# EVALUATING THE USE AND IMPACT OF ICT IN THE TEACHING OF LISTENING SKILLS IN BENIN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

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#### **Abstract**

This study aims to evaluate the impact of the use of ICT to develop listening skill in Beninese EFL classes to improve learners 'listening abilities in English Language. Then it will reveal to both teachers and learners the different opportunities the use of ICT tools offer in the teaching of listening skill. To reach the goal, some questionnaires were distributed to 250 EFL learners and 35 EFL teachers in some secondary schools and class observations in private and public schools in the Atlantic region in Benin school were held. The results of this work proved when EFL students are asked to speak in English on a particular topic, they have tried to defend themselves but were unable to listen clearly other speakers mainly native speakers. The basic reasons are the lack of practice in listening activities, lack of ICT tools in our schools. Some suggestions were made to teachers, learners, government to easy the use of ICT materials for listening skill teaching.

Keywords: Teaching; Language, listening; Technology. Communication

#### Résumé

Le présent travail a pour but d'évaluer l'impact de l'usage des TIC dans l'enseignement de l'écoute afin d'améliorer le niveau des apprenants. A cet effet, ce travail révèle aux enseignants et aux élèves les différentes opportunités qu'offre l'utilisation des approches technologiques dans l'enseignement de l'écoute de la langue. Pour atteindre le but de cette étude, des questionnaires ont été distribués à 250 apprenants et à 35 enseignants et l'observation de classes dans certains collèges d'enseignement secondaire publiques et prives dans le département de l'Atlantique. Les résultats de cette recherche prouvent que, lorsqu'il est demandé aux apprenants de s'exprimer sur un sujet donné en anglais, ils ont essayé de se défendre mais n'arrivaient pas à comprendre leur interlocuteur surtout les natifs de la langue. La raison est que les élèves ne pratiquent pas l'écoute de l'Anglais, et aussi le manque des outils de technologie. Des suggestions ont été adressées aux enseignant, apprenants, aux autorités éducatives en vue de l'introduction effective des TIC dans l'enseignement secondaire au Benin.

**Keywords**: Enseignement, écoute, Technologies, Langue, Communication

#### Introduction

Language is the most important means of communication and interaction existing among human being living either in the same or different areas. Among many languages English has become powerful

and influenced all the world. As a valuable language, English teachers need to teach it with modern strategies to allow learners not only to correctly understand it but also to be capable to listen to people while speaking even the native speakers. From this point of view, this study will explore the impact of ICT in the teaching of listening skill in Beninese EFL classes. As a matter of fact, many teachers want to improve their learner's level in listening skill relying on the old materials like their own voice, English books (...) to reach their goal but the most of time the certified report is that student try to speak English but are unable to listen to other speakers clearly. This problem is linked to the lack of adequate material like computer, video, radio... to help teachers and learners in the process of learning or teaching English. The mixed methods were used to bring back all the actors of education system upon the use of ICT as a tool and its impact in the teaching of listening skill in EFL school. This research work is of a great value because it will help the English teachers and learners to be motivated in the teaching or the learning of listening skill using ICT approach.

#### 1.Introduction to the study

This chapter includes the purpose of the study, the statement of the problem, The research questions, The significance of the study and the limitation of the study.

# 1-1-Purpose of the study.

Normally, teaching/learning a language should imply teaching its four skills which are: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. But most of time teachers only devote themselves to teach the last three skills and disregard or even prevent themselves from teaching the first skill which is listening. In fact, it is obvious that listening aims at training learners to decode utterances in communication to understand and respond adequately. This work deals with general objective which is to describe in detail the importance of listening skill and some ways to teach that skill through teachers 'motivation and through available materials and deal then with the specific or the main goal which is to reveal the Impact of ICT materials in the teaching of listening skill. Then this work will contribute positively to the teaching/learning of listening skill in Benin Secondary schools.

#### 1-2-Statement of the Problem

Learning to listen in a foreign is challenging because it is a complex, covert, and meaning-building process, yet this process has received less attention than those that develop speaking, reading, writing skills and critical thinking skill. Listening is less understood as procedure in language acquisition, though it plays a critical role in language development and communicative skills. Listening is ignored or poorly taught in EFL classes in Benin secondary schools. Listening efficiently is rarely covered in academic settings and its significance is underexplored in Benin schools. The absence of ICT material to teach listening is the basic issues students and teachers face in process of Learning and teaching English. However, the use of ICT tools has positive influence on the acquisition of perfect listening capacity. This work aims to assess and explore the effective use of ICT material and the impact it has on Listening skill teaching and learning in EFL schools in Benin.

