UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

TOPIC:

THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS ON TEACHING

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

IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF

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SPECIALIZATION PROFESSOR

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

ABSTRACT

The Internet has resulted in increased use of itself in the educational field; whether you want to plan an effective classroom or just want to improve student-teacher communication, these new technology tools come in handy. Therefore, educators are gaining more experience and knowledge about virtual environments and technological tools that enhance the teaching-learning experience. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the importance of the uses of digital content developed during the specialization course by providing innumerable significant content in a detailed manner, covering virtual learning environments. The course has been divided into three different courses that conveyed online education information, focused on online resources for boosting students' knowledge, enhancing teachers-student relationship, meaningfully changing the learning methods and approaching teaching- learning to facilitate the process. The results obtained from the course have been improving knowledge focused on digital competencies for improving teacher experience by incorporating technological resources and digital platforms. In fact, developing deep knowledge into technological uses can modify the ways to teach, providing a potential and improving performance into real classes mainly unlocking new learning skills and experiences.

Key Words: skills; performance; digital content; virtual learning; education**.**

INTRODUCTION

The specialization course in Administration of virtual environments in teaching and learning allows students of the Language Department from the University of El Salvador to break ground in the digital age through online education. The covid-19 pandemic has affected educational systems around the world and El Salvador was not an exception. Most of the teachers faced multiple changes, struggled with glitchy internet and disengaged students. For this reason, it is very important that future professional educators at the University of El Salvador be able to acquire teaching training that can adapt to any atypical change to which we are exposed. In this final report after completing the specialization course, the team described the different parts. First, the objectives that we want to achieve with this report, following by the theoretical framework that was divided into some sub-topics such as: Online English Language Teaching, Virtual teaching and its application in teaching English Language, Learning Management Systems (LMS) for the creation, feeding and use of online courses, Educational platforms and their applications and their use for online asynchronous classes, technological tools for educational purposes, Foundations and principles of educational tools, Fundamentals of Using Multimedia Resources in a Virtual Learning Environment. The team members for this report hope that this paper will be useful to those readers who want to get a chance for increasing knowledge regarding the use of technological tools for virtual classes and how to make running effectively on a daily basis as teachers. The Department of Foreign Languages aims to prepare future educators on English language teaching in a virtual environment, expanding our knowledge and keeping learning on the use of technological resources.

I. OBJECTIVES

I.1 General Objective:

To analyze the knowledge acquired in the specialization course Administration of virtual environments for the Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages from the University of El Salvador.

I.2 Specific Objectives:

- To describe the significant benefits of managing educational tools and virtual resources in online learning.

- To assess the effective use of learning management systems in an interactive online learning atmosphere.

- To provide students with the tools to be successful in their future endeavors in higher education and/or careers.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Module I: Online English Language Teaching:

Technology is currently changing all aspects of human beings such as the way they communicate, the way they work and of course the way they face and be part of Education process. After the pandemic of covid-19 that affected not only El Salvador but also countries around the world, technology has been essentially to continue with the learning process in a virtual way. Online English Teaching or E-learning takes place over the internet and it's a fully virtual environment. According to (Lee & Lee, 2006) "E-learning, also referred to an online education as the self-paced or real-time delivery of training and education over the internet to an user device, in simple language, e-learning is provided as learning that is enabled electronically". Two important approaches to take into account in online teaching are: synchronous state real time instructions and asynchronous state anytime and anywhere and this takes place in an online environment.

Virtual teaching and its application in teaching English Language.

Online teaching refers to the use of technologies that allow real-time learning, in this type of learning students have access to applications that help and provide them more opportunities for knowledge. With these applications students improve their learning process, just using the internet learners can have access to any application that lets them acquire knowledge and become more familiar with technology by using it through any electronic device. Teachers must give an effective and interactive online learning atmosphere.

Most language professors at various institutions today actively employ a variety of technology tools aimed to promote effective instruction. As a result, various elements of technology are currently used in English teaching by designing innovative curricula that take advantage of recent technological skills to ensure effective and quality teaching, providing techniques such

as audiovisual, modern technological programs, and creating student and teacher platforms that maximize the positive results of language learning.

