

**“EL PAPEL DE LA DIDÁCTICA EN EL CURSO ONLINE DE ADQUISICIÓN
DE UNA SEGUNDA LENGUA: SU FUNCIÓN EN LAS SESIONES
SINCRÓNICAS.”**

**THE ROLE OF DIDACTICS IN THE ONLINE
COURSE SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
(SLA): ITS FUNCTION IN THE SYNCHRONIC SESSIONS.**

Autor:

■ PhD. Josué Reinaldo Bonilla Tenesaca ■
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6748-2345>
Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador
jrbonillat@ube.edu.ec

Autora:

■ PhD. Isabel Batista Medina ■
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1701-4957>
Universidad de Oriente. Cuba
isabelbm56@nauta.cu

Autor:

■ PhD. Johnny Segundo Campoverde López ■
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0108-4755>
Buckingham English Center
bjohnsy@hotmail.com

RESUMEN

El siguiente trabajo analiza el papel de la Didáctica en la virtualización a través del desarrollo de las sesiones sincrónicas requeridas en el curso online Adquisición de Segundas Lenguas. Este curso se centra en teorías y factores que apoyan el aprendizaje del inglés y el conocimiento de las funciones de los profesores para conducir la enseñanza. Los métodos análisis-síntesis, inductivo-deductivo y el dialéctico hermenéutico se usaron para la interpretación de los datos procesados, derivados de la bibliografía consultada. Es evidente la necesidad de profundizar en el papel de la Didáctica y las formas nuevas de enseñar y auto aprender en la modalidad a distancia, con métodos que estimulen la asimilación efectiva de los contenidos.

Palabras clave: Didáctica, sesiones sincrónicas

ABSTRACT

The following work analyzes the role of Didactics in the virtualization through the development of synchronic sessions in the online course Second Language Acquisition. This course focuses on the theories and factors that support the English language learning and knowledge of the teachers' functions to lead the students' learning. The analytical-synthetic, inductive-deductive, and hermeneutic-dialectical methods were used for the analysis and interpretation of the data processed, derived from the bibliography and pedagogical experiences in the virtualization. It is evident the need to deepen into the role of Didactics and novel forms of teaching and self-learning at a distance, with methods that encourage the effective assimilation of the contents.

Keywords: Didactics, synchronic sessions



I. INTRODUCTION

Distance education is the use of specific pedagogical techniques, resources and means of communication to facilitate learning and teaching between students and teachers who are separated by time or distance. The techniques, resources and means of communication depend on factors such as: the subject matter, the needs and context of the learner, the competence and experience of the teacher, the objectives of the instruction, available technologies and institutional capacity (UNESCO, 2000).

The use of the distance modality is mediated with the incorporation of different media, among these, the digital medium. It constitutes a didactic option that supposes the pedagogical consideration of the educational teaching process in the virtualization.

Didactics in the virtualization has increased its role. Some transformations have undergone with the distance modality to favor social distancing and mitigate possible contagions with the SARS-COV 2 virus. Faced with this situation, teachers, from social isolation at home, deployed enormous efforts to digitize content, design online courses, virtual classrooms and digital resources to support the educational teaching process.

In the new normality of the educational teaching process, the role of Didactics has permitted to deepen into the virtualization modality providing further opportunities to create synchronic sessions supported by electronic presentations and attractive e-activities for the students. On accounting for this, some experiences have been carried out in the online course Second Language Acquisition for the Master studies developed by the University Bolivariana of Ecuador (UBE) during this current year 2022.

The following work aims to analyze the role of Didactics in the virtualization through the development of synchronic sessions as required in the online course SLA. Second language acquisition propitiates knowledge about methods, approaches and common concepts in English learning. It focuses on the theories and factors that support the English language learning and the knowledge of the teachers' functions to lead the students' learning.

The subject covers the principles, theories and new challenges in the classroom practice; introduction to diversity in learning learners, learning nature of the second language versus mother tongue, the logical problems and psychological mechanisms given in the second language acquisition.