#### 1-3-Researh Questions

To carry out this study, some questions have been asked and they would serve as the signposts to research problem. The research questions are summed up as follows:

- 1-What are the factors affecting the teaching of listening skill in Beninese EFL classes?
- 2 -What are the positive impact of ICT materials in the process of listening skill teaching?

### 1-4-Significance of the study.

The importance of this research work is related to not only how much language teachers will benefit from it but in the contribution to the social development of our country as far as the use of English is concerned. Many are the works, that have been written about English as a foreign language learning. But most of those research works have considered the problem related to the acquisition of the four skills in an integrated manner. Then those studies cannot certainly pinpoint with precision the different issues related to the acquisition of the four language skills. In fact, the interest of my study is that it deals with the difficulties linked to the listening skill and its acquisition through ICT

materials like the use of computer, the use of others audio and the use of podcast in the teaching of listening skill.

#### 1-5-Limitation of the study

The present research work will be vague and broad if no indication is given about the scope it covers. Then it considers the learning and teaching of English in a formal setting like in a classroom where there are teachers and students, a blackboard (....). Although language teaching lays emphasis on four skills mainly listening, speaking, reading, and writing skill. This work will excludly deals with the development of the listening skill. Consequently, I will be interested in the use of ICT materials and their impact like computer, audio equipment and the use of podcast in the classroom. Moreover, English is taught as a foreign language, so this research work does not consider others field in English teaching like English as first language or English as second language in Benin secondary school.

#### 2. Theoretical Frame

This study on the use and impact of ICT in secondary schools rely on some theoretical approaches of many scholars who had previously advocated in the similar field on research.

# 2.1. The use of computer in the teaching of listening skill.

Many are Writers that have been interested of the using of computer in listening skill teaching. Hofstetter (2001) have started that: "multimedia is the use of computer to create and combine text, graphics, audio, and video that follows users to interact, create and communicate. The interactive multimedia means the interplay between the users and the program or media". The author means that there is a reciprocal relationship, the users give a response to the delay programs, followed by the presentation of the information presented by the media, the users. In this case students must be active to take role in this computer assisted learning. They interact with some of the processes.

# 2.2. The use of audio equipment and its positive impact in listening skill teaching.

It is commonly said that teachers 'voice is the main instrument to use in

the teaching of listening skill. However, others believe that audio equipment are necessary to accompany teachers 'voice. This is defended by Théo Decaigny (2008) who said: "Andio equipment enrich the message compared to that we formally transmitted to our pupils". This means that the use of audio tools is very important to develop listening skill.

### 2.3. The use of Podcast in the teaching of listening skill.

Podcast is a Serie of video and digital audio broadcast that could be downloaded and played on mobile devices. The term"Podcast"was derived from two technologies: "iPod "and" Broadcast". Podcast is same as radio but there is thin line between radio and Podcast. Podcast give listeners full access to select their favorite program according to their convenience and listen to it. As defined by Sloan (2005)" Podcasting as a media became an important portable audio which can be utilized for drilling students' listening practice Importance of ICT in Education". In fact, the definition of ICT represents the main concept used for the whole study.

According to Khan. (2015:85), information communication technology (ICT) refers to technologies that provide access to information through communication, also they added that ICT is an umbrella term that includes any communication device, encompassing radio, television, cell phones, computer and network hardware, satellite systems and so on as well as the various services and appliances with them such as videoconferencing and distance learning.

# 2.4. ICT use in education and English language learning and teaching.

There are a variety of ICT applications in English learning. Collis and Moonen (2001) categorized the applications of ICT into three groups, namely:

Learning resources including educational software, online resources, and video resources, instructional organization of learning referring to software and technology tools for lecturing in the classroom, the course management system like *Moodle*, and the computer-based testing system like *Hot Potatoes*, and communication consisting of email systems, and

# 2.5. Benefits of ICT applications in English language learning

A considerable amount of theorists has highlighted the benefits of ICT in language learning. Darasawang and Reinders (2010) "stated that an online language support system helps promote learner autonomy". Another contributing factor of ICTs is motivation. "The blossoming of multimedia technology including visual aids, sounds, video clips, animations, and so on motivates learners, "attracts their attention and elevates their interest in learning" (Kuo, 2009:25).

