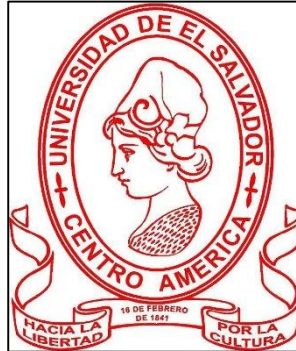


**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



TITLE:

**THE NEW METHODOLOGIES FOR LEARNING HOW TO TEACH A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE BY USING VIRTUAL TOOLS**

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**INFORME FINAL DE CURSO DE ESPECIALIZACIÓN
ADMINISTRACIÓN DE AMBIENTES VIRTUALES PARA LA ENSEÑANZA Y
APRENDIZAJE DE IDIOMAS EXTRANJEROS**

**TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF:
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MODERN LANGUAGES WITH A MAJOR IN FRENCH AND
ENGLISH**

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ABSTRACT

The present report is aimed to present the results of the activities conducted and the knowledge acquired during the practice and development of the specialization course. Throughout virtual learning theories and the theories of learning, the learning process in a virtual modality is presented and detailed, as well as the LMS (Learning Management System) and the online tools that can be used as resources for online classes. Moreover, some of the conducted activities via virtual tools such as Powtoon, Genially, Flippity, and Flipgrid are presented. These activities helped the group not only to learn how to use them and get a better idea of the advantages, but also to get prepared to teach in a virtual environment. Finally, recommendations and conclusions are presented to state the importance and the relevance of the development of the specialization course.

Keywords: Virtual Platforms, Virtual Tools, Virtual Environments, Virtual Contents, Electronic Learning, Learning Theories.

I. INTRODUCTION

Considering the growing need for virtual learning environments due to the present pandemic of Covid-19, students and teachers have had to take up online learning. The interaction has been limited for reasons beyond the control of teachers, so they must adapt to the current circumstances and create a good digital environment that allows the development of an environment conducive to facilitating the learning process.

Increasing globalization and technological development are bringing about fundamental changes in education systems. So, the challenge for educational institutions is to achieve greater adaptation and speed of response to the needs of change, so that personal and professional performance is congruent with social needs. At the University of El Salvador, particularly at the Department of Foreign Languages, the authorities have noticed the importance of offering a specialization course as a new modality to graduation work. The first course created was entitled: specialization course in the Administration of Virtual Environments for the Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages.

Inside the pages of this report, the memories, achievements, learnings, conclusions, and recommendations are presented. The course lasted six months, approximately, and it was divided into three modules. This final graduation report also includes the objectives of the specialization course, the theoretical framework, as well as, a detailed description of all the activities studied in each module. Finally, some recommendations are presented for the Department and authorities of the School of Humanities as well as the conclusions of the specialization course.

II. OBJECTIVES

General Objective:

- To train graduates of the bachelor's degree in Modern Languages in the use of Learning Management Systems, e-learning tools, and the creation of didactical materials for their implementation in virtual learning environments of the English language.

Specifics Objectives:

- To learn how to create material and use some Learning Management systems available on the internet.
- To use different e-learning tools to apply them during a learning plan and develop synchronous class activities.
- To create digital materials for the teaching-learning of foreign languages.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theories of Learning

Within the history of learning, several theories have been taken into consideration that has contributed to some extent to the understanding of the learning process. The emergence of theories such as behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism, brings us closer and closer to understanding what are the needs of students both outside and inside the classroom so that the information they receive is transformed into truly meaningful learning.

But what does it mean to "know" something? Is there a difference between "learning" and "knowing"? Herbert Simon, the winner of the 1978 Nobel prize for Economics, stated that "knowing" no longer means being able to remember and repeat information, but now means being able to find and use information. There are many different definitions of "learning." A few of those statements are included here for your consideration.