II. METODOLOGÍA

The practical and professional knowledge about Didactics as a science, permit to recognize the several causes of the educative practice problems. The complexity of these problems demands more professional and practical experiences to undergo the necessary transformations.

Practice is a conscious activity of a transformational character, which is historically conditioned for further development. (Addine, 2004, p. 3). During this development, teachers can transform reality in correspondence with new needs that imply new knowledge.

Didactics as the art of teaching assumes the teaching-learning process as the object of study, being the classroom as the main scenery, and teachers and students as the basic bilateral relationship.

To guarantee an efficient development of the teaching-learning process teachers must have knowledge and skills. Morrison (1997) refers to:

- Knowledge of the subject matter, that is to know the subjects they teach.
- Pedagogy of teaching. Pedagogical content knowledge, which includes learning how to teach a subject well.
- Knowledge of practice. Effective teachers have knowledge of the best teaching practice, including models of teaching and general teaching strategies and methods.

Concerning the skills teachers must get, Morrison (1997) appoints the following:

- Skills for teaching. How to teach, plan and develop curriculum, the use of technology, classroom management, assessment and evaluation, using communication, collaboration and corporation, developing leadership and decision making.

The essential aspects a teacher must have as described by Morrison (1997) are also enlarged by the teachers' role as a facilitator. In this sense, the teacher becomes a professional who organizes the environment and makes it possible for students to learn.

Foreign language teachers, who have pedagogical and psycholinguistic knowledge can take care of the following requirements: (Jiménez & Batista, 2021, p. 26-27).

- **Classroom environment:** group size, seating arrangements, aids, and ventilation, in correspondence with the number of the students, so that the teacher should match the needs of the learner with classroom structure and space. Accordingly, the seating arrangement should be made in such a way that all learners are comfortable during the teaching learning sessions.

Slow learners can be placed near average or advanced learners, so that the slow ones can learn from the others. These requirements are essential for the students to feel comfortable and happy while learning the foreign language.

- **Students' needs to experience success:** their aims need to be concrete, reasonable and challenging for them to guarantee a systematic and active participation while listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

- **Students' diversity and multiple intelligences:** this permits a better understanding of their developmental learning capacities. Each individual is potentially intelligent and this intelligence is qualitatively expressed differently, hence individual differences are observed and revealed as the result of his intelligence. Gardner (1989) gives us the description of the multiple intelligences: verbal Linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily –kinesthetic, interpersonal, interpersonal, and naturalistic.

In Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), the descriptions rely upon the domains in which one typically finds students who may show high levels of intelligence, while practicing the oral and written aspects of the language. (Jiménez & Batista, 2021, p.28). Thus, in second language acquisition, learners may show multiple intelligences using abilities to use syntax, phonetics, semantics and pragmatics; to perceive, discriminate, transform and express musical forms, including rhythm and tone sensibility as part of the singing actions; to solve rapidly logical-mathematical forms, through logical thoughts and numeral abilities, identification of models, calculation, hypothesis verification, inductive and deductive reasoning; to perceive internal and external images, recreate and transform them, and produce and decode graphic information; to relate body movements to express emotions as dancing, performing, sports or artistic creation; to discriminate emotions and be able to recognize them for interpreting and orienting the learner's behavior; to feel distinctions among learners and make contrasts concerning moods, motivations and intentions through interactions and cooperation; and to observe, experiment, reflect and describe plants and animals to question the environment in which the learner lives in and makes him live in harmony.

-Upgrading. The teachers must be constantly studying and receiving postgraduate courses to know more about their students' inclusiveness, diversity, cognitive level, multiple intelligences and Didactics of FLT. Teachers in inclusive English classrooms must consider a wide range of learning modalities in building guidelines to favor the development of the students' multiple intelligences, self-belonging and social protagonist behavior.

The components of Didactics let the authors of this paper reflect upon the following questions in relation to content, methods, means and evaluation fundamentally:

Objective: how to direct, organize and focus the content to teach?

Content: what to teach? In correspondence with the students' needs, the subject purpose, the students' outcomes, the content area.

