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

TOPIC:

IMPORTANCE OF TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS AND VIRTUAL EDUCATION TO TEACH ENGLISH AS A SECOND LENGUAGE.

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INFORME FINAL DE CURSO DE ESPECIALIZACION
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IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF:

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH WITH A MAJOR IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

This project presents an overview of E-learning and how a virtual environment is beneficial in the teaching and learning process. Using technological tools and virtual environments is important even in face-to-face courses. Therefore, learning how to use the available technological tools and applying them effectively to the teaching and learning process is a real challenge for teachers. During the specialization course, students learned about the importance of e-learning and how to use online tools and platforms effectively in the teaching and learning process. This report also provides information about how the technological tools became even more important during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also provides an insight about the type of technological tools learned during the specialization course, providing its most outstanding characteristics, and we also include some examples in each type of tool. Finally, students mention ways to apply technological tools efficiently in education. The research team presents the most remarkable features and benefits from both the perspective of teachers and students.

Keywords: management, specialization course, COVID-19 pandemic, virtual environments.

Introduction

The importance of online education lies in the quality of the content and the values of the person who takes the role of the teacher, building character in the students. In the 21st century, technology is becoming an essential element of our daily lives, which is why society has made use of today´s technology to learn and teach. The demand for learning is increasing due to the development of the economy. With the growing learning needs, online learning seems to give not only students but also teachers the opportunity to perform better in learning. This document summarizes the work that was developed throughout the Specialization Course – Specialization Course in the Administration of Virtual Environments for the Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages, which covered three modules beginning on Saturday, August 21, 2021 and ending on March 2022 where the activities were asynchronous, facilitating the students' learning process for a better development of skills in the English language and in online education. The document compiles the most important activities that were worked on throughout the course, recording the evaluations and activities that were carried out. The course is made up of 3 work modules and a weekly log detailing the procedure for each activity.

Chapter I

1.1 Objectives

1.2 General Objective:

To contribute to the strengthening of useful professional skills to design, manage, deliver, and evaluate in virtual environments and communication technologies

1.3 Specific objectives:

• To produce teaching material for the subjects of our specialty in a virtual way.

• To plan and schedule courses in the virtual teaching mode.

• To Participate in multidisciplinary teams for the design, planning, and management of courses in the virtual teaching modality using technological tools.

Chapter II

Theoretical framework

2.1 Definition of the problem

2.2Virtual Learning Environment?

According to the scientific world (2021) Virtual learning and use of technological tool is extremely important in the digital age. Effective teachers must allow students to use twenty-first century skills to expand their knowledge and to learn in the most natural way. Technology tools provide students and teachers with a range of dynamic, engaging, and new digital ways of learning. Furthermore, teachers' knowledge of the most up to date available tools is a must.

Even in a face-to-face course having a virtual learning environment is beneficial. A Virtual Learning Environment is a web-based education system for delivering learning materials to students or provide virtual classes, usually within educational institutions. Most of the students are digital natives; they have always been exposed to digital content for learning and for entertainment. Using digital content will assure a natural way of learning for them. Teachers must ensure to get the necessary competences to take advantage of virtual learning environment and moreover, use them effectively to include them into their everyday classes.

Virtual learning includes resources, communication tools, interactions within a course structure, student tracking, and different stages of assessment. This modern type of learning provides a set of advanced educational tools such as e-mail and creating

websites for courses that can add value to education. Moreover, virtual learning provides a lot of other benefits as flexible schedule, continuous education, the ability to study anywhere in the world without being bound by geographical borders, reduces the cost of education, diversifies the learning material and strategies, and you have instant access to a wide variety of online sources.

2.2 What is e-learning?

E-learning is a term for the traditional education process, but far from the physical communication between the student and the teacher, but it has a good educational efficiency led to a revolution in education, as distance education focuses on the use of all electronic technologies available to deliver information to students in different times and times.

2.3 Benefits of e-learning for teachers

Technological development and the Internet has led to a revolution in the world of education, as the owner of this development a significant change in the teaching mechanism since the early grades and access to post-secondary does not fall short of that change on a particular point, but on all sides, has won the e-learning a lot of benefits for students The teacher also, the following are some of the most important benefits of e-learning to teacher ratio:

- It promotes individual study method which enables the teacher to cooperate significantly with impaired students and improve the scientific level.
- Teacher can exploit the technology and the Internet to apply the theories and proof, through communication with the students and the use of the applications of realistic theories, called the process of continuing education.
- You can access the information banks and questions by the teacher so as to save time and effort to go to other educational matters.
- Causing the emergence of new educational platforms save time and effort on the teacher and at the same time to prove their effectiveness.
- Leads to the professional development of the teacher in front of him and open the way for creativity and access to continuing education.
- Can be controlled easily with large numbers of rows.

2.4 Benefits of e-learning for students

Centric benefits of e-learning for students about the following:

- Easy to understand and absorb the information because of the presence of media video and audio enhances the educational process.
- Get updated information directly as soon as updated by the author.
- Access to courses and information at any time and any place whatsoever.
- Save time with the student and that access to only what it needs information.
- Enhance the communication process and communication between the demand and the teacher.