Learning is a complex process that corresponds to a biochemical activity in the brain and a relatively permanent behavior change. But also, includes: Information processing, remembering and recalling, social negotiation, thinking skills, knowledge construction, conceptual change, and contextual change (transferring knowledge from the instructional context to a new context). A learning process has to be active and experiential and can be Distributed among the community (changes in our relation to the cultures to which we are connected). Tuning your perceptions to your immediate environment. Learning is also a self-organizing phenomenon (it is affected by numerous, unpredictable variables, but when people in a system need to learn, they will).

Among the most significant learning theories can be mentioned:

- **Behaviorism:**

In education, behaviorism examines how students behave while learning. It focuses on observing how students respond to stimuli that, when repeated, can be evaluated, quantified, and eventually controlled for each individual.

- **Cognitivism:**

Cognitive theorists promoted the concept that the mind has an important role in learning and sought to focus on what happens between the occurrence of environmental stimulus and student response. Motivation and Imagination as critical elements of learning.

- **Constructivism:**

Constructivism's central idea is that human learning is constructed, that learners build new knowledge upon the foundation of previous learning. This prior knowledge influences what new or modified knowledge an individual will construct from new learning experiences. The focus was to describe and explain teaching and learning as complex interactive social phenomena between teachers and students. Constructivism argues that individuals consciously strive for meaning to make sense of their environment in terms of experience and their present state.

The Theory of Connectivism.

At present, one of the theories that have gained a lot of importance, thanks to the constant development of technology, is the connective that emerged at the beginning of the 21st century

and its essence is the study of the influence of technology on the teaching-learning processes.

The theories based on connectivism go deeper into the matter and consider that learning is not something alien. That is to say, they consider that it is not something internal and individual, but that interactions (between people or technological media) and network constructions and one's interest influence the student's learning as it conditions the updating and restructuring of information.

Information and communication technologies become the central part of this current since it is assured that their use generates profound changes in the way of thinking and acting of the person so that in the development of the teaching-learning process the protagonists are the technologies (social networks, blogs, web applications, videoconferences, etc.) that influence the development of people.

To better understand this theoretical point of view, it is necessary to know concepts related to teaching technologies known as e-learning and their influence on modern education.

E-Learning.

The meaning of e-learning comes from "electronic learning". It is another possibility of education and training through the Internet. This type of online teaching allows the user to interact with the material through the use of various computer tools.

Electronic learning (e-Learning) has advanced and progressed vertiginously, adapting to the technological changes that are appearing since it was born in the early 1920s when some professors started to experiment with the idea of a "Teaching Machine" till nowadays where technology and teaching are not anymore a foreign combination.

Nevertheless, the concept has been adapted over the years to the technologies of the day, but the same effect does not exist for pedagogies and learning theories. It seems that the progress of applying the concept to e-learning in an actual good and functional way in schools and universities was not a priority even if most teachers and students could talk about its importance, the image presents an evolution of the e-Learning technologies that have appeared over the years. During 2020-2022 (the pandemic period) we could say that it has been the technology that has kept teachers and students connected all over the world.

Some of the characteristics of the use of e-learning in academic environments can be highlighted:

- · The simplicity of use.
- · Multimedia system (text, audio, video, image).
- · The disappearance of distances between sender and receiver.
- · Economical for students.
- · It is interactive.
- · It is accessible.
- · Learning methodologies are adapted to the subject and the student.

Using e-learning has numerous advantages, among them we can mention:

- Substantial savings Empowerment of human talent.
- The semiotics of the medium helps students and teachers in their digital transformation.
- Triple-A Access: (Anywhere, Anyplace, and Anytime)
- Can be adapted to particular needs
- Possibility of access to knowledge to people all over the world

- Less impact on the environment

However, it is also important to mention the difficulties that an institution or a teacher has when implementing a methodology dependent on e-learning. As for disadvantages, we can point out:

- Access to technology in many places can be complicated.
- Equipment prices (hardware and software)
- Socialization of individuals, no face-to-face interaction.
- Lack of trust in certification
- Teachers are not up to date
- Good e-Learning content is difficult to produce

Combining learning with technology certainly requires rigorous planning where both teachers and students must be open to the possibility of possessing the necessary resources to make this alternative viable. Not to mention that both the content and material used in virtual environments are very different from those used in traditional teaching. But despite the difficulties, it never hurts to implement new technologies in the classroom so that students' learning is more focused on their interests and needs.

