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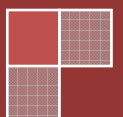
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November 2018*

Volume 1

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Prof. Dr. J. Ana Donaldson - AECT President  
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## Message from the Editor-in-Chief

Dear Colleagues,

We are very pleased to publish Special Issue Volume 1 for INTE-2018, ITICAM 2018 & IDEC 2018 conferences. This issue covers the papers presented at International Conference on New Horizons in Education, International Trends and Issues in Communication & Media Conference and International Distance Education Conference which were held in Paris, France. These papers are about different research scopes and approaches of new developments and innovation in education, communication, media and technology.

## Call for Papers

TOJET invites you article contributions. Submitted articles should be about all aspects of educational technology. The articles should be original, unpublished, and not in consideration for publication elsewhere at the time of submission to TOJET. Manuscripts must be submitted in English. TOJET is guided by its editors, guest editors and advisory boards. If you are interested in contributing to TOJET as an author, guest editor or reviewer, please send your CV to [tojet.editor@gmail.com](mailto:tojet.editor@gmail.com).

November, 2018

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Sakarya University

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Lídia CABRAL, Isabel BICA*

## **“Chicos, Sacad El Móvil De Vuestras Mochilas Porque Lo Vamos A Usar”: Empowering Spanish As Foreign Language Students Through Mobile Devices**

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### **Abstract**

In a post-globalized world, mobiles and tablets are the most popular electronic devices among university students, since they are their first option to access the Internet, exchange messages, take pictures, record videos, play games, etc. Taking into account that they are part of their daily life, it is urgent to take advantage of them to explore learning experiences inside classrooms (Toledo, 2015), by involving students in interactive and gamified tasks (Osoreo, et al, 2013; Álvarez, 2016; Chou, 2016).

Under the scope of a case study related to the learning of linguistic and cultural varieties of Latin-American Spanish (Cruz, 2018; Moreno Fernández, 2010), we will present didactic experiences with digital tools, which were carried out with Spanish as Foreign Language students (A2/B1.2 levels) of the Graduation Degree in Foreign Languages and Cultures at a School of Education in Porto, Portugal. Following a qualitative methodological approach, we have collected and analyzed students' representations about the use of mobile devices (through questionnaires) and their project works related to the Latin-American Spanish varieties.

Results show that students have empowered themselves in the learning process, revealing that they have (re)constructed knowledge related to the topic through hyper sensory strategies and resources (Cruz & Orange, 2016).

### **Introduction**

Present-day work environments require not only solid knowledge about specific topics, but also different skills, which include critical reflection, self-direction, cross cultural skills, etc. (Cruz & Orange, 2016). As we already know, mobile devices allow students to get an almost permanent presence in the virtual world, allowing them to participate, share, discuss and access information of any kind (Cruz, 2005). Both mobile phones and tablets have put our students into contact with language and cultural diversity.

Therefore, being exposed to a global Spanish which is present in and through the mass media (the Internet, the radio, the cinema, the TV channels, etc.), there is a need to rethink the way in which languages have been taught. In our opinion, one should be paying attention to new multimodal and hyper sensory settings which allow our students to be in contact with a lot of information through different sensorial channels.

Within this context, due to the economic and cultural dynamism of the region, a teacher of Spanish as a Foreign Language should be paying attention to the linguistic and cultural varieties of Latin America Spanish (Moreno Fernández, 2010), by implementing an holistic model of teaching and learning with pan-Hispanic uses (Anadón Pérez, 2003). In this way, we believe multimodal within the Spanish language learning and teaching should be valued, by developing aspiring students to be plurilingual within such an historical language.

In this article we will first of all explore how mobile devices have been revolutionizing our society and classrooms. Secondly, we will focus on Spanish linguistic and cultural varieties topic within the scope of Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL) teaching and learning process. Thirdly, we will present, analyze and discuss our project, which deals with the use of mobile devices to study the linguistic and cultural varieties, in which students have been empowered and incited to be more active producers of knowledge, rather than passive consumers.

