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Universidad Técnica de Babahoyo

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INNOVACIONES PEDAGÓGICAS PARA EL FORTALECIMIENTO DEL PROCESO DE ENSEÑANZA-APRENDIZAJE DEL IDIOMA INGLÉS

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CHAPTER 1

THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to show the influence of the flipped classroom pedagogical model in the teaching of English as a foreign language. Currently, it is a necessity for students in the world to have knowledge in at least two or three languages. The teaching process should be focused on the application of new technologies that allow students to progress in their academic and personal spheres. After having the necessary theoretical foundation, the application of the instruments and the respective analysis, it was identified that the use of this model with the integration of new methodologies contributed to a real and motivated approach to language learning, achieving the acquisition of skills and an improvement in the use of the foreign language thus, the use of an innovative model allows the student's interests to be materialized in a meaningful learning process that improves their foreign language level, achieving a decrease in the rates of demotivation and failure.

This research is the result of the application of the flipped classroom methodology to the development of an academic content proposed in a curriculum for the teaching of foreign language (English) that not only remained in theoretical notions, but with the help of ICT and the elements of the methodology allowed an increase in student motivation, a practical, cooperative, contextualized and useful learning for them, but above all, it opened the possibility of continuing with innovative and efficient pedagogical processes that develop different skills of students in learning a foreign language.

Keywords: flipped classroom, language learning, innovation, ICT.

RESUMEN

El propósito de esta investigación es mostrar la influencia del modelo pedagógico de aula invertida en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera. Actualmente, es una necesidad que los estudiantes en el mundo tengan conocimientos en al menos dos o tres idiomas. El proceso de enseñanza debe estar enfocado a la aplicación de nuevas tecnologías que permitan a los estudiantes progresar en su ámbito académico y personal. Luego de contar con la fundamentación teórica necesaria, la aplicación de los instrumentos y el respectivo análisis, se identificó que el uso de este modelo con la integración de nuevas metodologías contribuyó a un abordaje real y motivado del aprendizaje de idiomas, logrando la adquisición de habilidades y una mejora en el uso de la lengua extranjera así, el uso de un modelo innovador permite materializar los intereses del estudiante en un proceso de aprendizaje significativo que mejora su nivel de lengua extranjera, logrando una disminución en los índices de desmotivación y fracaso.

Esta investigación es el resultado de la aplicación de la metodología del aula invertida al desarrollo de un contenido académico propuesto en un currículo para la enseñanza de una lengua extranjera (inglés) que no solo se mantuvo en nociones teóricas, sino con la ayuda de las TICs y los elementos de la metodología permitió incrementar la motivación de los estudiantes, un aprendizaje práctico, cooperativo, contextualizado y útil para ellos, pero sobre todo, abrió la posibilidad de continuar con procesos pedagógicos innovadores y eficientes que desarrollen diferentes habilidades de los estudiantes en el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera.

***Palabras Claves*:** aula invertida, aprendizaje de idiomas, innovación, TIC.

INTRODUCTION

The teaching of foreign languages has always been a controversial topic in the educational field, since there is a diversity of methods for the student to acquire this knowledge in an experiential way, because that is the nature of a language, a real and practical knowledge. Nowadays, it is an imminent requirement to have a high level of linguistic competence in a foreign language, especially English. The modern world with its globalized dynamics has made language learning one of the main objectives of school education.

Based on the above, conducting research and creating different models and pedagogical strategies that motivate students to learn in order to obtain clear and efficient results in their educational process is an objective that is continually proposed by experts in education and in the teaching of foreign languages, and of course, by teachers who in each classroom become collectors of experiences and formulators of new educational projects.

Within this framework, the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has played a fundamental and dynamic role in the English teaching-learning process. Technology allows students to find interactive and enjoyable ways to acquire knowledge, share it and put it into practice in a real context. In view of this, the question arises whether and to what extent the use of these technological tools has a positive influence on the foreign language learning process. Thus, this research aims to analyze whether an educational model that involves ICT in the classroom, specifically the flipped classroom, can improve the linguistic competence of students in the English foreign language.

This research aims to relate two variables: the use of ICT in the classroom and the learning of a foreign language. This is done with the full conviction that technology is a sophisticated and effective tool in the educational field, becoming an essential and invaluable aid for teachers in their professional work.

Context

Teachers and students in the teaching-learning process are the engine that stimulates the application of knowledge in real and practical contexts. It is imperative to change traditional practices for alternative methods that motivate students to initiate processes that transform their reality and improve their standard of living. Thus, the use of ICT supports teachers in their task of helping students achieve a better performance in the linguistic, pragmatic and communicative use of the language. The teacher at this time cannot be a simple transmitter of knowledge, who expects an environment in which students become functional receivers who only comply with orders. The teacher has an active role. He/she becomes a support, guide and tutor of an academic process in which interaction rather than subordination makes students complement the pedagogical exercise and discover a world full of possibilities in the different knowledge that surrounds their context. All of these questions that were raised from the beginning were verified with the research that is presented in the following chapters.

In order to determine whether the flipped classroom pedagogical model that uses various ICT tools has a positive influence on students, this research was conducted focusing on a group of ninth grade high school students from an official departmental educational institution. The study consisted of developing a curriculum guide based on the flipped classroom model in a given group, comparing the results with another group that developed the same academic content, but in the traditional methodology. The materials were chosen, the methodology was applied and the results were effectively obtained, which pointed out that there is a notable improvement in the appropriation and practice of the knowledge of the second language (English). The results showed an increase in the motivation of the students, in their interest in the subject and the corresponding activities. Different mechanisms were developed to promote meaningful collaborative learning.

The educational possibilities offered by ICTs are numerous. One of important relevance is the combination of technological resources with active methodologies. Amaro and Chacín (2017) state that the design of a learning environment that promotes the construction of knowledge and the integration of ICT in curricular activities, in order to discover new knowledge, is of crucial importance in the classroom. To this end, the school must rethink the learning space beyond its walls and the teacher as a facilitator in the exploration of the world.

In this context and in the words of Schneiders (2018), active methodologies are alternative pedagogical practices to traditional teaching. The terms of knowledge transmission typical of what Freire called banking instruction are replaced by a more active participation of students in their learning process. The student under this perspective can solve problems, develop projects and, thus, build his own knowledge by being aware of his own learning process. Active methodologies involve the implementation of several strategies, among them, the inverted classroom.

A recent article in The New York Times (Rosenberg, 2013) describes the experience of Clintondale High School, the first school in the United States to implement the flipped classroom model in 100% of its classrooms. After the incorporation of the model, individualized teaching time ('one-to-one') has increased fourfold, and student performance and motivation levels have risen.

In recent research results, the book Flip Your Classroom: Reach Every Student in Every Class Every Day (Bergmann and Sams, 2012) is often cited as the foundational text of the model; and the articles ' Gathering Evidence that Flipping the Classroom can Enhance Learning Outcomes' (Walsh, 2013) and ' Measured Results Demonstrate Enhanced Learning Outcomes in the Flipped Classroom' (Szoka, 2013). All of these writings gather empirical evidence on the power of the Flipped classroom model to improve both motivation and student achievement in secondary and higher education.

One of the didactic models that has been emerging in the last couple of years, supported by the undoubted power of new technologies, is the so-called flipped classroom. As defined in the web recently created by Tourón, S. et al. (2013), The Flipped Classroom, Spain: experiences and resources to 'flip' the classroom:

Flipped Classroom is a didactic model in which students learn new content through online video tutorials, usually at home; and what used to be 'homework' (assigned tasks), is now done in the classroom with the teacher offering more personalized guidance and interaction with students

According to Prensky (2001) young people today are digital natives and have been born and raised surrounded by technology (computers, tablets, cell phones...). Prensky (2001), the use of these devices in daily life implies that students have a way of thinking and processing

information differently from ours and this directly affects teaching and should be taken into account in class. Therefore, students must learn to access this information, know how to choose and discriminate this information, value and compare it and then apply it to different contexts. It is not a matter of memorizing knowledge per se, but of building it and acquiring new competencies (Díaz, et al., 2012).

The research addresses the Flipped Classroom pedagogical model and the grammatical competence of the English language as study variables. Nowadays, with new technological advances, teaching can be improved using new strategies and tools that allow the student to discover in a practical way the different skills of the English language without so many explanations through the application of the Flipped Classroom or Flipped Class model (Merla and Yáñez, 2018; E-historia, 2014).

It is considered important to point out that these two variables in the new educational model that is being imposed and that wants to end the traditional teaching model: Flipped Classroom or Inverted Class, which broadly consists of turning the traditional class upside down?, going from give instructions in class and exercise at home as homework, give instructions and content to be reviewed as homework, being able to turn the class into a workshop where the knowledge acquired outside the classroom is applied with the help from the teacher, with a strong component in experimentation and collaboration.

Research objectives

The following objectives were presented and planned at the first instance of this research proposal aiming to include the complete step-by-step process used.

Main objective

- To analyze the impact of technology integration within the flipped classroom model on the English language learning process.

Supporting objectives

- Identify and evaluate specific technological tools utilized in the flipped classroom for English language learning.
- Analyze the impact of technology on learning outcomes, focusing on language proficiency and comprehension.

- Assess the level of student engagement and interaction facilitated by technology in the flipped classroom.

Investigate the effectiveness of using technology in the flipped classroom model to improve English language learning outcomes. This includes measuring the impact on various aspects such as vocabulary acquisition, grammatical accuracy, speaking fluency, and overall language proficiency.

Explore the specific technology tools and resources that are most beneficial for different English language learning activities in a flipped classroom. This could involve evaluating the effectiveness of online learning platforms, educational applications, video conferencing, interactive exercises, and collaborative tools. Analyze the impact of flipped classrooms on student engagement, motivation, and autonomy in English language learning. This would involve examining how technology fosters active learning, personalized learning plans, and self-directed learning strategies.

Identify the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing the technology-enhanced flipped classroom model for English language learners. This includes considerations such as access to technology, digital literacy skills, teacher training, and classroom management strategies.

Research on the use of technology in the flipped classroom for EFL learning has the following limitations: Generalizabilidad: The research findings may not be generalizable to all EFL learning contexts, as the effectiveness of technology in the flipped classroom may depend on factors such as students' ages, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds.

Access to technology: access to technology and reliable Internet connectivity may be a significant barrier for some students, limiting their participation in the flipped classroom model digital skills: students may need additional support to develop the digital skills necessary to effectively navigate online learning platforms and use technology tools.

Teacher training: successful implementation of the flipped classroom model requires that teachers have adequate training and support to use technology effectively and integrate it into their instructional practicese evaluation measuring the impact of technology in the

flipped classroom on complex language skills, such as speech fluency and critical thinking, can be challenging and requires careful consideration of methods.

METHODOLOGY

This research employed a mixed-methods approach to examine the impact of technology on the EFL university students at the A1 level within the Language Center. The first component involved the administration of a survey to gather quantitative data on student satisfaction, engagement, and the perceived effectiveness of technology in the flipped classroom. The survey was designed for A1-level students, including questions about the frequency of engagement with pre-recorded materials, satisfaction levels, and preferences for specific technology tools. The sample used was 150 students randomly selected from 5 courses of the first Level at the Language Center of the University of Babahoyo. This was a convenience sample due students characteristics are pretty similar and it is enough to explain the behavior and perceptions they had during the research (Wild et al., 2022).

The second component consists of classroom observations aimed at capturing the dynamics of the flipped classroom model. The observations focused on student interactions with technology during both in-class and out-of-class activities. The criteria for observation included student engagement levels, the effectiveness of in-class activities in complementing pre-recorded materials, and any notable patterns in technology usage (Chen et al., 2021). Following data collection, both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed. Quantitative data from the surveys were analyzed using statistical methods to identify the main trends. On the other hand, qualitative data from interviews and observations went to analysis to extract key themes and patterns. Ethical considerations, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring participant anonymity and confidentiality, and adhering to ethical guidelines and institutional review board (IRB) requirements, were prioritized throughout the research process (Patton, 2015).

DEVELOPMENT

To obtain results, the first idea was to assess a class for the whole process, since the planning through the students results. At the beginning of the term, it was explained to students the different tools and the flipped classroom approach was going to be used during the course. The main aim of this action is they are capable enough to understand and practice using the

tools in class. Then, two tools were used in the lesson plan, Prezi for slides and Wordwall for interaction and practice. The resulting plan states as follows:

Lesson Plan: Present Continuous Activity

Objective: Students will be able to understand and use the present continuous tense in English sentences.

Duration: 60 minutes

Materials:

- Zoom meeting link
- Prezi presentation on the present continuous tense
- Wordwall interactive activity on present continuous (shared through Moodle)
- Digital whiteboard on Zoom or collaborative document on Google Docs
- Handouts with sentences for practice (uploaded on Moodle)

Introduction (10 minutes):

- Share the learning objectives for the lesson.
- Conduct a quick review of the present continuous tense using the digital whiteboard on Zoom or a collaborative document on Google Docs.

Prezi Presentation on Zoom (15 minutes):

- Share your screen to present the Prezi on the present continuous tense.
- Engage students by using Zoom's interactive features such as polls, reactions, and the chat for questions and discussions.
- Encourage participation by asking students to unmute and share examples or respond in the chat.

Wordwall Interactive Activity on Moodle (20 minutes):

- Direct students to the Wordwall activity link uploaded on Moodle.
- Share the activity on the screen and motivate students to complete the interactive exercises related to the present continuous tense in class.

- Then, make them practice by themselves, monitor students' progress on Wordwall, and address any questions or issues through the Zoom chat or Session.

Practice and Application on Moodle (10 minutes):

- Upload a reinforcement practice with sentences on Moodle.
- Ask students to complete the sentences using the present continuous tense on Moodle.

Review and Closure on Zoom (5 minutes):

- Bring students back to the main Zoom session.
- Have a brief review and discussion on key concepts covered during the lesson.
- Summarize the main points about the present continuous tense.
- Provide instructions for homework assignments or additional resources on Moodle.

Assessment (after the session):

- Evaluate students based on their participation in discussions, engagement with Wordwall activities, accuracy in completing the handout, and the quality of their responses on Moodle.

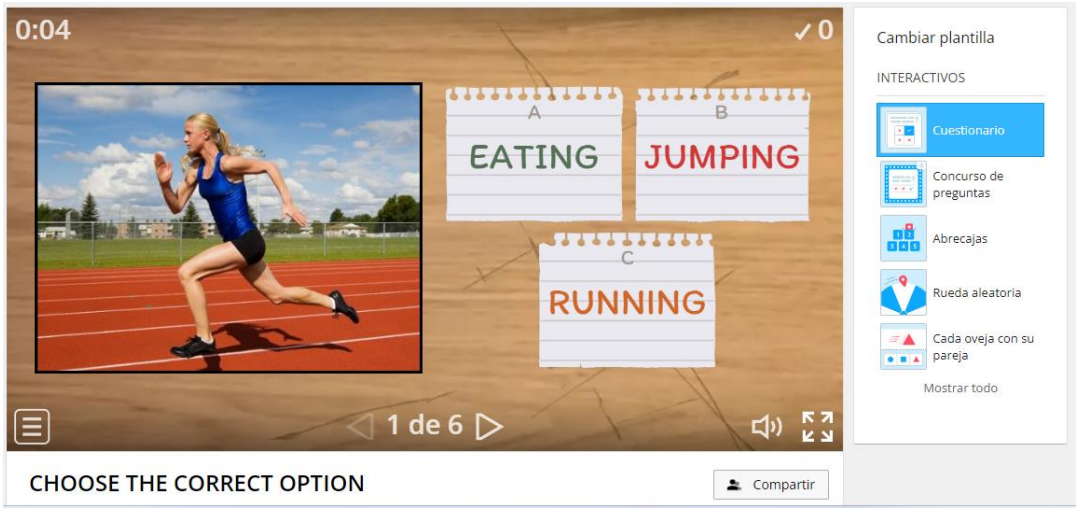
Extension (after the session):

- Encourage students to explore additional resources on Moodle, such as links to relevant videos or online grammar games for extra practice.

Then, some technological tools used to evaluate the feasibility of the flipped classroom were Wordwall and Prezi. First of all, Prezi slides were created to explain the use of Present Continuous to students in the previous class, then in this activity, it was just used to remind it. Then, Wordwall was used to make them practice in a interactive way. Figure 1 presents the initial activity in Wordwall, where they have to match the questions and pictures.

Figure 1

Verb review to introduce present continuous

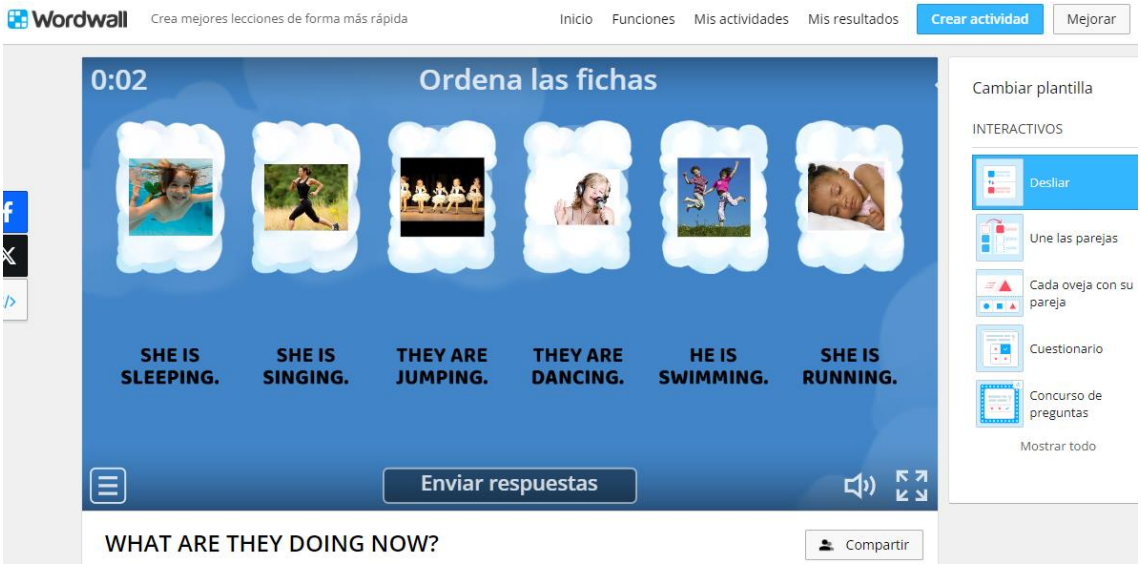


Note: This activity was obtained from wordwall.net.

The first activity aimed for students to identify the correct verbs using the “ing”, then, they could create sentences in present continuous. The exercise was fun and interactive, and students were actively participating in the session. Figure 2 presents the second activity.

Figure 2

Matching activity of Present Continuous.

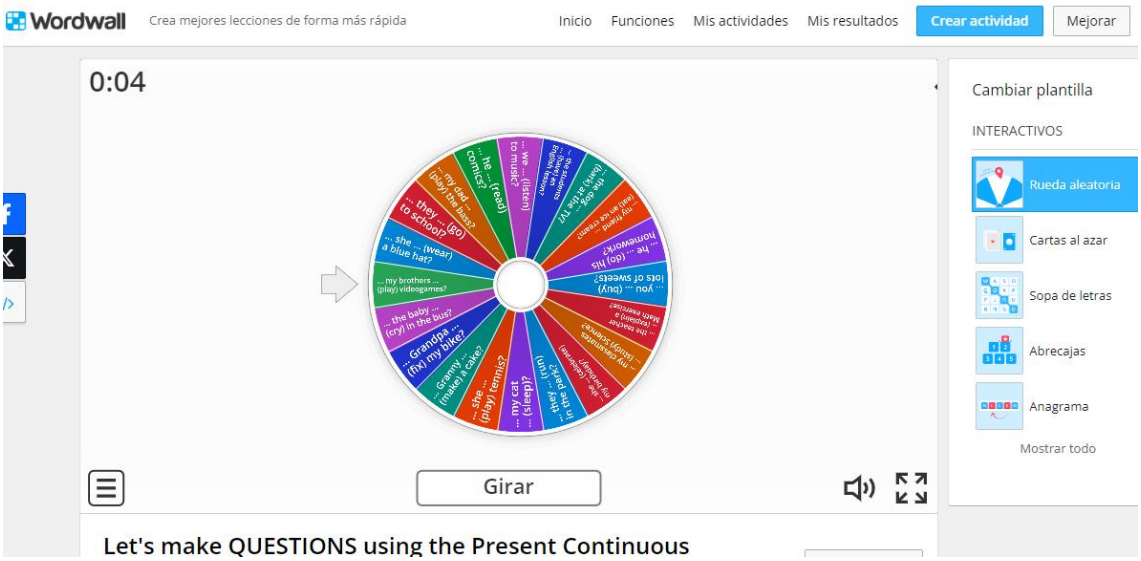


Note: This activity was obtained from wordwall.net

The second activity aimed at students to identify and match the sentences with the pictures. Thus, they could create new sentences based on this activity in the following sessions. Students were more attracted to this activity than the first one. Figure 3, present the third activity which was a questions and answer activity.

Figure 3

Matching activity of Present Continuous

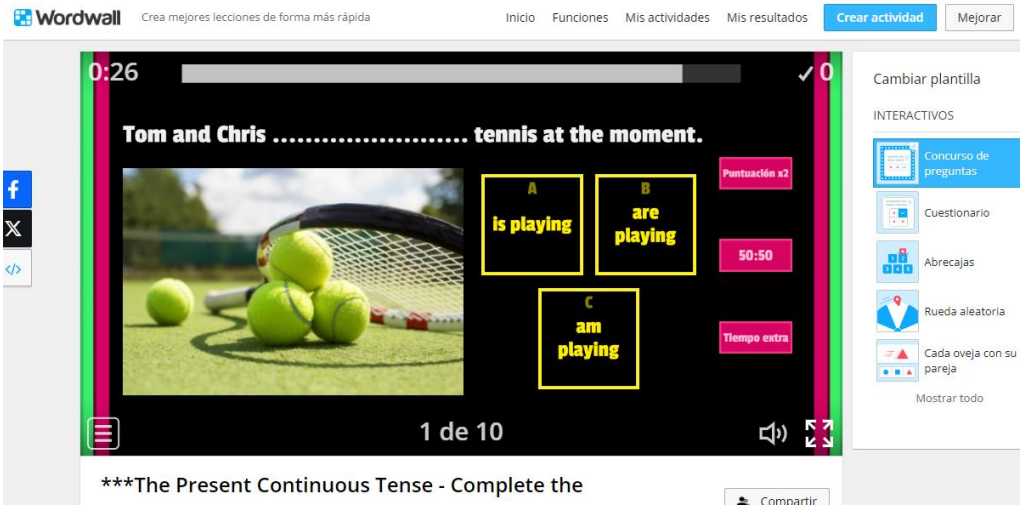


Note: This activity was obtained from wordwall.net.

The third activity was the toughest one for the students. Here students need to randomly answer some questions in present continuous. They declared this is difficult for them, because, i. they are most afraid of talking in class and got wrong, and ii. use the grammar tense correctly while talking. However, in the end, they made it through, and was quite fun despite the comments. Figure 4 shows a Quiz Game designed in Wordwall.

Figure 4

Quiz Game activity of Present Continuous



Note: This activity was obtained from wordwall.net

The final activity was a game created to assess the overall knowledge about the grammar tense previously reviewed and practiced in class. This was a quiz-type game, created in

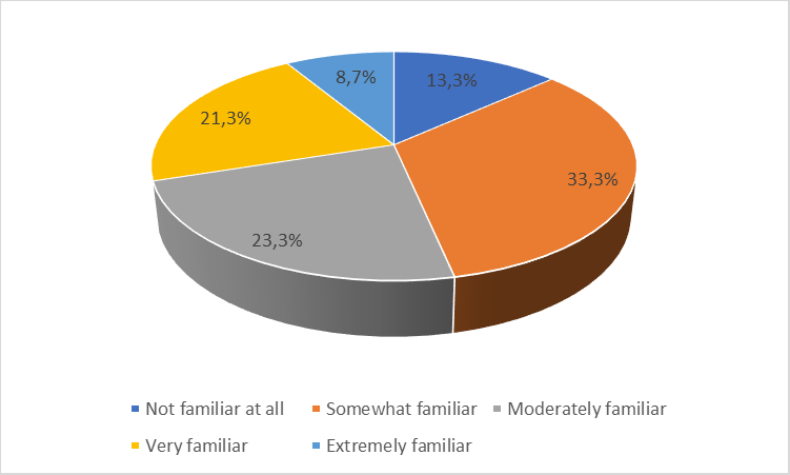
Wordwall and it was good enough for students to make a final practice and reinforce the knowledge acquired.

Obtained results

For the second part of the research, it was analyzed the survey presented to students, where the data collected explained the main information about their perceptions and satisfaction with the apps used. It is important to remember that the sample analyzed was A1 students of the Language Center of the University of Babahoyo. Figure 5 explains the familiarity of students with technology in class.

Figure 5

A1-Level Students' familiarity with technology in class

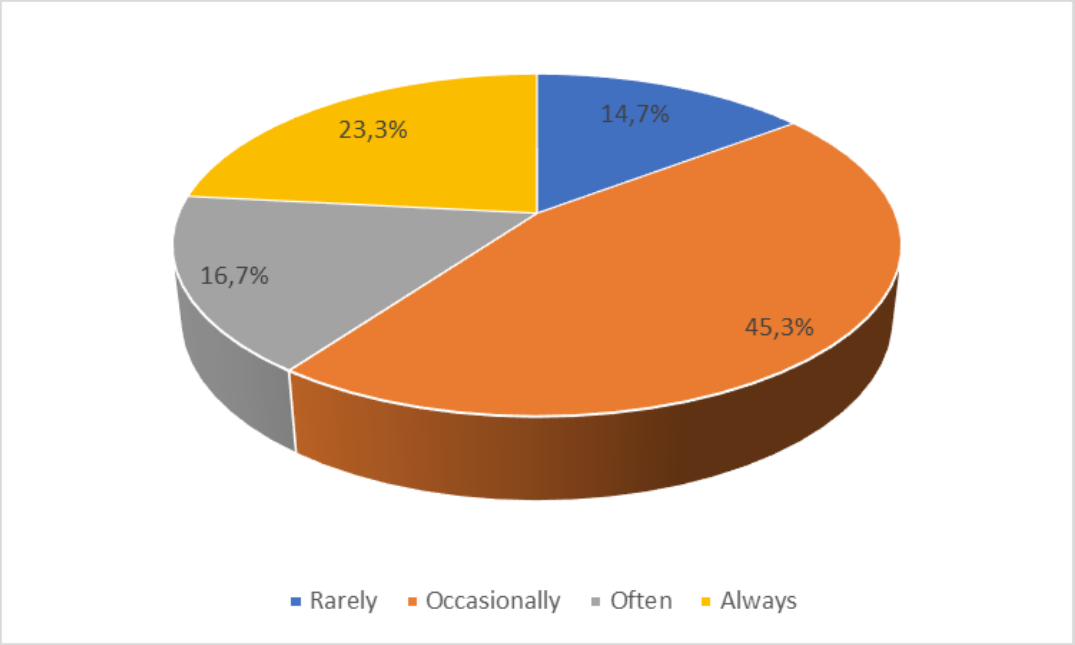


Note: This figure assesses familiarity from not familiar at all to extremely familiar.

The survey results indicate a varied range of familiarity levels among the participants regarding the use of technology in education. A notable 33.3% consider themselves somewhat familiar, suggesting a moderate baseline level of technological awareness. Additionally, 23.3% express a moderate level of familiarity, while 21.3% claim to be very familiar, collectively emphasizing a considerable segment of the participants with a confident grasp of educational technology. Notably, 8.7% of respondents consider themselves extremely familiar, suggesting a smaller but still noteworthy group with a high level of proficiency. Then, 13.3% admit to being not familiar at all, highlighting a subset that may require additional support or training to feel comfortable with technology integration in an educational setting. Figure 6 explains A1-Level Students' engagement with the pre-recorded lessons or materials before the in-class sessions.

Figure 6

A1-Level Students' engagement with the pre-recorded lessons or materials before the in-class sessions

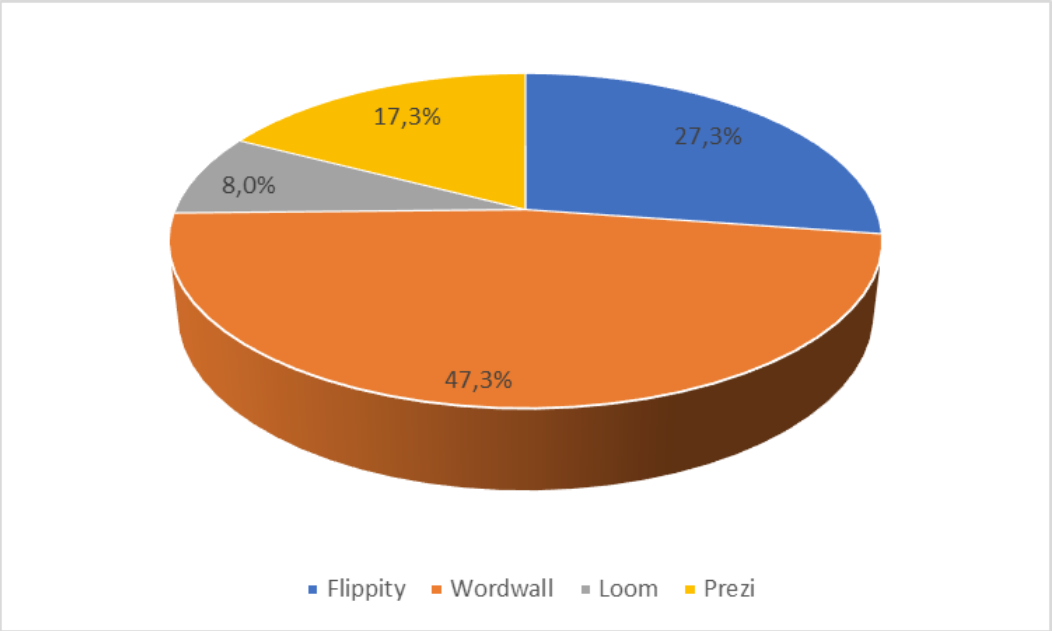


Note: This figure assesses engagement from rarely to always.

The survey outcomes shed light on the frequency of engagement with pre-recorded lessons or materials in the context of the flipped classroom experience. A significant percentage, 45.3%, indicates that they engage occasionally, suggesting a flexible approach to accessing pre-recorded content. Furthermore, 23.3% claim to engage always, emphasizing a dedicated segment committed to thoroughly reviewing materials before in-class sessions. On the other hand, 14.7% admit to engaging rarely, while 16.7% state that they engage often. These results underline the varying levels of student participation in pre-class activities, emphasizing the need for teachers to consider diverse learning preferences and schedules when designing and scheduling flipped classroom content. Figure 7, on the other hand, made students rate the usefulness of the tools.

Figure 7

The usefulness of Technological Tools according to students' criteria



Note: This figure assesses engagement from rarely to always.

The survey outcomes provide insights into the adoption and popularity of the specific technology tools reviewed among participants. Wordwall was the most widely used tool, with 47.3% of respondents indicating its utilization, highlighting its prevalence in the educational technology landscape. Flippity follows with a usage rate of 27.3%, indicating a considerable but somewhat lower adoption. Prezi is employed by 17.3% of participants, while Loom registers the lowest usage at 8.0%. Then, Table 1 presents students' perceptions of those technological tools.

Table 1

Students' perception of technological tools and approach

Criteria	Not Effective	Somewhat Effective	Effective	Extremely Effective
In-class activities facilitated by the teacher after the pre-recorded lessons	6,7%	16,7%	30,0%	46,7%
The use of technology in your participation and engagement during in-class discussions and activities	0,0%	15,3%	23,3%	61,3%
The flipped classroom model with technology integration in your English language learning experience	3,3%	8,0%	37,3%	51,3%

Note: This table analyzes the data collected regarding the students' perception-related variables

The survey results reveal a good perspective on the aspects of the flipped classroom model with technology integration. In terms of in-class activities facilitated by the teacher after pre-recorded lessons, 46.7% of respondents find them extremely effective, indicating a significant positive impact on the learning experience. Additionally, 30.0% perceive these activities as effective, while 16.7% find them somewhat effective. A smaller percentage, 6.7%, considers them not effective, suggesting a generally favorable response.

Regarding the use of technology in participation and engagement during in-class discussions and activities, 61.3% of respondents find it extremely effective, emphasizing the significant role technology plays in active engagement. Additionally, 23.3% consider it effective, 15.3% somewhat effective, and none find it not effective, indicating a positive perception of technology's contribution to participation and engagement. Finally, Concerning the overall flipped classroom model with technology integration in the English language learning experience, 51.3% of respondents find it extremely effective, showcasing a predominant positive sentiment. Furthermore, 37.3% consider it effective, 8.0% somewhat effective, and 3.3% not effective. These results collectively suggest a strong endorsement of the flipped classroom model with technology integration, especially in terms of enhancing in-class activities, improving engagement, and contributing to an effective English language learning experience.

Discussion

The research project, centered on the integration of technology in the flipped classroom model for English language learning, has created insightful results that contribute to the discourse on modern pedagogical approaches. Going from the relevant literature, the study aligns with the trends emphasizing the potential benefits of technology in language education. Then, the familiarity survey results indicate technological awareness among A1-level EFL students. Such as Koehler & Mishra (2005) indicated the importance of understanding learners' technological proficiency as a factor in designing effective technology-integrated educational strategies. The survey results demonstrate that while a significant part of students consider themselves familiar or very familiar with technology, a non-negligible percentage still falls within the somewhat, moderately, or not familiar categories. This underscores the need for support and guidance for those less familiar, aligning with Cordoba (2020) sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the role of social interaction and support in the learning process.

The assessment of technological tools highlights Wordwall as the most widely used, followed by Flippity, Prezi, and Loom. These findings are consistent with the broader literature emphasizing the popularity and effectiveness of interactive and gamified tools in language education (Lui, 2013). The students' perceptions of these tools, by their effectiveness in in-class activities, participation, and the overall flipped classroom experience, showcase a predominantly positive outlook. This aligns with the research of Putz et al. (2020), who found that technology when integrated effectively, can enhance student engagement, participation, and overall satisfaction.

The lesson plan implementation, incorporating Zoom, Prezi, Wordwall, and Moodle was important in the application of the flipped classroom model. The careful selection of tools aligns with the recommendations of scholars like (Dukuzumuremyi & Siklander, 2018), who emphasized the importance of technology selection based on specific educational objectives. To sum up, those findings align with established educational theories and contemporary trends, emphasizing the importance of using technological approaches to learners' needs and preferences. The positive perceptions and engagement levels indicate a promising avenue for further exploration and optimization of the flipped classroom model with technology integration in language education (Girgin & Cabaroglu, 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

In reviewing the results obtained in response to the stated objectives, this research has provided an enriching perspective on the integration of technology in the flipped classroom model for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. The findings suggest a positive reception of technology by students, highlighting the effectiveness of specific tools such as Wordwall in enhancing participation and the learning experience. Additionally, the variable familiarity of students with technology underscores the importance of an inclusive and supportive approach to meet the needs of all learners.

Looking ahead, this study suggests some areas for expansion and development. It is recommended to further explore the adaptability of the flipped classroom methodology with technology across different levels of language proficiency and educational contexts. Additionally, it could be beneficial to go deeper into students' preferences regarding specific technological tools and how these preferences impact learning effectiveness. Expanding this work through longitudinal studies that assess the long-term impact of technology on language proficiency and knowledge retention could also provide valuable insights.

In terms of recommendations for future research, there is a suggestion to further explore the relationship between students' preparedness and prior familiarity with technology and their performance in the flipped classroom model. Including more detailed assessments of students' technological skills could offer additional insights into optimizing the implementation of technology in the classroom. Furthermore, a focus on teacher training for the effective integration of technology in the flipped classroom model could constitute a valuable research direction.

Finally, this study provides a solid foundation for future research in the field of technology and English as a Foreign Language teaching, opening doors to new explorations that can further enhance the effectiveness of the flipped classroom methodology in specific educational environments.