Virtual Learning, English Teaching, and Learning Management Systems

The Covid-19 pandemic made it clear that education and the use of technological tools were of great importance in today's world. Many institutions found it necessary to implement non-face-to-

face classes using computers and internet service. This presented too great a challenge for teachers and students who had little or no knowledge of synchronous and asynchronous classes much less of Learning Management System (LMS) concepts.

It is necessary to emphasize the gratitude that in times of greatest need both teachers and students were able to overcome the bad moments, and little by little, they learned to use tools that facilitated the task to continue with their school planning. However, something that is notable among the academic sectors that had a functional system in non-traditional education was the institutions dedicated to online learning of foreign languages.

This sector, which we can name academies or platforms dedicated to providing the asynchronous education service, often thought of the possibility of connecting a large number of students who came from different parts of the world, so they had their own space within the red to perform that function. This software resource is known as the Learning Management System (LMS).

L Learning because you use it to deliver training courses and programs.

M Management because it helps you organize these courses.

S System because you do everything online and keep all info in one place.

What Does an LMS Do?

- · Provide learning experiences that are adapted to individual learners.
- · Make it easy for instructors to make notes and changes.
- · Give instructors and students the opportunity for online collaboration.

- · Integrate common tools such as calendars, word processors, and more.

Limitations of older LMSs

1. Not compatible with mobile devices.
2. Not easily customizable.
3. Not user-friendly.
4. Low on administration features.
5. Less reliable and open to data and security attacks.
6. Limited reporting and analytics capabilities.

Today more than ever, teachers of all institutions in the world must have in their professional curriculum the knowledge of the management of virtual learning environments and the creation of virtual didactic materials. Therefore, teachers must know the advantages of the use of LMS in the study plan.

Advantages of E-learning in English Teaching

- · Abundant Teaching Resources.
- · Easy access to information.
- · The Effect of Direct Interest.
- · Teaching Students following Their Aptitude.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

➤ Module 1.

This module was about the fundamentals of online education and its application to English Language Teaching, specifically LMS (Learning Management System).

For this module, participants worked on four main activities, some of which were developed in groups and some others individually.

Activity 1: Discussion Forum.

In module 1, participants learned and studied the main learning theories in learning such as the theory of behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, and connectivism. So, the first activity was intended for students to demonstrate their understanding of theories of learning and their application in a teaching-learning situation. For this activity, students analyzed and wrote a comment on a forum created on Campus in which they were given two examples of teaching-learning situations in which they had to apply two of the four theories seen in class.

Activity 2: Infographics.

This activity was intended for participants to elaborate an infographic to identify the features of a learning management system (LMS). For participants to create this infographic, they first researched some information about three to four LMS. Secondly, after having analyzed the

information, participants needed to select the features considered the most important ones and had to choose between three and five features to be explained.

Activity 3: Demonstrative class on MEET.

This was the final activity for module I, this activity was completed in groups. It was intended for participants to prepare and manage a micro-teaching lesson through Google Meet. For this activity, students presented a five-minute lesson by using the platform Google Meet.

➤ Module 2.

This module was about the theoretical fundamentals and the use of technological tools for teaching-learning a foreign language in a virtual modality. The technological tools that were studied for online teaching were: edpuzzle, flipgrid, flippity, liveworksheets, nearpod, padlet, Kahoot, classroom screen, and powtoon. For this module, the following four tasks were completed.

Activity 1: Infographics.

The first activity was about Infographics based on the fundamentals of Technological tools for teaching a language. In this activity, participants created an infographic in which they presented at least 5 tools from the ones studied in class (edpuzzle, flipgrid, flippity, liveworksheets, nearpod, padlet, Kahoot, classroom screen, and powtoon), and they described the main objective for using these tools in a virtual class and they also presented some of the main important features each tool provide to help teachers and students to develop an online class.