### **1. New Challenges In The Use Of Mobile Devices In The Transformative 21st Century Classroom**

In present days, mostly digital and *glocal* (Cruz, 2005), we advocate the development of a teaching process that addresses the needs of students, demanding learning experiences which should be significant and overwhelming. Thus, we must develop an experiential communicative approach, which is a "philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills and clarify values" (AEL, 2008, WEB).

In fact, a highly experiential teaching draws from the experience that must be relevant, authentic and always linked to our students' surrounding context. It is a multidimensional, holistic and multi-sensory approach that aims at developing students' skills, namely: communication, self-learning, cultural relativization and critical thinking. This, in turn, should be stimulated through a kind of exploratory teaching based on permanent questioning. In this process of seeking knowledge through experience(s), the creativity, cognitive flexibility and leadership skills are

particularly relevant.

Authors like Fernández-Corbacho (2014) list some characteristics of this type of approach, namely: a) each proposed task should pose challenges to the students, generating intrinsic interests; b) the variety of tasks should combine both a multimodal format and seek to meet different learning styles; c) the activities should include moments for the development of the learners' autonomy, while stimulating the development of cooperative strategies, instilling them responsibility in the decisions that have to be undertaken (individually and in group); d) the use of Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 tools, i.e., instant response systems such as *Plickers* or *Kahoot!*, or even the old WebQuests, can favor skills acquisition in hyper-sensory environments (Cruz, 2018).

These hyper sensorial environments transform the senses into channels of perception that activate, in turn, brain connections (Shams & Seitz, 2008), giving students the opportunity to experience something, by better retaining the information they receive, through the manipulation and simulation of tasks in the surrounding reality. By carrying out these tasks, students have the opportunity to develop reflective paths that stimulate their critical analysis of the experiences they have gone through, while enriching their *Weltwissen* with proactive knowledge, which allows them to recreate similar paths in other contexts (Fernández-Corbacho, 2014).

Since 1984, when the first video games appeared, we live with technologies that have finally redefined the way we contact and even face the *glocal* world, which we make part of. In this context, the gamification pedagogy and the use of mobile devices can enrich the teaching-learning process based on an experiential approach. According to Kapp (2012), gamification is no more than the use of game assumptions, such as its mechanics, motivation and problem solving characteristics, in the creation of didactic activities, in order to make them more attractive to the eyes of our learners. Thus, drawing techniques and elements of the game, such as narrative, points and challenges, we are able to motivate learners and condition their behavior so that they respond to the challenges they have to face (Duarte & Cruz, 2017).

As stated by Foncubierta & Rodríguez (2015), the gamification pedagogy can be defined as the use of technology which the teacher mobilizes in the design of learning activities, either analog or digital, introducing elements of the game (logos, time limits, punctuation, randomness, etc.) and critical thinking (challenges, competition, cooperation, etc.) in order to enrich the learning experience and to control the behavior of the class throughout the whole process. Within this context, it is of utmost importance the proper control of the emotions of the students in the process of undertaking gamified activities. According to Mora (2013), it is necessary to awaken in students the so-called "encendido emocional", i.e., the motivation for them to continue working in the task, by feeling involved in collaboration or competition, by stimulating their curiosity, and being moved by an almost instant recognition and feedback (cf. Hamari & Koivisto, 2013).

In order to develop a true gamified experience, one shall have the Octalysis Framework (Chou, 2016) into account. This is a tool which includes 8 core drives (see Figure 1) and must be tackled within the engineering and design for any gamified task, in order to transform activities into meaningful and enriching experiences (Duarte & Cruz, 2017). According to Chou (2016), if there are no core drives involved in a specific task, there is no motivation and therefore no behavioral changes will occur (cf. Chou, 2016).

