UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

MANAGEMENT OF VIRTUAL TOOLS FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
MANEJO DE HERRAMIENTAS VIRTUALES EN LA ENSEÑANZA Y EL APRENDIZAJE DE LENGUAS EXTRAJERAS

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Abstract

Education is constantly adapting to the circumstances. Many future professionals have been prepared to be the means of bringing education in a more accessible and modern way to any place, any time, and especially to those people who have the desire to continue learning in a more accessible environment. Therefore, to supply the significant demand for learning and how inaccessible this can be nowadays, the University of El Salvador looked for other alternatives to facilitate pedagogy by approving an online course on the administration of virtual environments for the teaching and learning foreign languages in July 2021. Through this online course, students have been provided with several tools to teach and learn a foreign language in a virtual classroom through an online environment; the course is made up of three modules that have been introduced in six months. In this way, students have been able to experience a thoroughly modern method within the reach of many people.

Keywords: Distance Education, Online Education, Constructivism, Educational Technology, Synchronous Learning, Asynchronous Learning.

Key Terms

➢ **Distance Education:** It is defined as a method of teaching where the student and teacher are physically separated. It can utilize a combination of technologies, including correspondence, audio, video, computer, and the Internet (Roffe, 2004).

➢ **Online Education:** It uses online course management tools and the Internet as the delivery mechanism, with at least 80% of the course content delivered online (Allen & Seaman, 2011; Shelton & Saltsman, 2005).

➢ **Constructivism:** The theory says learners construct knowledge rather than passively taking in information. People experience the world and reflect upon those experiences. They build their representations and incorporate new information into their pre-existing knowledge (schemas).

➢ **Educational Technology:** This term disrupts traditional education and teaching methods by offering both teachers and students the ability to learn in an environment that uses now-common devices such as smartphones, laptops, and tablets.

➢ **Synchronous learning**: This term refers to all types of learning in which learner(s) and instructor(s) are simultaneously in the same place for learning to occur. It includes in-person classes and online meetings when the whole class or smaller groups get together.

➢ **Asynchronous learning**: It describes educational activities, discussions, and assignments that engage students in learning at their own pace, on their own time.

Introduction

The Online English Language Specialization is a course first launched on August 21, 2021, by the University of El Salvador to students in the undergraduate process (degree work modality); through it, many future professionals will contribute to the accessibility of education through virtual environments. This course will provide students with the necessary tools to develop classes with their students electronically without the need to be present in a traditional classroom. It consists of three modules; students have coursed each in eight weeks, developing synchrony and asynchrony activities that support the teaching and learning process. The first module, called Online English Language Teaching about the fundamentals of online education and its application to English Language Teaching; precisely, the virtual or online teaching approach, like using an LMS (Learning Management System) to set up a virtual classroom and develop asynchronous activities, for instance, Moodle; and use platforms like TEAMS or Meet for asynchronous activities. A second module, Educational Applications for Learning a Foreign Language, is about the theoretical fundamentals and the use of technological tools for teaching-learning a foreign language in a virtual modality. The third module is The Design of Didactic Materials for Virtual Environments. Students learned how to use Web tools to design educational materials and will elaborate materials such as podcasts, online presentations, interactive images, and videos, among others. Professionals will provide the necessary tools to teach/learn a second language through this course. More people will continue their studies without being interrupted; they will have a wide range of job possibilities when they join this field of work because English is a universal language. This course will provide well-trained professionals qualified in the teaching and learning in virtual environments of a foreign language and prepare future competent people.

I.   Objectives

General Objective

➢ To learn about the online teaching English approach using emerging technological tools and getting familiar with theoretical information about virtual environments for teaching a language and its functions by designing digital materials to support acquiring foreign languages.

Specific Objectives

➢ To identify multimedia resources according to the teaching-learning process that contributes and is suitable in virtual education, creating virtual classrooms and using the Learning Management System available on the Internet.

➢ To define the terms and principles of technological environments for educational purposes and use them to plan and develop synchronous and asynchronous work sessions.

➢ To use specialized tools to design and elaborate didactic materials for the teaching-learning of foreign languages.

## II.	Framework

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Education is the fundamental basis for the development of a society. Therefore, accessibility and the environment where students learn can significantly influence the teaching and learning process. The most common limitations of traditional education are the higher costs of money and time because commuting demands an economical expense; also, time is a factor to consider if the classroom is far. You have to decide whether the trip is worth it. And do not forget about the social distancing people have to practice due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, thanks to which virtual teaching has been expanded and improved. Technologies and other aspects of digital culture have changed the ways people live, work, play, and learn, impacting the construction and distribution of knowledge and power worldwide.

Technology has become essential support for the traditional learning system; thanks to it, education is more accessible, favoring people's academic and professional lives. Although all these virtual tools are so good, some people would still like to continue learning but cannot access them because this system has some limitations. It is necessary to connect to the Internet, and unfortunately, not all places have access to it. But even with those lacks, online teaching has brought many opportunities for development and growth for those who want to continue their education. For those reasons, the process of teaching-learning a language through virtual environments is a valuable means to accomplish education. It allows students to reach their goals in an easy and accessible way.

"…*there is an impressive body of evidence on how teaching methods and curriculum design affect deep, autonomous, and reflective learning. Yet most faculty are largely ignorant of this scholarship, and instructional practices and curriculum planning are dominated by tradition rather than research evidence. As a result, teaching remains largely didactic, assessment of student work is often trivial, and curricula are more likely to emphasize content coverage than the acquisition of lifelong and life-wide learning skills*".

Knapper, 2010, p. 229

2.1.1   The Pandemic COVID-19 Impact on Education.

In approximately December 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) identified in Wuhan, Hubei province China, the virus called COVID-19. The virus causes respiratory illnesses and high temperatures and can manifest from a common cold to a severe acute syndrome (Abodunrin, Oloye & Adesolaet, 2020). On March 11, 2020, the General Director of the WHO announced that the new coronavirus disease COVID-19 could be characterized as a pandemic. The characterization of a pandemic means that the epidemic has spread across several countries, continents, or the entire world, affecting many people.