What is more," the Internet connection allows learners to gain access to a huge number of authentic materials to make English learning more enjoyable" (Dang, 2011). Hence, the application of the online resources available to the inside and outside classroom activities can result in the enhancement of their competences in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

### 2.6 The Virtual Learning to better listening comprehension.

The virtual learning term is a concept recently explored, the general term refers to any virtual space where a person is enhanced using computers or tablets with the internet to the facilities of the educational organization. Nonetheless, there is missing information related to virtual learning; however, the next paragraphs develop some characteristics connected to this term and how it has been implemented in the educational context.

Firstly, the definition of virtual learning has undergone some changes. According to Racheva (2017), "The learning experience is enhanced through utilizing computers and/or the internet both outside and inside the facilities of educational organizations. The instruction most commonly takes place in an online environment".

# 3. Research methodologies

This part of my work aims at describing the methods and techniques used all along my investigation. It also gives precisions on the sample population as well as tools used for data collection. For sample population, I have considered the two main actors, namely the teachers and learners of two secondary schools in Benin. The table

below gives more information about the sampling.

Table 1: The sampling Population.

Scholl Visite	Sampler Tacher	Semple Surdents
CEG GOLODJIGBE	07	40
CEG LE PLATEAU	11	87
Total	18	127

#### 3-1 Instruments used to collect Data.

To collect data from these two categories of people, I have used instruments such as questionnaires to students and teachers and classroom observation. Concerning questionnaire,

I have handed out questionnaire to eighteen English teachers in the two schools. At agreed time, I went back to each teacher to collect the filled in questionnaire distributed from them. Then, I distribute 127 to EFL students during the class situation with permission of both administrative and teachers' collaboration.

The last instrument I used to collect data during the investigation was classroom Observation.

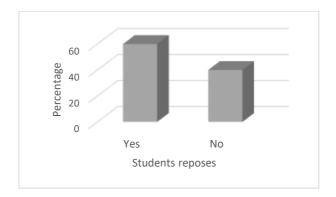
I undertook an hour of classroom Observation in three classes in each selected school .This gave me opportunity to see directly, what really happens in classes during English lessons. So, my observation focused on the learning/teaching strategies used to perform the activities; the type of interactions the students' ability to listen to the teachers and the ICT material used.

The observation concerned the material used and the way the learners react during the activities as regards the listening skills.

### 4. 1. The Finding of the Study.

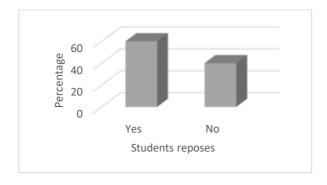
For the results of the investigation of the Study, they are presented in two categories: the results related to the student's questionnaire and those related to the teachers' questionnaire as well as one of class observation.

**Figure 1:** student response about whether they have been taught listening skill through video for audio or not.



The results in figure 1 show that (60%) selected students said they have been taught listening skill though video or audio and (40%) have said the contrary. This means that listening was taught but not with the appropriate materials.

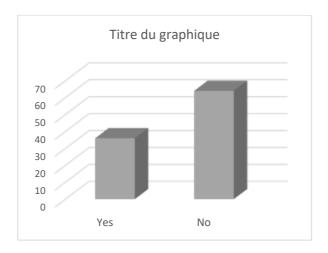
**Figure 2:** Students responses about if they have been taught by native or near-native English teacher.



This result shows that only (28%) of my respondents accepted they have been thought listening through video or audio materials. (72 %) of

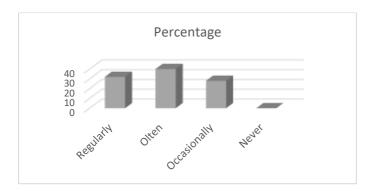
them have never been thought listening through any ICT materials. It means that the use of materials to teach listening is rare in EFL classes in Benin secondary schools.

**Figure 3**: Students response about if they often listen to broadcasting cooperation.



The result in table 3 show that only (36.00%) of students use to listen to English broad casting cooperation and (64. %) don't listen to anything. That answer of EFL learners prove that students do not listen to Broadcasting. It proves also that the learners were not taught listening with the use of podcast.

