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



"THE BENEFITS OF THE USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS IN VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS."

"LOS BENEFICIOS DEL USO DE HERRAMIENTAS TECNOLÓGICAS EN ENTORNOS VIRTUALES".

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic forced schools and universities to teach their classes online since the sanitary situation did not allow students and teachers to attend physical places. The University of El Salvador was no exception, both, teachers and students had to adapt to this situation; last year students from the majors of the Foreign Language Department could not continue or even start their research work since they could not meet their research partners and advisors. Therefore, in the attempt of relieving the need graduate students from the Foreign Language Department had to obtain their diploma, the authorities opted for the creation of the Specialization Course: Administration of Virtual Environments for The Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages. It was an alternative to the regular graduation process through research work. In order to highlight the importance, the implementation of the course had, this report provides context to how COVID-19 has affected education and the importance of online education nowadays. Besides, it defines and describes the meaning of vital concepts in online education such as learning theories, virtual learning environments, and Learning Management Systems. The report also describes the activities that were developed during the three modules of the course, and it points out the achievements the research team had. Additionally, it provides conclusions and recommendations that can help authorities to polish the course content for future implementations.

Keywords: COVID-19, online education, educational applications, learning theories, virtual learning environments, learning management systems (LMS).

INTRODUCTION

The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic affected schools and universities all over the world which forced facilities to close and caused education to take place online. The University of El Salvador and the Foreign Language Department were no exception. Due to this event, the vast majority of last year students from the majors of the Foreign Language Department could not continue with their graduation process since the pandemic did not allow research teams to get together with their advisors to work on their research work; this created uncertainty in students who saw their graduation farther every time. Therefore, the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador opted for the creation of a course to obtain the graduation diploma, this was named Administration of Virtual Environments for The Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages. The implementation of this course relieved graduate students' needs as it became an alternative to getting their graduation diploma.

This report describes how COVID-19 has affected education over the world, how teachers and students had to adapt to the circumstances, and how online teaching has become essential for education., Moreover, it defines what a virtual environment is and the development these environments have had over the last years. Next, the report explains the adaptation of learning theories into online learning, and it defines what synchronous and asynchronous learning is. It also lists the benefits and drawbacks both, synchronous and asynchronous, learning has in these learning environments. After that, it explains what a Learning Management System is and how they facilitate learning in online, face-to-face, and blended environments.

To conclude, this report describes the major activities carried out in the three modules the Specialization Course has. It explains how the assessments took place and their evaluation method. Additionally, the report details the achievements the participants had regarding online education and the administration of virtual environments for teaching and learning foreign languages; moreover, this report also provides conclusions and recommendations about the course to guide improvements in the implementation of the course for future participants.

I. OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To analyze the usefulness of the course content the team learned in the Specialization Course: Administration of Virtual Environments for The Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- ➤ To explain how the technological tools the team learned in the Specialization Course: Administration of Virtual Environments for The Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages were integrated in virtual learning environment activities.
- ➤ To determine the importance of the use of technological tools learned during the three modules when teaching a foreign language in virtual classrooms.
- ➤ To describe the different activities the participants carried out during the three modules of the Specialization Course and the advantages of performing those activities in asynchronous classes.
- ➤ To provide feedback on the course content of the Specialization Course so that authorities can polish this content for future implementations.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 IN EDUCATION

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, so do the risks we face. The COVID-19 pandemic has not stopped at national borders. The pandemic has caused millions of deaths and worldwide chaos. Countries had a difficult time handling healthcare, their economy and educational systems because there were many infected people. According to Schleicher, A. (2020). COVID-19 has affected people regardless of nationality, level of education, income, or gender. But the same has not been true for its consequences, which have hit the most vulnerable hardest.

Education is no exception. This crisis has exposed the many inadequacies and inequities in our education systems – from access to the broadband and computers needed for online education, and the supportive environments needed to focus on learning, up to the misalignment between resources and needs. While the educational community has made concerted efforts to maintain learning continuity during this period, children and students have had to rely more on their own resources to continue learning remotely through the internet, television, or radio. Teachers also had to adapt to new pedagogical concepts and modes of delivery of teaching, for which they may not have been trained.

3.2 VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

The number of new virtual learning environments (VLEs) is increasing and they have been advertised as being a solution for remote and cross-border education. Students can perform a wide range of exercises with a computer-based learning environment. This is extremely important when the tasks cannot be practiced in real life, for example due to their hazardous nature. For this reason, simulators have been used for years (Wickens 1992) to train pilots and operators in nuclear power plants. Virtual Reality (VR) is also a good tool for practicing safety skills. Kizil & Joy (2001) and Filigenzi et al. (2000) have assessed VR for improving miners' safety. Walker and Harrington (2004) have found in their studies that computer-based training is an effective safety training tool. Many studies report the virtual learning environment as more effective, efficient and satisfying than the traditional learning situation. In recent years, several case studies (Piccoli et al. 2001, KekkonenMoneta and Moneta 2001, Marandi and Luik 2003, Zhang et al. 2004, McDonald et al. 2004) have dealt with the use of VLEs in teaching information and communication technology (ICT). Koskela M, Kiltti P, Vilpola I and Tervonen J, (2005).

According to Firefly Learning (2021), a Virtual Learning Environment or VLE is a design space for teaching and learning. For some, "virtual" conjures up an artificial world that replaces real life. But virtual learning environments neither replace classrooms nor existing educational practices. They enhance them. They add value as they extend the space of the physical learning environment. They provide opportunities to stretch the imagination of teachers and students alike.

Technically speaking, virtual learning environments are designed spaces that resemble architecturally sophisticated buildings. Think of an ideal place of teaching and learning, one where the messy desk covered in coffee-stained assessments and the equally large pile of lesson plans all move to your laptop. Teachers effortlessly move between assessment, feedback, sharing and monitoring without knocking over their coffee in the process. Students have their assessments returned swiftly -- unstained.

A virtual learning environment offers not only an elegantly designed space for teaching and learning, but a place where learners, teachers and students feel at ease. A good VLE allows users to co-construct their learning environments together over time.

Far from being an anti-social space that replaces real life, the right VLE enhances the social space of a classroom. It opens possibilities for discussion threads, polls and surveys. It allows students to submit work without having to find their teachers. It provides hubs for an infinite number of resources in the form of documents, worksheets and PowerPoints. Using a VLE, teachers can link students to other online pathways and embed videos from YouTube, articles from newspapers and provide platforms for student-created podcasts. More than just a virtual repository for learning resources, the most valuable virtual learning environments and virtual learning software offer gateways to limitless pathways of connection, content and learning from which teachers, school leaders, students and parents all benefit.

3.3 THEORIES OF LEARNING AND THE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

According to Angelo State University (2022), theories about learning are mostly derived from psychology. While psychology describes how people act, the educational theory describes how people learn. An understanding of educational theories can assist us in the design and implementation of an effective online learning environment. Three prevalent theories are described below:

Behaviorism: Behavior theorists focus on observable behaviors, thus discounting independent activities of the mind. Behaviorism defines learning as nothing more than the acquisition of new behavior based on environmental conditions. The psychological theory of behaviorism is used as an educational theory when the learning experience is based on a stimulus and a response and by rewarding behavior that will meet the educational goal and ignoring (or correcting) behavior that is not goal-directed. Large tasks are broken down into smaller tasks, and each task is learned in successive order. The process is called successive approximations. The traditional learning lab in which proper procedures are learned for a task is an example of behaviorist theory.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT): In SCT, information is stored in schema. As new information is internalized, it is compared with existing information and knowledge. The schemas are then reorganized to accommodate the new information and thought patterns are altered.