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CHAPTER 2

STRATEGIES AND TOOLS TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

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ABSTRACT

In such a globalized world, in which technology has advanced by leaps and bounds, English has gained great importance as it is considered one of the main languages worldwide. Communication is a skill that allows people from all over the world to be connected. Previous studies demonstrate the effectiveness of using writing to learn the language, since students become familiar with the words they write, being a practical learning method for students who are still beginners. This chapter discusses strategies for learning and improving English language skills, using Padlet and the Collaborative Learning approach as strategies and tools to develop and improve writing skills in students. The method of this research is qualitative-quantitative, with an investigative approach, having as its object of study students who are studying the second level of parallel T, U, and V of the English subject at the Technical University of Babahoyo participated in the research, to improve their level of English by enhancing their linguistic and grammar skills through writing. The data collected will be from didactic activities designed within the Padlet platform, putting into practice the Collaborative Learning methodology, and encouraging interaction between students and their teacher, where the success of this study was subsequently verified by having students who managed to write texts with a larger vocabulary and better structured. The results showed that the use of Padlet as a pedagogical resource helped to improve the students' writing skills since it is proven that knowledge is learned better when it is put into practice, achieving the development of their other communication skills.

***Keywords*:** technology, virtual education, Padlet, writing skills, Collaborative Learning.

RESUMEN

En un mundo tan globalizado, en el que la tecnología ha avanzado a pasos agigantados, el inglés ha cobrado gran importancia al ser considerado uno de los principales idiomas a nivel mundial. La comunicación es una habilidad que permite que personas de todo el mundo estén conectadas. Estudios anteriores demuestran la efectividad del uso de la escritura para aprender el idioma, ya que los estudiantes se familiarizan con las palabras que escriben, siendo un método de aprendizaje práctico para estudiantes que aún son principiantes. Este capítulo analiza estrategias para aprender y mejorar las habilidades del idioma inglés, utilizando Padlet y el enfoque de Aprendizaje Colaborativo como estrategias y herramientas para desarrollar y mejorar las habilidades de escritura en los estudiantes. El método de esta investigación es cualitativo-cuantitativo, con un enfoque investigativo, teniendo como objeto de estudio a los estudiantes que cursan el segundo nivel de paralelo T, U y V de la asignatura de inglés de la Universidad Técnica de Babahoyo , para mejorar su nivel de inglés potenciando sus habilidades lingüísticas y gramaticales a través de la escritura. Los datos recolectados serán de actividades didácticas diseñadas dentro de la plataforma Padlet, poniendo en práctica la metodología de Aprendizaje Colaborativo, y fomentando la interacción entre los estudiantes y su docente, donde posteriormente se comprobó el éxito de este estudio al contar con estudiantes que lograron escribir textos con un Vocabulario más amplio y mejor estructurado. Los resultados demostraron que el uso del Padlet como recurso pedagógico ayudó a mejorar las habilidades de escritura de los estudiantes ya que está comprobado que los conocimientos se aprenden mejor cuando se ponen en práctica, logrando el desarrollo de sus demás habilidades comunicativas.

Palabras claves: tecnología, educación virtual, Padlet, habilidades de escritura, Aprendizaje Colaborativo.

INTRODUCTION

Importance and purpose of the writing

Over time, learning and understanding the English language has become a necessity and a challenge since communication can break cultural barriers. Learning a new language can be easy for some and complex for others, so technology can be of great help to the language teaching-learning process, due to its great impact on society, especially for young people who are currently. They are studying the language and need a guide, which in this case will be the teacher of the subject (King, 2018).

The utilization of technologies has been massively applied since synchronous learning was implemented in the educational aspect. After years of experience in the synchronous learning environment, a paradigm shift has occurred with online education, which has grown in popularity to near-permanence, even in the aftermath of the COVID-19 epidemic. It is an unavoidable step in integrating technology into our teaching-learning process, as it enables us to educate students in ways that are not only comfortable for them but also meet the demands of twenty-first-century technology (Mishra et al., 2020). Consequently, whether teachers or students, were experienced in using various electronic mediums represented by the internet to provide qualified teaching and learning process (Coman et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the teaching and learning process in the twenty-first century is significantly reliant on technology. The use of computers and the internet is critical in improving knowledge acquisition in general, and English language mastery in particular. The adoption of technology tries to enhance educational quality and provide both instructors and students confidence and competitiveness in today's global environment (Paudel, 2021). Technology utilization impacts teachers' and students' performance, such as more efficient and successful teaching and learning processes, reducing workload, breaking classroom routines, providing materials, and saving teaching class time (Alghasab et al., 2020).

The purpose of this work is to demonstrate how students can learn the language in a more interactive and fun way that allows them to demonstrate their writing skills and abilities through knowledge previously taught by the teacher, using general vocabulary and transition words. ; in addition to the use of technological tools such as the Padlet platform, in which

students will be able to express their ideas and subsequently be socialized in the virtual classroom, achieving the active participation of the students.

Theoretical and practical background

For many researchers, the ability to write is very complicated and requires complex mental activity, and even more so if it is to develop it in a foreign language (Villalobos, 2017). Therefore, one of the best ways to improve the ability to write in any language is by writing, or as stated by Sanz, et al. (2000), when mentioning that "writing is considered a means to promote self-esteem and personal development of the student" and in this sense, it could be said that the more students write, the better their performance will be. Within the field of English teaching, writing is practiced very little one of the great shortcomings of English teachers focuses on the study of grammatical rules and constructing simple sentences in the different tenses, and that for which critical and significant thinking is not required to a large extent.

One of the strategies that could be used to solve problems in writing is the use of technology. Harmer (2001) stated that technology is one good tool for the progress of students in writing because it will facilitate spell checkers for students. One of the platforms that can be used for learning is Padlet. Padlet is a free platform in the form of an online bulletin board so students can organize information on various topics they want (Sangeetha, 2016).

Other studies have used different strategies to improve writing skills, such as journal writing, rewriting, use of a bilingual dictionary. In this case, the Padlet platform and the Collaborative Learning approach were used. In the review of research carried out in 2020, the activity specifically consisted of students writing down in writing every day in their notebook (diary) personal thoughts, experiences, opinions, or any topic that they considered relevant or of interest, encouraging "free writing" or free writing to be something motivational, which had the objective of helping to solve the problem of poor writing that university students have, it was agreed to carry out this project, where it was intended to motivate students to journal writing to improve learning processes (Malo, 2020).

Similar research on Padlet with a workplace communication course has also highlighted that Padlet improves teacher-student relationships, increases motivation and self-esteem, and provides teachers with an alternative mode of communicating with students beyond the

classroom (Rashid, 2015). It can encourage real-time, whole-class participation and assessment (Fuchs, 2014). In the context of this study, students post answers to questions from the instructor and all answers will be visible on the wall. Responses and feedback from the instructor are also visible. Therefore, students can look at errors and suggestions and apply them when writing their answers. Comments and corrections from instructors and classmates can help students to reflect and allow for self-correction (Nizam et al., 2016). Padlet tasks in a professional workplace communication course have helped students develop their confidence and prepare for job interviews.

Another very useful platform to expand students' vocabulary and write better-structured paragraphs is www.vocabulary.com. This website is used especially for a single user and administrator. The students were presented with how to create an account, being recommended for the benefits and features it has to create incredible materials, especially for the acquisition of words. Vocabulary.com is an innovative method of teaching English because it develops confidence in students; In fact, this tool helps students immerse themselves in simple, complex, and technical words by applying gamification, resulting in a fun activity and converting students from beginners to experts in this skill (Deepa, 2021).

A study by Taufikurohman (2018) revealed that the integration of Padlet in classroom instructions provides a non-threatening environment for different kinds of collaborative classroom tasks. All the participants in the above research have the ability and opportunities to contribute and learn from one another and all their voices can be heard on a ‘graffiti wall’ in Padlet. Padlet can also replace the traditional assessment of using pencil and paper as an interactive assessment tool in classroom settings. Teachers can design questions in Padlet and then instruct the students to answer them to evaluate their understanding of the lesson that they had learned. Padlet has received considerable positive feedback from various studies, and its features are suitable to be used as pedagogical tools in language learning and assessment. According to Nugroho and Nurhamidad (2019) using Padlet for learning purposes causes positive effects due to, their attractive features which can capture students’ attention. In addition, students can learn collaboratively with peers and teachers and feel more engaged with writing activities. Another study conducted by Azmi (2017) claims that the integration of technology in language classrooms has contributed to positive motivation to write well, and it attracts students' attention.

General contextualization of the topic

Padlet as a tool in writing skills

Padlet is a web space where the administrator can add files, links, videos, and more. It allows the user to create various forms of content using their Padlet account. The user, especially the lecturer could develop good content and use it in their classes. Besides that, by using this web space, both lecturers and students can collaborate in a live discussion and share knowledge among themselves (Klein, 2013).Moreover, Fuchs (2014) added that the implementation and integration of learning tools in the classroom could encourage the whole class to participate in classroom activities. The lecturers will receive an email from Padlet each time the students respond to their wall (Wood, 2016).

Baleni says that Assessment in language learning is vital because it has a powerful and significant influence on students' learning. Moreover, the methods involved in teaching and learning processes must be assessment-centered and offer students opportunities to prove and identify their emerging abilities and receive feedback to enrich their learning experiences. However, the main focus has shifted in the drastic development and utilization of online and blended learning within the 21st-century teaching and learning environments (Bonaventure & Kim Hua, 2021).

Writing is a complex productive skill for students to acquire as it involves several skills and conventions, such as organizing and developing ideas and information, choosing the right vocabulary to eradicate the ambiguity of meaning and also the practice of accurate grammatical devices to focus and emphasize ideas. Writing is quite a difficult task, especially for low-proficient students. Consequently, they may lose interest in the learning of writing and merely copy their peers' work or leave a blank o any activities related to writing tasks. Furthermore, many students continue to have difficulty communicating their ideas effectively through writing due to their inability to express their thoughts even in basic sentences (Bonaventure & Kim Hua, 2021).

Padlet, which was formerly known as Wall Wisher, is a free web-based application that allows teachers and students to create an online bulletin-like board. The function of Padlet is similar to sticky notes, but the ideas and answers are shown on the wall inside the application. In this 'wall', the users can post words, links, pictures, videos, and other related materials in which

the contents are viewable by anyone who has access to the link or address to a wall in Padlet. Moreover, the use of Padlet as a web digital tool can provide opportunities for students to share their ideas on any assignments or activities either in the classroom or at home. It is also a versatile pedagogical tool that allows teachers to gather students' feedback and is accessible on any device, such as mobile phones and computers, as long as it is connected to the Internet. Compared with other forum-based platforms, Padlet is not rigid as it is a reliable and suitable online learning platform for students and teachers (Bonaventure & Kim Hua, 2021).

Using padlet for collaborative learning

According to Resta and Laferriere (2007), four educational reasons justify the use of technology as a way to introduce Collaborative Learning in the classroom. Padlet is a tool that can also provide space for the development of the Collaborative Learning approach.

First, Padlet helps students prepare for the academic community by improving their knowledge creation and collaboration skills, second, it contributes to the improvement of students' intellectual performance and promotes a deeper understanding of key concepts. Third, it improves the teaching process with great flexibility in time and place for collaborative learning, and fourth, it promotes students' participation in knowledge creation. With this motivation, Padlet is used to create their master's curriculum (Beltrán-Martín, 2019, p. 201-2011).

Some of the problems that can arise are that students sometimes miss the point of reading or writing inaccurate statements, and more motivated students feel that others are exploiting their summaries rather than reading the articles. These problems can be addressed by requiring all or selected students to add signed messages to papers, creating a classroom culture that values thoughtful input before class, or providing teachers with feedback and recognition for quality messages.

Padlets are incredibly useful for a variety of face-to-face classroom activities. Padlet calculates the available chat time based on the number of smart devices in the room. Students do not have to wait their turn to speak or compete with their neighbors for participation, allowing many ideas to be presented in a short time. Students with sensitive faces or less fluent English may feel more comfortable participating in class discussions through a written message rather than giving an oral presentation to the class. (Fisher, 2017).

Padlet is especially useful when teachers want to collect ideas and suggestions from the class, such as for brainstorming activities. After preliminary discussion in small groups, students are asked to present their ideas individually or on behalf of the group.

Most activities that are typically done using whiteboards or sticky notes work well with Padlet, with the benefit of increased visibility within the class and the creation of a permanent record of the discussion. Padlet can be used not only to gather input before a discussion but also to record and learn from points reached and consensus reached after a group discussion.

Padlet can also be used to provide a feedback channel for questions and comments about anything happening in class, such as exercises, videos, and associated listening tasks, lectures, or presentations from other students or groups. If your students work in study groups, you can create your Padlet to make it easier to take notes together during class.

Padlet can be used after class. At the end of the lesson, summarize the following activities: Activities and others listed as output entries can be performed in Padlet after class if you don't have time for class. You may need or want further consideration in a post-lesson Padlet about how students can apply what they have learned. The Padlet created during the course is also a useful resource for students when studying for exams (Fisher, 2017).

A good Padlet will have links to carefully selected (or homemade) videos, a short explanation of why you should watch each video, text, images, links to related articles or websites, and often a quiz. Contains interactives such as flashcard applications. Padlet is presented in live classes but can also serve as a training or review resource. Padlet tasks not only help students track their progress and the progress of other students in practicing basic English skills but also improve the data and resource quality of the information and resources they encounter. This also provides practice for learning the language on your own. Evaluate resources both in terms of content and value per unit of time, think about how you can apply what you learn in real-world settings, and create engaging tools to educate others.

Finally, you can also use Padlet to manage topic selection for group assignments by student teams. Students simply post the names of their team members and their chosen topic on a first-come, first-served basis on a Padlet provided by the teacher for this purpose. This allows other students to quickly see which topics are occupied and which are still available and allows teachers to see if a student has yet to join a team (Fisher, 2017).

In summary, Padlet is a very user-friendly technology that is important to the Collaborative Learning methodology for improving and learning English language skills and can be used to engage students in a variety of ways both inside and outside of the classroom.

Scope and limitations

The expected scope is for students to improve their level of English using technological tools, but this can also work against it since all students do not have a good internet network or have some other limitations that do not allow them to actively participate in this studio such as lack of digital devices to develop the activities during classes or foul of confidence writing to receive feedback in front others. On the other hand, not only students could have limitations, in many cases some teachers do not have good connections or knowledge about the use of technological tools. Apart from that, it is important to take into account that digital devices need electricity and internet connections to function properly.

Nowadays, there are still some places where there is no internet connection, becoming a disadvantage for some students who live in these places, in some cases if they have an internet connection the signal is low this issue prevents students from having a good performance in online classes.

Objectives

General objective

The main goal of this chapter is to improve English language communication skills of English learning, specifically, the ability to write, through strategies and tools through exercises put into practice in the virtual classroom, with teacher advice.

Specific objectives

- Improve students' writing skills based on topics of their knowledge, which will facilitate the teaching process.
- Encourage students to expand their vocabulary and improve their grammar during the writing process therefore, when teachers have engaged students in the writing activities, they will be able to get a better understanding of spelling and punctuation issues.

- Ensure that students can write coherent and meaningful texts, which will be useful for their personal and professional environments. That means when students develop different kinds of writing activities, they will be able to write more effectively and accurately.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research has an epistemological approach, so the researcher, in this case, the teacher, interacts with those he studies, either through coexistence or direct observation, with an investigative-bibliographic approach, since they will be using Previous studies as a reference point that verifies the effectiveness of this teaching method. The methodology used is qualitative-quantitative, the participants in this research are students who are studying the second level of English from parallels T, U, and V of the Technical University of Babahoyo, each parallel has approximately 70 students, therefore Since there are 3 parallels, it follows that the sample used will be a total of 210 students.

Before conducting this study, the students were notified that they would be part of a study, and their permission was obtained without any objection, so it could be carried out without any problems or interference. The data collection was from pedagogical activities within the virtual classroom, which were carried out on the Padlet platform with teacher instruction, where students were asked to write a paragraph about different topics, to evaluate different parameters in their writing and analyze what their most common errors were, to know the deficits and subsequently improve them with the help of the teacher.

Pedagogical activities include topics such as interviewing a famous person, writing a recipe for his favorite dish, extreme sports, and the experience of his last birthday. To evaluate each activity, a rubric composed of 5 categories and rated on a scale from 1 to 4 was used.

Table 1

Rubric to evaluate students' writing skills

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Content Accuracy	The letter contains at least 5 accurate facts about the topic.	The letter contains 3-4 accurate facts about the topic.	The letter contains 1-2 accurate facts about the topic.	The letter contains no accurate facts about the topic.
Grammar & spelling (conventions)	The writer makes no errors in in grammar or spelling.	The writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar and/or spelling.	Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar and/or spelling	The writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar and/or spelling.
Capitalization and Punctuation	The writer makes no errors in capitalization and punctuation.	The writer makes 1-2 errors in capitalization and punctuation.	The writer makes 3-4 errors in capitalization and punctuation.	The writer makes more than 4 errors in capitalization and punctuation.
Neatness	Paragraph is typed, clean, not wrinkled, and is easy to read with no distracting error corrections. It was done with pride.	The paragraph is neat hand-written, clean, not wrinkled, and is easy to read with no distracting error corrections. It was done with care.	The paragraph is typed and is crumpled or slightly stained. It may have 1-2 distracting error corrections. It was done with some care.	The paragraph is typed and looks like it had been shoved in a pocket or locker. It may have several distracting error corrections. It looks like it was done in a hurry or stored improperly.
Ideas	were expressed in a clear and organized fashion. It was easy to figure out what the letter was about.	Ideas were expressed in a pretty clear manner, but the organization could have been better.	Ideas were somewhat organized but were not very clear. It took more than one reading to figure out what the letter was about.	The paragraph seemed to be a collection of unrelated sentences. It was very difficult to figure out what the letter was about.

Note: Rubric to evaluate students' writing skills

These criteria have been chosen to assess writing skills and whether all of them are related to writing enhancement. In other words, they have allowed rating the students' improvements.

DEVELOPMENT

Collaborative Learning

"Collaborative Learning" is an umbrella term for a range of educational approaches that involve the collaborative intellectual work of students, learners, and teachers. Often, students work in groups of two or more to find an understanding, solution, method, or product. Collaborative Learning activities can vary widely, but most focus on student exploration of the use of class materials rather than teacher presentation or explanation (Smith & MacGregor, 1992)

Collaborative Writing, Hunzer (2012), describes collaborative writing as a community for student writers. Not only that but all the wonderful things that go into building a classroom community are created in the classroom and collaborative writing. For example, when students interact well with each other, and evaluate, and influence course materials, they feel they are part of a learning community.

Collaborative writing is a way of planning, activating, and evaluating low-level language exchanges to improve students' progress and reflection. In addition, collaborative writing promotes the development of second language writing by increasing student participation, confidence, and responsibility. Co-writing is effective in language domains (Sajedi, 2014).

Collaborative writing strategies are writing teaching strategies that ask students to work in pairs or groups to write effectively. This strategy allows students to work with their peers to write unique essays. in other words, students work together to write good writing. Collaborative writing provides an opportunity to facilitate book review, academic reading, and writing, and stimulates reflection, knowledge sharing, and critical thinking (Sukirman, 2016).

Dale in Utami (2012) defines collaborative writing as meaningful interaction and mutual decision-making among group members to create a shared document or writing activity. Collaborative writing style can facilitate the writing process for students by providing a suitable environment where they can work with a partner. From the above definition, it can be concluded that collaborative writing is a social activity that motivates students because it

involves social interaction when students work together in groups (Latifah et al., 2020, p. 1-18).

To carry out these writing activities, teachers assigned different topics to the students and warned them about the areas that will be evaluated in each proposed activity, so that the students have the opportunity to look at words, and vocabulary and check the mistakes. Grammar and spelling to show good practice and make it easy for students to complete the same steps in each activity will make the following essays easy to write personality and professionally.

Figure 1 reveals how much students were engaged with this writing activity, in which students described the questions they would ask to a famous character of their choice, imagining that they were interviewing him/her. Students wrote well-formulated questions with few errors which were received feedback after they shared their activities.

Figure 1

Exercise about questions to interview a famous person.

Note: Collaborative writing activity developed during asynchronous class.

In the second picture, as we can see in Figure 2, the progress of writing and comprehension skills for making a food recipe is shown with the characteristic that it is the favorite dish of each of the students. In this activity, students learn and practice new vocabulary related to ingredients and instructions to prepare them.

Figure 2

Writing activity about how to prepare their favorite dish.

Note: Collaborative writing activity developed during asynchronous class.

In Figure 3, students wrote about some extreme sports they know and made a comparison about the most dangerous, to develop this exercise students need to understand the proper use of some grammar rules like the use of adjectives, there were few punctuation mistakes but students receive teachers' feedback. In addition, they have used linking words to connect ideas revealing they have improved their writing skills.

Figure 3

Writing activity about Extreme Sports

Note: Collaborative writing activity developed during asynchronous class.

In Figure 4, the students wrote about their own experiences, this exercise concerned their last birthday, describing where they were, what they did, and how they spent it. So, they needed to use some grammar rules like tenses, capitalization, and punctuation.

Figure 4

Collaborative writing activity about their last birthday using Padlet

Note: Collaborative writing activity developed during asynchronous class.

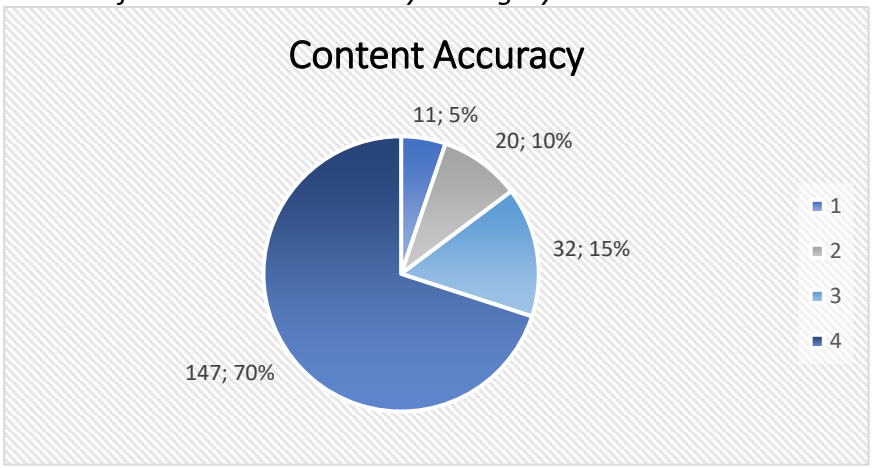
RESULTS

To evidence the students' results, the students' activities were graded based on the rubric in Table 1, which is made up of 5 categories. In each course, there are approximately 70 students. Since 3 courses are being evaluated, it has an estimated 210 students evaluated.

According to Category 1, the precision of the content was evaluated, obtaining the results represented in Graph 1, which shows that most of the students obtained a score of 4 in this category, which is a positive result.

Figure 5

Results of the "content accuracy" category.



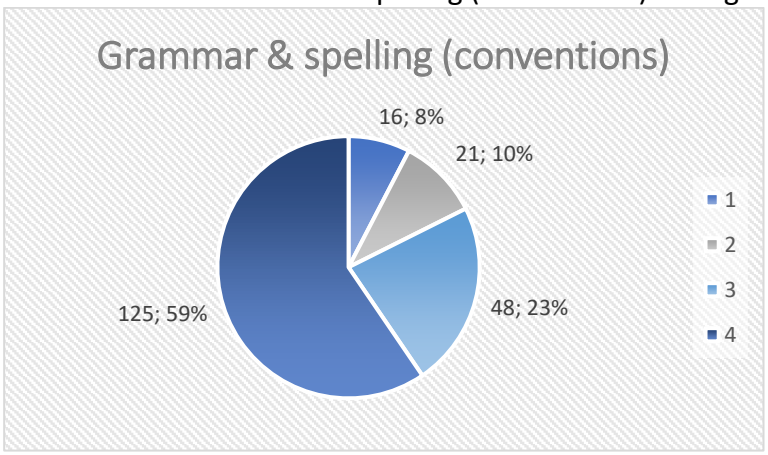
Note: Results of content accuracy

According to category 2, the grammar & spelling (conventions) are evaluated, obtaining the results represented in Graph 2, which shows that more than half of the students obtained a score of 4 and the rest of the students obtained a score of 3. In this category being a moderately positive result since it has been a great advance despite being beginners. Even so,

it is reflected that there was a deficit in certain students, so they can take tutoring to obtain classes.

Figure 6

Results of the “Grammar & spelling (conventions)” category

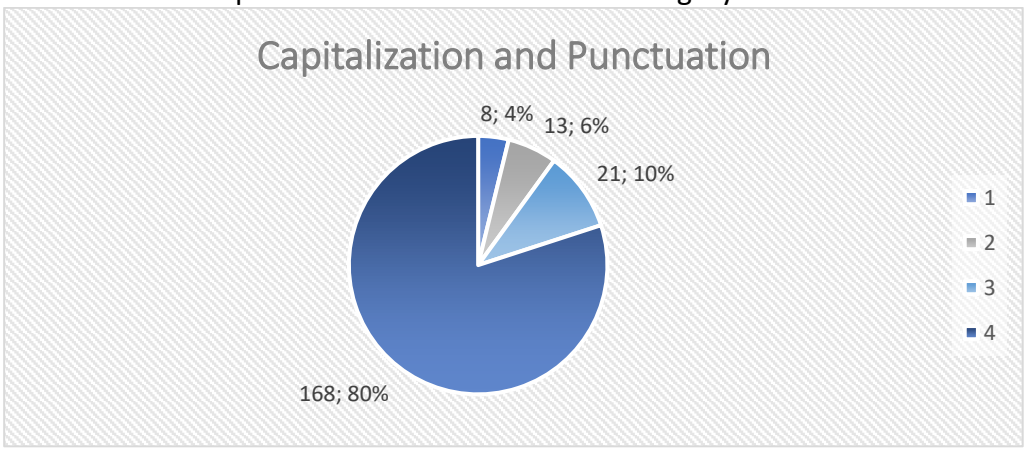


Note: Results of the grammar y spelling category

According to category 3, capitalization and punctuation were evaluated, obtaining the results represented in Graph 3, which shows that a high amount of the students obtained a score of 4 in this dimension, being a positive result. Even so, it is reflected that there was a deficit in certain students, so they can take tutoring to obtain classes that will help them improve their writing skills.

Figure 7

Results of the “Capitalization and Punctuation” category.

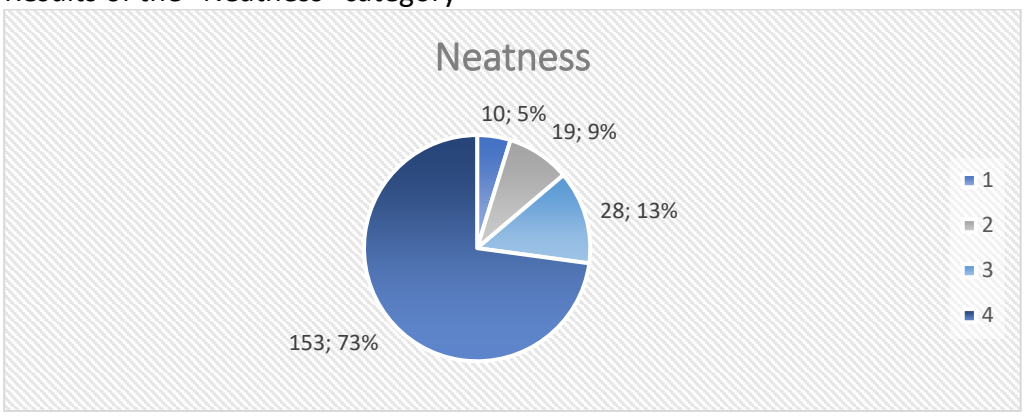


Note: Results of capitalization and punctuation

According to category 4, neatness was evaluated, gathering the results represented in Graph 4, which shows that most of the students obtained a score of 4 in this criteria, being a positive result. Even so, it is reflected that there was a shortage in certain students, so they can take tutoring to obtain classes that will help them improve their writing skills.

Figure 8

Results of the "Neatness" category

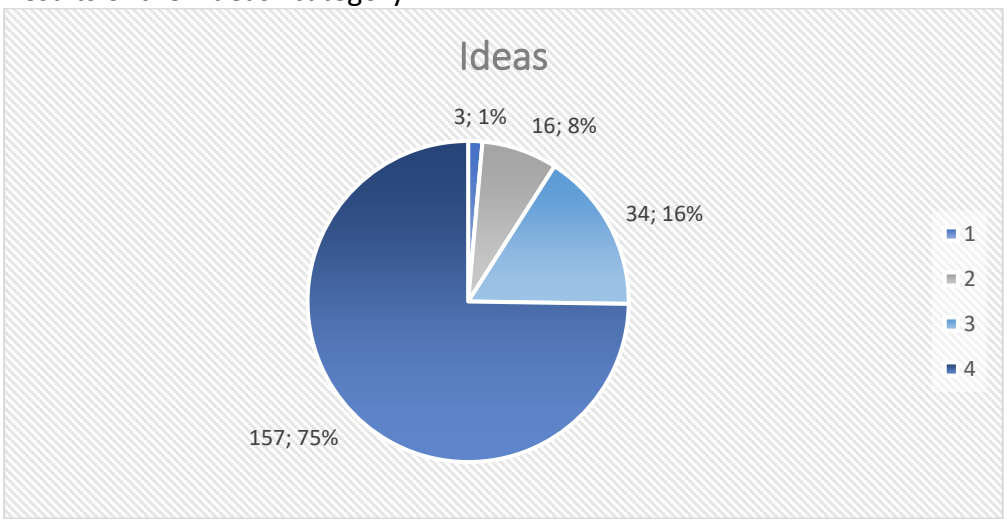


Note: Results of the Neatness category.

According to category 5, the ideas expressed in the different activities are evaluated, obtaining the results represented in Graph 5, which shows that more than half of the students obtained a score of 4 in this category, which is an assertive result. Even so, it is reflected that there is a deficit in certain students, so they can take tutoring to obtain classes that will help them improve their writing skills.

Figure 9

Results of the "Ideas" category



Note: Results of the ideas category

From the results obtained, it was concluded that the students obtained positive results and that they are capable of improving their linguistic skills in the English language through writing, since it has a certain similarity to learning the native language, which is Spanish, where the teachers teach from a base, which is writing and reading, then, by expanding their vocabulary, going beyond the elementary, students were able to write texts with a clear idea, as well as

precision and neatness when writing, respecting grammar, punctuality and other aspects that make a paragraph have coherence and meaning. In other studies of the same category, positive results were also obtained, so it is concluded that these tools and strategies are effective in improving language learning through students' writing skills.

Discussion

Although the results were mostly positive, the students' deficits that are evident with the scores of 1 and 2 in the previous categories must continue to be improved, so teachers can review the topics, the use of vocabulary, verb conjugation, and linking words, to ensure that these statistical values improve.

In addition, it was evident that, as they were practical activities, the students showed more enthusiasm and interest in carrying out the activities, obtaining greater effort and better performance when writing their writing, thus demonstrating the effectiveness of the use of digital tools for English language learning.

The researcher found that developing writing skills through Padlet as a digital tool was highly effective during the process of writing because students felt more engaged in the activities, felt more confident, or because there was more interaction between students-students or students-teacher since in each activity each student received feedback from the teacher.

Besides that, Collaborative Learning as a strategy has allowed students to learn from others even from their errors, so, this approach is focused on developing students' activities among peers, during this process students learn how to work collaboratively. Therefore, this study demonstrated that both the digital tool and the strategy applied were successful in achieving the goal that was developing writing skills.

Sharples (2003) states that writing is one of the writing skills for students in learning English because students have to set the idea and have a wide perception and good opinion in remarking on something or phenomena. Writing becomes difficult to do if the students lack vocabulary and Knowledge (Latifah et al., 2020).

Bruffee (1996) claims Collaborative Learning share some characteristics of conventional classroom teaching, such as the tutor possessing more knowledge about writing than the student, collaboration means that both the student and the tutor supply input into and take

insights out of the tutoring session. in the traditional classroom, there is no mandate suggesting that a teacher will learn from his students. But this mandate is an integral part of CL (Laal & Laal, 2012,).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is essential to know and implement strategies and tools to improve the communicative skills of the English language in students, thanks to technology and the instructions given in classes, the results obtained in this research demonstrate that to learn a new language it is necessary to use of the practice in everyday life, so the student must not only exercise their communicative skills of this language in the classroom but must also try to practice it in any scenario that is allowed, for example, conversations in English with their friends, writing a diary, imitating movie scripts where the original language is English, among other activities that attract the student's attention.

Regarding the improvement of writing skills, knowledge of new words, and grammatical rules, it was determined that Padlet is an excellent option to enhance communication skills, specifically writing and reading, of students, due to the particular characteristic it has of evaluating better the learning of all those who make up the class. With the Collaborative Learning approach, students have the possibility of learning about a known or unknown topic, based on research or experiences, and then capture the idea by writing it on the Padlet wall, and later sharing it with the group, where positive feedback will be provided. by the teacher, if necessary, so the student will have the opportunity to improve in subsequent writing and communication skills in general.

Besides that, the use of Padlet to develop writing skills lets students feel more engaged since using digital tools is amazing for young learners, in this way, students have the opportunity to increase their vocabulary and grammar knowledge as a result of that. They were able to write more effectively producing meaningful texts or paragraphs. In addition, applying the Collaborative Learning approach was useful in having more confident students due to, the interaction with peers and the tutor having increased their expectations.

It should be noted that Padlet, being a technological tool with diverse and interactive features, can reach not only students who are taking English courses but also anyone who can teach a class, thus making it more dynamic and participatory.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended to evaluate students to determine the level of knowledge acquired by each approved English course and provide feedback to level the performance of each of them.

- It is recommended to investigate the functions that interactive tools have to energize each class taught, improving the students' participation capacity and, above all, enriching their vocabulary,

- The ease of use of the Padlet platform allows researchers to consider that this study can be replicated in other places, however, it must be taken into consideration that the time required to read and review the writings of all the students, for which is why it is recommended to use a not so extensive study sample.

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CHAPTER 3

COMPETENCY-BASED LEARNING AND PROJECT BASED LEARNING APPROACH: LOOKING BEYOND GRADES

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ABSTRACT

The core of this chapter relies on the focus on student-centered learning in English classes in a foreign language, in contrast to the teacher-centered approach, the student-centered approach engages learners to work autonomously and actively in such a way they master decision-making, critical thinking, creativity, and communication, among other employability skills. In other words, it allows students to solve real-world challenges posed by the community. This chapter aims to describe competency-based learning as an innovative education approach that is oriented to the application of active learning based on the student-centered paradigm. The authors seek to present a guide for teachers to apply this. For that, information such as its nature, benefits, and purpose was detailed, additionally, an analysis of some studies in which the application of this approach has proved their influence on learners' motivation and improvement in their proficiency, as well as the process of applying them in class was described. Furthermore, some technological tools to promote participation in students were suggested with a complete description of how to use them and some examples of their application. As conclusion, this research threw int stark relief the positive effect of CBL in terms of learning, writing skills, and overall outcome in EFL. However, the research is also open about the challenges, such as the theory-practice gap and the diversity of CBL definitions, which makes such a process of implementation an act of careful and controlled standardization.

Keywords: student-centered paradigm, active role, competency-based learning, autonomy, 21st-century skills.

RESUMEN

El núcleo de este capítulo se centra en el aprendizaje centrado en el estudiante en las clases de inglés como lengua extranjera. A diferencia del enfoque centrado en el profesor, el enfoque centrado en el estudiante involucra a los alumnos para que trabajen de manera autónoma y activa, de tal manera que dominen la toma de decisiones, el pensamiento crítico, la creatividad y la comunicación, entre otras habilidades de empleabilidad. En otras palabras, permite a los estudiantes resolver desafíos del mundo real planteados por la comunidad. Este capítulo tiene como objetivo describir el aprendizaje basado en competencias como un enfoque educativo innovador orientado a la aplicación del aprendizaje activo basado en el paradigma centrado en el estudiante. Los autores buscan presentar una guía para que los docentes apliquen esto. Para ello, se detalló información como su naturaleza, beneficios y propósito, además de un análisis de algunos estudios en los que la aplicación de este enfoque ha demostrado su influencia en la motivación de los alumnos y la mejora en su competencia, así como el proceso de aplicarlos en clase. Además, se sugirieron algunas herramientas tecnológicas para promover la participación de los estudiantes, con una descripción completa de cómo usarlas y algunos ejemplos de su aplicación. Como conclusión, esta investigación resaltó el efecto positivo del aprendizaje basado en competencias en términos de aprendizaje, habilidades de escritura y resultados generales en el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera. Sin embargo, la investigación también es abierta sobre los desafíos, como la brecha entre la teoría y la práctica y la diversidad de definiciones del aprendizaje basado en competencias, lo que hace que dicho proceso de implementación sea un acto de estandarización cuidadoso y controlado.

