

Technology Mediated Foreign Language Classrooms: How to Build Effective and Inclusive Learning Environments

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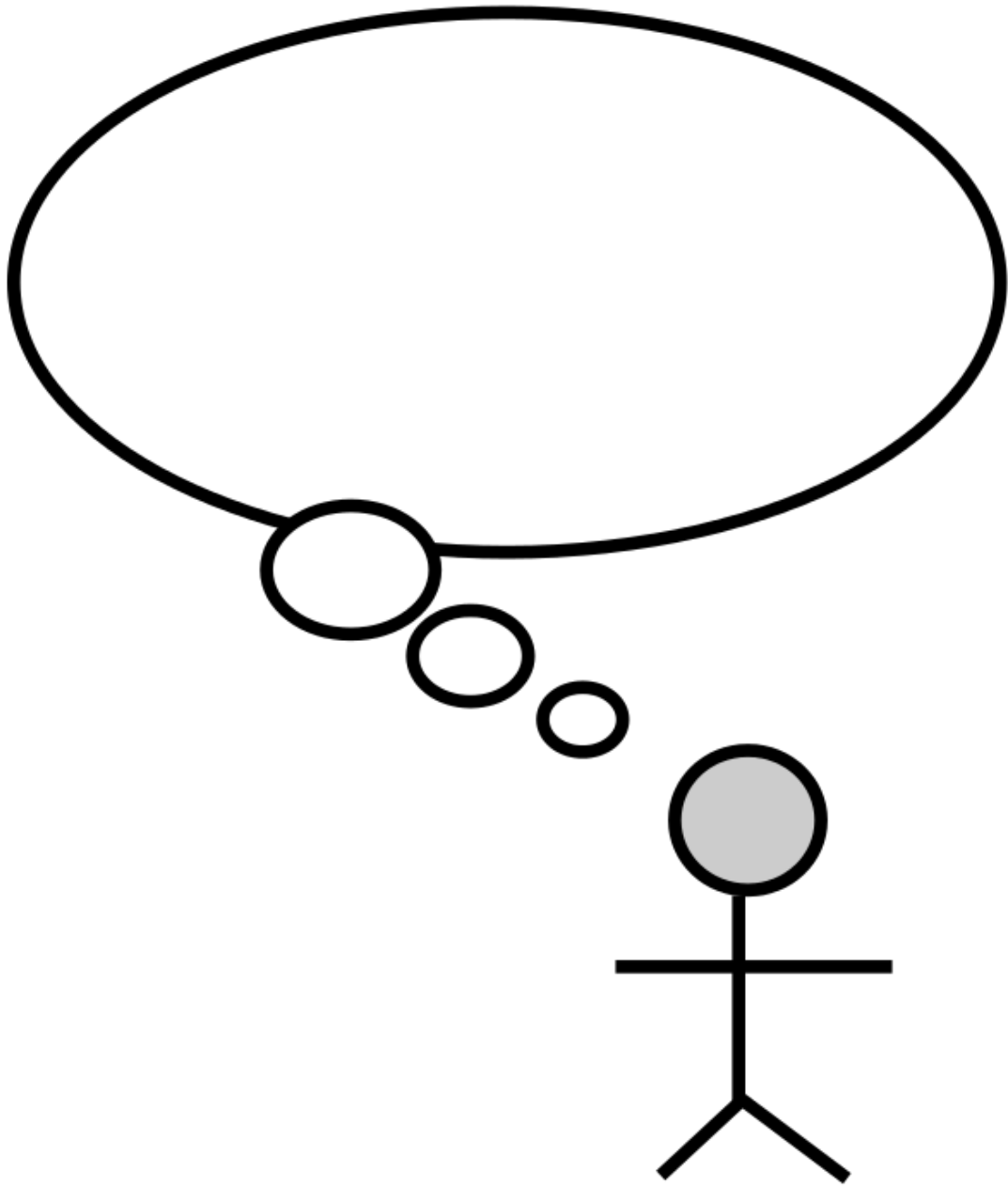


The incorporation of new Digital Technologies is an increasing trend in Higher Education. These tools can help create innovative classes that are more suitable to the Digital Learners from this century.