The first case of COVID-19 in El Salvador was reported on Wednesday, March 18, 2020. On March 6, El Salvador's General Director of Civil Protection declared a yellow alert due to the risk of the arrival of COVID-19 to the country, just some hours after the first case was confirmed in Costa Rica. This situation alerted the Salvadoran people, "Motivating the authorities to implement strategies resulting from an absence of antiviral treatment or vaccination" (Guo et al., 2020; Stebbing et al., 2020). These strategies promoted handwashing, keeping social distance, restricting movement, quarantining, and closing public and private institutions.

The government of El Salvador took gradual measures in different areas, even before COVID-19 became a pandemic, adopting measures such as suspending classes nationwide to prevent the massive spread of Covid. On March 11, despite having no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the country, the executive branch broke ranks nationwide for both public and private educational institutions for 21 days. The World Health Organization decided on March 11, 2020, to officially declare it a pandemic.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the world faced a learning crisis. In the case of the education system, strategies for its functioning during the quarantine had to be reoriented. This has brought with it a series of problems and deficiencies. According to Internet World Stats, as of December 2017, 57.7% of the Salvadoran population had access to Internet service through different devices and platforms. In this way, online education would form a fundamental pillar of society.   On the other hand, the subsidiary forms that developed the University of El Salvador in monitoring education affect many students. How have the various educational careers been coupled to the situation generated by the pandemic? The first one is the department of foreign language at the University of El Salvador, which has resumed its academic activities at a distance. That is, in an online mode.

The students, who suddenly had to stay at home, had to share digital devices and the internet network used by their whole family and must continue with their various enrolled subjects' learning activities through assignments, virtual lectures, and a series of overlapping homework. Besides, they have to deal with the possible effects of the pandemic on the family's health, emotions, financial concerns, and physical health. Moreover, the use of virtual environments due to the difficulty of using the cell phone in the case of several Students and the

problems of affording a constant mobile internet expense (Melchor Sanchez Mendiola et al., 2020).

2.1.2 E-learning and Learning Management Systems.

E-learning is not only necessary but also very beneficial in specific contexts. Because social distancing became an essential recommendation to avoid the infections of COVID-19, it was necessary to find new means to convey information to each of the students. Moreover, it was indispensable to find new ways to transmit the educational content in the best possible ways to fit the necessities of the students. One of the benefits of e-learning is that it allows students to study in a self-paced manner.

With knowledge of alternative theoretical approaches, teachers and instructors are in a better position to make choices about how to approach their teaching in ways that will best fit the perceived needs of their students within the very many different learning contexts that teachers and instructors face. Furthermore, the choice of or preference for one particular theoretical approach will have significant implications for how technology is used to support teaching; this is particularly important when addressing many of the requirements of learners in a digital age.

2.1.3 Online Collaborative Learning (OCL).

Online collaborative learning (OCL) is a theory proposed by Linda Harasim that focuses on the Internet facilities to provide learning environments that foster collaboration and knowledge building. Harasim (2012) describes OCL as a new theory of learning that focuses on collaborative learning, knowledge building, and Internet use to reshape formal, non-formal and informal education for the Knowledge Age. (p. 81)

Like Siemens, Harasim sees the benefits of moving to teach and learning to the Internet and large-scale networked education. In some respects, Harasim utilizes Alberto Barabasi's position on the power of networks. In OCL, there exist three phases of knowledge construction through discourse in a group:

- Idea generating: the brainstorming phase, where divergent thoughts are gathered
- Idea organizing: the stage where ideas are compared, analyzed, and categorized through discussion and argument
- Intellectual convergence: the phase where intellectual synthesis and consensus occur, including agreeing to disagree, usually through an assignment, essay, or other joint pieces of work (Harasim, 2012, p. 82).

OCL also derives from social constructivism since students are encouraged to collaboratively solve problems through discourse and where the teacher plays the role of facilitator and learning community member. This is a significant aspect of OCL and other constructivist theories where the teacher is not necessarily separate and apart but rather an active facilitator of knowledge building. Because of the importance of the role of the teacher, OCL is not easy to scale up. Unlike connectivism, suited for large-scale instruction, OCL is best situated in smaller instructional environments. This last issue becomes increasingly important when seeking commonality among online education theories.

2.1.4   Development of E-learning at the University of El Salvador.

For the last ten years, there has been an increase in the interest in e-learning by universities, teacher training programs, and schools. This has happened due to technology development, new educational methods, and processes made differently nowadays. First, this interest has arisen

because of "the performance of e-learning applications focused on students' interaction within online programs." (Davies & Graff 2005). The concept of e-learning has two primary subtitles. First is synchronized instruction, in which a group of students and their instructor get together virtually through an online conference meeting—the second a synchronized education, in which individuals get involved in self-training learning effectively.

Second, it is an essential step within the instructional design process to organize opportunities for interaction and communication. There are crucial factors, especially in virtual classrooms. However, some universities have adopted online education as an alternative that has helped enrich the educational model. Furthermore, the University of El Salvador decided to offer this model based on a distance modality with the help of the Ministry of Education MINED and advice from the State Distance University of Costa Rica UNED. This project at the University of El Salvador begins by offering four careers: Bachelor's degree in Mathematics Teaching, Bachelor's degree in Natural Sciences Teaching, Bachelor's Degree in English Language Teaching, and Bachelor's Degree in Educational Informatics.

On July 30, 2021, the Board Members, represented by Professor Ana Grace Gómez Alegría, Head of the Language Department, submitted a structured version emphasizing the administration of Virtual Environments for the Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages, and approval was agreed upon. The course named: Administration of Virtual Environments for the Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages (Degree Work Modality) would be taught for 180 hours in no less than six months through three groups: the Specialization Course: Administration of Virtual Environments for the Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages (Grade Work Modality).

Group 01 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, days: Monday and Wednesday

Group 02 from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm, days: Saturdays

Group 03 from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm, days: Saturdays

2.1.5 Learning Management Systems (LMS) in the Teaching-Learning Process.

Google Classroom.

The growth of Google Classroom hit a significant milestone in April 2020 when the pandemic caused user numbers to double to 100 million people. That number has likely ballooned even more as additional educators switch to Google Classroom online.

Google Classroom is a free platform for educators. It uses a scaled-down approach to give teachers the things they need to communicate with students, organize class events and materials, and keep records. A few years ago, experts wouldn't have considered Google Classroom a stand-alone learning management system (LMS), but many think it is just that through updates and new features for educators.

Moodle.

