



BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA

FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

*“Overcoming Challenges in Virtual Kindergarten English Lessons Using
Digital Materials”*

A professional teaching experience report submitted to the Faculty of

Languages for the degree of:

LICENCIADA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLES

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PUEBLA, PUE.

April, 2024

“Overcoming Challenges in Virtual Kindergarten English Lessons Using Digital Materials”

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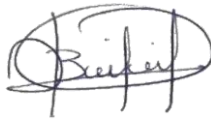
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I sincerely thank my thesis director, Mtra. Rocio Barbosa Trujillo, for your guidance, support, and valuable feedback throughout my thesis journey. Your expertise and insights have been truly invaluable in helping me refine my research and produce the best possible thesis.

I have learned so much from your mentorship. I appreciate your patience and willingness to answer my questions and provide clarifications whenever needed. Your constructive criticisms and suggestions have pushed me to strive for excellence and continually improve my work. Working on this thesis has been a challenging but enriching experience, and I am grateful to have had you as my supervisor.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my committee member, Mtra. Sara Merino Munive and Mtra. Gema Elisa Herrera Arellano, for their advice, time, and support throughout my writing process and for being part of this journey. Once again, thank you for your unwavering support and guidance throughout this process.

DEDICATORIA

Primero, quiero agradecer a mis queridísimos padres por el apoyo y el amor que he recibido hasta ahora por parte de ellos. A mi padre, Jesús Antonio Cerón Bonilla, que siempre estuvo en todo momento para mí y me inculcó un amor por aprender y que a donde sea que vaya siempre estará guiándome. A mi madre, Araceli Aguilera Sánchez, por todos sus sacrificios y amor incondicional a lo largo de mi vida y que sin su inmensurable apoyo no hubiera sido esto posible. Gracias por inculcarme los valores del trabajo duro, la dedicación y la perseverancia que me han ayudado a alcanzar esta meta.

A mis increíbles hermanos Antonio Cerón Aguilera, Yazmin Cerón Aguilera y Wendolyne Cerón Aguilera quienes han estado a mi lado en las buenas y en las malas apoyándome en todo momento han sido un pilar importante en mi vida y en este proceso. A mis adorables sobrinos Ximena Sarahi Mota Cerón y Bryan Mota Cerón que han traído tanta alegría a mi vida y han sido una fuente constante de inspiración para alcanzar la grandeza. Espero ser un modelo para ustedes y hacer que se sientan orgullosos.

To my dear friends Danny Jazmin Morales Garcia and Diana Gomez Velasco, whose unwavering support and friendship have been a constant source of inspiration and motivation. I am genuinely grateful to have such amazing friends who are always there to celebrate my triumphs, pick me up when I stumble, and remind me to keep going. Thank you for being my cheerleaders, mentors, and confidants.

Este reporte está dedicado a todos ustedes, con agradecimiento y admiración por sus contribuciones individuales y colectivas a mi vida. Este logro no hubiera sido posible sin ustedes.

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Overcoming Challenges in Virtual Kindergarten English Lessons Using Digital Materials

1. Introduction

Language and literacy skills can be challenging and fulfilling when teaching children, especially in the early years (Brown, 2014). For kindergarten English teachers, it is essential to focus on what they teach, how they teach, and how effective their methods are when supporting children's development (National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC], 2020). *Reflective practice* is a valuable tool that enables teachers to critically evaluate their teaching practices, assess their effectiveness, and refine their approach (Gudeta, 2022; Machost & Stains, 2023; Shandomo, 2010).

This report intends to demonstrate the effectiveness of teaching materials in kindergarten to improve teaching practice and children's learning experiences. The following pages describe the impact of teaching materials on young learners' English learning process. The use of teaching materials in kindergarten is crucial. In childhood, especially in kindergarten, it is more important to manipulate different teaching materials for children's learning development. Likewise, teachers must be very cautious when choosing and creating the materials to use in class to obtain the desired results. Teaching materials are fundamental to the child's attention and a good ally for the teacher in the teaching-learning process (Abayan et al., 2021). Another relevant characteristic of educational materials is that they satisfactorily meet students' needs for optimal development (Adu et al., 2017).

