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TITLE OF PAPER

**INTEGRATION OF LUDIC ACTIVITIES IN THE 1ST
BACCALAUREATE EFL VIRTUAL CLASS AS A MOTIVATIONAL
STRATEGY DURING THE PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN AT SAN
JOSÉ DE CALASANZ HIGH SCHOOL**

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PROJECT ADVISOR

Mariela Fátima Vásquez Barros, MSc.

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CERTIFICATION

We certify that this research project was presented by **Angy Paulette Nuñez Merchán and Galo César Barahona Banchón** as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the **Bachelor's Degree in English Language with a Minor in Educational Management**.

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STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

We, Galo Barahona César Banchón and Angy Paulette Nuñez Merchán

HEREBY DECLARE THAT:

The Senior Project: **Integration of Ludic Activities in the 1st Baccalaureate EFL Virtual Class as a Motivational Strategy during the Pandemic Lockdown at San José de Calasanz High School** prior to obtaining the Bachelor Degree in English Language with a Minor in Educational Management, has been developed based on thorough investigation, respecting the intellectual property rights of third parties regarding citations within the corresponding pages whose sources are included in the bibliography. Consequently, this work is of my full responsibility.

Under this statement, we are responsible for the content, truthfulness and scientific scope of the aforementioned paper.

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AUTHORIZATION

We, **Galo César Barahona Banchón** and **Angy Paulette Núñez Merchán**

Authorize the Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil to publish this Senior Project: **Integration of Ludic Activities in the 1st baccalaureate EFL Virtual Class as a Motivational Strategy During the Pandemic Lockdown at San José de Calasanz High School**. in the institutional repository. The contents, ideas and criteria in this paper are of our full responsibility and authorship.

Guayaquil, on the 13th day of September of 2021

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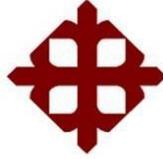
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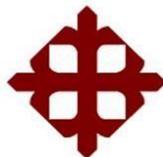
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DEDICATION

I want to thank my beloved wife Lissette for being my unconditional support and for her wise words that motivated me to carry out this thesis project successfully. Finally, with love I dedicate this thesis to my little daughter Danna.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	XIII
INTRODUCTION	2
JUSTIFICATION.....	4
PROBLEM STATEMENT	5
RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	7
GENERAL OBJECTIVE.....	7
Chapter 1 Theoretical Framework	8
Concept of motivation	8
Motivational dichotomies	13
Motivation for e-learning	13
Concept of ludic.....	15
Ludic strategies in the EFL classroom	15
Synchronous and asynchronous.....	19
Synchronous Communication Tools	21
Chapter 2 Literature Review	22
Challenges in Online Education.....	22
Experiences in ludic strategies during the pandemic	23
ICT for education	27
CHAPTER 3 Research Methodology.....	29
Mixed Methods	29

Descriptive Research.....30

Case Study31

Participants31

Data Gathering Tools.....32

Chapter 4 Data Analysis36

Findings from the observation checklist to verify the strugglingsituations.....38

Observation checklist for online sessions - teacher’s questionnaire40

Applications used in Online Teaching at San José de Calasanz, 2nd Quinmester44

CONCLUSIONS45

RECOMMENDATIONS46

BIBLIOGRAPHY47

APPENDIX56

TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1 Three Views Of Motivation, Williams & Burden (1997).....	15
Table 2 Motivational Dichotomies, (Brown H. , 2007)	18
Table 3 The Comparison Between Synchronous E-Learning And Asynchronous E-Learning (Yamagata-Lynch, 2014).	25
Table 4 Synchronous Communication Tools, Based On Lim (2017).....	26
Table 5 Protocol And Data Gathering Tools.....	40
Figure 3 Efl Scores, Second Quinmester. Created By The Authors.....	43

Figure 4 Observation Checklist, Difficulties.	45
Figure 5 Observation Checklist, Means Available For Teaching	46
Figure 6 Focus Group Web, Engaging Activities,	47
Figure 7 Focus Group Web, Videos´S Characteristics.	47
Figure 8 Focus Group Web, Online Activities.	48
Figure 9 Focus Group Web, Engagement.	48
Figure 10 Focus Group Web, Lessons' Characteristics.	49
Table 6 Applications Used In Online Teaching At San José De Calasanz,. ..	49

ABSTRACT

This study reports on issue in this research acknowledges the integration of ludic activities in the 1st baccalaureate EFL virtual class as a motivational strategy during the pandemic lockdown at San Jose de Calasanz high school. A mixed methods approach was followed within a descriptive design was designed. To analyze the EFL scores, a correlational design was applied. To gather data, an observation checklist of online sessions was applied to the English teacher and a focus group survey was applied to students. After the analysis of the data gathered, it was found that the ludic activities keep students engaged and motivated during online lessons. Also teachers can set up enjoyable environments where students want to take part in intrinsically. It was also found that game-based learning platforms the teacher used during the virtual English lessons played an important role to grab students' attention. This can also support teachers to ease their work and make the lessons more interactive.

Keywords: pandemic, ludic activities, engagement, EFL, online lesson, , enjoyable, interactive.

INTRODUCTION

The central topic of this research is the description of how ludic strategies motivate students in the EFL online classes during COVID-19 pandemic, the enjoyable activities to keep the student's motivation to support teachers for overcoming struggling situations during online lessons. According to (Wiersema, 2018) in the language teaching process, it is valid to create a fun environment in which the activities are not mandatory, but where students can take the initiative to take part in workshops. Teachers also have the opportunity to find what ludic activities are consistent with students' learning.

As stated by, Edmunds & Lauricella (2021) ludic pedagogy bases its philosophy on the fact that the priority of teaching is to know how to set up a unique environment through games without having to sacrifice academic and intellectual rigor. There are positive aspects that are part of this philosophy that could help educators to design an environment that may not be stressful for the learning process. The same authors mention the design of activities that may be enjoyable for students. First, carry out an activity that encourages student motivation. Then, the atmosphere should be cheerful with a ludic disposition. Finally, humor is an important item for developing the ludic pedagogy model. Humor is linked with fun and it has benefits like reduction of stress and anxiety. Students have the advantage of enjoying the learning process. They acquire more creativity and their learning background becomes a positive one.

According to Adebo (2016) online education provides engaging opportunities for students all around the world. Since online teaching has become demanding, teachers have been forced to prepare their classes through learning management systems (LMS) which are educational platforms and applications. Online learning shares a lot with face-to-face teaching, both contain the same approach but, in pace and delivery they show some differences.

The internet is a tool that serves as a support in the educational field. This tool offers teachers and students authentic resources during online sessions.

For creating unique teaching, the characteristics of the group of students must be taken into consideration. Digital age students can develop independence in academic achievement, be wiser in the use of technology, and maybe be well behaved during the learning process. Hassan (2021) declares that online classes shape students by creating self-discipline and awareness in learning. The online sessions must be integrative to keep the effectiveness of teaching with supporting tools and materials to ease the educational process.

Online teaching can also be a challenge for the teacher, as mentioned by Hassan (2021), since it implies a lot of responsibility and must try to develop didactic lessons for achieving a positive experience with the students.

Finally, the bibliographical material compiled and the evidence gathered at a local high school in this research work could support educators who want to teach applying ludic activities during online sessions as a motivational strategy for their students.

JUSTIFICATION

It is well known that the evolution of societies is deeply connected to the advancement of the education system. However, unexpected issues have appeared through the years and educators have played an important role in how to overcome them.

The pandemic lockdown due to COVID - 19 has made teachers become aware of the importance of students' engagement during lessons and create an online community among them by implementing strategies to be applied in online classes.

This research work was important for first baccalaureate teachers. It will help to figure out the importance of ludic activities through online platforms for keeping students motivated and engaged during online classes.

Educators had helpful hints on how to approach pupils for building up and boosting students' learning process through motivation. Moreover, school teachers will have the opportunity to think carefully about their performance and the effect of this during online lessons.

This paper will serve as a guide in the procedures that have been carried out to enhance and benefit first baccalaureate students' motivation, based on game learning platforms that are flexible tools in which students can work even if they are not in synchronous classes.

Finally, the institution will also benefit from the outcomes of this research since they will depict the teacher's approach in online lessons. This will give them clues for designing a comprehensive teaching system by setting up new strategies to motivate students to take an active part in the online lessons.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Due to covid-19, many schools were forced to discontinue face-to-face classes, affecting student learning.

In the upcoming months of 2020, the outbreak of the COVID 19 rattled our communities and ways of life. People had to face the devastating effects in nearly all countries around the globe. This also heavily challenged our food supplies, livelihoods, and economies. The United Nations was concerned about the impact of this disease in vulnerable and poorer countries. Due to this, it was stated that most of the governments decided to shut down schools and universities to decrease the spread of the virus. Unfortunately, more than 1.3 billion students have been affected in their educational process worldwide. (UNESCO, 2020)

According to the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education, our schools have faced several challenges with their teachers and students due to the COVID-19 pandemic. From March 13 onward the whole educational environment shifted completely. The Ecuadorian government decreed to shut down educational establishments all over the country. This established a remarkable gap in education. (Bonilla Guachamín, 2020)

The Minister of Education, Monserrat Creamer, stated in a press conference about open and distance learning which offers virtual and online education. She also said that these reforms are long-term approaches to endure the pandemic along with a normative to homeschooling. This safe and reasonable policy had been taken into consideration as a COVID 19 campaign for the teaching staff and students.

According to the Minister of Telecommunications Andrés Michelena, around one million students from public institutions do not have access to the Internet due to the health emergency of COVID-19. This information was given to the Commission Supervisor who was informed about the appropriate protocols to guarantee access to education through virtual platforms. Michelena pointed out that, according to the latest reports, there are 3 million students from public schools enrolled in 150,000 teaching institutions and 2

million out of 3 are making use of educational platforms and most of these students have connectivity. On the other hand, 1 million students do not have the same opportunity to connect to their online classes. (Michelena, 2020)

San José Guayaquil de Calasanz is a private high-school located in Urdesa. This high school opened in 1999. According to the schedule, students have to attend classes in the mornings from 7:20 to 2:30 pm. Most of the students live nearby the surrounding suburbs of the school. There are four ESL teachers and one English coordinator in charge of the English area. There are eight 1st baccalaureate students whose subjects are mostly taken in Spanish. Students receive 10 hours of English per week, one hour a day students attend Language Arts classes. Students' ages are between 15 to 17. Students find it difficult to learn the target language because of the online lessons.

There were several aspects to consider when talking about problems the 1st baccalaureate students had due to COVID-19 during their online classes. Most of the time, students are distracted on other web pages, sending private messages in the chatbox about current trendy social memes they had seen on Facebook. Moreover, students are not interested in virtual lessons due to the struggles they have with the Internet connection and some of them unexpectedly leave the online lesson or their web cameras are off because of this issue. Additionally, the lack of motivation when lessons were explained through platforms provided by the school, sometimes they turn plain; therefore, learners cannot correctly perform the tasks given such as homework, workshops, class participation, etc. Usually, students who stand out from the rest of the class keep the motivation alive when working in groups.

It can be said that online classes require a different approach taking into consideration how important classroom management is to grab students' attention and collaboration in classroom activities and to establish a productive working environment. This has given a new perspective on students' behavior and classroom management during online classes. (Mehjabin Haque, 2018)

The following research study is an approach for describing closely how motivation has affected 1st baccalaureate students of San José de Calasanz the English Language Arts class throughout their online lessons since the pandemic outbreak and how a ludic focus of subject activities could enhance motivation during virtual classes.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What situations were affecting students' motivation when they partook of synchronous lessons?
- How does the lack of ludic strategies affect students' attention?
- What methods or strategies does the teacher need to implement to attain students' attention online classes?

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To describe the integration of ludic activities as a motivational strategy for EFL students' online lessons at San José de Calasanz High School during the covid-19 pandemic. To draw upon based-game platforms and make students feel engaged during online lesson.