2.5 E-learning during the pandemic.

The use of virtual learning and technological tools became even more important during the pandemic. The spread of COVID-19 poses a threat to humanity, as this pandemic has forced many global activities to close, including educational activities. To reduce the spread of the virus, education institutions have been forced to switch to e-learning using available educational platforms, despite the challenges facing this sudden transformation. In order to further explore the potentials challenges facing learning activities, the focus of this study is on e-learning from students' and instructor's perspectives on using and implementing e-learning systems in a public university during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study targets the society that includes students and teaching staff in the Information Technology (IT) faculty at the University of Benghazi. Maatuk, A. M., Elberkawi, E. K., Aljawarneh, S., Rashaideh, H., & Alharbi, H. (2022).

The unexpected closure of educational institutions as a result of the emergence of COVID-19 prompted the authorities to suggest adopting alternatives to traditional learning methods in emergencies to ensure that students are not left without studying and to prevent the epidemic from spreading.

The formal learning system with the help of electronic resources is known as e-learning. Whereas teaching can be inside (or outside) the classrooms, the use of computer technology and the Internet is the main component of e-learning Aboagye (2020). The traditional educational methods were replaced by e-learning when the COVID-19 virus appeared because social gatherings in educational institutions are

considered an opportunity for the virus to spread. E-learning is the best option available to ensure that epidemics do not spread, as it guarantees spatial distancing despite the challenges and studied figures, which indicate that students are less likely to benefit from this type of education Lizcano (2020).

E-learning is playing a vital role in the existing educational setting, as it changes the entire education system and becomes one of the greatest preferred topics for academics. It is defined as the use of diverse kinds of ICT and electronic devices in teaching Gaebel (2014). Most students today want to study online and graduate from universities and colleges around the world, but they cannot go anywhere because they reside in isolated places without good communication services.

2.6 About the specialization course.

During the specialization course students learnt about the importance of e-learning and how to use online tools and platforms effectively in the teaching and learning process. The information provided during the course was up-to-date and helpful.

2.6.1 Online tools learned in the course.

The online tools could be divided into learning management systems (LMS), Communicational tools, tools to present content, website creation tools, and assessment creation tools.

2.6.1.2 Learning management systems: According to new research Valamis (2019) A learning management system (LMS) is a software that is designed specifically

to create, distribute, and manage the delivery of educational content. The LMS can be hosted as a stand-alone product on the company server, or it can be a cloud-based platform that is hosted by the software firm. Between the most popular LMS we can find: Blackboard, Moodle, and google classroom.

2.6.1.3 Communicational tools: These are tools that are commonly used to maintain a fluent communication between teacher and students. We can mention Gmail, Skype, Zoom, and Facebook.

2.6.1.4Tools to present content: There are a wide range of tools that can be used to present content to students. Some good examples are: Canva, Zoom, Genially, PowerPoint, Flipgrid, EdPuzzle, and Wordwall.

2.6.1.5 Website creation tools: Web sites are online pages in which you can share any type of content, they are usually visual, informative, and engaging. Those are features learners try to implement in their learning courses, therefore, the use of websites in education it is a must in today's world. There are some great web creating tools available for visionary teachers such as:

2.6.2 How to apply technology in education?

Technology is transforming education, changing how, when and where students learn, and empowering them at every stage of their journey. On the path to personalizing learning, technology empowers students by giving them ownership of how they learn, making education relevant to their digital lives and preparing them for their futures. With

technology and access to resources beyond classroom walls, students are inspired to become problem-solvers, critical thinkers, collaborators, and creators. Where technology has been successfully integrated into classrooms, students develop a lifelong love of learning.

Educators are always striving to personalize learning for students. Technology can help them reach new levels with access to real-time student data, longitudinal information, content, apps, and more. Technology can help educators create blended learning environments and leverage digital tools for formative and summative assessments, bringing new models for learning and teaching to classrooms.

Teachers must look forward to improving the teaching and learning process using new tools and improving the bases learners already have. New technology tools boost the learning process in many ways. Its utilization is not an option but a must in today's world. Therefore, future teachers must adapt to new tools and new methodologies, adapt existing methodologies and moreover, embrace change with a positive and refreshing perspective.

Chapter III

3.1 Description of the activities

3.2 Module 1

3.2.1 Week 1 & 2

The first week Students saw the introduction to Virtual Teaching (online) and its application in the teaching of the English language. The evaluated activity of week two of module one, Online English Language Teaching, was the one called Discussion Forum that was developed through the Campus platform. In this activity, students had to write a comparison between learning theories in their own words; they also had to do it using an essay format. Afterwards, the students had to comment and give their opinion to two more classmates´ posts. The minimum words were 50 per each comment. The goal of this activity was for students to demonstrate understanding of learning theories in the virtual environment.

