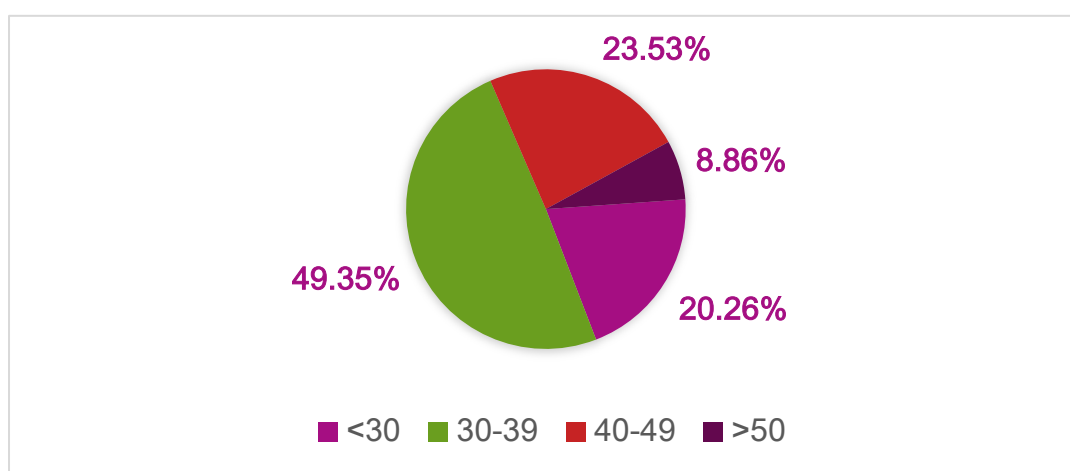
This study deals with a unique cohort under investigation that is, primary school foreign language teachers working within the Spanish territory. An initial total of three hundred and seven foreign language teachers (300 female, 6 male and a non-binary) participated in the study from different parts of the Spanish peninsula who responded to an online questionnaire provided although a single participant has been discarded due to her vague or null responses to open questions or selecting prefer not to say when the option was available. Therefore, the final and total of valid participants is three hundred and six foreign language teachers (299 female, 6 male and a nonbinary) being $n=306$ henceforth. The breakdown of the identification variables involved is contemplated in the following section.

3.3. Variables

In observing the large number of participants who have anonymously completed the questionnaires, sets of identification variables can be emphasized. The most important variables taking into consideration the type of study, the objectives and the research questions have been scrutinized in reference to the age of the participants (section 3.3.1), their gender (3.3.2), teachers' ICT level of competence (3.3.3), years of teaching experience (3.3.4) and the type of school (3.3.5) in which teachers work - i.e. state school, private school or semi-private school.

3.3.1. Age

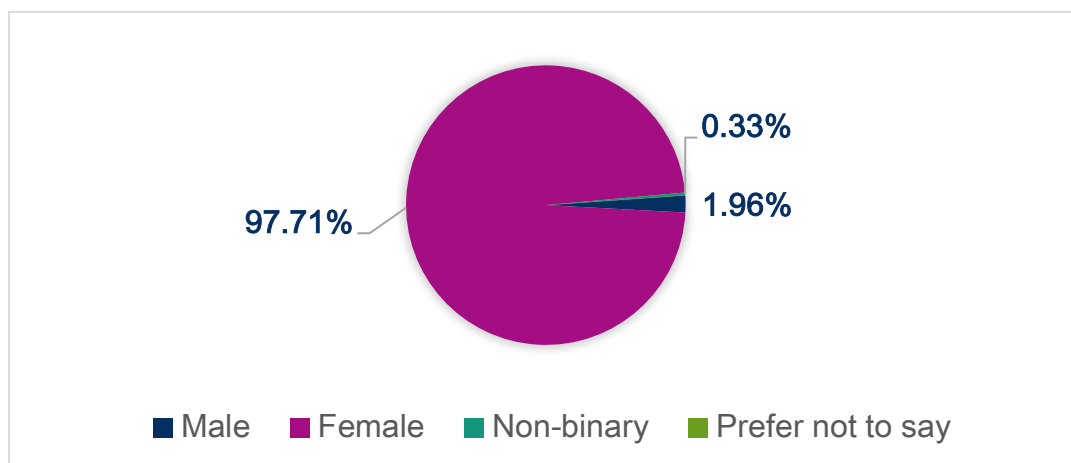
Regarding the age of the participants, there is a clear predominance of participants in the age group 30-39 (49.35%). Close to equal percentages are obtained for teachers under the age of 30 (20.26%) and 40-49 (23.53%), except for the teachers over the age of 50 which is identified as the smallest proportion (6.86%), (cf. Graph 1).



Graph 1. The age group of participants

3.3.2. Gender

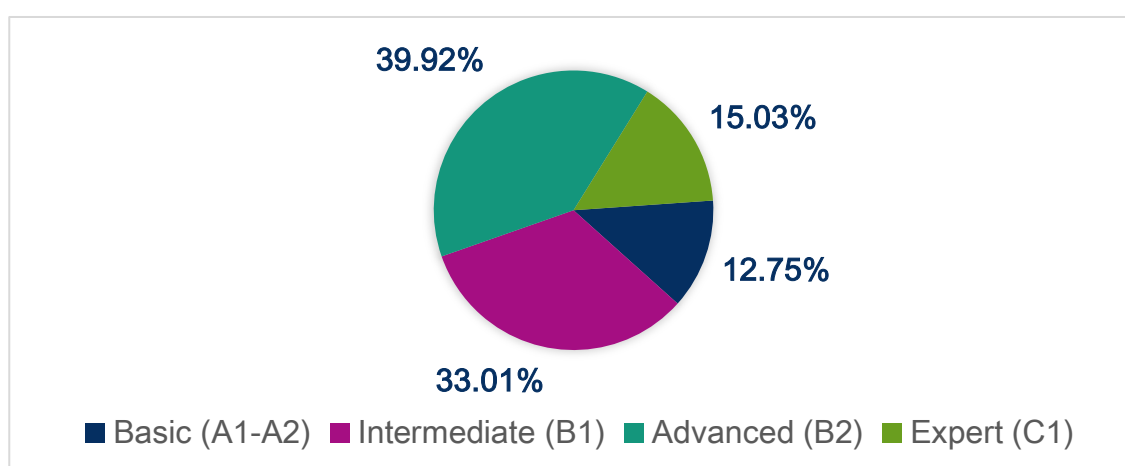
The unique cohort showed a considerably higher percentage of female (97.71%) than male (1.96%) or non-binary (0.33%) participants (cf. Graph 2). Although the variable of gender was initially to be studied, the outnumber of females in this study has made the variable of gender unconsidered. This high percentage phenomenon is closely associated with a statistical study carried out by the National Institute of Statistics (2022) which exhibits that the percentage of women language teachers has been increasing in recent years, representing 74.4% in the 2020-2021 academic year.