Specific Objectives

- To describe the struggling situations during synchronous lessons at SJC High School during the covid-19 pandemic.
- To analyze the EFL scores of SJC First Baccalaureate students during the first and second scholastic quinmester.
- To characterize the methods or strategies used in online lessons by the first secondary teacher to develop motivation on first baccalaureate EFL students at SJC High School during the covid-19 pandemic.

Chapter 1 Theoretical Framework

Concept of motivation

It is a well-known fact that motivation plays an important role to succeed in the learning field. Therefore, teachers have to set their understanding of it. According to Harmer (2015), motivation, at its most basic level, is defined as “kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things to achieve something.” (p. 51). Additionally, Hadfield et al. (2014) mention that “language teachers frequently use the term ‘motivation’ when they describe successful or unsuccessful learners. This reflects our intuitive belief that during the lengthy and often tedious process of mastering a foreign/second language (L2), the learner’s enthusiasm, commitment, and persistence are key determinants of success or failure” (p.1). Brown (2017) considers that motivation is an all-encompassing term for making clear the achievement or lack of success of any complex assignment expecting that the accomplishment of any piece of work is because of someone's motivation. Moreover, he points out that through years of research, motivation has come up with numerous definitions.

Historical schools of thought give three diverse perspectives that appear in the work of Brown (2017):

1. From the Behaviorist perspective, motivation shows us the importance of anticipation reward for accomplishing positive reinforcement. Past experiences of reward for behavior are meaningful for pupils. Students behave properly to achieve additional reinforcement.
2. In cognitive terms, motivation takes into consideration an individual's decisions, the decisions people make about the goals they will take part in or get rid of, and a great deal of effort they will strive for in that respect. Some psychologists in the cognitive field consider the importance of elemental needs as the strong effort behind our determination. For example, six needs or necessities have been identified to reinforce the construct of motivation:

- The necessity of searching, of looking at “the other side of the mountain,” of exploring the unknown;
- The need for controlling, for managing- to use skinner's term- on the situation and causing a shift;
- The need for action, for development and performance, both physical and mental;
- The need for incentive, the need to be encouraged and motivated by the mood, by the other peers, by perceptions, thoughts, and sense;
- The necessity of learning, processing and personalizing the outcome of analysis, action, and incentive, to resolve differences, to search for answers to problems, and logical schemes of knowledge;
- Finally, the need for ego improvement, and the self to be recognized by others.

3. Constructivist view of motivation goes even further, taking priority on social context and individual choices. Every single person is motivated differently and will behave in his or her mood according to it. But this unique behavior is always complemented with a cultural and social atmosphere and cannot be split from that background. Brown also adds that in some ways “ the needs” are principles of motivation that take part of the three schools of thought: Rewarding and choices are required to accomplish the needs, considering the interpretation of a social context. (Brown, 2017)

Behaviorist	Cognitive	Constructivist
Anticipation of reward	Driven by basic human needs (exploration, manipulation, etc.)	Social context
Desire to receive positive reinforcement	Degree of effort expended	Community
external, individual forces in control	internal, individual forces in control	Social status, security of group, Internal, interactive forces in control

Table 1 Three views of motivation, Williams & Burden (1997).

Furthermore, Marion Williams and Robert Burden (1997) claim that motivation encourages to act. The person cannot accomplish a previously set goal unless there is an intellectual determination and or physical attempt. They go on to convey that the strength of that motivation will depend on how much value the individual puts on the outcome he or she wishes to achieve. Children's goals are often amorphous and less easy to describe, but they can still be very powerful.

Souders (2021) states that learning motivation is defined as a behavior that allows students to understand and achieve their learning process given by their teachers to pursue their goals in the study. To carry out motivation in adolescent students, teachers must provide the opportunity to participate in interactive activities in which everyone has the right to participate. The teacher should create an appropriate environment and provide supporting material to reinforce the general motivation of the group. On the other hand, the other group of students who have low levels of participation will have to make an effort or challenge to participate through rewards to collaborate in activities that may not be as pleasant for them.

In terms of motivation, this makes a great deal of distinction between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Souders (2021).

Intrinsic motivation is caused when the individual is really into an activity because he or she has an internal motivation that gives them a great deal of happiness during the learning process making them feel better about themselves.

Extrinsic motivation can be caused by numerous external factors, such as, the necessity to pass an exam with flying colors, the possibility of traveling abroad. Tohidi & Mehdi Jabbari (2011).

Most of the researches has taken into consideration the importance of intrinsic motivation to encourage success.

Learners can be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to thrive on a task. Edward Deci (1975) in Palmer (2012) defined intrinsic motivation:

Intrinsically motivated activities are said to be the ones in which the activity itself is the reward. People seem to become interested in the activities because they find them enjoyable not because they drive them to an extrinsic reward. Intrinsically motivated behaviors are intent on carrying out internal rewarding outcomes especially feelings of competence.

On the other hand, extrinsically motivated behaviors are implemented to anticipate an external reward and go further with the self. Common extrinsic motivations are grades, positive feedback, prizes. Behaviors that began exclusively to stay away from punishment are in addition extrinsically motivated in spite of diverse intrinsic benefits increase in those who rather consider punishment avoidance as something challenging that might build up their perception of self-determination and competence.

The research carried out on motivation supports intrinsic orientations considering long-term retention. Barnes (2008) and others claimed that people look for a feasible challenge. Then they begin behaviors with the intention to defeat the challenging situation.

Maslow (1970) mentioned that intrinsic motivation is far superior to extrinsic. According to him, we are motivated to accomplish "self-actualization" as soon as safety, community needs, and essential physical

are achieved. Considering the presence or absence of extrinsic prizes, we will seek confidence and achievement.

On the same line, (Bruner, 1967) mentioned that the most practical approach to assist children is to release them from the authority of rewards and punishments. The deficiency in extrinsically driven behavior is its habit-forming nature. Tangible rewards rise because of the urgent praise to captivate students and then the willingness to learn when these are not available anymore.

Research done by Ramage (1990), discovered that high school students of foreign languages who were willing to continue their study over and above the college entrance requirement were highly motivated intrinsically and positively. Whereas students who attended classes to accomplish entrance requirements depicted a lack of motivation and poor performance.

Gardner (1959), integrative instrumental orientation needs to be distinguished from intrinsic- extrinsic construct. Even though many instances of intrinsic motivation may turn into integrative, others may not. For example, a strong desire to learn a second language to succeed in a career can be considered for highly developed intrinsic purposes.

Besides, an individual could establish a certain effect toward second- language speakers for many extrinsic reasons, such as parental support or teacher assistance. In a diagram Kathleen Bailey (1986), offered an illustrated relationship between the two dichotomies.

The intrinsic-extrinsic continuum in motivation is suitable for foreign language classrooms. Considering students' and teachers' beliefs and attitudes, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations can be quickly recognized. Dornyei and Csizer (1998), for instance, came up with a taxonomy of factors to help teachers motivate their learners, setting up learners' self-determination, boosting their goal-orientation, and embodying their learning process. These all focus on the intrinsic side of motivation. It is key to look at the pedagogical tools that can gather and control the capability of intrinsically motivated learners who are endeavoring for quality and self-actualization.

Motivational dichotomies

	Intrinsic	Extrinsic
Integrative	L2 Learner wishes to integrate with the L2 culture (e.g., for immigration or marriage).	Someone else wishes the L2 learner to know the L2 for integrative reasons (e.g., Japanese parents send kids to Japanese-language school).
Instrumental	L2 learner wishes to achieve goals utilizing L2 (e.g., for a career).	External power wants L2 learners to learn L2 (e.g., corporation sends Japanese businessman to the U.S, for language training).

Table 2 Motivational dichotomies, (Brown H. , 2007)

Motivation for e-learning

The use of e-learning among public schools during the pandemic COVID -19 has generated a change in the educational system in public schools. Teachers who make use of the internet in the e-learning system should create a pleasant environment using technological tools to encourage and motivate students to participate during the online activities (Matti, 2009). The online method used for English teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenge for teachers since it is demanding to teach in a non- traditional way.

Technology recommends many new characteristics that can be applied to make instruction more attractive to learners (Keller & Suzuki, 2004). E-learning can change the conventional methods of learning, it has the promise to overcome the barriers of time and distance, and presents new ways of solving old problems. For example, the key role of teachers is to change from importers of knowledge to facilitators of knowledge.

According to Nehme (2010), motivation is related to how behavior is directed and sustained in students. Based on this information, teachers should take the necessary measures to meet the students' needs and in this way reduce their anxiety levels. Consequently, teachers must plan innovative and

didactic strategies for learning to be meaningful. Following Abou et.al. (2015), one way to maintain interest in students may be through the design of certain strategies in which teachers could contribute to motivation such as:

1.- Avoid making students feel isolated and despite working independently they can learn from each other as long as the teacher provides the respective feedback positively.

2.- Provide opportunity and confidence for students to be responsible during the learning process.

3.- Demonstrate and explain how the online environment classes will be carried out.

4.- Planning or elaborating a careful but challenging course design in order to make students recognize what the main goal is.

5.- Facilitate the students' involvement with the online material by explaining the goal behind the designated task.

6.- Provide a variety of activities and ways of thinking that help their minds to solve problems, feeling engaged and motivated to learn even more.

7.- Use educational games to support learning material. There are enjoyable apps and sites that provide fun games to motivate learning.

8.- Develop and provide a flexible learning schedule and let the students know what to expect in their next class.

9.- Help students have the ease of making friends through the online system.

10.- Link e-Learning activities into hands-on learning in order to make students internalize their knowledge and put them in practice in their daily lives.

Concept of ludic

As stated by Ferdig (2008), in Latin, the word 'ludus' means "game", which characterizes or represents human behavior due to social and educational principles since much of the imagination is worked on. Also, the word 'ludus' means "school" for Roman gladiators.

As Machi (2015) mentions, games in the classroom help to create communicative and remarkable learning environments where attention to individuals' needs, respect of the rules, cooperation, solidarity, overcoming difficulties can grow and consolidate. Moreover, Korpershoek (2016) indicates that games and interactive activities have a positive effect on students by developing their intellectual and emotional side. In addition, the relationship between education and games are activities that are linked to stimulate and generate interest in learning and acquiring more knowledge.

According to Kolb (2013), the ludic concept represents a learning space, where students can achieve important learning content through the integration of intellectual, physical, moral, and, spiritual values in a free and safe space that provides the chance for individuals to play with their potentials and ultimately commit themselves to learn, develop, and grow. This ludic environment is formed over time, and it is the role of the teacher to reveal to students the usefulness of the discipline-specific tools that will be part of their professional, social, cultural activities, some examples of ludic instructional tools are: online dictionaries, digital maps, virtual thematic communities, news feeds, online courses, e-books, multimedia editing software, virtual labs, simulators, etc.

Ludic strategies in the EFL classroom

In the opinion of Moayad (2012), the importance of playful learning is a process that requires a lot of time and effort for learning to be meaningful. One of the biggest challenges for the teacher is to be able to create an interactive environment in which all students have the opportunity to give their opinion or participate in this process. Educational games and techniques applied by the teacher during class make the group feel confident

and also make the learners understand the topics covered in class. Also, there are some points to consider when it is necessary to use games for teaching purposes. As specified by Avila (2015) there are eight activities that the teacher can apply for developing the class:

- **Remembering English grammar and structures.** This activity is enjoyable for the students because they test their memory in the same way that they interact by listening to the voices of their classmates. The teacher can also reward students who respond correctly as well as penalize those who do not respond to the established questions as well as a penance.
- **Creating a fictional story.** This activity can be interactive and creative because students use their imagination to create stories while receiving support from the teacher in the use of new vocabulary through a dictionary and grammar.
- **Promoting creative writing.** This activity is a strategy that helps students create the structure of grammar expressing their own ideas in which they are allowed to work as a team and learn from each other in writing skills.
- **Boosting vocabulary through screenwriting.** To carry out this activity the teacher may consider making the students watch a movie or listen to music and come up with new words based on what they heard.
- **Circles of life.** This technique is successful because it makes students interact with each other and put their oral skills into practice without taking notes in their notebooks. Also, they can exchange ideas and information.
- **Drawing and speaking.** This activity offers students to share their stories and evaluate each other with the teacher's help. Also, it helps to create an environment of confidence between them.