3.2.2 Week 3 & 4

Continuing with the content and learning, in the third week the class about LMS (Learning Management System) was developed, and in the fourth week of module one of the course an Infographic was developed using the Canvas platform. The students had to find information about the 4 most common LMS. After analyzing the information, they had to create an infographic using the features of each LMS. The infographic had to be

attractive in terms of design, layout, neatness. In addition to that, the information had to be presented in order and correctly, demonstrating a deep understanding of the most common LMS. After all, the infographic had to be converted to PDF or JPG format and then uploaded to the campus platform. The objectives of this activity were to analyze the most common LMS and create an infographic to identify the most common LMS.

3.2.3 Week 5 & 6

To start the fifth week, the course teacher gave a demo on how to create a course in Google Classroom. For week six, students had to complete activity number three from module one. This consisted of creating a course in English on the Google Classroom platform. For this, the students had to watch a video on YouTube to be guided in the creation. Afterwards, they had to log in with their institutional email in order to create the English course. They had to add all the members of their team and do activities for the students of the course according to the guidelines. The objective of this course was to know how to create a course with its basic features in the Google Classroom platform.

3.2.4 Week 7 & 8

Starting the seventh week of the course, the students had to form groups of at least five students to work on the activity called ¨Demonstrative Class¨ using the Google Meet platform. In this activity, the group members had to create a lesson plan to give a demo on week number eight. The activity was about a presentation of educational products, such as virtual classroom and videos of work sessions in Teams or Meet. This

one was las activity, and it had a 30% of the whole course. The aim of this activity was to prepare and manage a micro-teaching lesson using educational tools.

3.3 MODULE 2

3.3.1 Week 1 & 2

Starting the second module, Educational Applications for learning a Foreign language, the students took the first class about the list of technological tools for educational purposes and their foundations and principles when teaching a foreign language. After the teacher's explanation, in week two of module two, the students had to create an infographic based on the fundamental of technological tools when teaching a language. This activity had the 20% of the course. The objective of this activity was to be familiar with the information about the technological tools for teaching-learning a language and their functions.

3.3.2 Week 3 & 4

Continuing with the development of the course content, the third week of the course began with the teacher's explanation of the following educational tools: Flipgrid, Edpuzzle, Flippity, and Liveworksheets. For the explanation of these ones, there were many materials, tutorials, demonstrations to explain each one of the characteristics of each technological tool. In week four, following the instructions in the guidelines, the students had to make a video using any of the educational tools seen in class. This activity

had the 25% of the whole course. The objective of this activity is to learn about the educational tools and their use in a class.

3.3.3 Week 5 & 6

At the beginning of week five of module two, the teacher explained to the students about the new technological tools seen in class, so students could know how to use them. These were Nearpod, Padlet, Kahoot, Powtoon. The teacher explained the majority of the features and how easy learners can use it. At the beginning of the week number six, the students had to create a video explaining the advantages and disadvantages of using technological tools to teach the English language. The students had to be creative and orderly following all the instructions in the guidelines and taking into account the aspects of the rubric. When the video was done, it had to be uploaded to YouTube and its link shared on the Campus platform. This activity had 25 percent of the entire course. The objective of the course was to learn the use of technological tools and how they can help when teaching a foreign language.

3.3.4 Week 7 & 8

Beginning week seven of module two, students had to form groups to present a topic. After choosing the topic, they had to create a lesson plan that included a warm up, presentation, production, practice and wrap up. Then share it with the class teacher. To teach the class, the students had to use one of the educational tools and try not to repeat them in the same group. 10 students were assigned for each group, with the goal that these students could participate in any questions or doubts that the students were presenting. Finally, when the group that was presenting finished the lesson, the

classmates could give feedback. The objective of this activity was to prepare and handle a micro-teaching lesson using educational tools.

3.4 MODULE 3

3.4.1 Week 1 & 2

Beginning week one of module three, Design of Didactic Materials for Virtual Environment, students return to the virtual classroom in which the teacher explained about the fundamentals of using multimedia resources in a virtual learning environment. He also explained about the tools that learners can use to create a podcast, such as using Audacity and Soundcloud, which is a platform to upload a podcast. In week two, students had to create a podcast using the tools given in class following the guidelines and rubric. Also, students had to choose a topic from the four-macro skills. After creating the podcast and adding background musing using Audacity or another tool to record audio in MP3 format, the learners had to upload it as a podcast and then share the link on the Campus platform. This activity had a percentage of 20% of the module. The objective of this activity was to design digital materials in the teaching and learning of foreign languages.

3.4.2 Week 3 & 4

Continuing with the contents of module three, in week three, the teacher explained about the use and perks of using Genially to create an interactive image. For week four, students had to create an interactive image; To do this, the students had to follow the steps previously explained by the teacher. The first thing they had to do is select a topic from the four-macro skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Afterwards, they had to log in to the Genially platform to create the interactive image following the

guidelines and rubric instructions. In the second part of this activity, the students had to use the tool called GIMP in order to edit an image given by the teacher.