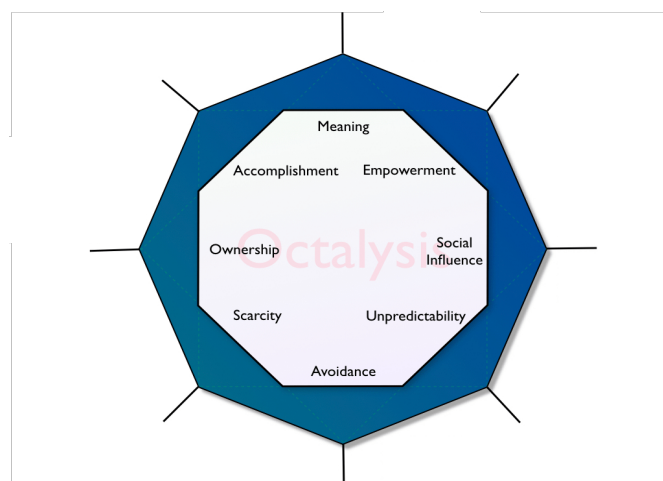


Figure 1 - The Octalysis Framework (adapted from Chou, 2016)

Upon closer examination of these 8 core drives, the first core drive is known as *Core Drive 1: Epic Meaning & Calling*, and it is related to the calling and meaning a specific task offers our students, i.e., students feel somehow involved in a quest which is bigger than themselves. The second core drive, *Development & Accomplishment*, is related to progression, skills development and achievement. It usually takes the shape of points, badges and leaderboards. The third core drive is known as *Empowerment of Creativity & Feedback*, and it is felt within the

creative process students undertake in order to solve problems. It is related to hypermedia content and stimulus. The fourth core drive, *Ownership & Possession*, is felt when pupils are engaged in a group activity for the group success on a project work. In relation to the fifth core drive, entitled *Social Influence & Relatedness*, includes all the social elements which motivate people, namely social feedback, companionship and even fewer good feelings, such as competition and envy. In education, it can serve as one of the strongest and long-lasting motivations for pupils to become connected and engaged. As for core drive 6, *Scarcity & Impatience*, it is related to the longing for a rare and exquisite object, token or reward. The difficult in obtaining it is what moves students to continue on task. The seventh Core Drive, *Unpredictability & Curiosity*, is related to the infatuation with experiences that are quite uncertain and involve luck. The last core drive, known as *Loss & Avoidance*, is the motivation to avoid something negative from happening (Chou, 2016; Duarte & Cruz, 2017).

By applying this gamification framework in our practices, students will gain more opportunities for experiential, self-paced and life-long learning (Duarte & Cruz 2017). In this way, through the use of virtual environments and mobile applications, students may feel empowered and engaged in enjoyable activities and tasks, being therefore rewarded with knowledge and skills. As Prensky (2001) adds, the use of digital technologies stimulates multitasking skills, network learning and experimentation and simulation in so-called virtual realities. Taking all of this into account, we can say that learners will be more proactive and more critical if we provide them hypersensitive environments. Prensky (2001, p. 4) goes further on this topic and suggests the following:

“As educators, we need to be thinking about how to teach both Legacy and Future content in the language of the Digital Natives. The first involves a major translation and change of methodology; the second involves all that PLUS new content and thinking. Its not actually clear to me which is harder – “learning new stuff” or “learning new ways to do old stuff.” I suspect its the latter. So we have to invent, but not necessarily from scratch. Adapting materials to the language of Digital Natives has already been done successfully. My own preference for teaching Digital Natives is to invent computer games to do the job, even for the most serious content. After all, its an idiom with which most of them are totally familiar.”