- **Asking and answering questions.** This exercise in class can be beneficial for students because it allows the whole class to participate and to build grammar structures.
- **Students' autonomy in creating their own activities.** In this activity, students are allowed to create their own games, which would increase their motivation and create a joyful environment.

Also, there are some advantages and disadvantages to online learning as stated by Gautman (2020). For example, some of the advantages are :

- **Efficiency.** Online learning makes it easier for teachers to teach through technological tools or support materials such as videos, PDFs, podcasts, etc. In this way, it can be said that learning would be more efficient.
- **Accessibility of time and place.** Another benefit of online classes is that students have the opportunity to take their classes anywhere and at any time of the day. One way that students can access their learning material is through lectures that have been pre-recorded by their teachers.
- **Affordability.** The advantage of online education is that it is a bit cheaper compared to face-to-face learning. In addition, the teacher's support material is online, which facilitates the teaching and learning process.
- **Improved student attendance.** Students have less probability of missing their classes because they can take their online lessons from the comfort of their homes.
- **Suits a variety of learning styles.** Due to different types of learning according to each student, the online system has a variety of options and resources that can be adapted based on the needs of the students.

On the other hand, there are also some disadvantages to consider when talking about online classes, for example:

- Inability to focus on screens. One of the biggest problems for students when taking online classes is concentrating on the screen for long periods. Additionally, students often get distracted by social media during their online lessons. For this reason, teachers need to create an interactive class and enjoyable environment for the group of students.
- Technology issues. Another problem we can find is the Internet connection. We have to keep in mind that without a stable Internet connection both teachers and students can have problems in the educational system.
- Sense of isolation. Students can learn from each other, but, due to online classes, this process has made communication and interaction difficult among them, which has generated isolation. For this reason, it is important to promote communication through emails, videoconferences, chats, etc.
- Teacher training. Teachers must have basic knowledge of the use of digital tools. The reality is that teachers have little knowledge of the use of these technological tools and do not usually have these resources.
- Manage screen time. One of the concerns that parents have with their children is the number of hours they spend on the screen receiving classes, such a situation can cause physical problems.

Synchronous and asynchronous

The new format in online education has made a huge impact on students using these two new learning environments: synchronous and asynchronous. Besides, this new format has given students a friendly schedule to attend online classes during the pandemic.

Synchronous cooperation helps to react and take into consideration group work; moreover, it gives a sense of inspiration to arrange and trade thoughts (Hrastinski, 2008). The synchronous virtual classroom is a fundamental setting for teachers and students to connect and gather in real-time.

Salmon (2013) states that synchronous environments offer real-time interaction, which can also allow teachers to incorporate e-tivities to ease the online environment, and also facilitates the question-answer session. Nevertheless, a synchronous session needs the presence of teacher and student and work together in real-time. The fundamental advantage of synchronous learning is that it empowers students to keep away from feelings of isolation or separation since they are in communication with others all through the learning procedure.

Three primary impacts are highly considered for synchronous e-learning: media, classroom, and meeting (Clark et al., 2007). Considering the use of webcams and discussion in class, synchronous e-learning can be similar to traditional lessons with the only exception that students can connect remotely on the internet (Khan, 2006)

According to Yamagata-Lynch (2014), synchronous lessons inspire students and keep them busy with exercises and help reduce the distance in education. There are some challenges students struggle with synchronous e-learning such as the internet reception due to the bandwidth of the internet. Moreover, students must be self-disciplined and have to keep active and interactive by themselves to follow up on e-tivities (Huang & Hsiao, 2012).

On the other hand, the asynchronous mode of learning/teaching is by far the most predominant form of online teaching due to its flexible modus operandi (Hrastinski, 2008). The material given is available via Learning Management

Systems and students can access it anytime and anywhere. The material can be sent in the form of articles, Powerpoint presentations, Google Slides, audio lectures.

Sherron & Boettcher, (1997) let us know that when the online courses were initially provided, they were nearly asynchronous and this became a turning point for a new era in distance learning.

As mentioned by Parsad & Lewis (2008), asynchronous e-learning gives the opportunity of a delayed response, and students are allowed to use their learning skills for an extended period. Students have plenty of time to work on their assignments. Doo (2009) annotates that during asynchronous environments learners are furnished with available materials granting them spare time to work the contents online or offline. Teachers have to consider that asynchronous e-learning can be challenging and have in mind a set of strategies to ease problem-solving, motivation, engagement, and analytical skills.

There are also advantages and disadvantages of synchronous e-learning and asynchronous e-learning that have to be necessarily considered.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Synchronous e-learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate in real-time 2. Clarify certain ideas Promptly 3. Instant feedback and answers 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The same learning pace 2. Less attention 3. Depending on the quality of the instructor
Asynchronous e-learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue at your own pace 2. The same Content 3. Flexible learning Time 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.No promptly accessible Answer 2. Less motivation 3. Lack of other participants

Table 3 The comparison between synchronous e-learning and asynchronous e-learning (Yamagata-Lynch, 2014).

Communication is a valuable element for knowledge transfer between teachers and students. Its use influences the e-learning field in which teaching and learning are conveyed through the use of propelled devices. Different Types of synchronous communication tools used in e- learning with their usability and shortcomings are shown in table 2 show (Lim,2017)

Synchronous Communication Tools

Communication Tool	Usability	Limitations
Video Conferencing	Real-time interaction Seeing each other can give important visual clues	Quality is dependent on bandwidth The conversation flow can be disrupted by a short time lag. Material shared through the presenter's camera.
Web conferencing	Real-time interaction Presentation sharing, documents, and application demonstration allowed	Quality is dependent on bandwidth The conversation flow can be disrupted by a short time lag.
Audio conferencing	Real-time interaction Collaborative discussions in which people are involved	Quality is dependent on bandwidth The conversation flow can be disrupted by a short time lag. Visual learning is not incorporated
Live chat	Real-time interaction Availability of texts and graphics capabilities Provides documentation of student interaction	Text-based slows down communication rate May lead to misinterpretation of expressions
Whiteboarding	Real-time interaction Demonstration and co-development of ideas	Bandwidth based, and at times effective with audio conferencing
Application sharing	Real-time interaction Demonstration and co-development of documents	Bandwidth based, and at times effective with audio conferencing

Table 4 Synchronous Communication Tools, based on Lim (2017).

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Challenges in Online Education

This research is mainly focused on secondary students' motivation in virtual lessons. To keep students motivated it is crucial a learning management system or the use of a platform that could permit learning processes. Ageng Tirtayasa (2020) mentions that success in learning will be determined by a person's motivation. Moreover, the motivation and outcomes are expected to be positive by using a suitable and easy online learning platform for students who struggle with their internet signal at home.

Mahyoob (2020) states that although synchronized e-learning was a relief during the pandemic, learners' performance and learning outcomes could be influenced negatively. The author explains in his study that learners found it difficult to access the Blackboard platform; they switched to alternative platforms during their virtual lessons. EFL learners struggle with online learning, due to technical issues, which were considerable challenges. Some learners dealt with internet connectivity problems, accessing classes, and downloading courses' materials issues. Furthermore, online exams could not be opened on learners' mobile phones. Taking into consideration language communication problems, the interaction between learners and teachers during English language virtual lessons, the education process was not effective enough. Regarding asynchronous processes, the students had little support to complete the tasks, this represented frustration, and disagreement on the use of digital resources. Further research was recommended to figure out the teacher's knowledge and perspectives towards virtual teaching during the pandemic.

Distance learning during Covid 19 has raised significant challenges not only for students but also for teachers and parents. According to Pelikan, et al., (2021) intrinsic motivation is seen as a protective factor to support learning success and well-being among students. This study gives a sense of awareness to set up adequate and reliable concepts for fruitful future online learning in case of going through educational crises anew.

Authors convey in the need to conduct further studies on the competence, self-regulation on learning and motivation, achievement tests, and the mechanisms that operate in distance learning for the success of students, all in the context of distance learning. The results of the qualitative analysis suggest that social integration and support from teachers may play an essential role as the intrinsic motivation and well-being in distance learning. (Pelikan, Lüftenegger, & Holzer, 2021).

Experiences in ludic strategies during the pandemic

Gozku & Kivanc (2016) studied how EFL games could be applied inside classrooms. The results point out that if the students are exposed to an enjoyable environment and are motivated, it enhances motivation to learn a language. In addition, it must be considered that the importance of games to avoid anxiety should not be taken lightly since it allows the development of the target language. The games applied in English learning are considered meaningful because they not only make students enjoy and have fun with the target language, but also let them practice it naturally. These learning games are useful tools for making students learn new vocabulary and also support EFL teaching-learning by creating an entertaining environment.

García & Franchino (2020) developed a list of games or platforms that students are using for academic purposes:

- BrainpopEII- It is an educational website on which students from 6 to 17 years old can have access. This platform offers several subjects such as English, Maths, Social Studies, Music, etc. BrainPop is used in more than 25% of U.S. schools and also offers subscriptions for homeschoolers.
- Eight excellent digital resources for English learners- This is a blog that offers recommended tips to engage and improve English skills such as writing, reading, listening, and speaking through virtual lessons.
- English media lab- It is an informative website that offers material resources in the target language for students and teachers. This website

is organized by English video lessons, online puzzles, gap fills, cloze exercises, English pronunciation, and listening.

- Ellevation education- it is a platform that helps schools and educators increase online learners by using didactic programs and the acquisition of the target language.
- Epic- On this platform teachers can find books for free in English and Spanish.
- ESL at home. This platform offers activities in diverse languages for online learners from elementary to high school. There are also activities in English that teachers can follow by the link that this platform provides.
- ESL bits. This platform is allowed for any online students that is interested in novels, short stories, and audiobooks of Intermediate and Advanced English learning.
- ESL video. Is a free online platform for English listening and grammar activities. English learners can watch videos about several learning and enjoyable topics and answer questions according to the information they acquire from the platform.
- Freerice. This platform is sponsored by a program on which online students practice can acquire new vocabulary that matches the meaning of the words or synonyms.
- Listenwise. It's a listening skill platform on which Intermediate and Advanced students listen to material based on Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, etc.
- Overdrive. Students can search for e-books and audiobooks for free using the library of their school.
- Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab. This English online platform provides listening activities for ESL and EFL learners. The platform focuses on everyday English comprehension skills at three levels based on content,

voices, vocabulary, and natural speed. Also, it is divided into levels Easy, Intermediate, and Difficult.

- Write & Improve- On this platform students can write essays, paragraphs or texts according to what is suggested for them and the program auto-generates the feedback.

As reported by Schwartz (2020), nowadays online learning has many benefits for both students and teachers and during this process, teachers can expand their teaching techniques and supporting material to create effective learning experiences through free platforms. Lessons can be recorded and uploaded to the platforms so students have the opportunity to review the material without having the teacher present. This is a list of some resources for English learning that have been found help students' learning motivation:

- Youtube Education. This app is completely free and contains educational information which allows teachers to create playlists that can be shared with students.
- Kahoot. It's an interactive tool that helps students through audiovisual learning games, assessments, reviews, true or false questions, etc. This app can also be used for kids, teens, and adult learners.
- Quizlet. It is a useful app that helps students to acquire new vocabulary through digital flashcards. Also, teachers can adapt or customize the information according to the student's needs.
- Newsela. This platform contains updated articles and questions related to pictures that students see and must answer. It also provides five different levels. The content is available only with a paid subscription.
- CommonLit. It is a free website that contains more than 2000 passages that can be searched by genre, level, and grade. Also, various texts with lessons are organized according to the students' units of study.

- Duolingo. It is a free learning application that offers English as a second language and also more than 20 languages. Students' knowledge is tested through games in which they compete with each other.
- BBCteach. This website has diverse content for teaching around 30 subjects that also contains English learning. It also has effective interactive activities through videos and graphics.
- The British Council. This website can also be searched on smartphones that contain activities, games, and audiovisual lessons.