With Moodle's rich resource toolkit, easily share files and links to websites with learners. Pages of learning content – combining text, images, and embedded video - can also be quickly created within a course.

Group students into year or class groups to automatically provide access to the appropriate learning materials. You can even control when specific course content becomes

available to learners. Edit 24/7 via a browser to update and add to course content for learners to access immediately. Why spend time marking when Moodle can do it for you?! Use various engaging question types in a Quiz to assess the learning. Moodle can keep these and give immediate detailed feedback to the learners – ideal for both formative and summative assessment.

Schoology.

Connects people, content, and systems fuel education—bringing eLearning through collective effort. Personalized instruction for 20+ million administrators and users from K-12 schools and universities. Easy to use and time-saving.

Canvas.

The Canvas LMS by Instructure makes teaching, learning, implementation, adoption, customer support, and student success easier. Reliable, customizable, mobile, time-saving, designed to get out of your way, to let you do your thing.

Edmodo.

Intuitive features and unlimited storage, quickly create groups, assign homework, schedule quizzes, manage progress, etc. Edmodo is designed to give you complete control over your digital classroom with everything on one platform.

2.1.6 Online Conferencing Tools (OCTs).

Zoom.

Zoom is a cloud-based video conferencing service. It is intended for businesses to work remotely and offers a wide range of services to accommodate any business's needs. These include video and audio conferencing, collaboration, chat, and webinars. It supports both desktop and mobile users.

Microsoft Teams.

Microsoft Teams is a persistent chat-based collaboration platform complete with document sharing, online meetings, and handy business communications features.

Google Meet.

The meet is a video conferencing tool super practical and safe to use, in which you can carry out work and professional and academic meetings. It has access to Google Jam board and Google Calendar. Depending on the version, it allows you to create meetings with 100 participants or with 250 attendees. You don't have to worry about advertisements during the development of your sessions.

III.   Description of Activities

3.1 Module 1

For the development of module one, which was about the fundamentals of online education and its application to the English Language Teaching; precisely, the virtual or online teaching approach, and for reaching the goals outlined in this, two types of activities were mainly developed; synchronous and asynchronous, these are described below.

3.1.1   Synchronous Activities.

There were only two synchronous activities during this module; the first one was the virtual class, there were four per month, and they took place on Saturdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. During these virtual sessions, students received theoretical content related to the following topics: "Theories of learning in virtual learning," "E-learning definition, application, advantages and disadvantages," "Virtual teaching and its application in teaching languages," "Language Management Systems" and "Platforms for Videoconferences."

In addition to the theoretical content, the students were given a demonstration of how to use the virtual educational tools or software that would be used both for the development of the class and for the development of future asynchronous evaluations assigned to the student. Some of the software used are Google classroom, Google meet, Teams, etc.

To execute this activity, both the teacher and the students needed to use their official Google account with the domain of the University of El Salvador, that is, their institutional account. To obtain the link and be able to connect to the meeting, the students had to access the official Moodle platform of the University, where, in addition to finding the link, all the

information related to the module was also provided, for example, the module program, content to study each week, presentations, videos, and a forum where topics related to the class or questions, in general, were discussed.

The second synchronous activity was developed in the last meeting of this module; it was a group task that consisted of teaching a demonstrative microteaching class. For this activity, the students chose the level at which to teach the lesson and the topic, and each group had 15 minutes to develop their task. In this activity, the students put into practice everything learned during the module, both the theory and the execution of the software used.

3.1.2   Asynchronous Activities.

The asynchronous activities developed during this module were the following:

1. Watch the videos on the Moodle platform (Campus UES).

The topics for these videos were: "Synchronous and Asynchronous concepts," "Theories of learning. Evolution and benefits of learning into E-learning", "Learning Management System," how to create a Google Classroom and its advantages and disadvantages," "Conferencing tools," etc. Each week students were asked to watch the videos previously mentioned to reinforce their knowledge about the topic developed in class.

2. Read the material uploaded to Moodle.

To reinforce their knowledge, students had to read the documents uploaded to Moodle about the topics: "Synchronous and Asynchronous concepts," "Theories of learning," "Evolution and benefits of learning into E-learning," "Learning Management System," etc.

3. Write an essay and comment in the forum.

This assessed activity consisted of writing an essay on "Theories of Learning" and then uploading it to Moodle in the forum section. In addition, every student had to comment on others' essays to get a grade for this task.

4. Create an infographic.

For this task, students had to research information about the four most common LMS, analyze the data, and select the features of each LMS. Then include them in the infographic. After creating the infographic, students had to upload it on Campus in PDF format.

5. Create a virtual classroom.

For this activity, students were asked to work in groups of 5 members and create a virtual course taking into account all the elements or features that provide Google classroom, upload material for a 45min class about a macro skill for teaching English, and add people, etc. Students used this classroom and the information uploaded to perform their last evaluation, previously described in the synchronous activities.

3.2 Module 2

For the development of module two, which was about the "Theoretical fundamentals and principles in the use of technological tools for teaching-learning a foreign language in a virtual modality," and for reaching the goals outlined in this, two types of activities were mainly developed; synchronous and asynchronous, these are described below.

3.2.1   Synchronous Activities.

There were only two synchronous activities during this module; the first one was the virtual class, there were four per month, and they took place on Saturdays from 8:00 am to 12:00

pm. During these virtual sessions, students learned about the fundamentals and principles of using technological tools for teaching-learning a foreign language in a virtual modality.

In addition to the theoretical content, the students were given a demonstration of how to use the virtual educational tools or software that would be used both for the development of the class and for the development of future asynchronous evaluations assigned to the student.

The technological tools used to teach online were: Edpuzzle, Flipgrid, Flippity, Liveworksheets, Nearpod, Padlet, Kahoot, Classroomscreen, and Powtoon.

To execute this activity, both the teacher and the students needed to use their official Google account with the domain of the University of El Salvador, that is, their institutional account. To obtain the link and connect to the meeting, the students had to access the official Moodle platform of the university. In addition to finding the link, all the information related to the module was also provided. For example, the module program, content to study each week, presentations, videos, and a forum where topics related to the class or questions, in general, were discussed.