3.4.3 Week 5 & 6

To start week five of module three, the professor gave an explanation of how to create a Google site and create Google slides/presentations. After the explanation, in the sixth week, the students had to select a topic from the four-macro skills and then create a Google site following all the instructions in the guideline, such as adding text, images, sub-parts and a YouTube video to the explanation of the chosen topic. In the second part of this activity, the students had to create a Google presentation using the information seen on the Google site. Then, they had to share the link on Campus.

3.4.4 Week 7 & 8

In week seven of module three, the teacher gave an explanation of some tools that can be used to create videos when professors are teaching a foreign language. Some of the tools seen in class are OpenShot, Camtasia, Movie Maker etc. After the class, in week 8, the students had to create a video in which they had to record themselves for three to 5 minutes explaining a topic of the four- macro skills. This video had to have text, and be edited following the guidelines instructions. The objective of this activity was to share knowledge about editing a video using one of the video editors seen in class.

Chapter IV

Achievements

Students learned the academical definition of E-learning and virtual environments in education and its importance in today's world. The course facilitators provided an in dept explanation about education based on modern methods of communication including technological devices such as computers, cell phones, tables, etc. Furthermore, it includes new technology applications such as Google Classroom, Google slides, Canva, Genially, Edmodo, and so forth. Students discussed the pros and cons of E-learning compared to traditional learning.

Besides, students learned developed skills to effectively used each of the technological tools included in the course. Facilitators provided a professional and academical lecture about how to use each tool and students created their own teaching material using applications such as Google Classroom in which educators can add any kind of activities such as documents, images, videos, homework assignments, quizzes, etc. Moreover, students learned how to create infographics using Canva or Genially to present new topics. Students learned how to use Powtoon to create videos and bring a more visual resource to the class. This tool can be used to create video to present new topic or to wrap up what have been learned during a given class.

Furthermore, students learned how to create podcasts for educational purposes. Podcast are very useful for Asynchronous activities; teachers can use them to provide a brief explanation about a topic or to review the most important information given during the class. Podcast can also be used to assign assessments. Also, students learned how to create presentations with applications like google slides and Genially. With those tools,

you can create visual presentations and besides, you can add interactive elements. Finally, students learned wo to use Google Sites to create Google websites. Which is a great tool to upload all the material created with the previously learned applications.

Chapter V

Conclusions:

Firstly, in the new ways of learning and teaching, there is no longer the traditional classes in the classroom. Now with the multimodality of teaching, virtual classrooms have helped the students of this course to improve their skills in online classes.

From the role of the student, the importance of having these relevant skills goes from being a passive entity to being the protagonist of our own learning. The diversification of ways of learning lead us to be more autonomous, more self-taught, force to develop, and enhance learning skills that at other times, students built up very slowly.

The different technological tools seen in this course will undoubtedly be very useful for a teacher career. If these tools are used, they would undoubtedly make teachers' work much easier and more efficient.

This specialization course has certainly helped the participants to improve their skills to teach online. The world continues to update and there are many new ways of teaching and learning. This is why the course has served as a guide to be able to practice the teaching profession.

Chapter VI

Recommendations

As graduates, students really appreciate the effort of the University of El Salvador to provide the opportunity to take this course, as this has been of a great success, it definitely prepared us to be more proficient in teaching using all the available technological tools. However, students have some recommendations to make this even better.

- ✓ To the authorities:

  The material used by facilitators should be available for students to consult even after the course end date. Learners struggled to get the information to elaborate this report because the modules 1 and 3 were removed from the virtual campus.

- ✓ To the teachers:

  Teachers should deliver the content in a more engaging way.

- ✓ To the students:

  Students should utilize all the tools learned during the specialization course in order to improve the teaching and learning process in virtual environments.

Chapter VII

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Module I

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGES 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 process**
1.6 Month and Year:	**August 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

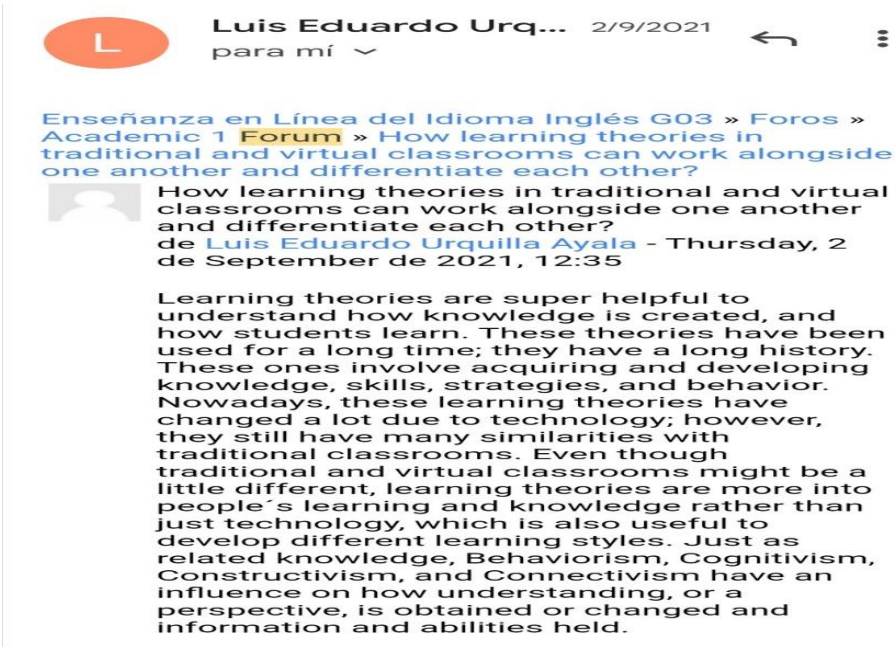
EVALUATION	PERCENTAGES
1. Discussion Forum	20%
2. Infographics	20%
3. Create a Virtual Classroom.	30%
4. Demonstrative class on MEET (Groups of 5)	30%
TOTAL	100%