Waters (2020), states that due to the pandemic, it has been determined that 91.3% of students have been forced to study online. For this reason, certain digital activities have been designed for effective learning. In the following activities, we will consider specific lessons that help to support the class and include curricula that contain: English, Art, Humanities, and Physical Education. Teachers should consider these three activities:

- Positive primer. To start the class with the students, the teachers must start by motivating them based on their emotional well-being, and in this way, they can socialize during the online classes and pay attention to online lessons.
- Positive pause. At a given time during class, students should be revitalized to avoid being distracted.
- Positive post-script. Compensate or reward the students before finishing the class.

The following activities are important for making the students feel motivated, focused, and energized during this process of online learning:

- Strengths- In this activity, the teacher should explain and describe 24 universal strengths such as love, kindness, perseverance that are emotional factors that are linked to students and their learning process. After this brief explanation, the teacher should form groups of four students will discuss the following questions:

- What are your top five strengths?
- How can you use your strengths to stay engaged during remote learning?
- How do you use your strengths to help your friends during COVID-19?"
(Waters, 2020)

After working on the questions established by the teacher the students should share their different opinions and points of view.

- Emotional management- In this activity, the teacher should show a spinner wheel to the students on which each color represents emotions and feelings that had been affected as a result of the pandemic. After that, prepare an anonymous survey showing the 10 emotions such as frustrated, angry, happy, etc. Then the teacher asks students to indicate 5 emotions with which they feel identified. Count the results and let them know about all the emotions mentioned. Finally, choose 2 positive and 2 negative emotions, form groups to exchange ideas, finally, the teacher asks them possible solutions to avoid negative emotions.

ICT for education

To implement ICT (Information and Communications Technology) in education purposes must be based on evidence and educational plans. The Organization is in charge of selecting which activities can be carried out and based on this an agreement is reached. This educational plan is aimed at disadvantaged populations and guarantees better education. UNESCO, through its networks and institutes, develops a work plan so that ITCs are put into practice and certify education through radios, TV, smartphones, etc.

UNESCO works to:

- Make sure that teachers are capable and that they have the skills and in this way improve the learning outcome of students through technological tools.
- Reinforce the use of technological tools through the production of reports and improved practices in mobile learning.

- Assist in the progress and use of open educational resources (OERs). In this process, the use of OER is evaluated and controlled.
- The UNESCO Institute provides programs for technology development and information necessary for education. (UNESCO, 2021)

CHAPTER 3 Research Methodology

This chapter gives an outline of the research methods that were followed in the study. It provides information about the techniques that were applied for this specific case and the procedures for collecting data to describe the integration of ludic activities as a motivational strategy for EFL students' online lessons at San José de Calasánz High School during the covid-19 pandemic. This research work applied a mixed-methods approach within a descriptive design. To analyze the EFL scores of SJC First Baccalaureate students during the pandemic lockdown a correlational desing was applied.

Mixed Methods

According to Creswell (2014) over the years, research has mixed the investigation studies by applying the quantitative and quantitative methods. This has received a variety of names such as interrelating qualitative and quantitative data, multitrait-multimethod research, mixed model studies, etc. As the years have passed, the mixed method has come to be seen as an approach to research methodology since both qualitative and quantitative research have been very supportive of each other. Qualitative and quantitative research plays a very important role in theorizing. Although most researchers focus on working with these methods separately, the objective isto make it possible to combine both methodologies and make them work.

As stated by McDonough & McDonough (1997), the mixed method is also known or defined as multisite, multimethod, and large-scale research refers to in which a group of researchers works collecting data from the quantitative and qualitative analysis that is linked to the development and decisions of the educational policy.

Another way to define the mixed methods is given by Tashakkori & Creswell, (2007), they mention that it is the process developed by the researcher or researchers in which they accumulate data and information for concluding using the quantitative and qualitative methods in individual research. The study of mixed methods involves the qualitative method and the quantitative dimension and that even though this process is difficult to articulate or put

into practice, the researcher must find a way to make these two methods work together.

Mixed methods are also defined as the combination of research techniques, approaches, and also the incorporation of the quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study. Quantitative and qualitative research can become complex concerning mixed research since data analysis required could become tedious and long. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2016).

Descriptive Research

According to McCombes (2019), descriptive research is also defined as quantitative research even though qualitative research is aimed at descriptive purposes. The descriptive investigation process must be carried out with the greatest possible care and thus achieve solid and authentic results. The objective of descriptive research is to be able to accurately describe or detail a specific group or population. In this type of study, questions such as what, where, and how are elaborated but not why. In descriptive research, the researcher can also use a variety of methods for one or more variables. Compared to experimental research, the researcher does not have the freedom to manipulate or dominate the variables since he only limits observing and measure them.

As described by Dudovski (2011), descriptive research is characterized by being a study in which the researcher can describe, analyze, and diagnose one or more variables while analytical research establishes why and how it came to be. The purpose of descriptive research is to show contemporary issues or problems through a collection of data or evidence and in this way to be able to describe the study. The essence of descriptive research is to be able to study and describe the characteristics or peculiarities of a specific group or population. Descriptive research has three objectives which are to describe, explain and validate the research results. Surveys and case studies are traditional methods that are used to collect data that are used in the descriptive study.

According to Nassaji (2015), descriptive research refers to scientific research in which the observation of a specific group in its natural environment is carried out and that is dedicated to collect data that will be analyzed and that serve as evidence in the study through quantitative research. Fluet (2021) indicates that descriptive research is one of three basic types of research since it is considered useful to prove scientific hypotheses and describe certain functions of a specific study. The descriptive design must have clear research questions.

Case Study

The case study is the most frequent type of descriptive research because it offers a deep analysis of a specific person or group. One of the advantages of descriptive research is that the specific group of people to be investigated can be studied or observed in their natural environment without the need for an experiment. The results that the researcher finds should not be generalized, they are of great help for future research. Lumen (2021).

The case study is also known as the report of studies that were given in the past and that have served to support the understanding of complex concerns in today's educational environment. Through the case study, the researcher has the possibility of looking for more information than he could find in the quantitative method and statistical results that help to understand the research. The case study involves a scientific investigation based on real life. Such a case can take the form of a problem or anomaly in which it is not in a controlled way compared to experiments. Burawoy (1998).

The website Lumen (2021), specifies that “case studies research is performed in detail on a single individual, group, incident, or community, as opposed to a sample of the whole population.”

Participants

This research study involves 9 students that are currently in the second baccalaureate course of Unidad Educativa “San José de Calasanz”. The class comprises 5 female students and 4 male students. The participants' ages range between 12 and 15. They come from a middle-class social status

who mainly live in Urdesa Norte (Guayaquil) and other surrounding northern suburbs. Students have five English subjects: Language Arts, Literature, Artistic Education, Philosophy, and Social Studies. These English subjects are divided into four hours for Language Arts, two hours for Social Studies and Literature, one hour for Philosophy and Artistic Education. Students receive English lessons two hours per day and forty hours weekly. The student's textbooks are Understanding and Using Grammar (student book and workbook) for Language Arts, The Holt Reader student book for Literature, and World History student book for Social Studies.

Data Gathering Tools

In this study, we introduced the specific objectives that the gathering tools acknowledged during this process. Regarding the first specific objective about the description of struggling situations during synchronous lessons at SJC High School during the covid-19 pandemic the authors are going to apply an observation checklist of online sessions.

As stated in the second objective, it is necessary to analyze the EFL scores of SJC First Baccalaureate students during the first scholastic quinmester. For this reason, the scores gathered in the EFL area during 2020 scholastic year were analyzed and the results were compared in two groups; with and without ludic activities.

Referring to the third specific objective, about the characterization of the methods or strategies used in online lessons, a checklist was applied to describe the SJC teacher's performance.

Finally, it was applied a focus group with students for establishing the most appealing ICT resources for First Baccalaureate students at SJC.

a. Classroom Observations

According to Halim, Wahid, & Halim (2018), classroom observation consists of examining, reflecting, and observing how the teacher and the students function in the classroom. Classroom observation ease teacher's work in order to use new strategies in the teaching-learning process. For this reason,

the classroom observation is of great importance for teachers, which helps them to realize what could be the weaknesses when teaching or what techniques are not used properly. Through feedback to teachers, they can analyze where they are being vulnerable.

In consonance with MacDonald (2016), observation in the classroom serves to evaluate and analyze the teaching process. The data obtained in the classroom observation are complemented with other sources such as evaluations or students' achievement, teacher self-evaluations, teaching materials, etc. Nonetheless, a classroom observation is solely directed at the teacher and their teaching quality.

According to Ferri, Grifoni, & Guzzo (2020), the goal of contemporary education is to be able to provide opportunities despite the pandemic. The observation checklist during online session should be the support and assessment that teachers need during this online teaching system. Giffin (2020), the observation checklist was selected from the document, Synchronous Online Teaching Observation Checklist for P-12 Instruction Hunter College (2020). This data gathering research was adapted, the items selected were used to accomplish the topic of this research.

Students' Grade Reports

As stated by Mohr & Ventresca (2002), a large number of activities are put into practice to aid the research of documents.

Students' grade reports contain primary information that can be found in collection libraries or other similar sources. These source materials can be manuscripts, electronic or physical records.

The study uses the EFL records provided by the SJC registrar, corresponding to the First and Second Semester, during the scholastic year 2020.

Focus group

According to Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick, & Mukherjee (2018), qualitative approaches are used regularly in focus group discussions to gain a better

understanding of certain social issues. The objective of this study is to collect data on a specific person or group of people in an environment that represents the social domain.

As reported by Freitas, Oliveira, Jenkins, & Popjoy (1998) the focus group is a kind of interview that is carried out meticulously. These interviews represent characteristics of the composition of the topic that is going to be discussed. The objective that is taken into account in the focus group is interaction. The data used in this procedure are the transcripts of the focus group discussions and the moderator's notes.

The audiotapes and transcripts that are produced by focus groups are the sources that the researcher needs as data collection evidence. (Morgan, 2014)

The resources that can be found in high school education are the use of virtual platforms for teachers and students. Videos, chats, and audiovisual material are necessary tools for online learning and participation. On the other hand, asynchronous classes are the virtual material that students need without the teacher participating in real-time. (Woolf, 2020)

Focus Group Topic: Most appealing ICT tools to first baccalaureate EFL students at SJC High School.

Number of participants: 6 (3 boys and 3 girls).

The criteria for selection: The students were selected because of their regular attendance to class and willingness to help with their opinion to the questions in this focus group.

Time: 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Participants: This research study observes students attending online sessions who are currently in the second baccalaureate of Unidad Educativa "San Jose de Calasanz". The focus group will be carried out on the online

platform of San Jose de Calasanz High School. The participants who took part in this focus group were chosen from the first baccalaureate. They are all currently studying in the second baccalaureate. The first group was made up of 2 male students. They always participated actively in the activities during the online sessions. They usually bounced off ideas with their classmates and shared their technical knowledge with their peers. The other group consisted of 3 female students. They were usually interested in learning more about the topics taught in class and participated actively in online activities.

Protocol

Data gathering Tools	Protocol followed
Archival records	First, gather scores from the first quinsemester and elaborate a comparative chart against the second quinsemester
Class observation checklist	First, was observed a lesson recording of the first quinsemester and the checklist was applied. Then, the second recorded lesson and the observation checklist was applied as well.
Focus Group	Permission was asked to have a meeting with some students previously selected. The students were gathered in a Zoom meeting to collect opinions over the topics suggested.

Table 5 Protocol and data gathering tools. Prepared by the authors

Chapter 4 Data Analysis

The following data analysis starts with the quantitative diagnosis of the EFL scores gathered from the first and second quinmester archival records at SJC high-school. The outcomes were presented from the observation checklists. Finally, the answers of the focus group to students were informed.