The second synchronous activity was developed in the last meeting of this module; it was a group task that consisted of a demonstrative microteaching class. For this activity, the students chose the level at which to teach the lesson and the topic; each group had 20 - 25 minutes to develop their task. Each group of students had to create a lesson plan before the presentation to set up this activity. Each member had approximately 5 minutes to explain the part of the lesson chosen.

3.2.2   Asynchronous Activities.

The main asynchronous activities developed during this module were the following:

1. Watch the videos on the Moodle platform (Campus UES).

The topics for these videos were: Flipgrid tutorial, Greeting started with Edpuzzle, Go live Edpuzzle, create interactive workbooks, Wordwall complete training. Each week students were asked to watch the videos previously mentioned to reinforce their knowledge about the topic developed in class.

2. Read the material uploaded to Moodle.

To reinforce their knowledge, students had to read the documents uploaded to Moodle about the topics: Technology for teaching-learning, Guiding principles for teaching with technology, The growing importance of technology in education, etc.

3. Create an infographic.

For this task, students had to create an infographic about "The importance of using technology or technological tools in teaching-learning." For making this, students chose software like Canva, Genially, or PowerPoint and then uploaded the infographic to Campus in PDF format.

4. Record a video using Flipgrid.

Students had to create or upload a video using Flipgrip software for this activity. Students had to research information about the educational tools, their use in online classes, their most essential features, the actions they could create, or how to use them in class. After having analyzed the information, students had to select two Educational Tools. Then, students had to

prepare for each Educational Tool a short description and a concrete example of how to use them in class. Finally, students had to upload the video to the Flipgrid website and share the link on Campus.

5. Powtoon Video.

Students had to create a video using Powtoon about one Educational Tool from the ones seen in class (Edpuzzle, Flipgrid, Flippity, Liveworksheets, Nearpod, Padlet, Wordwall, Pear Deck, Genially). In the video, students had to recommend using an Educational Tool, and it has been focused on teachers. Finally, students had to share the link for the video on Campus UES.

3.3 Module 3

For the development of the final module on this course, which was about using web tools to create educational material, and for reaching the goals outlined in this, two types of activities were mainly developed like in the previous modules, synchronous and asynchronous, and these are described below.

3.3.1   Synchronous Activities.

There were only two synchronous activities during this module; the first one was the virtual class, there were four per month, and they took place on Saturdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. Students learned theories about designing and elaborating educational materials during these virtual sessions, such as podcasts, online presentations, interactive images, videos, etc.

In addition to the theoretical content, the students were given a demonstration of how to create and design educational material and how to use the virtual educational tools that would be used

both for the development of the class and for the development of the future asynchronous evaluations assigned to the student.

As in the previous modules, to execute this activity, both the teacher and the students needed to use their official Google account with the domain of the University of El Salvador, that is, their institutional account. To obtain the link and be able to connect to the meeting, the students had to access the official Moodle platform of the University, where, in addition to finding the link, all the information related to the module was also provided, for example, the module program, content to study each week, presentations, videos, and a forum where topics related to the class or questions, in general, were discussed.

The second synchronous activity was developed in the last meeting of this module; it was a group task that consisted of a demonstrative microteaching class. For this activity, the students chose the level at which to teach the lesson and the topic; each group had 15 minutes to present. To develop this activity, each group had to create a Google classroom and add all members of the group, including the teacher in charge, create a presentation using Google Site about any topic, create a Google Slide about the info uploaded on the site, create a podcast, create an interactive image using Genially and record a video explaining the topic chosen. Students shared all the previous elements to the stream section in Google classroom, where the teacher verified it and provided feedback to students after the presentation.

3.3.2   Asynchronous Activities.

The main asynchronous activities developed during this module were the following:

1. Watch the videos on the Moodle platform (Campus UES).

The topics for these videos were: Advantages and disadvantages of multimedia, what is a podcast? What is Audacity? What is Soundcloud? Creating interactive images with Genially, how to use Google Sites, how to use OpenShot video editor, how to use Camtasia video editor, etc. Each week students were asked to watch the videos previously mentioned to reinforce their knowledge about the topic developed in class.

2. Read the material uploaded to Moodle.

To reinforce their knowledge, students had to read the documents uploaded to Moodle about the topics: A systematic review of multimedia resources to support teaching, Advantages, and disadvantages of multimedia, using multimedia objects in an online learning environment, creating a Podcast workbook, how to use GIMP to edit images, etc. All this was theory or guides about using the software studied in class.

3. Create a Podcast.

For this evaluated activity, students had to: select a topic (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Grammar, Vocabulary, etc.), write the script of the podcast, record themselves developing their topic, and use Audacity to record the audio or any other software, add background music and add a picture. Finally, upload the audio to Soundcloud and share and link on Campus UES.

4. Create an interactive image.

For this evaluated activity, students had to: select a topic (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Grammar, Vocabulary, etc.), log in to genially to create the interactive image, add text to the image and use from 3 to 5 pages on the interactive image. In addition, students had to edit

an image the teacher provided in Campus UES; they had to modify some aspects like the angle, resolution, etc., and upload it to Campus UES.

5.   Elaborate on a Google site and Google Slide/presentation.

For developing this evaluated activity, students had to: select a topic (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Grammar, Vocabulary, etc.), create a Google site and add text to the site, add images related to the topic, and use from 5 to 6 sub-parts, add an index, insert a division in each sub-part and finally insert a video from YouTube related to the topic. In addition to this, students had to: create a Google slide/presentation, use the information and images from part 1, add texts, photos, and transitions, and finally, share the links for the Google site and Google presentation on Campus.

6.   Video editing.

For developing this evaluated activity, students had to: record themselves talking about any topic from 3 to 5 minutes, edit the video using Openshot, Camtasia, Movie Maker, or any other software, add a front page at the beginning of the video and add a slide at the end of the video, add background music at the beginning and the end, add transitions to each subpart, add text and at least two images, write any vital video editing information, upload the video to YouTube and finally, students had to share the link on Campus UES.

IV.   Achievements

At the end of the specialization course, the team achieved the following.

The team learned both the theory about the teaching approaches of English and the practice of using emerging technological tools used nowadays for teaching English online.

The team learned to identify and create multimedia resources used in the teaching-learning process of virtual education, using a Learning Management System that consists of two elements: a server that performs the base functionality and a user interface operated by instructors, students, and administrators.