Graph 2. Gender of participants

3.3.3. Teachers' ICT level of competence

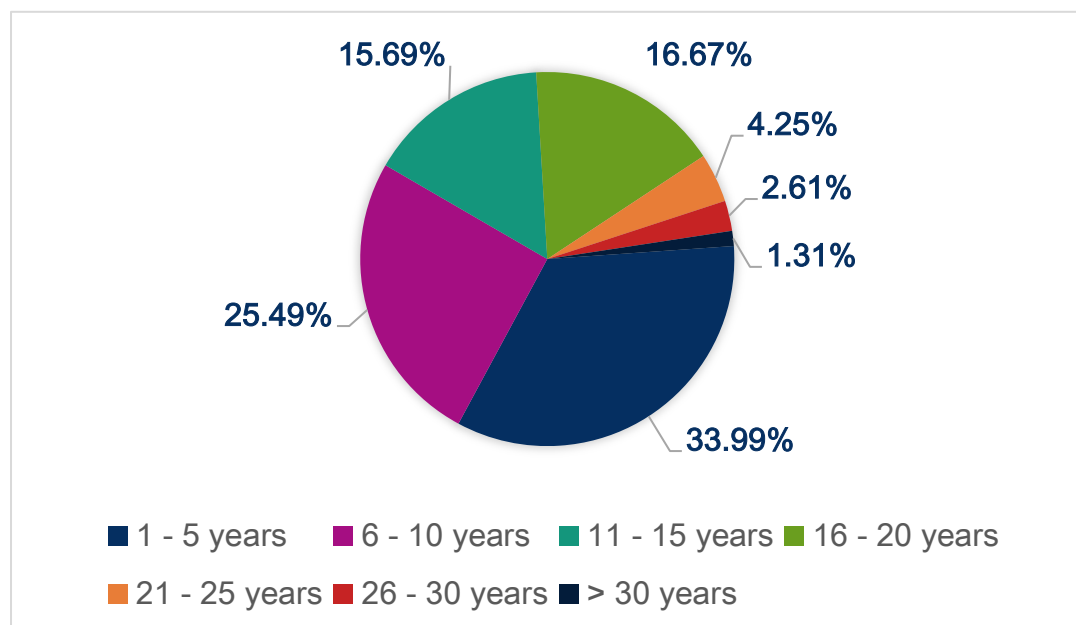
The majority of teachers consider themselves to have an advanced (39.22%) or an intermediate ICT level of competence (33.01%). On the contrary, slightly more than a quarter of all teachers considered themselves to have an expert level (15.03%) or a basic level of ICT competence (12.75%). (cf. Graph 3).



Graph 3. Teachers' ICT level of competence

3.3.4. Teaching experience

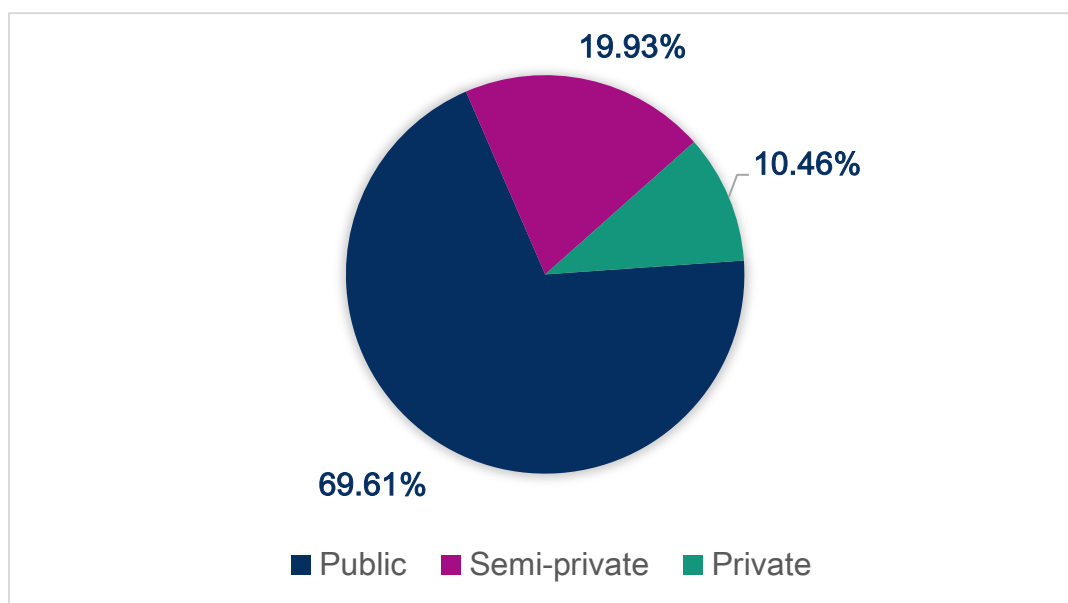
As a result of the information presented in Graph 1, it becomes apparent that a high percentage of teachers count on one to five years of teaching experience (33.99%), and six to ten years of experience (25.49%), both representing 59.48% of the lower range of age. Close to equal percentages are obtained for teachers with eleven and fifteen years of teaching experience (15.69%) and teachers with sixteen to twenty years of experience (16.67%). On the opposite side, teachers with twenty-one to twenty-five years of teaching experience (4.25%) and participants with twenty-six to thirty years of experience (2.61%). The smallest proportion is obtained for teachers with more than thirty years of experience, representing 1.31% of the total sample. (cf. Graph 4).



Graph 4. Sample's years of teaching experience

3.3.5. Type of school

It emerges that the most representative setting for teachers is public school (69.61%), decreasing in percentage when considering a semi-private setting (19.93%) and private setting (10.46%). (cf. Graph 5).



Graph 5. Type of school the sample work at

3.4. Instruments

Taking into consideration the cohort and many other aspects of the items in the instrument selected to support the posterior analysis of the data, a unique and anonymous online questionnaire through Google Forms has been provided to English as foreign language teachers within the Spanish territory. The questionnaire (Appendix 1) has not been translated into teachers' mother tongue (Spanish) as a consequence

of the level of language competence of the sample, skilled enough to fully comprehend the questions developed in the questionnaires as foreign language teachers.

The researcher-made online mixed questionnaire comprises a total of thirty-four closed-ended and open-ended questions regarding five main aspects: section number one comprises personal information about the sample including their age, gender, type of school they work at, level of ICT competence and teaching experience; section two includes questions about teachers' perception over the effects that the use of ICT in foreign language classroom have on students' level linguistic of competence; section three covers questions about the factors influencing teachers to use ICT tools and resources in teaching the target language; section four embraces questions about the level of confidence and ICT skills of teachers, and section five entails questions about the ICT resources teachers use to develop language skills. Considering the thirty-four questions submitted along the questionnaire, twenty-two questions were designed on a five-point Likert scale of agreement, six multiple-choice questions and six open questions were used to elicit more information about the main advantages of using ICTs compared to traditional teaching methods when teaching a foreign language, teachers' motivation to use ICTs in the language classroom and the different ICT tools and resources Spanish foreign language teachers use in their classrooms to develop students' language skills.