In this interactive presentation, a set of digital tools will be explored and the audience will become acquainted with different practical approaches in implementing these technologies as instruments that:

- Help instructors present **content**,
- Provide students with different ways to enrich their **performance**,
- Appeal to all **learning skills & styles**,
- Generate multiple opportunities for **engagement**.

Objectives of a Language class?



Main aspects in the language teaching dynamics: "Beliefs"

Natures: (D. Nunan)

Nature of the Language

Nature of the Learning Process

Nature of the Teaching Act/Role

Nature of the Language: Complexity

- "It is not a collection of rules and structures [...] as mental representation, it cannot be taught and learned explicitly, as happens with other 'subject matter'" B. Van Patten
- "Can be thought of as a tool for communication rather than as sets of phonological, grammatical and lexical items being taught without a purpose for communication" D. Nunan

Nature of the Learning Process: Not lineal

- Learning a language is **not a lineal** process.
- There is a constant unconscious process in the learners' mind that is directly affected by the way they interact with received input (learning by osmosis/ active learning).
- For the digital generation of students, technology is an intrinsic part of their interaction with the world, personally and academically speaking. For instance, integrating digital tools to our language classes contributes to the extension, expansion and enrichment of the learning progress into the students' daily life (breaking spacial and time constraints).

Nature of the Teaching Act/Role: On the sideline

ACTFL standards and current research align with the following concepts related to the role of the instructor:

- The "**Guide on the side**" role creates awareness and promotes accountability and self reflection on the student as well as promoting active learning.
- **Communication** is conceived as the purpose of teaching (and learning) and, for instance, as center of the curriculum.
- **Tasks**, defined by Pica, Kanagy and Falodun (as cited in Nunan, 2004, p. 84) as "Inter-actional activities with communication goal" are elemental pieces in order to build communicative curriculum.
- Students learn by **doing**: Communication as center of the learning process.
- Facilitate **Application** of language outside of the classroom.

Where does technology fit in language "classroom"? = Universalization of the T&L process

The merging technologies lead to "**ubiquitous**" learning opportunities and facilitate our role.

As B. Cope states: "digital media support new modes of knowledge creation, communication, and access. As new media **empower** practically anyone to produce and disseminate knowledge, learning can now occur at any time and any place".

The digital tools implementation:

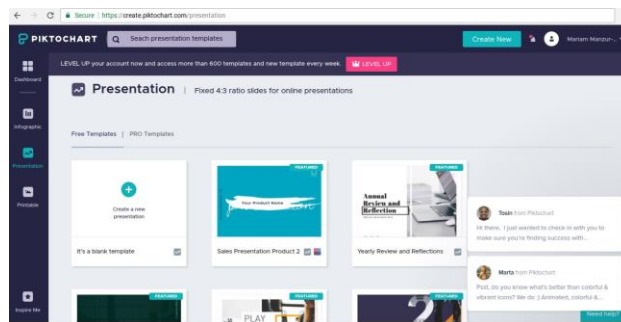
- allows individual needs and abilities to be **accommodated**
- elicits **motivation and involvement**
- presents **enhanced** content and allows a more intense **multi-sensory** learning process
- helps the instructor shift the attention from presenting content to supporting and guiding the learner

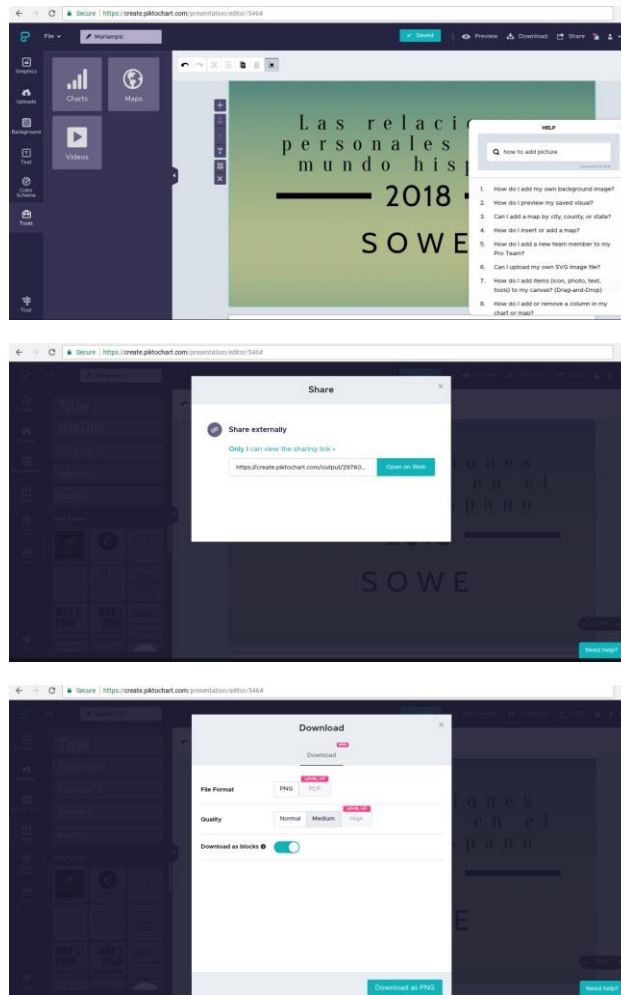
These technologies lead to a **flexible** instructional design that replace the traditional concept of "one class fits all".