The team learned the terms and principles of technological environments for educational purposes; moreover, the participants domain their use and utilized them to plan and develop synchronous activities. Those activities are designed in real-time, with students and instructors attending simultaneously but at different locations and asynchronous activities, including activities set on a more flexible schedule. Students access class materials during other hours and locations.

The team learned to use technological tools to design and elaborate didactic materials for the teaching-learning of foreign languages, such as podcasts which consist of digital audio files available on the Internet for downloading to a pc or mobile device; videos, presentations, websites, along with others.

V.   Conclusions

The research team concludes by studying the specialization course in the administration of virtual environments for teaching and learning foreign languages. Students can now apply the best educational theory based on the students' needs for learning in a virtual environment and learn how to use some applications to develop an online course (Language Management Systems).

Students discovered a variety of online applications designed specifically to create creative and interactive content to develop when teaching an online course; therefore, they experienced the advantages and disadvantages of each application studied in class, and they learned how to use some applications to create online sessions, having in mind synchronous and asynchronous work sessions.

Many software is created for educational purposes, where teachers can create didactic material to develop online courses. The students from the specialization can use different platforms that will facilitate their job and, for sure, the learning process for their students; using the resources, teachers will create interactive material such as videos, podcasts, and interactive images and apply all the knowledge they will have great results.

Students learned how to create a complete and creative session for online teaching courses, using the educational tools that they have practiced many times in class, having the opportunity to present individual and group tasks for the rest of the class, they shared ideas with each other's applying all the knowledge, creativity and online resources in each activity learned on the specialization course.

VI.   Recommendations

For all students resort to a variety of educational platforms to create interactive and creative content to be able to develop the different topics in a very entertaining way; using that software, teachers guarantee the learning process of their students and, in the same way, facilitate the development of the sessions and the practical understanding for students, making the job easier for both, students and teachers.

For students who carry out their studies with the new distance learning modality, it is recommended that they have an organized, clean, and quiet space to be able to maintain concentration and avoid distractions when receiving the courses; this allows students to be focused, putting this in practice, the research team guarantee the learning process and retaining information on the topic being presented by teachers.

To the authorities of the University of El Salvador, so that they take into account the results and recommendations of the work carried out by the graduates of the foreign language career who completed the specialization in the administration of virtual environments for teaching and learning of foreign languages and continue investigating to improve the conditions for future students of similar courses.

To the authorities of the University of El Salvador so that they can guarantee the necessary resources for future teachers for them to be able to supply the needs and the University can give them the resources to plan the sessions using technology, in that way they will develop the content and guarantee the teaching-learning process and obtain the expected results with the students who are coursing a specialization at the end of their career.

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IX.   Appendixes

Syllabus Module 1

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

Module 1: Online English Language Teaching

PROGRAM

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Module 1:

1.2 Code: **EDII114**

1.3 Pre-requisite: **None**

1.4 Academic Credits: **3**

1.5 Target Population: **Students who have concluded their**

academic courses

1.6 Month and Year: **August-Oct. 2021**

1.7 Major Academic Unit: **Foreign Languages Department**

1.8 School: **School of Arts and Sciences**

1.9 Module Term: **8 Weeks/ 2 Months**

1.10 Hours per Module: **60 Hours**

1.11 Professors :

MsE. Blanca Alicia Menjívar González

Licda. Sey Danisia Najarro de Alvarado
MsDi. .Juan Antonio Flamenco Flamenco

2. Module Description

This module will be about the fundamentals of online education and its application on the English Language Teaching; specifically, the virtual or online teaching approach, like using a LMS (Learning Management System) to set up a virtual classroom and develop asynchronous activities, for instance Moodle; and use platforms like TEAMS or Meet for synchronous activities.

This module will also provide participants with the experience of creating virtual classrooms in Learning Management Systems available on the internet.

3. OBJECTIVES

a) General Objective:
  - To know and apply learning theories for teaching English online using emerging technological tools.

b) Specific Objectives:

At the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- To get acquainted with the virtual learning environments that are used currently.
- To identify multimedia resources according to the teaching-learning process that contribute and are suitable in virtual education.
- To create a virtual classroom using a Learning Management System available on the internet.
- To carry out synchronous work sessions using available tools.

4. Methodology

In this module, students will analyze and identify the importance of Learning Theories for the development of English language teaching methodology in virtual learning environments. For the development of the academic activities, the teacher will promote among the participants to take an active role in the analysis and discussion forums, as well as in the rest of the course activities. The use of tools related to web 2.0 will be for the purpose of involving students in their tasks with a change of roles: as learners and as facilitators in their virtual classrooms.

The activities of this module will be developed online and cooperative learning will emerge spontaneously. Interaction and feedback will take place between the facilitator and the participants,

TIME TABLE

Week	Synchronous session	Asynchronous session
1 Saturday, August 21st, 2021	• Introduction (Program, Sessions time, Class Policies) • Theories of learning in virtual learning	• Video about Synchronous and Asynchronous concepts. • Video about Theories of learning • Forum to answer questions or clarify doubts
2 Saturday, August 28th, 2021	• E-learning definition and application • Virtual teaching and its application in teaching languages.	• Discussion forum about theories of learning • Forum to answer questions or clarify doubts
3 Saturday, September 4th, 2021	• Language Management Systems (most common ones)	• Videos • Website • Forum to answer questions or clarify doubts
4 Saturday, September 11th, 2021	• Language Management Systems (most common ones	• Inphographic • Forum to answer questions or clarify doubts
5 Saturday, September 18th, 2021	• Language Management System - Google Classroom	• Tutorial, multimedia • Forum to answer questions or clarify doubts
6 Saturday, September 25th, 2021	• Language Management System - Google Classroom (Live demonstration)	• Create a Virtual Classroom • Forum to answer questions or clarify doubts
7 Saturday, October 2nd, 2021	• Platforms for Videoconferences (Zoom, TEAMS, MEET) • MEET	• Videos, Multimedia, Tutorials, Web sites • Forum to answer questions or clarify doubts
8 Saturday, October 9th, 2021	• Demonstrative class (MEET)	• Forum to answer questions or clarify doubts

III. **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES****: Students must turn in their homework assignments on the due dates; excuses are accepted only if events of force majeure prevent the students from turning them in time.