3.5. Data collection

In this section, three successive stages involved in the data collection process will be detailed. The first stage involves the meticulous design of the questionnaire used to collect the data in concordance with the four objectives and research questions of this study. Subsequently, the validation of the questionnaire with a small representative sample and the posterior slight modifications of the questionnaire. In the third stage, questionnaire administration will be described in addition to the data collection method used and data collection time, both as a conclusion of the present section.

3.5.1. Questionnaire design

The initial version of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) was piloted before its application with a small percentage of foreign language teachers, a total of six female participants. Thereafter, the participants involved in the piloting process reported their feedback to the researcher concluding that the time employed by the participants to complete the pilot questionnaire was between six and eight minutes in total. The feedback compiled about the questions forms, type of questions and answers, questionnaire structure, etc., were positive although a spelling mistake in the fourth possible option given to answer the target question (question 7) was reported to be corrected from “increate” to its correct form “increase”. However, four of the six

participants delivered that the questionnaire as a global was thought-provoking and the questions proposed were interesting.

3.5.2. Questionnaire validation

After the initial questionnaire was piloted, some modifications were made. In the presentation section of the questionnaire, some extra information was added to define the present study as part of a Master Dissertation and to indicate the time intervals participants approximately needed to complete the online questionnaire.

In section one, where the personal information of the participants was collected, the following sentence was employed as a heading to emphasise the importance of collecting personal information as personal information is vital to process and analyse the data accurately. In the same section, “prefer not to say” was added as a supplementary option about the gender of participants. In section two, some modifications were made: the verb “want” in question number seven was replaced by the verb “consider” to adequate the language and improve the readingness and the adjective “huge” was replaced by the adjective “large” for the same extent; a spelling mistake reported by one of the participants involved in the piloting process was corrected from “increate” to its correct form “increase” in question number seven; and the noun “usage” used in questions eight to eleven were replaced by the noun “use” in order to facilitate participants the total and easy comprehension of questions. In section

five, question twenty was modified following the same pattern as in question number seven mentioned above where the verb “want” was displaced by the verb “consider”. The final version of the online questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2.

3.5.3. Questionnaire administration

Prior to the administration of questionnaires, ten personal contacts were chosen to administer the questionnaire to their co-workers as part of the educative community along different Spanish autonomous communities. These personal contacts were meticulously selected taking into consideration the type of setting they would administrate the questionnaire: public, semi-private and private settings. In this sense, the sample would be representative. Furthermore, the final questionnaire was administrated to foreign language groups of teachers online and broadcasted through social media.

3.5.4. Data collection method

The data collection method employed to carry out this study was non-experimental since conditions were not manipulated but rather the phenomena of the use of new technologies to teach language skills in the foreign language classroom were explored in a natural manner finding out foreign language teachers’ opinions and attitudes through a questionnaire. The use of an online questionnaire permitted the registration and compilation of language teachers’ opinions and beliefs according to

the four research questions of this study, valid and heterogeneous information that was registered and compiled to be subsequently analysed.

3.5.5. Data collection time

The present research is considered to be cross-sectional as data has been collected at one point in time from a large number of subjects (Rindfleisch et al., 2008). As mentioned before, a total of three hundred and seven foreign language teachers participated in completing the online questionnaire in a short period, a total of ten days under these circumstances.

In addition to characterizing and detailing the instrument employed to collect the data, it is essential to provide a clear overall timeline of the procedure followed. The current data collection timeline involves several steps that have been fundamental to structure and collect the data accurately: literature review, instrument design, sample contact, pilot study, questionnaire modifications, data collection, data analysis and the establishment of results and conclusions.

Following Pérez Cañado (2011), a timeline table has been designed to provide a visual aid in which data collection steps are involved during 2023 (cf. Table 1).

Task	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
Literature review	X	X	X	X			
Instrument design					X		
Sample contact					X		
Pilot study						X	
Questionnaire modifications						X	
Data collection						X	
Data analysis						X	
Establishment of results and conclusions							X

Table 1. Study data collection time.

3.6. Data analysis

As a consequence of mixed research that involves qualitative and quantitative analysis, two different tools were used to analyse the data. On one hand, a statistical analysis of the data was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS¹ henceforth) tool in its 27.0 version (2021) for the reliability of the data following Cronbach's alpha in its analysis of consistency. On the other hand, qualitative

¹ SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) is a software package used for the analysis of statistical data related to social studies.

analysis was performed using Sketch Engine², an ultimate tool to analyse texts to identify, in this case, frequent words in participants' answers, and Atlas.ti³. In the following paragraphs, specific details in relation to the research objectives will be compiled.

Regarding the first objective (RQ1) in connection with the relationship between the use of ICT and foreign language learning, the second section of the questionnaire was quantitatively analysed using a SPSS tool and therefore, *Cronbach alpha* was calculated. In this section, questions were proposed to answer through a five-point Likert scale of agreement (questions one to eleven) except for question seven which was proposed as a multiple-choice question. This questionnaire structure facilitated statistical analysis of the data regarding central tendency measures such as mean, median and mode; and dispersion measures as range, low-high, standard deviation and variance.

² Sketch Engine is a corpus manager and text analysis software that enables researchers to explore how language works. Its algorithms analyse text corpora to identify instantly what is typical in language and what is rare, unusual or emerging usage. In this study, it has been used to analyse frequent words in participants' answers.

³ Atlas.ti is a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software that facilitates analysis of qualitative data for qualitative research, quantitative research, and mixed methods research. In this study, Atlas.ti has been used to analyse frequent words and create word clouds.

In respect of the second objective (RQ2) concerning the main factors influencing foreign language teachers to use ICT resources in teaching the target language, questions in section three were also proposed to be answered through a five-point Likert scale of agreement: questions twelve to nineteen, except for the last question of this section of the questionnaire concerning the different motivations that language teachers could have to use ICT tools and resources in the foreign language classroom that followed an open question structure. Therefore, questions twelve to nineteen were statistically analysed using the SPSS tool and calculating *Cronbach alpha*; and question number twenty was qualitatively analysed using Sketch Engine and Atlas.ti in order to find frequent words and common or similar answers that led to finding a pattern about what motivates foreign language teachers to use ICTs tools and resources in the foreign language classroom. At this point, it is essential to attach that answers to open questions have been translated into English language given that some of the participants' responses were given using their mother tongue (Spanish).

As regards the third objective (RQ3) in reference to the level of confidence and skills foreign language teachers have to implement ICTs in the language classroom, dichotomous questions (questions twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three and twenty-seven) were proposed in section number four of the questionnaire. In this section, questions twenty-one to twenty-six were also proposed following a five-point Likert scale of agreement. The third section of the questionnaire as a whole was statistically analysed using the SPSS tool where *Cronbach alpha* was calculated.