7. CLASS POLICIES

1. **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.

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

-Academic Forum discussion



Luis Eduardo Urq... 2/9/2021
para mí

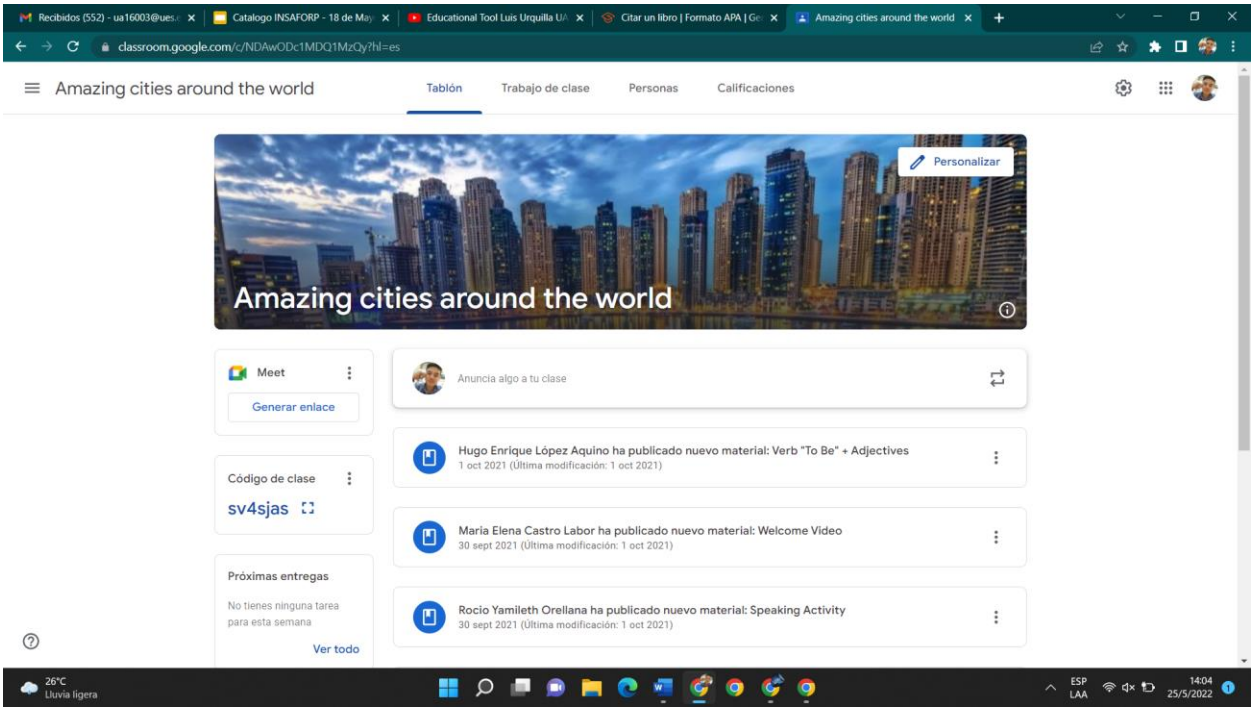
Enseñanza en Línea del Idioma Inglés G03 » Foros » Academic 1 Forum » How learning theories in traditional and virtual classrooms can work alongside one another and differentiate each other?

How learning theories in traditional and virtual classrooms can work alongside one another and differentiate each other?
de Luis Eduardo Urquilla Ayala - Thursday, 2 de September de 2021, 12:35