Activity 2: Video on Flipgrid.

This activity was about creating a video on Flipgrid in which students put into practice the technological tools that they studied in class. Participants presented an activity they could use in an online class with their students created on Edpuzzle, Flipgrid, Flippity, or Liveworksheets.

The purpose of this activity was for them to show the way they can create some interactive activities for their students by using one of these tools, the video they created on Flipgrid should last the most 5 minutes.

Activity 3: Video on Powtoon.

This activity was about creating a video on Powtoon about the advantages and disadvantages of the use of Technological tools when teaching English.

For this activity, participants prepared a video in which they presented and explained the main advantages and disadvantages of the use of a technological tool. Moreover, they presented one of the tools studied in class, and they explained the reason why they recommend that tool to be used in class, and they also explained the main use that they could give to the tool selected, students also explained how they could use it in an online class and the main features this tool offer to teachers. In that way, students were able to put into practice what they learned from the Technological tools studied in class.

Activity 4: Demo class.

The last main activity was a Demo class using Technological tools.

For this activity were randomly assigned two tools that participants needed to use for a demo class.

Students chose a topic to be developed in 5 minutes maximum and they also needed to create an activity by using one of the technological tools studied in this module. Besides that, for this activity, students created a lesson plan, in which they included a description of the class, the objectives, general information about the class such as the topic, duration, and date, and they also presented a table with the details for the video class, in which students presented the activities they created, the resources they used and the tools that were used in the demo class and the duration of each activity developed.

➤ **Module 3.**

In this module, students learned to use at least four Web tools for the design of educational materials. In this module, participants worked on five main activities that helped them to put into practice all the knowledge acquired during this process and also to put into practice everything they learned in the two previous modules.

Activity 1: Elaboration of a Podcast.

The main purpose of this activity was for participants to demonstrate that they learned how to create an educational podcast that could be used in online classes.

For students to create the podcast they needed to consider some specific aspects like the listed below:

- Select an appropriate topic for the students that the participants will be teaching.
- Research information if needed, analyze it, and write a script.

- Create a podcast using Audacity or any other audio editor.
- When finished recording and editing our podcast, students uploaded the podcast to SoundCloud.
- In addition to the podcast, participants needed to write an explanation of their plan for using this podcast in the classroom (half-page - maximum 1 page), this explanation should include two elements: · What is the topic that was picked, and why did they choose it? How will it help your students? · Secondly, they needed to describe how they envision using the podcast during class – what kind of an instructional tool will it be? And some of their important aspects.

Activity 2: Instructional video.

The objective of this activity was for participants to create an instructional video that they can use in a virtual class with their students to help them to teach or illustrate an educational concept.

The first step was to select a topic for their course in google classroom (the one the participants created in module 1). Then, they researched information, analyzed it, and wrote a script and/or storyboard. Besides that, students chose some images or video clips if needed. After doing that, they recorded the video, and when finished recording, students edited the video. Finally, they uploaded it to YouTube and shared the link on Campus.

Activity 3: Elaboration of a presentation in Google.

This activity was intended for students to demonstrate good use of presentation creation tools.

For us to complete this activity participants followed the instructions listed below:

- Select a topic related to your course. Here they needed to select a topic that was related to the google classroom they already had from module number one.
- Create a presentation (PowerPoint, Google Slides, Canva, Genially, Prezi, Powtoon) following the recommendations given in the class sessions.
- The presentation needed to contain between 10 to 12 slides.
- After making and reviewing the presentation, participants needed to record a short video using the presentation (around 5 minutes, maximum of 7 minutes)
- Both documents, the presentation, and the video needed to be shared on Campus UES.

Activity 4: Interactive image.