IV. **COURSE MATERIALS:** such as presentations, videos, audios, PDF notes, and the like.

V. **CLASS TIME:** Students are required to be connected to the sessions the complete period of time allotted to the meetings.

VI. **STUDENTS' BEHAVIOR:** They have to make their best effort to access to the class sessions at the time agreed. Once in class, they must keep their microphones off, try to stay focused on the activities being carried out, avoid improper chatting and texting. When connecting to the platform, they must have an appropriate headshot of themselves to be recognized by the teacher and their peers.

VII. **Students must have an institutional e-mail,** that is, it must contain the domain @ues.edu.sv

VIII. **GROUP CHANGES:** These changes are not Teachers´ responsibilities. If needed, students must resort to the competent authority. In any case this authority is Junta Directiva of the Facultad, or Administracion Academica de la Facultad.

*Artículo 147

El estudiante para tener derecho a las evaluaciones en cada unidad de aprendizaje, deberá tener una asistencia a las actividades académicas mayor o igual al 75%.

**Artículo 148

Una vez publicada la nota de la medición sumativa, los estudiantes que no estén conformes con la misma, tendrán derecho dentro de los tres días hábiles siguientes a la publicación oficial de estas, a solicitar en forma individual y por escrito la revisión ordinaria de la prueba ante el Jefe o Director de Escuela responsable.

**Artículo 150

Si el estudiante no se presenta a una evaluación por causa justificada, éste podrá solicitar por escrito su realización en forma diferida a más tardar dentro del tercer día hábil de haberse realizado ésta, ante el jefe de departamento o director de escuela, quien resolverá a más tardar al día siguiente hábil de presentada la solicitud, concediéndola o denegándola. En caso de ser favorable, deberá indicar el lugar, día y hora para su realización, notificándole oficialmente al estudiante y al docente responsable, la cual deberá estar considerada dentro de la programación del ciclo, en caso de no estarlo, esta deberá ser programada dentro de los tres (3) días hábiles contados a partir del día siguiente de la notificación oficial al estudiante, respetando la calendarización de actividades del sistema de evaluación establecido en el programa de la unidad de aprendizaje. En caso de ser desfavorable la solicitud, el estudiante tendrá derecho a solicitar a la Junta Directiva la revisión de la actuación del Jefe de Departamento o Director de Escuela.

En ningún caso y bajo ninguna circunstancia se permitirá diferir una prueba más de una vez por ciclo académico por unidad de aprendizaje.

**Artículo 151

Se admitirán únicamente como motivos justificativos de ausencia a una actividad evaluada sumativa, los siguientes: a) Problemas de salud; b) Problemas laborales; c) Muerte del cónyuge o parientes hasta el segundo grado de consanguinidad; d) Programación de dos o más evaluaciones en la misma fecha; e) Cumplimiento de actividades oficiales; f) Cumplimiento de misiones oficiales; y g) Caso fortuito y fuerza mayor debidamente comprobados.

Los motivos antes mencionados deberán sustentarse <u>con los respectivos atestados</u>.

The aforementioned justifications must be supported with the corresponding evidence.

*** Tomados del Reglamento de la Gestión Académico-Administrativa de la Universidad de El Salvador ***

8. REFERENCES

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Syllabus Module 2

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT

PROGRAM

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. Module 2: **Educational Applications for Learning a Foreign Language**

1.2. Code: **APE214**

1.3. Pre-requisite: **None**

1.4. Academic Credits: **3**

1.5. Target Population: **Students who have concluded their academic courses**

1.6. Month and Year: **October- December 2021**

1.7. Major Academic Unit: **Foreign Languages Department**

1.8. School: **School of Arts and Sciences**

1.9. Module Term: **8 Weeks/ 2 Months**

1.10. Hours per Module: **60 Hours**

1.11. Professors : Licda. Sey Danisia Najarro de Alvarado

Lic. Juan Antonio Flamenco Flamenco, MsDi.

Licda. Blanca Alicia Menjívar González, MsE.

2. **Module Description**

This module will be about the theoretical fundamentals and the use of technological tools for teaching-learning a foreign language in a virtual modality. The technological tools that will be used to teach online will be: **edpuzzle, flipgrid, flippity, liveworksheets, nearpod, padlet, kahoot, classroomscreen, powtoon.**

3. **OBJECTIVES**

   a) **General Objective:**

   ✓ To get familiar with theoretical information about technological tools for teaching-learning a language and their functions.

   b) **Specific Objectives:**

   At the end of this module, participants will be able to:

   ✓ define the terms and principles associated with technological tools for educational purposes.

   ✓ use technological tools to plan and develop synchronous class activities.

4. **METHODOLOGY**

   In this module, students will analyze at least eight technological tools and learn their usages in the teaching-learning process in virtual environments. Students will develop specific activities based on instructional practices, these will be discussed among the module partners in order to give and receive feedback and thus be able to improve permanently during the process.

   The academic activities of this module will be developed online and cooperative learning will emerge spontaneously, according to the requirements from the course.

Time Table

Week/Dates	Synchronous session	Asynchronous session
1 Saturday, October 16th to Friday, October 22nd, 2021	Presentation (Program, Content and Class Policies) List of technological tools and an overview	- Presentation of the concept educational applications - Question and answer forum
2 Saturday, October 23rd to Friday, October 29th, 2021	Fundamentals and principles of using technological tools	- Discussion forum on the fundamentals of technological tools when teaching a language. - Question and answer forum
3 Saturday, October 30th to Friday, November 5th, 2021	General information and tutorial of Edpuzzle. Live practice. General information and tutorial of Flipgrid.	- Videos - Tutorials - Websites - Question and answer forum
4 Saturday, November 6th to Friday, November 12th, 2021	General information and tutorial of Flippity. General information and tutorial of Liveworksheets. Live practice.	- Video summary about the applications: Edpuzzle, Flipgrid, Flippity, Liveworksheets - Question and answer forum
5 Saturday, November 13th to Friday, November 19th, 2021	General information and tutorial of Nearpod. Live practice. General information and tutorial of Padlet. Live practice. General information and tutorial of Powtoon. Live practice.	- Videos - Tutorials - Websites - Question and answer forum
6 Saturday, November 20th to Friday, November 26th, 2021	General information and tutorial of Kahoot. Live practice. General information and tutorial of Classroomscreen. Live practice.	- Create a video in Powtoon about advantages and disadvantages in the use of technological tools when teaching English. - Question and answer forum
7 Saturday, November 27th to Friday, December 3rd, 2021	Demo class using technological tools.	- Videos - Tutorials - Websites - Question and answer forum
8 Saturday, December 4th to Friday, December 10th, 2021	Demo class using technological tools	- Demo class using technological tools - Question and answer forum

7. **CLASS POLICIES**

I. CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE*: Students' active participation and attendance are required. Students´ attendance will be taken by their getting connected to the class platform during the time assigned to the tutoring sessions. If any connection problem arises, they must prove it with a valid resource such as a screen shot that shows the time and date of the failing attempt to access, either to a routine class or an evaluation event.