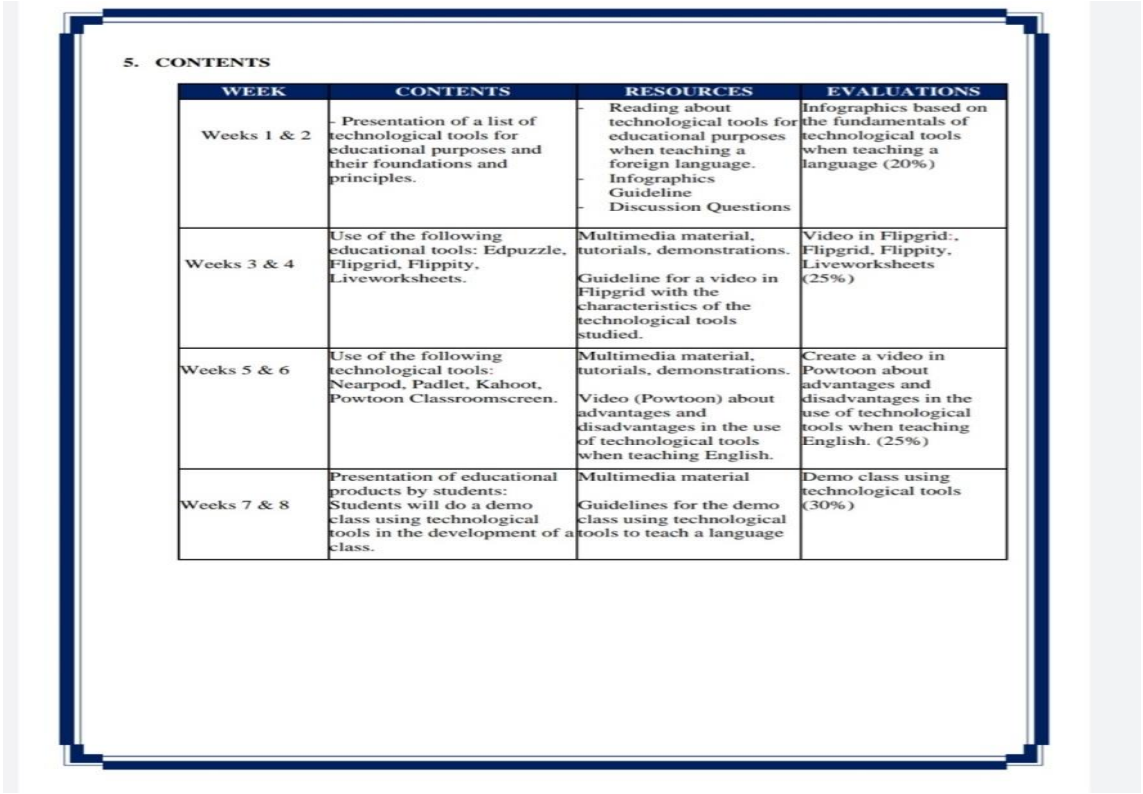
Learning theories are super helpful to understand how knowledge is created, and how students learn. These theories have been used for a long time; they have a long history. These ones involve acquiring and developing knowledge, skills, strategies, and behavior. Nowadays, these learning theories have changed a lot due to technology; however, they still have many similarities with traditional classrooms. Even though traditional and virtual classrooms might be a little different, learning theories are more into people´s learning and knowledge rather than just technology, which is also useful to develop different learning styles. Just as related knowledge, Behaviorism, Cognitivism, Constructivism, and Connectivism have an influence on how understanding, or a perspective, is obtained or changed and information and abilities held.

