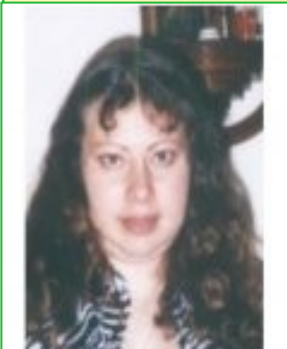


**TICS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
THE ROLE OF THE TUTOR**

**Msc (C) CLARA ESPERANZA BILBAO CORTÉS**



- Licenciada en Idiomas de la Universidad Nacional
- Especialista en Traducción Español - Inglés - Francés de la Universidad del Rosario
- Candidata a Magister en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera de la Universidad de Jaén (España).

- Tutora virtual de inglés certificada por el Consejo Británico y el Ministerio de Educación Nacional.
- Desde hace 2 años, Tutora virtual de inglés de la UNAD y apoyo de la Coordinación Nacional del Programa de Inglés de la UNAD.

***Abstract***

*Recently, the use of technology from tutors has increased a lot because they are aware of its importance inside foreign language teaching processes. Internet has become an essential teaching tool since it contains lots of resources and information. The purpose of this article is to explore the role of tutors in the way foreign languages are taught and learnt.*

***Resumen***

*Recientemente, el uso de tecnología de tutores ha aumentado mucho porque ellos son conscientes de su importancia dentro del idioma extranjero con los procesos instrucción. Internet se ha vuelto una herramienta instruccional esencial desde que contiene muchos recursos e información. El propósito de este artículo es explorar el papel de tutores de la manera que enseñan los idiomas extranjeros.*

**Msc (C) CLARA ESPERANZA BILBAO CORTÉS**

**TICS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
THE ROLE OF THE TUTOR**

**Key Words**

*Mediator, Guide, Facilitator, Manager, Encourager, Internet, Foreign Languages Teaching, TIC.*

**Palabras Clave**

*Mediador, Guía, Facilitador, Gerente, Encourager, Internet, Enseñanza de Idiomas Extranjeros, TIC.*

## **Introduction**

*We live in a globalised world where the Information and Communication Technologies (TIC) in the life of the people, are a daily matter.*

*The technologies of information distribution are changing as they had never done it before in history. The possibilities provided by these changes and the challenges we face, are also new in history, and have a power able to modify many basic foundations of the society, as we have known it during the last two centuries.*

*The technology offers huge possibilities to improve learning and teaching, as well as the access to the education, its quality and management, and the benefit of educative services.*

*Nowadays, the demand of education increases and the governments, sometimes, have less money to satisfy it. Traditionally, it has been considered that concerning the educative system, the technology can be the key.*

*For that reason, currently the education does not have to focus only in the transmission of knowledge, but it must develop other capacities. The Information and Communication Technologies (TIC) represent a great challenge for the modern education not only in teaching field, but also in the learning one. Thus, all new challenge requires a change in the factors that integrate the system.*

*The tutors training is the key element to integrate TIC in the education, since if the tutors do not have the knowledge to dominate this field nor the pedagogical abilities necessary to favor the learning, the result will be negative.*

## TICS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE THE ROLE OF THE TUTOR

### Methodology

*The tutors, independent of the subject they guide, must consider that its main function is tutoring, therefore, we must be enabled to apply the technology to the self-learning.*

*Thus, we must know the techniques and the tools that are valid for its application inside and outside the educative institutions, through the use of electronic means.*

*In addition, the role of the tutors in the knowledge society must be to become a guide and means to carry the knowledge from the TIC to their virtual rooms without discrimination of any type. For this reason, the tutors must have a specific training in this field: as much in the technical as pedagogical use of these modern resources.*

*Thanks to TIC, tutors can have in their rooms a completely limitless group of resources, which is a luxury since everything is available to all. For this reason, since the knowledge societies has settled between us and due to TIC have revolutionized and are revolutionizing the educative world, it is necessary to reflect on the role of the tutors and their relationship with the students.*

*With the apparition of TIC, languages teaching requires today, more than ever, a constant update where didactic and technological abilities converge.*

*Perez Torres (1999, 55-59) defines some characteristics for the tutors who use TIC in their English teaching process:*

- a) To know the different ways to work with technologies.*
- b) To have didactic knowledge about TIC in*

**WITH THE  
APPARITION  
OF TIC,  
LANGUAGES TEACHING  
REQUIRES TODAY  
MORE THAN EVER  
A CONSTANT  
UPDATE WHERE  
DIDACTIC AND  
TECHNOLOGICAL  
ABILITIES CONVERGE.**

*virtual rooms. This knowledge must be planned according to the didactic units and the plan of the course.*

*c) To have valid criteria to carry out the selection of suitable materials which allow the development of the four basic skills (writing, listening, speaking and reading).*

*d) To adapt the contents and the curriculum to the technology.*

*e) To renew the didactic methods and fit them to the new technological needs.*

*f) To imply themselves in their own training, taking advantage of all the available online and face to face courses and certifications.*