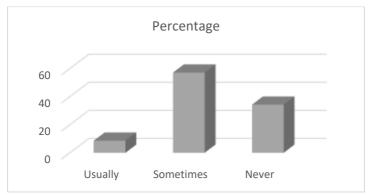
<u>Figure 4:</u> Students response about if they speak English in the classroom with their teacher.



The result in figure 4 show that (32%) of selected students said they regularly speak English with their teachers in the classroom (40%) said their often speak English in the classroom; (28%) said they occasionally speak English in the classroom and none of them have said he never speak English in the classroom with their teachers. This can explain the desires of learners to be good at English but they failed du to the lack of adequate teaching of listening skill.

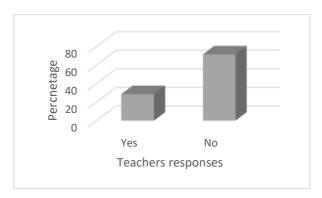
The following will be the results related to teachers' questionnaires.

<u>Figure 5</u>: Teacher responses about if they teach listening comprehension in the class.



The results in figure 5 show that (08.87%) usually teach listening comprehension in their class, (57.51%) deal sometimes, with listen comprehension and unfortunately (34.28%) never teach listening comprehension in their classes. This confirms the fact that EFL teachers in Beninese secondary schools neglected the teaching of this skill or they are not aware of its importance.

**<u>Figure 6</u>**: The use of ICT materials in the teaching of listening skill



The results in figure 6 show that on (28.57%) of teachers use ICT materials in the teaching of listening skill and the most of them

(71.42%) never use ICT materials in listening skill teaching. This result proves that both teachers and learners of my research area are not aware of the advantages the use of ICT materials offer to learners. That is the reason why the acquisition of ICT materials is rare in many secondary schools in Benin.

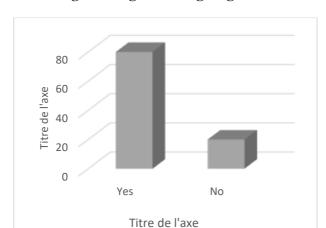
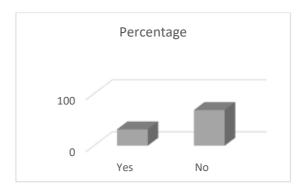


Figure 7: Teaching listening skill using English textbook.

The result in figure 7 show that (80%) of teachers teach listening skill through English textbooks and only (20%) don't use English textbook in the teaching of listening skill. This allow us to know that most of English teachers just use text books and their own voice in the teaching of listening skill.

**Figure 8:** The teacher's response about of (histogram) they have language laboratory.



The results in figure 8 show that on (31.42 %) of selected teachers in the private school have a language laboratory in their school and (68.57%) of teachers in public school don't have any language laboratory. This result shows that the laboratory is rare or absents in many EFL school in Benin Republic.

# 4.1.2 Classroom observation report

For classroom observation, I have visited six classes in the two different schools. The aim of this observation is to observe the use of ICT material teaching listening comprehension activity in their classroom. In the classes I visited none of them were organized for listening activity. There are no ICT materials in those classes. The teacher writes down the pre-listening question on the board and the learners give the answers before the teachers started reading his/her listening text. This text is not in students' books only the teachers have that. I have noticed that many of the leaners were not motivated because they don't succeed to decode what their teacher was reading. Most of learners were not excited to do anything during the activity then they just looked at the teacher and waited for him to take notes of the correct answers which come sometimes from the good learners or from the teachers himself/herself.

#### 4.2 Discussion of the study

Intellectual development in relation to languages refers to maturation in systematic development of mental or cognitive abilities largely as result of learning, training, and exposure to an appropriate linguistic and cultural experiences at various stages of life. Thus, the research questions will bring to the followings assumptions as discussion to answers or confirm the hypothesis of the research questions.

# 4.2.1- The factors affecting the development of listening skill in Beninese EFL classes.

The causes of this flaw are related to the learners' incapacity to develop the listening skills with authentic vocabulary for speaking English fluently are:

Firstly, due to their lack of vocabulary. As a matter of fact, they often hesitate over words during conversation situations, because they don't have words enough or because the appropriate words are not easily and automatically found. So, it is not scare they spend a relatively long time to get their messages through or give up expressing their ideas during real conversations. Secondly, their inability to listen accurately is due to the absence of good listening lesson plan. According to my classroom observation, it is remarked that the teachers of my classes visited do not plan their listening activities. Thirdly, the incapacity of the learners to listen English can also be related to the absence of ICT material to teach listening activities. This led to mispronunciation teaching mainly in beginner's classes where the teachers themselves did not master the good pronunciation.