II. MISSED EVALUATIONS**: Requests presenting a genuine written justification for all evaluations missed should be made within the next three days following it.

III. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES**: Students must turn in their homework assignments on the due dates; excuses are accepted only if events of force majeure prevent the students from turning them in time.

IV. COURSE MATERIALS: such as presentations, videos, audios, PDF notes, and the like.

V. CLASS TIME: Students are required to be connected to the sessions the complete period of time allotted to the meetings.

VI. STUDENTS' BEHAVIOR: They have to make their best effort to access to the class sessions at the time agreed. Once in class, they must keep their microphones off, try to stay focused on the activities being carried out, avoid improper chatting and texting. When connecting to the platform, they must have an appropriate headshot of themselves to be recognized by the teacher and their peers.

VII. Students must have an institutional e-mail, that is, it must contain the domain @ues.edu.sv

VIII. GROUP CHANGES: These changes are not Teachers´ responsibilities. If needed, students must resort to the competent authority. In any case this authority is Junta Directiva of the Facultad, or Administracion Academica de la Facultad.

*Artículo 147

El estudiante para tener derecho a las evaluaciones en cada unidad de aprendizaje, deberá tener una asistencia a las actividades académicas mayor o igual al 75%.

**Artículo 148

Una vez publicada la nota de la medición sumativa, los estudiantes que no estén conformes con la misma, tendrán derecho dentro de los tres días hábiles siguientes a la publicación oficial de estas, a solicitar en forma individual y por escrito la revisión ordinaria de la prueba ante el Jefe o Director de Escuela responsable.

**Artículo 150

Si el estudiante no se presenta a una evaluación por causa justificada, éste podrá solicitar por escrito su realización en forma diferida a más tardar dentro del tercer día hábil de haberse realizado ésta, ante el jefe de departamento o director de escuela, quien resolverá a más tardar al día siguiente hábil de presentada la solicitud, concediéndola o denegándola. En caso de ser favorable, deberá indicar el lugar, día y hora para su realización, notificándole oficialmente al estudiante y al docente responsable, la cual deberá estar considerada dentro de la programación del ciclo, en caso de no estarlo, esta deberá ser programada dentro de los tres (3) días hábiles contados a partir del día siguiente de la notificación oficial al estudiante, respetando la calendarización de actividades del sistema de evaluación establecido en el programa de la unidad de aprendizaje. En caso de ser desfavorable la solicitud, el estudiante tendrá derecho a solicitar a la Junta Directiva la revisión de la actuación del Jefe de Departamento o Director de Escuela.

En ningún caso y bajo ninguna circunstancia se permitirá diferir una prueba más de una vez por ciclo académico por unidad de aprendizaje.

**Artículo 151

Se admitirán únicamente como motivos justificativos de ausencia a una actividad evaluada sumativa, los siguientes: a) Problemas de salud; b) Problemas laborales; c) Muerte del cónyuge o parientes hasta el segundo grado de consanguinidad; d) Programación de dos o más evaluaciones en la misma fecha; e) Cumplimiento de actividades oficiales; f) Cumplimiento de misiones oficiales; y g) Caso fortuito y fuerza mayor debidamente comprobados.

Los motivos antes mencionados deberán sustentarse <u>con los respectivos atestados</u>.

The aforementioned justifications must be supported with the corresponding evidence.

*** Tomados del Reglamento de la Gestión Académico-Administrativa de la Universidad de El Salvador ***

8. **REFERENCES**

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Syllabus Module 3

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT

Module III Syllabus

January, 2022

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. Module 3:	**Design of Didactic Materials for Virtual Environments**
1.2. Code:	DIM314
1.3. Pre-requisite:	**None**
1.4. Academic Credits:	**3**
1.5. Target Population:	**Students who have concluded their academic courses**
1.6. Month and Year:	**January- March 2022**
1.7. Major Academic Unit:	**Foreign Languages Department**
1.8. School:	**School of Arts and Sciences**
1.9. Module Term:	**8 Weeks/ 2 Months**
1.10. Hours per Module:	**60 Hours**
1.11. Professors:	MEVA. Sey Danisia Najarro de Alvarado
	MsDi. Juan Antonio Flamenco Flamenco
	MsE. Blanca Alicia Menjívar González

5. CONTENTS

Week	Content	Resources	Evaluation
Week 1 Y 2	❖ Fundamentals of Using Multimedia Resources in a Virtual Learning Environment ❖ Use and creation of Podcasts ❖ Using Audacity ❖ Using SoundCloud	❖ Readings ❖ Tutorials ❖ Guidelines for the elaboration of activities	**Elaboration of a Podcast**
Week 3 y 4	❖ The Fundamentals of image selection ❖ Using and Creating a Google Site ❖ Using Genially	❖ Presentations tutorials ❖ Guidelines for the elaboration of evaluated activities	**Elaboration of an interactive image** **Creation of a Google Site**
Week 5 y 6	❖ Fundamentals of Creating Presentations ❖ Using Google Presentations	❖ Readings, tutorials ❖ Guidelines for the elaboration of evaluated activities	**Creating a Google presentation**
Week 7 y 8	❖ Fundamentals of video creation ❖ OpenShot working environmen.	❖ Readings, tutorials ❖ Software for videos ❖ Guidelines for elaboration of evaluated activities	**Elaboration of a video**

6 Monday, February 21st to Saturday, February 26th, 2022	❖ Using Google Presentations	- Videos - Tutorials - Websites - Question and answer forum - Creating a Google Presentation - Guidelines for the elaboration of activities
7 Monday, February 28th to Saturday, March 5th, 2022	❖ Fundamentals of video production ❖ Examples of Video Editors	- Videos - Tutorials - Websites - Question and answer forum - Guidelines for the elaboration of activities
8 Monday, March 7th to Saturday, March 12th, 2022	❖ Use of Smart Phones for video recording. ❖ Use of OpenShot.	- Videos - Tutorials - Websites - Question and answer forum - Creation of a video - Guidelines for the elaboration of activities

6. Evaluation System

The evaluation system will take place in 2 ways:

Formative Assessment:

As an integral part of the teaching-learning process, the formative evaluation will take place as a self-evaluation, co-evaluation, discussions, reflections and questions to enrich the process. Effective formative feedback will help participants improve their practices during the module.