Educational platforms and their applications and their use for online asynchronous classes. To speak of asynchronous classes is to understand that students will have the opportunity to be part of a class from anywhere and at any time through an electronic device with internet access and for this type of class there are the following platforms that can be used:

Google classroom: This is one of the most popular educational tools. Google classroom let tutors and educators have an active work on it like to set assignments, have work submitted by students, to mark and return graded papers, and also uses well-known G Suite tools, such as Google Docs, calculations' sheets, online presentation tools and video call tool which can be recording and save them (Google Hangouts).

Moodle: This online educational platform provides students learning environments. Moodle can be used by educators not only to create lessons but also to manage courses in which students can learn in an effective way interacting with each other through discussion forums or by using open questions. This is a friendly-user platform.

Schoology: This is a very useful platform and Provides students formative assessment and feedback, also students can be part of discussion groups to analyze assignments and create folders.

Module II: Educational Applications for Learning a Foreign Language
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Module II: Educational Applications for Learning a Foreign Language

The second module of the specialized course focused on the basics and principles of employing technology in education. It allowed us to examine various technical tools and learn how to use them in the teaching-learning process in virtual settings. In recent years, integrating technology into classroom systems has grown popular and effective for language acquisition. Technology is a potent instrument that has changed the way teachers teach and students learn. It has given people access to new means of communicating and cooperating. According to Mohammad Reza Ahmadi (2018), technological tools have been the preferred choice for teachers as they see positive student involvement with English language instruction.

Planning and developing synchronous class activities using technology

Synchronous learning occurs in real time and can help students feel connected even if their learning is mostly online. Asynchronous aspects are just as important as synchronous elements

in activity delivery. Real-time learning allows students to interact with their peers and professors in person. Live teaching through streaming video may also simulate the experience of a classroom situation, in which teachers and students are both present at the same time. If you want to integrate real-time components in an online class, keep the following in mind: Improve students' online learning experiences by testing virtual classroom software or resources. Some technologies, platforms, and software are extremely beneficial while teaching online classes:

Flippity: is a website that allows you to create different, interesting, and simple interactive exercises for your classroom, as well as some class management tools. At the same time, it enables time savings while also attracting the interest and curiosity of kids.

Liveworksheets: Is a website that provides a very easy free solution that allows you to digitize any of the activities you develop for kids and make them interactive so that they can be accessed from any electronic device.

Kahoot: This is a free tool for creating assessment questions. It is a mechanism in which the instructor creates exams in the classroom to help pupils learn or reinforce what they have learned.

Module III: Design of Didactic Materials for Virtual Environments:

There are many teaching methods and materials that are used according to the criteria of each educator. Today the use of technological resources benefits both students and teachers who, through the use of digital tools and educational platforms, design teaching materials that facilitate and improve the teaching-learning process of students taking into account their educational needs and their competencies.

Fundamentals of Using Multimedia Resources in a Virtual Learning Environment.

After the impact of the covid-19 pandemic that the world faced, online education and virtual environments gradually grew, and multimedia tools such as text, image, audio, video and movements are becoming richer every day. All this helps the teaching learning because it allows students to learn by exploring all the resources and tools that the web offers for educational purposes and with capable and professional educators as facilitators and guides. Students utilize technology tools to develop content that will be beneficial in our presentations to make our presentations more engaging and achieve the desired objectives. Students use Audacity and SoundCloud to generate a podcast to include in the presentation and build a listening exercise. Another technique that may be used to play a dynamic activity is the usage of interactive pictures that can be created in Genially. All that is required to produce an amazing presentation is creativity.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

III.1 Course description of Module I: Online English Language Teaching

Online teaching of the English language is used by millions of students and teachers around the world. A virtual teaching approach, such as using an LMS (Learning Management System) to establish a virtual classroom and create synchronous activities, was examined for online language teaching study. Some of the academic activities used to promote students' and teachers' participation are:

- **Discussion Forum.**

A forum allows students to share their perspectives with others who are interested in the same topic. These arguments are regarded to be among the earliest forms of internet communication. The utilization of forums will encourage people to actively participate in discussion and comments. There are a few basic principles for forums that you should follow: being respectful, explaining why your beliefs differ from the other ones, and accepting different points of view. In this project, an essay was written about learning theories and introduced and updated our knowledge of each one. The study of visible and quantifiable characteristics of human behavior is known as behaviorism. Parkay and Hass (2000) Cognitivism is concerned with how the mind receives, organizes, and retrieves information. Constructivism is founded on the premise that individuals actively create or make their knowledge, and that experiences as a learner shape reality. Connectivism is a relatively recent learning paradigm that recommends students and general information in a meaningful manner. Multiple Intelligences is a hypothesis that describes the various ways pupils learn and absorb knowledge. All of the students posted their writings on a blog in order to gather feedback and ideas on the subject. The activities of the forum generated a positive environment.