2. Teacher Practice Context

This teaching experience occurred in a bilingual private institution in a residential neighborhood in Loma Bonita 7, Plazas de Guadalupe, in Puebla, Mexico. "Enrique Conrado Rebsamen School" is the name of the institution, which provides three different levels of education: kindergarten for children between the ages of 3 and 5, elementary school for those between the ages of 6 and 12, and junior high school for children aged 13 to 15. The institution follows the Advanced Methods Corporation (AMCO) method, a teaching method created by the North American company Advanced Methods Corporation for teaching English to Spanish-speaking students. AMCO focuses on comprehensive education incorporating multiple intelligence theory (Pan, 2017). The school supports the Generative Voice Theory and proposes that students can learn English the same way they learn their first language. To accomplish this, the school conducts classes entirely in English while utilizing other teaching tools, such as emotional intelligence, critical thinking, graphic organizers, and technology. Each section has its own English teachers at each level. In preschool, teachers use learning strategies to make teaching fun, such as telling stories, singing, and playing games. In addition, every school year, English teachers change groups, which allows them to provide feedback on how the groups work. The English language in this educational center is fundamental because the AMCO method enables students to certify their English proficiency level at the end of junior high through the Excellence Certification Platform in collaboration with San Diego State University. The kindergarten level offers Parental Mentoring, English, Spanish, Taekwondo, and Music classes. The lessons are from Monday

to Friday, where students take courses in Spanish for half of the day and in English for the other half.

3. Objective

This study aims to share the experience of designing and using digital materials during COVID-19 virtual classes for third-grade preschool kindergarten children. In addition, this report reflects on successes and errors and thus improves the design of materials. It also supports research projects that inspire future readers to focus on the design of materials or rely on the materials used in this report.

3.1 Research questions

- How do digital materials support children's learning?
- How do teachers perceive students' classroom involvement when digital materials are used?
- How can kindergarten English teachers overcome challenges in delivering practical online lessons using digital materials?

4. Literature Review

4.1 Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in a non-English-speaking country can be challenging for teachers. Setiyadi (2020) explains that it is different to teach a foreign language where society does not speak that language as teaching a mother tongue.

Furthermore, he analyzes that teachers focus merely on grammar in countries where English is not the first language. Besides, in countries where English is their first language, teachers focus on fluency and how they communicate daily, "They acquire English because they are exposed to the language in the society" (Setiyadi, 2020, p.17).

Moreover, there are always differences in languages, even with similarities. Setiyadi (2020) remarks that those differences could be a challenge that students face when they are learning a foreign language, and some of them are: Phonology may cause difficulties in producing sounds; vocabulary depends on the number of words that are similar to the words in their mother tongue; culture a language student that has a culture that relates to the language they are learning is less complicated to understand the context that language is about "difficulties in understanding another culture may also cause difficulties in learning the language in which the culture lives" (p.19).

During the process of learning a language, one of the objectives of teachers is to provide students with a context where they can communicate in the foreign language and not just stick to classroom learning because, in that case, "the teacher becomes the only member of the community of the target language" (Setiyadi, 2020, p.21). In addition, Setiyadi (2020) states that there are three essential factors teachers could face when they teach a language and determine the success of learning and teaching a foreign language: linguistic, social, and psychological.

In institutions, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is often extensively used, but it has little impact on national and social life. The average citizen can use English for daily life and social or professional advancement to non-native English speakers. The role of the

English language in the everyday life of a nation is, as it were, influenced by geographical, historical, cultural, and policy factors that are not all permanent. However, the way to teach English and its influence on a person's daily life and development must be considered (Rustamov, 2022).

4.2 Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL)

According to Setiyadi (2020), teaching a foreign language to children is believed that they learn in a way that involves certain aspects. Additionally, those aspects are also mentioned in agreement (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Mackey, 1975; Richards and Rodgers, 2001, as cited in Setiyadi, 2020), leading to teaching foreign languages to children in a successful way.

- a. Creating an environment without stress and anxiety is ideal for students to learn a foreign language.
- b. Children must work on listening to and speaking sounds in foreign languages before starting to write and read.
- c. Children must use their five senses to learn a language, which is a helpful way to teach a foreign language successfully.
- d. Teachers must not translate the meaning of the words; they could instead show pictures or something related to the word.
- e. There must be an association process in teaching children between what they know and what they will learn.

In agreement with Setiyadi (2020), teaching a foreign language to children should be entertaining and accessible. This feature allows language teachers to develop teaching techniques, search for and create material, and use games and songs. In doing so, teaching

children is highly different, so simple vocabulary and structure, which can be learned quickly, should be chosen by a language teacher.

A recent analysis from the British Council 2013 explains that "English was being taught at every younger age, putting pressure on educational resources across the world." (Shelagh Rixon in Bland, 2015, p. 108, as cited in Cahyati, Parmawati & Atmawidjaja, 2019). Many countries introduce English to children in preschool settings such as kindergartens and early childhood education. In other words, in the golden age of learning English, when children can learn anything rapidly.