Therefore, it is up to the teacher to stimulate the ability to use technologies, such as mobile phones or tablets, in a proactive way. In most contexts, students use these technologies more passively, limiting themselves to the basic functionalities that these tools offer them. After having implemented a study carried out with "Google Generation", Rowlands, Nicholas, Williams, Huntington, Fieldhouse, Gunter, Withey, Jamali, Dobrowolski & Tenopir (2008, p. 1) concluded that students are not able to develop skills such as critical thinking through devices they own:

“The study shows that much of the impact of ICTs on the young has been overestimated. The study claims that although young people demonstrate an apparent ease and familiarity with computers, they rely heavily on search engines, view rather than read and do not possess the critical and analytical skills to assess the information that they find on the web.”

In fact, as we can easily guess, the use of mobile phones or tablets by students does not allow them to directly improve their search and analysis of information skills. They need a mediator teacher and stimulator of proactive use of technology.

During the last decades we have been hearing voices stating that as soon as students enter the classroom they have to leave the mobile phone aside. When we inhibit their use, we are banishing a tool that is part of their daily lives, and in this way we are not allowing them, on the one hand, the development of skills which permit them to maximize the power of technology which mobile phones and tablets offer them; on the other hand, we believe that students are left unprepared to leave digital marks on the Internet and even to develop a truly proactive e-citizenship, based on the assumptions of Rosnay (2005), in order to improve the surrounding society which they are part of.

More and more educational institutions and teachers are taking advantage of the wave of innovative electronic devices that offer portability and instant use, such as mobile phones or tablets, including iPods, iPhones, iPads, e-readers, and more. These devices offer a great flexibility in the scope of communication strategies and collaborative work among teacher-students and student-students. Portability allows students to continue the learning they have experienced in the classroom on their own mobile phone or tablet. At the same time, they give students a sense of empowerment, as decision makers of learning pathways, while allowing a customization of it. In 21st century learning, we should be moving away from a Taylorist view of education that treats students equally. Mobile phones or tablets with touch technology, WIFI connection, P2P communication tools, web 2.0 and web 3.0 applications facilitate learning processes which promote the critical search for information, critical thinking, pedagogical differentiation and problem solving through collaboration strategies enriched by hyper sensorial environments.

In the language classroom mobile devices may cater for stimulating the development of communication skills in

a globalized world, in which linguistic and cultural diversity exists. In the next chapter we will tackle this issue in relation to SFL teaching, specifically.

## 2. From Peninsular Spanish To Latin-American Spanish Varieties In The Spanish As Foreign Language Classroom: The Power Of Mobile Phones And Tablets

Technology-driven globalization has been generating paradoxical effects because it contributed for both homogenization and heterogeneity in present-day society. On the one hand, the mass media and their rich and engaging messages have been contributing to the creation of a culture based on the market rules. On the other hand, we have been living a sort of adaptation of the contents of these messages to the context of a specific region, a phenomenon called *glocalization* (Regueiro Rodríguez, 2009).

The globalized market we are experiencing has generated a couple of consequences, namely: the disappearance of borders, the need for labor mobility and the development of plurilingual communication. Within this context, English is no longer enough as a lingua franca. Some of these needs towards other languages have been felt in relation to the Spanish language. In fact, the positioning of Spanish as an international language and the prominent role that Spanish-American peoples have in the vitality and projection of the language in the globalized world are the main reasons behind it (Mora-Figueroa, 1998). Therefore, one can say that the presence of linguistic diversity is increasingly being felt, both in terms of the existence of numerous languages in international communication, either in presence or virtually, and in terms of varieties within the same language (Cruz, 2011).

There are two main reasons for dealing with varieties within the language classroom. On the one hand, it increases the confidence of the speakers of a language leading them to the understanding that learning the language does not have to be totally based on a single variety but rather in real and useful situations, so that they may feel they are part of the (re)building of the language they speak. On the other hand, we should not forget that the greatest wealth of a language is precisely its diversity, and we should expect students to be prepared to deal with that diversity, i.e., the actual use of the language in concrete situations (cf. Del Rios and Aires, 2015).