Sensory input is stored for several seconds, and the information disappears unless it is deemed important. If deemed important, the information will be stored in short-term memory. If the information continues to be important, it will be moved into long-term memory. Cognitive theory is used in the traditional classroom to impart information from the teacher to the student. The responsibility for learning lies with the student. A weakness of the cognitive theory is its inability to explain human thought and learning.

Constructivism: It focuses on interpreting the world and constructing meaning. Learning is active and reflective which means there is doing, then reflecting about the doing, and then rethinking about the doing. Action and reflection enable the student to integrate new knowledge with existing knowledge and experiences so that complex mental models can form. Learning is authentic, complex, and contextualized, resembling real-life experiences. Constructivist learning is process-oriented and emphasizes collaboration and conversation among learners and teachers.

In the constructivist approach, instruction is inductive and from the bottom, up. The instructor is a model and a coach who encourages the exploration of ideas in learner-centered and learner-generated environments. Constructivism engages learners in an active learning process.

Although lectures may be well-written and well-delivered, they often pass from the ear to the hand leaving the mind untouched. The active learning process places responsibility on the learner and lends itself to a wider range of learning styles. If the student is to construct meaning from content, faculty, activities, and peers, then learning environments must be rich with strategies and resources.

Virtual and traditional learning fields have many similarities when applying theories of learning in Education. Educators need to take into account the aspects that both modalities have in common, and know the differences also can help teachers to plan curricular activities properly and improve students' learning process efficiently. Throughout the years, digital technology has changed the learning process in which each student investigates and develops a new skill. Furthermore, theories of learning are being implemented in both virtual environments and traditional classrooms in order to teach appropriately and to address students' needs.

Theories of learning such as behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism and connectivism in a virtual environment and traditional classrooms have the same focus which is to improve teaching. Schunk (2020) argues that "Learning theories determine the best theoretical perspectives for the types of learning we deal with and their implications for teaching". For instance, applying theories gives the opportunity to educators to observe how students respond to stimuli. Connectivism theory is defined:

Connectivism: When connectivism theory is applied students have the advantage to use the internet to enhance knowledge in the method they prefer or are comfortable with. For example: articles, videos, forums, newspapers, and social media to gather more information about an issue or ideas of a topic. Virtual and traditional fields involve the use of technology to implement different interactive learning activities.

Theories of learning can be used in both virtual environments and traditional classrooms in order to facilitate students' learning process, develop new skills and promote an efficient engagement. Even though theories of learning in education are utilized in virtual and traditional fields they also have some differences between them when they are applied in learning activities that can help teachers differentiate and select appropriate material and activities for students. On the other hand, the similarities can help educators to plan curricular activities accurately in order to address students' needs easily.

3.5 SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

According to Wintemute, D. (2022), synchronous learning runs in real time, with students and instructors attending together from different locations. Synchronous learning allows students to engage with class materials at the same time as their peers as long as they can connect to the internet. This delivery type provides learners with a structured and immersive learning environment without the worry and stress of travel. Synchronous classrooms use web and videoconferencing technologies — like Google Meet, Google Hangouts, or Zoom — to create learning spaces. Synchronous online classes run similar to traditional classes, with attendance, lectures, and discussion periods. Students typically attend and participate via webcam or livestream forum and may move into smaller virtual rooms for group work or a teacher's office hours. Instructors can physically demonstrate specific problems or processes and ask questions as they go.

They incorporate interactive components, like chat rooms, polls, surveys, and shared documents. Online classrooms may not provide the same opportunities for visibility as in-person classes, but students can stand out by showing themselves online and participating thoughtfully while following synchronous classroom netiquette.

Wintemute, D. (2022) also states that asynchronous learning is one that offers learners the flexibility to study in a self-paced manner. While most asynchronous classes still have submission deadlines, students can connect with materials, peers, and instructors

on their own schedules, often over an extended period of time. Teachers may prescribe an order of operations for the materials, but learners can often choose how much or how little time they spend in each area.

Asynchronous online classrooms use forums and message boards to keep a running dialogue between participants. They also incorporate self-guided lessons, workshops, and shared files. Many students find asynchronous environments more comfortable for certain types of learning, though participation expectations may actually be higher in this format than in others.

In asynchronous online classes, students can access their studies on their own schedules. Teachers may mark attendance in different ways, such as by tracking who watched the lecture or posting comprehension quizzes. More interactive lessons can require learners to answer polls or click buttons, which also tells the instructor who has engaged with the content. An asynchronous class allows learners to digest material in different ways: Students can dedicate more time to challenging content and breeze through lighter content. Since teachers cannot evaluate a student's readiness in person, online participation plays a large role in asynchronous classrooms. This delivery mode also requires a great deal of self-motivation and proactiveness, especially if a student is having trouble with a topic.

3.6 LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LMS)

Kpolovie, & Lale (2017) state that Learning Management Systems, referred to in short as LMS, is a platform that assists the delivery of content online for learning purposes. If we want a technical definition, a Learning Management System (LMS) is a webbased software used to facilitate the delivery of online, face-to-face, and blended courses, whether in an academic setting or in the world of business. Each method of delivery is defined below:

Online Learning: a form of learning that occurs via the Internet, often through a webbased platform.

Face-to-Face: a form of learning that happens in person between teacher-student and student-student.

Blended Learning: a form of learning that happens partially face-to-face and partially online.

No matter the delivery method, an LMS is supposedly designed to foster learner-centered approaches with integrated learning activities grounded in learning objectives making it the most advanced tool for facilitating learning. Still, there are some criticisms of the philosophy behind LMSs. Critics emphasize that the LMS structure is designed to foster traditional views of education, e.g., teacher-centered approach or an administrative tool (Bousbahi & Alrazgan, 2015; Siemens, 2004). In a LMS, the course designer or instructor controls the design of the instruction (e.g., sequence of content) and the nature of interactions (i.e., to whom, when and how learners interact), so they

have the ability to determine how the LMS will function. Designers and instructors can create courses that are learner-centered through numerous strategies such as open-discussion forums, learner choice in assignments, and video messaging to name a few. Although there are critics, LMS are "currently the climax to which educational technology is applied in the planning and execution of transformational teaching-learning experiences interactively and collaboratively to best capture and maintain the students' attention via a wide range of platforms that most suits the briskly changing world of globalization and internationalization".

III. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

MODULE I: ONLINE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (Figure I)

The first module of the specialization course focused on the fundamentals of online teaching and the application of the learning theories in this modality. For the first evaluated activity, the team wrote a comparative essay about the differences and similarities of the learning theories when applied in online and traditional classrooms. To write this essay, the team read the material posted by the professor on Moodle. These were online books, essays, papers, and videos about the history of online education, the theories of learning, and Synchronous and Asynchronous learning tools. Then, after writing the essay, the team was instructed to read two of our classmates' essays and provide feedback to each of them.