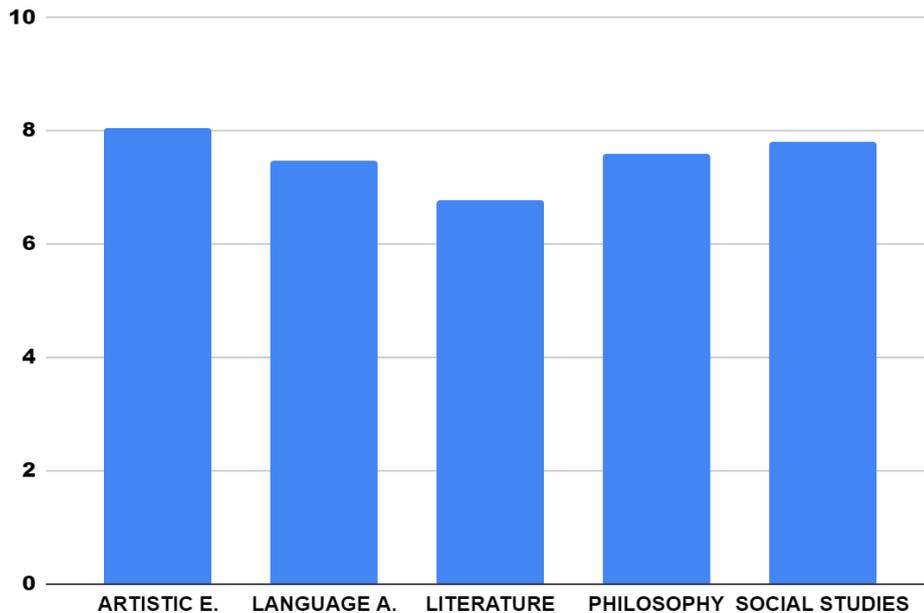


Figure 1 EFL Scores, first quinmester, UE SJC. Created by the authors.

This bar chart provides information on the five English overall subject scores on which first baccalaureate students were taught during the first quinmester of the academic year 2020-2021. According to the chart, there is a slight difference between Artistic Education and Social Studies marks. Whereas, Language Arts and Philosophy bar charts depict a significant decrease of scores and vary considerably in comparison with Literature grades.

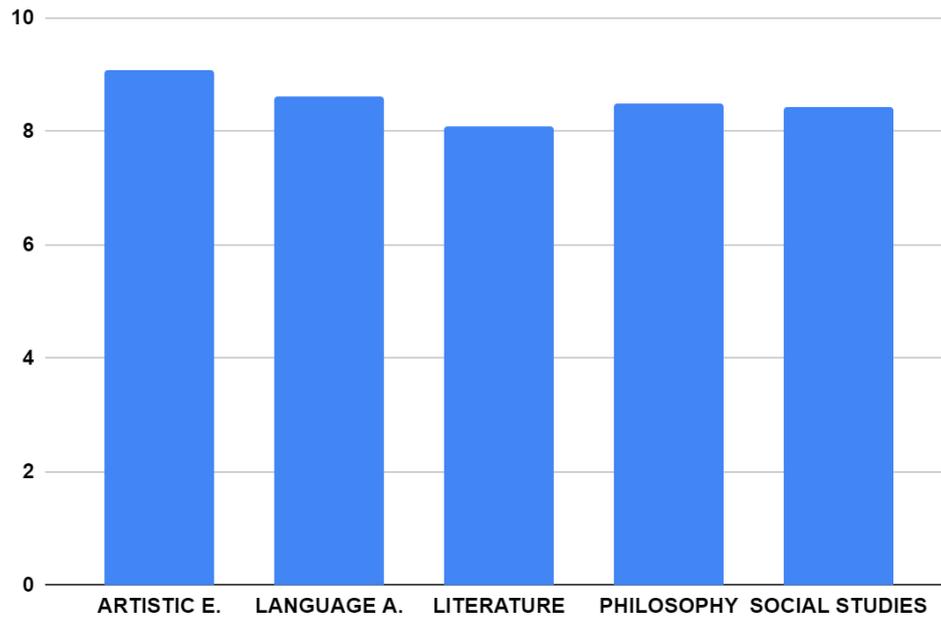


Figure 2 EFL scores, second quinmester. Created by the authors.

This bar chart demonstrates an increase in overall scores during the second quinmester. Artistic Education is the subject that increased the most, reaching 9.1 in the second quinmester. Also, there is a rise in scores in Language Arts and Literature. Furthermore, there has been a gradual enhancement of scores in Philosophy and Social Studies as seen in the chart.

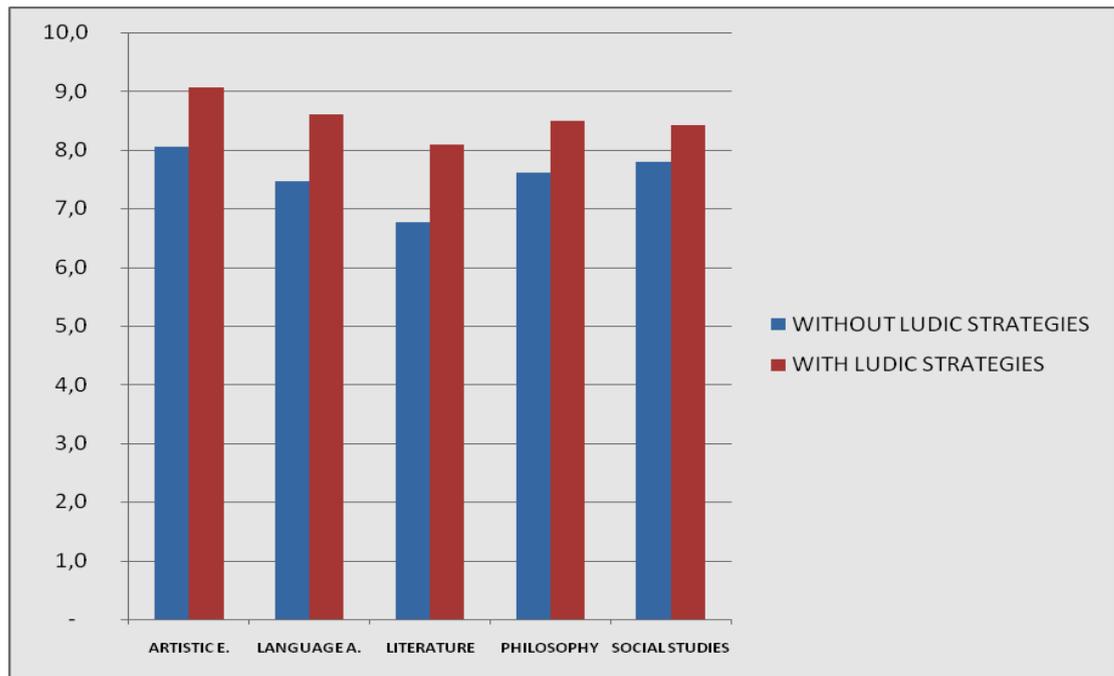


Figure 3 EFL scores, second quinmester. Created by the authors.

This bar chart illustrates both the scores of English subjects during the first quinmester and second quinmester. The percentage of grades increased during the second quinmester. The most noticeable grades that rose were Literature from 6,8 to 8,1 and Language Arts from 7,5 to 8,6. There was also a gradual peak of scores in Artistic Education from 8,1 to 9,1 and Philosophy from 7,6 to 8,5. The graphic also demonstrates a slight growth of Social Studies grades from 7,8 to 8,4.

Findings from the observation checklist to verify the strugglingsituations

1st Quinmester

Instructional design - The main objective is to depict how the teacher instructs, explains and starts the class. He did not start with the objective of the class which is important to let the students know what they are going to learn and why. Also, the teacher did not use engaging activities.

For time management -The lesson given by the teacher was previously planned but it did use online material on which students could participate during the online session.

Learning environment - The teacher made everyone interact during the online session. This allowed the students to cooperate and interact with each other but also to understand what was taught in class.

Students' engagement - Even though the teacher did not use any online games, apps or supporting material for his students it was noticeable that he was clear with the instructions provided during the online session.

Assessment and Feedback: In this last part, the teacher made a general feedback and some questions to the whole class just to verify if they understood the topics taught in the online session.

2nd Quinmester

Instructional Design: The teacher demonstrated clearly the planning of his class through online activities which are considered interactive and all the students had the opportunity to participate and collaborate during the online lesson.

Time Management: The teacher introduced the class with a game based on academic purposes that engaged most of the students during this process.

Learning Environment: The teacher started the online class with a warm-up that made students feel motivated and made them feel in confidence to participate in the class.

Students management: The interaction that the teacher had with his students was noticeable, he made the whole class participate by delivering clear rules and integrating everyone .

Assessment and feedback: The teacher not only gave the feedback that students needed but, also he clarified student's questions about the topic taught during the online session

Observation checklist for online sessions - teacher's questionnaire

During the online session, there were no problems with the connection.

The teacher provided the tools, documents, and activities that were shared with the whole class that make it easier to understand the content explained.

As teachers, we know that the teaching-learning experience should also be linked with the facility of the Internet.

The teaching experience should be face-to-face instead of learning online through a camera because it didn't allow the students an optimum learning process. Finally, the best option in platforms is Google Meet and its benefits because it is free, it is easy to handle in comparison to other platforms.

Observation checklist of online sessions - teachers questionnaire

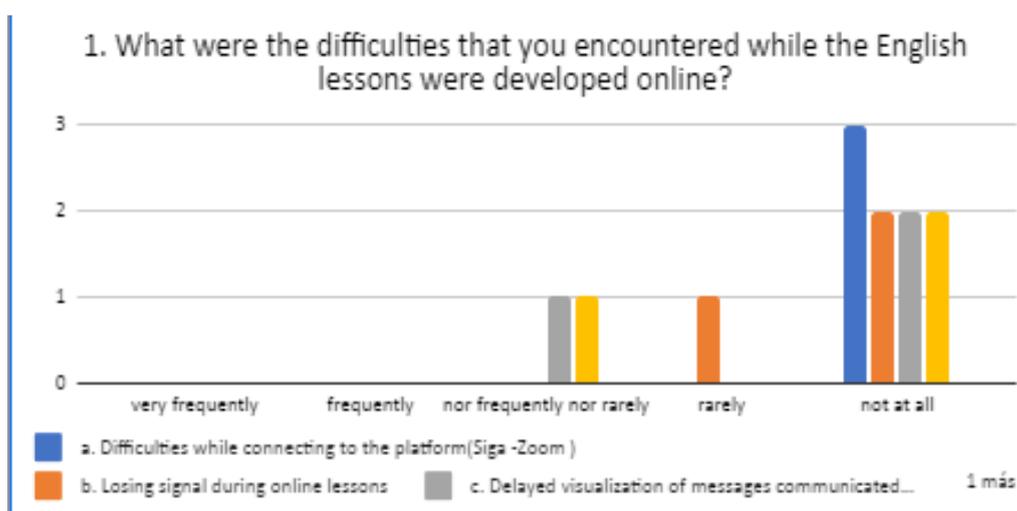


Figure 4 Observation Checklist, Difficulties. Created by the authors.

There were no difficulties when connecting to the platform Siga. It was rarely seen some connection issues. The visualization of messages during the online sessions was slow. External sounds were not a problem during class.

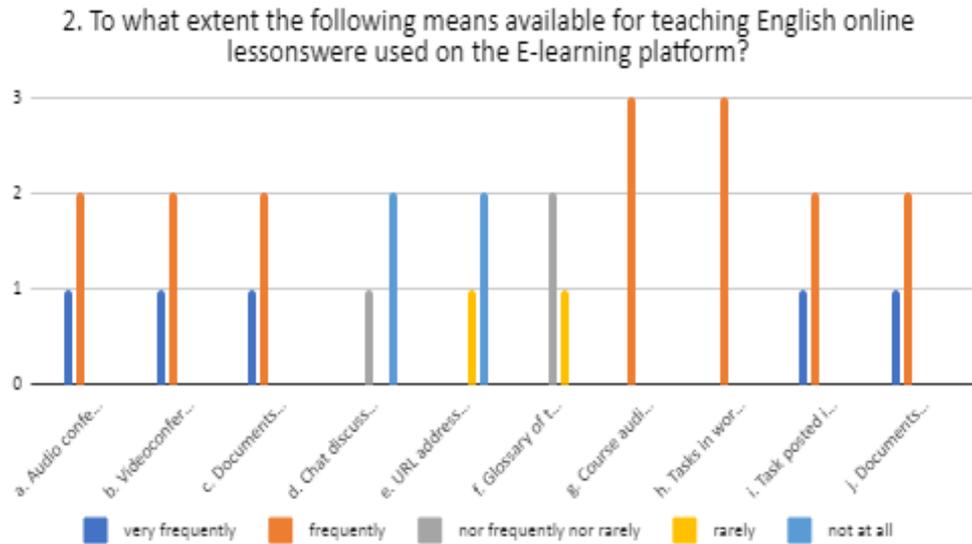


Figure 5 Observation Checklist, Means Available for teaching. Created by the authors.