In fact, within the Spanish classroom, students can get in touch with the language and cultures of the varieties of Latin American Spanish through physical or virtual environments of an intercultural and plurilingual nature. According to Bortoni-Ricardo (2014), the main aim of providing such teaching environment is to increase the effectiveness of pragmatic communication of students in specific contexts.

The study of the Latin America region is relevant, not only because of the cultural heritage of the region that *is Europe transferred and America transfused* (Alvar, 2002, p 251), but also due to the creation and implementation of market or cultural unions, such as the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) or the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), and the tourist attraction it offers to the world. For these reasons, it is impossible to neglect the great dynamism of the region in the SFL class and therefore, it seems important to work with the linguistic varieties that foreigners who visit Latin America can find and the cultural references that will mark interpersonal relationships (Alvar, 2002).

Portuguese-speaking university students who study Spanish, as other European students, reveal interest in the Latin American varieties of Spanish due to: a) their linguistic richness, including their exoticism because of the region's own cultural miscegenation; b) professional needs in the future, as many want to work or look forward to work in the region; c) attraction for knowledge of geography, history, music, cinema, but above all, the boom and post-boom Latin American literature (Altmann & Vences, 2004).

In the teaching and learning process, the SFL teacher has to show respect towards the culture of the Spanish-speaking countries and the country of the society in which he/she lives and works, being aware of his/she role as an intercultural mediator and making the most of the technological and audiovisual resources while dealing with cultural topics in the classroom (Cruz, 2018).

A teacher should also be aware that the lack of knowledge about the diatopic differences between the Latin American Spanish and that of Peninsular Spain may cause some communicative misfortunes, especially if we think about lexicon and pragmatics (Regueiro Rodríguez, 2016). Moreover, there are main differences that can cause communicative misfortunes, and therefore one should not rely on the cohesion of the Spanish language as it offers a great diversity of linguistic uses and pragmatic communication patterns.

However, different linguists prefer to emphasize its homogeneity and accentuate its character of koiné, which allows a certain unity, homogeneity, and facilitates communication among all Spanish speakers (Moreno Fernández, 2000). The truth is that we can not forget that "la intercomprensión entre un mexicano y un santiagueño, un zaragozano y un limeño es mucho más sencilla e inmediata que la que se da entre un australiano y un escocés, un irlandés y un sudafricano (...)" (Marcos Marín, 2001, pp. 70-73) than that between speakers of different varieties of English, for example.

It is also known that Spanish is one of the languages "más conexas entre las grandes, sin variantes dialectales ininteligibles que apunten hacia la fragmentación, y fonéticamente muy clara, con diferencias dialectales mínimas en comparación con las que suelen ofrecer otros dominios lingüísticos y no impiden nunca ni siquiera dificultan la intercomprensión" (Salvador, 2001). Authors such as Lapesa (1980), Zamora Vicente (1967) or Roña (1965) agree to emphasize the existence of a continuum of understanding existing in the Spanish language, as they

consider that the differences within the extensive American territory are minimal within the structure of total speech. However, this variation is due to the linguistic differences that the settlers brought from the peninsula to miscegenation (Sueiro Justel, 2011) and later to the influence of the substratum (Amerindian languages) and also to the later superstrate (African slaves or migration and Italian in Argentina, for example) (Lapesa, 1980), which makes Spanish a *mestiza* language, a linguistic code that represents a synthesis of all these cultures and contacts between all languages (Torres Solórzano, 2010; Konieczna-Twardzikowa, 2002).

According to Moreno Fernández (2010), Lapesa (1980), Zamora Vicente (1967) and Roña (1965), the main differences of the Spanish language in Latin America are related to the lexicon (archaisms, Indigenisms, Anglicism, etc.), phonetics (*seseo*, pronunciation of *z* as *s*; *yeísmo*, pronunciation of *ll* as *y*; rotacism, confusion of *r*- and *l*; aspiration of initial *h*- from *f*- Latin and from Castilian *j*; relaxation or loss of implosive consonants (followed by another consonant, in the middle of a word); loss of intervocalic -d-); morphosyntax (*voseo*, i.e., the use of the pronoun *vos* for informal treatment instead of *tú*; use of *ustedes* with second-person plural value; post-positioning of possessives, as in *la hija mía*; great use of the diminutive appreciative suffix, as in *ahorita*, the use of suffixes *-ada* as in *muchadada*, *platicada*, etc.; absence of *leísmo*, *laismo* or *loísmo*).