***Palabras Claves*:** paradigma centrado en el estudiante, rol activo, aprendizaje basado en competencias, autonomía, habilidades del siglo xxi

INTRODUCTION

Since English is the lingua franca most spoken worldwide, dominating this language has become a relevant competence, either for personal, professional, or work issues. English as the Lingua Franca relates to EFL contexts, it means learners who are not native English speakers (Seidlhofer, 2005). As English is used internationally, it turns out to be a key competence for present and future generations. Life Skills known as 21st-Century Skills involve communication, and social competencies as the main ones to have success in life (Rotherham & Willingham, 2010). Therefore, dominating English is not just about passing a course to have a degree but also about learning it and being conscious of its usefulness in life.

Educational institutions have a great responsibility to society in preparing learners to promote development and welfare, they have the undeniable and inevitable duty of fostering a quality education that retrieves these skills in classrooms. As a result, the competency-based learning approach has taken power in the education field since it boosts 21st-century skills. But what is really to be competent, competence is to be knowledgeable about some information, how to use this information, and finally how to apply it in real-life contexts in the most appropriate way (Le Deist & Winterton, 2005).

Therefore, as English is an important lingua franca and communication-social skills are mandatory to have success in the present and for sure in the future, the key to being competent is aligned with applying a competency approach in the teaching-learning process. Even though many studies have tackled this topic very few have landed it in the English teaching-learning context.

The purpose of this qualitative research is to analyze deeply the competency-based learning approach to teaching English in non-native contexts such as Ecuador. This study defines and exemplifies this approach making it easier to comprehend in the teaching practice. This exemplification represents how the process could be carried out, which elements are important to apply, and the time that is required to have realistic and trustful results in learners. Finally, this investigation has the purpose of deepening not only the theory teachers already know from other studies but for their experiences in the teaching field making this research interesting and contextualized in the public Superior Education.

Theoretical and Practical Background

The origin of this research is based on the low-quality performances that students have nowadays with artificial intelligence help. Students have put all their learning processes into artificial intelligence applications fostering less critical thinking and unsatisfactory problem-solving skills for real-life contexts. Artificial Intelligence is not bad, it is useful for several tasks but we need to make our students understand that they cannot depend on it, they must be against memorization, avoiding being robot students with a low reasoning ability. It has turned out to be a big problem to perform in real life since in the work market, laborers must show skills such as: solving problems, creativity, and critical thinking in specific situations that the AI is not able to solve (Vyortkina, 2023). To solve this problem, teachers must be more creative in constructing their classes to improve student's competence.

Wong, R. (2008) in his research *Competency-Based English Teaching and Learning: Investigating Pre-Service Teachers of Chinese's Learning Experience* analyzes the implementation of competency-based ESL teaching in a sample of 70 pre-service teachers in a Hong Kong institute. This qualitative study revealed that competency-based teaching was not well conducted since curriculum, instruction, and assessment were not related to each other resulting in low grades for students.

Vail, T. (2019) in his research *Self-paced English as a Foreign Language in a Competency-Based Education Program for Korean Learners* analyzed nine students split into two groups of self- and fixed-paced study using a Competency-Based Education model. Instructions, content, and resources were the same in both classes. It demonstrated that students who were in the fixed-paced program improved only after taking a self-paced program and then performed 20% better than the group in the fixed-paced program.

Thipatdee, G. (2021) in the study *The Development of English Competency-Based Curriculum Integrated with Local Community for High School Students* a competency-based curriculum was developed and applied to solve the needs of students and teachers in Thailand, the sample was 244 students and 82 teachers. According to performances, the students had significantly higher learning achievement and writing skills after the curriculum implementation than those before the implementation at the level of 0.01.

Nkwetisama, C. (2012) in the research called The Competency-Based Approach to English Language Education and the Walls between the Classroom and the Society in Cameroon: Pulling Down the Walls analyzed the competency-based approach to be applied in students from this country. This paper defines the approach and describes its features concluding that it can improve the dismal outcomes of English language teaching in Cameroon.

According to Bader and Hamada (2015), in their investigation, *the Competency-based approach between theory and practice* studied 42 fourth-year middle school pre-service teachers of English at the Teachers Training School of Constantine in Algeria. The results were that most pre-service teachers know the theory of CBL-Competency-based Learning but they are not able to transfer this knowledge into a practical context of use.

Torres, Brett, and Cox (2015) in their study *Competency-Based Learning: Definitions, Policies, and Implementation*; evaluated how 20 administrators in three states (6 state-level administrators, 11 district-level administrators, and 3 school-level administrators) define the CBL and how these differences mark the application of it in these states. According to the interviews, definitions were not similar but one element was detected in all these reforms such as the students´ mastering of competencies must be achieved and shown to go to the next level.

HS Hassanein (2021) in the research *Investigating Competency-Based Learning Implementation at the Northern Border University (NBU): A Descriptive Analytical Study*, analyzed the level of consciousness 151 EFL teachers have about the CBL and to what extent teachers' practices and course descriptions support it. Results showed that the awareness level was medium. Finally, teachers' practices and course descriptions do not promote the CBL approach.

Egbert and Shahrokini (2019) in their study *Balancing Old and New: Integrating Competency-Based Learning into CALL Teacher Education*, define and explain how the CBL can be included in computer-assisted language learning CALL. It exposes how to implement the CBL in three steps: developing, implementing, and assessing CBL tasks suggesting key points for each phase. It does not show examples but theory.

Heriansyah et al., (2021) in the *research Competency-based curriculum, relevant second language learning theories, and its language assessment*; study the implementation of the

curriculum based on competency-based teaching-learning relating the context, content and assessment as well as suggesting a curricular innovation that includes diverse of cultures being included in textbooks and another assessment tools apart from a unique checklist.

Suryanto (2018) in the research *Autonomous Learners: How Competency-Based Curriculum Could Accelerate EFL at English Education Department*, explores the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum at the Department of English Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta in Indonesia reflecting on the known theory and a specific context, but it does not show exemplifications on how to implement it in the teaching practice.

Duran et al., (2017) in their research *Exploratory Study About the Implementation of the Competency-Based Approach in Graduate Programs from Two Panamanian Universities* examine the implementation of the Competency-based Approach - CBA in master programs. It was conducted with 504 students and the final result was that 84% of the learners will get more benefits in their professional areas with the CBA.

De Beltrán and Pérez (2019) in their Investigation Project *Competency-based Language Teaching in the English Classroom: Challenges and Strategies, evaluate the experience of working with Competency-based Learning Teaching* – CBLT analyzing the teachers´ perceptions at Don Bosco University and the strategies they implemented to overcome obstacles. The sample was six teachers and the instruments were a survey and observations. The results showed that teachers had a good theoretical comprehension of the CBLT, but in practice (class observations) a few features were not related to this approach. Classes did not promote autonomy and creativity in students. In contrast, teachers stated that they had not been instructed about this approach.

Mendoza et al., (2019) research *A Performance-Centred Competency-Based Approach to Quality University Teaching* is a theoretical reflection based on 14 lecturers from different universities in Quito – Ecuador. This analysis was made through semi-structured interviews. The results show that teachers consider cognitive competencies more important than the ones related to teaching practices including the investigation. In contrast, based on the theory teachers should unify their teaching and investigative competencies to promote quality Education based on competency. The conclusion was that teachers who develop pedagogic investigations are more likely to apply their findings in the classrooms with their students.

General Contextualization of the Theme

According to Henri et al., (2017), Competency-based learning is a centered student and outcome instruction where learners are conducted to have autonomy in mastering content and skills in specific real-life contexts. As stated by Casey and Sturgis (2018), the Competency-based learning principles are the following:

Competency-based learning Principles
● Student's progress is based on the achievement of learning expectations (mastery) through personalized learning pathways. ● Learners' success objectives are designed around preparation for university, professional careers, and permanent learning. ● The pedagogical principles based on the investigation highlight the students' context location to promote their intrinsic motivation. ● Evaluations are integrated into the personalized learning process and aligned to the learning outcomes, including the transfer of knowledge and competencies. ● How to communicate contributes to the learning process and the student's success. ● Establishing problems of incipient importance to students. ● Organizing learning based on core theories. ● Inquiring and valuing learners' thoughts. ● Adjust the syllabus to consider student assumptions. ● Evaluating students' learning aligned with the teaching.

Since the Competency-based learning approach deals with students' competence to have success in life in professional, personal, and social areas, their types or models may be aligned with 21st-century skills. According to the National Research Council (2012), 21st-century skills englobe abilities for life and work promoting deeper, transferable, and long-lasting learning. The twelve skills that are considered as 21st-century skills are the following:

1. Critical thinking
2. Creativity
3. Collaboration
4. Communication
5. Information literacy

6. Media literacy

7. Technology Literacy

8. Flexibility

9. Leadership

10. Initiative

11. Productivity

12. Social skills

As it is noticed, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication are the four most important to handle and progress in present and future societies. After the COVID pandemic, technology literacy skills became a priority and certainly, they will continue to be relevant for society's development.

Objectives

Main objective

Develop an innovative competency-based learning approach guidance that encompasses the analysis and synthesis of the conceptual framework, the formulation of a strategically phased plan for managing competency-based learning processes, and the design of a model plan to facilitate the successful implementation of competency-based learning in English as a foreign language class.

Specific objectives

- To analyze and synthesize the conceptual framework of competency-based learning
- To provide a plan for the competency-based learning management process by phases.
- To create a model plan to facilitate the implementation of competency-based learning, in English classes as a foreign language.

Scope and Limitations

This study tries to define, reflect, and exemplify the Competency-based learning approach for EFL English contexts as a solution to decrease memorization and non-logic performances in

students, making them not able to solve problems in real-life contexts. This problem has been more visible now with AI – Artificial Intelligence. The theoretical knowledge about the Competency-based learning approach – CBL has been vastly analyzed in a wide number of researches, but the analysis of its application has not been conducted with the same rigor as with the theory. For this study, it was detrimental since investigators could not make comparisons among model plans in EFL higher education contexts. Further, the exemplification shown in this research was developed based on the teachers´ experiences teaching English but it was not applied to real classes to know the effects, changes, and perceptions in students after its application.

Methodology

This study has applied a systematic review of the literature on the competence method and qualitative research since it relies on the analysis of data. Due to a systematic review is a research method that involves collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing previous literature aligned to the main topic: Competency-based learning, the first collecting method that was considered is the analysis of literature reviews. Following that line of work, the checklist was the collecting instrument. Second, after deriving a new understanding of Competency-based learning from the analysis, since this systematic review is interpretative, the focus group was the collecting instrument. Therefore, it leads to the development of new proposals that can help to understand better Competency-based learning.

Participants

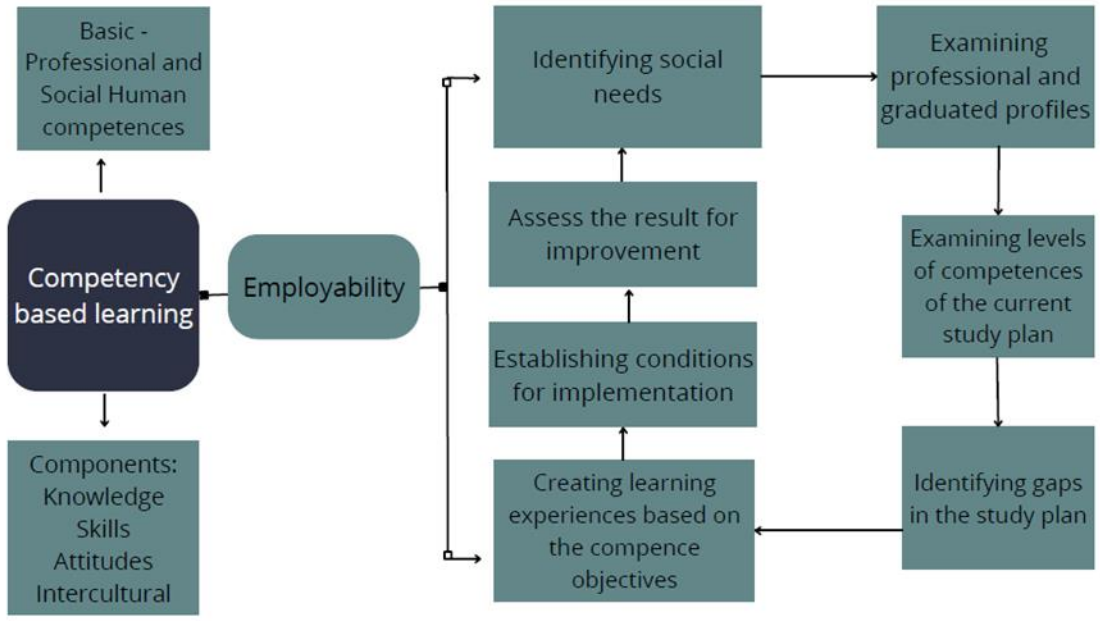
Four experts from higher education institutions were selected by purposive sampling. An analysis of the previous experiences of four high-level education teachers of the University of Babahoyo, regarding the application of competency-based learning, in a micro level of curriculum was done. This analysis was used to propose an example of the application of competency-based learning in English as a foreign language context.

DEVELOPMENT

To respond to the first specific objective: *To analyze and synthesize the conceptual framework of competency-based learning,* figure 1 frames and conceptualizes the most important aspects of CBL.

Figure 1

Competency-based learning conceptual framework



Note: Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework in which the main components are described: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. In addition, intercultural skill was also integrated since it facilitates interaction with people from different cultural backgrounds, needed in a globalized world.

Also, three main constructs or dimensions: basic, professional, and social human competencies are pointed out. Regarding basic competencies, it mainly includes characteristics and personal qualifications of the subject, and aspects such as: being, knowing, doing, and living together. In regards to professional competencies, it also refers to the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors that individuals need to effectively perform their job roles and contribute to the success of their organizations. Concerning the social, human, and inquiry competencies, they are related to being, knowing, and knowing how in a cultural context. Among the social competencies are: communication, interpersonal, and cultural competencies, Also, human competencies include emotional intelligence, adaptability, and resilience. Finally, inquiry competencies comprise critical thinking, research skills, and curiosity and creativity. All of them are proposed to prepare the students to develop employability skills.

The framework to implement and assess the Competency-based learning approach should rely on the components and dimensions explained before. This process starts identifying the social needs concerning the economic, social, and entrepreneurial areas, among others. Next, it should be done to the current graduated and professional profiles integrated with the micro

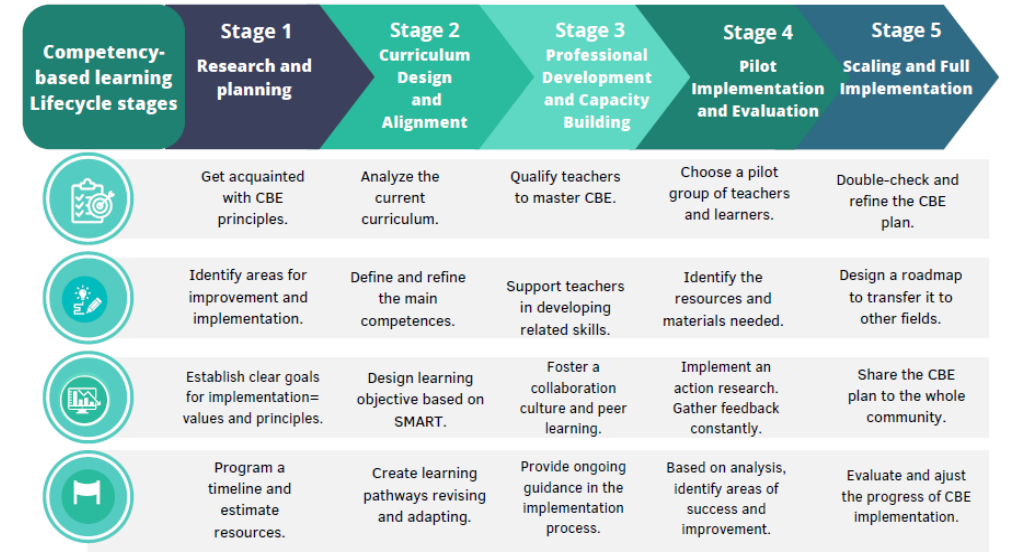
curriculum and study plan. Also, it should be revised the level of competencies to identify the gaps in the process.

Based on the findings and innovations, the learning experiences based on competencies should be created. They should intertwine with the competence objectives, which have been measurable and clear. Also, the environment (conditions and resources) for implementation should facilitate the process. Not less importantly, the result must be assessed to ensure a high standard of quality. It helps identify any shortcomings, gaps, or areas of weakness in the learning materials, methods, or assessments. In addition, by assessing results, it could be verified if the learning outcomes are aligned with the main goals and competencies of the program. Finally, assessing results guarantees the execution of a curriculum disruption.

In response to the second specific objective: To provide a plan for the competency-based learning management process by phases, a lifecycle stage organizer was created to illustrate the process in different levels of curriculum. It is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Competency-based learning lifecycle stages



Note. Figure 2 shows the five stages necessary to implement the Competency-based learning (CBL) approach from a micro-level to a meso-level curriculum.

Stage 1 Research and Planning comprises the basis of the process. At this level, familiarization with the successful implementation of CBL in other institutions is crucial. Also, research and a CBE implementation team should be formed. The team should assess the current process to determine what areas need improvement and adaptation based on the CBL principles. Then,

the goal of the plan should be directly connected with the institution's mission. Finally, a timeline and budget should be proposed to carry on the implementation plan.

Stage 2 Curriculum design and alignment includes a revision of the current curriculum through a SWOT analysis of the program, to resolve some aspects such as the competencies and standards, and to reformulate objectives. Therefore, the graduate and professional profiles should be revised to first confirm their validation to construct a CBL implementation map to redesign it.

Stage 3 Professional development and capacity building encompasses the generation of professional development opportunities for teachers and the staff as part of the team to master and understand the principles, strategies, methods, and assessment guidelines to start up the plan implementation. Also, it includes training about the development of skills and competencies to facilitate CBE. This process should be done from start to finish throughout the implementation process.

Stage 4 Pilot implementation and evaluation includes leading a pilot program. For that, a pilot group of teachers and students are selected to implement CBE on a smaller scale. Also, the program, planning, and resources should be ready to be used. In this stage, action research should be done to understand the process through the collection and analysis of data on students' performance, competency attainments, and professors' performance. Finally, based on the findings, areas of improvement are detected and contemplated for continuous innovation.

Stage 5 Scaling and Full Implementation. It consists of revising and refining the pilot CBE implementation phase and providing a roadmap to replicate the process in different areas of study and subjects in the institution. In other words, to expand the CBE process to a higher level. Finally, the process of continuous monitoring, changes, and adaptations is necessary to innovate education.

To contemplate the third specific objective: *To provide a model plan to facilitate the implementation of competency-based learning, in English as a foreign language session;* a detailed lesson plan of a unit is detailed to present clear guidelines on how to implement it to be considered as part of an integrated curriculum. It is illustrated in table 2.

Table 2

Model Plan of implementation of competency-based learning

Level: Fifth

Professional life competency:

Employability	Learners will demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively in job interviews and their understanding of the process.

Learning objectives:

- Learners will be able to create competency questions they may be asked at an online 20-minute interview and their corresponding answers.
- Learners will be able to role-play an online 20-minute job interview in which they should include examples of a situation where they solved a problem creatively or when they achieved success even when the odds were stacked against them.

Lesson Plan

Topic: Skills for Success! Job Interview

Day 1 - 120-minute period

Engage (20 minutes)

Activity 1. Hook (meaning making) (10 minutes)

Launch into a brief icebreaker. Invite students to present to the class one interesting or unusual information about themselves. This encourages engagement and creates a favorable atmosphere for the class.

Activity 2. Discussion (10 minutes): Students will watch a video about a job interview, and then they'll start a conversation among themselves about their experiences attending job interviews. Encourage them to discuss any difficulties or worries they have had when doing interviews, particularly when doing online interviews.

https://www.tiktok.com/@erinmcgoff/video/7190516753728851246?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=7292079898285032965

Study (50 minutes):

Activity 3. Vocabulary Activity (20 minutes): Present a set of 3 short interview videos and ask students to write the questions and answers that called their attention to introduce the most common phrases applied in an interview.

Video 1

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExJZAegsOis

Video 2

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=naIkpQ_cIt0

Video 3

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SieNfciN274

Activity 4. Group Activity (15 minutes): Split up the students into pairs. Based on the vocabulary activity, students have to create their set of interview questions based on the skills they believe are essential for the job they want. They should create at least three questions. Then in pairs, students should take turns asking and responding to these queries.

Activity 5. Feedback and Discussion (15 minutes): Discuss the students' experiences in class after the activity. What knowledge did they gain about effectively responding to competency questions? Students should be encouraged to discuss the ideas and techniques they came up with while practicing.

Activate (50 minutes)

Activity 6. Students will imagine that they are in a job interview. Record a 10-minute video presenting themselves and answering all the questions that they have created in the activities above.

Day 2 - 120-minute period

Engage (20 minutes)

Activity 1. Hook (meaning making) (10 minutes)

Warm-Up Activity: Show a set of pictures about strengths and weaknesses, and then students will try to guess which is the correct word for each picture.

Activity 2. Discussion (10 minutes): Start a conversation among the students about strengths and weaknesses. Encourage them to discuss which strengths and weaknesses are beneficial to say in an interview.

Study (40 minutes):

Activity 3. Vocabulary Activity (10 minutes): Present a video about tips to improve students' responses in a job interview and ask students to talk about which tips they would use and why.

Activity 4. Writing Activity (30 minutes): Each student should consider the position they are interviewing for, and create a chart based on a swot analysis, considering the tips that they have chosen.

Activate (60 minutes)

Activity 5.

Learners will work in pairs to think about ideas to counteract and deal with their weaknesses. Then, they will create a chart to show the class their improvement ideas.

Day 3 - 120 minutes period

Engage

Activity 1. Developing (meaning making) (10 minutes)

Individually, learners will watch a video, in which certain terms will be introduced, they will have to improve the vocabulary displayed by replacing them with new ones and creating some examples using the terms.

https://www.tiktok.com/@the_englishera/video/7286469444434447621?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=7292079898285032965

Study

Activity 2. Developing (meaning-making) Skimming and Scanning activities. (20 minutes)

Individually, learners will read an example of an *application letter* to gather information about what it is about. Also, they will have to determine how it is composed.

Activity 3. Developing (meaning making) Scanning activities. (30 minutes)

Also, they will analyze three different examples of *CVs* to match them with the right job position request.

Activate

Activity 4. Developing (transfer) (60 minutes)

Learners will write an application letter according to the field of their careers. Then, in pairs, they will have to give feedback on their letters following a rubric.

Day 4 - 120-minute period

Engage

Activity 1. Hook (meaning making) (15 minutes)

Which job positions match each person's skills and interests? Learners will have to follow the link and browse three different job positions that interest them. Then, they will have to read the information regarding the skills, attitudes, education, knowledge, abilities, and more. After that, they will have to comment to the class about which of them is more aligned with their competencies.

https://www.mynextmove.org/profile/summary/27-2042.00

Activity 2. Developing (transfer) (60 minutes)

Learners will create their Curriculum Vitae. Then, in pairs, they will have to give feedback on their CVs following a rubric.

Activity 3. Developing (Acquisition) (15 minutes)

Learners will watch the video "*How to Prepare for an Interview - The Best Pre-Interview Strategy"* to take notes about the most relevant information they might gather to be ready for an interview.

Activity 4. Ending (Transfer) (20 minutes)

Formative assessment
Authentic Performance task - The hiring process
Learners will demonstrate their employability competencies through the following activities:
Hiring process report
Learners will be grouped according to their competencies and preferences (5 learners per group). They will have to conduct a hiring process considering these steps:
1. Identify the hiring need - Offering a job description
2. Create a recruitment plan
3. Advertise the position
4. Recruit the position
5. Review applications
6. Interviews
7. Decisions based on the interviews.

In the first 25 minutes of group work, they will have to take the roles according to their strengths and weaknesses and gather general information about the hiring process.
Day 5 - 120-minute period
Formative assessment
Authentic Performance task - The hiring process
The group will have to conduct a hiring process and a report based on that.
Day 6 - 120-minute period
Formative assessment
Authentic Performance task - The hiring process
Role–play: Students will role-play online job interviews in shifts. They should act out a 20-minute virtual job interview in which they answer each other's questions including their strengths and weaknesses, where they solved a problem creatively, or when they achieved success even when the odds were stacked against them. They should emphasize how crucial it is to communicate particular circumstances, acts, and successful results. Throughout this time, they will have to have practice time.
Day 7 - 120 minutes period
Summative assessment
Authentic Performance task - The hiring process
The group will have to present their final performance regarding the job interview role-playing. Finally, the group will have to hand in the hiring process report following the eight steps mentioned before.

Note: Table 1 depicts an example of the application of a competency-based learning program for b1 students. As it is shown each competency should also encompass some objectives that meet the following characteristics: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bounded.

In addition, the competency described has focused on the three main elements: knowledge, procedure, and attitudes. Therefore, it leads to learners acting efficiently in different situations and professional contexts. The first step of this approach is to establish very clear competencies and learning outcomes (objectives), therefore, they were pointed out at the beginning of the program to enable learners to understand that this approach focuses on the students' demonstration of their mastery of it. The whole unit aims at having students master an instrumental competency regarding knowledge in a second language.

On Day 1, it has been considered the instrumental competencies: 1. skills in information management, 2. analysis skills, and 3. technology management skills. Regarding interpersonal

competencies, it focuses on 1. teamwork, and 2. critical and self-critical capacity. Finally, in regards to systemic competencies, the lesson involves 1. research and inquiry skills, 2. brainstorming, and 3. the ability to apply knowledge and practice.

On Day 2, the swot analysis of a job position comes with the development of instrumental, interpersonal, and systemic competencies. The three of them, foster the ability to plan changes towards the seek for improvement. Since instrumental competencies intertwine with cognitive, communicative, linguistic, technological, and methodological competencies: swot analysis promotes basic knowledge of the profession, the ability to analyze and synthesize, and problem-solving. On the other hand, insomuch as interpersonal skills include critical thinking and interaction, they relate to teamwork, ethics, and critical capacity. Lastly, systemic competencies imply the ability to apply knowledge in practical situations, this task aims at mastering creative thinking and inquiry skills.

On Day 3, to achieve a holistic way to conduct learning and teaching, the association of different, but connected disciplines, was considered. In this regard, the plan was created to integrate the three generic competencies. Through the analysis of different examples of CVs and application letters and the creation of the last one by themselves, skills such as employability skills, creativity, autonomous learning skills, basic technological skills, and communicative skills, among others; were contemplated. That is to say, the design of the activities intends to connect different disciplines through generic competencies to specific subject-related competencies and reflects real-world challenges and issues.

On Day 4, students will work in groups, they will have to take the roles according to their strengths and weaknesses and gather general information about the hiring process. This activity is connected with the competency-based learning principles about establishing problems of incipient importance to students. The hiring process it’s a problem that students will have to face; therefore, its development is of great importance.

On Day 5, the group will have to conduct a hiring process and a report based on that in this stage students will put in practice what they have learned and it is connected with the principle about assessing student learning aligned with teaching. They will work with their previous investigation that is aligned with the research-based pedagogical principles highlighting students' contextual placement to promote their intrinsic motivation.

On Day 6, students will role-play online job interviews in shifts. They should act out a virtual job interview in which they answer each other's questions including their strengths and weaknesses, where they solved a problem creatively, or when they achieved success even when the odds were stacked against them. They should emphasize how crucial it is to communicate particular circumstances, acts, and successful results. This formative assessment is based with the competency-based learning principles about assessments that are integrated into the personalized learning process and aligned with learning outcomes, including the transfer of knowledge and skills.

On day 7, the last activity is a summative assessment, the students will have to present their final performance regarding the job interview role-playing. This activity is connected with the assessment of student learning aligned with teaching in order to check their progress based on achievement of learning expectations (mastery) through personalized learning pathways.

Discussion

This paper shows that traditional EFL teaching strategies, especially those enabled by artificial intelligence software, have reinforced a dependency on learning by memorization over the thinking and problem solving skills required for genuine connections that carry significance and purpose beyond the confines of the classroom.

The fundamental theories and empirical arguments proposed in this study offer a strong justification for the merger of competency learning into English language pedagogy. Indeed, in the words of Henri et al. (2017) “CBL incorporates a learner centred and results based model of education with an emphasis on learner autonomy, mastery and application in authentic contexts”. As elucidated by the National Research Council (2012), the synergy of the 21st-century skills, particularly critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication, “fits the needs of today’s and future societies” (p. 6).

Wong’s (2008) explanation is particularly important, in highlighting the need to, “align curriculum, instruction, and assessment in competency-based learning (CBL)” (p. 917). It underscores the need for a systematic and carefully designed approach, one that integrates the principles of CBL and supports a comprehensive plan that includes research, design, curriculum development, professional development, and ongoing evaluation.

The synthesis of a variety of studies provides a wealth of insights into the many ways that CBL configurations are being applied. These studies have shown that CBL has a positive effect on academic performance, writing performance, and overall English language learning effectiveness. Challenges, such as a gap between theory and practice and lack of a single definition for CBL (Torres, Brett, & Cox, 2015), make it clear that CBL needs to be a more structured and standardized instructional approach.

While this debate brings to light the benefits of CBL in EFL, it also acknowledges that teachers are not fully aware and still need further practices as well as course descriptions that embody the CBL spirit (Hassanein, 2021). Future initiatives should aim at mitigating such challenges with more empirical data in actually running these projects and training educators to get them onboard.

Competency-based learning (CBL) holds promise in addressing the inherent flaws in traditional pedagogy and the new demands brought on by the emergence of Artificial Intelligence. This discussion profiles CBL, synthesizes prior research and expounds upon a step-by-step blueprint for integrating CBL in an EFL setting. An examination of 21st century skills, evidence from prior research, and a sample lesson plan pragmatically support the discourse. It is suggested that the introduction of these methods appears to be necessary, and indeed, paramount if educational systems are to keep up with the needs of the future.As educational institutions wake up to the needs of the future, a significant trend seems to be emerging. Educational systems are seeing a move to orient themselves towards the needs of new millennium students.

CONCLUSION

Nowadays, English has taken on an important role worldwide as the lingua franca and mastering it has become a necessary skill to achieve professional, personal and social success. The development of these competencies is a fundamental task of educational institutions in response to the increasing prevalence of competency-based education. From this has emerged a virtual movement to support these schools, with competency-based learning as a fundamental component of its approach. This reality contradicts the current state of education, where traditional teaching strategies have not contributed much to supporting the development of these competencies. His jobs have become even more difficult as a result of

this clash, which has brought with it the inevitable presence of artificial intelligence in classrooms.

The research throws into stark relief the positive effect of CBL in terms of learning, writing skills and overall outcome in EFL. However, the research is also open about the challenges, such as the theory-practice gap and the diversity of CBL definitions, which makes such a process of implementation an act of careful and controlled standardization.

The paper presents a plan for the implementation of CBL within an EFL context. The paper details the stages of the life cycle, from careful research and design to large scale reproduction and finally full implementation. The model of lesson plan proposed continues to be an instance of the pragmatic application of CBL principles as adapted to B1 level students and which is an ideal gestalt of instrumental, interpersonal and systemic competencies.

Moreover, “while the presence of these principles and their positive association with the growth of CBL is undeniable, the reluctance of teachers to adapt their existing practice and challenges in raising student awareness about their career development” should not be assumed (Hassanein, 2021, p. 19). Recommendations for future research and work in this area is to move past the identification “for these challenges to be addressed requiring more empirical evidence supporting the practicality of embedding CBL within the curriculum and to building teacher capacity in its adoption” (Hassanein, 2021, p. 19). Competency-based learning offers an important opportunity to experiment with new and challenging student focused, dynamic and shifting pedagogies so as to rise to similar issues stemming from the pervasive presence of artificial intelligence and the gamification of all learning that teachers and learners face at the current time.

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CHAPTER 4

TASK-BASED LEARNING AND GAME-BASED LEARNING IN VIRTUAL CLASSES

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ABSTRACT

Different virtual educational environments in higher education create the conditions for educators to provide a task-based approach as well as a Game-Based learning approach in learning a second language. Modern education forces us in one way or another to get along with ourselves in teaching practices with the use of educational technological applications for efficient language learning with students. Both approaches have been based on aspects such as motivation and tasks related to the real context of the activities in order to optimize foreign language learning. Data collection includes academic records and evidence of student practices. The data used is based on the results of the application of tools with specific activities for higher education students. This study used a deductive methodology of student behavior and outcomes by combining task-based learning with Game-Based learning. This study evaluates and demonstrates how the combination of task-based language teaching and Game-Based learning significantly influences university students' virtual learning environments. The results of this study highlight how both approaches work and prove to be a valuable resource for educators in search of maximizing online learning opportunities. In conclusion, this research contributes to the development of innovative teaching practices in English language teaching in higher education.

Keywords**:** virtual educational environments, motivation in language learning, online language learning

RESUMEN

Los diferentes entornos educativos virtuales en la educación superior crean las condiciones para que los educadores proporcionen un enfoque basado en tareas, así como un enfoque de aprendizaje basado en juegos, en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua. La educación moderna nos obliga de una u otra manera a congeniar con nosotros mismos en las prácticas docentes con el uso de aplicaciones tecnológicas educativas para el aprendizaje eficiente de idiomas con los estudiantes. Ambos enfoques se han basado en aspectos como la motivación y las tareas relacionadas con el contexto real de las actividades con el fin de optimizar el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras. La recopilación de datos incluye expedientes académicos y evidencia de las prácticas de los estudiantes. Los datos utilizados se basan en los resultados de la aplicación de herramientas con actividades específicas para estudiantes de educación superior. Este estudio utilizó una metodología deductiva del comportamiento y los resultados de los estudiantes combinando el aprendizaje basado en tareas con el aprendizaje basado en juegos. Este estudio evalúa y demuestra cómo la combinación de la enseñanza de idiomas basada en tareas y el aprendizaje basado en juegos influye significativamente en los entornos virtuales de aprendizaje de los estudiantes universitarios. Los resultados de este estudio resaltan cómo funcionan ambos enfoques y demuestran ser un recurso valioso para los educadores que buscan maximizar las oportunidades de aprendizaje en línea. En conclusión, esta investigación contribuye al desarrollo de prácticas docentes innovadoras en la enseñanza del idioma inglés en la educación superior.

Palabras claves: entornos educativos virtuales, motivación en el aprendizaje de idiomas, aprendizaje de idiomas online

INTRODUCTION

This research describes the task-based and game-based approaches in the virtual environment to highlight how some approaches that work in traditional environments can be adapted in a contemporary environment through technological resources and innovative applications, all of them, to enhance the development of the different skills of a second language. The task-based learning and game-based learning are briefly described below from its origin, characteristics, importance, advantages, stages, and aspects.

Task-based Language teaching was first expanded on in the 1980s by a teacher and researcher in South India. This author emphasized that learners may learn a second language more effectively when they are centered more on a task than in the same language (Buyukkarci, 2009: cited to Prabhu, 1987). Moreover, Prabhu implanted the terms of tasks due to remains on communication skills. In other words, learners become skilled in a second language with tasks developed in the real world and according to the needs of the student's environment. Likewise, Sholeh (2021) pointed out that task-based learning is an approach to developing communicative skills due to the integration of language skills such as reading, listening, writing, and speaking in the same practice.

Furthermore, task-based learning and communicative opportunities inside and outside the classroom take place in daily activities. Promoting the learning based on tasks, pretend the students to accept the second language through the use of daily contact information. On the other hand, Ge & Ifenthaler (2018) described the term game-based learning as a teaching process where video games, related to reality include images, audio, and content of the subject. Partovi and Razavi (2019) explained that game-based learning is applied to students maintain relationships in their academic performance as well as a more positive attitude toward new learning. Therefore, implementing the game-based learning approach in virtual classes to create interest and achieve the development of competitive skills of university students is also part of this research.

Task-Based Learning

Theoretical and practical background

Keeping students focused on learning a new language is a tough task and As Afifah and Devana (2020) reported, the learning style influences to improvement of the abilities of students who

study a foreign language, by focusing and having an analytical approach in the student. In addition, through a primary focus on task-based, an analytical approach is employed to identify the communication needs of students in real-life scenarios. This learning method makes certain that students are guided through previous instructions from the teacher when attempting to fulfill the given tasks (Frost, 2007).

According to Ahmadian (2016) has remarked that task-based learning incorporates the teaching of foreign languages with the primary goal of engaging students in authentic language usage, thereby connecting the gap between theoretical learning and real-world application through the completion of tasks. As a result of the research conducted by Afifah and Devana (2020), students respond in a positive way to the use of task-based learning, help them to study and to improve vocabulary and grammar.