Teachers with TEYL abilities can create instructional materials, deliver quality instruction, and recommend appropriate approaches, strategies, and tactics. Nonetheless, TEYL must be carried out only after thorough planning and preparation. These young learners differ from adult learners regarding their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical characteristics. According to Graddol (2006, as cited in Cahyati, Parmawati & Atmawidjaja, 2019), TEYL calls for instructors who can inspire young children, have a broad background in child development, and speak English well. Accordingly, providing high-quality and appropriate educational resources for early learners is crucial and enhances the teaching-learning process's effectiveness and significance.

4.3 Reshaping Education: The Transition to Virtual Modalities in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic (2019-2021)

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic affected not only the health sector but also the education one. Due to this situation, the teaching processes had to adapt to virtual modalities. According to Lubis and Yudhi (2021), colleges and teachers had to develop an

online learning model in light of the urgent need to implement a system of internet training during the COVID-19 pandemic. Content, infrastructure channels, and information technology are three things that relate to online learning. As a result, instructors faced the challenge of reinventing their teaching techniques. Teachers had to update themselves in technology to learn how to use the platforms they would use in their classes. Likewise, adapting to this new modality in a short period was challenging. Due to this situation, educators had to change and adapt all their teaching techniques, activities, and materials to the virtual modality (Serhan, 2020). Besides, during online lessons, educators created digital materials to obtain students' attention and explore the platforms teachers would use for their classes, such as Zoom, Google Classroom, and Microsoft Teams.

4.4 Importance of Using Materials when Teaching English to Young Learners

According to Hertiki (2018), teaching materials are essential in language teaching. They need to fit the age and level of the learners. Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) is very different from teaching teenagers and adults because children tend to be very moody and prefer to sit in armchairs only sometimes. Furthermore, Hertiki (2018) established that children manifest more excitement than adults when learning; as a result, teaching materials must be exciting and attractive to have children's attention. Moreover, teachers must constantly change their teaching techniques to develop children's learning skills and create a good learning environment. Eventually, teachers must prepare their classes, and for students to comprehend the material rapidly, teachers need to use comprehensible language.

In addition, teachers who teach in the first grades of school have a massive challenge since they must be innovative, visionary, and original in creating materials and teaching

children to develop their English skills. However, creating English materials for young learners has to be "based on how children learn and how they learn the language" (Hertiki, 2018, p.31), and the aim is to expand students' knowledge and opportunities to use the English language. Lastly, due to their design, teaching materials must attract students' attention and make children actively participate during the class.

Regarding the nature of TEYL materials, Tomlinson (2011, as cited in Nieminen, 2021) asserts that impacting the learner is a crucial component of language teaching materials. This effect may increase students' interest, maintain their focus, and ignite their curiosity. Additionally, while selecting appropriate content, learners' interests should be considered, as well as the topic's relevance and significance for them (Ghosn 2019, as referenced in Nieminen, 2021).

There are various ways to influence a learner, but only some learners experience the impact similarly, as Tomlinson (2011) elucidates. Therefore, the material developer must understand their target audience to optimize the likelihood of impact. Thus, teachers have an edge over those who create teaching materials. Since they are more familiar with their students, they can provide students with more targeted lesson plans and emphasize the importance of material variation.

4.5 Teaching materials

In agreement with Ghosn (2019, as mentioned in Nieminen, 2021), teaching materials include coursebooks and additional classroom materials. Workbooks, films, dictionaries, and—above all—anything the teacher has created, such as games, worksheets, and flashcards, can all be included in this extra material. The idea is expanded even further by

Tomlinson (2011), who claims that educational materials can include things like "food packages, newspapers, photos, live talks by invited native speakers, instructions given by a teacher, tasks written on cards or discussions between learners" (p.2, as cited in Nieminen, 2021).

In accordance with Tomlinson (2011) suggests that language-teaching materials serve a purpose of broadening the learners' comprehension and exposure to the language and may consist of an assortment of items. Recently, digital teaching resources, such as interactive games, songs, and digital coursebooks, have gained popularity as effective tools for language instruction (as cited in Nieminen, 2021).

4.5.1 Authentic material

According to Mandasari (2016), authentic materials "can be defined as any visual, audio or audio-visual produced by a native speaker not for teaching purposes" (p.20). Another definition is established as "exposure to real language in its community" (Rogers & Medledy 1998 as cited in Azizah, 2016, p. 364). At this point, authentic materials are text, videos, images, audio, movies, and magazines, among other resources English speakers make to improve real-life English skills.