For this activity, participants created an interactive image that could be used in a language course. First, students selected a topic that could be related to grammar, vocabulary, or something that they could relate to their course in Google Classroom. After selecting the topic, they researched information, websites, videos, or activities for them to use with the topic they selected. When having all the information, students looked for an appropriate picture or pictures that would help them to create their interactive image. It was important to consider that the image should have different elements to create the interactive elements on it. Finally, once they had all the elements needed participants went to <https://genial.ly/> and created their Interactive image, which was published in Campus UES.

Activity 5: Integrative assignment (Google Site linked to Google Classroom and live defense).

This was the last activity for module 3 and this activity was intended for students to put into practice everything they learned in the three modules, it was also divided into two parts, the creation of the website and its presentation to the class.

In this activity, participants created a website by using Google Sites. For them to create this website there were some important elements to consider and respect.

First, determine the parts that the website was going to contain according to the inputs participants already had in their Google Classroom course. Besides that, three main elements were mandatory to the website (Meet your teacher, Schedule, and Assignments). However, they were allowed to include some other sections depending on their interests and the usage of their website.

Additionally, the website must contain the podcast, video, slideshow, and interactive image created in the last module and include at least 3 tools seen in module 2, this was for them to put into practice what was learned from previous modules.

Finally, the second part of the evaluation consisted of the presentation and demonstration of the website to their classmates and they also explained what was the main purpose of the website and the use they will give to it in the future for an online class.

V.ACHIEVEMENTS

The team learned how to use at least eight tools and their usages in the teaching-learning process in virtual environments. Moreover, the team developed specific activities based on instructional practices, these had been discussed among the module partners to give and receive feedback and thus be able to improve permanently during the process.

Also, they learned in a general way the history of educational technology and learning theories. That was useful information that we have to keep in mind as teachers because improving our recourse, knowledge, and skills is also our responsibility to adapt ourselves to the circumstances and new teaching methodology.

During the three modules of the specialization, students were able to develop their creative skills and come up with new ideas on how to carry out activities or what elements could be more favorable to attract the attention of their students.

The students learned how to solve the most common technical problems in the learned platforms that they used, thanks to the patience and empathy of the whole group of the specialization.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The Specialization Course in Administration of Virtual Environments for the Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages has been helpful for all graduates of the Foreign Language Department, especially for those who want to improve their didactic competencies. The specialization has topics in line with everything a foreign language teacher needs to know to have good management of their virtual classrooms.

It should be noted that each of the teachers who taught each module was an expert in the field as they aroused the interest in learning each weekly lesson while encouraging the student to think creatively without limitations in the teaching and learning of foreign languages.

It is important to motivate students to use LMS (Learning Management System) as a language learning strategy, to take advantage of the technological advances and tools that can make the learning process easier.

Furthermore, the usage of technological tools or LMS for planning and developing synchronous and asynchronous class activities benefit in a very important way the learning process of foreign languages. In that way, professors would perform better at monitoring the language learning progress of each student.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

This team has prepared some recommendations for concerned parties involved, to continue improving the eLearning system, moreover to develop cooperative online learning, and continue working closely in teaching-learning a foreign language in a virtual modality.

- Assign strategically part of the institution's budget to the development of the technology and update the equipment, also provide constant training to all the professors of the School of Humanities, to guarantee an excellent educational system.
- Professors should continue having training in the use of technological tools for online classes to improve the learning process of the virtual classroom.
- The groups should be divided into small groups, so they do not exceed 30 to 35 members in that way we can assure that students will be able to participate in their classes.
- The Faculty should not only maintain the virtual modality for the specialization courses but also improve and innovate the eLearning methodologies used in each course.
- The specialization courses should also have the option to be taught and taken in French to benefit the students who are interested in teaching French specifically. In this way, they can continue improving their skills in this language.

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IX. APPENDIXES

Appendix 1

Module 1: Infographics

TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS FOR ONLINE CLASSES.

Kahoot!

The main objective for its inclusion is to Activate Prior Knowledge.

This tool can be used to help students to remember what they have just learnt in previous classes.

Some of the features this tool offers to help teachers and students to develop an online class are:

1. We can assign homework.
2. We can get students to play and learn at the same time individually or in groups.
3. We can create a quiz with multiple options.
4. We can get students attention with some true/false questions.