In other words, encourage students to develop and organize their studies are above all through class materials. Thus, task-based learning enables active participation and information exchange in class, based on the activities they have engaged in (Farizka et al., 2020). Another research carried out by Marashi and Dadari (2012), observed the development of writing skills in English is a process from task-based writing and, is achieved with the support of materials such as documents, images, and videos to promote the organization of the contents.

Characteristics of Task-Based Instruction

Task-based learning is an approach that is explored in education, Swan (2005) cited Sholeh (2021) who enlisted four characteristics to apply task-based learning. First, real-world language; focuses on learning to speak English and having the occasion to discuss it in class and then, in the real environment. Second, learner-centered; centers on the production of students rather than teachers because the students can track their learning, and apply previous knowledge and, experiences. Third, meaning; focuses on learning things based on meaning and not on form which helps students incorporate new words or phrases. Fourth, competition in the task; permits students to end the task in class and produce meaning for daily living activities.

Advantages of Task-Based Learning

First of all, Corwin (2023) indicates that task-based learning has some meaningful advantages during the learning process. First, students are at the center of learning which means that students become actors of their learning for the reason that they may create and produce a task under the authority of the teacher who decides what and why students must do it. Then, students are capable of working on something personal and relevant to them so they are using the previous knowledge and expanding it with more vocabulary and phrases of real life. Subsequently, students work as peer learners or team learners which permits them to learn to work in a collaborative world sharing ideas and making decisions at once.

Among other advantages mentioned by Corwin (2023) is that students by nature spend a lot of time communicating with their classmates during the class when teachers plan a task and their learners integrate reading, listening, and speaking skills in the English language, and in many cases, is produced consciously or unconsciously. With task-based learning, students learn terms of their environment and thus improve their communication skills.

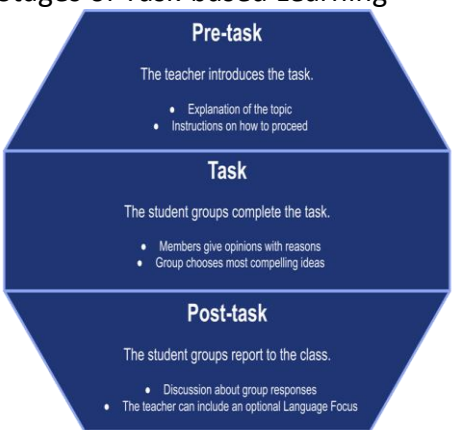
Besides task-based learning, Muhammad (2023) highlighted that students feel more involved in their learning, sharing their ideas with their partners. As well, helps them to develop their imagination and use different skills such as reading and listening comprehension which supports learners to be worthy thinkers (Melzer, 2021).In the company of this learning approach, students take complete control, improving autonomous work related to real contexts and under their needs tool (Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019). Moreover, students become more confident inside and outside the classroom which will drive on the use of language all the time (Muhammad, 2023)

Stages of Task-Based Learning

Task-based learning is divided into different stages, in the words of Ramadhan et al., (2021) who emphasized their research on the three stages such as pre-task, task, and, post-task.

Figure 1

Stages of Task-based Learning



Note: Figure 1 shows the stages of task-based learning: pre-task, task and, post-task.

Pre-task. – It is an introductory phase where the teacher gives to know the topic in the class and, with the help of a brainstorming technique, learners activate previous knowledge which will permit them to prepare about the topic itself under the instructions of their teacher.

Task. – Within a lesson plan, the teacher must set between 10 or 15 minutes for this phase, then, students do the task in pairs or groups. After that, each student or group must share their ideas and choose the most convincing them, meanwhile, the teacher's role is to monitor the whole class and regulate the time.

Post-task. – In this last phase, students report the task to the class, students examine and discuss specific features, and then, teachers conduct the practice of new words, phrases, and patterns that can incorporate the meaning and form of the new language.

Aspects of Task-Based Learning

Student Autonomy

A virtual learning environment integrates student autonomy as in presential classes, Lee (2016) emphasizes motivation and independent study skills, to the development of the community and collaboration among students. Subsequently, students' progress in language abilities, and motivation to learn and communicate in a second language increases. They take management of their language learning process, seeking opportunities for independent study and exploration. All of this is achieved through the task-based learning approach.

According to Collentine (2011), improve study skills in a deeper understanding of language structure and engage in activities that promote communication. Taking this into account, task-

based learning develops autonomy in virtual classes due to the holistic approach that this approach has. In addition, autonomy is a slow process that involves careful preparation, support, and a powerful learning environment (Engeness, 2021). Hence, better-equipped students with motivation and independent skills meet the challenges of the outside world.

Real-Life Problem Solving

The use of the task-based learning approach is correlated to classroom activities, as Sholeh (2021) indicates, activities connected to daily life build up language skills, thus allowing students to explore forms of communication. Authentic academic materials are utilized by the task-based learning approach to involve students in real-world academic assignments (Gavell, 2021). The real-world challenges call for learners to use both, critical and creative thinking (Shanta and Wells, 2022). Students with the right guidance can assess the problem, devise creative solutions, and adjust to shifting conditions.

Teaching languages as a practical tool for communication, with students' personal and professional experiences, is more effective than teaching it in isolation (Amerstorfer and Münster-Kistner, 2021). For that reason, educational tasks create opportunities and challenges for language learners since handle the English language within the real world through integrated educational tasks connecting experiences (Alshuraiaan and Almefleh, 2023). Additionally, Leithwood et al. (2021) highlight that having practical problem-solving skills could help overcome obstacles. The use of new teaching techniques, adjusting the curriculum, and employing new teaching strategies will make the learning atmosphere more attractive and supportive and provide solutions. An engaged problem-solving mindset and desire to adapt and innovate are necessary to provide students with interactive learning experiences (Van Den Berg, 2019).

Online Collaboration Tools

Concerning collaborative online tools Ahmad (2020) indicates that this leads to preparing students for the future both, academically and professionally which requires the ability to work on significant projects. Otherwise, educators can assign virtual tasks to students, allowing them to interact with classmates and teachers through online platforms, developing personal, technological, and language skills (Subrahmanyam et al., 2021). For this reason,

technological tools have become part of the task-based teaching-learning process, through the creation of interactive learning environments.

As online resources are integrated into education, students learn in new ways in a connected and dynamic world. Instead of only getting knowledge, encourage students to engage in mutual problem-solving and idea-sharing (Jiang et al., 2022). Task-based learning approach is being explored with digital technology, and the use of computer tools to support foreign language learning methodologies (Reinders & Thomas, 2008). In a few words, the combination of digital technology and task-based learning has the potential to have a significant impact on language education.

Critical Thinking

Task-based learning allows students to apply critical thinking skills to solve problems, participate in real-world activities, and reach conclusions under judgment (Mouni, 2022). Critical thinking is defined as a cognitive process in which individuals take the initiative to evaluate their judgments for authenticity, accuracy, process, theory, method, background, and arguments (Qing et al., 2010, p. 3). Likewise, improve this ability to face complex situations, draw students to their conclusions.

Assessment and Feedback

In task-based learning, assessment and feedback are connected to the teaching-learning process. This influences the way students deal with tasks, by reflection, and using knowledge and skills (Uzun and Ertok, 2020). The teaching responsibility is in charge of examining tasks and results of students and giving objective feedback. Formative and summative evaluation methods, both evaluations take place across the results in the different tasks involved. Along with, the task-based learning approach teachers' management in the pre-task stage and feedback in the post-task stage encourage learners to improve their comprehension in learning english (Chong & Reinders, 2020).

Authentic Learning Experiences

Students can understand that skills and knowledge gained are useful beyond the classroom (Crookes & Ziegler, 2021). According to Lombardi and Oblinger (2007, as cited in Hamdy, 2015, p. 128), the term authentic learning refers to understanding and facility solutions to carry out

real-world problems. Hamdy (2015) argues that assignments should be created using actual materials from written or spoken sources, without being made easier through simplification.

In the current age of digital technology, incorporating authentic resources and challenging activities in virtual classes helps to promote comprehension and prepare students for success (Prasetiyo et al., 2023). Additionally, virtual classrooms can incorporate a wide range of authentic materials, such as interactive simulations, online tools, and virtual laboratories. This diversity enables educators to design assignments that closely mirror real-life challenges, empowering students to apply their knowledge in realistic online settings (Chen, 2020).

Game-Based Learning

In today's educational environment, the latest approaches have brought technology, one of the methods is Game-Based learning. This method is the experience of online classes by adding elements to learning activities, making them effective and entertaining to learners (Leather et al., 2021). By implementing game-based learning, classrooms could become dynamic environments where students understand and enjoy the teaching process. Incorporating games into learning activities stimulates active engagement and encourages creativity and problem-solving (Fonseca et al., 2023). This chapter will also explore the definition, benefits, advantages, difficulties, resolutions, and strategies that this methodology offers and how interferes with educational growth.

Definition of Game-Based Learning

In virtual classrooms, game-based learning refers to a strategy that involves interactive simulations, video games, or play activities that increase student engagement and learning (Fitria, 2022). This approach uses game elements such as rewards, cooperation, and problem-solving to increase intellectual capacity. Taking advantage of the quality of learning by encouraging student participation, and decisive thinking in the virtual classroom.

First of all, game-based learning is being used as a tool by teachers for students of every age to bring into online tasks. Furthermore, game-based learning is an approach that transforms the classroom into a dynamic space, providing an interactive experience carrying academic concepts (Stancin et al., 2021). This method allows students to learn by looking into problem-solving beyond the traditional classroom.

The use of games in teaching is based on the pedagogical fundament that accompanies learning. Also, games help students build understanding through interaction. This concept is established through experience and interaction with the environs, immersing students in situations that require thinking, decision-making, and action (D'Aprile et al., 2015). Activities based on games and interactions promote the interaction teachers seek in regular classes.

In addition, game-based learning provides simulated scenarios where students can apply what they have learned in a practical context (Odendaal, 2018). These immersive experiences allow students to perform lessons recognizing concepts. In these settings, games provide challenges that push students beyond their abilities (Fitria, 2022). Indeed, students' engagement empowers them by exploring and overcoming obstacles.

Benefits of Game-Based Learning

To begin with, game-based learning was promoted just before traditional teaching methods to provide a more attractive and motivating educational experience. According to Al-Azawi et al. (2016), the competitions keep students in active learning providing an interactive, personalized, and student-centered method of traditional teaching approaches. Moreover, game-based learning provides a more personalized approach that is supported by immediate feedback (Algayres et al., 2019).

Consequently, this approach creates a less stressful educational environment through dynamic activities, allowing students to learn in a manner without fear of making mistakes (Loderer et al., 2020). As motivation is part of learning, and students feel engaged, a gaming experience captures their attention, and emotions during the learning process (Korhonen et al., 2009). In effect, students engage much more in any activity related to games that allows them to achieve a goal and receive a prize.

Difficulties and Resolutions

Including game-based learning into a virtual environment brings big challenges to the table. Among those barriers is the need for specialized abilities on both sides, students and professors. Not all institutions count with access to the digital tools needed in order to experience a complete experience into online gaming, which represents a huge obstacle (Dumitrache and Almăşan, 2014). Some possible solutions include providing the necessary training to teachers and students and providing the resources needed for them to become

familiar with the platforms and technological tools used in game-based learning (Caeiro-Rodríguez et al., 2021).

Another challenge comes with the requirement of affordable technology and a reliable internet connection on all the devices. Student's engagement with game-based learning may be weakened due to the lack of appropriate equipment or a stable internet connection (Tsega et al., 2022). A possible solution is to provide students alternatives such as printed activities that do not require a permanent internet connection. Another solution to this obstacle is collaborating with the educational community to provide access to technology to all of its members (Siburian & Mahmud, 2022).

Strategies to Integrate Game-Based Learning

Incorporating game-based learning in virtual classes could be an efficient way to apply strategies related to technology. The chosen games must match the educational objectives of the institutions (Pellas & Mystakidis, 2020). Defining the targeted abilities in each game helps the integration of them into the virtual curriculum (Dumitrache and Almăşan, 2014). This matching helps to keep student's interest and secures the development of learning.

Also, keeping student's interests and covering their educational needs, would be a complete challenge if an adequate game selection is not provided. Providing games with different learning styles and matters forward engagement in different learners, each one depending on the student's needs and interests (Kafai & Burke, 2015). Adapting games to different learning levels provides the confidence that each student will be experiencing a stimulating and equitable experience and what's more, maximizing the educational potential of game-based learning in a virtual environment (Benton et al., 2021).

Objective

General objective

Analyze the impact of using game-based learning in the task-based learning approach in the english virtual classes.

Specific objectives

1. Define task-based and game-based learning approaches through the theoretical review.

2. Interpret results by Nearpod and Flip applications employed in classes.

3. Distinguish the impact of combining task-based learning and game-based learning approaches.

Scope and Limitations

The study aims to investigate the use of Game-Based and task-based learning approaches in virtual classrooms, focusing on English classes. The research studies the impact of this approach on tasks and the interpretation includes the academic performance using applications with students, considering activities, to determine results. On the other hand, the findings of the present investigation may not be applicable due to the selected student group does not represent a large part of the higher education population. In this study, students may have presented internet limitations and without digital tools may have had opposite experiences. Also, external factors such as socioeconomic background, personal motivations, and extracurricular responsibilities are not included in this research.

Brief description of the methodology

The research applied a descriptive methodology to comprehend the strengths and weaknesses of students studying English in virtual learning environments. Likewise, the deductive method was combined to demonstrate through the collection of data and analysis of the participants' scores generated by the technological applications. Therefore, this methodology analyzed the impact of task-based and Game-Based learning on students' progress, using the proper approach to improving language skills.

Development

Nearpod as a tool to develop listening skills

Nearpod is an ITC tool that supports the teaching-learning process in any studied subject. Regarding L2 teaching, it could be used to develop diverse activities such as games, listening, vocabulary matches, polls, or surveys. The following ideas summarize the importance of using

this platform and the advantages for the teachers and students, from previous class experiences.

Figure 2
Time to Climb - Nearpod Game

Note: Figure 2 shows the game portrait which is obtained from the Nearpod application.

This gamification activity in Nearpod is Time to Climb, this tool was a warm-up game using the vocabulary that the students need to know to participate in the Listening activity. The main aim of this tool is to motivate students to play before the main skill development. The topic selected was Climate Change, and they needed to climb selecting the correct words, based on pictures to win the game.

The vocabulary related to climate change includes words such as wildfires, flood, climate refugees, measurable contributions, etc. Of students' total, 83% of participants chose the correct options to advance through the game. The students were motivated and excited with the activity after this game was developed.

Then, pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities were developed. The pre-listening activities were a poll answering "In your opinion, what is today's topic about?", and "What do you expect to hear in today's activity? Write or record two ideas". Next picture, presents the information about the first question:

Figure 3

Students' answers to poll question

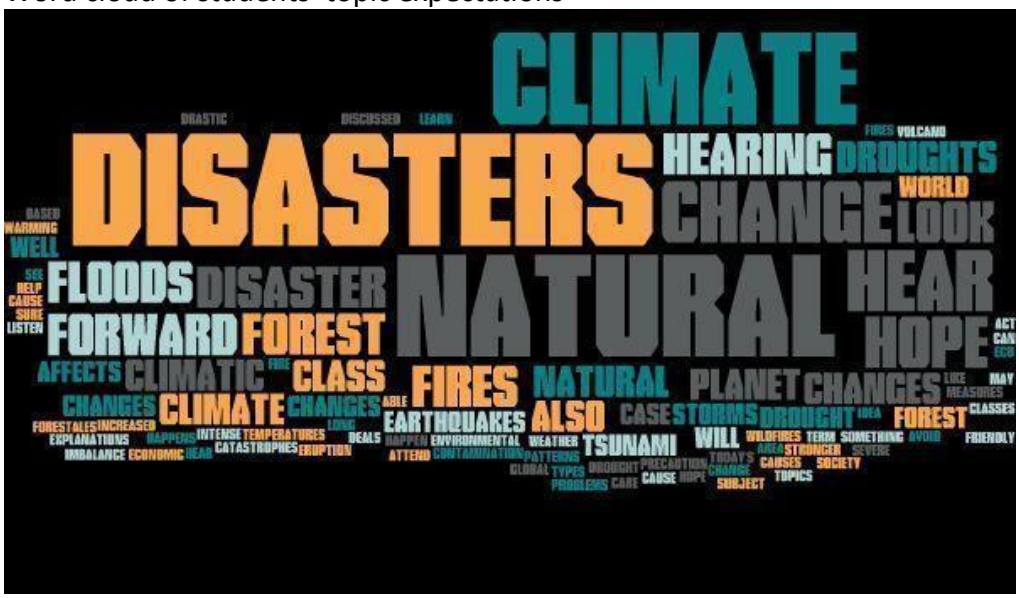
RESPUESTA	% ELEGIDO
A. Earth Disasters	13%
B. Climate Change	78%
C. New normal	0%
No hay respuesta	10%

Note: This picture was obtained from the Nearpod application with the activity of poll question

Poll results of The Nearpod application are great because most of the students (78%) selected the correct answer, while a minority selected a wrong answer (13%) or didn't participate (10%). According to the result, 78% are quite motivated to see the students' engagement when carrying out this kind of activity and so they are learning something new.

Figure 4

Word cloud of students' topic expectations



Note: summarizes the main answers about the second activity in a word cloud

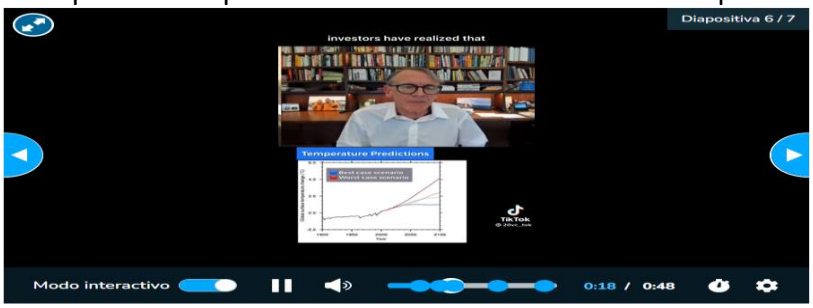
The most repetitive words are disasters, change, natural, and climate. Some related phrases about what they thought they were going to hear are: "Natural disasters, forest fire environmental contamination", and "I look forward to hearing about how climate change affects the world. and "I also hope to hear how to act in case something like this happens.", "In today's class, I am sure that I will hear about climatic disasters that happen on our planet

“I also have the idea that I will hear about climatic catastrophes such as earthquakes and so on.” the activity of word cloud got 78% of active participation.

The picture below is of the while-listening activity, they have the opportunity to hear as much as they need to complete the task, but in the live session, they only watched the audio twice. The video was a TikTok video related to climate change, it was an interview made by 20VC Media with John Deer.

Figure 5

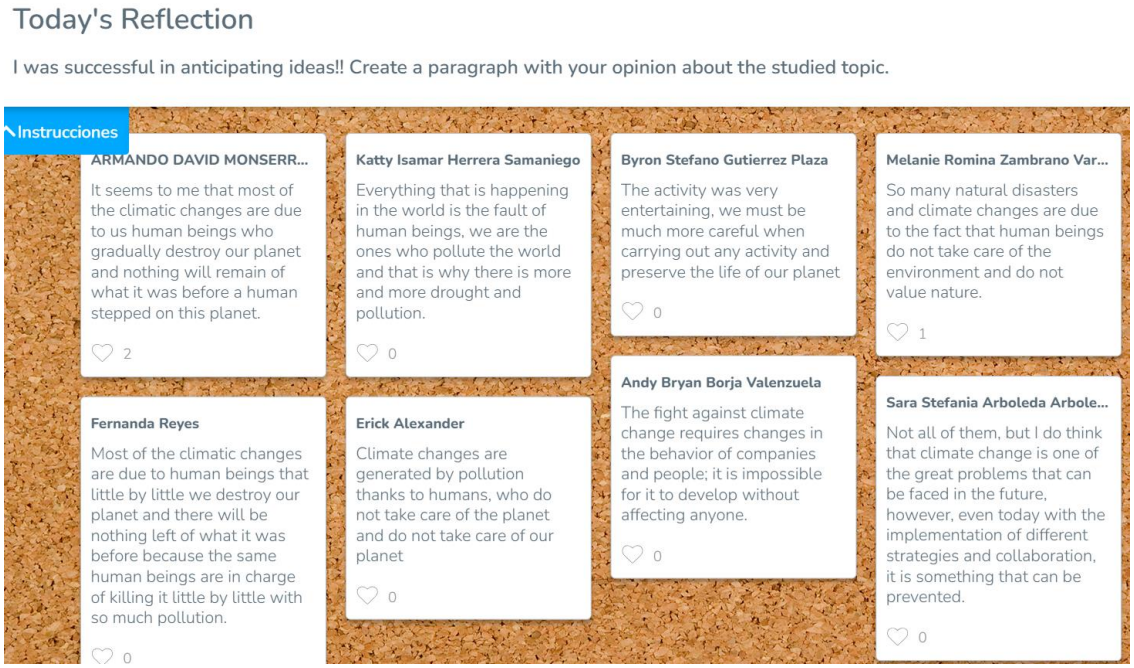
Multiple-choice questions about a TikTok video in Nearpod



Note: Figure 5 presents the while-listening activity obtained from the Nearpod app. The results obtained from this activity are 79% of correct answers and 73% of students’ participation.

Figure 6

Collaborate Board in Nearpod



Note: Figure 6 was obtained from Nearpod with the collaborative board activity where it shows the student's comments about climate change.

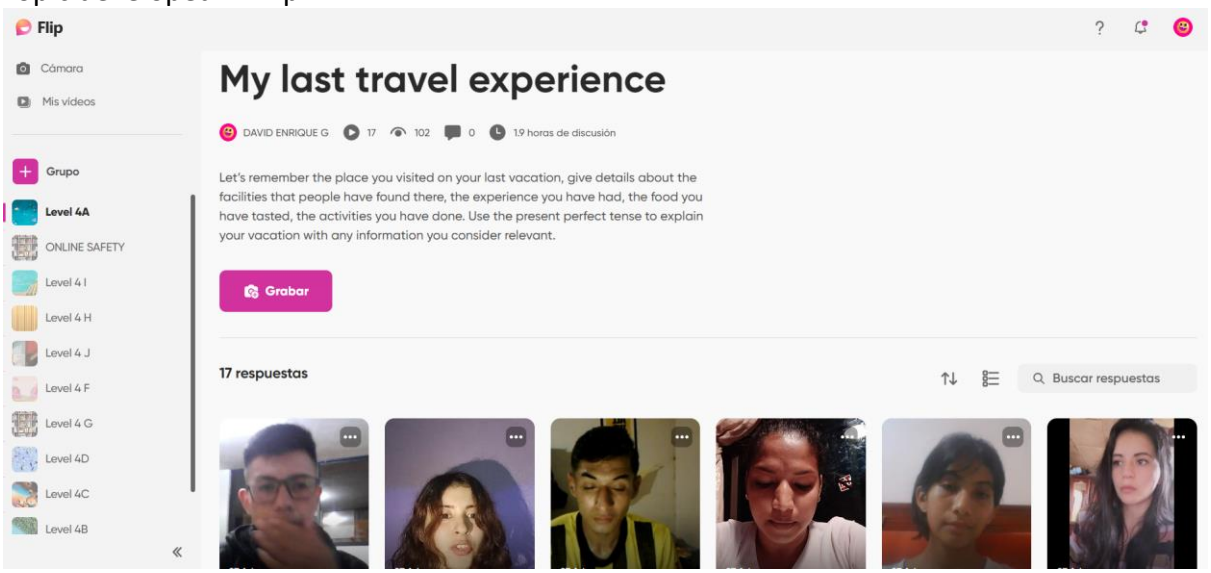
At the end of this task, it was evidenced that students were motivated to participate in the whole listening activity. Some reflections were well developed explaining the importance of climate change action in their lives and the development of the world.

According to Gortaire et al (2023) some advantages of using Nearpod in the classroom are related to “the effectiveness of the instructional intervention in developing these specific listening skills among the participants”, and “gamification offers an environment to engage and motivate students to persist in their learning” (Gortaire, 2022). Then, gamification could improve students' grades, as was presented in the results, and also, support students' participation in the virtual classroom.

Flip platform to improve speaking and pronunciation.

Flip is a great tool where students can practice speaking skills and improve their pronunciation of English. This tool, as it is not a gamification app, could improve their communication abilities by recording videos and discussing them as if it was social media video. Also, subtitles are generated as part of the uploading, then they could realize their pronunciation mistakes and correct them through repetition. Figure 7 presents the way topics are defined in the Flip app.

Figure 7
Topic developed in Flip

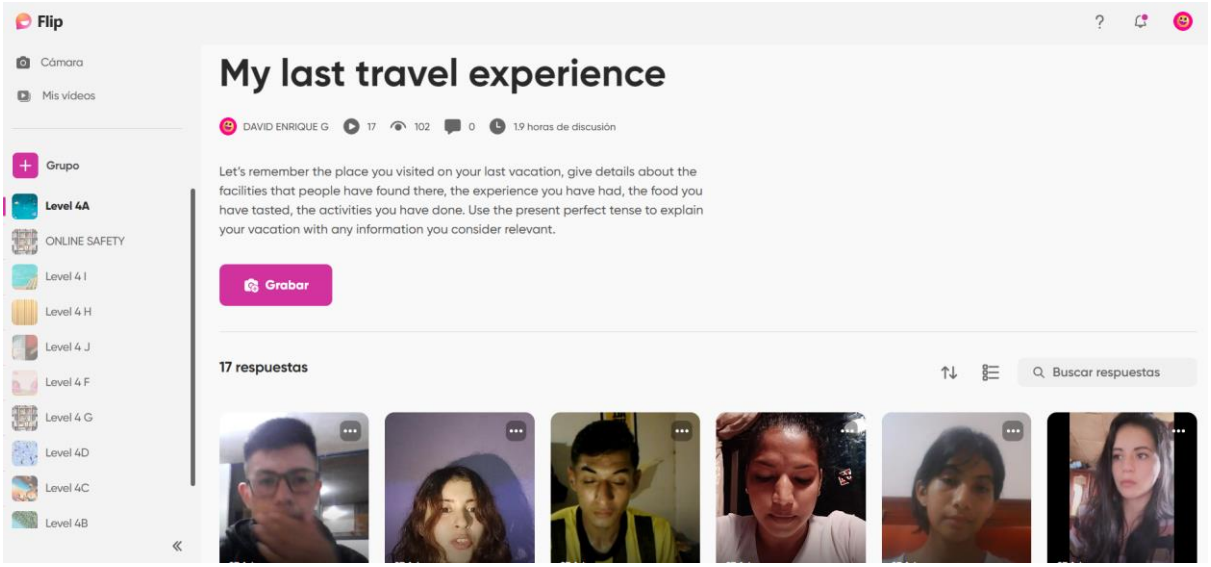


Note: Figure 7 was obtained from the Nearpod app when students participate with the flip activity

In Flip, it is possible to create courses and assign students topics they could talk about and practice their speaking skills. In this case, they discussed their last travel experiences, and the classmates could also watch their videos and comment on them with their opinions. Figure 8 presents an example of a video recorded by a student in Flip:

Figure 8

Video example in Flip



Note: Figure represents students when they talk and so they improve the English language

Some authors recommend the use of Flip as an interactive platform to improve students' communication skills and practice oral interaction and pronunciation (Hammett, 2021; Damayanti & Citraningrum, 2021). Moreover, the speaking anxiety and the students' negative experiences that could hinder them in having speaking assessments have been overcome by the implementation of Flipgrid (Subiana et al., 2022).

Discussion

This chapter was conducted to present the impact of task-based and game-based learning applied to virtual classes. The results should be interpreted according to research findings. In line with Sholeh (2021), activities done by students in this research were connected to real tasks, developing topics that include everyday English, and encouraging them to develop language skills. Moreover, the results remind us that game-based learning is a flexible tool for educators in online education for students of all ages (Fitria, 2022).

However, based on other findings of similar studies, game-based learning could create a less stressful educational environment by incorporating too many elements (Loderer et al., 2020). Consequently, assignments develop autonomous work according to their needs to improve English skills in real-context tasks (Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019). Other results pointed out that a communicative environment is developed when students spend time with classmates during the tasks provided by the educators (Corwin, 2023).

Likewise, integrating educational instructions with real problems involves students connecting their experiences in different environments (Alshuraiaan & Almefleh, 2023). The data contributed to understanding how task-based learning and game-based learning work together to improve student skills by applying scenarios that allow teachers to innovate in their teaching instructions. While previous researchers have focused on the flexibility of games in education settings, these results demonstrate how much students improve and participate in these activities in class and at home.

CONCLUSION

The research shows the impact of students improving second language skills through task-based and game-based learning approaches in virtual classrooms. Because of integrating these methods, students experienced motivation when using the Nearpod application according to the time to climb activity indicating high percentages of superior participation in this exercise related to vocabulary. This study observed that students integrated more language skills such as reading and writing through this application. Besides, combining these two approaches through the application of Nearpod indicated a great percentage of correct answers (79%) of the participants and (73%) of student participation. This demonstrates that students get involved in the class through the use of technological resources that the teacher applies.

Additionally, the Flip application allows students to practice their speaking ability and teachers can create teaching-learning spaces. Among Nearpod utilities described in the results, part is poll, time to climb, collaborate board, video, and flip. Each of them focuses on the development of two or more combined skills as supported by the use of task-based Learning, for this reason, employing both approaches (task-based learning and game-based learning) facilitated to achieve the growth of the communicative competence of a second language. As a final point, based on the results obtained in this research, technological applications have helped to create powerful tasks. Furthermore, this research gives scope to new researchers, to work on each English skill to empower the communicative competence of students with tasks in technological applications.

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CHAPTER 5

VISUAL NARRATIVE AND ROLE PLAY AS CHALLENGES FOR E-LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

E-learning, or learning through electronic media, has become increasingly popular in recent years due to the convenience and flexibility it offers. However, e-learning also presents a number of challenges, including the use of visual narrative and role play, which are important components of many educational programs. Visual narrative refers to the use of visual elements, such as images, videos, and graphics, to tell a story or convey a message. In the e-learning context, visual narrative can be a powerful tool for engaging learners and helping them to understand complex concepts and ideas. However, it can also be a challenge, as it requires careful planning and design to ensure that the visual elements are relevant and effective in conveying the desired message. Role play, on the other hand, is a technique in which learners assume the roles of characters and act out a scenario, usually for the purpose of practicing language skills or problem-solving. Role play can be an effective way to promote the development of social and communication skills, as it allows learners to practice using the language in a realistic and authentic context. However, it can be difficult to implement in the e-learning context, as it requires learners to interact with one another and may require the use of specialized equipment or technology. Overall, visual narrative and role play are important components of many e-learning programs, but they can present challenges in terms of planning and implementation. Careful consideration of these challenges is necessary to ensure that these approaches are used effectively and in a way that maximizes their potential benefits for learners.

Keywords**:** visual narrative, role play, e-learning, storytelling, interaction

RESUMEN

El e-learning, o aprendizaje a través de medios electrónicos, se ha vuelto cada vez más popular en los últimos años debido a la comodidad y flexibilidad que ofrece. Sin embargo, el aprendizaje electrónico también presenta una serie de desafíos, incluido el uso de narrativa visual y juegos de roles, que son componentes importantes de muchos programas educativos. La narrativa visual se refiere al uso de elementos visuales, como imágenes, videos y gráficos, para contar una historia o transmitir un mensaje. En el contexto del aprendizaje electrónico, la narrativa visual puede ser una herramienta poderosa para involucrar a los estudiantes y ayudarlos a comprender conceptos e ideas complejos. Sin embargo, también puede ser un desafío, ya que requiere una planificación y un diseño cuidadosos para garantizar que los elementos visuales sean relevantes y eficaces para transmitir el mensaje deseado. El juego de roles, por otro lado, es una técnica en la que los alumnos asumen el papel de personajes y representan un escenario, generalmente con el fin de practicar habilidades lingüísticas o resolver problemas. El juego de roles puede ser una forma eficaz de promover el desarrollo de habilidades sociales y comunicativas, ya que permite a los alumnos practicar el uso del idioma en un contexto realista y auténtico. Sin embargo, puede resultar difícil de implementar en el contexto del aprendizaje electrónico, ya que requiere que los alumnos interactúen entre sí y puede requerir el uso de equipos o tecnología especializados. En general, la narrativa visual y el juego de roles son componentes importantes de muchos programas de aprendizaje electrónico, pero pueden presentar desafíos en términos de planificación e implementación. Es necesario considerar cuidadosamente estos desafíos para garantizar que estos enfoques se utilicen de manera efectiva y de una manera que maximice sus beneficios potenciales para los estudiantes.

Palabras claves: narrativa visual, juego de roles, e-learning, storytelling, interacción

INTRODUCTION

Most civilizations and cultures all over the world always wanted to communicate what they observed in the environment, share their experiences, and express their ideas using different means and varieties of tools from cave art such as paintings and engravings to Egyptian hieroglyphs, from the Bayeux Tapestry to contemporary graphic storytelling known as books (Kunzle, 1973; McCloud, 1993), from ancient pottery to sequential images extend across human cultures and periods (Petersen, 2011).

It is clearly understood that the innate desire of the human being to communicate is maintained and it could even be said that information and communication technologies (ICTs) are facilitating this objective. More with the appearance of new forms of the virtual council that its appearance has accelerated thanks to the current pandemic. No matter what tool or medium people use, the truth is that even in the 21st century this inner desire to communicate is still alive and new methods are being used, one of them is called visual narrative. Regarding this aspect, Petersen (2011) claimed that visual narrative refers to a group of images, which are organized with the aim to illustrate the sequence of an event and provide a message to the receptor. Moreover, Caputo (2003) remarks that visual narrative can be defined as a story which is visualized throughout visual media resources, they commonly tend to be illustrations, pictures, videos, graphics and even it can include audio in the form of music and voices.

This method is used widely in the world, mainly in the areas of marketing, advertisement, and even in the education field. It is not a surprise that more teachers try to include this method in their virtual classes, especially when the main goal is to provide students with new experiences while they are learning. Here, there is special attention regarding the learning of English and the major issues it implies for students, mainly when it refers to the increase of vocabulary. Certainly, at the basic stages of the learning process, students must get used to new words but there is a point during this journey when the learning process of new vocabulary gets more difficult and then the limited vocabulary storage leads learners to communication breakdown (Gardner, 2011).

Having previously mentioned the current panorama facing both students and teachers, it was necessary to define mechanisms that allow the teacher to continue being able to lead learning. In addition, it can be said that being part of the long history and the inner desire of authorities

of the Technical University of Babahoyo (UTB) a workshop aimed at teachers of the English Language Center (CENID) was held on 5 July 2021 about visual narrative as a method to increase vocabulary was developed. *The main purpose of this workshop was to learn how to use digital tools to create a visual narrative and engage students through storytelling*.

Theoretical and Practical Background

The increasing importance of using digital stories as a potential tool for education responds to the valuable effects on education it has demonstrated over the years. The concept of digital storytelling is not considered new; there is evidence in the form of records that has demonstrated its usage in the United States during the 1970s and 1980s; its main purpose dealt with social change, and it was used to promote the participation of social persons (Robin, 2006).

Furthermore, since 1994, Atchey and Lambert have been promoting the use of Digital storytelling for diverse purposes; for that reason, they created the Center of Digital Storytelling CDS. The CDS intends to promote the development of digital storytelling by disseminating seven elements of digital storytelling (Moradi & Chen, 2019).

Regarding the elements of digital storytelling, the CDS stated that it must include the author's opinion. Also, it must start with a question that needs to be answered when concluding the story; the tone of voice needs to be considered the objective of the story, and the sound and music have to promote the message (Rodríguez et al., 2021)

Roleplay

To achieve an adequate learning process, learners need to move from a passive stage to a more active one, in which the relation with the environment in the form of real experiences determines deep learning and motivation. Based on Piaget's claims related to how people learn ass, imitation and accommodation arise. Both imply different teaching and learning styles. At the same time, the former considers memorization; the ladder uses memorization in a more active form by accepting, accommodating, and reusing what is learned (Blatner, 2009).

Considering the premise above, roleplays are intrinsically related to assimilation and accommodation, which implies active learning; this methodology promotes the assimilation

of information while the experiences are conceptualized and assimilated. Roleplays throughout its socio-drama enable learners to face real situations, activating learning, memorization, and assimilation (Kilgour et al., 2015).