Authentic materials have been used since the 1970s and have various benefits in teaching English as a Foreign Language. Furthermore, authentic materials help students develop speaking skills (Mestari & Malabar, 2016). Subsequently, those materials increased their application, specifically in non-English-speaking countries (Akbari & Razavi, 2016). In addition, Kilickaya (2004, as cited in Safitri, 2017) comments that there are improvements for instructors and learners in using authentic materials, and he remarks on some of them:

- a. They motivate students
- b. Students learn more about the foreign language culture
- c. Students could practice in real context
- d. They are backing an innovative way to deal with instructing.

Additionally, several definitions of authentic materials facilitate understanding what they mean. Another definition is that authentic materials are "texts which are made by native speakers for non-pedagogical purposes." (Bacon and Finnemann, 1990, as cited in Akbari & Razavi, 2016, p. 106).

4.5.2 Teacher-made material

Creating teaching materials requires planning time, innovative ideas that can be adapted to the needs of the students, and adjusting the materials so that the students can understand them and use them according to their knowledge. Each teacher must know the needs of their students and, thus, be able to explore and adjust the activities that help enhance their students' results (Hertiki, 2018). According to Christie (2003, as cited in Hertiki, 2018), three rules must be followed when designing materials:

1. Choose materials that are useful in a natural context to learn and promote the use of the language.
2. Conduct a workshop to provide an appropriate balance between instructions and teaching purpose and skills and to meet the specific needs of learners.
3. Assessment of what young learners know and can do, as well as on-demand assessments.

According to a recent study by Hertiki (2018), five teaching materials effectively supported student teachers' success in developing English teaching materials for young learners. These

materials are Let's Count and Clip, Boggle Jr, Noun Clipboard, What Time is It?, and Dominoes Card. After the activities, the teacher gave the students an evaluation form to evaluate their feelings about performing these activities. In the first activity, "Let's *Count and Clip*," the results were that the students were fond of doing activities that required them to compete against their classmates, and for the material *Let's Count and Clip*, children also actively matched flash cards and figures. The second activity, Dominoes Card, was carried out independently and took little time to complete; they could play dominoes and practice with their friends without a problem. Based on the observation, the students were thrilled to do that activity, and the design of the domino card was one of the reasons. Pictures were in there, and most students had no difficulty. In the third one, *Boggle Jr*, the students found the activity hard because their word recognition and spelling skills were limited, and they needed to learn how to say words. The fourth activity, *Noun Clipboard*, was found to be adored by learners because they were not sitting down all the time. However, the problem was that some students needed better vocabulary skills. The last activity, What Time Is It?, was the most difficult for learners because they had to say what time they thought it was. However, learners continued to try their best to answer questions, and the game layout was also popular with the kids, especially when they rolled the giant dice.

The five previous teaching materials created a fun classroom atmosphere and demonstrated students' interest in design. Additionally, it attracted students at first sight, and they actively participated in the course. Finally, Hertiki (2018) recommends that English teachers of young learners be more creative and innovative in designing teaching materials without forgetting design and form. Finally, the most important thing is the content of the teaching materials before using them.

4.5.3 Technology in Language Teaching

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have become a fundamental aspect of facilitating human life. It has also greatly supported the development in different sectors, such as education, which has gained importance in recent years, revolutionizing the way of teaching and the materials to use, thus creating more pleasant learning (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018). Besides, technology has been a watershed in language teaching and a good ally in helping teachers create and adapt more dynamic classes. It is a tool that helps teachers and has benefited students thanks to the ease of access to various sources that enrich their knowledge (Ahmadi, 2018).

Linder et al. (2012) showed that technological means and inquiry-based learning have helped children solve problems according to their age. A survey conducted with a group of teachers showed that technology in the classroom is omnipresent, and PowerPoint is the most used software for building presentations. Likewise, instructors stated that training courses on technology are more effective when they focus on the context of their classes. Besides, interview results demonstrate that teachers with practices focused on student needs have greater emphasis "to create learning opportunities with technology as a base for enhancing 21st-century skills in students" (Ruggiero & Mong, 2015, p. 161).

4.6 Digital Materials

Due to the COVID-19 health contingency, the educational sector was forced to consider a virtual learning system, and teachers, in turn, developed an online learning model. Zutiasari (2021) stated, "the existence of digital teaching materials used in learning as a

source of technology based information channels is an alternative learning media that is attractive, practical, and easy to use" (p. 201) that requires that teachers have skills in technology for the teaching process. Due to this, digital materials have increased in recent years. In addition, technology has manifested itself as a support for the learning process. Moreover, technology is used in different formats, such as videos, images, and animation. Teachers can adapt them if necessary as long as they are applied to the needs of the students (Zutiasari, 2021).