Infographic (Learning Management Systems)

An infographic is a simple but effective approach to summarize a topic. Simple icons, symbols, maps, and graphs are combined to convey the data. In this exercise, learners made an infographic regarding LMS (Learning Management System). The participants conducted extensive study on LMS concepts, features, benefits, and drawbacks, then played the role of researcher while creating an infographic since the information, material, photos, and words given in an infographic should be carefully picked.

The many resources in Canvas, PowerPoint, and Word assist us in selecting a template based on the topic. Students choose a template to make editing easier. Canva provides hundreds of images and templates to help you get started, but it's necessary to summarize material and manage space for each icon, symbol, text color, font, backdrop, and visuals. To download and save the infographic, choose a format such as PNG, JPG, or GIF.

III.2 Course description of Module II: Educational Applications for Learning a Foreign Language

Online schooling has replaced traditional classroom instruction in El Salvador. An educational application for learning a foreign language can be defined as software or the integration of learning management systems and technologies designed to assist individuals in learning a foreign language, ranging from basic (foreign language) applications for children to applications that serve as advanced professional training programs for adults. Some educational apps for learning a foreign language include:

- **Flipgrid.**

Flipgrid is a free web tool that allows you to present tasks with responses in short movies of around five minutes each. As an example, in the previously described video, the class specifies an activity that can be carried out such as asking the kids some questions and offering the answers. Flipgrid can also help students avoid becoming distracted or bored by certain topics that can be overwhelming for some of them or simply boring, causing them to lose interest. With the use of this crucial educational tool, Learners can incorporate a vast amount of material, and it helps students acquire or enhance abilities such as grammar, pronunciation, and so on. This tool is becoming more user-friendly for students, and as previously said, it is amusing. It has features that students enjoy, such as the ability to add emojis to movies, which is appealing to both young students and some adults.

- **Nearpod.**

Nearpod is a platform for developing and delivering engaging interactive presentations for students, as well as formative and summative exams to identify each student's knowledge and whether they require further information in whatever area. It allows you to have more control over your students' involvement and allows you to submit items such as papers, PDFs, and YouTube videos. Nearpod also builds games in order to improve your grasp of the class, or it to grab the attention of the students, and also construct a list of students. Aside from that, have the option of providing reinforcement for pupils by providing other examples as well as additional tasks or exercises for them to do. With the Nearpod platform, also observe students' progress or work in an individual form, and if that is not enough, you can even construct a quiz that provides you with quick feedback on each student's knowledge.

III.3 Course of description of Module III: Design of Didactic Materials for Virtual Environments

The effective use of technological materials in the teaching learning process can increase students' engagement. They can be applied as a fundamental base in order to build in proper manner, students' digital skills. Designing technological materials has become a challenge for the Educational system, but mostly for educators who felt unfamiliar with the uses of technological tools, the new and trending perspective of teaching at the same time experienced a glitchy internet which made a difficult process. Since COVID-19 pandemic showed up, unexpected challenges took place in the education context, in which educators had to face by giving an extra effort, creating online classes most likely as the conventional way does, also mitigating challenges based on student's interest and strengths. In module III, a deep knowledge was made into web tools that support teachers creating technological materials. As podcasts, online presentations, interactive images and videos, etc.

- **Podcasts**

Podcasts are useful resources to teach English by listening to audio. Educators have found a great source to teach students by recorded audio-engaging, it can be an attractive source due to teachers can create their own audio material base on student's interests or experiences and students can feel more comfortable; requires more than effort however are richer in order to use as a part of the online classes because of the fact that can include grammar content, inspirational context, English tips, just on audio etc. Podcasts bring flexibility and accessibility for teaching and learning a language.