They are an essential key that help us adhere to the principles of UDL (**Universal Design for Learning**) which promotes flexibility in the instructional design in order to provide **multiple means of representation, expression and engagement**.

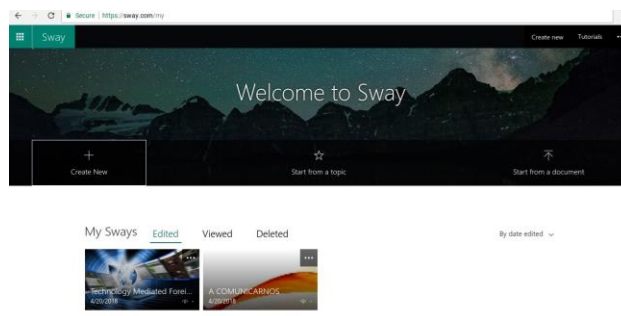
Practical insights

In terms of **presentation of content and in class work**, our daily practice can be enriched by the use of typical technologies like video and Podcasts and also by the implementation of Sway and Piktochart. Both tools are interactive and appealing to different types of learning styles.





Sway

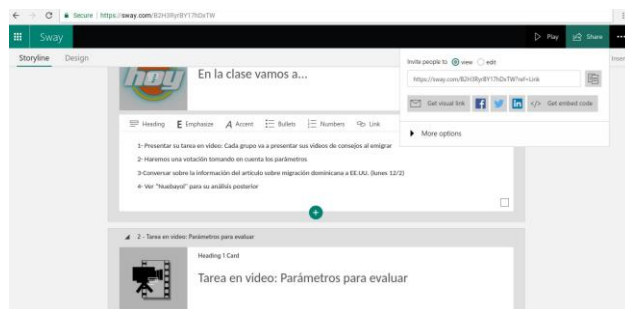
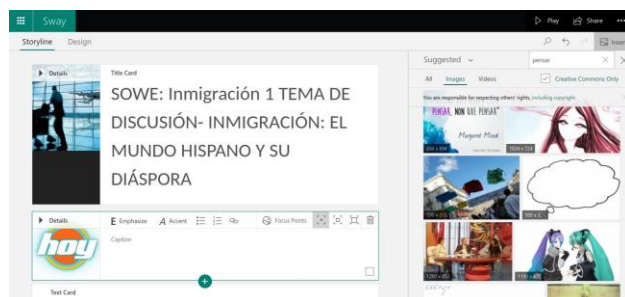
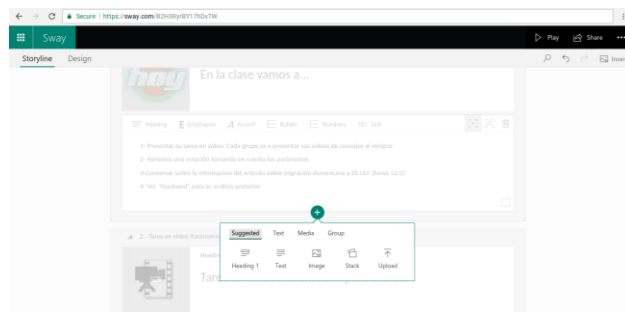