-Infographic

-Creating a Virtual Classroom



Appendix B: Module II

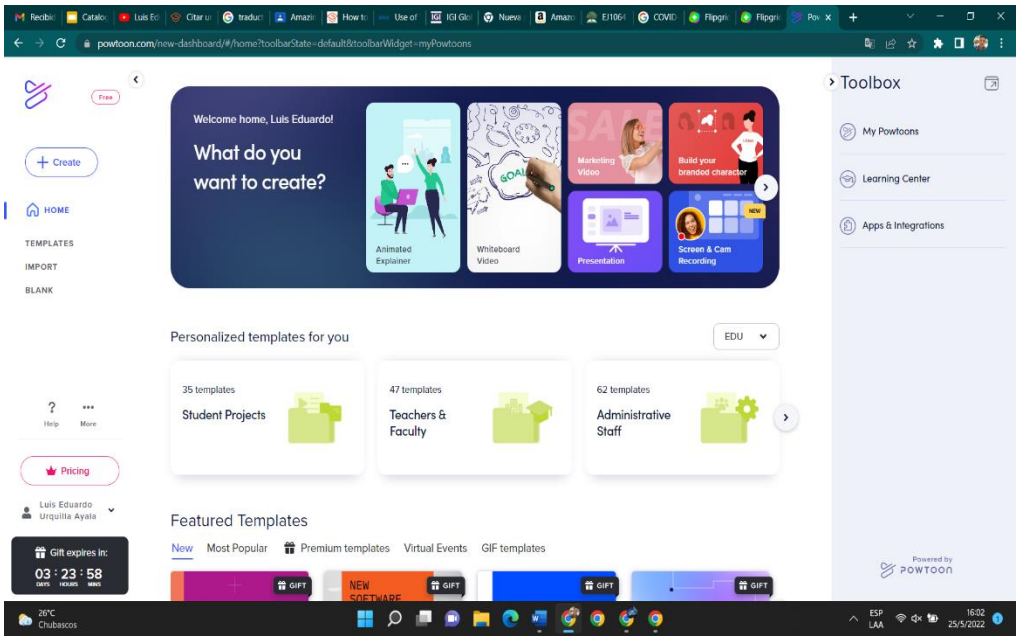


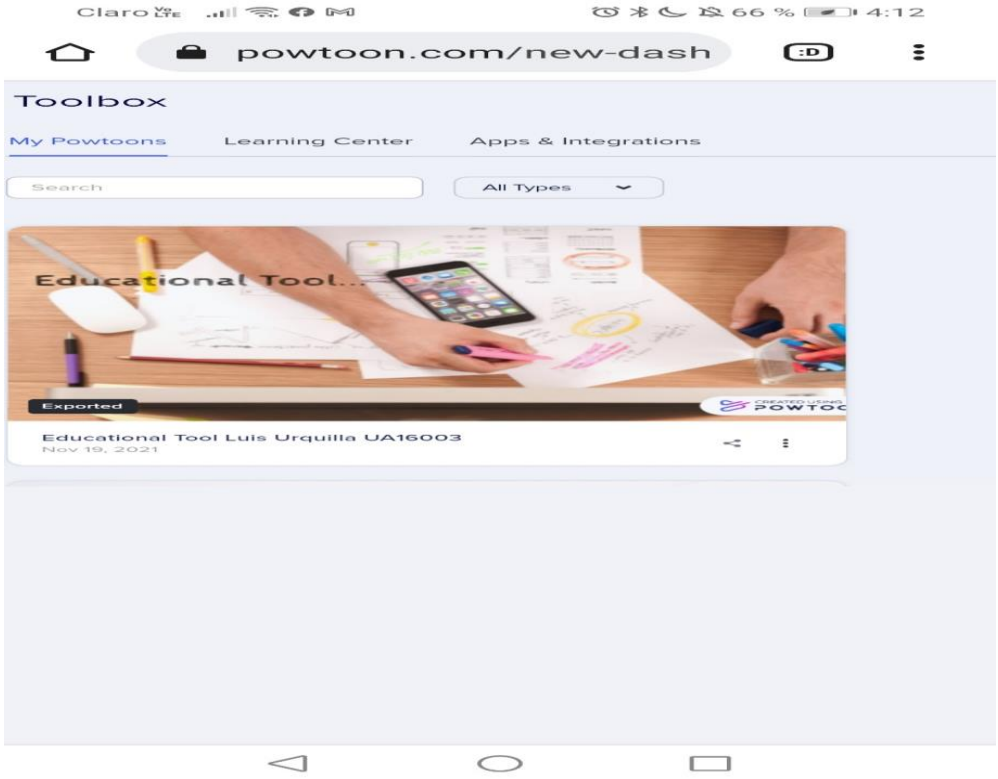
5. CONTENTS

WEEK	CONTENTS	RESOURCES	EVALUATIONS
Weeks 1 & 2	- Presentation of a list of technological tools for educational purposes and their foundations and principles.	- Reading about technological tools for educational purposes when teaching a foreign language. - Infographics Guideline - Discussion Questions	Infographics based on the fundamentals of technological tools when teaching a language (20%)
Weeks 3 & 4	Use of the following educational tools: Edpuzzle, Flipgrid, Flippity, Liveworksheets.	Multimedia material, tutorials, demonstrations. Guideline for a video in Flipgrid with the characteristics of the technological tools studied.	Video in Flipgrid:, Flipgrid, Flippity, Liveworksheets (25%)
Weeks 5 & 6	Use of the following technological tools: Nearpod, Padlet, Kahoot, Powtoon Classroomscreen.	Multimedia material, tutorials, demonstrations. Video (Powtoon) about advantages and disadvantages in the use of technological tools when teaching English.	Create a video in Powtoon about advantages and disadvantages in the use of technological tools when teaching English. (25%)
Weeks 7 & 8	Presentation of educational products by students: Students will do a demo class using technological tools in the development of a class.	Multimedia material Guidelines for the demo class using technological tools to teach a language	Demo class using technological tools (30%)