Finally, the fourth objective (RQ4) concerning the ICT resources that Spanish foreign language teachers use in their classrooms in order to develop students' language skills, question twenty-eight was provided as a question to be answered through a five-point Likert scale of agreement and question twenty-nine was written as a multiple-choice question. Hence, both questions were analysed using the SPSS tool where *Cronbach alpha* was calculated. On the contrary, questions thirty to thirty-four were administrated as open questions in order to analyse what tools and resources teachers use in order to develop the four skills of language. These last questions of the questionnaire were analysed using Sketch Engine and Atlas.ti, this last software to analyse positive, neutral and negative sentiments in their open responses to question 34.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this fourth section, the results of this study will be decoded and discussed in relation to the objectives and research questions. Therefore, in the same line as the instrument employed to collect the data was organized, the results and discussion of this study will be structured following five main sub-sections: sample's personal information (4.1), the use of ICTs in foreign language (4.2), factors influencing teachers to use ICT tools and resources (4.3), teachers' ICT skills (4.4) and ICT tools used in the foreign language classroom (4.5).

4.1. Sample Personal Information

The research participants of this study were three hundred and six volunteers from different autonomous communities along the Spanish territory. Due to the high percentage of women teachers who teach languages in the educative community, two hundred and ninety-nine of the participants in this study are women (97.71%), six participants are men (1.96%), and a single participant is identified as non-binary, representing the 0.33%.

Taking into consideration the three hundred and six participants, two hundred and thirteen teachers (69.61%) declared to work in the public educative sector, sixty-one teachers (19.93%) revealed to teach in semi-private settings and a lower percentage (10.46%) represented by thirty-two participants who pointed out to work in private settings. Data and figures provided by Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional (2021), the Spanish Ministry of Education during the 2021/2022 school year revealed that 67.28% of non-university education settings are public schools. Moreover, the figures presented by the Statistical Commission of the Education Sector Conference stated that 95.16% of primary education schools are public in contrast to the lower percentage (4.84%) of semi-private or private schools that offer primary education in their settings. This may explain why a higher percentage of the participants involved in this study declared to work in public schools compared to the 30.39% of the participants who work in semi-private or private schools. (cf. Table 2).

	Total	Public	Percentage	Private	Percentage
Sample of study	306	213	69.61	93	30.39
Non-university settings	28,470	19,155	67.28	9,315	32.72
Primary Education settings	10,260	9,764	95.16	496	4.84

Table 2. Percentages of Primary Education public, semi-private and private schools in Spain.

Regarding the age of the participants, approximately half of the sample are in their thirties (49.35%, corresponding to one hundred and fifty-one teachers), seventy-two participants are in their forties (23.53%), sixty-two participants are in their twenties (20.61%), and twenty-one teachers are above fifty years old representing the 6.86% of the total. Based on the results about the total years of teaching experience, they are vastly connected to the results obtained about participants' age range. Hundred and four teachers (33.99%) stated to have between one and five years of experience, and seventy-eight participants (25.49%) stated to have between six years of teaching experience, both representing a total of 59.48% of the participants. This may explain why they give these segments such a high rating. Furthermore, close to equal percentages are established by forty-eight teachers (15.69%) with eleven to fifteen years of experience and fifty-one teachers with sixteen to twenty years of experience (16.67%) respectively. Moreover, thirteen participants (4.25%) stated to have between twenty-one and twenty-five years of teaching experience and eight participants with twenty-six to thirty years of experience (2.61%). The smallest proportion is obtained

by four teachers with more than thirty years of experience, representing 1.31% of the total sample. (cf. Table 3).

	Age				Years of teaching experience						
	<30	30-39	40-49	>50	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	>30
Total	62	151	72	21	104	78	48	51	13	8	4
%	20.61	49.35	23.53	6.86	33.99	25.49	15.69	16.67	4.25	2.61	1.31

Table 3. Table 2: Relation between the age of participants and their total years of teaching experience.

Participants were also questioned about the level of ICT competence they considered to have. Hundred and twenty teachers (39.22%) consider themselves to have an advanced level of ICT competence, hundred and one teachers (33.01%) consider themselves to have an intermediate level of competence, forty-six teachers (15.03%) selected to have an expert level of competence and thirty-nine participants (12.75%) consider they perform their skills at a basic level of ICT competence. Taking as a reference the European teaching digital competence framework, Spain has recently launched, for all its autonomous communities, levelled training courses adapted to the Spanish educative context and current legislation for all teachers in the Spanish-regulated educational system (BOE, 2020). These training courses are organized in six different levels of digital competence that teachers involved in the Spanish educational system must acquire to adapt themselves to the current educational needs and perform their teaching functions. Digital progression levels are

set from A1 (novices) to C2 (pioneers). Based on the data collected, it seems that Spanish foreign language teachers consider themselves to perform skilled ICT practices since a high percentage of the sample (72.23%) is considered to have an intermediate or advanced level of digital competence.

4.2. ICTs in foreign language teaching

In the second section of the questionnaire, participants were asked about different aspects regarding the use of ICTs when teaching a foreign language. The results of this section are predominantly positive, insinuating that Spanish foreign language teachers are aware of the positive effects of incorporating ICT tools and resources into their language classrooms. A great majority of teachers (87.25%) strongly agree or agree with the facts that ICT facilitates language teaching and learning (question 2), the use of ICT in the language classroom contributes to a better understanding and acquisition of the English language (81.37%) (question 3), that ICT promotes autonomous learning (71.56%) (question 5) and that having positive attitudes towards the use of ICTs in the classroom is essential for language teachers (85.29%) (question 4). These results are in concordance with the outcomes from question 1 about how often teachers use ICT resources in the foreign language classroom. Statistically analysing this question, it can be said that language teachers always or frequently use ICT resources in their language classrooms. Many studies (Yunus, Aqsha & Pei, 2009; Mullamaa, 2010; Al-Mahrooqi & Troudi, 2014; Gilakjani, 2017; Bin Noordan & Yunus, 2022) have discussed the influence of new technologies

on students' language learning acquisition. Based on their teaching experience participants in this study believe ICTs have a positive influence on students' language learning process (question 6). (cf. Table 4).

	Standard							
	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Mean	Median	Mode	Deviation	Variance
Q1	1	5	4	3.921	4	5	1.008	1.016
Q2	1	5	4	4.346	4.5	5	0.775	0.600
Q3	1	5	4	4.179	4	4	0.835	0.698
Q4	1	5	4	4.274	4	5	0.839	0.704
Q5	1	5	4	3.986	4	4	0.912	0.832
Q6	1	5	4	4.022	4	4	0.803	0.645
Q8	1	5	4	3.261	3	3	1.029	1.059
Q9	1	5	4	4.437	5	5	0.722	0.522
Q10	1	5	4	3.741	4	4	0.865	0.749
Q11	1	5	4	3.310	3	3	0.950	0.903

Table 4. Cronbach Alpha analysis of Likert scale questions in section 2 of the questionnaire.

Taking into account the positive results of previous questions regarding the use of ICT in the foreign language classroom and teachers' perceptions over the influence of digital tools and resources during the language teaching-learning process, question 7 has provided clear results on the main advantages of using ICTs compared to

traditional teaching methods for teaching English as a foreign language under their point of view. Among other advantages, eight out of ten participants stated the benefits ICT provide on the increment of students' motivation (cf. Table 5).