**TICS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
THE ROLE OF THE TUTOR**

## *Methodology*

*It is also important tutors undertake a permanent self-assessment in order to detect and correct mistakes on time.*

*Tutors must be conscious of all the tools the knowledge society offers to them. Therefore, they must be critics and choose the adequate resources and the time to use them in their teaching processes, in a responsible way.*

*The challenge that the new society sets out to the tutors is not reduced to a scientific-didactic update on a series of contents of the formal education but it asks them to foster the relationships between the school and the society.*

*The concept of tutor has undergone with the TIC a deep change, because he has changed from being a simple transmitter of knowledge to become a guide. The students also change from being passive persons to adopt an active role in their own learning process.*

*Traditionally, in English language learning, some different audio-visual supports have been used, such as cassettes, videos, television or the radio. With the inclusion of the new technologies in education, the tutors (once overcome the training barriers) have access to a big group of multimedia resources, as much online as offline.*

*The use of Computer Assistance Language Learning (CALL) can help the students who learn languages to be more conscious of their mistakes. The language produced by the use of CALL seems to be more coherent, cohesive and expressive than that one produced in a traditional class.*

**IF  
THE  
STUDENTS  
CAN WORK  
AT  
THEIR OWN  
RHYTHM  
THERE WILL  
BE A MORE  
EFFECTIVE  
LEARNING**

*Nevertheless, thanks to the use of the computer and, more exactly, of Internet; the motivation that our students can find in the use of these tools leads us to provide not only a more motivating learning but also a more interactive one. TIC allow practicing English, online, with people from all over the world and this way, evaluating the performance level.*

*The handling of these new systems will provide a great opportunity so that our students can develop like citizens of a modern and multicultural world in which the English language plays an important role.*

## THE ROLE OF THE TUTOR

*Methodology*

*Thus, the role of the tutor must be clear, since we have to bring, to our students, support during the learning process and to carefully select the material that the students are going to use, since concretely in the area of English there are lots of available resources that can overload us.*

*This way, the curriculum of the TIC and its selection must answer to the interests and personal needs of each person.*

*If the students can work at their own rhythm, there will be a more effective learning because they go on according to their real degree of assimilation and progress, and do not have limit about the time they can dedicate to the practice and consolidation of a determined structure, function, etc. or to the development of some skill.*

*Thanks to my experience as English tutor, I believe there are some other roles and characteristics we should play and have:*

- **Mediator:** *He assesses student crises (roommate disputes and noise complaints) and take appropriate actions based on their judgment and training.*
- **Manager:** *He manages group and individual dynamics, and provides the frame work necessary for students to develop them.*
- **Encourager:** *He encourages students to learn, practice, participate and achieve the proposed goals.*
- **Guide:** *He guides the time and the whole learning process.*
- **Facilitator:** *He provokes, promotes, and nurtures their students' intellectual and social growth.*
- **Leader:** *He gets e-learners to participate expanding, elaborating and contributing on something they have read or written.*
- **E-wizard:** *He provides technical advice to e-learners.*
- **Observer:** *He watches for participation and the lack of it; watches for the carrying out of the instructions.*
- **Evaluator:** *He gives feedback, reviews and assesses.*
- **Advisor:** *He supports e-learners whenever they have difficulties with the platform.*

**TICS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
THE ROLE OF THE TUTOR**

## ***Methodology***

*As far as all these elements interact simultaneously, the results will be evident. Tutors will be better teachers, the students will be better students and both will be familiarized with new processes of teaching and learning that were not considered before.*

## ***Conclusions***

- *Nowadays, the demand of education increases and the governments, sometimes, have less money to satisfy it. Traditionally, it has been considered that concerning the educative system, the technology can be the key.*
- *Traditionally, in English language learning, some different audio-visual supports have been used, such as cassettes, videos, television or the radio. With the inclusion of the new technologies in education, the tutors (once overcome the training barriers) have access to a big group of multimedia resources, as much online as offline.*
- *The handling of these new systems will provide a great opportunity so that our students can develop like citizens of a modern and multicultural world in which the English language plays an important role.*

**TICS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
THE ROLE OF THE TUTOR**

## ***Bibliography***

CANALE, M. y SWAIN, M. (1980): *Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. Applied Linguistics, vol. 1, 1, 1-47.*

Pérez Torres, M.I. (1999): *Discussion forums in the internet. En GRETA, Revisita para professors de Inglés 7/1 (55-59).*

Pérez Torres, M.I. (2002): *Apuntes metodológicos acerca de la enseñanza de lenguas asistida por ordenador (ELAO). En GRETA, Revista para profesores de Inglés 10/1 (55-61).*

Robles, A. (2003): *Nuevas tecnologías en el aula de inglés: una experiencia de publicación de trabajos. En GRETA, Revista para profesores de Inglés 11/2 (41-47).*

Rodríguez Diéguez, J.L. Y SÁENZ BARRIO, O. (1995): *Tecnología educativa.*

*Nuevas tecnologías aplicadas a la educación. Alcoy, Marfil*

<http://www.uib.es/depart/qte/edutec-e/revelec6/revelec6.html> Visitada el día 25 de Septiembre de 2009.