Literature Review

According to Kalaja, Dufva, and Alanen (2013), it is now recognized in applied linguistics, or more precisely, in language learning and teaching, that storytelling helps both teachers and students make sense of their experiences and can help them develop identities."Narratives play an important role as a mediational means in teacher education, or in the professional development of teachers and their teaching practices," according to Johnson and Golombek (2011). This claim also involves language education and their language-learning endeavors. Since then, human figure drawings have been utilized for a variety of objectives in fields like psychology, art therapy, and education, such as determining a child's cognitive growth, assessing IQ, or scheduling treatment sessions.

In addition, it has progressively come to light in linguistics that texts can be multidimensional, with each mode having its own set of possibilities and limitations. This means that something that can be expressed visually may not be able to be articulated linguistically, and vice versa. "A particular culture has a range of general, possible relations which is not tied to expression in any particular semiotic mode," as Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) explained (p. 46). "However, some relations are more realistic to be realized visually or linguistically, in some cases, mostly visually."

Visual Narrative and Storytelling

Narrative and conceptual structures serve to better identify and characterize visual representations. Actions, events, or processes are shown in narrative forms as they happen. As a result, these structures require interaction, which is further demonstrated by thinking bubbles or looking. Conversely, participants are described by conceptual frameworks according to their attributes, which may also be symbolic: "Symbolic processes are about what a participant means or is." When we gaze at visual images, interaction between the creator and the spectator is thus portrayed.

According to Kirsch (2016), the use of stories in language learning emphasizes the significance of how stories can stimulate learners' imaginations and creativity while also boosting their

self-assurance in language use. Furthermore, research has indicated that they facilitate the growth of oral proficiency in three languages: a native language, a heritage language, and a foreign language (Tsou, Wang, and Tzeng, 2006). As stated by Glazer and Burke (1994), stories enhance children's comprehension of grammar and story structure, which improves their ability to successfully narrate their own stories. The five main categories of narrative grammar in the Cohn (2013) method are as follows:

Figure 1

Visual Narrative Categories

Note: Elaborated by the authors, based on Cohn (2013)

The knowledge of those categories can support the development of the story to be narrated. Learners could identify better if they know the whole context of the story or can perform a better path for the story to tell. Then, it is important to analyze each category.

- **Establishers**: Before the sequence's real acts, they are merely in a state of "being." This Establisher does not include characters or objects in the actions or events of the story; instead, they communicate referential information about them.

- **Initial**: It establishes the action or event in motion. The action begins here, but the next panel contains the climax. This lead-up event corresponds to the sequence's main event.

- **Prolongations**: During an activity or occurrence, a prolongation designates an intermediate condition. Extensions frequently show the path from a Source to a Goal, occasionally elaborating on the details of the route.

- **Peak**: A sequence's most significant activities occur at this point, setting the tone for the remainder of the sequence. Peaks are frequently linked with the conclusion of an event or the meeting point of multiple occurrences.

- **Release**: It provides a conclusion or resolution, acting as a "wrap up" for those occurrences. Reactions to the events in the peak may also be included in releases. Possibly because they depict aftermath, a response, or a (relatively) quiet follow-up to the sequence's conclusion, provide a significant opportunity for humor (Cohn, 2013).

On the contrary, the history of storytelling has occurred in various ways in different cultures. Huang (2006) explored “the effects of contextualized storytelling on EFL young readers’ reading comprehension and vocabulary retention. Drawing on Dual-Code Model and the various sensory approaches, it was projected that the multi-sensory method, with the aid of storytelling, would be a more useful intervention than Dual-Code Form in EFL reading and vocabulary recognition” (p.51).

According to Abdulla (2012) "using storytelling as a new method in vocabulary teaching/learning is important." English language learners had a difficult time picking up vocabulary since they had to commit a vast number of words to memory daily (Page 20). Furthermore, graphic storytelling improved vocabulary learning for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, as validated by Soltani et al. (2015) in a study that looked at it in a pre-and post-test quasi-experimental manner.

"The vocabulary training additions of beginner EFL learners in Iran Language Institute utilizing the use of visual attention and conventional procedure of definition," based on a 2013 study by Sadeghi and Farzizadeh. The results indicated that there were many opportunities for teachers to use the visual-supported style of instruction (p. 1).

Roleplay to develop speaking abilities

According to Mardiningrum (2016), role play is a type of performance where learners present a spoken production about a specific situation in the form of a dialogue that can be planned or spontaneous. Also, as Tateyama (1998) mentions, Mohammad Aliakbari and Behrouz Jamalvandi (2010) claims that greater cognitive load is linked to more comprehension and breakdown of systems. This has led to an increase in the importance for learners to quickly integrate knowledge of social pragmatics, along with pragmalinguistics (p. 20).

In other words, role play consists of assuming a character in a specific situation that is based on an imaginary situation or based on a real situation, one of the advantages related to role-plays refers to facilitating learners with a secure setting for practicing their skills, reflecting and refining communicative skills before attending and facing the real world. Hence, it is undeniable the impact that role plays have on learning a second language since it allows one to gather all knowledge and skills to practice, improve, and demonstrate real communicative competence. Referring to role play as a speaking activity, Nunan (2015) pointed out some specific advantages of this kind of spoken production activity:

Firstly, it offers practical opportunities to use the target language naturally without unnatural pauses. This is called fluency. Secondly, the spoken nature of the assignment is used by students to test all of their language skills; this allows teachers to gauge the actual level of student learning in oral communication. Finally, the greater the number of times students can bring into play the various components of language that they have stored in their brains, the more these elements become automatic both in use and proficiency (Nunan 2003, as cited in Alzboun, Smad, and Baniabdelrahman, 2017).

Concerning to benefits of role-play, a variety of research have been carried out where most of them brought positive findings related to role plays, for instance, it has positive effects on speaking skills in English learners (Shen and Suwanthep, 2011); also it helps to decrease students' stress and anxiousness related to speak a language which is not their native tongue (Sağlamel and Kayaoğlu, 2013), in other others words, role plays offers a wide range of positive effects on learning acquisition.

Despite describing the benefits of role plays, there are some doubts related to the possibility of using them in an e-learning context; it is well-known that COVID has brought challenges for education, and the area of second language contexts has identified some tools, techniques, and instruments which can facilitate interactions among learners when they are not in the same classroom.

Effect of role-play in an e-learning environment

There is not an extensive body of research in this particular field, however, some of them used certain tools to facilitate interaction without having face-to-face contact. Lin Shen (2011) conducted a study related to E-learning constructive role plays for English as a Foreign

Language (EFL) learners in China, some of the findings indicate that constructive role plays have positive effects on enhancing the speaking performance of students across different language proficiency levels. Students demonstrated proficiency by actively and successfully applying knowledge acquired from tutorial classes and previous studies during constructive e-learning role plays. (p.20)

One remarkable discovery indicates that learners had a positive attitude towards using e-learning constructive role plays; in fact, they demonstrated an increase in their level of engagement with the activity. In addition, the application of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) and virtual learning in general increases the classroom capacity, and provides opportunities to practice, obviously only when the most suitable tool is selected considering the students' needs and access to IT technology and internet (Anderson, 2008).

Powtoon as the main tool

There are a variety of tools to use for facilitating students' integration and interaction in environments as similar as possible to face-to-face sessions. In this situation, Powtoon can be helpful because it is a visual communication platform that allows users to create professional videos with different characters, situations, and scenarios; also, learners can include their own voice to present the character's participation in the role-play.

Similarly, to role plays in face-to-face contexts, teachers can organize groups and assign different situations to have learners use their knowledge, creativity, and IT knowledge to present a video synchronously (Sari, 2021). Additionally, to improve the proficiency of EFL students it is essential to focus on skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing; in that regard, Powtoon is an effective learning tool that can greatly benefit students. The findings of the study demonstrated the ability to improve students' proficiency in the four English Learning skills (Putu Yuliantini, 2021, p.42).

Breakout rooms in virtual classes

In an online classroom setting student interaction plays a role in learning especially when face-to-face contact is limited. Building relationships and boosting confidence are aspects of this process where breakout rooms offer advantages by empowering students to participate in session planning.

Breakout rooms offer the advantage of facilitating group work, which not only brings the tutor and the students closer together but also allows everyone in the group to learn from one another. This approach encourages a shift away from viewing the tutor as the expert and also empowers teachers with a sense of accomplishment and job fulfillment when they can step back from traditional front-facing teaching methods (Cole, Haynes, Lown, Ulanowsky, and Salmon, 1999, p.16).

From our experience in online classes, it is relevant to provide opportunities for small group work in online classrooms, the same as it is in face-to-face sessions. Therefore, using breakout rooms effectively can help to increase the number and quality of interactions as well as the student engagement.

Laurillard (2009) advocates for the exploration of technologies with a focus on meeting the needs of learners. Her Conversational Framework is a model that incorporates various elements that are essential for effective learning including instructionism; constructionism; social-cultural learning; and collaborative learning. Laurillard (2009) emphasizes the importance of technology in providing diverse opportunities such as peer discussion, debate, articulation of ideas to peers, and repeated practice. In this regard, breakout rooms seem to be well-suited for facilitating these objectives.

Due to the challenges of the pandemic, English language educators had to adapt by using asynchronous and synchronous online platforms as substitutes for traditional face-to-face lessons. Based on the Communicative Learning Teaching approach, the main aim of language acquisition is to use it in real-life communication situations than purely focusing on understanding the grammar rules of the language (Pham, 2007, p. 195). According to Richards (2006), CLT emphasizes collaborative classroom activities where learners actively engage with each other instead of learning alone. In this context, the teacher’s role shifts towards facilitating students' fluency development.

According to research, incorporating breakout rooms has been shown to enhance student engagement and improve the overall effectiveness of the learning process. In a study conducted by Saltz and Heckman (2020), they used structured pair activities within distributed rooms. The findings from their research are likely applicable to a range of web-based online courses offering some benefits such as promoting deeper learning, improving grades,

facilitating longer retention of information, and enhancing communication, and teamwork skills which provide students with a better understanding of their professional environment they will eventually work in (Oakley et al., 2004). However, instructors need to be aware that these benefits do not occur effortlessly or overnight. As a result, there must be a well-structured activity, designed with specific roles where every student has a specific responsibility to avoid a lack of coordination and to have equal contributions among students.

The study conducted by Warden, Stanworth, Ren, and Warden (2013) stated that after nine years of research into learning environments, it was discovered that problems usually stem from behavior rather than technology. The researchers also noted that despite students' familiarity with words they still lack experience in being learners. Taking that into consideration, it's clear the need for a well-designed activity when using breakout rooms to guide students.

There is still a long way to explore the breakout room usage in online education. Saltz and Heckman (2020) research revealed that limited studies have been conducted on engagement during synchronous breakout sessions. Regarding the breakout-rooms tool, if it is used in the right way, through a well-designed activity, well-distributed roles, and constant supervision from the lecturer, can provide an effective and collaborative learning environment in online classes, especially when executing a role-play activity.

Research Objectives

Taking into consideration the situations described in the previous sections, this research work aims to meet the following objectives.

Main objective

- To assess the impact of innovative teaching tools combined with storytelling, and role-play on students' learning experiences.

Supporting objectives

- Explicitly explains the characteristics and functionality of storytelling and role play related to language learning.
- Evaluate the Effectiveness of Digital Storytelling and Role Play in Language Learning

- Propose recommendations and guidelines for the correct integration of technological tools applied in a Language Learning context.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this research includes 5 courses of the 4th level from the Language Center. The students who study English as part of their academic curriculum and who are outside the academic framework, this language is a mandatory requirement for completion of their career. The students were introduced to the various tools at the start of the semester since they would eventually need to utilize one of them to make a presentation based on stories, films, or television shows.

Certainly, a quantitative approach was applied to this task. However, the study is limited due to some reasons. Firstly, student comments and reflections regarding their use of these tools and how they felt they affected their learning would be beneficial to include. While quantitative data is important and valuable, qualitative data—such as student narratives or observations—may offer a deeper insight into how technology affects role-playing and storytelling in a classroom setting. Secondly, since classes were online, some students had problems being part of the classes because they had internet problems.

METHODOLOGY

Among the characteristics of the students, it is indicated that they are studying the fifth level, which, according to the curricular design of the English levels of the Language Center, represents level B1.1. In this case, the Level selected was Level 4, which is a B1.1 CEFR, of the University of Babahoyo. Using a convenience sample, it was selected five courses of this Level (Level 4 A, B, C, D, and E), which has approximately 70-80 students, and each course was divided into 15 groups.

Then, the research is a practical exploration focusing on teaching vocabulary using technological tools for developing visual narrative, such as "Storyboard That" and "Flashcard Factory by Pear Deck." These tools were integral in creating an engaging learning process for students. The main participants in your study were students from five Level 4 courses at the Language Center. They were introduced to various digital storytelling tools, including Canva and Powtoon, and were tasked with creating presentations using these tools.

The use of digital storytelling tools (independent variable) could impact the students' language skills improvement (dependent variable). The effectiveness of these tools in enhancing students' writing and oral communication skills was a key focus. This improvement was likely assessed by observing students' performance in creating and presenting their stories, films, or TV shows using the chosen design tools. The data collection process consisted of the use and assessment of storytelling tools in language learning, particularly observing improvements in writing, oral communication, creative expression, and collaboration skills among students.

DEVELOPMENT

There are so many differences in teaching vocabulary. To make the learning process easier and more interesting, the teacher applied the appropriate teaching media and teaching strategies concerned with vocabulary presentation (Kurniawati and Eni, 2018). For this purpose, we used two online tools for developing Visual Narrative: Storyboard that and Flashcard Factory by Pear Deck. Starting with Storyboard that which is a graphic organizer that plans a narrative. Storyboards are a powerful way to visually present information; the linear direction of the cells is perfect for storytelling, explaining a process, and showing the passage of time. At their core, storyboards are a set of sequential drawings to tell a story.

Part 1. Technological tools for storytelling.

The first tool that is presented is Storyboard that, then, it is possible to encourage the audience to create stories in different paths as comics, real daily life situations, and superheroes, among others. On that website, creating stories is much simpler, we only have to i) Make a shot list. Take a scene from the script and make a shot list. ii) Sketch it out. Whether you’re working on a feature film or a short animation, choose one of the more complex sequences, and scope out a vision for the scene. iii) Fill in details. iv) Add words. The following picture presents an example of the story created.

Figure 2

Story created in Storyboard that

Note: This comic was designed by the authors using Storyboard that.

Flashcard factory by Peardeck

On the other hand, we proposed the use of Flashcards Factory by Pear Deck. Initially, we used a YouTube video for the audience to analyze the content, and then we asked some relevant questions based on the video. After that, with the vocabulary presented in the video, we used Flashcard Factory to promote retentive and improve knowledge. Flashcard Factory was designed to transform the way students engage with vocabulary. When they play Flashcard Factory students pair up and work together to create dynamic and engaging flashcards. Students collaborate to illustrate and define terms, making learning vocabulary an active and social experience.

Figure 3

Flashcard Factory process

Note. This figure was taken from Mo Physics Mo Problems (n.d.)

Flashcard Factory divided the group into two teams and then, paired the students to participate in couples, they received words with their meanings, and in the process, they had to work in a group, one of them wrote a sentence considering the word, and the other student has to draw a picture based on the vocabulary presented. When this phase is done, the teacher can review the cards and approve or reject them. Then, in the final phase, those cards are shipped, and we can know which the winning group, and also, we can export it to Gimkit or printable files.

Powtoon to create animations

There are a variety of tools to use for facilitating students' integration and interaction in environments as similar as possible to face-to-face sessions. In this situation, PowToon (https://www.powtoon.com/) can be helpful because it is a visual communication platform that allows users to create professional videos with different characters, situations, and scenarios; also, learners can include their voice to present the character´s participation in the role play.

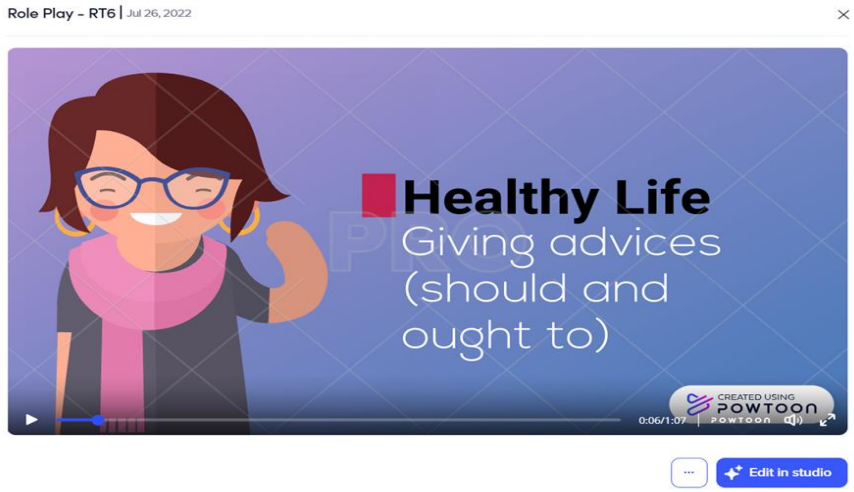
Similarly, to role plays in face-to-face contexts, teachers can organize groups and assign different situations to have learners use their knowledge, creativity and IT knowledge to present a video synchronously or asynchronously (Sari, 2021). Additionally, this online resource provides benefits not only for developing speaking skills, it also helps to "enhance EFL students' English skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and the benefit of

PowToon as learning media. The result showed that media It can improve students' English skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing" (Putu Yuliantini, 2021, p. 42).

Powtoon is a website that allows users to create videos in simple, easy, and accessible ways. This webpage has two versions: free and paid. For obvious reasons, the paid version has a more variety of functionalities. However, the free version fulfills the functions of organizing a class or preparing a learning activity in a successful and creative form. Powtoon, from its functionality as a teacher's tool, presents great benefits; among the activities that can be implemented with this web page is the presentation of the topic to be covered within the class dynamically using drawings, scenarios, and moving avatars. This type of presentation can be presented through the description of the activity using lyrics or using the teacher's voice.

Figure 4

Usage of Powtoon to make lesson presentations.

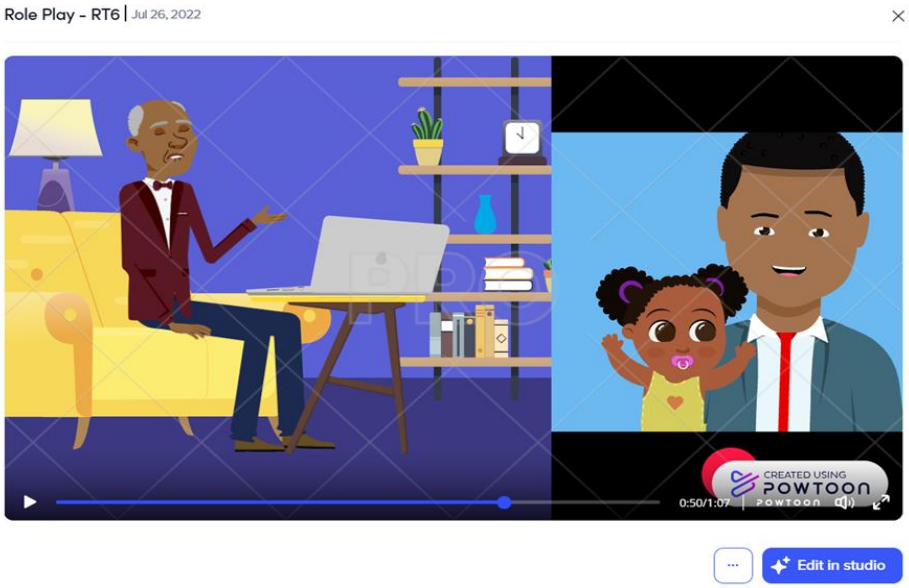


Note. Resource used by the teacher to develop a lesson related to pieces of advice.

Within the teaching work, it is common that, on many occasions, it takes work to find specific resources with the expected content. These resources, in video or audio forms with dialogues exemplifying the grammatical and lexical use of a lesson topic, are not accessible, or they do not exist. In this situation, Powtoon allows the teacher to develop the dialogue using grammatical structures in conjunction with the desired lexicon and present it as an animated video. Likewise, this format allows students to build an animated video presenting a roleplay in which learners contribute to the conversation by entering their voice and presenting it within the class session or as an autonomous task or project.

Figure 5

Usage of PowToon to make role plays or create spoken production activities.



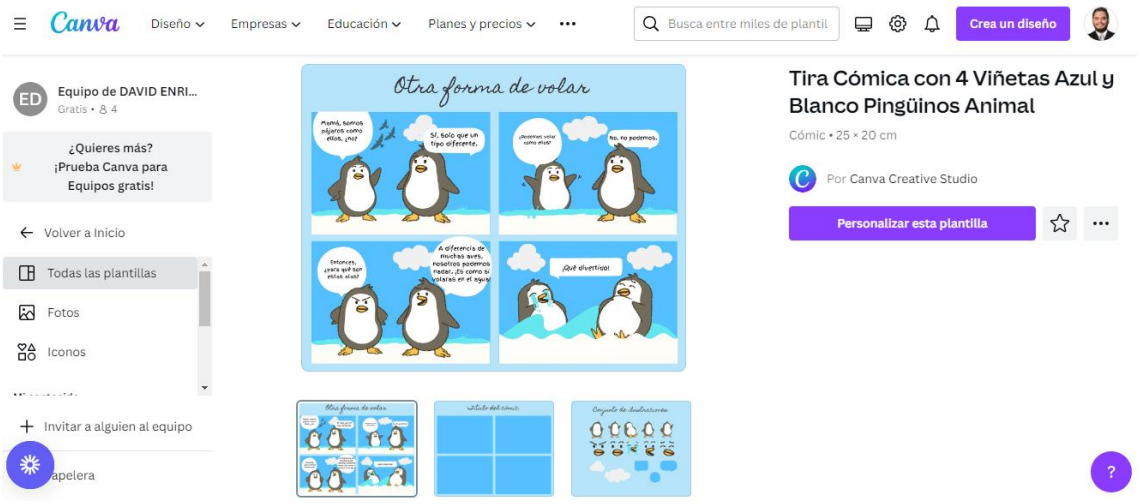
Note: Resource used by the teacher to present a conversation.

Canva for storytelling

The last tool we presented to the students is Canva, which is nowadays widely used for students, teachers, and professionals in different areas, because of its practicality to create different media and content for every situation needed. That's why Canva makes designing beautiful creative assets easy for everyone. From social media images, videos, and gifs to posters, websites, booklets, multimedia presentations, and heaps more, Canva is an invaluable tool for helping you level up your design skills, even if you're just getting started.

Figure 6

Canva for storytelling



Note: Canva free tool has several templates for story creating and comics students could adapt.

Part 2 –Case Study: Implementing Storytelling and Role play with technological tools usage.

At the beginning of the semester, the students from 5 courses of the Level 4 at the Language Center were introduced to the different tools because, at the end, they needed to create a presentation using one of them, based on stories, films, or TV shows. The lesson plan designed for this final activity is:

Lesson Plan: *Explaining a Story Using Design Tools*

Objective: Students will analyze and articulate the elements of a story, film, or TV show using a chosen design tool (Canva, Storyboard That, Powtoon) and present their insights effectively in class.

Duration: 3 class sessions (120 minutes each)

Day 1 – Part 1: Introduction to the Project

Objectives:

- Introduce the project and its goals.
- Explain the importance of visual representation in storytelling.
- Present the three design tools: Canva, Storyboard That, and Powtoon.
- Discuss criteria for selecting a story, film, or TV show to analyze.

Activities:

Project Introduction (20 mins):

- Briefly introduce the project's objectives and expectations.
- Discuss the significance of visual storytelling in today's media-rich world.
- Highlight the three design tools and their potential applications.

Story Selection (20 mins):

- Assing groups to students to work in the story analysis.
- Discuss and provide examples of suitable stories, films, or TV shows.
- Instruct students to choose a narrative and a design tool for their project.

- Assign homework: Students finalize their story selection and tool choice.

Day 1 – Part 2: Tool Tutorial and Story Analysis

Objectives:

- Ensure students are proficient with their chosen design tool.
- Guide students in analyzing the key elements of their chosen story.

Activities:

Tool Tutorial (15 mins):

- Provide a detailed tutorial for each design tool.
- Emphasize essential features and functionalities.
- Allow students to practice using the tool with a simple exercise.

Story Analysis (30 mins):

- Review the elements of storytelling (plot, characters, setting, theme).
- Instruct group students to analyze these elements in their chosen story.
- Provide a template or guide for structuring their analysis.

Individual Consultations (15 mins):

- Circulate the class to provide individual guidance.
- Answer questions and ensure students are on the right track.

Closure: Questions and Answers (15 mins):

Day 2: Designing and Creating Presentations

Objectives:

- Encourage creativity and effective use of the chosen design tool.
- Ensure students are progressing with their visual presentations.

Activities:

Designing Session (60 mins):

- In groups, students use the chosen design tool to create their visual presentation.
- Encourage creativity and effective use of visuals to convey story elements.

Script Writing (20 mins):

- Instruct students to prepare a brief script or talking points for their presentation.
- Emphasize the importance of aligning the script with visual elements.

Peer Feedback (10 mins):

- Facilitate peer feedback sessions for students to share progress.
- Encourage constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement.

Day 4: Presentation and Reflection

Objectives:

- Provide students with an opportunity to present their projects.
- Reflect on the process and discuss key takeaways.

Activities:

Group Presentations (100 mins):

- Group of students present their projects to the class.
- Emphasize effective communication and engagement.

Peer Evaluation (10 mins):

- Allocate time for peers to provide feedback using a provided rubric.
- Discuss the importance of constructive criticism.

Reflection (10 mins):

- Lead a class discussion on the challenges and successes of the project.

- Ask students to reflect on how the design tool enhanced their storytelling.

Assessment:

The following rubric was used to assess clarity, creativity, engagement, and the incorporation of feedback in both the written and visual components of the project.

Table 1

Rubric for the final activity

Criteria	Excellent (2.5)	Good (2)	Satisfactory (1,5)	Needs Improvement (1)	Inadequate (0,5)
Clarity and Coherence	- Exceptional clarity and coherence in explaining the story, film, or TV show. - Clearly identifies and discusses key elements.	- Clear and coherent explanation of the story with minor lapses. - Identifies and discusses most key elements.	- Adequate clarity in explaining the story, but with some confusion. - Identifies and discusses some key elements.	- Limited clarity and coherence. - Difficulty in identifying and discussing key elements.	- Lack of clarity and coherence. - Fails to identify or discuss key elements.
Creativity and Effectiveness	- Highly creative and effective use of the chosen design tool. - Visuals enhance the understanding of the story.	- Creative and effective use of the design tool. - Visuals contribute to the understanding of the story.	- Adequate creativity and effectiveness in using the design tool. - Visuals somewhat contribute to the understanding of the story.	- Limited creativity and effectiveness. - Visuals do not strongly contribute to the understanding.	- Lack of creativity and effectiveness. - Visuals are irrelevant or confusing.
Engagement and Quality of Presentation	- Engages the audience effectively with a high-quality presentation. - Maintains a confident and engaging presence.	- Engages the audience with a good-quality presentation. - Maintains a mostly confident and engaging presence.	- Adequate engagement with a satisfactory-quality presentation. - Presence is somewhat confident and engaging.	- Limited engagement with a presentation of low quality. - Presence lacks confidence and engagement.	- Little to no engagement with a poor-quality presentation. - Presence is entirely lacking.

Incorporation of Feedback and Revisions	- Effectively incorporates peer feedback into revisions. - Shows a clear improvement in the final presentation.	- Incorporates peer feedback into revisions with noticeable improvement in the final presentation.	- Makes some revisions based on peer feedback, but improvements are limited.	- Limited incorporation of feedback into revisions. - Little improvement in the final presentation.	- Ignores or fails to incorporate feedback into revisions. - No improvement observed.

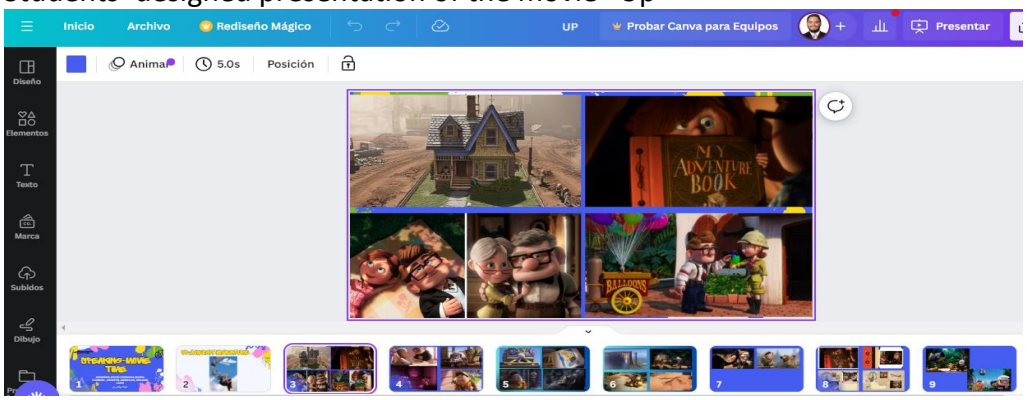
Note: This rubric was used to evaluate students according to the activity presentation

Part 3 – Implementation and evaluation.

The activity was implemented in the 5 courses of level 4, where students presented their final projects using different tools. Most of them used Canva because they considered it the easiest to design the presentation. The following figures presented some examples:

Figure 7

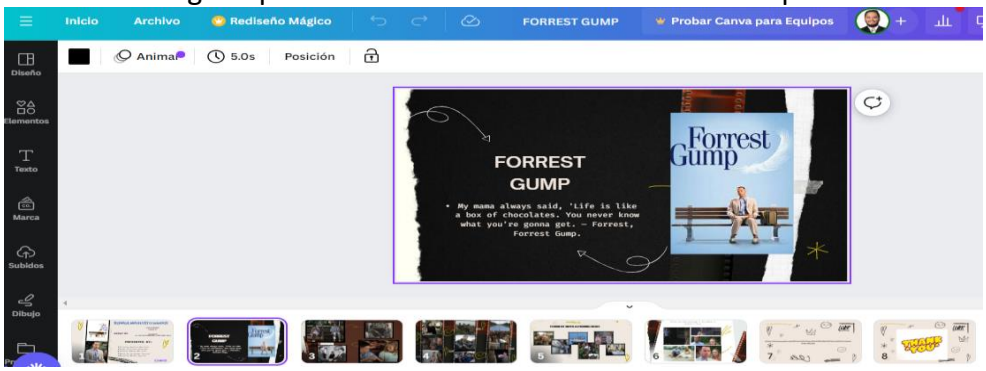
Students' designed presentation of the movie "Up"



Note: Students designed this presentation using a storytelling approach in Canva

Figure 8

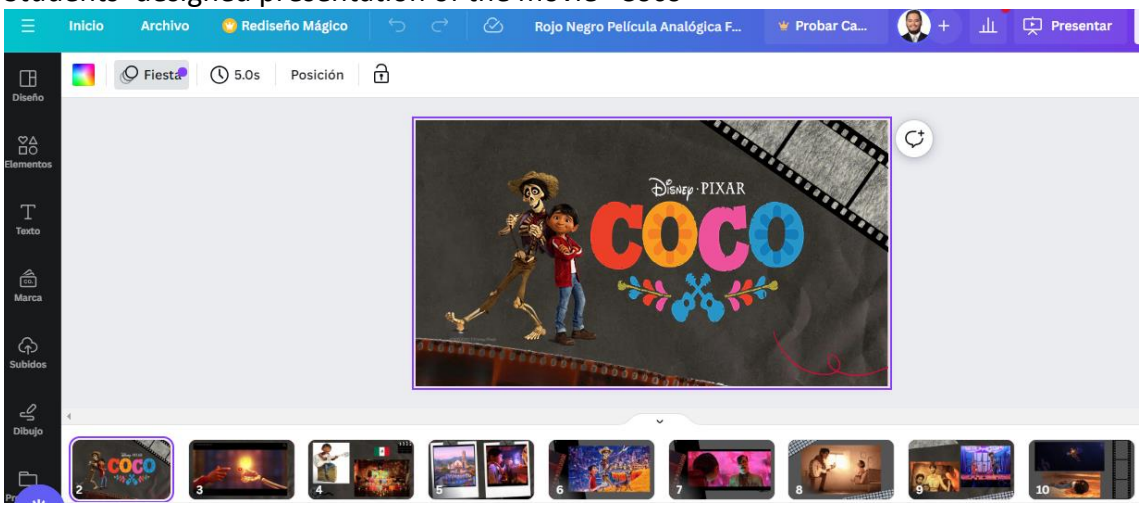
Students' designed presentation of the movie "Forrest Gump"



Note: Students designed this presentation using a storytelling approach in Canva

Figure 9

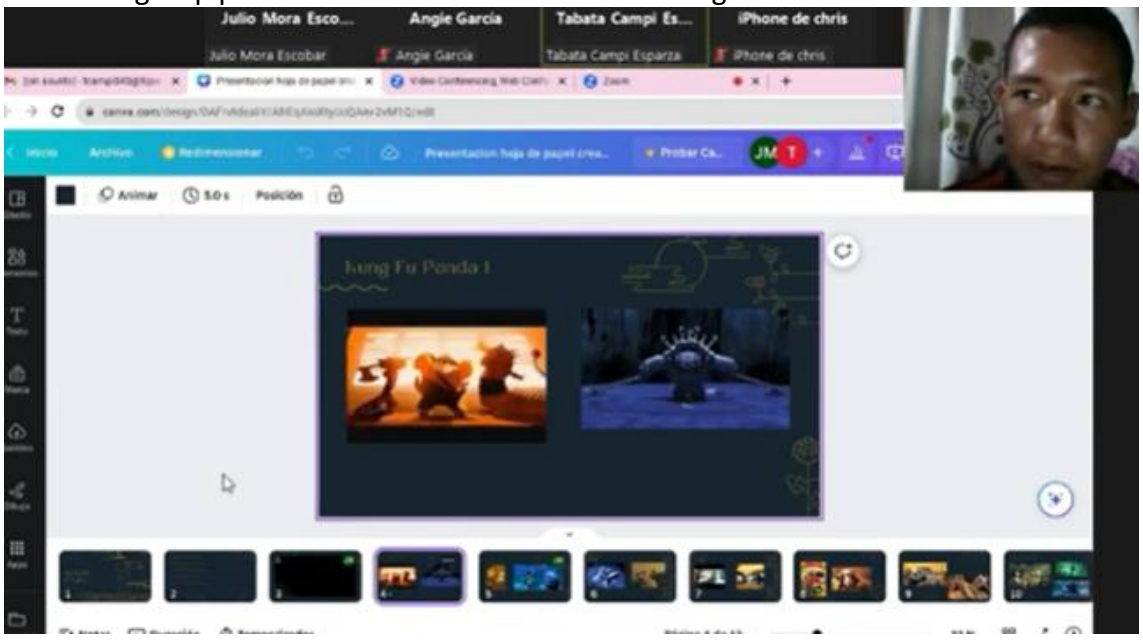
Students' designed presentation of the movie "Coco"



Note: Students designed this presentation using a storytelling approach in Canva

Figure 10

Students' group presentation in the class - movie "Kung Fu Panda"



Note. Note: Students presented the story in the Zoom Session

The activities were successfully carried out during the three sessions of 120 minutes established in the lesson plan. As students were working in groups of five, they had 5 minutes to tell the story to their partners. Some intrinsic results that could be gather in a qualitative assessment are:

1. **Motivation:** The collaborative nature of the activities, combined with the use of engaging design tools increased students' motivation. Working in groups allowed for the exchange of ideas, diverse perspectives, and shared responsibilities. The interactive elements

of Canva, Storyboard That, and Powtoon likely made the project more enjoyable and rewarding. Students might have felt a sense of ownership and pride in presenting their creations to peers. The real-world application of storytelling skills through visual media may have increased intrinsic motivation, making the learning experience more meaningful.

2. **Skill Improvement:** Students likely enhanced their writing skills through the analysis of story elements and the creation of a script or talking points for their presentations. Expressing narrative concepts in writing has been important during this project. On the other hand, the oral presentation component provided an opportunity for students to practice and improve their public speaking skills. Presenting to peers in a limited timeframe challenged them to communicate effectively, ensuring that their audience understood the key elements of the story.

3. **Collaboration and Communication Skills:** Working in groups encouraged collaboration and communication. Students had to articulate their ideas, negotiate different perspectives, and allocate tasks effectively. These skills are essential not only in academic settings but also in various professional environments.

4. **Creative Expression:** The use of design tools like Canva, Storyboard That, and Powtoon encouraged creative expression. Students were able to experiment with different visual elements to express their narrative effectively. This aspect could have contributed to a sense of creativity and originality in their presentations.