<i>Question 7</i>	Total of participants	Total percentage
Active learning	195	63.73
Immediate feedback	178	58.71
Large number of digital activities, games and resources	247	80.72
Increase students' motivation	261	85.29
Others	14	4.58

Table 5. Results of the advantages of using ICT in foreign language teaching (Q7).

Moreover, additional advantages over the use of ICT in the language classroom have been shared by participants highlighting the outstanding possibilities ICTs can provide to help students with special needs as adjusting activities and resources to their learning rhythm. The opportunity to listen to native speakers online, maintain communication with students from other countries, find realia for classroom activities, receive lots of inputs such as hearing real English through videos and audio and enjoy ICTs just for individual experience and development, are for teachers among the most potentials advantages of using ICT in the language classroom.

Regarding language skills, results over questions 8 to 11 evidence that foreign language teachers truthfully consider that receptive skills (listening and reading) can be better developed through the use of ICT tools than productive skills (speaking and writing) (cf. Table 3 above). This might be explained by the high percentage of written and audio-based resources available online for language teaching compared to other types of resources and materials.

4.3. Factor influencing teachers to use ICT tools and resources

With the exception of the numerous advantages that ICTs provide to the educational field, the results from questions 12 to 15 reveal that teachers have clear preferences when they use ICT tools and resources in their classrooms. The results from questions 12 to 15 emphasise the factors influencing teachers to use ICTs as they exhibit that teachers would rather use Information and communication technologies to find and download relevant materials for their classes (question 12), to design activities online using different websites and platforms (question 13), and to prepare presentations as visual aids for their students (question 14) than use ITCs to provide feedback to their students (question 15) or communication exchange with them at any point of the teaching-learning process (question 15). (cf. Table 6).

Standard

	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Mean	Median	Mode	Deviation	Variance
Q12	1	5	4	4.539	5	5	0.677	0.459
Q13	1	5	4	3.369	5	5	0.812	0.659
Q14	1	5	4	4.140	4	5	1.022	1.045
Q15	1	5	4	3.274	3	3	1.149	1.321
Q16	1	5	4	3.133	3	3	1.172	1.375
Q17	1	5	4	3.140	3	3	1.152	1.327
Q18	1	5	4	4.062	4	5	0.897	0.805
Q19	1	5	4	4.052	4	5	0.963	0.928

Table 6. Cronbach Alpha analysis of Likert scale questions in section 3 of the questionnaire.

Furthermore, question 18 shows that the use of ICT increases teachers' productivity in terms of planning, assessing, creating or finding what suits best for their students. This may explain the results obtained from question 19 as the majority of teachers believe that ICT tools and resources optimize their time when planning activities for their classes, reducing the amount of time needed to plan lesson activities or anything related to classroom performances.

In addition, question 20 about teachers' motivations to use ICT tools and resources in the foreign language classroom demonstrates that for teachers, students are the centre of the teaching process, and their motivation performs an essential role

The 98.04% of participants declared to have internet access at home (question 21). Close to an equal percentage of participants (97.71%) stated they also have internet access in their settings to teach the foreign language (question 22). Moreover, 95.95% of teachers affirmed they also have access to digital tools such as computer tablets or mobile phones to prepare their classes (question 23). Undoubtedly, the access to internet and ICT resources at home and in their settings facilitate teachers' ICT skills development, promoting the professional growth of teachers and the development of student's foreign language learning. (cf. Table 7).

	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Prefer not to say	Percentage
Q21	300	98.04	5	1.63	1	0.33
Q22	299	97.71	5	1.63	2	0.66
Q23	293	95.75	11	3.59	2	0.66
Q27	299	97.71	7	2.29	0	0

Table 7. Results over the internet access, access to digital tools and ICT skills improvement

The use of ICT tools at home and in their settings facilitates teachers' ICT skills development but it does not necessarily entail confidence in their use. Almost the totality of the participants stated that they often or always find easy to use the internet for lesson preparation (question 24) together with the use of a computer for lesson preparation (question 25). This may be explained as the 72.23% of the participants declared to have an intermediate or advanced level of ICT competence. (cf. Table 8).

	Standard							
	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Mean	Median	Mode	Deviation	Variance
Q24	1	5	4	4.405	5	5	0.848	0.720
Q25	1	5	4	4.470	5	5	0.806	0.649
Q26	1	5	4	4.349	5	5	0.848	0.719

Table 8. Cronbach Alpha analysis of Likert scale questions in section 4 of the questionnaire

Regarding teachers' confidence when using ICT tools in the classroom, the results reveal a clear majority of teachers who feel often or always confident when using new technologies to teach the target language (question 26) (cf. Table 8). Moreover, the results also evidence that although teachers feel positive, convinced and confident when using ICTs, the majority of participants (96.4%) have considered to improve their ICT level of competence in the future (question 27). (cf. Table 7).

4.5. ICT tools use in the foreign language classroom

In the fourth and last section of the questionnaire, participants were asked about the ICT resources they use in their foreign language classrooms in order to develop the different skills involved in language learning and acquisition: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Teachers stated to often incorporate new technologies in their language classes (question 28) (cf. Table 9).

	Standard							
	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Mean	Median	Mode	Deviation	Variance
Q28	1	5	4	3.924	4	4	0.896	0.804

Table 9. Cronbach Alpha analysis of Likert scale questions in section 5 of the questionnaire

Based on teachers' experience, participants shared their ICT tools preferences. The results of question 29 (cf. Table 9) evidence that teachers have clear preferences on the use of ICT tools to see online content such as YouTube or BBC Learning representing the 83.66%, the use of ICT tools to create educational activities through platforms such as Canva, Genially, Slidesgo or Storyjumper (85%), or the use of ICT tools to bring active learning to their classroom through the use of websites such as Kahoot! Edpuzzle, Liveworksheets, Quizzizz, etc. (88.89%). Furthermore, the use of learning management systems such as ClassDojo, Moddle or Google Classroom and other webpages to read audiobooks and grammar explanations, textbook materials from the different editorials teachers are using in the classroom, iDoceo, MadRead, Wordwall, Bamboozle, Google Teams, Corubrics for assessment self-assessment and co-assessment, Padlet, Apple apps such as iMovie or Garage Band, are among other ICT tools registered by participants. (cf. Table 10).

<i>Question 29</i>	Total of participants	Total percentage
Online contents	256	83.66
Creation of educational activities	261	85.29
Active learning	272	88.89
Learning management systems	177	57.84
Others	13	4.25

Table 10. *Results of participants' ICT tools preferences for the foreign language classroom*

Results obtained for ICT resources teachers use to develop language skills are in line with the results outlined for receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing) from questions 8 to 11. These questions revealed that teachers considered receptive skills can be better developed through the use of ICT tools than productive skills. Hence, the results over the ICT resources teachers declare to use to develop each of the language skills are detailed afterwards.