Methods: how to teach? Approaches, procedures, and techniques.

Means: what resources to use? Time, space, and concrete materials.

Evaluation: what and how to evaluate? Providing feedback, engaging the students in open-ended and analytical debates, and other forms of evaluation: portfolios, tests and project works.

The above reflections are supported by some basic Didactics tasks as follows:

1. Organization of the learning tasks.
2. Motivation for enhancing the students' attitude towards learning
3. Direction of the teaching-learning process under a favorable socio-psycholinguistic climate.
4. Leading effectively the students during the learning process for content assimilation and self-control of strengths and weaknesses to get new knowledge.
5. Diagnosing the learning process on time to contribute to satisfactory outcomes.
6. Fastening learning integration and consolidation.
7. Assessing in a concrete way the learning results.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The general analyses so far expressed by the authors of this paper concerning Didactics are quite recommendable for the virtualization. The complexity of the teaching-learning process of English, either in the face-to-face modality or at a distance, implies new transformations.

As far as the course Second Language Acquisition concerns to, it enables the future master to apply in a theoretical and practical way the process of acquisition of a second language and develop with creativity the abilities achieved from the theories, methods, and approaches that support English language acquisition in the classroom practice.

So, they will:

- Find new viewpoints while analyzing theories, approaches, and methods.
- Deepen into curriculum adaptations according to the educative and social contexts in Ecuador.
- Argue about the English learning process and the teachers' functions.

The course covers the theory and practice in second language acquisition, dealing with

schools of thought, principles, theories, methods, approaches and new challenges in classroom practice. The course also underlines the linguistics of second language acquisition, the nature of language learning, curriculum adaptations and the students' educative needs; languages in the brain, learning process, differences in learners and the effects of multilingualism. The role of Didactics becomes evident while using e-learning as a modality of virtualization, with the professor's companion supported by technologies and educative resources.

In this respect, the synchronic sessions are the virtual sceneries that favor social distancing by offering the opportunities to teachers and students to work cooperatively for improving learning. In fact, these are sessions that make available the relationship among objective, content, methods, means and evaluation as the basic Didactics components in the virtualization.

From the basic components of Didactics in the virtualization, let's explain the objective in three levels: behavioral, emotional and cognitive, as it is the component that paves the way to the other ones.

1. Behavioral level: learning objectives are directed to skills and knowledge acquisition to regulate aspects such as the time of exposure to technologies, conditions for using applications and programs, as well as the use of the space, and instruments, that is the relationship between the digital and technological means.

For achieving this objective the teacher's strategy must be to reconfigure learning objectives to guarantee a limited time of exposure to technologies, to avoid fatigue, anxiety, and stress. (Sagrá, 2020)

2. Emotional level: learning objectives are directed to detect and regulate critically the emotions that the technological mean brings about. (Sagrá, 2020). In this sense, it is advisable to search how a teaching activity or a social web interaction can influence positively or negatively in the students' learning.

The teacher's strategy must be to find out spaces to talk about emotions when using digital means. An institutional strategy is recommendable, as to accompany the students in the virtualization by means of chats, and messages to support their emotions and letting them know about strengths and weaknesses generated through the use of technologies. This strategy can be also reinforced by the cordiality, solidarity and friendship the teacher must show to the students while admitting their failure or success during the teaching-learning process.

3. Cognitive level: learning objectives are directed to skills acquisition to filter the quality of the information through the development of critical thinking, to select the technical tools and the information.

The teacher's strategy must be to select appropriate techniques to work at home in correspondence with the tools the students really have. These tools must guarantee the students' critical thinking, solid arguments and valid conclusions through the presentation of graphics, tables, pictures and videos that might denote their informational and digital competence.

The synchronic sessions in the online course Second Language Acquisition cover 33 hours and 9 classes. The objectives in all classes are directed, organized and focused in correspondence with the content to teach. Consequently, the synchronic classes permit the analyses and explanation of the basic theoretical foundations of the second language acquisition processes, the application of the theory and practice in reference to the methods and procedures in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), and the characterization of the students' educative needs in context of situation.