After finishing the first evaluated activity, the team learned about Learning Management Systems. To introduce the topic, the professor created a NearPod activity during the class in which all participants had to name the Learning Management Systems (LMS) they know about. There was also a class discussion to talk about the elements a good Learning Management System needs to have. Subsequently, the class was instructed to create an infographic on Canva about LMS for the second evaluated activity. The infographic had to list five LMS and the features each of them has. The professor uploaded videos and PDF files on Campus about the most common

Learning Management Systems and their must-have features to set up an online course so that the class could become more knowledgeable about the topic.

Lastly, in groups of five, the team created a course on Google Classroom applying all the elements learned when studying the materials about LMS and creating the infographic. However, before creating the course, the team had to choose a topic to teach and make a lesson plan. Then, the Google Classroom course had to be created and structured based on the lesson plan which means that all materials included in the lesson plan for the warm-up, presentation, practice, production, and wrap-up stages had to be included in Google Classroom too. The final evaluated aspect of this activity was to have a five-minute presentation per person explaining how the chosen activity for each stage of the lesson plan could be taught in a real online class.

MODULE II: EDUCATIONAL APPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (Figure II)

In the second module of the specialization course, the teacher presented a list of technological tools for educational purposes, their principles and foundations. Some of the technological tools that were presented are:

- > Prezi Presentation editor
- Zoho Show Creating and sharing
- > Renderforest Animations and videos
- > Pixton Comic and storyboard creator
- > PhotoPeach Slideshows
- > Dvolver Moviemaker Animated cartoons
- Animoto Video slideshows

The first evaluated activity was to create an infographic using eight different Educational tools, and to describe their importance.

The second evaluation was about recording a video summary about two different applications. For example: Edpuzzle, Flipgrid, Flippity or Liveworksheets. Also, to provide a concrete example for each tool using Flipgrid as a video recorder or any other video recorder.

The teacher shared videos, tutorials, websites and an explanation about how to customize a video using Flipgrid, and the length of the presentation was four to five minutes to upload the video in Flipgrid without any inconvenience.

Besides, to include a PowerPoint Presentation in the video was necessary in order to explain the two Educational tools chosen.

Thirdly, the teacher provided tutorials, multimedia materials and demonstrations about the use of technological tools, such as Powtoon, Nearpod, Padlet, Kahoot and Classroomscreen. Then, the evaluation consisted of creating a video in Powtoon about the advantages and disadvantages in the use of those technological tools when teaching English. Additionally, in pairs, students uploaded the Powtoon video to a YouTube channel with a length of three minutes.

At the end of the second module, the last evaluated activity was a Demo Class using technological tools to teach a topic to our classmates in the last live session from the module. A lesson plan was designed in groups of five students and the topic of the lesson plan for our group was Sports and leisure activities. The grammar structure was the simple present tense and the technological tools used in the lesson were Flippity, Powtoon, Wordwall and Nearpod. Each group had fifteen minutes to present the topic.

MODULE III: DESIGN OF DIDACTIC MATERIALS FOR VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS (Figure III)

The last module of the course focused on the use of multimedia resources in a virtual learning environment. The first activity consisted of creating a podcast to talk about a free topic based on one of the four macro skills: Listening, writing, reading, or speaking. The guidelines stated that the podcast had to be 3-5 minutes long and include three main aspects: Introduction to the topic, body, and conclusion. To achieve this, the professor instructed us to create a script where the class had to include the whole speech that was going to be developed. Once the speech was recorded, the next step was to add a background song to the recording with the aid of a program, Audacity. Then, after editing the podcast, the class uploaded it to Soundcloud and added an image to it related to the chosen topic.

Secondly, for the next assignment, the team created interactive images using Genially and edited an image provided by the professor using Gimp. The interactive images activity had to be based on one of the four macro skills: listening, writing, reading, or speaking, and to contain 3 to 5 images related to the same topic. To get familiar with Genially and show the features it has, the professor edited during the class some images using this tool. He explained that Genially allows a lot of customization in your images since you can add text to the images, and modify its size, color, font, and background. You can also link webpages, YouTube videos, and Google Maps links to the interactive images. After explaining the features of Genially, the professor had a demonstration on how to use Gimp to edit the provided image. He also explained in a

short PowerPoint presentation some features of digital images such as formats, resolutions, pixels, and inches which were essential to developing the assessment. Based on the guidelines, the team resized the image to no more than 100 KB, changed the format to JPEG, and the resolution to 1000 pixels per inch.

Next, the team designed a website using Google Sites and created a presentation on Google Presentations for the third assessment. The professor dedicated a whole class to talk about the features Google Sites and Google Presentations have. Additionally, he had a demonstration to show how those features can be used to create appealing sites and presentations. After the demonstration, the professor explained that the topic on both, the Google Site and the Google Presentation, had to be the same and based on one of the four macro skills: Speaking, listening, writing, or reading. Based on the guidelines on the Google Site, a banner was created and an index was added to the site; moreover, the content was divided into five subparts, and images related to the topic were added. On the other hand, the Google Presentation was created based on the content added to the Google Site. The presentation included images related to the topic, a front-page to introduce the topic, and the slides were customized with transitions. For the fourth assessment in this module, the class edited a video using OpenShot. Similar to previous assignments, the professor introduced this tool by editing a video during class. He explained the most relevant features OpenShot has such as synchronizing audio and video, adding background music and text, recording screen, and voicing over videos. As per the guidelines of the assessment, the edited video was focused on one of the four macro skills: Listening, speaking, writing, or reading. The edited video was five minutes long, and it included an animated introduction and closing, a background song, and transitions.

To conclude, the class created in groups of five a class on Google Classroom in which all previous assessments in the module were integrated into a single topic based on one of the four macro skills. The class also had a three-minute presentation per participant in the last meeting to explain how each activity (the podcast, edited video, interactive images, etc.) can be taught in an online class.

IV. ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1- The team acquired knowledge about the history of online education and the application of learning theories in this education modality. According to IGI Global (2022), online education takes place electronically and relies on the Internet to provide new information or experiences for participants. On the other hand, Indeed Career Guide (2021) states that Learning Theories explain the different ways people learn by focusing on the internal and external influences that affect the learning process.
- 2- The team developed critical thinking when analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of synchronous and asynchronous learning in online education. According to Wintemute, D. (2022), synchronous learning runs in real-time, with students and instructors attending together from different locations whereas asynchronous learning allows students to access their studies on their own schedules with the flexibility to study in a self-paced manner.
- 3- The team applied the knowledge acquired about Learning Management Systems (LMS) in the Specialization Course to create a course on Google Classroom. Brush, K. (2019) states that a Learning Management System (LMS) is a software application or web-based technology used to plan, implement and assess a specific learning process.
- 4- The team enhanced their knowledge about technological tools by using tools such as Edpuzzle, Flipgrid, Flippity, and Liveworksheets to create activities that can be

applied in virtual environments when teaching a foreign language. Passmore, D. (2021) claims that technological tools refer to software, primarily, that can be used to develop or support online course content.