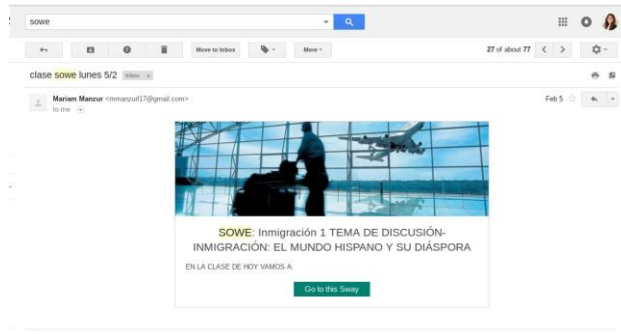


Start from a template



Get inspired by a featured Sway





General aspects of both tools:

Sway:

- Easily created from scratch, from templates or from existing documents (Ppoint/PDF, Word, etc)
- Easy to embed media
- Easily shared (Link with authorization to view or edit) or Word, PDF
- Automatically saved

Piktochart:

- Created from templates or from scratch
- Multiple visuals to use: maps, infographics
- Accessibility to chat and find information or help while working on the presentation
- Shared as PNG
- Automatically saved

Digital tools that allow students to have an ubiquitous learning experience:

The following are a set of samples of digital tools that provide students with different ways to enrich their performance, appeal to all learning skills, and generate multiple opportunities for engagement.

- Proprofs: <http://www.proprofs.com/games/>
- Socrative: <http://www.socrative.com/>
- Quizlet: <https://quizlet.com>
- Comic strip creator: www.stripcreator.com

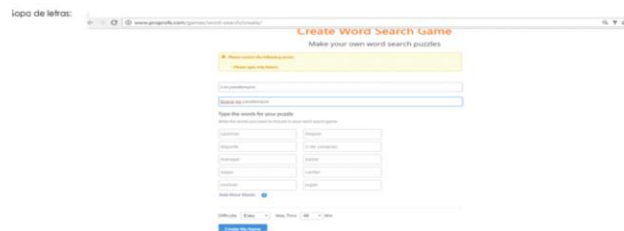
ProProfs

Brain Games

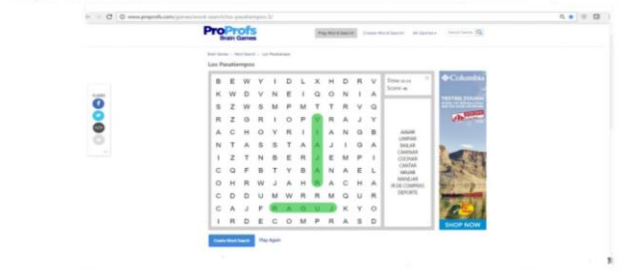
www.ProProfs.com/games/

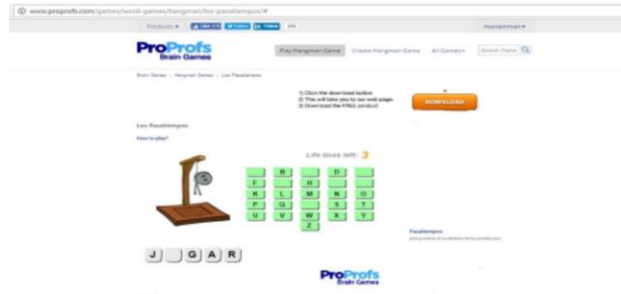
Very useful tool to create a set of different games that help with recognition and practice of vocabulary and functions. It can be used as an online practice or printed if preferred.

Useful to assign or make students collaborative activities that students present in class (Games, quizzes and flashcards) .

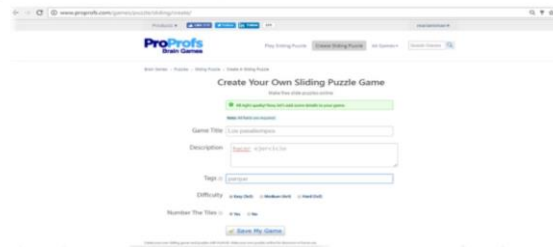


Sopa de letras:

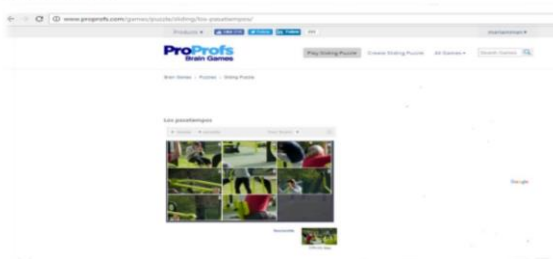




- Rompecabezas



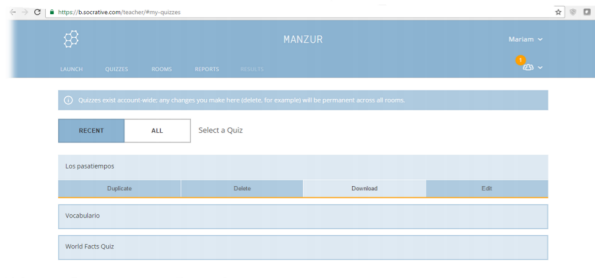
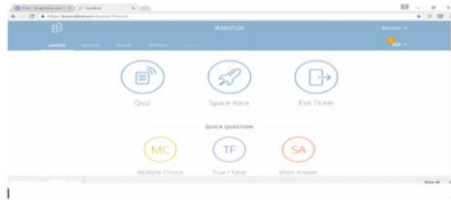
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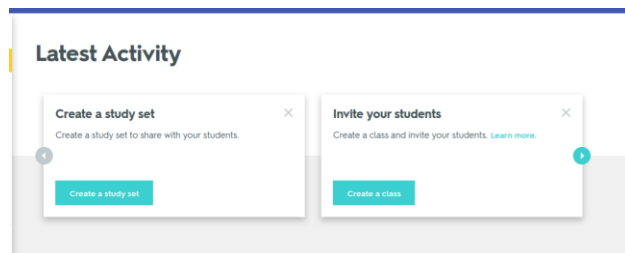
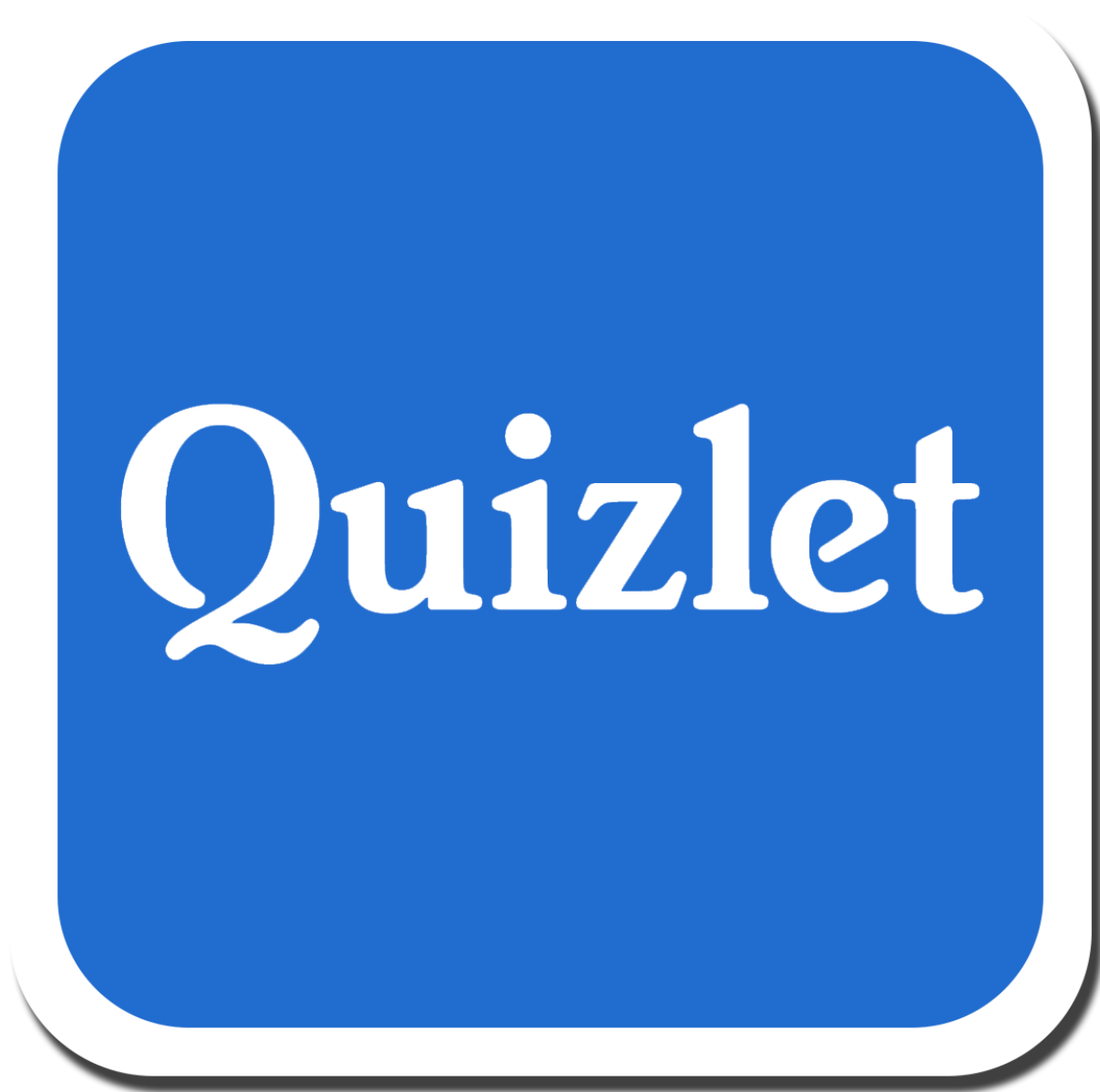