The audio and videoconferences during the online sessions were frequently used by the teacher. The documents were also posted on the platform. Also, the chat discussions were not at all performed. Rarely the teacher shared the URL with his students. The glossary of terms was not frequently nor rarely seen during the class. The course audio-video registration was frequently performed. Tasks in word and PDF format were shared with the whole class.

Focus group

In the next knowledge networks it is shown the students' thoughts about the EFL online classes from UE San José de Calasanz gathered during the focus group session conducted. The complete scripts are included in the annexes section of this study.

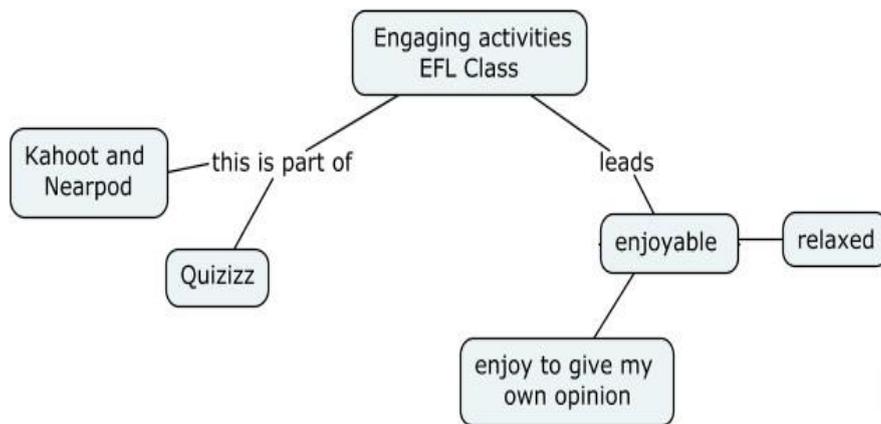


Figure 6 Focus Group Web, Engaging activities, Created by the authors.

Students declared that engaging activities in the EFL class lead to an enjoyable and relaxed environment, they are willing to give their own opinions by an engaging application like the ones used, these are: Kahoot, Nearpod and Quizizz.

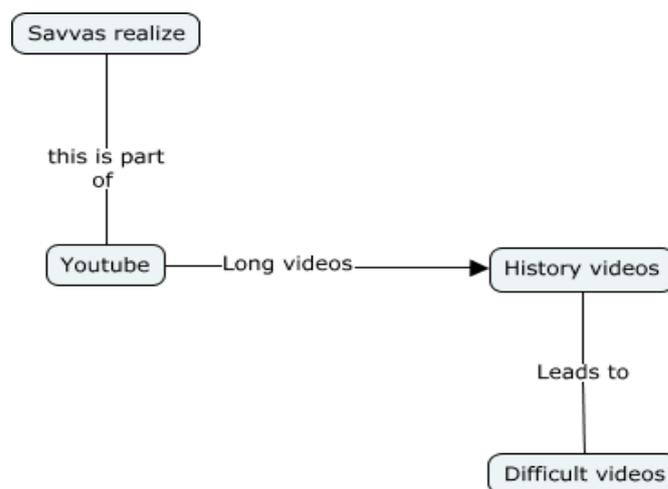


Figure 7 Focus Group Web, Videos's characteristics. Created by the authors.

Students mention that Savvas Realize and YouTube have long history videos that are difficult to understand for them. They consider that the language is too technical for their English level.

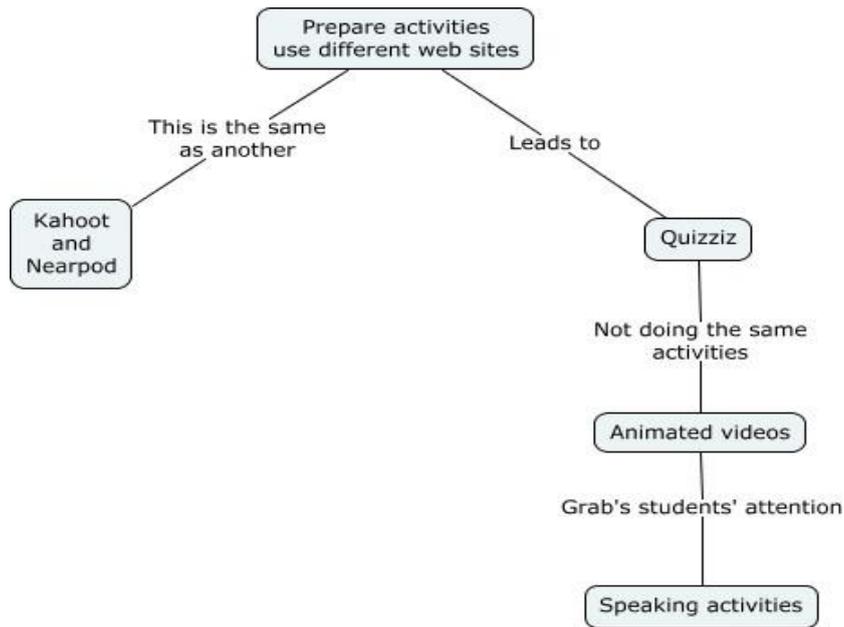


Figure 8 Focus Group Web, Online activities. Created by the authors.

According to students, teachers should set up activities using different applications like Kahoot and Nearpod. Also, Quizziz leads to not repeating the same activities since it has animated videos that grab students' attention. Speaking activities should also be developed in the same way.

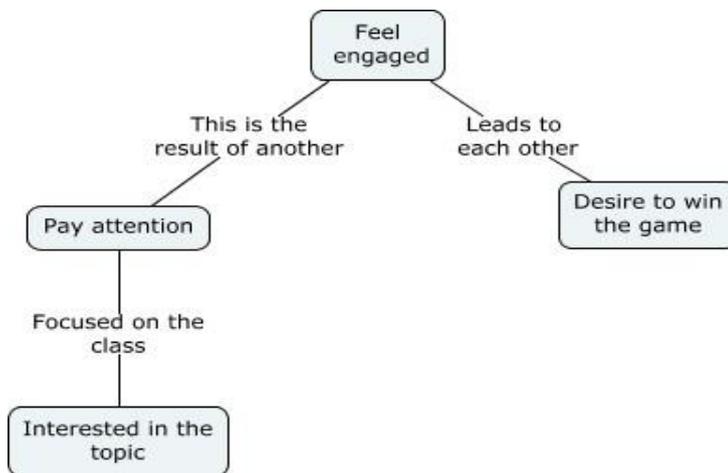


Figure 9 Focus Group Web, Engagement. Created by the authors.

Students report that they feel engaged, they pay attention, are focused on the class, and interested in the topic, this could be the result of the desire to win the EFL games.

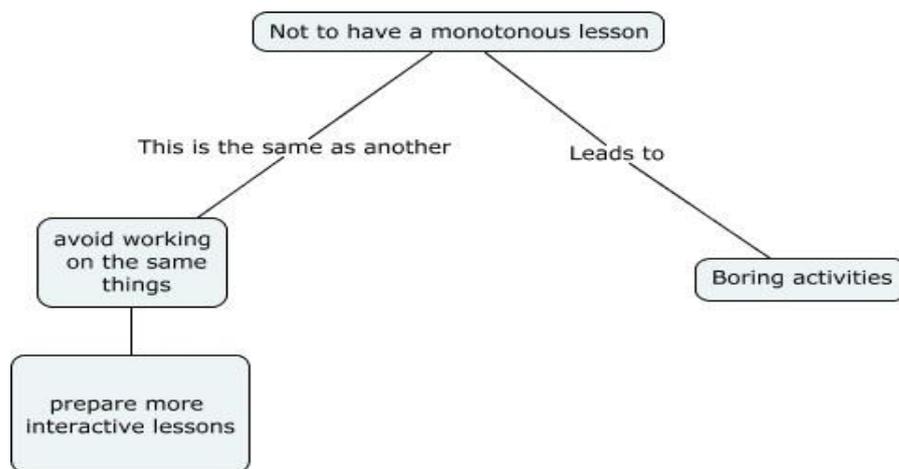


Figure 10 Focus Group Web, Lessons' characteristics. Created by the authors.

Students consider that monotonous lessons result in boring activities and the teachers should avoid working on the same things. Teacher should prepare more interactive exercises.

Applications used in Online Teaching at San José de Calasanz, 2nd Quinmester

Technology Option	Subject	Application used
Video	*History - Philosophy - Artistic Education - Literature	YouTube - Pearson Savvas Realize
Web pages	History - Artistic Education – Philosophy	Britannica - BBC - History Channel - Google Forms - Zoom
Audio	Language Arts - Gold Experience	CDs Chapters - Pearson dashboard platform
Images	Philosophy - Artistic Education - Literature - History	Google images - Pinterest
Game-based platforms	History- Language Arts- Philosophy - Literature	Kahoot - Nearpod - Quizizz
Gathering-Sharing platform	Language Arts - History – Philosophy	Padlet - Jamboard - Mentimeter

Table 6 Applications used in Online Teaching at San José de Calasanz, created by the authors.

CONCLUSIONS

Regarding the integration of ludic activities during the EFL online lessons, it was found that:

During the first quinmester, the virtual lessons were delivered with a lack of engaging classroom strategies which turned lessons into boring ones.

The lack of virtual classroom management strategies could have affected the student's attention. This is mainly because the highschool teacher used the physical books and worksheets during online lessons.

The English teacher implemented ludic activities in subjects whose contents are in physical books such as Language Arts, History, and Literature. Quizizz and Nearpod were used as warm ups and lead-in activities. Students felt engaged, drew their attention to the online lessons and were willing to participate in through online games applications.

In the second semester, the teacher set emphasis on students' motivation during online sessions by using ludic, active strategies performed on ICT assessment applications such as Nearpod, Kahoot and Quizizz. Instructional engagement could be the result of the desire to win the EFL games.

Using quiz applications leads to avoid repeating the same activities since it has animated videos that grab students' attention.

These are the applications frequently used during the EFL online sessions at SJC High School, YouTube - Pearson Savvas Realize, Britannica - BBC - History Channel - Google Forms - Zoom- Pearson dashboard platform - Google images - Pinterest - Kahoot - Nearpod – Quizizz.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were generated upon the established conclusions:

- Activities must be enjoyable and integrative in order to make students participate during the online lessons.
- Students' attention could be grabbed if the teacher interacts with them through games so they can improve their grades during the scholastic year.
- The English teachers should be trained to use online games as much as possible with the students during the online classes such as Kahoot, Nearpod, and Quizziz.
- Ludic strategies and games should be applied from the first semester so students will be motivated from the beginning.
- The educational institutions could help by paying certain apps with instructional purposes for helping teachers grab students' attention.
- Teachers should prepare more interactive exercises to keep up the motivation.
- During the first quinmester the institution should elaborate a survey for the students in order to gather opinions, and, recommendations for enhancing the classroom strategies for the second quinmester.