During COVID-19, ICTs have been essential in the teaching-learning process. In agreement with Marchlik, Wichrowska, and Zubala (2021) and their research, ICT became an advantageous instrument that supported "training, self-help and support tasks for teaching staff was of particular importance" (p. 7119). Pallavi et al. (2018) define ICT (Information and Communications Technology) as the technology used for transmitting, processing, storing, creating, displaying, sharing, or exchanging information electronically.

Nowadays, several language organizations worldwide have recognized the importance of ICT in the teaching process. Many ICT tools are also used in teaching-learning and applied at different education levels. Online English courses interactively help with many language skills, for example, speaking, reading, writing, and listening.

Indeed, ICTs are a great help for students learning in general because teaching is no longer conventional; they also have accessibility to images, videos, and audio that stimulate language learning. Likewise, teachers can create and design teaching materials. Notably, "ICT provides authenticity by which the learner could interact with others worldwide" (Alkamel & Chouthaiwale, 2018, p.32). Similarly, Livingstone (2012, as cited in Cakici, 2016, p. 13) argues that ICT has characteristics that can be used in the classroom through applications and educational games, among others.

The educational system has had to reinvent itself thanks to technological advances, especially since teachers have had to innovate their teaching tools using technology. Besides, it was demonstrated that teaching languages using technological tools leaves aside the traditional teacher-focused approach and gives rise to a more student-centered approach (Gaballo, 2019).

4.6.1 Digital material created by the teacher

The pandemic caused by COVID-19 forced teachers to look for different tools to carry out teaching activities in this new modality; for this reason, many teachers looked for an alternative to multimedia. In addition, Thyagarajan et al. (2015, as cited in Indrayanti, 2021) define *multimedia presentation* as incorporating various elements such as videos, images, sound, texts, graphics, and animation. Likewise, an advantage of this tool is that it is adapted to the current generation and satisfies the needs of students. Another format fundamental to the teaching process is educational games because they help maintain students' attention and motivation. Moreover, several platforms or websites help the teaching-learning process, like PowerPoint, Genially, and YouTube, which will be described in this teaching practice.

4.6.2 Genially

Genially is a practical and easy-to-access teaching tool, especially for teachers with difficulties using technological tools. *Genially* is software created in 2015 by the Spanish biologist Juan Rubio Lopez (Indrayanti, 2021). *Genially* is a widely accepted application for designing participatory content that can be used in many sectors, such as education. In

addition, it has excellent features and accessible functions that can be used through a computer, cell phone, or tablet (de Souza & Kasseboehmer,2021).

4.6.3 PowerPoint

Teachers have access to endless digital tools, many of which are free. One of the most popular is *PowerPoint*, which universities have embraced as a teaching tool (Rickman & Grudzinski, 2000, as cited in Baker, Goodboy, Bowman & Wright, 2018). *PowerPoint* offers multiple functions to edit presentations, such as adding images, videos, graphics, and sound effects, creating animations, and making transitions between images and slides. *PowerPoint* is one of the most well-known and accessible technological tools for teachers and students (Baker et al., 2018).

4.6.4 YouTube

Another digital tool used in this teaching practice was YouTube. Jalaluddin (2016) establishes that YouTube is a good tool for English language teaching, and it is excellent for practicing listening, speaking, and vocabulary skills for ESL (English as a Second Language) students. Besides, learners would use it outside the classroom. Furthermore, Jalaluddin (2016), *YouTube* is a website where you can find different kinds of videos, i.e., video clips, television shows, music videos, movie trailers, and other content, such as blog posts, short originals, or educational videos. As the author mentions, this platform allows users to create a channel, subscribe to other channels, and share, comment, like, view, and upload videos.

Moreover, YouTube is not just for entertainment purposes; it is easy to find many videos about learning the English language, and interacting with native English speakers and

non-native English speakers is one of the main objectives of learning English. Then, Jalaluddin (2016) summarizes several advantages of using YouTube as a digital classroom tool:

- YouTube is considered a very useful tool because it can be used outside and inside of the classroom.
- It provides exposure to authentic English.
- It is enjoyed by the students.
- YouTube could be a very useful online resource for learning and teaching process.
- Using YouTube in the classrooms attracts students' attentions greatly and it makes classroom very interactive for language learning.
- YouTube provides an opportunity for students to comment on the videos and ask questions about videos.
- YouTube is not only a source to learn but it also inspires the students.
- YouTube also provides an opportunity for students to present what they learned by making a video and sharing it with the class.
- If a student finds a particular video on YouTube that is interesting and useful in English language learning, h/she can find more similar videos related to it easily.
- It offers authentic examples of everyday English spoken by the people (p. 2).