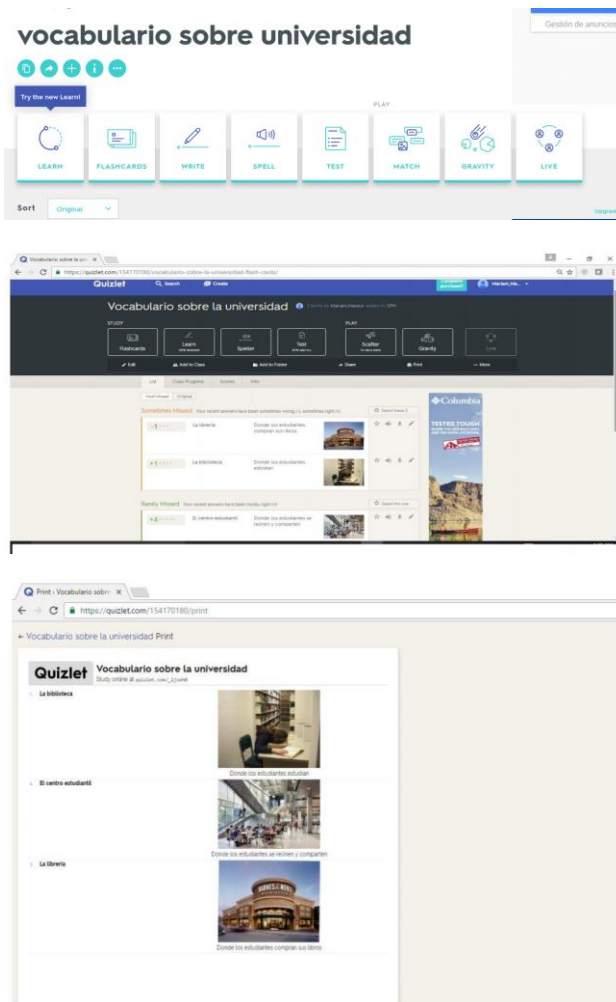
Socrative & Quizlet

Very visual apps that can be used at all times. They generate motivation to perform competitive practice in and outside of the classroom. It appeals to visual learners. The same content can be reinforced in different formats: flashcards, quizzes (variety of presentations), games.









Comic Strip Creator:

This tool allows students to produce **digital graphic writing**. Students can **create** with the language in a communicative and artistic way. At the same time, as indicated by S. Cary, this tool **motivates** reluctant readers and incites students with low interest in writing. It develops **composition techniques** through **visual-verbal connections**.





Conclusion

This presentation aimed to provide different insights on the use of digital technologies in language classroom. The implementation of these technologies leads to create **flexible and versatile** environments that **facilitate** the instructor's role as well as the students learning process.

Instructors are able **extend/expand** their class, for instance, their teaching outside of the constraints of time and space to the students' real world

These tools provide students with different effective ways to **enrich their performance through multiple opportunities for engagement** and also provide them with **autonomy** when it comes to the interaction with the content and practice. They become more **accountable** in their own learning process.



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