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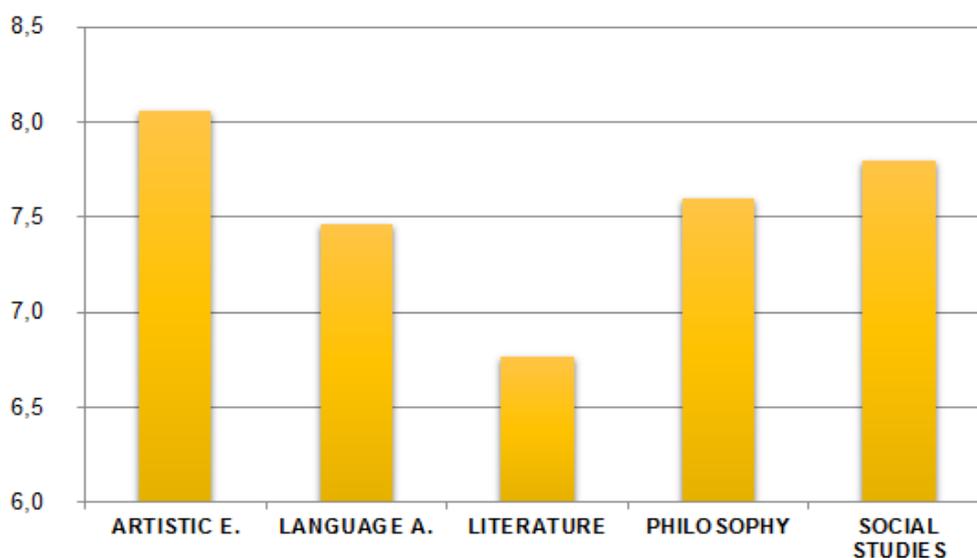
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APPENDIX

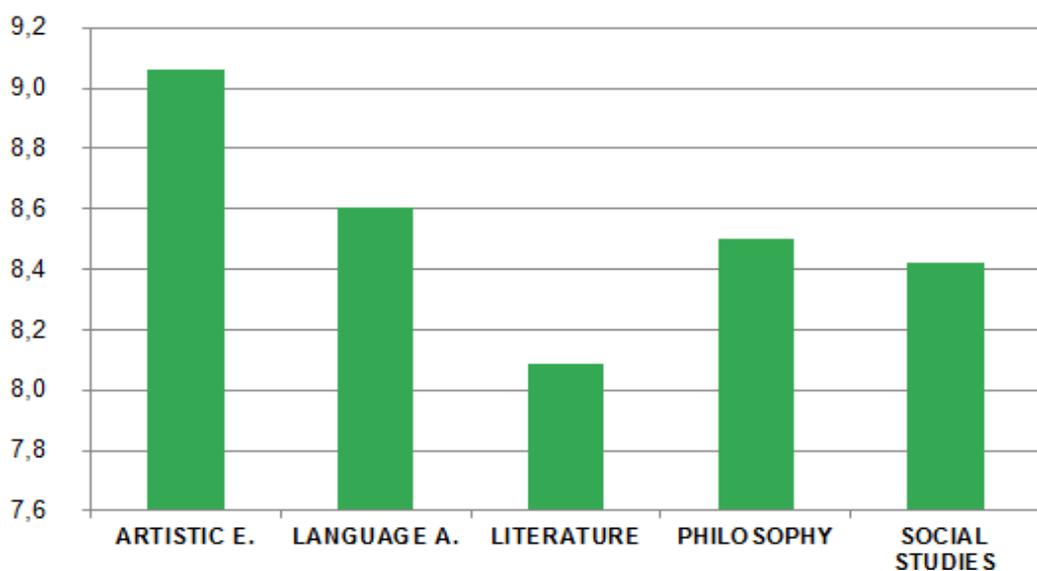
	P. I QUIM	P. I QUIM	P. I QUIM	P. I QUIM	P. I QUIM
	ARTISTIC E.	LANGUAGE A.	LITERATURE	PHILOSOPHY	SOCIAL STUDIES
SIN ESTRATEGIAS LUDICAS	8,1	7,5	6,8	7,6	7,8
STUDENTS					
ARAGUNDY MANZABA FREDDY XAVIER	6,66	3,72	3,44	6	5,25
DOMINGUEZ MORAN ANGELICA NATASHA	9,33	8,18	7,67	8,25	7,96
FIALLOS IDROVO MARCK ALEXANDER	8,55	8,1	8,48	8,68	8,66
GAVELA LOZANO JAELE ALEJANDRA	8,89	7,99	8,35	7,72	8,57
LOOR LOOR LUÍS CARLOS	5,4	5,68	4,98	4,79	4,35
PABÓN GALLINO PAULA ANDREA	5,89	6,86	4,42	6,7	7,27
RIVAS LOOR MARÍA EMILIA	9,85	9,78	9,74	9,75	9,44
RODRIGUEZ AVILA KRYSHEL JESSICA	9,21	8,36	6	8,3	9,26
ZAMBRANO MORFIRA PABLO ADRIAN	8,73	8,48	7,85	8,23	9,45

SIN ESTRATEGIAS LUDICAS

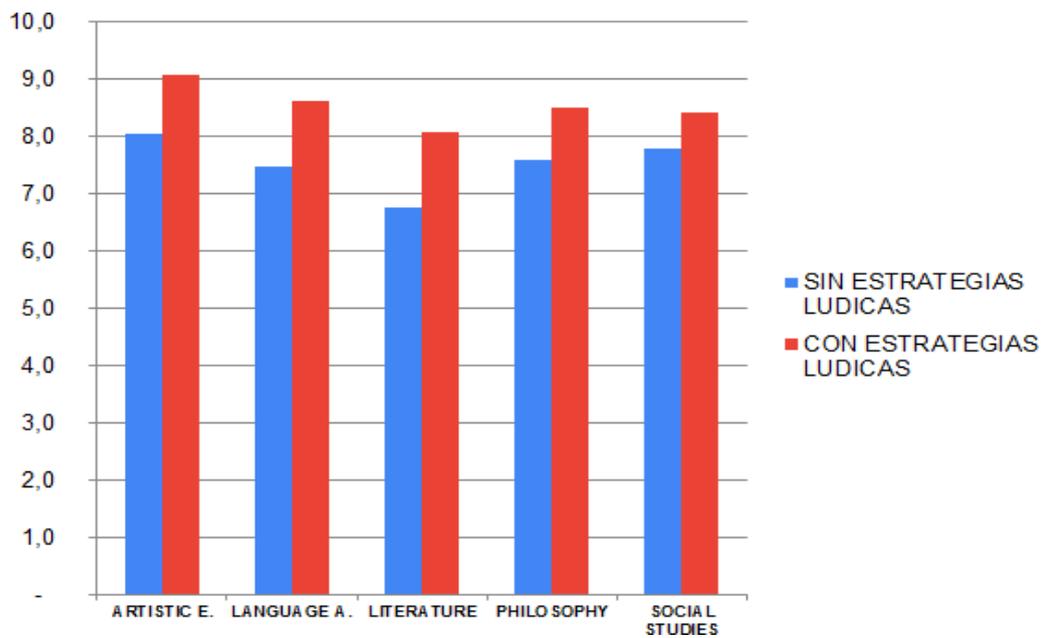
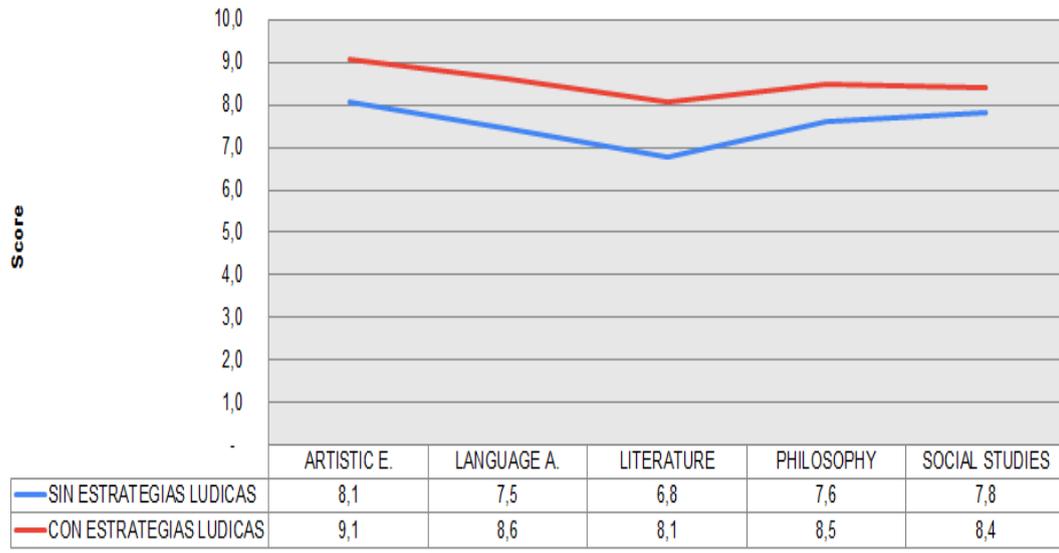


	P. II QUIM	P. II QUIM	P. II QUIM	P. II QUIM	P. II QUIM
	ARTISTIC E.	LANGUAGE A.	LITERATURE	PHILOSOPHY	SOCIAL STUDIES
CON ESTRATEGIAS LUDICAS STUDENTS	9,1	8,6	8,1	8,5	8,4
Aragundy Manzaba Freddy Xavier	8,21	6,2	6,21	7,48	6,8
DOMINGUEZ MORAN ANGELICA NATASHA	9,36	9,07	9,27	9,57	8,19
FIALLOS IDROVO MARCK ALEXANDER	9,21	8,56	8,5	8,99	8,85
GAVELA LOZANO JAELE ALEJANDRA	9,68	9,13	8,74	8,64	9,16
LOOR LOOR LUÍS CARLOS	8,6	8,75	5,69	5,86	5,88
PABÓN GALLINO PAULA ANDREA	7,61	7,38	7,75	7,47	8,2
RIVAS LOOR MARÍA EMILIA	10	9,95	9,84	9,87	9,93
RODRIGUEZ AVILA KRYSHEL JESSICA	9,74	9,56	8,69	9,33	9,28
ZAMBRANO MOREIRA PABLO ADRIAN	9,17	8,84	8,11	9,3	9,52

CON ESTRATEGIAS LUDICAS



EFL Subjects



CLASS OBSERVATION CHECKLIST		
Course: 1st Baccalaureate Qinmester: 1st Subject: LANGUAGE ARTS		
Objective: To describe the struggling situations during synchronous lessons at SJC High School during the covid-19 pandemic		
	YES	NO
The class session demonstrates clear signs of planning and organization, and follows a logical flow.	X	
Instructional materials for this class are age appropriate, ad-free, easily accessible, free of errors and broken hyperlinks	X	
Instructor introduces the learning goals for the class session, which are visible to participants.		X
Materials are made available to help students who cannot be online or have a technical difficulty (e.g., a recording of a live class is given after class for viewing; materials for performing offline are made available)	X	
Session provides variety in visual, textual, kinesthetic and/or auditory activities to enhance student learning and accessibility.		X
Instructor has prepared technology relevant to the lesson and gathered needed links before the start of class.		X
Instructor reviews "netiquette" and expectation for engagement and behavior	X	
Evidence of community building (introductory or getting to know you activities/icebreakers/review or warmers later in semester)		X
Instructor creates opportunities for interaction between students (breakout rooms, use of chat, collaborative google docs).	X	
It is evident that instructor is present, proactive, and engaged (if webcam on, is clearly visible and facing camera, keeps an eye on chat or Q & A, monitors waiting room, turnson/off mute as needed, has disabled distractions)	X	
Instructor utilizes and controls webcam/audio features to optimize interactions.	X	
Instructor checks for responsiveness(demonstrated through polls, body language, nods, simple checks or emojis, "thumbs up" to signal affirmation)	X	
Instructor uses active-learning exercises in balance with teacher-led presentation inappropriate relation to students' ages and the nature of the lesson	X	
Before sending students to active learning tasks (group work, paired discussions, polling, team problem-solving, in-class writing), Instructor provides explicit modeling and instructions(e.g. rationale, duration, product)	X	
Instructor monitors and manages active-learning exercises.	X	
Students engage in active learning tasks that are goal-oriented, focused, project-based and inquiry-oriented	X	
Instructor utilizes appropriate tools and materials to motivate learners (interactive or competitive games, music, video)		X