5. Reflection of the Professional Teaching Experience

During my English teaching experience, I have had many challenges, but the COVID-19 pandemic raised questions about education. It was my first teaching year when COVID-19 reached Mexico. After two months, the Secretaria de Educación Pública (SEP) and the

government of Mexico decided that all public and private schools had to move to a virtual modality of education. At first, there was much uncertainty about what classes would be like at the elementary school level. At that moment, I was teaching second grade in a private kindergarten; for all three months, all the teachers had recorded videos on YouTube and taught the main coursebook themes through videos.

During those months, I received the topics that were going to be taught and the physical materials that are used in the face-to-face classes for AMCO classes, such as a poster of the classroom rules, a classroom stuffed animal (pet), teacher's books, vocabulary flashcards, manners flashcards, and directions flashcard posters. Then, all the teachers sent three to four videos about class topics to the principal weekly through the school platform. In addition, evidence of the activities was sent to parents every Friday through the same platform. Eventually, teachers only had direct contact with the students during March, April, May, June, and July. However, in August, which began the new school year, a big challenge for teaching would begin, especially at the kindergarten level, where English is taught to children aged 5 and 6 in a virtual modality.

Having virtual classes at such a young age was unimaginable before the pandemic. However, it was possible. Before starting the school year entirely, AMCO guided us with webinars and digital tools. However, the webinars needed to be more functional in my area because they were mainly focused on the primary and secondary levels for older students.

Afterward, teachers had a virtual session with the parents, where they introduced us as the third-grade teachers. In my case, I already knew most of the parents because I had already worked with them the previous school year, which had certain advantages such as treating parents, knowing how the students worked, what they liked, and what did not work for them.

When the school year started, I was nervous because I did not know what the outlook would be like, and at the same time, I was excited to see my students again virtually. During the first classes, students were eager to know what the courses would be like through a computer because it was new for them. They quickly learned to use the ZOOM app, turned the camera off, and turned the microphone on and off, and some of them even knew how to share the screen and write in the chat box. Despite being children, most students had no adults accompanying them in classes; only the minority were commonly accompanied by their grandparents or parents.

As time passed, I realized that the students were losing interest; many of them started playing, others stood around, others were having breakfast or had just woken up, and others did not even join our online classes. At first, I felt that my teaching practice was not working, but when I shared this situation with other colleagues and coworkers, I realized that they were going through the same problem, especially in preschool. Keeping the children's attention through a computer for over an hour was challenging. I received ideas from my colleagues when they mentioned that they had looked for material and techniques that could be applied in the virtual modality for preschoolers.

Then, I decided to browse various social networks and web platforms, including Pinterest, YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram, to look for ideas to help me invent teaching techniques and create functional digital material for my students. Although I found many materials, not all of them applied to teaching English to children. Most materials were focused on Spanish classes, and the materials that were in English were visually attractive for children. However, many of them were not suitable for my students because those materials were focused on teaching English as their native language and contained vocabulary that, due to their context, they would not be able to understand without a bilingual

adult present with them and as I mentioned previously, many of them were alone, and the students who had an adult accompanying them in class did not know how to speak English.

During that time, I relied on authentic materials such as movies or YouTube videos that would help me make the class more attractive for my students. I used fragments of children's movies to practice listening, videos on YouTube to understand the concepts of addition, subtraction, rhymes, weather, emotions, days of the week, numbers from 1 to 100, and active pauses, among others, and my students liked it. They even asked me to repeat the activities and digital materials. An activity that came to my mind was when we were watching the changes that the body experiences when it grows. I gave an example of a fragment from the movie *The Lion King* in which the main character was changing his body, and just as this character changed and grew, they would, too.

Using many authentic materials in classes was very attractive at first, but after a while, it became noticeable, and the innovativeness of my classes was lost again. After several days, I realized using them was a good idea; I just had to mix them with different resources. For example, in a class, I used a YouTube video about the numbers from 10 in 10 to 100 with digital material I designed about finding and identifying the numbers they were asking for through a setback game.

Thanks to this, I had to create my materials based on the tastes of my students, that is, movies, characters, video games, and favorite songs, among others. Then, I started looking for ideas for creating material and found tutorials on YouTube to create digital materials for children. It took me several days to learn how to make them and put them into practice because it was also important when I could apply them according to the topic to be taught. At first, it was not easy because I had to teach my students how to use them, and not all of them understood how to use the material; the majority were enthusiastic about having their

favorite characters and their favorite video games in class, which helped me make the courses more attractive for them of course. Only some of the materials I designed worked for me because they were not to my students' liking, or those materials were more difficult than I thought they would be.