Outcomes from question 30 allow us to assemble the ICT tools teachers use to develop students' listening skills. Keyword frequencies from teachers' answers lead to a complete list of ICT resources used for listening skills development. The most predominant resources are platforms for online content such as YouTube, Lyricstraining or BBC to find free learning videos and songs and materials. As Sibi (2020, p. 34) stated, "watching movies is an excellent way to understand the way

English communication is used in different cultures”. Moreover, the second block of words collected is related to the creation of educational activities through online platforms and apps such as Canva or Genially. They are succeeded by online platforms that help to create active learning in the foreign language classroom such as Edpuzzle and Kahoot! Although other ICT resources are fewer, they are equally effective and educational in the foreign language classroom. Some examples are Spotify, podcasts, Duolingo, Wordwall, ISL Collective, Netflix or Plickers (cf. Figure 2).



Figure 2. Word frequencies from question 30 answers using Atlas.ti

Similar results although less frequent words have been found about the ICT tools teachers use to develop students speaking skills. Although speaking is one of the most important skills to be developed when acquiring a foreign language, it seems to be an arduous task to develop speaking skills and the communicative competence through the use of new technologies. Therefore, the number of ICT tools shared by

Outcomes from question 32 about the ICT resources used to develop reading skills in the foreign language classroom reveal that teachers use similar resources although new websites appear as part of the methodology to develop speaking skills. As mentioned before in the second section of this study, reading comprehension is considered a needed skill in the 21st century that can be easily developed through the use of ICTs such as reading online newspapers, reading ebooks (Drigas & Charami, 2014; Sibi, 2020), interactive stories, storytelling and reading blog posts (Ohler, 2009; Tyner, 2014, as cited in Budiman, 2020). Word frequencies from participants' answer to question 32 share similar results to questions 30 and 31 in the sense of websites and resources for active learning such as Liveworksheets, websites to create learning game and activities such as Canva or Genially, and others previously mentioned as BBC, Wordwall, British Council website, Bamboozle. In this case, online platforms for online content such as Lyricstraining and Eddpuzzle are not among teachers' ICT preferences to develop students' reading skills. In consideration, new ICT tools and resources have been shared by teachers: Epic, online newspapers, magazines, stories comics, MadRead, Blooket or Buzzfeed are new tools that benefit the development of students' reading skills. (cf. Figure 4).



Regarding the last language skill, the results from question 33 about the ICT tools teachers use to develop students' writing skills have been analysed. Similar results compared to ICT resources used to develop speaking skills have been found as the use of platforms to favour active learning (Liveworksheets) and websites to create learning games and activities (Canva and Genially) are the most frequent responses from question 33. Close to these fantastic options, Google Classroom, Genially and Wordwall are three different tools that are highly used by teachers to develop writing skills as they offer the opportunity to write messages, order words to create correct sentences through games, etc. Google Docs, Padlet, Kahoot, Books and Microsoft Word are among other ICT tools language used in their foreign language classroom since these software and websites enable students to plan their writing, revise it and edit it. These ITCs are related to what López Henao (2017, p. 40) stated

<i>Question 34</i>	Total of participants	Total percentage
Yes	237	77.45
No	44	14.38
Not sure / Maybe	17	5.55
Question not answered	8	2.62

Table 11. Results of participants' future intentions to increase ICT tools use in the classroom

On the one hand, 141 positive sentiments have been found regarding teachers' future intentions to increase their ICT tools use in the classroom and therefore, some statements can be highlighted. In one of the participants' words:

- (1) "The world is changing very fast and we have to adapt to it and using ICT is essential for that".

Taking into account the fact that nowadays students are known to be digital natives and ICTs are considered 21st-century skills, participants shared some comments:

(2) *"Society is changing to a virtual and connected world"*

(3) *"ICT use to create good and attractive contents"*

(4) *"ICTs will be the future way of teaching"*

(5) *"Students need to be prepared in digital competence for their future"*

(6) "ICTs play such an important role in our world, we as teachers need to prepare our students to be successful in their lives"

These reasons incentivise practitioners to keep themselves updated with new digital tools and continuous teaching training in order to offer students the best education and prepare them for real situations in the future. Furthermore, regarding students' motivation and the positive use and advantages of incorporating ICTs in the foreign language classroom, three participants made some statements:

(7) "Students tend to be more focused when using them (ICTs) rather than traditional methods"

(8) "ICTs improve students' autonomy"

(9) "ICTs make teachers' job easier"

These comments elucidate that teachers are trying to find new tools and resources that help them find new ways to engage students in their classes. Moreover, teachers consider that ICTs make their job much easier, using useful ITC tools that help them to improve lesson plans and create dynamic lessons. Definitely, ICTs offer teachers and students numerous possibilities of use in the language classroom, sharing comments as the following:

(10) "Students need to see the learning process as an easy attractive task and ICT tools allow me to achieve that"

(11) *“With correct use it is a tool that promotes meaningful learning”*

(12) *“ICTs are the key to the new language-learning process”*

Despite the fact that some practitioners are open to increase ICT use in their classrooms, some barriers such as the lack of digital resources for students and persistent poor internet connection make arduous the simple fact of using new technologies in the classroom. In the same line, 12 neutral sentiments have been found among teachers' responses to the last question of the questionnaire. Their neutral responses are explained in terms of students' needs in the foreign language classroom and the need to provide students with the equal opportunities of using digital tools and other traditional methods. Regarding the doubtful response to increase the percentage of ICT use in the future, comments by two of the participants can be highlighted:

(13) *“Every time I take the school iPads for them, we lose the whole class trying to connect to the internet”*

(14) *“It is proven that digital tools alienated them from the real world (handwriting, critical thinking, memorizing....)”*

On the other hand, 33 negative sentiments have been found among teachers' responses to question 34. The main reasons that facilitated the comprehension of their negative sentiments are the deficit of ICTs in schools, their preference for a balance between traditional methods and the use of new technologies and the negative of

incrementing its use. The lack of ICT resources and internet connection in schools hinders the possibility of using ITC in foreign language classrooms. Some of the participants declared that they would like to use ICTs in the classroom but they do not think they would increase their use in the classroom. Some of their reasons of their negative were:

(15) "Because we don't have computers or tablets to be used by students in the classroom"

(16) "I don't have enough tools to do it"

(17) "We don't have devices for all the groups in my school so using them is not always a possibility"

Another reason shared by participants to not increase ICT use in the future is the lack of time. Teachers stated that they do not have enough time to develop new ICT skills at the moment. One of the participants clearly stated that:

(18) "It demands a lot of time and it's not worth it"

Moreover, other teachers stated that they prefer to keep a balance between digital tools and traditional tools. Some comments from the participants that support this idea are:

(18) "A high percentage of screen use does not help in the learning process"

(19) "Students are exposed daily to screens at home too much"

(20) "Screens are harming the eyesight of children"

Last but not least are the less frequent responses of teachers who have a clear idea about the use of ICT in the classroom. Some teachers declared:

(21) "We are giving so much importance to new technologies forgetting about other important things"

(22) "Kids should practice the language in real situations, write on paper and read real books"

(23) "Sometimes new technologies disturb the classroom atmosphere and it gets too loud"

(24) "Introducing more technology would be detrimental for students"

(25) "Sometimes students have to feel interested in what they are learning rather than stimulated and motivated".