5. **Critical Thinking:** Analyzing story elements and translating them into a visual format required critical thinking. Students had to make decisions about what information to include, how to represent it visually, and how to structure their presentations for maximum impact. This type of critical thinking is valuable in problem-solving and decision-making contexts.

6. **Peer Learning and Feedback:** Peer presentations and feedback sessions fostered a supportive learning environment. Students had the opportunity to learn from each other, both in terms of content and presentation techniques. Constructive feedback from peers provided valuable insights for improvement and encouraged a culture of continuous learning.

7. **Technological Proficiency:** Engaging with design tools may have improved students' technological proficiency. Using tools such as Canva, Storyboard That, and Powtoon have

expanded their digital literacy skills, which are increasingly important in today's technology-driven world.

8. Project-Based Learning Benefits: The project-based nature of the lesson plan increased student engagement and retention of information. By applying theoretical knowledge to a practical task, students were actively involved in their learning, leading to a deeper understanding of storytelling elements and their effective communication.

9. Reflection on Learning Process: Encouraging students to reflect on the challenges and successes of the project could further enhance their metacognitive skills. Reflecting on their own learning process helps students become more aware of their strengths and areas for improvement, fostering a growth mindset.

To sum up, the activities in the lesson plan resulted in improved motivation, enhanced writing and oral communication skills, creative expression, critical thinking, technological proficiency, and a positive collaborative learning experience. The combination of storytelling, design tools, and peer engagement created a rich and holistic learning environment.

Part 4 – Students' results based on the activity.

After the presentation, the groups of students were evaluated using the rubric, in total, there were 15 groups in each of the courses, and the final results are presented:

Table 2
Students' grades based on the story presentation

Group	Level 4 A	Level 4 B	Level 4 C	Level 4 D	Level 4 E
1	8	7	10	10	10
2	7	6	10	9	8
3	10	8	6	7,5	9
4	6	10	8	9	9
5	9	9	8,5	7	8
6	7,5	8	4	6	10
7	9	6	9	4,5	8
8	8	8,5	9	10	10
9	10	3	5	7	8
10	7	8	4,5	6	7,5
11	5	10	8	7	4
12	4,5	7	6	10	8
13	8,5	4	7	6	10
14	10	5	8	7	8,5
15	6	7,5	10	4	5

Note: The groups of students were evaluated according to the rubric in their presentations

The results reveal different patterns across the 15 groups in the Level 4 courses (A, B, C, D, and E), measured on a scale under 10. Notably, Group 3 got good grades, achieving the highest score in Level 4 A and E which is a well-rounded performance. Then, groups 1, 4, 8, and 14 went well in multiple categories, particularly standing out in Level 4 D and E. Conversely, Group 6 struggled in Level 4 C, while Group 11 faced challenges in Level 4 A and C. The diversity in scores highlights strengths and weaknesses among the groups, across the board, and others presenting a better preparation to present their story. Overall, these results underscore the importance of evaluation, emphasizing both individual and collective achievements across the Level 4 courses. Finally, Table 2 presents the main statistics of those results.

Table 3

Obtained statistics under students' presentation grades

Course	Mean	Standard Error	St. Deviation	Variance
Level 4 A	7.47	0.39	1.92	3.68
Level 4 B	7.07	0.43	2.16	4.67
Level 4 C	7.33	0.48	2.38	5.68
Level 4 D	7.27	0.49	2.44	5.95
Level 4 E	7.87	0.42	2.11	4.46

Note: The groups of students were evaluated according to the rubric in their presentations

Although the results of the story presentations across the 15 groups in each of the five courses (Level 4 A, B, C, D, and E) provide valuable insights into the overall performance, there is some variability within each group. In Level 4 A, the average score of 7.47 suggests a solid presentation quality, with a moderate level of variability indicated by a standard error of 0.39. The standard deviation of 1.92 implies a reasonable dispersion of scores, and the variance of 3.68 highlights the spread from the mean. Then, Level 4 B presentations achieved an average score of 7.07, reflecting a generally strong performance. However, a standard deviation of 2.16 and a variance of 4.67 suggest a broader range of scores. For Level 4 C, the mean score of 7.33 indicates a favorable performance, with a moderate level of variability (standard error 0.48) and a broader dispersion (standard deviation 2.38, variance 5.68). In Level 4 D, the mean score of 7.27 suggests a solid performance, with a standard error of 0.49 reflecting moderate

variability and a standard deviation of 2.44 indicating a broader range of scores. Finally, Level 4 E presentations stood out with an average score of 7.87, indicating a strong overall performance. A lower standard deviation of 2.11 and a variance of 4.46 suggest a more concentrated distribution of scores. Overall, these statistical measures provide an understanding of the story presentation outcomes, offering insights into both the average performance and the extent of variability within each course.

Discussion

The results of the study provide valuable information about student performance in story presentations. It shows diverse patterns in the performance of the 15 groups in Level 4 courses (A, B, C, D, E), and this indicates variability in how students approach story presentations. Although the evaluation highlights both individual and collective achievements across all courses, the results indicate that the variation in the quality of story presentations may be related to the challenges mentioned in the general assertion, thus the stages of planning and implementation require careful attention to maximize their potential benefits.

Implementing innovative teaching tools and assessing student performance through a comprehensive rubric are some of the strengths of the study, however, the effectiveness of these tools and methods could vary in diverse settings, since the analysis focuses on a specific context. Moreover, the study primarily focuses on assessing outcomes from the teacher's perspective, and it would be valuable to include feedback and reflection from the students regarding their experiences with these tools and their perception of the impact on their learning. Quantitative data are relevant, and of high value, but incorporating qualitative data, such as student narratives or observations could provide a richer understanding of the impact of technological tools for storytelling and role play in an e-learning environment.

The results obtained from the study are consistent with the literature cited in the text. The literature emphasizes the innate human desire to communicate and express ideas through various means, including visual narratives, which suggests that information and communication technologies facilitate this objective when organizing a group of images to illustrate the sequence of an event to convey a message to the audience.

In the language learning field, students face a challenge when working on their increasing vocabulary, the study addresses these challenges by incorporating visual narrative methods

to enhance vocabulary learning, aligning with Gardner's point of view about the difficulties in vocabulary acquisition and potential communication breakdown. Also, the study's workshop is in line with the practical application of theoretical concepts discussed in the literature. The study's use of digital tools reflects the historical and ongoing importance of digital storytelling in education. Also, the incorporation of role play in the study aligns with the value of promoting active learning, deepening understanding, and fostering motivation, where learners transition from passive to active stages to facilitate their assimilation and accommodation of information through real experiences.

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the present century offers many opportunities but also challenges and new situations, rapid and radical changes in different areas including education, and all this is facilitated by ICTs. According to Prensky (2001), students and the method by which education is delivered have been greatly impacted by the rapid expansion of technology worldwide. The fact that more and more students are using computers and mobile phones to participate in official online learning is indicative of this. Online learning environments, according to Malekian, Bailey, and Kennedy (2020), are becoming more and more common in higher education systems.

The purpose of the study was to evaluate how new teaching methods, such as role-playing and storytelling, affected students' language learning. The outcomes showed notable advantages. Enhancement in writing and spoken communication skills, technical proficiency, creative expression, critical thinking, motivation, and a good collaborative learning experience were the outcomes of the activities included in the lesson plan. Peer participation and the use of storytelling design tools produced a noticeable performance

However, it's important to note that while the study highlighted the strengths of implementing innovative teaching tools and a comprehensive rubric for assessing student performance, its effectiveness could vary in different settings, as the analysis was focused on a specific context. The study primarily assessed outcomes from the teacher's perspective, suggesting the need for future research to include student feedback and reflections. The results across the courses showed diversity in performance, highlighting both strengths and

weaknesses among the groups. This diversity underscores the importance of individual and collective evaluation in language learning.

The importance of understanding and applying tools that allow us to communicate better but also use digital tools to improve vocabulary is extremely necessary in a world as globalized as the one currently presented. It is precisely for these reasons that training among CENID teachers was developed. From a realistic view, the application of this methodology and the aforementioned tools benefit students in different ways such as:

Stress reduction and motivation. The need to be competitive today creates a constant desire but also pressure on students to learn and develop skills that can generate greater opportunities to be successful, being the students themselves who recognize the need to learn English as a second language. Due to their other subjects and limitations generated by the effects produced by the pandemic, many students obtain it by stopping studying or simply not giving their best effort. It is so the current teacher needs to understand these factors that affect students and apply new methodologies and tools. Based on research conducted by Dujmovic (2014), storytelling can motivate students during their language training in a low-stress context.

Improved learning. It is important to understand the need to look for mechanisms that facilitate the learning of the English language. Among the existing differences, one can mention the fact that EFL learners improved their vocabulary learning through storytelling (Soltani et al., 2015). In the same way, some researchers conclude that storytelling is one of the best strategies for learners (Brown & Tomlinson, 1993).

Technological use of skill improvement. Being previously the need to adapt to the current modality of virtual education, the tools presented two online tools for developing Visual Narrative: Storyboard that and Flashcard Factory (by Pear Deck) allow the student to use technology in favor of their learning and they also prepare it for self-learning. In general, the high level of interest on the part of the teachers can be established and among the comments, we can cite the one given by a professor who mentions the benefits that she considers of the use of storytelling: “Learning a new vocabulary and some grammar concepts through stories help to encourage students to generate ideas while keeping them engaged with the topic of the class.

It is also important to take into account some recommendations to apply visual narrative during the class as follows:

- Teachers should integrate Visual Narrative into teaching but under a clear pedagogic framework.
- Try to include real elements of daily situations in the Visual Narrative activities
- Teachers should try to give accurate information to learners so they can construct knowledge rather than just passively take in information.
- Choose correctly the topic based on what you want to teach, the range of age groups for your students, and specific cultural issues regarding the top.

The main goal during the process of learning a new language is to acquire the skill to communicate ideas, feelings, and thoughts; however, since the Ecuadorian environment rests in a non-speaking English country our EFL context decreases English learners´ opportunities to keep in touch with the second language and limit their opportunities to practice the language naturally. EFL teachers are well-known for their background, for that reason, English teachers look for chances to get learners as close as possible to learning environments which simulate a natural situation. Referring to this simulated situation, role plays are the most demanded instruments, since they allow learners to be inside different situations which commonly are connected with a communicative objective.

As the premise at the beginning, the main goal while learning a foreign language is to acquire the skill to communicate our ideas, thus role play gives the learners the chance to visualize themselves in different real-life scenarios and to use their own words based on previously learned grammar and content.

Those activities set the stage for the students to act with their peers and react while developing a conversation, which fundamentally allows the lecturer to assess the vocabulary acquisition and measure the progress of their speaking ability. Nevertheless, the authors strongly believe that teachers need to set up a productive classroom environment for collaboration in order to visualize the benefits of peer collaborative learning.

It is advised that future research concentrate on a larger context and use a wider variety of inputs, including direct student participation. This method will aid in comprehending the

various effects of role-playing games and storytelling in various educational contexts and support the successful integration of technology into language instruction. Moreover, educators who wish to improve language learning experiences should create standards for the appropriate integration of these tools in different learning situations.

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CHAPTER 6

THE EFFECT OF SONGS AND MOVIES IN THE ENGLISH LEARNING PROCESS

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Abstract

This research investigates the critical role of videos and songs in nurturing listening skills among A2-level English students. The study recognizes the challenges inherent in mastering listening comprehension as a crucial language acquisition component. Drawing from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which advocates exposure to authentic auditory sources, this research explores how videos and songs are potent tools for enhancing listening proficiency. Analyzing previous scholarly inquiries, this article underscores the enriching impact of these multimedia resources. It delves into their ability to provide authentic contexts, nuanced vocabulary, natural intonation, and rhythmic structures, fostering an engaging and effective learning environment. This research study was carried out with students from the Basic Level II of English, distributed across five classes at the Language Center (CENID) of the Technical University of Babahoyo (UTB); the findings aim to offer practical insights and pedagogical strategies for educators to maximize the potential of videos and songs in optimizing listening skill development among A2 level English learners.

Keywords: listening comprehension, multimedia resources, engaging learning environment

Resumen

Esta investigación detalla el papel fundamental de los videos y las canciones en el fomento de las habilidades auditivas entre los estudiantes de inglés de nivel A2. El estudio reconoce los desafíos inherentes a dominar la comprensión auditiva como un componente crucial de la adquisición del lenguaje. A partir del Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas (MCER), que aboga por la exposición a fuentes auditivas auténticas, esta investigación explora cómo los vídeos y las canciones son herramientas potentes para mejorar la competencia auditiva. Al analizar investigaciones académicas anteriores, este artículo subraya el impacto enriquecedor de estos recursos multimedia. Profundiza en su capacidad para proporcionar contextos auténticos, vocabulario matizado, entonación natural y estructuras rítmicas, fomentando un entorno de aprendizaje atractivo y eficaz. Este estudio de investigación se realizó con estudiantes del Nivel Básico II de Inglés, distribuidos en cinco clases del Centro de Idiomas (CENID) de la Universidad Técnica de Babahoyo (UTB); Los hallazgos tienen como objetivo ofrecer conocimientos prácticos y estrategias pedagógicas para que los educadores maximicen el potencial de los videos y canciones para optimizar el desarrollo de las habilidades auditivas entre los estudiantes de inglés de nivel A2.

Palabras claves: comprensión auditiva, recursos multimedia, entorno de aprendizaje atractivo.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, language acquisition has witnessed a paradigm shift in teaching methodologies, especially concerning acquiring and refining oral skills in learning English as a second or foreign language (Kathirvel & Hashim, 2020). Acquiring a second language, mainly English, has become integral to global Education. Within this linguistic journey, mastering the skill of Listening poses a considerable challenge for students, especially those at the A2 proficiency level. Listening comprehension, a multifaceted skill encompassing auditory perception, understanding, and interpretation, is fundamental to language acquisition. However, it remains one of the most arduous skills to foster among English language learners.

Supiyati (2011) mentions that integrating audio-visual resources into language education has become a pivotal tool, offering a dynamic and immersive approach to augment oral proficiency. This introductory exploration delves into the multifaceted realm of employing audio-visual resources to fortify oral language skills, examining its theoretical underpinnings, pedagogical implications, and profound impact on language learners. Using audio-visual aids in language learning aligns with contemporary theories emphasizing communicative competence and learner-centered approaches. As per Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, learning is fostered through social interactions and mediated by cultural tools, with audio-visual resources serving as potent tools for language mediation.

This theoretical foundation underscores the significance of integrating audio-visual elements ranging from videos, podcasts, and digital media to interactive multimedia in fostering authentic communication and linguistic development (Kathirvel & Hashim, 2020). The academic exploration of language learning methodologies has long sought effective strategies to facilitate listening proficiency. Prior research has underscored the pivotal role of listening skills in language acquisition, recognizing its significance as a precursor to successful communication. Akay (2021) mentions that the interactive nature of audio-visual resources encourages active participation and engagement among learners. Interactive exercises, role-plays, and language-learning apps capitalize on audio-visual elements to elicit responses, promote dialogue, and simulate real-time conversational situations.

This active involvement enhances linguistic proficiency and cultivates confidence in articulating thoughts and ideas in English, a crucial aspect of oral language development.

Moreover, Jaramillo and Bravo (2023) claim that one of the primary merits of incorporating audio-visual resources is its ability to provide learners with an immersive linguistic environment. Engaging visual stimuli and auditory inputs creates a holistic learning experience that mirrors real-life communication scenarios, promoting contextual understanding and linguistic fluency. For instance, watching films and documentaries or participating in interactive online platforms exposes learners to diverse accents, intonations, and idiomatic expressions and offers cultural insights crucial for effective communication.

However, while audio-visual resources offer many opportunities, their effective integration demands judicious pedagogical strategies. Educators must curate and scaffold materials aligning with learners' proficiency levels, linguistic goals, and cultural sensitivities. Additionally, employing various audio-visual resources catering to diverse learning styles ensures inclusivity and maximizes the benefits derived from these tools. Furthermore, technology integration in language learning has witnessed exponential growth, contributing to the accessibility and versatility of audio-visual resources. Mobile applications, online platforms, and virtual reality tools have revolutionized language learning, transcending geographical barriers and providing learners with on-demand access to diverse linguistic content (Supiyati, 2011).

Importance and Purpose of Writing

Numerous scholarly inquiries have corroborated the positive impact of integrating videos and songs in fostering listening skills among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. These multimedia resources furnish authentic contexts, contextualized vocabulary, natural intonation, and idiomatic variations, thus enriching the language learning experience. Furthermore, the audio-visual elements of videos and the repetitive, rhythmic structure of songs contribute significantly to facilitating the retention and comprehension of linguistic concepts more engagingly. Beyond merely enhancing listening skills, incorporating videos and songs into the classroom setting yields additional benefits by fostering student motivation and engagement.

These resources enable educators to create a stimulating and participatory learning environment, promoting active and meaningful learning experiences. The amalgamation of visual and auditory stimuli engenders a multisensory experience that bolsters language

retention and comprehension among learners. The complexities embedded within listening in a second language present an array of hurdles for learners from the Basic Level II of English at the Language Center (CENID) of the Technical University of Babahoyo (UTB). From deciphering unfamiliar accents and dialects to grappling with rapid speech patterns and linguistic variations, students face an intricate web of obstacles in comprehending spoken English.

Consequently, the struggle to attain a satisfactory level of proficiency in listening directly impacts their overall communicative abilities and impedes their language fluency. In light of this, the influence of videos and songs in nurturing listening skills among A2-level English students emerges as a pertinent and captivating subject within the realm of language education. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) emphasizes exposure to authentic auditory sources in honing language skills. Within this framework, videos and songs in English stand as authentic and culturally rich resources that offer invaluable opportunities for students to enhance their listening comprehension.

Integrating audio-visual resources is a cornerstone of modern language pedagogy, providing a comprehensive and interactive approach to improving speaking skills in English language learning. This research provides the basis for an in-depth analysis of the practical applications, challenges, and future directions for harnessing the potential of audio-visual aids to help language learners improve their English language proficiency and communication skills. Within this context, this academic article aims to delve into and analyze the impact of videos and songs on developing listening skills among A2-level English students. Through a rigorous investigative approach, the study identifies and elucidates the advantages these resources offer in enhancing students' abilities to comprehend and process spoken English. Furthermore, the article seeks to provide practical recommendations and effective pedagogical strategies for maximizing the use of videos and songs in the EFL classroom, thereby enriching the teaching and learning processes in this specific context.

Origin and Theoretical and Practical Background

Over the last few years, teachers have witnessed how the rapid development of technology has positively influenced the teaching and learning process of the English language. The use of audio-visual resources has made it possible to immerse students in a new world of knowledge, where the study of different aspects of a language can be learned without barrels.

At the same time, the culture of the English-speaking countries can be lived to understand the emotions, feeling, thoughts, and ways of behavior people have in those countries.

According to Sherman (2003), using audio-visual material provides essential arguments for teachers using videos in their classroom languages. Videos offer practical activities that can be incorporated into lesson plans, showing how the videos can bring the world and culture into the classroom in a productive way.

English teachers worldwide have faced different issues in developing the linguistic skills of their students, especially when the focus is listening skills, which have been a challenge for students throughout the years; the lack of honest communication through the English language among students in English classes has increased, one of the reasons could be the lack of authentic material in the classroom, most of the teachers use the course book provided by the institution and use it as an only resource to enhance the language and foster an environment for teaching and learning, it could create an ineffective climate to foster the oral interaction among learners. (Eckard & Kearny (1982) cited by Chamba, M., & Gavilanez, C. 2019).

General Contextualization of the Subject

Nowadays, teachers have many options of resources available online and offline; these tools have eased how teachers plan their classes and address their students to get the integrated development of language skills. Teachers have included new strategies based on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (Buabeng-Andoh, C.2012) to influence students' learning. Listening skills have been, over the years, a burdensome stone for learners of English as a foreign language since they have not had the chance to be exposed to the language through different experiences of learning; in the countries where they live, people do not speak the English language so students find almost impossible to be in contact with the target language, teachers must create a bilingual environment making use of these tools.

Over the last few years, the lack of honest communication through the English language among students in English classes has increased in learners of English as a foreign language; one of the reasons could be the lack of authentic material in the classroom, most of the teachers use the course book provided by the institution and use it as an only resource to enhance the language and foster an environment for teaching and learning, it could create an

ineffective climate to encourage the oral interaction among learners. (Eckard & Kearny (1982) cited by Chamba, M., & Gavilanez, C. 2019).

Eckard & Kearny (1981) pointed out that textbooks count on short and direct answers that the learners memorize, and it does not respond to an honest conversation with native speakers; for that reason, learners feel uncomfortable at the time to hold a dialogue in a natural environment. Listening as comprehension has been the traditional way of thinking about the nature of listening; this is based on the belief that the primary purpose of listening in foreign language learning is to ease understanding of spoken production. Nowadays, researchers have another conception of Listening; they think of Listening as acquisition; this latter view of Listening focuses on how Listening can provide Input to the learners that help them to develop the language. (Jack C. Richard, 2008)

When listening to the spoken discourse, learners must deal with some aspects that make the listening skills hard to get, and sometimes, when they are listening to a speech, people speak so fast that it is almost impossible for them to get the whole information given in it. There is no chance to listen to it again; everyday speech is done very fast, although speech rates can vary considerably, as sample Radio monologs may contain 160 words per minute, while dialogues can consist of up to 220 words per minute. (Jack C. Richard, 2008)

Numan, D. (1997) pointed out that Listening is an important language skill that must be integrated; with practical listening skills, learners will learn to communicate effectively. Two processes are involved in developing listening skills: Top-Down and Bottom-Up.

Learners use top-down processes when they have enough prior knowledge to understand the meaning of the incoming message; this background permits them to interact effectively at the time to answer, formulate questions, and report information in conversations. On the contrary, learners use bottom-up processes when they apply linguistic knowledge to understand them; in these processes, learners focus on individual words and phrases and construct meaning from the smallest unit of spoken language to the whole content in a linear mode.

According to M. Underwood (1989), learners feel listening is the most challenging skill because they cannot control the speed of the delivery. In addition, learners need help to concentrate on getting the meaning; most of the time, they need help processing information in a foreign

language due to the need for more familiarity with the new language. To overcome these situations at the time of learning a language, it is mandatory to expose the learners to many experiences that provide them with the knowledge, abilities, and aptitudes needed to achieve the goal of communicating in a foreign language.

Supiyati (2022) stated that using audio-visual resources is suitable for improving students' learning outcomes. It permits students to create an appropriate environment for creating experiences that give the students the Input needed to feel confident at the time to express their ideas in the target language. Language teaching could be a complex process for learners from foreign countries; teachers must domain strategies and resources that help them immerse in the language. To accomplish this goal nowadays, technology must have a critical role in transferring scientific knowledge to learners using different devices; teachers should select the appropriate technology for their teaching-learning situation to scaffold their learners to learn better (Ismail, 2006). In addition, audio-visual material can create a natural learning environment through them; students can recreate different circumstances of their natural lives, making the learning process an opportunity of learning unique that cannot equate with other kinds of learning. These resources contribute significantly to the teaching and learning process of English language skills (Larsen-Freeman,2000).

According to Thammil (2007), cited by Make & Jonas (2018), audio-visual materials make the learning process more focused, realistic, and dynamic. So, teachers must plan their lessons by choosing topics and resources based on the learning outcomes they want to obtain from the learners. Despite the different conceptions of audio-visual material, all layouts say visual material means "exposure to real language" (Widdowson, 1990).

Due to the variety of audio-visual materials such as filmstrips, tape recordings, cartoons, flipcharts, slide projectors, video compact discs, multimedia, radios, maps, graphs, models, posters, pictures, and flashcards among others that teachers can effectively use to make their classes more meaningful for their learners and making easier to develop the speaking skills in them. Audio-visuals permit teachers to grab learners' attention and keep them motivated during their learning (Charles & Robert 1998, cited by Make and Yonas 2018).

Nowadays, there has been a great revolution in Education with the use of the Internet; educational institutions have had enormous changes over the last few years, and remote

Education has come to stay. The use of new resources available online makes the classes more realistic, and it must promote "learning to learn," the acquisition of knowledge and skills that make it possible to continue learning over time. This aspect makes teachers redesign how to produce knowledge to respond to the day's demands. (Chhabra, P.2012).

It is mandatory to mention the computer-assisted language learning approach (CALL), an interactive method of instruction that helps learners achieve their learning goals at their own pace and ability. This method uses computer technology in teaching/ learning procedures such as presentation, practice, and feedback. This approach has several benefits for the learners, among them the following. It can enrich English language skills, foster collaborative and cooperative learning, create a realistic environment, and provide impartial feedback, among other positive aspects while working online. (Kumar, E., & Sreehari, P. 2009).

Enormous online resources exist that can be applied in English classes to develop each aspect of the language. These tools are classified according to Online Tools for Language Teaching (OTLT). In the following website, teachers can find the most relevant tools for teaching and learning ((http://c4pt.co.uk/Directory), which supplies a comprehensive list of tools for formal, personal, group, and organizational learning.

Based on their primary functions and features, the online tools are classified into twelve categories: Learning content management systems; communication; live and virtual worlds; social networking; and bookmarking; blogs and wikis; presentation and resources sharing; website creating; web exercise creation; web search engines; dictionaries; and concordances; and utilities. (Son, J. B. (2011)

Garrett (2009) pointed out that using these tools does not mean learners use them correctly for the purpose for which they were created; teachers must design structured assignments, and follow-up work may help with their proper use.

Among the different options that have been mentioned so far. It is essential to highlight videos and songs as enjoyable resources to help learners develop their listening skills. Using video has always been associated with the fact that it allows learners to enhance their listening skills. Videos have received plenty of attention from educators due to their effectiveness in developing the target language for foreign learners. (I. Valtova, 1995). It is important to remember that learners' multiple intelligences tell us that learners do not learn in the same

way, so some learn better by watching, others learn better by listening, and so on. Using video materials, teachers provide different types of learners with several methods of simultaneous learning that also extend their language experience. Videos allow for exploring a wide array of real language experiences that improve their learning environment and contextualize their learning process. (J.Sherman, 2003)

Hornby (1990) pointed out that a song is a piece of music with words and phrases that are sung; in songs, learners can find a package complete of information regarding a foreign country inside a song, culture, vocabulary, Listening, grammar, and a host of other language skills in just a few rhymes. Moreover, songs can provide relaxation and be the basis for the following lessons.

Orlova (2003) claims that there are many methodological purposes for songs that are applied in class. Among them are Practicing the rhythm, stress, and intonation patterns of the English language, teaching vocabulary and grammar, developing listening comprehension, listening acquisition, writing skills, and speaking; for the last mentioned, songs can be used to discuss different topics included in the song.

Ruller (1999) pointed out that the use of songs enhances students' motivation since they enjoy songs, and this contributes to the development of positive attitudes; the song also provides an opportunity and a context for interesting repetition and reinforces listening and speaking skills because all the learners must focus on the duration of the activity. (Saricoban and Metin, 2000).

General Objective

To determine the impact of the use of videos and songs on the development of listening comprehension skills in A2-level English learners.

Specific Objectives

- To analyze the effectiveness of different types of videos and songs in improving listening comprehension in English.
- To examine how the frequency and duration of exposure to English videos and songs affect A2-level learners' listening comprehension.

- To assess the influence of complementary factors, such as learners' motivation and cultural context, on the effectiveness of videos and songs in improving listening comprehension.

Scope and Limitations

Among our scope is that the methodology focused on a deep understanding of the student population and learning preferences, providing a complete vision of the educational experience. The need to improve listening comprehension skills was identified, pointing out a key area for developing pedagogical strategies and allocating online resources. The results suggest that students have specific preferences, highlighting the importance of adapting teaching methods and course content to improve motivation and engagement.

The limitations are based on the experience of only students at the Language Center of the Technical University of Babahoyo, which could limit the generalization of the results to other institutions or educational contexts. The study was only with A2 level students, which could limit the findings' applicability to different English proficiency levels.

Applied Methodology

The methodology applied in this research is predominantly descriptive, focusing on a detailed understanding of the Language Center of the Technical University of Babahoyo student population. A comprehensive survey with 10 questions explored students' preferences, challenges, and perceptions regarding language skills, emphasizing listening comprehension. The thematic structure of the survey, which covers interests, obstacles, and the evaluation of pedagogical strategies, allows a complete view of the student's educational experience.

The research focused on providing a detailed analysis without prioritizing statistical inference or generalization of results. The demographic details and the classification of competencies by difficulty showed a deep and specific understanding of the reality at the Language Center.

DEVELOPMENT

During the initial stage of this research, a contextual analysis of the Language Center and the student cohort belonging to the Technical University of Babahoyo was carried out. This contextual assessment is crucial for effectively directing the research methodology.

After one week of environmental immersion, a data collection tool was implemented: a survey distributed via Google Forms, targeted explicitly at second-level students of the Language Center. This survey aims to deepen the contextual understanding and obtain relevant and meaningful data for the research.

Previous Methodological Strategy

Pilot Survey

Prior to the execution of the main survey titled "Influence of Videos and Songs in the Development of Listening Skills in A2-Level Students of English at the Languages Center of the Technical University of Babahoyo," a pilot survey was conducted. The purpose of this preliminary phase was to validate the structure, clarity, and relevance of the questions, as well as the functionality of the selected platform for data collection.

Pilot Sample Selection

For the pilot survey, 10 students were selected, two from each course, from the target research population. This sample was carefully chosen to reflect the diversity of skills, gender, age, and other relevant factors of the student population, thus ensuring a true representation.

Implementation of the Pilot Survey

The pilot survey was administered using Google Forms, the same platform chosen for the final survey. The questions in the pilot were kept identical to those in the final survey to ensure the accuracy of the results. Detailed instructions were also provided on how to respond to each type of question, whether multiple-choice, yes/no, or using a Likert scale.

Feedback Collection

After the students completed the survey, their feedback was requested regarding several critical aspects of the instrument, including:

The clarity of the questions.

The ease of navigation and survey format.

The relevance of the content and the questions posed.

Demographic Data and Previous Experience

As part of the pilot survey, demographic and prior experience questions were included to contextualize the responses. These items covered:

Age and gender.

Current level of English proficiency.

Context and mode of English learning (for example, self-taught, formal classes, etc.).

Experience with private English studies.

Personal preferences and motivations for learning English.

Self-assessment of highlighted English skills.

Content Preferences

In addition, inquiries were made about preferences for content in English, such as:

Enjoyment of videos, movies, documentaries, and series in English.

Preferred types of audiovisual materials for practicing listening comprehension.

Preliminary Conclusions

The feedback collected after the pilot survey suggests that the students found the instructions clear and the survey format intuitive. The questions were perceived as relevant and of great importance to their educational process. The demographic and prior experience responses provided a deep understanding of the students' context, which will be invaluable for interpreting data in the final survey.

Next Steps

Based on the results of the pilot survey, necessary adjustments will be made to improve the survey before its broader application. These adjustments may include rephrasing questions that were found to be ambiguous, improving instructions where necessary, and confirming the relevance of all included questions.

This process ensures that the final survey will be fine-tuned to collect precise and meaningful data that will contribute to the objective of assessing the influence of videos and songs on the development of listening comprehension skills in A2-level English students.

Evaluation Instrument Aimed at the Student Population

The evaluation instrument to be applied to the student population will consist of 10 items, integrating a mix of multiple-choice and binary (yes/no) response options.

Regarding the thematic structure of the questionnaire, the questions are classified into three main categories: the student's interests, the challenges faced, and the perception of the relevance of the activities and pedagogical strategies implemented in the classroom.

More specifically, the first category focuses on discerning the topics that generate the most and least motivation in students and evaluating the value they place on listening comprehension skills compared to other linguistic skills. The second category seeks to identify the main obstacles students face when dealing with oral texts, including questions about which factors they find most challenging, whether they better understand audio-visual formats, and how they handle situations of partial misunderstanding in discourse.

Finally, the third category aims to collect personal opinions from students on the effectiveness of the listening comprehension activities in class and their perception of possible improvements in the pedagogical approach or in giving greater relevance to these activities to optimize their learning process.

Questionnaire Implemented for Students

The questionnaire to be administered to the students will consist of 10 questions combining demographic data, multiple-choice and yes/no responses. Regarding the content of the form, we could divide the questions into three categories: interests, difficulties, and appropriateness, according to their point of view, of the activities and strategies used in class.

They are broadly speaking. First, the questions related to their interests were aimed at finding the topics that most motivate students and those that least, and the importance they give to listening about the other skills. Second, we will try to find out the complications that most affect students when it comes to understanding an oral text by asking them which variables they consider more complicated, whether they know better when it comes to audio-visual

format, and how students handle the situation when they do not understand part of the discourse.

Finally, we will focus on knowing their opinion about the usefulness of the activities with which listening comprehension is worked on in class and whether they believe they could improve their level if the activities were done in another way or given greater importance.

Description of the Population and Sample

The target population for this study comprises students from the Basic Level II of English, distributed across five classes in morning and evening schedules (F, G, H, I, J) at the Language Center (CENID) of the Technical University of Babahoyo (UTB). Each class has 80 students, totaling 400. Classes are conducted virtually for five hours a week, spread over four days.

Population and Sample:

Population: 400 Second Level students, sections: (F, G, H, I, J) of the Language Center of the Technical University of Babahoyo.

Sample: The formula = N / ((N-1) * e^2 + 1) was applied to obtain a sample.

n → sample.

N → universe.

E → error coefficient – is discretionary, determined by the researcher.

*n = 400 / ((400-1) * 0.102 + 1)*

n = 80

Study Variables:

Independent Variable: Videos and songs

Dependent Variable: Listening comprehension

Inquiry Instrument Applied to the Student Cohort

The inquiry instrument for the student population consists of 10 items, incorporating multiple-choice and dichotomous (yes/no) response options. In terms of the content structuring of the instrument, the questions are grouped into three categories: student preferences, obstacles

in listening comprehension, and assessment of the effectiveness of the methodologies and pedagogical strategies applied in the educational field.

In detail, the first category addresses student interests, aimed at identifying the topics that generate more or less motivation and evaluating the importance attributed to listening skills compared to other linguistic competencies. The second category focuses on elucidating the main challenges students face in understanding oral texts, inquiring about factors perceived as more challenging, their level of understanding in audio-visual formats, and strategies adopted in the face of partial misunderstanding of the discourse.

Finally, the third category aims to gather student perceptions about the usefulness of listening comprehension activities implemented in the classroom and their opinions regarding possible improvements in the methodology or in prioritizing these activities to strengthen their listening skills.

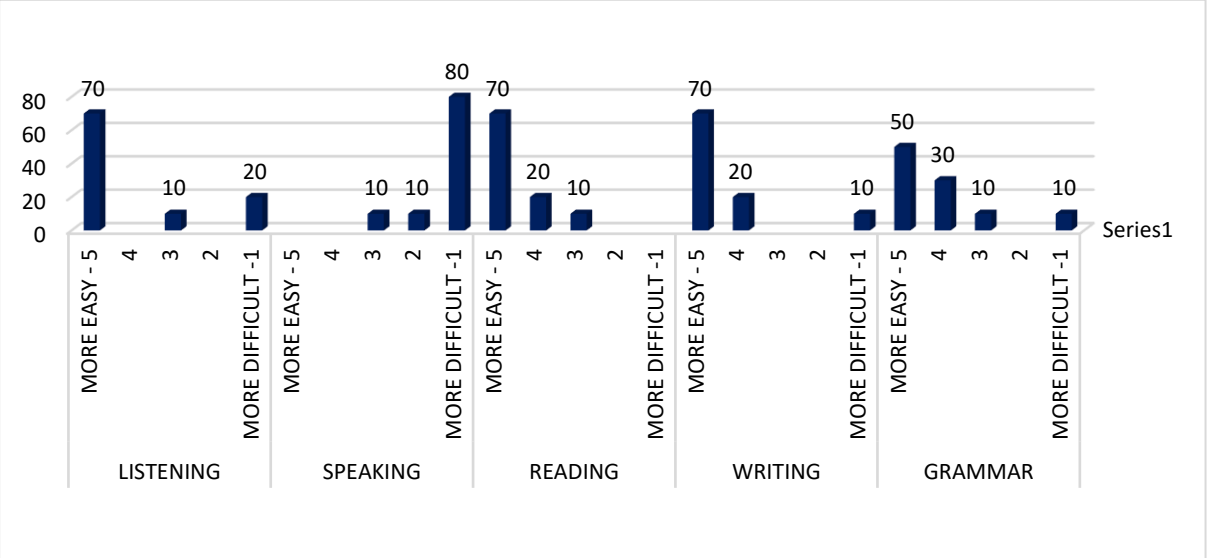
Analysis of the Responses to the Survey Applied to Students

The questionnaire was applied to the student population during a lecture session to ensure clarity and complete understanding of the questions. Regarding participant demographics, the questionnaire was completed by 80 students aged between 19 and 25 years. The findings derived from this survey are presented below: Using a scale where 1 represents the most significant difficulty and five the least, the students ranked the competencies/linguistic areas they perceived as most challenging. This initial question intended to identify student perceptions about the skills or aspects of learning English they found most challenging. We were asked to rank them according to their difficulty level in the following competencies: reading comprehension, listening comprehension, grammar, written expression, and oral expression.