Another problem I witnessed during classes was that the few parents who supported their children in the virtual courses gave them the answers or did the activities when I applied the digital material, which differed from the objective. However, I had to personalize the digital materials more, that is, carry out activities or questions only the students could know about the topic of interest. A clear example is the AMONG US game, in which the children knew the rules because it was a trendy game at that time and children how to play them. Thanks to that knowledge, they were guided in monitoring the activity.

My students' interest increased with this modification in the materials, and their participation and attention in the classes were continuous. Later, I had to create other materials with different designs, characters, movies, or cartoons and even add adjustments to the PowerPoint slides that would help make the class more dynamic and attractive. Finally, despite being in virtual classes, I achieved the goal of maintaining the attention of most of my students and ensuring that they satisfactorily accomplished the activities in class.

The following school year, I was nervous because I did not know if the materials I designed and used last year would work for me. After all, we were returning in a new way since the classes would now be hybrid; that is, virtual and in-person classes simultaneously. However, the school where I am currently working does not apply this way. In the morning, teachers had face-to-face classes, and at the end of those classes, the virtual classes began with those students who took courses from home. When this school year began, I realized

that the materials I had designed needed minor modifications to be applied to the hybrid modality.

After finishing this school year of teaching, I continued using several digital materials and lesson plans I had designed during my virtual classes for the next school year. One of the key learnings was the design of digital materials, which led me to develop my skills in using technology and discover other platforms to improve my classes. Thanks to this, I have acquired more technological skills and improved the design of my materials, promoting technological inclusion in the classroom. In future situations, my goal will be to maintain a continuous renewal attitude, to know and apply different teaching methodologies, and to base my classes on including at least three multiple intelligences.

Likewise, in this teaching experience, I identified some weaknesses that affected my teaching of children. One of them was the need for more attention to certain principles of the AMCO method, such as the development of emotional intelligence. Additionally, I often became frustrated socio-emotionally when my planned activities did not produce the desired results. Poor lesson time estimation was another area for improvement identified, leading to us needing help adjusting to the session schedule. In the future, I am committed to paying more attention to these aspects, incorporating principles of the AMCO method, and focusing on improving the social-emotional skills of my students, in addition to better planning my time to get the most out of the sessions.

6. Conclusion

Finally, this paper concludes that creating materials for 5-year-old children means analyzing in detail what will help the student; that is, the materials must be based on the students' tastes and needs so that they feel motivated to get involved in the topic to teach.

According to the outcomes, it is not favorable to keep a child sitting all the time and pretend that they will remain that way throughout the activity because, at some point, they will stop being interested and will lose focus or attention.

When designing digital materials, it was recognized that it entailed not only time and effort but also a particular skill with technology and knowing students well to improve teaching practice results. It is also essential to have a specific connection between the topics and the materials to be designed so that these teaching tools are about more than just entertaining the students, and there is no learning. As a result, teachers notice that they must create more dynamic classes even in situations we did not imagine, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, so that children can develop cognitively and socially.

The digital materials designed during the school year aimed to learn through playing and socializing among students since the COVID-19 pandemic somewhat limited this communication skill. Also, during this teaching practice, I learned to create materials with a specific objective: children's learning in a pleasant and relaxed way and not just making them look nice. In addition, this helped me to improve my choice of materials, develop and improve my skills in digital design, and learn how to apply them during classes. This reflection teaches us that we should not only use physical materials for children in future teaching practices. Because we are in a digital era, we should take advantage of that and design digital materials that help children learn, have fun, and explore all or most of their skills. Nowadays, more children are familiar with technology. In this situation, it can help teachers so that the digital materials created are of interest to young students, in this case, children.

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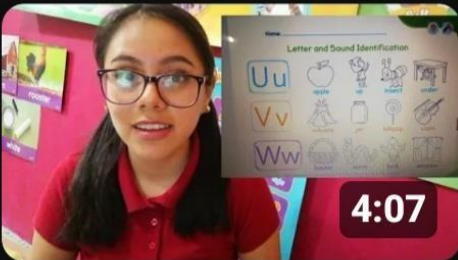

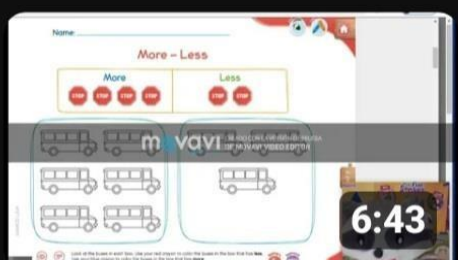

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A- YouTube videos about class topics