Summative evaluation:

This evaluation will be considered to demonstrate the extent to which each of the participants is able to complete the evaluation criteria designated by the facilitator. Numerical weights will be assigned and thus the results will be evidenced at the end of the module.

EVALUATION	PERCENTAGES
1. Elaboration of a Podcast	20%
2. Creation of an interactive image in Genially	15%
3. Elaboration of a presentation in Google	15%
4. OpenShot video production	20%
5. Integrative assignment in groups of 4 students (Google Site linked to Google Classroom and live defense.	30%
TOTAL	100%

7. CLASS POLICIES

I. **CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE***: Students' active participation and attendance are required. Students´ attendance will be taken by their getting connected to the class platform during the time assigned to the tutoring sessions. If any connection problem arises, they must prove it with a valid resource such as a screen shot that shows the time and date of the failing attempt to access, either to a routine class or an evaluation event.

II. **MISSED EVALUATIONS****: Requests presenting a genuine written justification for all evaluations missed should be made within the next three days following it.

III. **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES****: Students must turn in their homework assignments on the due dates; excuses are accepted only if events of force majeure prevent the students from turning them in time.

IV. **COURSE MATERIALS:** such as presentations, videos, audios, PDF notes, and the like.

V. **CLASS TIME:** Students are required to be connected to the sessions the complete period of time allotted to the meetings.

En ningún caso y bajo ninguna circunstancia se permitirá diferir una prueba más de una vez por ciclo académico por unidad de aprendizaje.

Artículo 151

Se admitirán únicamente como motivos justificativos de ausencia a una actividad evaluada Sumativa, los siguientes:

a) Problemas de salud; b) Problemas laborales; c) Muerte del cónyuge o parientes hasta el segundo grado de consanguinidad; d) Programación de dos o más evaluaciones en la misma fecha; e) Cumplimiento de actividades oficiales; f) Cumplimiento de misiones oficiales; y g) Caso fortuito y fuerza mayor debidamente comprobados.

Los motivos antes mencionados deberán sustentarse con los respectivos atestados.

Artículo 152

Cuando en una prueba sumativa ordinaria, resultaren reprobados entre el 51 y 60% de estudiantes, estos tendrán derecho a solicitar al Jefe de Departamento o Escuela respectivo, la repetición de la prueba en la unidad de aprendizaje de que se trate, dentro del plazo de tres días hábiles después de haber sido publicadas

oficialmente las notas. El jefe de Departamento o Director de Escuela vista la solicitud, resolverá señalando lugar, día, hora y responsable de practicar la prueba dentro de las 48 horas siguientes a la solicitud previo notificación a los solicitantes.

Cuando resultaren reprobados más del 60 % de estudiantes en una prueba sumativa, ésta se repetirá de oficio, observando el trámite anterior.

En ambos casos, el Jefe de Departamento o Director de Escuela, junto con eldocente responsable efectuaran un análisis de los problemas que ocasionaron los resultados, a efecto de establecer las mejoras correspondientes.

La repetición de pruebas se realizará una sola vez y a ella se someterá solo los estudiantes que así lo deseen. La nota obtenida en la prueba repetidasustituirá a la anterior.

SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES DEVELOPED DURING THE COURSE

Module I week 4: Infographic about the Learning Management Systems

Module 2 week 5: PowToon video -Use of the educational tool Flipgrid

Link to watch the video https://youtu.be/xp4kifa9aG4
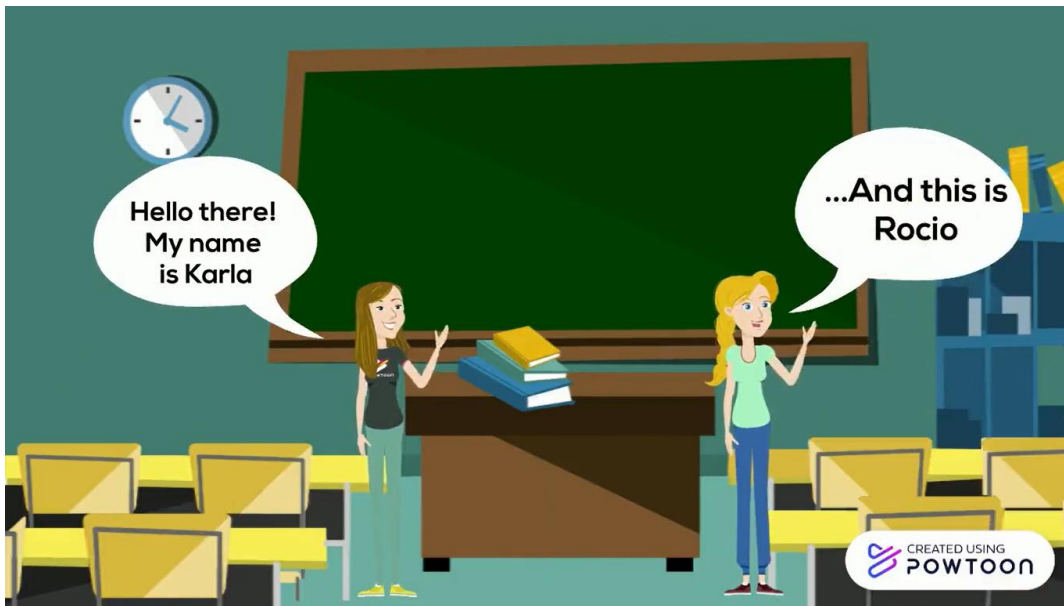
Module 3: Interactive Image

Link to see the interactive image

https://view.genial.ly/62043e409266ed001947f6b5/interactive-image-interactive-image