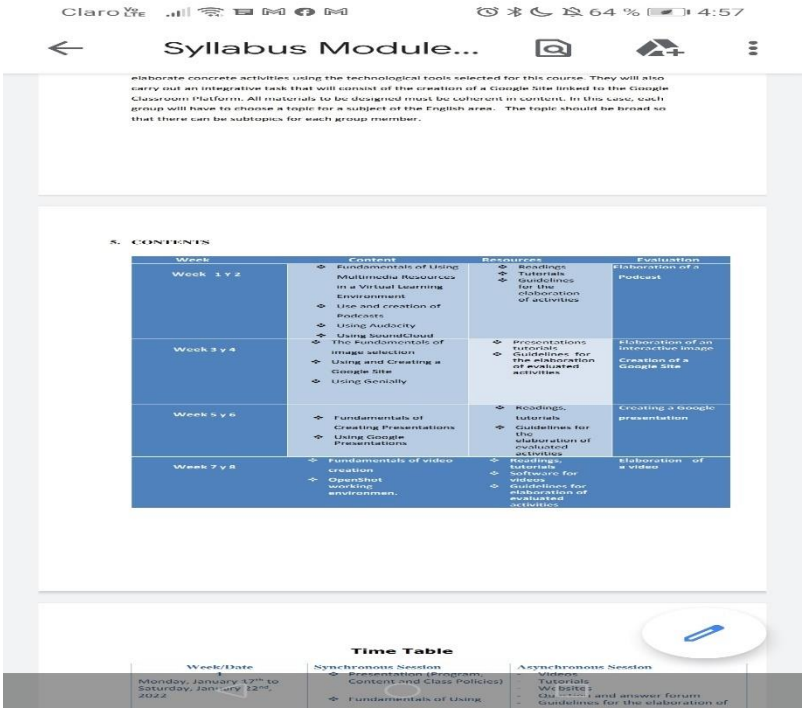
-Video in Flipgrid

-Video in Powtoon

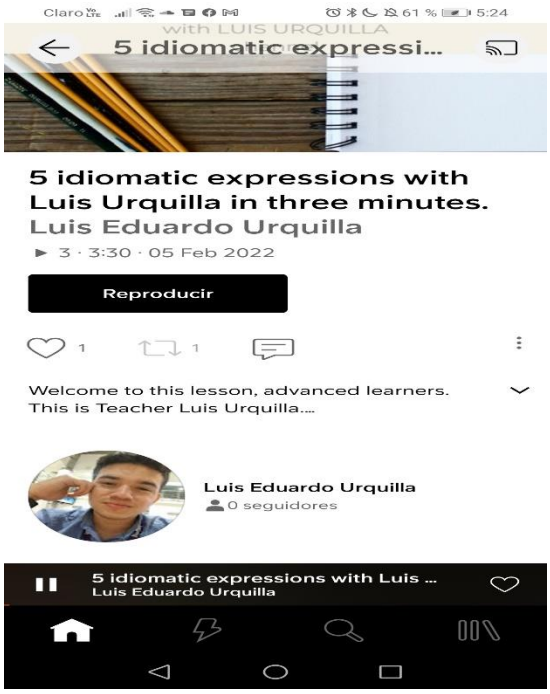




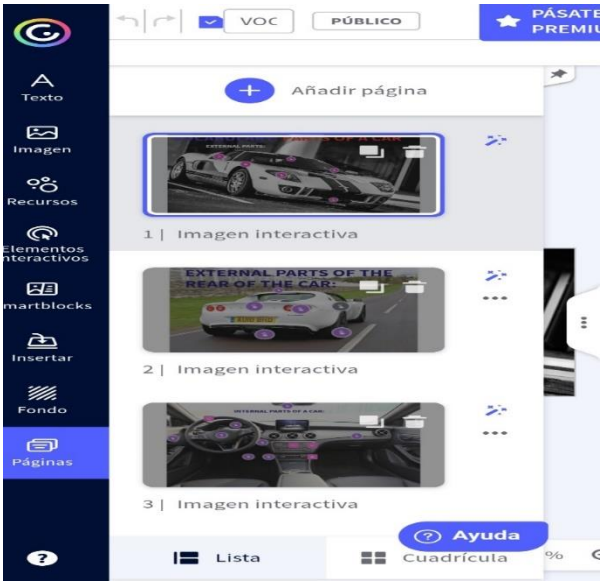
Appendix C: Module III



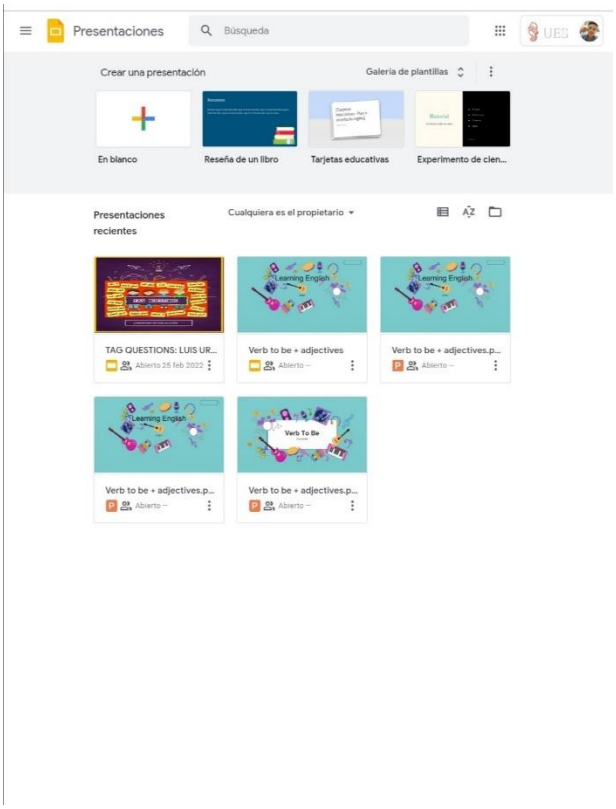
-Creating a podcast



-Interactive image



-Creatiging Goodle Slides presentation



-Elaborating a video