In the first activity belonging to the III module; the participants made an educational audio- recording, as a practice developing an innovative way to teach. Each team was addressed to record a podcast taking into account how will be structure, using a good strategy to catch pupils attention by creating a connection, consistent or flow of it, it needs to be specific by picking up an appropriate theme, the age or grade and skills, etc; the participants of the course needed to keep mind that those details have the ability to create a unique experience making an interactive and memorable material or class by listening and it has one powerful way to wave effective content. In order to record an audio was used software

known as Audacity that brings itself easy access by editing, recording and making a podcast and as a highlight, it is not necessary to buy expensive material to record an audio. This activity requires effort, a little extra thought, expressing ideas in a clear way and making it right but made participants think out of the box.

- **Interactive images**

In this digital age, teachers have been working and putting more effort into creating material for developing classes and here it is when interactive images play an important role for teaching. Interactive image is another type of resource that allows teachers to create and innovate content by conveying information regarding the English language in an image. Interactive images can be used as flashcards, games, Pictionary's, etc., making our classes lively.

Digital materials create a significant empowerment and functional classes by using and giving information about everything in a single interactive image. Future teachers always need to take into account topics, skills and select the correct strategy to speed up the process of learning by using interactive content in the online classes. Since students do not have physical material, it has been a hard experience due to the way to teach by using genially or other educational websites that have to make clear, well-structured and create a visual impact on our students. The Internet brings us unlimited material. Learners can make images based on different themes and using Genially, created animated material that can contain text, audio, links etc just by adding buttons in which students can select and learn new English vocabulary, improve their knowledge, ensure their learning and facilitate the process. Genially has become an important source for teachers; interactive content providers and supports classes, it can engage students in a friendly way to learn. One of the main advantages that it provides is that we can connect content with other resources by linking YouTube videos, educative pages, audios etc. It is important to offer a good learning experience by selecting our material based on the student's interest.

To make this activity every student must have selected a topic at random based on grades/age, once this part has been selected Genially plays an important role due to being used to make the interactive content

and material well personalized. Genially brings endless features just by inserting a button in a picture taken from the internet, that button inserted allows teachers to add text, videos, audios, vocabulary, concepts or even introduce a topic and animated content. We can get students' attention by displaying the information just by clicking the interactive button.

- **Educational videos**

Teaching English languages by videos can boost a student's engagement due to being highly focused on the student's interest and teacher 's strategies. This way to teach can improve classes by guiding or walking students through several examples, important concepts, based on visual content .As fact, it has become one most important and hard to develop due to teachers can create self made videos highly personalized by designing an effective and functional content taking into account materials that will determine the sequence of our classes.

In this activity, scripts or outlines are a fundamental part of creating or developing videos and appropriate content selection and clear goals make the activity have more active ways to engage students. The good combination of material that includes spoken text, picture or illustrations, animated slides, organization, and coherence makes the participants keep in mind what is strictly necessary to teach, in other words teaching English using short videos is better than one long video. The activity was made using basic materials and it was uploaded to YouTube platform.

- **Google SLIDE / SITE**

Google Workspace brings unlimited resources for educators and it has been taking important space and high impact on virtual environments. This platform provides collaborative spaces, content, more effectively classes and well supported, definitely Google workspace plays an important role providing a meaningful learning experience.

In this activity, Google slide and Google site were created to develop during the practice part. This activity makes the participants improve themselves to explore ideas and explore new ways to teach and address classes, using innovative tools by combining multimedia content as videos, images and text.

IV. ACHIEVEMENTS

- The team learned how to create content, material and resources adequate for teaching effectively virtual environment classes.

- The team learned to define goals by organizing content and selecting important information to engage the audience by giving them specific ideas or details in a dynamic way, everything in an infographic making in Canva or Genially.

- The team learned how to manage and create collaborative environments into Google workspace for virtual classes and how it can be addressed by technological resources such as podcasts, PowerPoint presentation, educational videos, interactive images focused virtual classes in a proper manner based on students' needs and accessibility.

- The team learned how to create virtual environments using technological tools that conducted extensive study on learning theories and how they may be utilized in online classrooms. These ideas can help to assist the teaching learning process and build a successful teaching method, accelerated learning as much as the conventional method does.

V. CONCLUSIONS

After finishing this work on the specialization curse, the group members came to the following conclusions:

- The goal of this paper was to demonstrate the assistance that learning environments and Learning Management Systems provide while teaching Foreign Languages in virtual environments.

- With the constant change in study methods and the usage of technological resources in virtual environments, online education are becoming extremely relevant.

-.Providing appropriate feedback and opportunities to practice using technology when students are familiarized with the implementation of the technology can lead to remarkable results in the classroom.