# 4.2.2 The use of computer in the teaching of listening skill.

Many are Writers that have been interested of the using of computer in listening skill teaching. Hofstetter (2001) have started that:" multimedia are the use of computer to create and combine text, graphics, audio, and video that follows users to interact, create and communicate. The interactive multimedia means the interplay between the users and the program or media". The author means that there is a reciprocal relationship, the users give a response to the replay programs, followed by the presentation of the information presented by the media, the users. In this case students must be active to take role in this computer assisted learning. They interact with some

of the processes. Moreover, computer also help students to achieve the expected competencies. This material is designed as a complete ranging from assessment to guide its used. The results in figure 6 show that on (28.57%) of teachers use ICT materials in the teaching of listening skill and the most of them (71.42%) percent never use ICT materials in listening skill teaching. This proved that the use of Computer is very important in listening teaching process and its absent is a disaster.

# 4.2.3 The use of audio equipment and its positive impact in listening skill teaching.

The figure 2 of my finding shows that only (28%) of my respondents accepted they have been thought listening through video or audio materials (.72 %) of them have never been thought listening through any ICT materials. This means that this fact is responsible for learners' poor performance at listening. However, it is commonly said that teachers 'voice is the main instrument to use in the teaching of listening skill. Therefore, I believe that audio equipment is necessary to accompany teachers 'voice. This is stipulated by Théo Decaigny (1976:11) who said: "Audio equipment enrich the message compared to that we formally transmitted to our pupils". T. Decaigny means that audio materials help EFL students to hear authentic language from native speakers 'mouths. In addition, the use of audio materials enables students to be clear about different sounds that they have been taught by the teachers. Therefore, other authors emphasis on the use of radio to improve listening capacity. It is the case for Joe Pemagbi (1995:53) who states: "Radio can enrich students' language". J. Pemagbi tries to show the importance of radio in terms language improvement. According to him radio offers to learner's opportunities to increase their linguistic knowledge. He is right because listen to the radio can help EFL learners to improve their receptive and productive competences through the internalization of lexical, syntactical knowledge. This can help them in pronunciation. Furthermore, teachers should encourage their students to listen to radio programs on english channels like BBC, VOA, Ray Power (...). The better that should be the case is to encourage learners by giving them assignment about specific program that should be corrected in classes. Andrew Wright (1976:87) have emphasized this by saying that "The purpose of language laboratories is to give individualized audio teaching". All those factors show that the importance of audio equipment, or ICT materials teachers must try to orientate their learners into those materials to help them to improve their listening capacity strategically and motivationally.

# 4.2.4 The Importance of the Use of Podcast to teach listening skill in EFLClasses.

Podcast is a series of video and digital audio broadcast that could be downloaded and played on mobile devices. The term"Podcast"was derived from two technologies: "iPod "and" Broadcast of ". The result in figure 3 shows that only (36. %) of students listens to English broadcasting cooperation and (64. %) don't listen to anything. That answer of EFL learners prove that students do not listen to Broadcasting. It proves also that the learners were not taught listening with the use of podcast. However, podcast is same as radio but there is thin line between radio and Podcast. Podcast give listeners full access to select their favourite program according to their convenience and listen to it. As defined by Sloan (2005) Podcasting as a media became an important portable audio which can be utilized for drilling students' listening practice. Moreover, Gromit (2008:47) claims that Podcasting provides learners with "full access authentic resources' non-English speaking context". In addition, Podcast offers a real-life listening source that all foreign language listeners are allowed to benefit from it. Constantine (2007) also explained the importance of using podcast in the foreign language classes from beginners' level to advanced level. Beginners can benefit from general listening and exposure to new language. For immediate level, students can access authentic material based on their own needs.