1. Using a scale where 5 is the highest value and 1 is the lowest, rank - according to your opinion - which skill you find most interesting to work on in English class?

Figure 1

Perception Skills



Note: Elaborated by author

Analysis

Listening and Reading are found to be the most interesting skills to work on for the majority of students (70% ranking them as 5), indicating a high level of interest in these receptive language skills. Speaking is considered the least interesting (80% ranking it as 1), suggesting that students might find speaking activities less engaging or more challenging.

Writing, like Listening and Reading, also holds a high interest for a majority of students (70% ranking it as 5). Grammar shows a more balanced distribution of interest, with 50% finding it most interesting, but also 10% finding it least interesting, and 40% rating it at intermediate levels of interest. The lack of percentages for certain rankings (such as the rank of 4 for Listening) suggests that either those options were not selected by any respondents or the data may be incomplete. Additionally, no students found Speaking to be the most interesting, and no students found Reading to be the least interesting, highlighting clear preferences and aversions among the skills.

The data also reveals that the students seem to have a preference for activities that involve processing and understanding language (Listening, Reading) and show less interest in

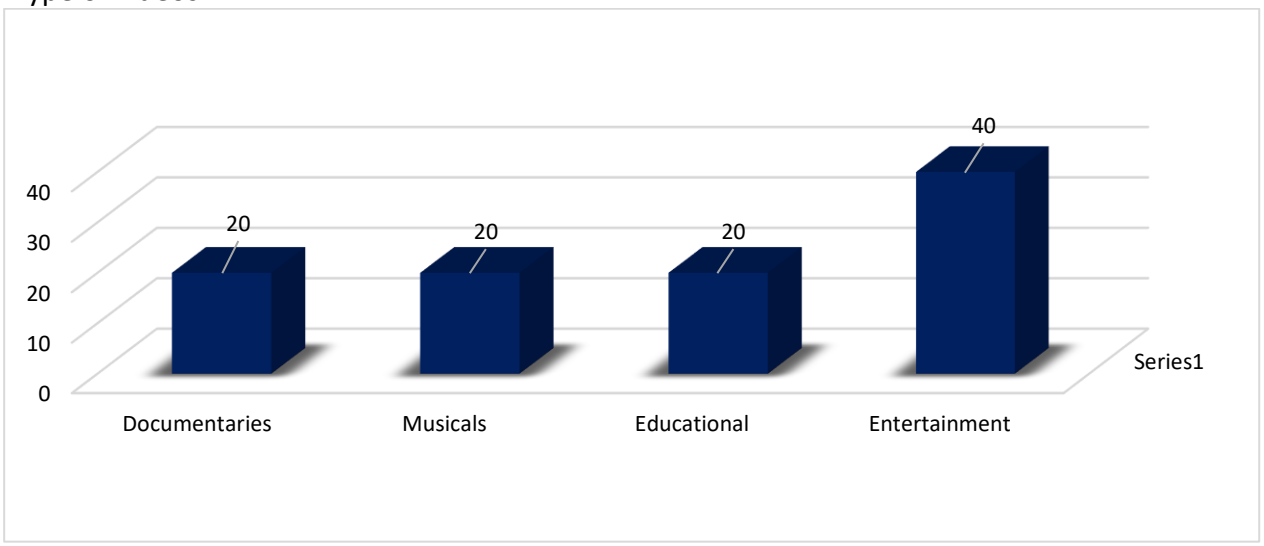
productive skills, especially Speaking. This could be due to a variety of factors including self-confidence, perceived difficulty, or the teaching methods employed.

2. What type of video in English do you consider to be the easiest for you to understand?

Documentaries, Musicals, Educational and Entertainment.

Figure 2

Type of videos



Note: Elaborated by author

Analysis

The majority, 60% (YES), indicate that there is a specific type of videos that they find easier to understand in English class. This high percentage suggests a clear and widespread preference for a particular type of audio that facilitates comprehension.

14% (not) do not consider that there is a specific type of audio that is easier to understand. This group could similarly prefer several types of videos or not identify a clear preference.

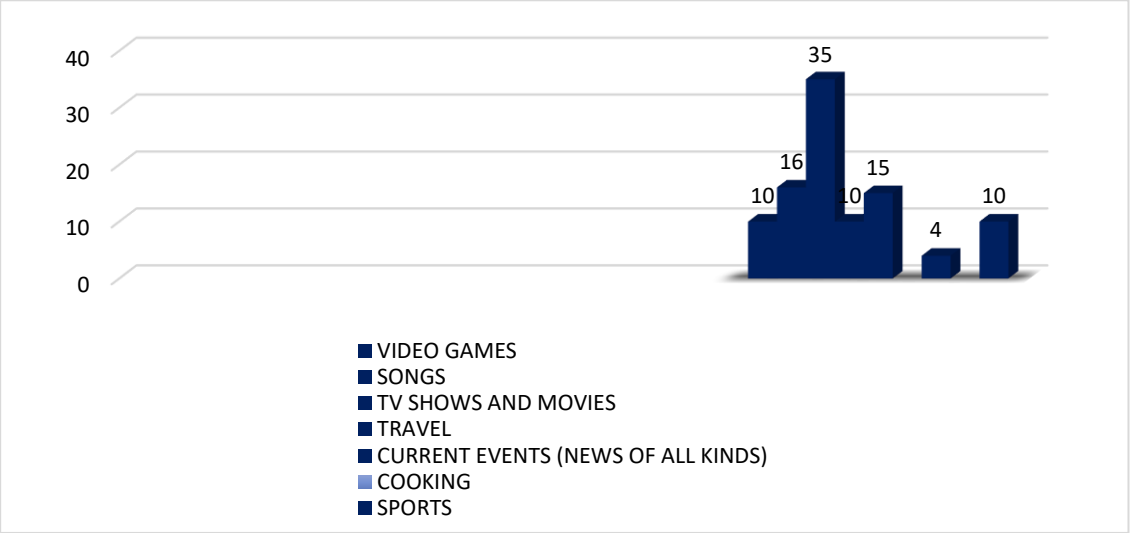
26% (maybe) are still deciding or have a clear preference for the type of audio that is easiest to understand. Various factors, such as the diversity of teaching-learning styles or content, may contribute to this indecision.

3. From the proposed topics, choose the three that you find most interesting

Video games, Songs, Tv shows, Travel, Current events, Cooking and Sports.

Figure 3

Most Interesting Topics



Note: Elaborated by author

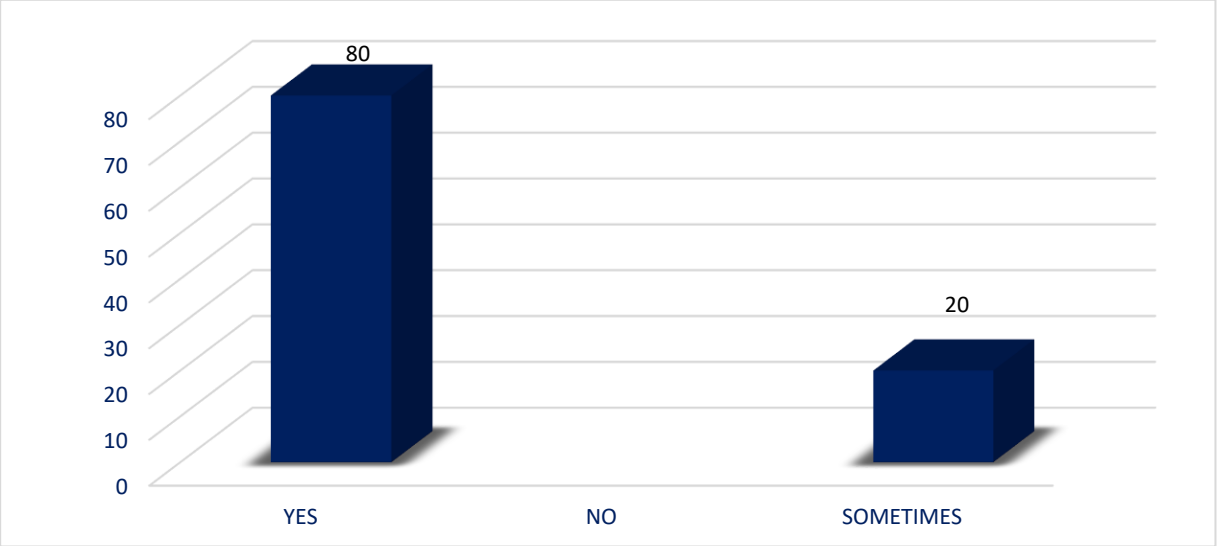
Analysis

In examining student preferences for topics within listening activities, the data indicates that "TV Shows and Movies" are the most engaging content, capturing the interest of 35% of the respondents. This suggests that visual storytelling mediums effectively capture and maintain student attention due to their narrative richness and the visual context they provide. "Songs" also holds a significant appeal, with 16% of the student cohort indicating a preference, which may be attributed to the rhythmic and melodic elements that facilitate memory and language retention. "Current Events" garnered 15% interest, reflecting a desire for content that connects learners with real-world discourse and contemporary issues. "Video Games" and "Travel" resonated with 10% of the students, indicating a moderate engagement with interactive and experiential themes. Conversely, "Sports" and "Daily Life" topics were less favored, with 4% and 10% respectively, suggesting these may be less universal in their appeal. The absence of interest in "Cooking" and "Fashion" within this dataset may indicate a need for curricular diversification to encompass a more comprehensive array of interests that reflect the diverse student body. The data underscores the importance of incorporating compelling and relatable content into language learning curricula to enhance motivation and engagement.

4. As a general rule, do you understand and complete the listening exercises that are carried out in class?

Figure 4

Understand and Successfully



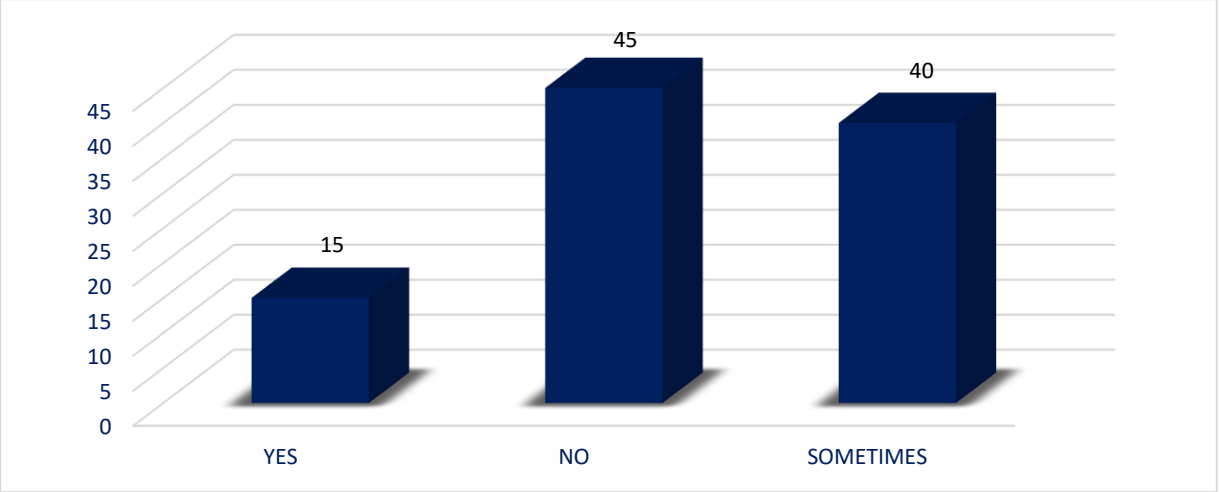
Note: Elaborated by author

Analysis

80% of the students responded affirmatively, indicating that, as a general rule, they understand and complete the listening exercises in class. On the other hand, no students selected the "No" option, suggesting that none of the respondents considered themselves failing to understand and complete the listening exercises thoroughly. 20% of the students indicated that they sometimes understand and complete these exercises successfully, which could indicate some inconsistency in their listening comprehension ability or the difficulty of the presented exercises. Overall, the results show a positive trend towards listening comprehension in the classroom environment, with a small proportion of students experiencing difficulties occasionally.

5. When you do not understand the audio, do you feel frustrated/stressed?

Figure 5
Emotions



Note: Elaborated by author

Analysis

Low Prevalence: (yes) 15% of respondents admitted feeling frustration or stress when not understanding the audio during English class. This group may face specific obstacles in listening comprehension during English classes, which could affect their learning experience.

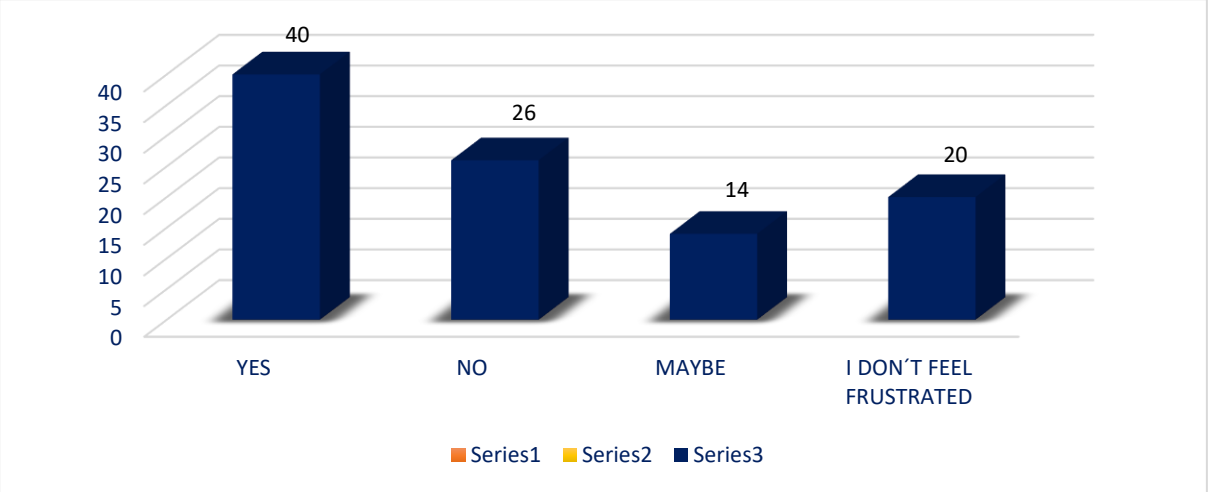
Majority Response: (not) 45% indicated they do not feel frustrated or stressed during English classes when they do not understand the audio. This response suggests that the majority of respondents feel comfortable and confident in the English class environment, which may be indicative of a positive learning environment.

(SOMETIMES) 40% mentioned experiencing frustration or stress occasionally, suggesting a significant frequency of negative emotions at certain times in class. Emotional variability may affect information retention during English lessons, pointing to the importance of addressing these intermittent emotions.

6. Does that frustration affect your understanding of the rest of the audio?

Figure 6

Emotion Influences



Note: Elaborated by author

Analysis

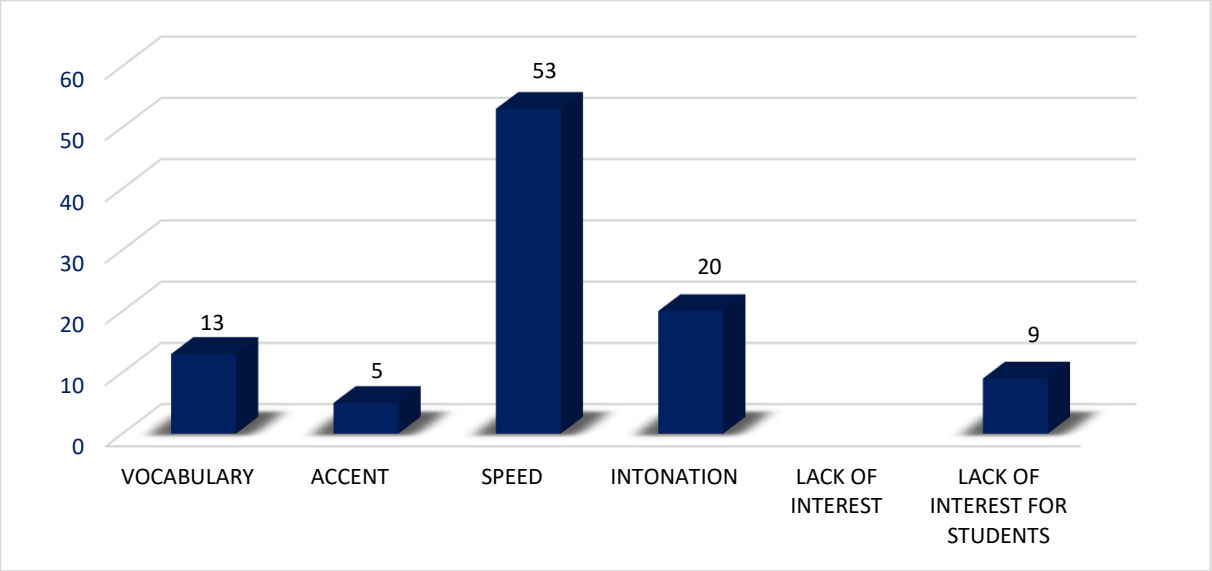
In analyzing how frustration influences the understanding of the rest of the audio, 40% of the respondents indicated that it does affect their comprehension, while 26% stated that it has no influence. 14% of the participants were undecided, responding that perhaps frustration might influence them, and 20% declared that they do not feel frustrated, suggesting that frustration does not impact their listening comprehension. It reveals that most students' frustration negatively affects their understanding of the audio. However, there is a significant proportion that is not affected or does not experience frustration at all.

7. What main factor do you attribute comprehension difficulty to when facing challenges in a listening comprehension activity in the classroom?

Vocabulary, Accent, Speed, Intonation, Lack of interest and Lack of interest for students.

Figure 7

Listening Challenges



Note: Elaborated by author

Analysis

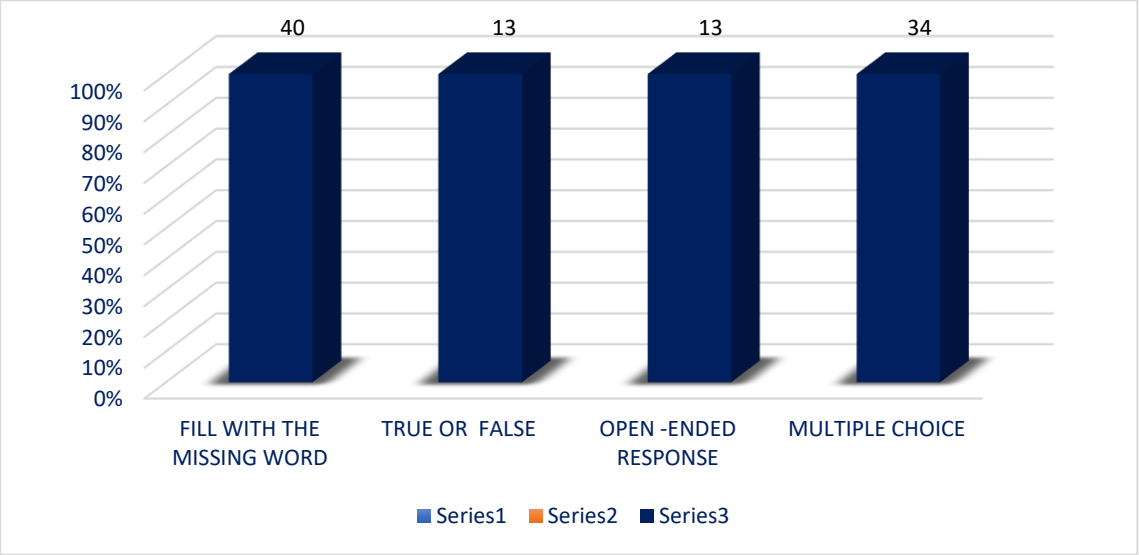
In response to the question about the main factors contributing to comprehension difficulty during listening comprehension activities in the classroom, the results are as follows: the speed of speech (Speed) is identified as the primary obstacle, with 53% of students pointing it out as a difficulty factor. Intonation (Intonation) is the next most significant factor, with 20% of responses. Vocabulary (Vocabulary) and lack of interest among students (Lack of Interest for Students) are also considered relevant factors, accounting for 13% and 9%, respectively. Meanwhile, the accent (Accent) is perceived as a minor problem, with only 5% of students considering it challenging.

8. What exercises do you prefer when doing a listening activity?

Filling with the missing word, True or False, Open- ended response and Multiple Choice.

Figure 8

Listening Strategies



Note: Elaborated by author

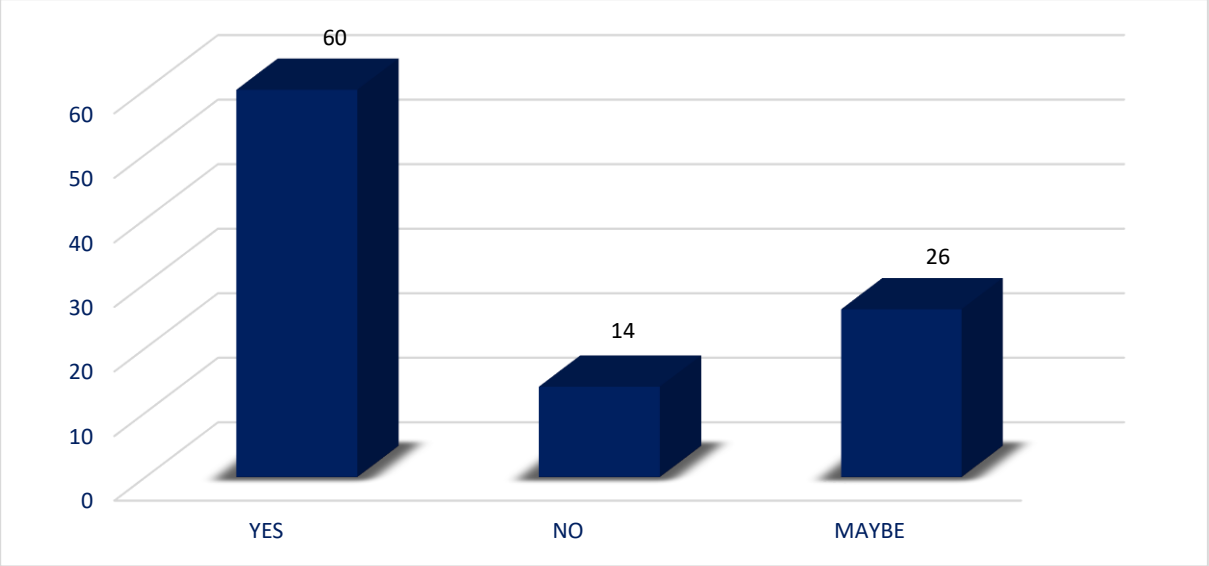
Analysis

Regarding preferences for types of listening exercises, the data presents an apparent inclination among respondents. 'Fill with the Missing Word' tasks are favored by 40% of the participants, indicating a preference for exercises that challenge their ability to discern and retrieve specific lexical items within a given context. 'Multiple Choice' questions are preferred by 34%, suggesting that a substantial portion of students appreciate the guided recall and recognition aspects that this format provides. 'True or False' and 'Open-Ended Response' exercises garnered 13% preference, reflecting a comparatively lower favor for binary decision tasks and activities requiring comprehensive, unrestricted expression. These insights suggest that while learners show diverse preferences, there is a notable inclination towards exercises that balance the retrieval of specific information with recognition-based tasks. This underscores the importance of a varied listening exercise approach that caters to different learning styles and cognitive strategies.

9. Do you find the listening comprehension activity is approached in class motivating?

Figure 9

Listening Comprehension



Note: Elaborated by author

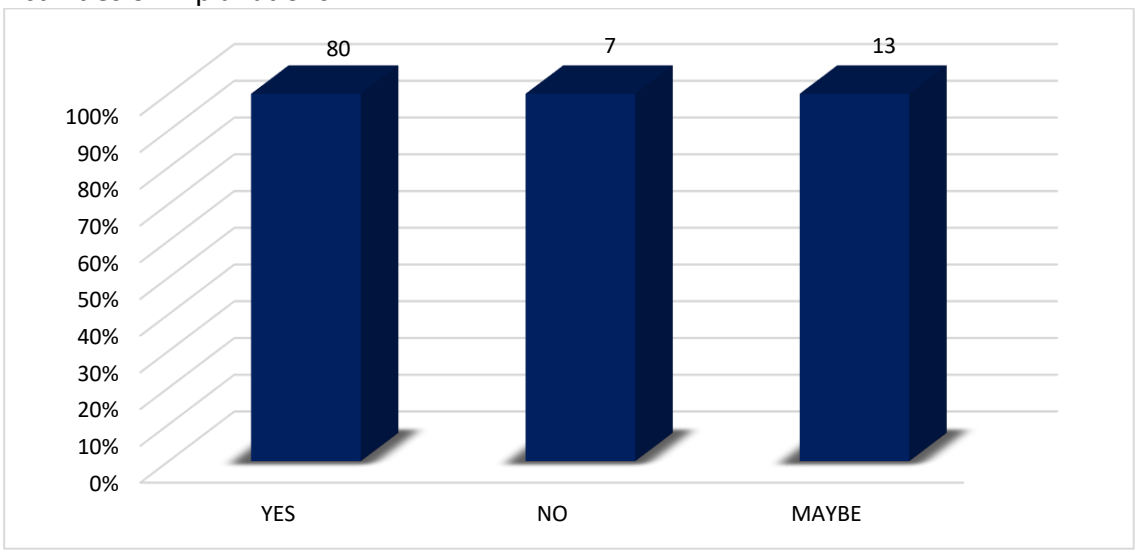
Analysis

Upon examining the provided data, most students, representing 60%, affirm that the methodology employed for auditory comprehension exercises in class is indeed motivating. This suggests that the current pedagogical approach to teaching listening skills is mainly practical in engaging students. Conversely, a minority of 14% do not find the approach motivating, which may indicate a discrepancy in meeting the student cohort's diverse learning preferences or needs. Meanwhile, 26% of the respondents occasionally find the listening activities motivating, pointing towards a potential variability in the perceived efficacy of the instructional methods or the content of the exercises. This data underscores the importance of a dynamic and inclusive teaching strategy that caters to the varying motivational drivers of students to maximize educational outcomes in language acquisition.

10. Would you find it beneficial for learning to have pre-activities introducing vocabulary or the theme before a listening exercise, and follow-up activities such as debates, reading the transcribed speech, or summarizing what was heard?

Figure 10

Activities or Explanations



Note: Elaborated by author

Analysis

Analyzing the response percentages, 80% of the participants answered affirmatively ("Yes"), indicating that they would find it beneficial to have pre- and post-activities for the listening exercise. 13% responded "Maybe," showing some indecision, and 7% responded negatively ("No"). Overall, the majority of participants expressed a positive interest in the idea of activities both before and after listening exercises.

General Analysis

Based on the dependent and independent variables, the objectives set, the population and sample studied, as well as the analysis of the responses to the survey questions, several general conclusions can be drawn about the influence of videos and songs on developing listening comprehension skills in A2 level English students:

Perception of the Difficulty of Linguistic Skills

As highlighted in the survey responses, students consider listening comprehension one of the most challenging skills. This suggests a need to focus more resources and pedagogical strategies on improving this skill.

Current Focus in the Classroom

Grammar receives the most attention, followed by writing and listening comprehension. This indicates that, although listening comprehension is recognized as challenging, it might receive a different teaching priority than other areas.

Emotional Impact of Listening Comprehension

Many students experience frustration or stress when facing difficulties in listening comprehension, which can negatively influence their learning process. However, there is also a considerable group of students who are not affected by these negative emotions.

Content and Methodology Preferences

Students show a notable preference for using videos compared to audio, indicating that visual elements can enhance motivation and understanding. Post-listening activities, such as debates or transcript analysis, are also beneficial, reinforcing the importance of a multimodal and active teaching strategy.

Need for Content Diversification

The topics of most interest to students include TV shows and movies, music, and current events while cooking and sports are less appealing. This underscores the importance of diversifying the content of educational materials to align with student interests and enhance their engagement and motivation.

In summary, these results highlight the importance of focusing on teaching listening comprehension more effectively, taking into account the preferences and challenges of students. Integrating more interactive teaching methods and diversifying content could significantly improve the learning process and student motivation in acquiring English listening skills.

Discusion

The results from the study highlight the importance of focusing on teaching listening comprehension through authentic materials and considering the challenges and preferences of the student's profile. Using authentic classroom resources such as songs or videos effectively improves students' learning process and their motivation to acquire listening comprehension skills. In a similar study, Toleuzhan et al. (2023) claim that using videos combined with blogs and songs in EFL environments is essential to enhance students' motivation. Moreover, it makes students the center of a learner-centered approach, which must be considered when teaching English in the classroom.

The students' perceptions of listening comprehension highlight the need to prioritize using technological tools in the learning process, particularly with receptive skills such as reading or listening, in which students tend to be less active. Chamba M. & Gavilanes C.'s (2019) findings display that early-level teachers relied heavily on texts and summarized readings to teach. These strategies resulted in insufficient effectiveness in developing listening comprehension. The study also found the need to incorporate activities to foster not only listening skills but also the development of speaking skills. Therefore, the results highlight the need to review and adjust EFL pedagogical practices to address students' needs and challenges.

Gokgoz B. (2023) establishes an essential perspective on teaching English as a foreign language by suggesting opportunities for improving the effectiveness of pedagogical practices. These opportunities are found in tasks in which videos or songs are used. On the other hand, educators must be aware of the students' challenges in developing listening comprehension through traditional practices. The emotional impact, evidenced by the frustration and stress experienced by students, can be relieved through audiovisual resources. Moreover, attention to body language improves comprehension and creates a more stimulating learning environment. This study encourages educators to rethink their pedagogical strategies for teaching English by integrating audiovisual materials into their teaching practices.

CONCLUSIONS

➢ The use of entertainment videos and songs has a significant impact on improving listening comprehension in English. Different genres, such as documentaries, musicals, and educational videos, are considered highly understandable by students. These videos help improve

students' comprehension of spoken English, making them valuable resources for language learning.

- The frequency with which students are exposed to videos and songs plays an essential role in developing stronger listening comprehension skills. Regular practice using these resources provokes students' enthusiasm and enjoyment of foreign languages.

- Complementary factors such as motivation and cultural background promote better pedagogical practices. Using audiovisual resources to teach listening skills motivates students during practice. In addition, considering the cultural context contributes to improving the teaching-learning of a foreign language. Knowing the students' preferences and tastes makes it possible to create appropriate educational activities that foster the development of listening skills.

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CHAPTER 7

THE USE OF INFOGRAPHICS AND CLOUDS TO DEVELOP PROACTIVE STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

This chapter explores the integration of infographics and collaborative word cloud activities to enhance student engagement, motivation, and understanding in virtual classrooms, focusing on A2 CEFR Level students at the University of Babahoyo. A structured lesson plan on COVID-19 was implemented, incorporating these digital tools to propose a proactive learning. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing quantitative data from structured surveys and qualitative insights from participant feedback. Results indicate that infographics and word clouds significantly boost student motivation and participation. Infographics were found to be effective in simplifying complex concepts and increasing engagement, with 78.4% of students affirming their motivational impact. Collaborative word cloud activities also demonstrated a positive influence, with 66.1% of students reporting high motivation levels. Performance assessments showed diverse skill levels across groups, highlighting the need for specific educational strategies. The findings underscore the potential of these tools in enriching virtual learning experiences and suggest avenues for future research, including longitudinal studies and cross-disciplinary applications.

***Keywords*:** Infographics, tools, charts, information.

Resumen

Este capítulo explora la integración de infografías y actividades colaborativas de nubes de palabras para mejorar la participación, la motivación y la comprensión de los estudiantes en aulas virtuales, centrándose en estudiantes de nivel A2 CEFR de la Universidad de Babahoyo. Se implementó un plan de lección estructurado sobre COVID-19, incorporando estas herramientas digitales para fomentar el aprendizaje proactivo. El estudio utilizó un enfoque de métodos mixtos, empleando datos cuantitativos de encuestas estructuradas y perspectivas cualitativas de los comentarios de los participantes. Los resultados indican que las infografías y las nubes de palabras aumentan significativamente la motivación y la participación de los estudiantes. Las infografías demostraron ser efectivas para simplificar conceptos complejos y aumentar el compromiso, con el 78,4% de los estudiantes afirmando su impacto motivacional. Las actividades colaborativas de nubes de palabras también mostraron una influencia positiva, con el 66,1% de los estudiantes reportando altos niveles de motivación. Las evaluaciones de desempeño mostraron niveles de habilidad diversos entre los grupos, destacando la necesidad de estrategias educativas personalizadas. Los hallazgos subrayan el potencial de estas herramientas para enriquecer las experiencias de aprendizaje virtual y sugieren vías para futuras investigaciones, incluidos estudios longitudinales y aplicaciones interdisciplinarias.

Palabras claves: Infografías, herramientas, gráficos, información.

INTRODUCTION

If you've ever looked at a jumble of disparate words that seem to not correlate until you dig deeper, you've seen a word cloud. This is a special text display in which the most frequently used words are effectively highlighted by occupying more prominence in the representation. To some extent, understanding the general composition of sight words allows viewers to have an overview of the main themes of a text and can illustrate the main points of view of the author of the text (Miley & Read, 2011).

The most specific word that appears in a textual data source is the biggest and boldest that appears in a word cloud. The result demonstrates an engaging way for students to have a basic understanding of the available data. Word clouds are not just static images prepared before class, McGee (2020) indicates that "they can be dynamic, dancing images, whose words capture the ideas and emotions of students live, at the moment".

Teachers in general, and more especially those who teach in education, find themselves daily with the difficulty of capturing the attention of students, as well as motivating and encouraging them to learn. If new technologies contribute something to the work of teachers in the classroom, it is the possibility of presenting and transmitting the didactic element more easily. If the educator does not make an effort to assume this new style of communication, he will be confined in a different world and away from the real problems of his student (Santos, 1984, p. 30).

Tafazoli (2013) states that as the use of virtual worlds to support education is increasing in classrooms, word clouds have become attractive and are used to enhance personal and small-group study. According to research, this tool helps visual learners process the reading task, and Reyes and DeNoyelles (2016) suggest that it "facilitates class discussions and formative assessments through images."

This article aims to delve into the possible uses of word clouds as an educational strategy, demonstrating its use through an online word cloud generator. On this occasion, several programs are available to generate them: Concordle, Tagxedo and Wordle (Feinberg, 2009).

Incorporating infographics and cloud technology into the classroom is an effective way to engage and empower students. It promotes proactive learning by providing students with the

tools and resources to explore, collaborate, and manage their education effectively on the plan, mind mind, padlet, wordwall, educaplay, and others.

This study is to examine the effectiveness, or otherwise, of vector infographics on ESL students' acquisition of grammar, especially the use of tenses. After questioning college teachers about their teaching environment and main challenges, eight infographic designs were created to assist in the teaching of the simple present and simple past tenses. Ibrahim, T., & Maharaj, A. (2019). The impact of Infographics on language learning. *International Journal of Computer Science and Network Security*, 19(12), 47-60.

Visual graphics, such as infographics, play a crucial role in education by enhancing the communication of information. They break down complex ideas into easily digestible visual elements, making learning more engaging and accessible for students. As a result, infographics have become an important element of the education system, helping educators and learners alike in their quest for effective knowledge transfer. (Mol, 2011).

Literature Review

In topic-based inquiry, the teacher is required to give students a word cloud created from information on a particular subject or topic. Using the keywords from the word cloud, have students do some web-based research on the topic and find out as much as they can about it. They should try to use the keywords from the word cloud in their text.

Another way is a text-based review. Each time students study a text in class, make a word cloud of the text. Collect and save your word clouds until you have around ten. When you're ready for some review, hang the world clouds around the classroom and have students walk around and look at the word clouds and see how much they can remember about the text. Show the texts in plenary and try to get as much information about the text as possible.