-Adequate instructional resources are important when learning in an online environment. The internet can offer plenty of technological tools used for the teaching and learning process; nevertheless, if they are not used appropriately it can cause drawbacks. As a result, a proficient study regarding the best technological resources to use is crucial to better understand the uses of these.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The creation of a new set of courses for improving educational curriculum that includes technological resources might help ensure the development and performance for future professionals widely understanding current ways to teach.

- Improving education by the use of technological tools can be a good way to innovate education using the most effective resources and it would be useful for teacher enhancement and professional development.

- Promote inclusiveness and highlight goals, focused on the current way of teaching, need to be part of the university awareness by looking for the accessibility for students based on learning styles, skills, abilities, living conditions, resources, etc.

- The Department of Foreging Language should continue designing study plans based on technological age resources, ressauring and emphasizing to evolve students' experiences on pedagogical process by making effective use of technology into the classroom during the teaching learning process.

- Encourage University of El Salvador to continue the spread of online courses in higher education emphasizing in students engaging, effective learning, collaborative environment, wide participation and increasing digital learning -virtual environment.

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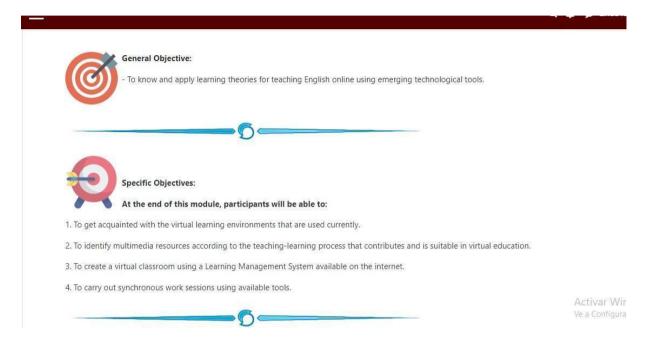*Educational Learning Theories: 2nd Edition* "Educational Learning Theories: 2nd Edition" by Molly Zhou and David Brown (usg.edu)
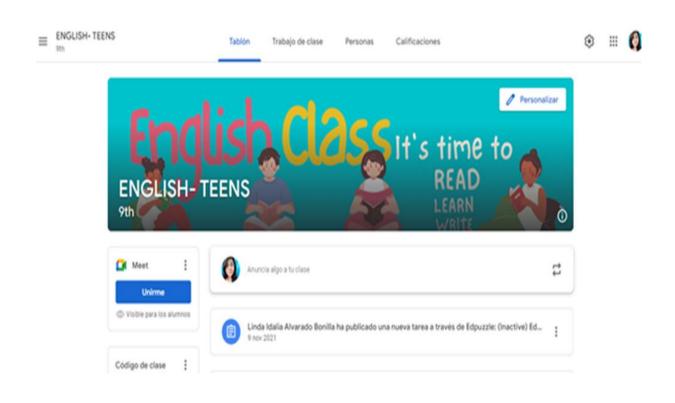
VIII. APPENDIXES

A. Campus's main platform of the module students used to post activities and assignments
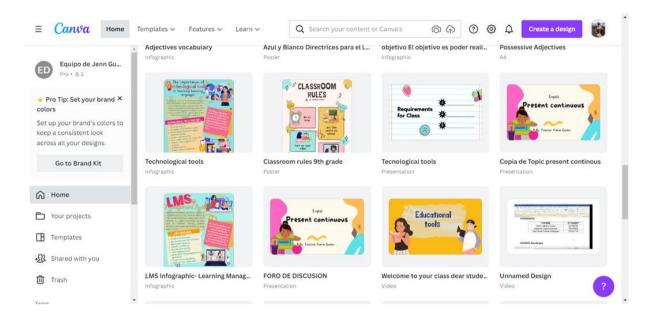
B. General and main objectives to modules

General Objective:

- To know and apply learning theories for teaching English online using emerging technological tools.

Specific Objectives:

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

1. To get acquainted with the virtual learning environments that are used currently.

2. To identify multimedia resources according to the teaching-learning process that contributes and is suitable in virtual education.

3. To create a virtual classroom using a Learning Management System available on the internet.

4. To carry out synchronous work sessions using available tools.

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Ve a Configura

C. A collaborative class created in google classroom by a group of students

D. Use of Canva to create original contents.

E. Final module.