	<p>p.56 Letter and sound i... ⋮</p> <p>10 views • 3 years ago</p> <p>Made for kids</p> <p>🔒 👍 0 💬 0</p>
	<p>p. 55 Letter and sound... ⋮</p> <p>19 views • 3 years ago</p> <p>Made for kids</p> <p>🔒 👍 0 💬 0</p>
	<p>Daily routine 4-8 de M... ⋮</p> <p>78 views • 3 years ago</p> <p>Made for kids</p> <p>🔒 👍 2 💬 0</p>
	<p>p.25 More Less ⋮</p> <p>No views • 3 years ago</p> <p>Made for kids</p> <p>🔒 👍 0 💬 0</p>
	<p>Directionality ⋮</p> <p>1 view • 3 years ago</p> <p>Made for kids</p> <p>🔒 👍 0 💬 0</p>

Appendix B – PowerPoint Presentations

The screenshot shows a PowerPoint presentation window titled "notebook slides - PowerPoint (Producto sin licencia)" by Jessica Ceron Aguilera. The ribbon includes "Inicio", "Insertar", "Diseño", "Transiciones", "Animaciones", "Presentación con diapositivas", "Revisar", "Vista", and "Ayuda". The main slide, slide 15 of 67, is titled "Say the number you see on the Screen" and features a grid of cartoon numbers: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, and 60. Each number is accompanied by a small cartoon character. The task is to identify the number shown on the screen. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 08:22 p.m. on 14/03/2024.

The screenshot shows a PowerPoint presentation window titled "AMONG US - PowerPoint (Producto sin licencia)" by Jessica Ceron Aguilera. The ribbon includes "Inicio", "Insertar", "Diseño", "Transiciones", "Animaciones", "Presentación con diapositivas", "Grabar", "Revisar", "Vista", and "Ayuda". The main slide, slide 18 of 45, is titled "How many are there?" and features a grid of cartoon astronauts in various colors (red, orange, green, white, yellow, cyan). The task is to count the number of astronauts. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 07:40 p.m. on 14/03/2024.



Appendix C - Genially video game about numbers 1 to 20


The screenshot displays the Genially presentation editor interface. On the left is a dark blue sidebar with various tool icons and labels: Genially logo, Text, Image, Resources, Interactive elements, Interactive questions, Smartblocks, Insert, and Background. The main workspace shows a presentation slide with a video game theme. At the top, there are navigation arrows, a search bar containing 'NUM...', and a 'Public' status indicator. Below the navigation is a blue '+ Add page' button. The presentation content consists of three slides:


- Slide 6:** Titled '6 | Pregunta 05'. It features a video game scene with a spaceship at the bottom and several alien enemies (Martians) scattered across the screen. On the right side of the slide, there is a text box with the question 'HOW MANY MARTIANS CAN YOU SEE?' and three multiple-choice options: 10, 3, and 6.
- Slide 7:** Titled '7 | FIN BIEN'. It shows a video game screen with a 'NEW HIGH SCORE 999999' at the top, a large alien enemy in the center, and the text 'CONGRATULATIONS! YOU ARE AWESOME' in large green letters. At the bottom, it says '© 2020 GENIALLY GAMES'.
- Slide 8:** Shows a video game screen with a spaceship at the top and the text 'GAME OVER' in large red letters. Below it, it asks 'CONTINUE?' with two options: 'SI' and 'NO'.

Each slide has a small blue 'x' icon in the top right corner and a three-dot menu icon in the bottom right corner, indicating interactive elements.

- 
-  Text
-  Image
-  Resources
-  Interactive elements
-  Interactive questions
-  Smartblocks
-  Insert
-  Background
-  Pages

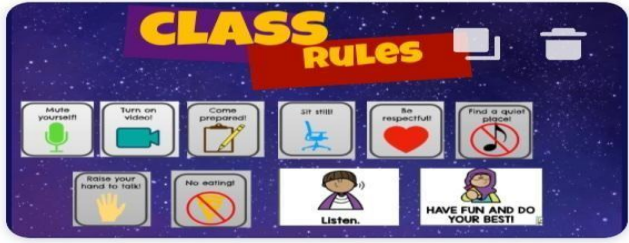
← → |  daily...  Public

 Add page



HELLO EVERYONE


1 | PORTADA



CLASS RULES



- Mute yourself!
- Turn on video!
- Come prepared!
- Sit still
- Be respectful!
- Find a quiet place!
- Raise your hand to talk!
- No eating!
- Listen.
- HAVE FUN AND DO YOUR BEST!

2 | ÍNDICE



Attendance

Sofia del Rosario	Reyna Etuney	Mayte Isabella	Zoe Valeria	Valentina	Caroline
Sofia	Gretel	Ariel Priscilla	Dasha	Daniela Eliete	Diana Brenda

 List  Grid