Jamboard

The objective for its inclusion can be to Encourage learners participation.

This is online board that can be used to perform some activities in groups with our students, and to encourage them to participate in our classes when discussing about a topic.

Some of the features this tool offers are:

1. We can write and draw in real time online.
2. We can share links and pictures from Google to help students to complete activities.
3. Students can gather their ideas and organize them.
4. We can drag and move anywhere the images and texts we have add.

Google docs

The objective for its inclusion can be to Put the Knowledge Learnt into Practice.

This tool is a good option to encourage students to practice all they have learnt and to continue improving their skills.

Some features this tool offers are:

1. Create exercises that allow students to write and provide answers.
2. We can create complete paragraphs.

padlet

The main objective for its inclusion is to introduce a Content.

This tool is very useful when starting a new topic with our students and to help them to get an idea of the new topic.

Some features from this tool are:

1. We can add posts with specific information.
2. We can make changes that are autoseed.
3. We can get our students together, sharing ideas, at the same time in real time.
4. We can also create tickets to provide feedback.

genially

The objective for its inclusion can be to Provide Feedback.

This tool is very complete and helps us to provide feedback in a very interested and original way by creating and designing interactive visual content.

Some features this tool offers are:

1. We can start from blank or pre-designed templates.
2. We can create escape room games where students can answer questions and solve problems.
3. We can create interactive images.
4. We can create quizzes.
5. We can use it to create clickable infographics.

6 TOP LMS FEATURES FOR TEACHING LANGUAGES

How in days using of LMI is necessary for teachers around the world. But there are some features that it cannot be skip for teaching.

1. MESSAGE BOARD.

FEATURES THAT HELP STUDENTS LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER.

+ Google Classroom, Facebook, Moodle.

2. COURSE CREATION

FINDING AN LMS THAT INCLUDES COURSE CREATION FEATURES WILL HELP STREAMLINE YOUR PROCESSES.

+ Canvas, Google Classroom.

3. MOBILE LEARNING

LEARNERS CAN PARTICIPATE IN COURSE FROM ANY LOCATION USING WHATEVER DEVICE THEY DO OWN.

+ Canvas, Google Classroom.

4. ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

THE ABILITY FOR LEARNERS TO COMPLETE COURSE WORK AT THEIR OWN PACE.

+ Teams, LearnUpon, Grovo.

GOOD FOR TEACHING LANGUAGES.

5. GAMIFICATION

GAMIFICATION FEATURES CAN TURN LEARNING INTO A FRIENDLY COMPETITION.

+ Moodle, Docebo.

6. INTEGRATIONS

IT IS IMPORTANT HAVING A FEATURE THAT ALLOW TO CREATE BREAK ROOMS FOR PRACTICING PRODUCTION OF A LANGUAGE.

+ Teams, Moodle.

MELISSA VALERIA FLAMENCO HERNANDEZ
MODULE 1: ONLINE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING GROUP 1

The most important and useful LMS Features for teaching languages

LMS means learning management system. A learning management system is a digital learning environment that manages all aspects of a company's various training efforts.

Social Learning :
Social learning is defined as learning through the observation of other people's behaviors. It helps students learn from one another. (Campus UES, Schoology, Edmodo.)

Gamification :
Gamification is adding game mechanics into nongame environments, like a website, online community, learning management system or business, internet to increase participation. Create a sense of challenge, competition, and fun via a leaderboard. (Docubo.)

Mobile Learning:
Mobile learning, also known as M-learning, is a new way to access learning content using mobile devices. It is possible to learn whenever and wherever you want, as long as you have a modern mobile device connected to the internet. (Classroom, Edmodo, Schoology, Moodle, Microsoft Teams.)

Asynchronous learning :
It is the ability for learners to complete course work at their own pace. This means they don't have to be present at a set time for a lecture or to talk with an instructor. (Provo, Classroom, Campus UES.)