- 5- The team learned how to create podcasts for educational purposes using Audacity and SoundCloud. Cambridge Dictionary defines a podcast as a radio program that is stored in a digital form that you can download from the internet and play on a computer or an MP3 player.
- 6- The participants learned how to use Genially to create interactive images for teaching a foreign language. Genially Academy states that an interactive image is an image that has been enriched through the use of resources and interactive elements which allows us to expand upon the information represented with videos, text, embedded content, etc.
- 7- The students achieved a high level of expertise in the creation of websites for educational purposes using Google Sites. According to Techopedia (2020), a website is a collection of publicly accessible, interlinked web pages that share a single domain name.
- 8- The research team improved their proficiency in the creation of presentations on Google Slides by learning how to create interactive slides and how to add transitions and background images to presentations slides. Kolowich, M. (2013) states that an

online presentation is a type of content that brings the traditional business presentation (typically Microsoft PowerPoint) to an anytime, anywhere environment online.

9- The team learned how to use OpenShot to edit videos for educational purposes. According to Dictionary.com, a video is a program, movie, or other visual media product featuring moving images, with or without audio, that is recorded and saved digitally or on a videocassette.

10- The participants improved their proficiency in the creation of courses on Google Classroom by integrating multiple activities such as podcasts, interactive images, edited videos, websites, and Google Slides into a single course.

V. CONCLUSIONS

- 1- The Specialization Course helped participants expand their knowledge about the application of learning theories in virtual learning environments.
- 2- The division of the Specialization Course into three modules allowed participants to have a more organized and sequenced exposure to the course content.
- 3- The course enabled participants to enhance their knowledge in the development of course content in Learning Management Systems such as Google Classroom.
- 4- The implementation of the Specialization Course allowed participants to have more exposure to online education and increase their expertise in this modality.
- 5- The Specialization Course allowed participants to have a shorter alternative to get the diploma as the specialization course lasts approximately six months in contrast to the regular method via research work that can last over a year.
- 6- The implementation of the Specialization Course in three different schedules provided participants the flexibility to choose the one that best suited their needs.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

After concluding the course and having analyzed the strengths and areas of opportunities the Specialization course has, the research team recommends the following to the authorities of the Foreign Language Department:

- 1- To integrate a section into the course content that teaches participants how to use spreadsheets. Spreadsheets are very important nowadays for teachers as they can be used to store data such as students' names, attendance, and grades.
- 2- To obtain full licenses of the tools used during the course since free versions have limited features and participants may struggle creating their activities under these circumstances.
- 3- To open more groups so that the number of participants in each group is not too large. Large groups are more time-consuming for teachers as they spend more time grading. Additionally, large groups limit the time participants have for demo classes and presentation activities.
- 4- To provide a certification diploma to those participants who successfully conclude the Specialization Course as this can allow them to obtain more job opportunities in the teaching of foreign languages field.

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VIII. APPENDICES



Figure I. Online English language teaching



Figure II. Educational applications for learning a foreign language



Figure III. Design of didactic materials for virtual environments

APPENDIXE A: ONLINE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

A.1 THEORIES OF LEARNING IN VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT AND TRADITIONAL CLASSROOMS, DIFFERENCES AND THEIR SIMILARITIES.

A.1.1 DISCUSSION FORUM:

Theories of learning in Virtual environment and Traditional classrooms, differences and their similarities.

What are the differences and similarities that virtual and traditional learning fields have when applying theories of learning in Education? It is a question that teachers need to take into account because the aspects that both modalities have in common, and their differences can help educators to plan curricular activities properly and improve students' learning. Nowadays, digital technology also has changed the learning process in which each student investigates and develops a new skill. Furthermore, theories of learning are being implemented in both virtual environment and traditional classrooms in order to teach appropriately and to address students' needs.

Theories of learning in virtual environment and traditional classrooms have the same focus on students' learning process. For instance, behaviorism theory, gives the opportunity to educators to observe how students respond to stimuli. For example: an activity using behaviorism in traditional classroom, could be the following. The teacher could divide the class in groups of five, students could practice verbs' pronunciation, and spelling because they need unscramble some pieces of paper in order to complete a puzzle. After that, the winners get a prize. Teachers could perform this activity in both environments.

In virtual environment could be a memory game in which eight students could be selected. They need to match pairs by remembering and pronouncing correctly each verb presented on the computer screen. The three winners for virtual class could have an extra point to the next activity, and the winners for traditional class could have a cookie a candy, or any prize that the teacher provides to motivate student's participation.

Consequently, each of the activities presented by teachers gives the opportunity to students of practicing new topics and get more knowledge of language, those activities lead to a positive behavior change in each student. In both virtual and traditional learning fields, cognitivism theory is considered a cognitive process of the mind that plays an important part in the way students learn because motivation and imagination are crucial elements of learning that bridge environmental stimuli and student responses. For example, teachers implement this theory to teach tough content in a creative manner due to the positive impact when learning or practicing a new topic through understanding the way in which new learners are getting the new structures and vocabulary to be use properly and fluently.

The cognitivism theory can be applied in all levels and areas of the learning process a clear example can be the following activity that is used with students at preschool level in both virtual or traditional classes. In a virtual class a memory matching game or in traditional class a card game can help preschoolers to intellectually work through practice the new vocabulary introduced on a previous class with the objective of practicing those new language elements. Students have to identify an item or several items, remember the items, look for a matching item, and identify when a match is found. Finding a match can be gratifying and make a child proud of their discovery, which is why many preschoolers learn through memory matching and card games activities easily.

The constructivism theory facilitates and builds significant knowledge because each learner has the chance to develop different interactive media projects; in the virtual environment area, or group dynamics activities assignment in traditional classroom modality. As an example, by performing different activities such as having a short conversation between two or more students with this type or activities students create their own knowledge-based foundation through their experiences and interactions that they have with different students. On the other hand, the constructivism theory and its benefits can be also applied on a virtual class environment; on a virtual class the teacher can talk about Coronavirus disease in order to share students' ideas and experiences about the topic.

The teacher can create a breakout room in Google Meet, Zoom or any platform used to develop the class with the purpose of dividing students into smaller groups; so that, students have the opportunity to share their ideas to each other. Similarly, in a traditional classroom, students can work in pairs and discuss about Coronavirus disease. Then, when students hear the bell, they can look for a new classmate to share more ideas about the topic.

On students learning process there are many theories and techniques that are helping teachers and students to get more knowledge on the language, one of them is connectivism. The current reality of teaching gives the chance to apply in virtual and traditional classrooms connectivism activities; for example, students have the advantage to use the internet to enhance knowledge in the method they prefer or are comfortable with. For example: articles, videos, forums, newspaper, and social to gather more information about

an issue or ideas of a topic. Virtual and traditional fields involve the use of technology to implement different interactive learning activities.

In detail, in a virtual classroom the teacher can play a video related to the topic studied in class. Then, students can share their ideas about what they know or think about anxiety in Neardpod or any platform. Then, the teacher can share student's opinions. Also, in a traditional classroom, students can develop the same activity. After that, the teacher can divide the class in two and explain that group "A" can talk about the video content. And group "B" can ask questions.