Instructor utilizes UDL principles and multiple means of engagement through choice projects, interactive games or apps (Voicethread, Flipgrid or narrated Powerpoints or low-tech engagement tools such as flashcards).		X
Draws non-participating students into activities/discussion and prevents specific students from dominating activities/discussion	X	
Addresses potentially disruptive behaviors before they impact learning environment	X	
Instructor builds in pauses in the lesson to provide opportunities for students to ask questions and promptly responds to questions	X	
Instructor provides class generalized constructive and encouraging feedback on how to improve their comprehension or performance in class.	X	
Attends respectfully to student comprehension or puzzlement.	X	
Evidence of reinforcement (such as a point chart, a clip-up chart, token economy or certificate, positive points) appropriate to remote or online contexts.	X	
Types of assessments are suitable for distance learning environment and provide immediate feedback	X	
Instructor assesses students both informally and formally within the online or remote classroom through use of games, quizzes, online tests, etc.	X	
Instructor seeks feedback from students on lesson and on ease of online technology and accessibility of course.		X

CLASS OBSERVATION CHECKLIST				
Course: 1st Baccalaureate Q1mester: 2nd Subject: LANGUAGE ARTS				
Objective: To describe the struggling situations during synchronous lessons at SJC High School during the covid-19 pandemic				
		YES	NO	
Instructional Design	1	The class session demonstrates clear signs of planning and organization, and follows a logical flow.	X	
	2	Instructional materials for this class are age appropriate, ad-free, easily accessible, free of errors and broken hyperlinks	X	
	3	Instructor introduces the learning goals for the class session, which are visible to participants.	X	
	4	Materials are made available to help students who cannot be online or have a technical difficulty (e.g., a recording of a live class is given after class for viewing; materials for performing offline are made available)	X	
	5	Session provides variety in visual, textual, kinesthetic and/or auditory activities to enhance student learning and accessibility.	X	

Time Management		Instructor has prepared technology relevant to the lesson and gathered needed links before the start of class.	X	
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	7	Instructor reviews “netiquette” and expectation for engagement and behavior	X	
	8	Evidence of community building (introductory or getting to know you activities/icebreakers/review or warmers later in semester)	X	
	9	Instructor creates opportunities for interaction between students (breakout rooms, use of chat, collaborative google docs).	X	
	10	It is evident that instructor is present, proactive, and engaged (if webcam on, is clearly visible and facing camera, keeps an eye on chat or Q & A, monitors waiting room, turnson/off mute as needed, has disabled distractions)	X	
	11	Instructor utilizes and controls webcam/audio features to optimize interactions.	X	
	12	Instructor checks for responsiveness(demonstrated through polls, body language, nods,simple checks or emojis, “thumbs up” to signal affirmation)	X	
STUDENTS ENGAGEMENT	13	Instructor uses active-learning exercises in balance with teacher-led presentation in appropriate relation to students’ ages and the nature of the lesson	X	
	14	Before sending students to active learning tasks (group work, paired discussions, polling, team problem-solving, in-class writing), Instructor provides explicit modeling and instructions(e.g. rationale, duration, product)	X	
	15	Instructor monitors and manages active-learning exercises.	X	
	16	Students engage in active learning tasks that are goal-oriented, focused, project-based and inquiry-oriented	X	
	17	Instructor utilizes appropriate tools and materials to motivate learners (interactive or competitive games, music, video)	X	
	18	Instructor utilizes UDL principles and multiple means of engagement through choice projects, interactive games or apps (Voicethread, Flipgrid or narrated Powerpoints or low-tech engagement tools such as flashcards).	X	
	19	Draws non-participating students into activities/discussion and prevents specific students from dominating activities/discussion	X	
	20	Addresses potentially disruptive behaviors before they impact learning environment	X	
	21	Instructor builds in pauses in the lesson to provide opportunities for students to ask questions and promptly responds to questions	X	

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK	22	Instructor provides class generalized constructive and encouraging feedback on how to improve their comprehension or performance in class.	X	
	23	Attends respectfully to student comprehension or puzzlement.	X	
	24	Evidence of reinforcement (such as a point chart, a clip-up chart, token economy or certificate, positive points) appropriate to remote or online contexts.	X	
	25	Types of assessments are suitable for distance learning environment and provide immediate feedback	X	
	26	Instructor assesses students both informally and formally within the online or remote classroom through use of games, quizzes, online tests, etc.	X	
	27	Instructor seeks feedback from students on lesson and on ease of online technology and accessibility of course.		X

FOCUS GROUP SURVEY

1. The first question says: what are the most engaging activities that happened in the EFL class?
2. The second question says: Which aspects of the class have you found least engaging?
3. The third question says: If you were teaching class, what would you do to make your lesson more engaging for students?
4. The fourth question says: How do you know when you are feeling engaged in class?
5. The fifth question says: What projects/ assignments/activities do you find most engaging in this class?
6. The sixth question says: What does the teacher do to make this class engaging?

FOCUS GROUP SURVEY

During the Zoom meeting, the English teacher asked students to take part in the focus group interview and answer with total honesty. Moreover, students were told to turn off their web cams and feel confident during the interview.

The first question says: what are the most engaging activities that happened in the EFL class?

Participant 1: Well, I think that the most engaging activities are the ones we work on Kahoot and Nearpod.

Participant 2: I agree with my classmate (Participant 1.) I also feel engaged with the activities done in Philosophy. I don't know, it's like I enjoy the questions in which I can give my own opinion and they make me think they are challenging.

Participant 3: the truth is that I share my classmates' opinions. Regarding the activities, we do on Kahoot, Quizizz, and Nearpod. Also, **the subject I like the most is Artistic Education. I think the Mandala activity was enjoyable. I would like to have more activities in which I can draw and paint. It made me feel relaxed.**

Participant 4: Well I think the activities we do in Language Arts and History using Kahoot and Nearpod.

The second question says: Which aspects of the class have you found least engaging?

Participant 1: I think that history because the videos we watch on the platform (Savvas realize Pearson) and you tube are pretty long. It is not the language I speak so it is difficult for me to understand most of the words that are said in the video

Participant 2: I agree with my classmate. I think the videos during our history lesson are too long and I get bored with them.

Participant 3: For me, I think that not only history videos are too long but also any sort of video we watch on any English subject. I would like to watch more lively and didactic videos.

Participant 4: Well for me Literature because I do not have a physical book and I am not good at reading. Also, the history videos because I do not understand what the videos say.

The third question says: If you were teaching class, what would you do to make your lesson more engaging for students?

Participant 1: For me, it is difficult to be in a teacher's shoes because they teach more than one subject. I would prepare activities that do not take too many minutes. I would use different websites during the week. For example, if I used Kahoot on Monday then on Tuesday I used Quizizz, and on Wednesday Nearpod. The idea is not to get bored doing the same activities every single day.

Participant 2: I think I would look for animated videos and continue working with Kahoot, Quizizz and web sites to grab students' attention.

Participant 3: I totally agree with my classmates. I would use all the web sites you use in class (Kahoot, Quizizz, and Nearpod.)

Participant 4: I would like to create speaking activities among the students in Language Arts. I have no regrets about the other subjects.

The fourth question says: How do you know when you are feeling engaged in class?

Participant 1: I can notice that I am paying attention to the teacher and not only hearing what he /she says. I am really focused on the class.

Participant 2: It happens when I am interested in the topic. For example in Literature I feel engaged with the pictures and activities we do use comic strips.

Participant 3: I feel engaged when I want to know more about the topic we are working on. I do not feel comfortable if I am not focused on an activity and my entire body aches. The reason of it is that I have to spend too many hours sitting on a chair.

Participant 4: Basically, it is when I am interested in a topic and I do not think of any other thing but the class.

The fifth question says: What projects/ assignments/activities do you find most engaging in this class?

Participant 1: I think I have already mentioned that. The websites because they entertain me and I want to win. Although it sounds mean I really have that desire to win the game.

Participant 2: Well I think that the activities we work on the websites are really enjoyable and grab my attention.

Participant 3: I totally agree with my classmates.

Participant 4: I think that my classmates had already mentioned what activities are most engaging for all of us.

The sixth question says: What does the teacher do to make this class engaging?

Participant 1: It is important not to have a monotonous lesson. The teacher should avoid working on the same things.

Participant 2: I agree with my classmate. I think that the teacher should prepare more interactive lessons for his/her students.

Participant 3: I really do not know what to say because all of the lessons are interesting. I have to make a point in the videos I usually got distracted if they are too long.

Participant 4: I do not know what to say because the teacher has to make his/her own decision.

Concepts	Definition
What are the most engaging activities that were used in the EFL class?	
Engaging activities	Activities students find interesting and enjoyable.
Kahoot and Nearpod	Game-based learning platforms. Students play learning games or trivia quizzes.
Enjoy to give my own opinion	Something in which you find pleasure and satisfaction in doing it or experiencing it.
	We give our opinion, we say what we think, feel or believe about something or somebody.
Make me think, challenging	Something difficult but in an interesting way.
Quizizz	An interactive student engagement platform, which offers multiple features to make classroom fun and engaging.
Enjoyable	Giving or capable of giving enjoyment; pleasurable.
Relaxed	Calm and not feeling any stress.
Which aspects of the class have you found least engaging?	
Savvas realize Pearson	Digital platform access to Pearson K12 Learning content (HISTORY), along with the ability to customize instructions, upload content, and monitor student progress.

You tube	It is an online video sharing and social media platform
Long videos	Continuing for a large amount of time
Difficult to understand videos	Not easy to do or understand.
History videos	Recorded compilation of events that happened a long time ago.
If you were teaching class, what would you do to make your lesson more engaging for students?	
Prepare activities	To make ready beforehand for some purpose, use, or activity.
Use different websites	Use different game-based platforms for students to enjoy the lesson.
Kahoot and Nearpod	Game-based learning platforms. Students play learning games or trivia quizzes.
Quizizz	An interactive student engagement platform, which offers multiple features to make classroom fun and engaging.
Not doing the same activities	
Animated videos	Videos created with original designs, drawings, illustrations or computer-generated effects.
Grab students´ attention	To attract someone's attention.
Speaking activities	Get students to talking

How do you know when you are feeling engaged in class?	
Paying attention	To watch, listen to, or think about something or someone carefully or with interest.
Focused on the class	To give a lot of attention to the class.
Interested in the topic	Wanting to give your attention to something or learn more about it.
Feel engaged	Involved in an activity
Desire to win the game	To achieve first position and/or get a prize in a competition.
Know more about the topic	Willing to ask someone to tell you a piece of information
The fifth question says: What projects/ assignments/activities do you find most engaging in this class?	
Comic strips	A short series of funny drawings with a small amount of writing, often published in a newspaper.
Websites activities on (Kahoot, Nearpod, Quizizz.)	based learning platforms kahoot, nearpod, quizizz.
Entertain me	To keep a group of people interested or enjoying themselves.
Websites are really enjoyable and grab my attention	to find an activity pleasant and everyone wants to take part in it.
The sixth question says: What does the teacher do to make this class engaging?	

Not to have a monotonous lesson	Boring activities because of never changing.
Avoid working on the same things	To stay away from repetitive activities.
Prepare more interactive lessons	Develop activities for students in which they immerse themselves.



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Yo, **Angy Paulette Nuñez Merchán y Galo César Barahona Banchón**, con C.C: 0952497923 C.C: 0915699425 y autor/a del trabajo de titulación: **Integration of Ludic Activities in the 1st Baccalaureate EFL Virtual Class as a Motivational Strategy during the Pandemic Lockdown at San José de Calasanz High School** previo a la obtención del título de **Licenciatura en Lengua Inglesa con Mención en Gestión Educativa** en la Universidad Católica de Santiagode Guayaquil.

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<p>The issue in this research acknowledges the integration of ludic activities in the 1st baccalaureate EFL virtual class as a motivational strategy during the pandemic lockdown at San José de Calasanz high school. To address this circumstance a mixed methods approach within a descriptive design was designed. To analyze the EFL scores, a correlational design was applied. To gather data, an observation checklist of online sessions was applied to the English teacher and a focus group survey was applied to students. After the analysis of the research tools findings, it was found that the ludic activities keep students engaged and motivated during online lessons, also teachers can set up enjoyable environments where students want to take part in intrinsically. It was also found that game-based learning platforms the teacher used during the virtual English lessons played an important role to grab students' attention. This can also support teachers to easy their work and make the lessons more interactive.</p>			
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