### 3. Our Project: A Tour Through Latin-American Spanish Varieties In The Spanish As Foreign Language Classroom

This project focuses on the Latin-American varieties of Spanish language (Liceras, Carballo & Droege, 1995; Beaven & Garrido, 2000) which reflect the binomial cohesion-diversity, which we have just analyzed in the previous chapter, resorting to literary and hypermedia discourses with contributions from historical sociolinguistics.

According to authors as Fernández-Corbacho (2014), Mora (2013) and Knutson (2003), due to the affective dimension it contains, the experience should function as a compass which allows students to guide their learning with a strong relationship with the real and virtual worlds. In fact, it seems to us that the experiential communicative approach is the most effective approach for the implementation of the study of linguistic and cultural varieties in the Spanish as Foreign Language classroom, because it implies the connection of the language contents with the student, their hobbies and interests and with his/her experience of the world (Fernández-Corbacho, 2014).

In this way, students participate in an interactive process of co-construction of cultural knowledge about the societies of the Spanish-speaking countries and theirs own, by analyzing their similarities and differences among them and acquiring skills that allow them to acquire knowledge by themselves and interact successfully with native speakers (Valls Campà, 2011). Let us now focus on our study, including its research design and didactic proposals.

#### 3.1. Research Design: Methodologies, Aims And Questions

Our macro study was developed around the specific aims and research questions that one can find in Table 1. Taking our macro study into consideration, we have used the following research tools: a) questionnaires aimed at students, about both the use of mobile devices in the Spanish as Foreign Language Classroom (<https://goo.gl/forms/OGlj3yZ4sWlc8wGc2>) and their representations and knowledge of Latin-American linguistic and cultural varieties of Spanish language (<https://goo.gl/forms/m00rxsA3I0B7XIEg2>); b) questionnaires aimed at teachers about their representations on the teaching of linguistic and cultural varieties of Spanish language (<https://goo.gl/forms/m00rxsA3I0B7XIEg2>); c) analysis grid of course books on the presence of Spanish linguistic and cultural varieties; d) analysis grids of graduation degrees of Portuguese higher education institutions in relation to the presence of linguistic and cultural varieties of the Spanish language; e) project works, developed by students within the nature of our study; f) self-assessment questionnaires which were implemented in the end of each didactic unit.

Table 1: Aims and research questions

Aims	Research Questions
<p>A. Describe the sociolinguistic and sociocultural representations and knowledge that teachers and students have about the linguistic and sociocultural varieties of Latin America, regarding the process of teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language in higher education institutions.</p> <p>B. Analyse y the representations that teachers of higher education institutions have of teaching practices that favor the (re) construction of knowledge related to Spanish and its varieties.</p> <p>C. Analyse the degrees that offer content about Latin America in Portuguese higher education institutions, regarding teacher training.</p> <p>D. Analyze Spanish as Foreign Language teaching course books regarding the approach of content related to the linguistic and sociocultural varieties of Latin America Spanish.</p> <p>E. Create didactic proposals based on literary and hypermedia discourses that capture the linguistic and cultural varieties of Latin America, considering an experiential communicative approach.</p> <p>F. Demonstrate the creation of new sociolinguistic and sociocultural representations and knowledge by students, when they are stimulated through practices based on an experiential communicative approach.</p>	<p>1. Which representations have students and teachers got of the linguistic and cultural varieties of Latin American Spanish in higher education in Portugal?</p> <p>2. How are the linguistic and cultural varieties of Latin-American Spanish taught in teacher training degrees in Portugal?</p> <p>3. Which literary and hypermedia discourses and their phonetic, morphosyntactic and lexical features can facilitate work with the linguistic and cultural varieties of Latin American Spanish?</p> <p>4. Which practices can be mobilized in educational contexts that may contribute to the reconstruction of the sociocultural and sociolinguistic knowledge of Spanish and its Latin-American varieties?</p>