The creation of an infographic can be developed as a group or individual activity in an environment with or without an internet connection since fosters research, creativity, cooperativeness, and production in the written and spoken space. This enables a student's ability to acquire information and learn, an infographic can also be created in order to provide information about non-grammatical content which gives flexibility to content. The content can be produced and presented by a teacher or a student. This media can be created on websites

like Canva, Genially, Piktochart, which are the most popular and effective tools for creating infographics due to their high amount of customizable templates.

Infographics in Education

One of the reasons why infographics are considered an ideal medium to promote teaching is the primary use of images. These processes are easier for the human mind than long sentences and words, because in it "the images at once and the texts linearly" (Smiciklas, 2012, p.7). Due to this evidence, the public to which the infographic will be intended will be able to assimilate the new information more quickly and efficiently. Word clouds can be created in minutes from any digital text by simply cutting and pasting. This means that you can produce these useful teaching materials from any authentic or web-based text to complement your teaching materials. They are very versatile and can be used in many ways to support language development. They are very colorful and therefore stimulating for visual learners. They can be collected and used to stimulate memory and increase the level of cognitive engagement with a text (Peachey, 2020).

A variety of word cloud generators are available online or through apps:

One of these is Concordle, which is free and creates a word cloud from any text you paste into the text field and can produce different types of word clouds: the colorful type, but also a black and white version and a version with the words is shown in alphabetical order. You can also choose which words are omitted from the word cloud. (Peachey, 2020). Another free website is “Tagxedo”: This allows the user to create a word cloud from any text or URL and convert the cloud into a specific shape. There are a wide variety of shapes to choose from and users can also edit the font type and colors used. This type of word cloud can be useful with younger students, as you can match the shape of the word cloud to the topic you are studying (Peachey, 2020), for example, a word cloud of a text about cats can be created in the form of a cat.

Among word cloud generators, Wordle may be the most versatile software to use. It is free and allows the user to cut and paste any text or website address and create a colorful word cloud based on the text. You can choose the fonts and the colors and the direction of the words etc. Wordle, created by IBM developer Jonathan Feinberg in 2009, is one of the most popular tools on the Internet for generating word clouds. It is easy to use and the user can

paste a bunch of text and enter the URL of any blog, blog feed, or other web page with an Atom or RSS feed. Its interface is easy to use and its results are considered "more personal and visual than others" compared to other similar tools. The developer of it described Wordle as a toy (Peachey, 2020).

Word cloud use and application

“Many teachers can incorporate word clouds in many ways to stimulate critical thinking. When students are thinking critically, they are more likely to find the task enjoyable, interesting, and motivating” (Reyes & DeNoyelles, 2016). This tool is useful for analyzing any type of text data, including essays, short answers, or written responses to opinion questions. One way word clouds can be used is to compare student responses to the same questions before and after a course, activity, or intervention to look for differences. In addition, a teacher asked students on the first day of an introductory course: what is communication?

In the final exam, the instructor asked the same students the same question and compared the word clouds. Probably in the first cloud of words, the most used words are "chat2", "dialogue", and "symbols". On the other hand, by the end of the course, the students, as a group, have focused on some key statistical concepts such as 'voice', 'speech', and 'interpretation' and have better articulated that communication is the exchange of ideas. and interaction among group members. (Fatimayin, 2018). On the other hand, Bromley (2013) states that today, technology, including digital media, has an increasingly important role both inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, all students need opportunities to become proficient in the use of electronic tools (...) Word clouds have great potential to motivate students to use technology and develop their vocabulary (p. 39).

Infographics use and application

Using infographics as a learning tool can indeed be an effective way to convey complex information clearly and visually. The idea that infographics improve information comprehension and retention has been supported by several studies. Mol's (2011) statement emphasizes the benefits of using infographics as a means of presenting complex information. Infographics can provide a structured overview of data that makes it easier for students to understand the main points and relationships in the data. They are especially effective for visual learners and can make complex concepts easier to understand. (Ozdamli, 2016).

In my professional experiences as an English teacher of the Universidad Técnica de Babahoyo – Cenid. The infographics are ideal for teaching new vocabulary, and grammar. I can create infographics that show images of objects, activities or concepts and their names in English. This helps students associate words with pictures and better understand their meanings. The grammar concepts for example using an infographic explaining the rules for using verb tenses like the present simple or past simple, with visual examples and concise explanations. Adding this tool to my virtual English lessons can make my activities more interesting and provide visual support for students. It's important to make infographics an integral part of your teaching strategy and make sure they meet your learning objectives.

Advantages of using infographics in English classes

Innumerable advantages are presented through the use of this tool applied to education, then we have; the information to be presented is done in a simpler way, so the message is better understood. The reader retains the information more easily thanks to the combination of image and text, which captures their attention. Infographics are easy to publish on social networks (Simobolizate, 2016). In addition, WeebleBooks (w.d.) states that students love easy-to-understand information such as statistics, numbers, graphs, and figures. Infographics are ideal for gathering a large amount of data, in a simple and pleasant-to-understand format, so they will not only appreciate the format, but also memorize and process the information more quickly. Unlike written information, which gets lost in paragraphs, headings, and titles, infographics jump out at you from any page of a book or digital content.

Disadvantages of using infographics in English classes

Creating an infographic takes a long time, infographic design is complicated, behind an infographic there is real graphic work. There are other drawbacks to computer graphics, but they can be solved. In fact, infographics do not allow good referencing, since on a site they appear only as an image, to do this, it is necessary to add an explanatory text below to increase their reference. Also, computer graphics can be very easily used and stolen by other Internet users. To do this, remember to put the logo or name of your company and introduce elements that refer to your brand (Simbolizate, 2016; LolUp, 2021).

As students of English classes, we are going to discuss two tools for the use of infographics, such as Genially and Easil. These tools allow you to create infographics in a simpler way that

captures the attention of students and teachers, in order to have a better understanding and assimilation of the information. In the field of education, word clouds can be a very effective tool to drive online interaction, conferences, or meetings to engage an audience, collect feedback, and promote reflection and brainstorming. Another way word clouds can be used is to provide students with feedback on their writing. For example, if a student has a writing assignment that the teacher wants to critique, the teacher can provide a word cloud of the text to help the student visually identify problems with the writing. In this sense, the word cloud acts as a map for further analysis.

One topic where word clouds can be applied is the reconstruction of sentences. The teacher must create word clouds from sentences. Then show students the word clouds and see if they can use their understanding of the syntax to piece together the sentence. Some word clouds focus on content words and miss prepositions and articles, so you can have students add those as well. You can make this more fun and competitive by offering points for sentence quality and bonus points if they use two or more words from the word cloud in the same sentence.

“They can help a student understand main themes, identify unfamiliar terms, review previous material, theorize connections between words, and encourage students to read the entire text” (Reyes & DeNoyelles, 2016) and “can help writing development through activities that require students to plan, compose, edit predictions, text structures, and/or arguments, leading to a final draft of a document to be used for subsequent practice-based activities” (Perveen, 2021)

Teachers can create a word cloud from a text that students have studied. When they have finished studying the text, the teacher gives the students the word cloud and asks them to use it to write a short summary of the text. In a dialogue re-enactment, the teacher can give students a short four-line conversation/dialogue to practice. Once they have had some time to practice, remove the text and give them a word cloud for each text. Have students repeat the conversation using the word clouds as prompts.

According to Jumpakate (2020), vocabulary learning enables EFL/ESL learners to understand context to communicate effectively to develop target skills and provide opportunities for success in academic and future careers. In other words, the more vocabulary students can learn, the more proficient they will be in the target language. With the growth of technology,

teachers can encourage students to expose new vocabulary more easily through the use of online tools (p. 15).

Another topic where word clouds can be applied is vocabulary preparation. The teacher needs to produce a word cloud from a text that the students need to study. Before reading the text, the teacher shows them the word cloud and asks them to cross out the words they already know. He then asks them to use a dictionary to check the vocabulary they are not sure about. If there are many words, the teacher could give different words to pairs or groups of students, have them research the words, and then teach students in other groups. Another activity is to produce a word cloud based on a text that students have already studied. Give each pair of students a copy of the word cloud and have them test each other's memory for the text vocabulary.

Another interesting way to use word clouds is with song lyrics. Find a short song that your students might like and create a word cloud from the lyrics. Play a short part of the song for your students and then give them the word cloud and ask them to see how much of the song they can piece together using the word cloud to help them. Once they have had time to write down what they remember of the song, play it back and ask them to fill it in with lower levels, you could use a song they already know quite well.

Word clouds can serve as a great pre-reading activity by asking students to predict or identify potential keywords. Keywords act as stimulants that motivate students to further explore a text (...) since they find in them a source of motivation creating an interactive environment in the classroom. They can help students orient themselves to the themes of the text and serve as a schema activation activity by predicting the theme of the text that will be read (Perveen, 2021).

Contribution of Technique in the English Language

According to Miley and Read (2011) “Today, word clouds have proven to be a beneficial tool in many educational settings”, while Calle et al. (2018) found that “Although word clouds are very powerful, they are not widely used in education (or online education of course), but the use of word clouds could offer many benefits in e-learning. for both teachers and teachers. and students” (p. 508). Using writing, word clouds will quickly show students which words they have been using too often in an essay and whether or not they have stayed on topic. This

will lead to a reflective activity on writing skills. As for public speaking, journalists often use word clouds to analyze important speeches. Likewise, they can be used to analyze conversations and presentations in the target language. Word clouds, in this context, will give students clues about topics to focus on as they work through the full transcripts presented.

For the listening skill, teachers can use the word cloud in the pre-listening stage. This stage helps students by focusing on the topic, activating the knowledge they have about the topic, and providing students with a clear vision of what they are going to do. By using words, teachers can (1) discuss topics with students, (2) help students build vocabulary related to the topic, (3) provide students with information about context, and (4) have students Students predict what they are going to do. Hear (Tafazoli, 2013).

Research Objectives

The objectives that guide this study are a foundation base of this research project and are determined as follows.

Main Objective

- To analyze the impact of integrating infographics and cloud-based tools in virtual classrooms on the enhancement of students' motivation and active participation.

Supporting Objectives

- Identify challenges and factors in sustaining student motivation and participation in virtual classes.
- Evaluate the influence of infographics and the role of cloud-based tools on student motivation and collaborative participation.
- Assess the impact of multimedia content on sustained student interest to propose strategies to improve the teaching-learning process.

Scope and Limitation

The scope of the research project includes the impact of integrating infographics and cloud-based tools on students' motivation and participation in a virtual classroom. The study primarily focused on A2-Level students of the University of Babahoyo. The research explored different factors, such as the effectiveness of infographics, collaborative features of cloud

tools, and multimedia content, to increase motivation and active engagement among students.

As a limitation, findings from the research may have limited generalizability beyond the specific educational level, institution, or geographical area under investigation. Therefore, caution was exercised when applying the results to broader contexts. Then, the effectiveness of cloud-based tools may be influenced by the technological infrastructure available to students and educators. Variations in internet connectivity, device accessibility, and software compatibility may impact the consistency of the results.

Moreover, the study may face time constraints that limit the ability to capture long-term effects. The impact of infographics and cloud tools on motivation and participation may evolve over an extended period, and the research may not fully capture these dynamics within its timeframe. However, the research acknowledges that individual differences among educators and students may influence the outcomes. Variability in teaching styles, technological proficiency, and student preferences may introduce bias in the results.

Lastly, the research may be susceptible to selection bias, as participants who voluntarily engage with the study may have different motivations and levels of participation compared to those who choose not to participate. Thus, self-reported data, such as survey responses, may be subject to response bias. Participants may provide socially desirable answers or may not accurately represent their true experiences and perceptions.

METHODOLOGY

The research employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the impact of integrating infographics and cloud-based tools on the motivation and participation of A2-level students at the University of Babahoyo. This approach allowed for a comprehensive exploration of both quantitative and qualitative data, providing an understanding of the phenomenon descriptively as sequentially exploratory. The study primarily focused on A2-Level students of the Language Center of the University of Babahoyo, exclusively level 3. The population consisted of all A2-Level students enrolled in the academic year under consideration. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation across different majors or programs within the A2-Level curriculum. The sample size was determined based

on statistical considerations to achieve a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, obtaining 384 students.

A structured survey instrument was administered to collect quantitative data on students' perceptions of the effectiveness of infographics and cloud tools in enhancing motivation and participation, where Likert-scale questions and closed-ended items were utilized. However, academic records were also analyzed to explore potential correlations between students' engagement with virtual classroom tools and their academic achievements. Then, the survey was the main instrument and it was developed based on established scales for measuring motivation, participation, and technology integration effectiveness.

Quantitative data were analyzed employing descriptive statistics to summarize survey responses and explore relationships between variables. All the participants were provided with detailed information about the research objectives, procedures, and potential risks. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point without consequences. Moreover, the confidentiality of participant information was strictly maintained. Data were anonymized, and participants were assigned unique identifiers to protect their identities. Only the research team had access to the raw data.

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, they did not face any negative consequences for choosing not to participate, and they could withdraw at any stage without any penalty. Since the research aimed to minimize any potential harm to participants, open communication channels were established, and participants were encouraged to express any concerns during or after their involvement.

DEVELOPMENT

The results of integrating infographics and cloud-based tools on the motivation and participation of A2 CEFR Level students at the University of Babahoyo are presented below. It started with a proposed activity where it could be integrated both tools. Initially, a lesson plan for the activity was developed in order to have it as a guide.

Lesson Plan: Exploring COVID-19

Objective: Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of COVID-19, focusing on symptoms, preventions, warnings, signage, and related information.

Duration: Two sessions of 120 minutes.

Materials:

- Computer or device for each student
- Projector and screen
- Mentimeter account (for the teacher)
- Collaboration tools for group work (Canva, Google Docs, Slides, or other preferred platforms)

Session 1: Introduction and Word Clouds

Introduction (15 minutes):

- Begin with a brief discussion about the importance of understanding COVID-19 and its impact.
- Introduce the lesson objectives: to create a shared understanding of COVID-19 and develop digital literacy skills.

Video Presentation (10 minutes)**:**

- Show a pre-selected video about COVID-19, emphasizing key information on symptoms, preventions, warnings, and signage.
- Encourage students to take notes during the video.

Interactive Word Clouds (25 minutes):

- Guide students to Mentimeter (or a similar tool) and create a collaborative word cloud.
- Ask open-ended questions related to the video content (e.g., "What are common symptoms of COVID-19?") and allow students to contribute words in real time.
- Discuss the word cloud as a class, highlighting important terms and concepts.

Reflection (15 minutes):

- Facilitate a brief reflection session. Ask students to share one key takeaway from the video and the interactive word cloud.
- Motivate them to research and have information on COVID-19 prevention measures.

Group Work (45 minutes):

- Divide students into 15 groups per class (courses have 70 – 80 students approximately).
- Instruct groups to conduct research, compile information, and design an infographic using digital collaboration tools.
- Explain to the groups they must create an infographic based on those aspects of COVID-19 (symptoms, preventions, warnings, signage, etc.).

Spare Time (10 minutes): This time serves as “just in case time” when some inconvenience in the class is presented and needs some quick solution.

Session 2: Presenting group infographics

Infographic Presentation (75 minutes):

- Each group presents their infographic to the class, explaining key information, design choices, and the relevance of their chosen topic.
- Encourage questions and discussions after each presentation.

Reflection (25 minutes):

- Organize a gallery walk where students explore other groups' infographics. (Padlet)
- Conclude with a brief reflection session: What did students learn from each other's presentations?

Closure and Next Steps (10 minutes):

- Summarize key insights from the lesson, emphasizing the importance of effective communication of COVID-19 information.
- Discuss any follow-up activities or assignments.

Spare Time (10 minutes): This time serves as “just in case time” when some inconvenience in the class is presented and needs some quick solution.

Assessment:

For the assessment, a rubric was used to evaluate the infographic and the presentation.

Table 1

Rubric used to evaluate groups' infographics and performance.

Criteria	Excellent (2 points)	Good (1.5 points)	Satisfactory (1 point)	Needs Improvement (0.5 point)	Inadequate (0 points)
Content Accuracy	All information presented is accurate, up-to-date, and relevant to the chosen aspect of COVID-19.	Most information presented is accurate and relevant, with minor inaccuracies.	Information presented is generally accurate, but some details may be outdated or missing.	Several inaccuracies or outdated information is present.	Information is largely inaccurate or irrelevant to the chosen aspect.
Clarity and Readability	Text is concise, clear, and easy to read. Font choices enhance readability.	Most text is concise, clear, and easy to read, with a few exceptions.	Text is mostly concise but may lack clarity in some areas.	Text is lengthy or unclear, affecting overall readability.	Text is convoluted, making it challenging for the audience to understand.
Visual Appeal	The infographic is visually appealing, with a balanced use of color, graphics, and layout that enhance overall design.	The infographic is visually appealing, but there may be minor inconsistencies or areas for improvement.	The visual appeal is satisfactory but may lack some cohesion or consistent design elements.	The infographic lacks visual appeal, making it less engaging for the audience.	The visual elements are disorganized, detracting from the overall appeal.

Clarity of Explanation	The presenter effectively explains the key points of the infographic, providing clear and concise information.	The presenter mostly explains the key points clearly, with some areas that could be refined.	The presenter provides a satisfactory explanation, but clarity may vary.	The presenter struggles to explain key points clearly, affecting overall understanding.	The presenter fails to provide a clear explanation of the infographic.
Time Management	The presentation is well-paced, adhering to the allocated time without rushing or going over the limit.	The presentation mostly adheres to the allocated time but may have slight deviations.	The presentation stays within a reasonable time frame but may lack consistency.	The presentation deviates significantly from the allocated time, impacting effectiveness.	The presentation significantly exceeds or falls short of the allocated time.

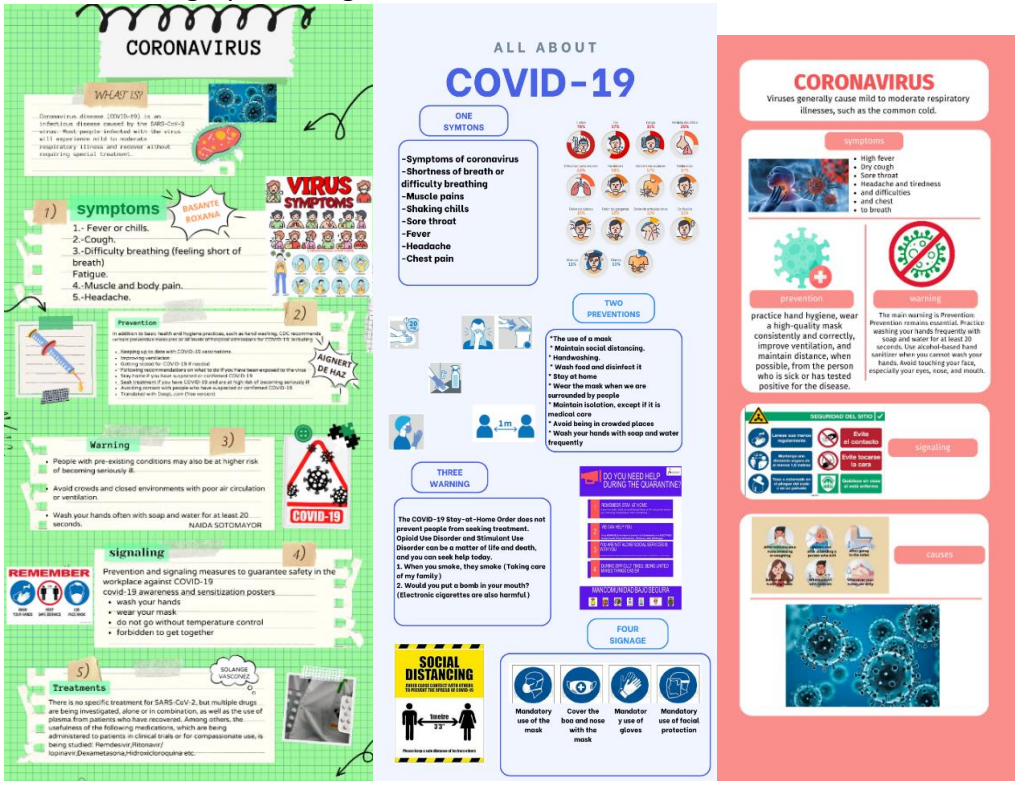
Note: This rubric evaluates students on a scale of 10.

Students' performance and grades

Analyzing students' performance and assigning grades based on the rubric involves evaluating each student's work against the established criteria. The analysis starts with the infographics and the results obtained from the grading scale from both the infographic and presentation skills. Figure 1 shows examples of infographics designed by the groups of students.

Figure 1

Students' infographic designed in class



Note: This infographic was designed by a group of students of Level 3.

Then, Table 2 presents the grades that the 5 courses obtained on the infographic activity:

Table 2

Students' grades of the designed infographic.

Group	Level 4 A	Level 4 B	Level 4 C	Level 4 D	Level 4 E
1	10	6,5	9	8	7
2	7	10	8	9	9
3	5,5	5	10	10	7,5
4	10	7	9,5	8	8
5	5	10	8,5	10	9
6	4,5	4	10	8,5	9
7	6	8	8	5	7
8	7	7	7	7	8
9	6,5	9	8	8	10
10	9	9	7,5	6	6
11	4	9	8	8,5	6,5
12	5,5	10	10	8	7
13	5	5	6,5	9	9
14	7,5	5,5	10	8	7
15	9	8	9	6,5	8

Note. This table shows the result by group of Level 3.

The results for the groups in Level 4 A, B, C, D, and E reflect different performances across the assessed criteria. In Level 4 A, 2 groups achieved an exceptional score of 10, demonstrating outstanding performance, while Group 6 faced challenges with a score of 4.5. Level 4 B showcases 3 groups as top performers with a score of 10, indicating strong competence, while Group 6 struggled with a score of 4, revealing potential areas for improvement. In Level 4 C, 4 groups stand out with a perfect score of 10, showcasing comprehensive understanding and execution, while Group 6 faces challenges.

Then, the performance in Level 4 D varies, with 2 groups excelling with a score of 10, while Group 7 encountered difficulties, achieving a score of 5. For Level 4 E, only Group 9 demonstrated proficiency with a score of 10, while Group 11 faced challenges, achieving a score of 6.5. Overall, these results highlight the diverse skill levels and areas for improvement within each level, providing valuable insights for future educational strategies and support based on individual group needs. Lastly, statistics are shown based on the group results:

Table 3

Descriptive statistics according to students' grades of the infographic

Course	Mean	Standard Error	St. Deviation	Variance
Level 4 A	7.30	0.32	2.60	6.76
Level 4 B	7.43	0.39	2.34	5.47
Level 4 C	8.79	0.24	0.97	0.95
Level 4 D	8.58	0.27	0.89	0.79
Level 4 E	8.10	0.22	0.79	0.62

Note: This table shows the main statistics by course of Level 3.

The results for Level 4 A, B, C, D, and E courses provide an understanding of the performance distributions within each course. The mean scores represent the central tendencies of the groups, indicating their average performance. In Level 4 A, the mean score of 7.30 suggests a moderate overall performance, with a standard error of 0.32, signifying the precision of this estimate. The standard deviation of 2.60 illustrates the extent of variability among group scores, and the variance of 6.76 provides a measure of the data spread. Moving to Level 4 B, the slightly higher mean of 7.43 implies a relatively stronger overall performance. The standard error of 0.39 reflects the precision of the mean estimate, while the lower standard deviation of 2.34 suggests less variability in group scores. The variance of 5.47 reinforces this observation, indicating a narrower spread of data points.

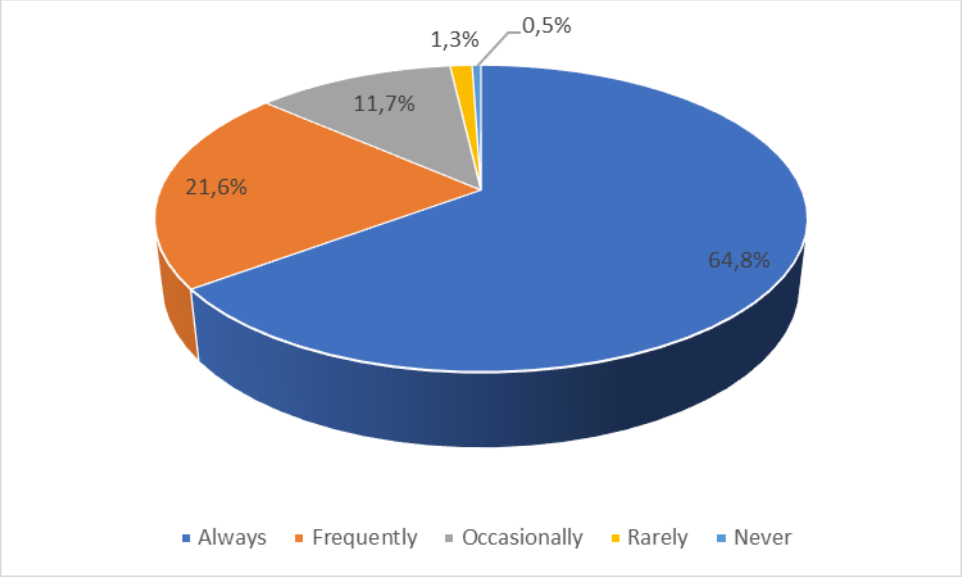
On the other hand, Level 4 C has the highest mean score of 8.79, showcasing a strong overall performance across groups. The low standard error of 0.24 underlines the precision of this mean estimate. The extremely low standard deviation of 0.97 indicates minimal variability in group scores, and the variance of 0.95 further emphasizes the homogeneity of performance within the course. In Level 4 D, the mean score of 8.58 suggests a robust performance, with a standard error of 0.27 ensuring a precise estimate. The low standard deviation of 0.89 implies a tight distribution of group scores, and the variance of 0.79 highlights the consistency of performance within the course. Finally, in Level 4 E, the mean score of 8.10 indicates a solid performance. The standard error of 0.22 emphasizes the precision of the mean estimate, and the low standard deviation of 0.79 implies a narrow distribution of group scores. The variance of 0.62 further reinforces the coherence in performance within this course.

Students' Perceptions about the tools in virtual classrooms

Students' perceptions are the most important part of this research, with their opinions we can know if the activities and tools are right for them or not. The responses obtained from the survey provide a comprehensive overview of students' perceptions, shedding light on the potential benefits, challenges, and areas for improvement in leveraging technology to enhance motivation and participation in the virtual classroom setting. Then, Figure 1 presents students' perceptions about word clouds.

Figure 2

Students' perceptions of Word Clouds improve their participation collaboratively

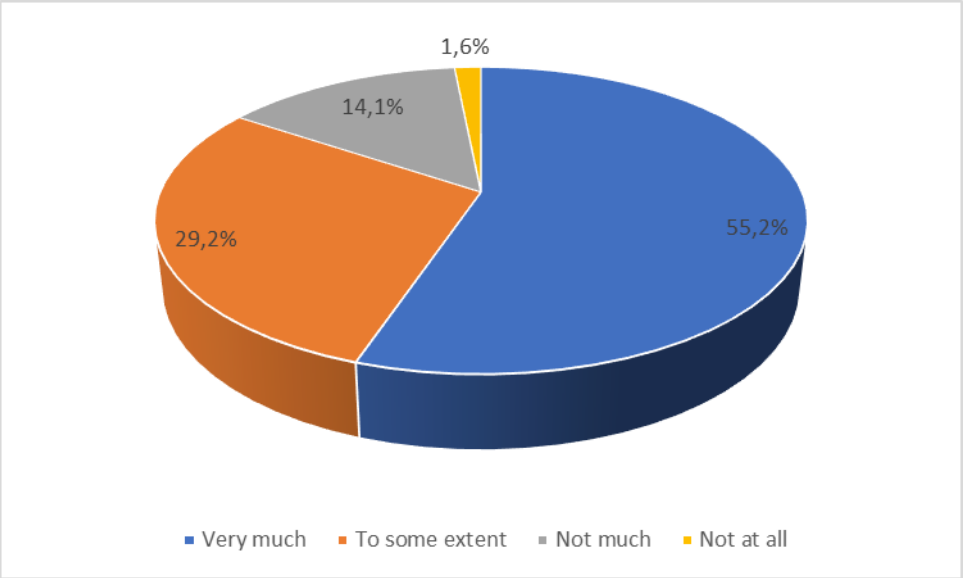


Note: Students were asked if collaboratively participating in Word Clouds improves their motivation in their virtual classroom.

The data on students' engagement in collaborative word cloud activities within a virtual classroom suggests a strong positive correlation between participation frequency and motivation. A notable 64.8% of respondents reported always participating, indicating a consistent engagement with collaborative word cloud activities. Furthermore, 21.6% noted frequent participation, reinforcing the idea that students involve themselves in these collaborative endeavors. The 11.7% who reported occasional participation still contribute, and there is a minimal percentage of 1.3% who rarely participate, emphasizing that the majority actively engage. Interestingly, the extremely low percentages of 0.5% reporting never participating signify that almost all participants are involved to some degree in collaborative word cloud activities. Then, Figure 3 presents students' opinions about cloud-based tools and their effective collaboration among them.

Figure 3

Students' perceptions of Cloud-based tools facilitate effective collaboration among them



Note: Students were asked if Cloud-based tools facilitate effective collaboration among them

The data on the extent to which participants perceive the impact of collaborative cloud word activities on their motivation in the virtual classroom reveals a notable positive trend. A substantial 55.2% of respondents reported that these activities have a significant impact, indicating a strong recognition of their motivational value. Another 29.2% acknowledged the impact to some extent, further highlighting the widespread acknowledgment of the positive influence of collaborative cloud word engagement. The relatively low percentages of 14.1% responding "Not much" and a mere 1.6% stating "Not at all" suggest that the majority of participants see tangible motivational benefits from these collaborative activities. This

analysis implies that, overall, collaborative cloud word activities play a crucial role in enhancing participants' motivation within the virtual classroom, with a majority attributing significant value to these collaborative endeavors. Table 4 shows information regarding students' perceptions on infographics.

Table 4
Students' perceptions of Infographics in EFL education

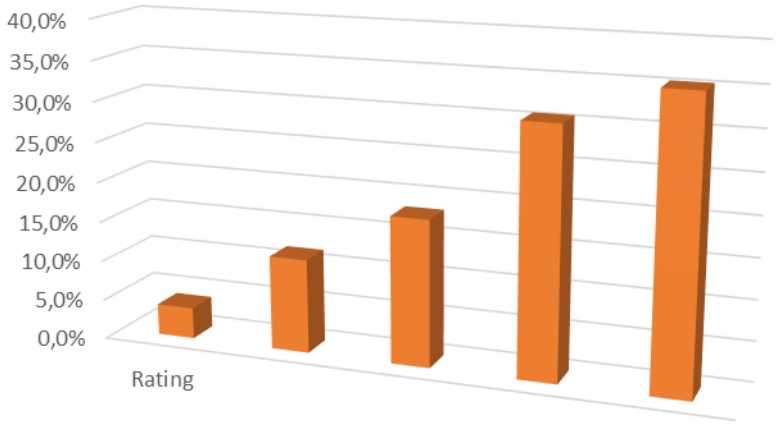
Criteria	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Infographics used in the virtual classroom are a great tool to learn.	47,4%	46,1%	6,5%	0,0%
Infographics help understand complex concepts	31,3%	50,0%	14,1%	4,7%
Infographics enhance my motivation to engage with course materials	78,4%	20,3%	1,3%	0,0%

Note: Students were asked different aspects about infographics

The analysis of the chart on participants' perceptions of infographic use in the virtual classroom reveals overwhelmingly positive sentiments toward this educational tool. The majority, with 47.4% strongly agreeing and 46.1% agreeing, consider infographics to be a highly effective learning tool. This high level of agreement underscores the perceived value and efficacy of infographics in the educational context. Moreover, when assessing their utility in understanding complex concepts, a substantial 81.3% either strongly agree or agree, showcasing infographics as a valuable resource for simplifying the intricate subject matter. Additionally, an impressive 78.4% strongly agree that infographics enhance their motivation to engage with course materials, indicating a significant positive impact on student motivation. The minimal percentages of disagreement or strong disagreement further support the overall positive reception of infographics in the virtual classroom. In summary, these findings suggest that participants overwhelmingly recognize the effectiveness, utility, and motivational impact of infographics as valuable tools in the virtual learning environment. Finally, Figure 4 explains the motivation rating they have with the tools.

Figure 4

Students' motivation with Word clouds and infographic tools in EFL classes.



Note: Students were asked on a scale from 1 to 5, how motivated are you to actively participate in virtual classroom activities?

The data on participants' motivation to actively participate in virtual classroom activities, assessed on a scale from 1 to 5, reflects a generally positive sentiment. The highest percentage of respondents, at 35.4%, gave the highest rating of 5, indicating a substantial level of motivation. Additionally, 30.7% rated their motivation at 4, contributing to the majority expressing a high or moderate motivation level. The percentages of 11.7% for a rating of 2 and 3.9% for a rating of 1 suggest a minority expressing lower motivation levels. However, the combined percentages of ratings 4 and 5 showcase that a significant majority, totaling 66.1%, feel motivated to actively participate in virtual classroom activities. This analysis implies an overall positive inclination towards engagement, highlighting the importance of understanding and fostering factors that contribute to motivation in the virtual learning environment.

Discussion

The results of this study offer valuable insights into students' performance, perceptions, and motivations in the virtual classroom, particularly when utilizing infographics and collaborative word cloud activities. The diverse skill levels observed in students' infographic design performance across different courses underscore the need for tailored educational strategies. The positive perceptions regarding the efficacy of infographics, as demonstrated by the majority strongly agreeing or agreeing, align with existing literature highlighting the visual and communicative advantages of infographics in enhancing learning (Smith, 2017; Johnson &

Cutshall, 2020). Collaborative word cloud activities were prevalent, with a majority indicating positive impacts on motivation, corroborating previous research on the benefits of collaborative learning in virtual environments (Dillenbourg, 1999; Kreijns et al., 2003).

Moreover, the students' overwhelmingly positive perceptions of cloud-based tools align with the literature emphasizing the role of technology in fostering effective collaboration in virtual classrooms (Zhao et al., 2020). The high motivation ratings for active participation in virtual classroom activities resonate with the literature on the significance of engagement and motivation in online learning environments (Deci et al., 1991; Artino, 2008). The descriptive statistics by course provide a nuanced understanding of the performance distributions, allowing for targeted interventions and support.

While the study has provided comprehensive insights, it is essential to acknowledge potential limitations, such as the study's focus on a specific educational context. Additionally, future research could explore the longitudinal effects of these interventions and further delve into the intricacies of collaborative learning in virtual settings. Overall, these findings contribute to the growing body of literature on effective strategies for enhancing virtual classroom experiences, emphasizing the importance of tailored approaches to meet the diverse needs of students in online education.

CONCLUSION

In reviewing the main results in response to the stated objectives, it becomes evident that the integration of infographics and collaborative word cloud activities in the virtual classroom holds substantial promise for enhancing student engagement, understanding, and motivation. The diverse skill levels observed in students' infographic designs underscore the importance of recognizing individual group needs, emphasizing the necessity for tailored educational strategies. Moreover, the overwhelmingly positive perceptions expressed by students regarding the effectiveness of infographics and collaborative cloud-based tools affirm the potential of these resources in fostering an enriched virtual learning experience.

Projections and expansions of this theme reveal exciting possibilities for future research and educational implementation. The positive impact observed in student motivation and participation suggests that further exploration of the long-term effects of these interventions could uncover sustained benefits. Additionally, examining the transferability of these

strategies to different academic disciplines or educational levels could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of their effectiveness. Expanding the theme to investigate the specific elements of collaborative learning that contribute to enhanced motivation would provide educators with valuable insights for refining instructional approaches in virtual settings.

In light of the study's findings, several recommendations for new studies or future investigations emerge. Further exploration into the specific dynamics of collaborative word cloud activities and their impact on motivation is warranted, as is an in-depth investigation into the factors influencing the effectiveness of infographics across various subjects. Comparative analyses with traditional teaching methods could provide a clearer understanding of the relative advantages and disadvantages of these innovative approaches. Moreover, future studies could delve into the potential effects of these tools on students' overall academic performance and retention, offering educators evidence-based insights for pedagogical decision-making.

In conclusion, this study contributes significant insights into the use of infographics and collaborative word cloud activities in the virtual classroom. The positive student perceptions, coupled with diverse performance outcomes, offer a nuanced understanding of the potential and challenges associated with these educational tools. Projections and recommendations for future studies underscore the need for continued research to refine and optimize these strategies, ensuring their effectiveness across diverse educational contexts and settings. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, embracing innovative approaches becomes imperative, and these findings offer a solid foundation for further exploration and advancement in the realm of virtual education.

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