Even though, theories of learning in virtual environment and traditional classrooms have many similarities, there are some differences between them when applying in education. Indeed, activities that include behaviorism theory, can be utilized to motivate student's participation. As a result, students can receive a prize such as chocolates, cookies, and candies only in a traditional classroom. Likewise, cognitivism cannot be applied in a virtual activity such as work in small groups or in pairs to perform a competition on the board, memory games or to complete a puzzle. Equally, in constructivism activities carried out in a traditional classroom, students are not able to performed a face to face activity in which both can complete a story using pieces of papers to complete in order the story, and then explain the story to each other.

Those activities are commonly used in traditional classrooms with a different emphasis because teachers can measure students' learning process, due to the stimuli' responses students have during interactive classroom activities. Importantly, teachers can provide positive reinforcement, and immediate corrections in order to facilitate students' understanding and engagement.

As a result, theories of learning can be used in both virtual environment and traditional classrooms in order to facilitate students' learning process, develop new skills and promote an efficient engagement. Even though, theories of learning in education are utilized in virtual and traditional fields they also have some differences between them when they are applying in learning activities that can help teachers differentiate and select appropriate material and activities for students. On the other hand, the similarities can help educators to plan curricular activities accurately in order to address students' needs easily.

A.1.2 COMMENTS ON FORUM:

Hello Karen!

Thank you for sharing a description of each learning theory and useful examples that clarify this valuable content when is applied in virtual environment and traditional classrooms activities, and how the correct use of content and interactive activities can enhance students' skills.

I couldn't agree with you more because nowadays technology not only has changed the learning process of each student but also how teachers are developing different activities that address students' needs properly in both fields.

Best regards.

Hello Ana!

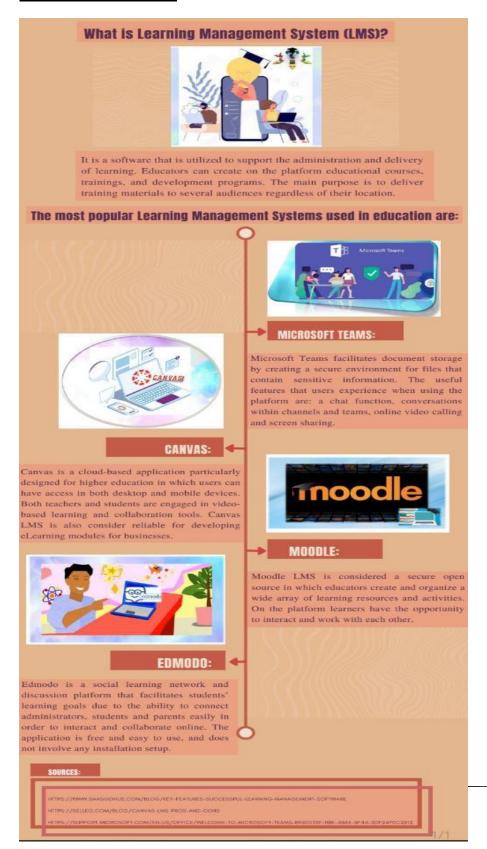
I absolutely agree with you on the way you explain how theories of learning are properly applied in both virtual environments and traditional classrooms activities that can help students to achieve an effective learning process. Besides, in both fields, teachers can use technology to develop appropriate activities, design materials, and evaluations in order to address students' needs with efficiency.

I want to highlight your idea related to online learning and the fact that it is not designed to replace traditional learning it is true since technology can be useful in traditional classrooms to potentiate the teaching strategies.

Best regards.

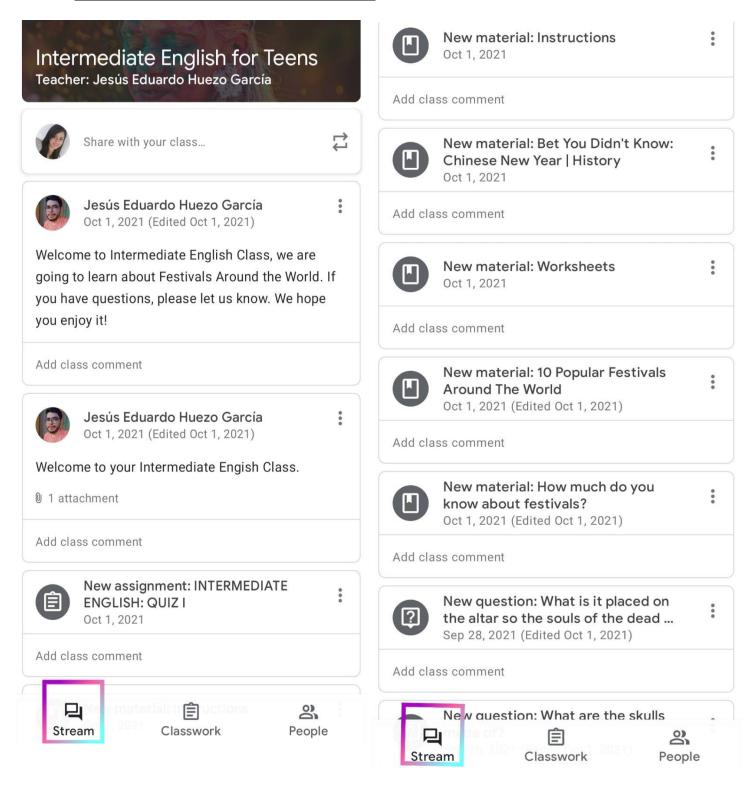
A.2 BASED ON LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS)

➤ A.2.1 INFOGRAPHIC:



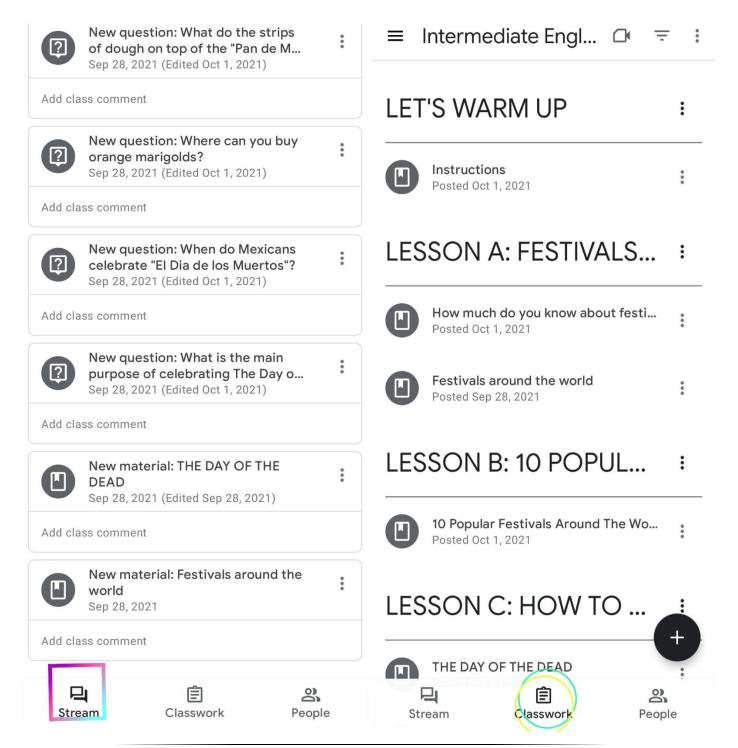
A.3 ONLINE TEACHING

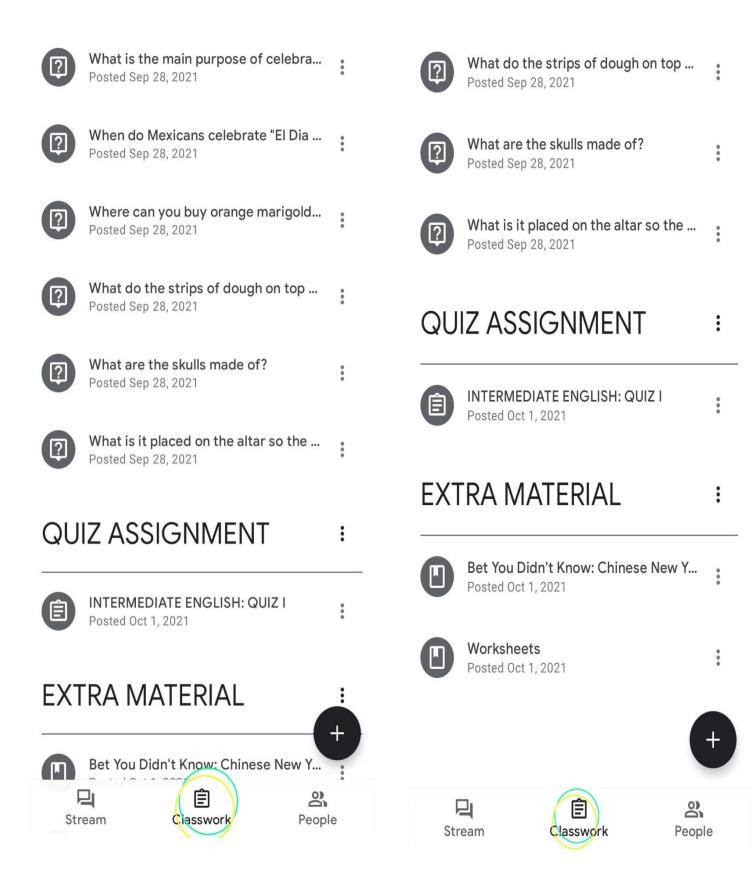
➤ A.3.1 CREATE A VIRTUAL CLASSROOM



A.4 VIRTUAL TEACHING IN THE MACRO-SKILLS (SPEAKING, LISTENING, READING AND WRITING)

➤ A.4.1 DEMONSTRATIVE CLASS ON MEET





APPENDIXE B: EDUCATIONAL APPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

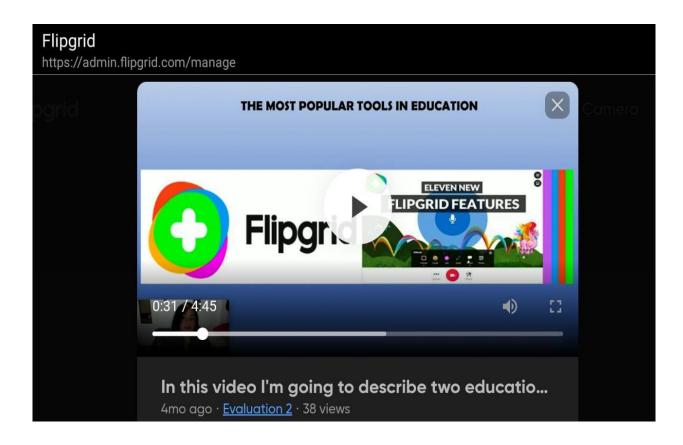
B.1 BASED ON THE FUNDAMENTALS OF TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS.

➤ B.1.1 INFOGRAPHIC:



B.2 A VIDEO SUMMARY ABOUT TWO DIFFERENT APPLICATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE: EDPUZZLE, FLIPGRID, FLIPPITY OR LIVEWORKSHEETS.

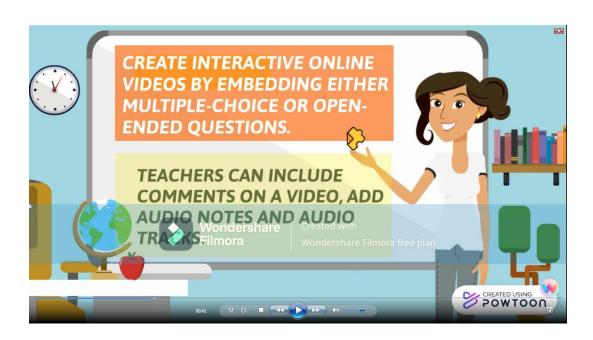
➤ B.2.1 VIDEO IN FLIPGRID:



B.3 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES IN THE USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS WHEN TEACHING ENGLISH.

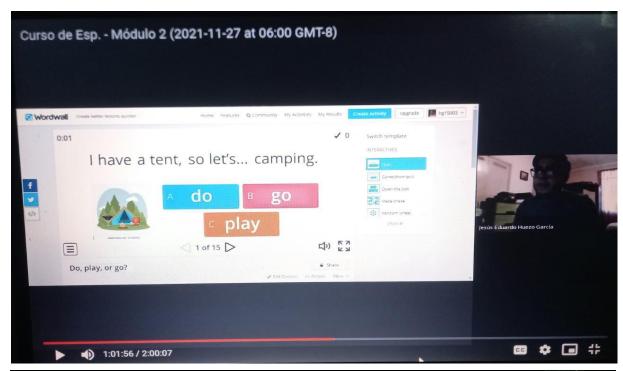
➤ B.3.1 POWTOON VIDEO:

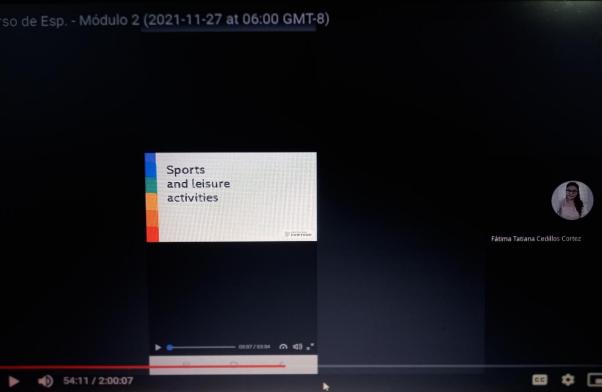


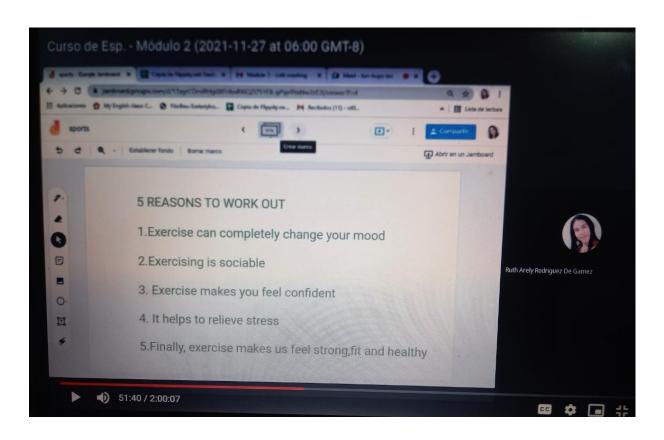


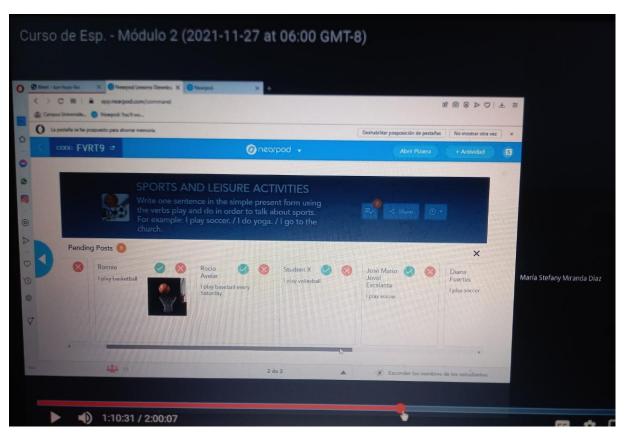
B.4 USING TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS

➤ B.4.1 DEMO CLASS:









APPENDIXE C: DESIGN OF DIDACTIC MATERIALS FOR VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS

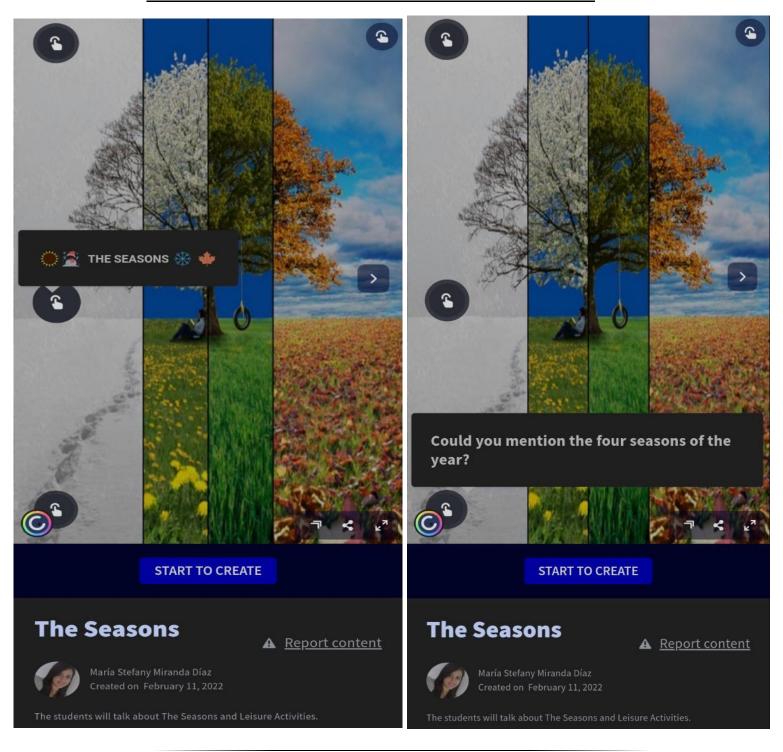
C.1 APPLICATIONS IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

> C.1.1 ELABORATION OF A PODCAST



C.2 THE USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS IN VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

> C.2.1 CREATION OF AN INTERACTIVE IMAGE IN GENIALLY



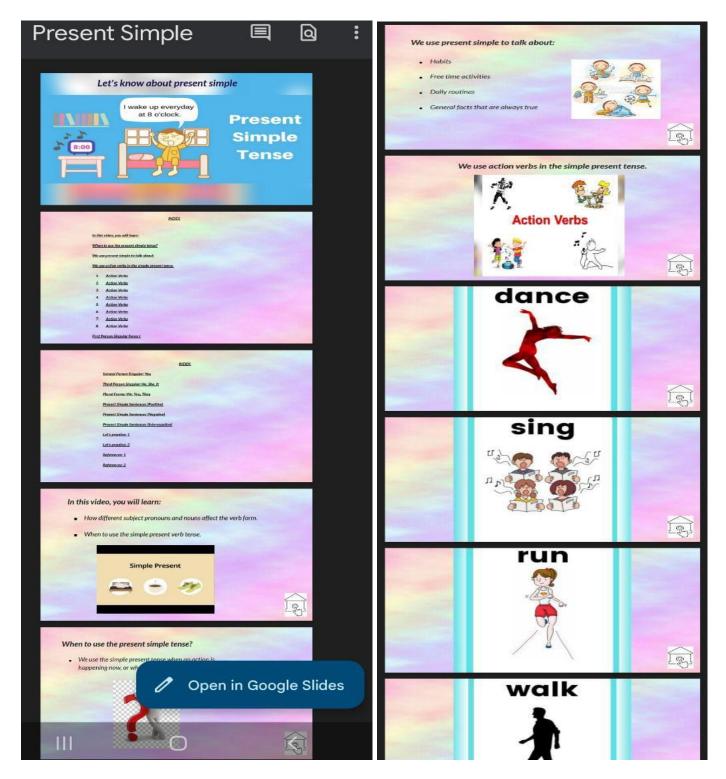
C.2.2 EDIT THE IMAGE USING GIMP: THE IMAGE WAS PROVIDED BY THE PROFESSOR.



THE IMAGE HAD TO CONTAIN 1000 ppi, JPG FORMAT AND COMPRESSED BY 100 KB.

C.3 WEB APPLICATIONS

> C.3.1 ELABORATION OF A PRESENTATION IN GOOGLE:

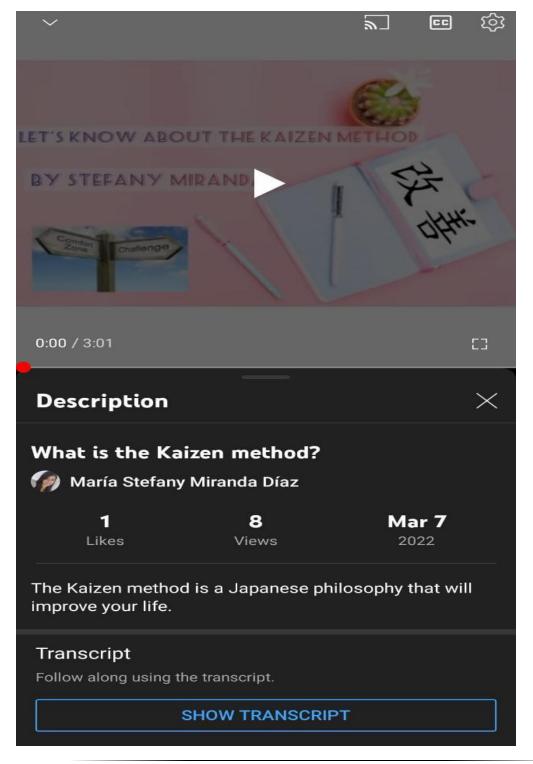






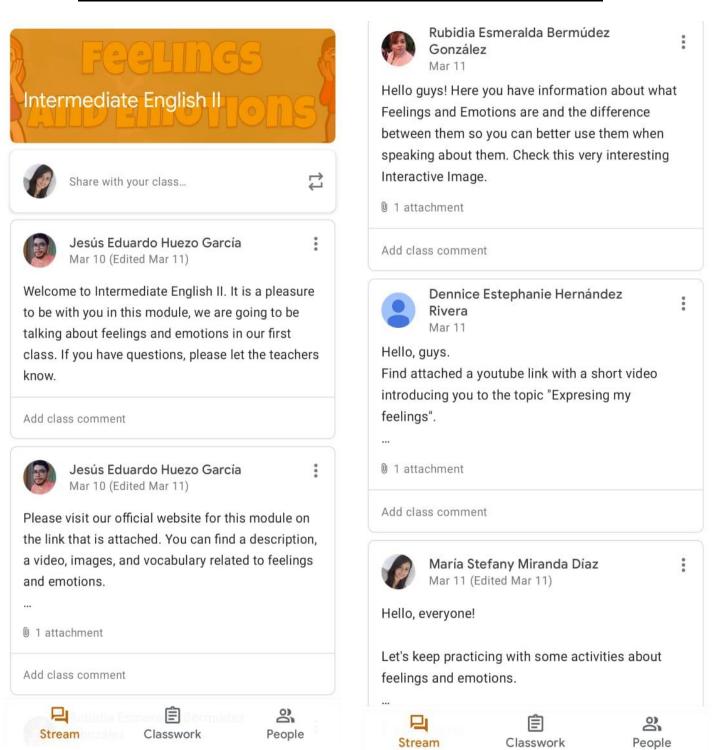
C.4 TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS

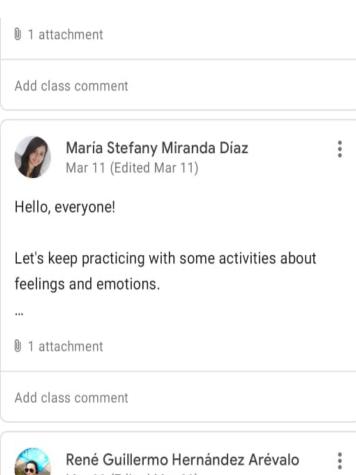
> C.4.1 OPENSHOT VIDEO PRODUCTION

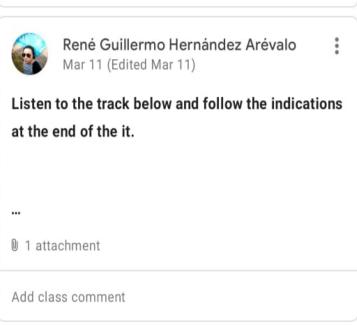


C.5 EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

> C.5.1 INTERACTIVE ASSIGNMENT IN GROUPS OF FOUR STUDENTS:

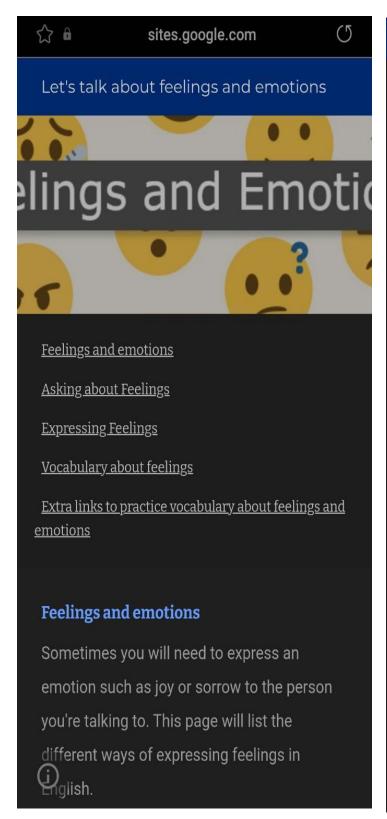


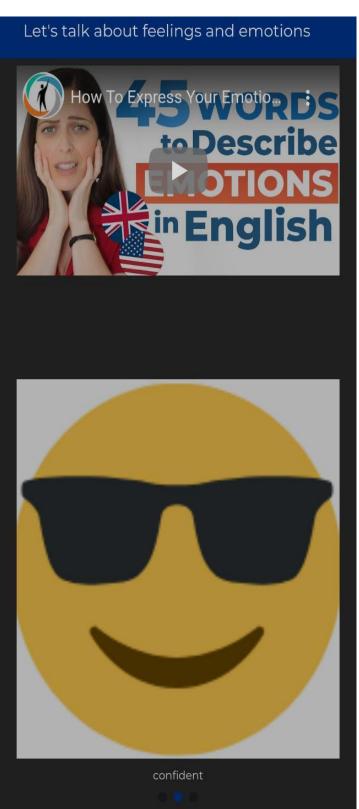




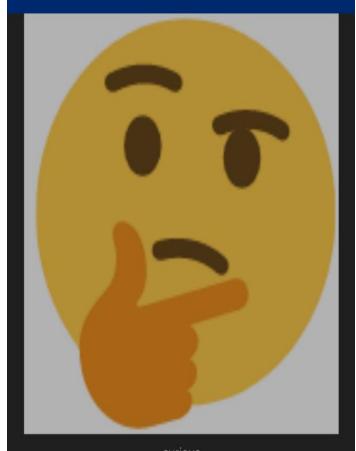


C.5.2 GOOGLE SITE LINKED TO GOOGLE CLASSROOM AND LIVE DEFENSE





Let's talk about feelings and emotions







Let's talk about feelings and emotions

Asking about Feelings

To ask about feelings you can use the following questions:

- How are you feeling today?
- You look sad / upset. Are you OK?
- You seem a little bit distracted. Are you alright?
- You seem kind of low today. What's wrong?
- You seem a little blue today. What's the matter?
- What's wrong?
- What's the matter?
- Are you OK / alright?
- Are you happy / angry...?



Let's talk about feelings and emotions

Expressing Feelings

To respond to a question about feelings you can use the following expressions:

- I feel a little sad / happy / angry /
- I am a little sad / happy / angry /
- To be honest, I'm a little bit sad / happy / angry /
- It's been a difficult day.
- The thing is that, I am angry / sad / ...
- I am mad at him / her..

Vocabulary about feelings

- sad / unhappy
- feel blue
- feel low / down
- depressed
- downhearted
- angry
- cross
- annoyed
- irritated
- mad
- furious
- vexed



Let's talk about feelings and emotions

seething

EFL/ESL speaking lessons - Expressing
Feelings. (2022). myenglishpages.com.
https://www.myenglishpages.com/englis
h/communication-lesson-expressingfeelings.php

Extra links to practice vocabulary about feelings and emotions

https://www.myenglishpages.com/english /vocabulary-lesson-feelings.php

https://www.juicyenglish.com/blog/feeling s-and-emotions

https://en.islcollective.com/english-eslworksheets/vocabulary/emotions