What an LMS must have for teaching languages

Intuitive user interface:
It is a user friendly UI without having to get lost or confused. That means they are easy to use for admin and learners.

Learning paths:
It is to build Learning Paths according to the students' needs and provide a more effective learning process.




Appendix 2

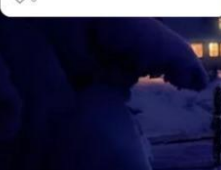
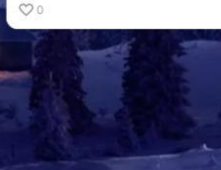

Module 2: Flipgrid and Powtoon (technological tools)



padlet

Melissa Valeria Flamenca Hernández + 8 · 3me

What is your favorite thing about christmas?
Write one or two things that you like about christmas.

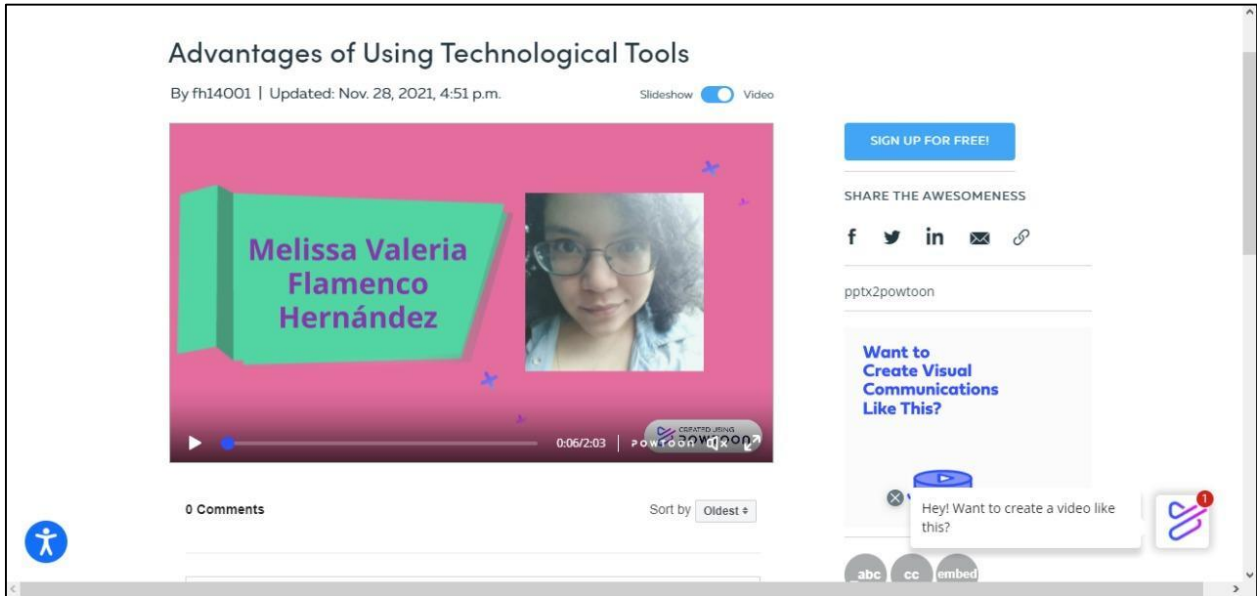
  

The screenshot shows a Flipgrid interface. At the top left is the Flipgrid logo. The top right has navigation icons for Groups, Camera, and a profile icon. The post is by 'Flamenco_Hernández' and is titled 'Using LiveWorksheet'. It is dated 'November 15, 2021'. The main content is a video thumbnail featuring a woman wearing a green 'Flipgrid' cap and glasses, with a yellow thumbs-up emoji and a 'Worksheets' label. Below the video is a blue 'Add Response' button. At the bottom, it shows '0 Responses', '0 views · 0 comments · 0.0 hours of engagement', and a 'Search responses' search bar.

Appendix 3

Module 3: Using Powtoon to create video and presentation



Module 3: Creating a website and PowerPoint presentations