5. CONCLUSIONS

The scope of this research was to get an insight into the current situation regarding the use of new technologies to teach language skills in primary education foreign language classrooms in the Spanish territory. Therefore, four research questions related to four main objectives were set and investigated obtaining varied results that will be developed in the next paragraphs.

With respect to objective 1 and responding to the first research question (RQ1) related to teachers' perception over the effect that the use of ICT in the foreign language classroom has on their students' level of linguistic competence, Spanish foreign language teachers seem to highly be aware of the positive effects of incorporating ICT tools and resources into their language classrooms. Teachers agree on the fact that ICTs facilitate language teaching and learning contributing to a better understanding and acquisition of the language. Moreover, they agree on the contribution of ICTs in making students autonomous in their learning process, increasing their motivation, helping practitioners to adjust resources to cover students' special needs and allowing teachers to access uncountable ready-to-use materials and activities for language learning, and developing language skills to a greater or lesser extent.

Congruent with objective 2 regarding the second question (RQ2) and related to the main factors influencing Spanish foreign language teachers to use ICT tools and resources when teaching English as a foreign language, results have revealed that clear preferences are guiding teachers to use a variety of ICT tools and students needs are the key points of their considerations. Nowadays, the copious number of ICT tools and resources available facilitate teachers' jobs regarding the possibility of finding and downloading teaching and learning activities online as well as innumerable apps and websites that provide teachers and students with an open window to new possibilities

to communicate, interact and learn in the foreign language classroom and increase teachers' productivity in terms of lesson planning and assessing students.

Regarding objective 3 in connection with the third research question (RQ3) that is related to the level of confidence and ICT skills of Spanish teachers using new technologies in the foreign language classroom, results have shown that except in particular situations, Spanish foreign language teachers have internet access at home and in their setting, and have access to numerous ICT tools that undoubtedly facilitate Spanish teachers' ICT skills development for personal and professional growth, favouring the use of ICT in the foreign language classroom. The gradual increase in foreign language practitioners' level of confidence regarding the use of ICTs constitutes ICT-skilled teachers who can use ICTs confidently in their classrooms and are predisposed to continuous training.

Concerning objective 4 with reference to the fourth question (RQ4) related to the ICT resources foreign language practitioners use in order to develop language skills, teachers state they use of a higher number of ICT tools and resources to teach receptive skills rather than productive skills. Nevertheless, similar results were found according to the type of tools, platforms and websites foreign language teachers use in their classes. The most frequent ICTs used by teachers are Online content including YouTube, BBC Learning or Lyricstraining, platforms to create educational activities

involving Canva, Genially or Slidesgo, and websites to create active learning such as Edpuzzle, Kahoot! or Liveworksheet. The amount of ICT already used in the foreign language classroom has served as a foregoing to analyse teachers' intention to increase the use of ICT tools in the future. Close to a quarter of the participants have not responded to the question or expressed neutral or negative sentiments claiming that there is lack of digital resources at schools, the lack of teachers' time to prepare new classroom dynamics using ICTs and the overexposure of students to screens. Despite that, the majority of practitioners have shown their desire to increase the use of ICTs tools in the future because as a globalised and interconnected world human being, students are considered digital natives who need digital skills and taking the advantages of the numerous ICT tools and resources available at their fingerprints. Furthermore, participants also stated that useful, attractive, engaging and motivational teaching and learning resources can be created and used to complement other methodologies in the classroom. As López Henao (2017, p.27) stated, "It is necessary to take advantage of promoting activities or tasks where students feel comfortable by using tools they know well [...] permitting them to move at their own peace".

With the assistance of the designed and validated instrument in order to achieve a response to research questions, prevalent limitations of the study have been found concerning the gender of participants and their honesty. Although the sample relevant to the investigation is numerically substantial, the unique cohort of this study represented by Spanish foreign language teachers undoubtedly presents the greatest

number of females compared to male or non-binary participants. This noticeable difference is a coherent limitation since males are not represented in the sample, and therefore, the result might be altered compared with the possible results including a higher percentage of males in this study. Moreover, a further limitation can be considered regarding participants' honesty since the informants may not have been completely honest in their responses to multiple choice and open questions.

The deficiencies regarding the gender of the sample are in need of rectification through homogeneous samples in which men are equally a representative part of the study sample as a line for future research. This would benefit from methodological and data triangulation contrasting stakeholders in order to compare the cohort. It would be equally worthwhile to conduct quantitative research and analyse perspectives in secondary education within the Spanish territory in order to compare outcomes with the results found in the present study.

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7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Initial questionnaire

THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO TEACH LANGUAGE SKILLS IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM – PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE

The present survey has been arranged for a **research project** at the **University of Jaén** in order to analyse the **use of new technologies to teach language skills** in foreign language classrooms at the Primary Education stage.

First of all, we would like to thank you for your collaboration in this study and remind you that there are no wrong answers.

Your opinion is **anonymous** and will be highly valuable for the investigation. Make sure your answers are as honest as possible.

Section 1: Personal information

These details are very important to process the data.

- Age group: <30 / 30-39 / 40-49 / >50
- Gender: Male /Female/Non-binary
- Type of school you work at: Public / semi-private / private

- Level of ICT competence you consider to have: Basic (A1-A2) / Intermediate (B1) / Advanced (B2) / Expert (C1)
- How many years of teaching experience do you have? (Open answer)

Section 2: ICT in foreign language teaching

In this section, questions can be answered choosing an option following a Likert scale where an option from 1 (minimum) to 5 (maximum) should be selected.

1. How often do you use ICT resources in your language class? Likert scale (5) Never - Always
2. Do you think the use of ICT facilitates language teaching and learning? Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree
3. Do you think that ICT usage in the language classroom contributes to a better understanding and acquisition of the target language? Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree
4. Do you think having positive attitudes towards the use of ICTs in the classroom is essential for language teachers? Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree
5. Do you consider that ICTs promote autonomous learning? Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree
6. In your experience, how has the use of new technologies influenced your students' language learning? Likert scale (5) Very negative – Very positive
7. What are the main advantages of using ICTs compared to traditional teaching methods for teaching English as a foreign language? Select as many as you want:

Active learning / Immediate feedback / Huge number of digital activities, games and resources / Increase students' motivation / Other (open answer)

8. Do you think speaking skills can be better developed through the usage of ICT tools? Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree
9. Do you think listening skills can be better developed through the usage of ICT tools? Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree
10. Do you think reading skills can be better developed through the usage of ICT tools? Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree
11. Do you think writing skills can be better developed through the usage of ICT tools? Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree

Section 3: Factors influencing teachers to use ICT resources

In this section, questions can be answered choosing an option following a Likert scale where an option from 1 (minimum) to 5 (maximum) should be selected.