The system of classes is arranged for 10 hours per week and it permits to regulate the time of exposure to technologies. In this way, the two hours on Friday are available to start the new content using adequate presentations in power point for developing theoretical practical sessions. The didactic strategy to insert questions for the debate may enhance the students' critical thinking and arguments around the topic. Night sessions provide limited time of exposure to technologies which favor the students' permanent comprehension.

Class sessions in the morning and in the afternoon on Saturdays may produce fatigue, anxiety and stress, as the time of exposure to technology lasts 8 hours. However, the application of some didactic strategies, as presented below by the authors of this paper can reduce these behavioral effects:

- To organize workshops and seminars for the application of the theoretical and practical issues about the subject.
- To let the students do collaborative work in teams.
- To permit the students select the tools that guarantee their critical thinking, solid arguments and valid conclusions.
- To permit the students use statistics and pedagogical experiences, carefully organized in graphics, tables and charts.

- To encourage the use of pictures, photos or videos.
- To encourage oral presentations with an adequate use of the foreign language.

The strategies mentioned above support some of the main didactic principles for the teaching of communication, which are also valuable in the virtualization in upgrading courses, say:

- The teaching centered in the students' learning: in the cyberspace, teachers and students assume specific roles during the process of emission and reception of the information and the e-activities to develop, being the students highly involved in the problem solving activities. The center of the class session is not the program of the subject but the communicative interaction that is produced among the students, and between the teacher and the students.
- The unity of thinking, doing and feeling to create. Thinking, Doing and Feeling are three words, which concepts are basically important for learning with joy and creation in foreign language teaching. (Acosta, 2011). The organization of online debates, workshops and seminars make the students think communicatively when they are developing critical thinking, solid arguments and valid conclusions.
- The cooperative work: online debates, workshops and seminars require team organization and virtual rooms where they have the opportunity to select the tools that guarantee their critical thinking, solid arguments and valid conclusions. This work means the organization of learning in small groups, where they all collaborate in problem solving. It also has some advantages, for example, content socialization, exchange of knowledge and experiences for the selection of tools and technological resources to present the e-activities.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The role of Didactics in the virtualization has been essentially effective for developing the synchronic sessions of the Master course that the University Bolivariana of Ecuador carries out at present.

Didactics as a science has permitted the necessary new transformations that the education at a distance requires, focusing on the students as the center and protagonists of the e-activities throughout collaborative and cooperative works during synchronic sessions that guarantee the relationship among objective, content, methods, means and evaluation, as the basic Didactics components in the virtualization.

The didactic strategies carefully planned and applied during the teaching learning process have influenced on the students' social scope by offering time and space to present their critical thinking, solid arguments and valid conclusions, which denote their professional growth.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acosta, R & Alonso, J (2011). *Didáctica interactiva de lenguas*. Editorial Pueblo y Educación, Cuba.

Addine, F. (2004). *Didáctica Teoría y Práctica*. Editorial Pueblo y Educación. Cuba.

Gardner, H & Hatch, Th.(1989). *Multiple Intelligences Go to School: Educational Implications of the Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. Source: *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 18, No. 8 (Nov., 1989), pp. 4-10. Recuperado de <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1176460>

Jiménez, M, Batista, I (2020). *Inclusive education in English classes for Elementary Learners: Methodological intervention in elementary education through the processes of systematization and contextualization*. LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing. ISBN: 978-620-4-20681-3.

Jiménez, M, Roca, M, & Rodríguez, A. (2012). *Didáctica del Inglés*. Editorial Pueblo y Educación, Cuba.

Morrison, G (1997). *Teaching in America*. University of North Texas. USA

Sangrá, A. et al. (2020). *Decálogo para la mejora de la docencia online. Propuestas para educar en contextos presenciales discontinuos*. Editorial UOC. España.

UNESCO (2000) *Informe Final. Foro Mundial de Educación (Dakar, Senegal)*. París.