# 4.2.5 Positive impact of ICT materials in the process of listening skill teaching

The results in figure 6 of my findings show that on (28.57%) of teachers use ICT materials in the teaching of listening skill and the most of them (71.42%) never use ICT materials in listening skill teaching process. This result proves that both teachers and learners of my research area even the schools' authorities and policy makers are not aware of the advantages the use of ICT materials offers to learners. That is the reason why the acquisition of ICT materials is rare in many secondary schools in Benin. It is also, the ignorance of the importance

of ICT materials that causes the fact that the parents cannot afford those materials to help their children to improve their communicative competence in English. This work reveals the ignorance or the neglections of the impact of the use of ICT by the schools, students, parents of my research population. However, using different kinds of input Lectures, radio news, films, TV plays, announcements, ordinary conversation, interviews, storytelling, English songs, and other input forms should all be provided to learners. There are many advantages in using ICT materials. Firstly, teachers use visual aids or draw illustrations and patterns relevant to the listening topics to assist students in guessing and imagining actively. Visual aids engage learners' attention, improve their interest in the topic, and assist them in relating to the content of the spoken text, allowing them to overcome challenges such as unfamiliar vocabulary and limited pairs of words. Secondly, ICT contribute to betterment of English accents. It can make EFL students aware of the many accents used by native speakers. Strong regional accents are not suitable for listening instruction. However, native speakers do have accents in spontaneous speech. Furthermore, the American accent differs significantly from the British and Australian. As a result, learners must be allowed to deal with various accents, particularly during extended listening. Thirdly, ICT materials help listeners to better one's pronunciation. Language pronunciation is also a problem for the students comprehending listening material. Therefore, teachers are required to help students explore themselves and get familiar with the precise pronunciation of native speakers. By doing so, the students' pronunciation capacity is much more improved, which will help them find listening to native speakers effective and efficient. My study works to convince both English teachers and learners to appropriate the use of ICT materials for listening skills to easy the learning of English.

#### Conclusion

The teaching/learning of listening skill is a must and should be taken into consideration to bring EFL learners' interests more on it for their development of oral communicative performance. The absence of ICT material to teach listening is in EFL classes in Benin is the basic issues students and teachers face in process of Learning and teaching English.

However, the use of ICT tools has positive influence on the acquisition of perfect listening abilities. The work has assessed and explored the effective use of ICT material and the impact it has on listening skill teaching and learning in EFL classes in Benin secondary schools. This study has relied on some scholars 'theoretical approaches.

The theoretical basis of the study has delt with the different issues such as the use of audio equipment and its positive impact on listening skill teaching, the use of computer in the teaching of listening skill, the use of Podcast in the teaching of listening skill, ICT use in education and English language learning and teaching, benefits of ICT applications in English language learning and the virtual learning to better listening comprehension. This work intends to explore the different problems that explain the inabilities of EFL students to listen and understand the native or non-native English speakers after more than thirteen years of English study in secondary school. To reach the objective of this research work, the methods used has considered the sample population including EFL students and teachers, the research instruments including questionnaire and class observation in a Classroom setting where the needed data were collected for analysis and interpretation. The questionnaire sheets addressed to 250 students. Also 35 questionnaire sheets were distributed to 35 EFL teachers of my research areas. The data collected and analysed revealed that many problems hinder the listening skills teaching and learning with Benin EFL Learners. There are multifaced like, the absence of good listening comprehension teaching, the mispronunciation issue of EFL teachers, the absence of ICT materials in Benin secondary schools. The absence of listening activities planning also is another hindrance the learners encountered. The study will help both teachers and learners to realise how important it is for language learners and teachers to afford ICT material for better listening skill learning and teaching to solve problems inability to listen and reply to any English speakers even native speakers of English language. It will also help the schools and administrative leaders and police makers to facilitate the acquisition of ICT materials didactic or pedagogic materials needed in Beninese secondary schools to easy the teaching and learning of English.

This study will help any EFL target language learners to devote themselves in distance language learning by using ICT materials to acquire the target languages. My study will still motivate the policy makers and governmental leaders to favour the creations and equipment of language laboratories to facilitate the teaching and learning of English with good pronunciation as listening play very important role in the acquisition of reading and speaking skills. Finally, this research work will open opportunities for further researchers in this area of listening teaching with technological tools in the purpose of improving English Language learning and teaching in Benin secondary schools and anywhere English is to be study as foreign language. Many suggestions and recommendations are made in this study and if they are put in practice, listening skill will be restored to improve oral communicative competence of EFL learners in EFL classes.

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