12. Do you use ICT tools to find and download relevant materials for your classes? Likert scale (5) Never - Always
13. Do you use ICT resources to design activities? Likert scale (5) Never - Always
14. Do you prepare presentations as visual aids using ICTs? Likert scale (5) Never - Always
15. Do you use ICTs to provide feedback to your students? Likert scale (5) Never - Always

16. Do you use ICT tools as communication exchange with your students? Likert scale

(5) Never - Always

17. Do you use ICT for students' collaboration in the foreign language classroom?

Likert scale (5) Never - Always

18. Do you consider that ICT increases your productivity? Likert scale (5) Never -

Always

19. Do you think ICTs optimize your time when planning activities for your classes?

Likert scale (5) Never – Always

20. What motivates you to use ICT tools and resources in the foreign language

classroom? (open answer)

Section 4: Teachers' ICT skills

In this section, questions can be answered choosing an option following a Likert scale

where an option from 1 (minimum) to 5 (maximum) should be selected.

21. Do you have internet access at home? Yes / No /Prefer not to say

22. Do you have internet access at your setting to teach the foreign language? Yes /

No /Prefer not to say

23. Do you have access to digital tools such as computers, tablets or mobile phones

to prepare your classes? Yes / No /Prefer not to say

24. Do you find easy to use the internet for lesson preparation? Likert scale (5) Never

- Always

25. Do you find easy to use a computer for lesson preparation? Likert scale (5) Never

- Always

26. Do you feel confident using ICT tools in the classroom? Likert scale (5) Never -

Always

27. Would you consider to improve your ICT level of competence in the future? Yes /

No /Prefer not to say

Section 5: ICT tools use in the classroom

28. How often do you incorporate new technologies in your language classes? Likert

scale (5) Never - Always

29. Which digital ICT tools do you prefer to use in the foreign language classroom?

Select as many as you want: Online contents (Youtube – BBC Learning, etc...) /

Creation of educational activities (Canva, Genially, Slidesgo, Storyjumper, etc...) /

Active learning (Kahoot!, Edpuzzle, Liveworsheets, Quizzizz, etc...) / Learning

management systems (Class Dojo, Moddle, Google Classroom, etc...) / Others

(open answer)

30. Name the ICT tools you use in order to develop your students' listening skills.

(open answer)

31. Name the ICT tools you use in order to develop your students' speaking skills?

(open answer)

32. Name the ICT tools you use in order to develop your students' reading skills? (open

answer)

33. Name the ICT tools you use in order to develop your students' writing skills? (open answer)

34. Do you intend to increase the use of new digital tools in your foreign language classes in the future? Why (not)? (open answer)

THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO TEACH LANGUAGE SKILLS IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM – PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE

The present survey has been arranged for a **research project as part of my Master's Dissertation** at the **University of Jaén** in order to analyse the **use of new technologies to teach language skills** in foreign language classrooms at the Primary Education stage.

First of all, I would like to thank you for your collaboration in this study and remind you that there are no wrong answers.

Your opinion is **anonymous** and will be highly valuable for the investigation. **It will take you about 6 - 7 minutes to answer all the questions.** Make sure your answers are as **honest** as possible.

Section 1: Personal information

Personal information is very important to process and analyse the data accurately.

- Age group: <30 / 30-39 / 40-49 / >50
- Gender: Male / Female / Non-binary / **Prefer not to answer**
- Type of school you work at: Public / semi-private / private

- Level of ICT competence you consider to have: Basic (A1-A2) / Intermediate (B1) / Advanced (B2) / Expert (C1)
- How many years of teaching experience do you have? (Open answer)

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In this section, questions can be answered choosing an option following a Likert scale where an option from 1 (minimum) to 5 (maximum) should be selected.

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3. Do you think that ICT usage in the language classroom contributes to a better understanding and acquisition of the target language? Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree
4. Do you think having positive attitudes towards the use of ICTs in the classroom is essential for language teachers? Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree
5. Do you consider that ICTs promote autonomous learning? Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree
6. In your experience, how has the use of new technologies influenced your students' language learning? Likert scale (5) Very negative – Very positive
7. What are the main advantages of using ICTs compared to traditional teaching methods for teaching English as a foreign language? Select as many as you

consider: Active learning / Immediate feedback / **Large** number of digital activities, games and resources / **Increase** students' motivation / Other (open answer)

8. Do you think speaking skills can be better developed through the **use** of ICT tools?

Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree

9. Do you think listening skills can be better developed through the **use** of ICT tools?

Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree

10. Do you think reading skills can be better developed through the **use** of ICT tools?

Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree

11. Do you think writing skills can be better developed through the **use** of ICT tools?

Likert scale (5) Strongly disagree – Strongly agree

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In this section, questions can be answered choosing an option following a Likert scale where an option from 1 (minimum) to 5 (maximum) should be selected.

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14. Do you prepare presentations as visual aids using ICTs? Likert scale (5) Never - Always

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16. Do you use ICT tools as communication exchange with your students? Likert scale

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17. Do you use ICT for students' collaboration in the foreign language classroom?

Likert scale (5) Never - Always

18. Do you consider that ICT increases your productivity? Likert scale (5) Never -

Always

19. Do you think ICTs optimize your time when planning activities for your classes?

Likert scale (5) Never – Always

20. What motivates you to use ICT tools and resources in the foreign language

classroom? (open answer)

Section 4: Teachers' ICT skills

21. Do you have internet access at home? Yes / No /Prefer not to say

22. Do you have internet access at your setting to teach the foreign language? Yes /

No /Prefer not to say

23. Do you have access to digital tools such as computers, tablets or mobile phones

to prepare your classes? Yes / No /Prefer not to say

24. Do you find easy to use the Internet for lesson preparation? Likert scale (5) Never

- Always

25. Do you find easy to use a computer for lesson preparation? Likert scale (5) Never

- Always

26. Do you feel confident using ICT tools in the classroom? Likert scale (5) Never - Always

27. Would you consider to improve your ICT level of competence in the future? Yes / No / Prefer not to say

Section 5: ICT use in the classroom

28. How often do you incorporate new technologies in your language classes? Likert scale (5) Never - Always

29. Which digital ICT tools do you prefer to use in the foreign language classroom?
Select as many as you **consider**: Online contents (Youtube – BBC Learning, etc...) / Creation of educational activities (Canva, Genially, Slidesgo, Storyjumper, etc...) / Active learning (Kahoot!, Edpuzzle, Liveworsheets, Quizzizz, etc...) / Learning management systems (Class Dojo, Moddle, Google Classroom, etc...) / Others
(open answer)

30. Name the ICT tools you use in order to develop your students' listening skills.
(open answer)

31. Name the ICT tools you use in order to develop your students' speaking skills?
(open answer)

32. Name the ICT tools you use in order to develop your students' reading skills? (open answer)

33. Name the ICT tools you use in order to develop your students' writing skills? (open answer)

34. Do you intend to increase the use of new digital tools in your foreign language classes in the future? Why (not)? (open answer)