As we have already mentioned, the main and only aims of this article are both to analyze the students’ representations on the use of mobile devices in the teaching and learning process of Spanish as a Foreign Language, and at the same time present didactic proposals which entail the development of skills related to the linguistic and cultural varieties of the Spanish language, and finally analyze students’ projects which were developed within this project. Therefore, taking Table 1 into account, in the scope of our micro study, we will focus on research question number 4 only.

In relation to our micro study, we would like to mention that this is an empirical research of exploratory and descriptive nature because it is our aim to describe the collected data results (Yin, 2005). According to Coutinho & Chaves (2002), this kind of research aims at transforming a certain educational reality, allowing for knowledge of great value and precious insights.

Focusing on the questionnaires related to the use of mobile devices in students’ daily lives and learning process, which were created and applied, include Likert-type scales (see Figure 2) and can be accessed here: <https://goo.gl/forms/OGIj3yZ4sWlc8wGc2>. They were built according to categories which emanated from scientific literature we analyzed (Tuckman, 2000), including Carrega’s study (2011). This questionnaire is based on a study carried out by Carrega (idem), in which the researcher figures out that the mobile phone became an almost mandatory accessory used by younger generations in everyday situations, from classes to free time activities. Let us know analyze the data we collected during our research.

13. A) Nas aulas das diferentes unidades curriculares que frequentou, participou em atividades que envolveram o uso de... ? \*

	Nunca	Raramente	Poucas vezes	Algumas vezes	Muitas vezes
de sítios Web (Google, Wikipedia, Dicionários, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
de sítios Web educativos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
de vídeos (Youtube, Vimeo, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
do manual adotado	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
de ferramentas de apresentação (Powerpoint, Keynote, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
de plataformas de ensino à distância (Moodle, Dokeos, Blackboard, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
de aplicações de smartphone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 2 - Sample of the questionnaire on the use of mobile devices in students’ daily lives and learning process

### 3.2. Analysis Of Students’ Representations On The Use Of Mobile Devices In The Learning Process

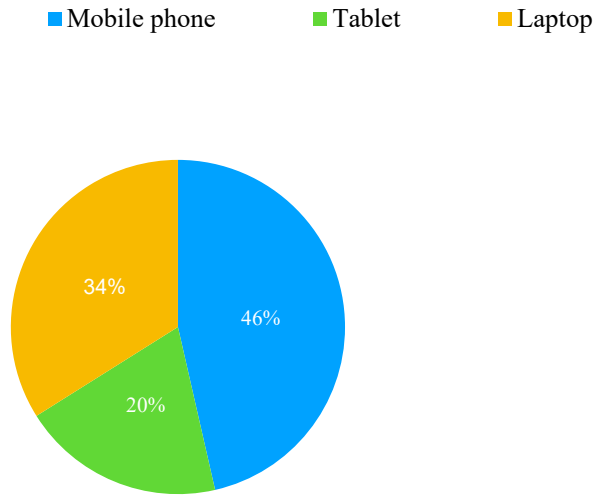
After having presented the design of both our macro study and micro study, we will now analyze the collected data within the application of questionnaires related to the use of mobile devices in students’ daily lives and learning process.

In relation to the sample, we would like to start by mentioning that 82 students answered the questionnaire. 75% of the students are female and 25% male. 90% of the students are less than 25 years old and all of them are studying Spanish as a Foreign Language (either A2 level or B1.2 level) and other curricular units in the Graduation Degree in Foreign Languages and Cultures at a School of Education in Porto, Portugal.

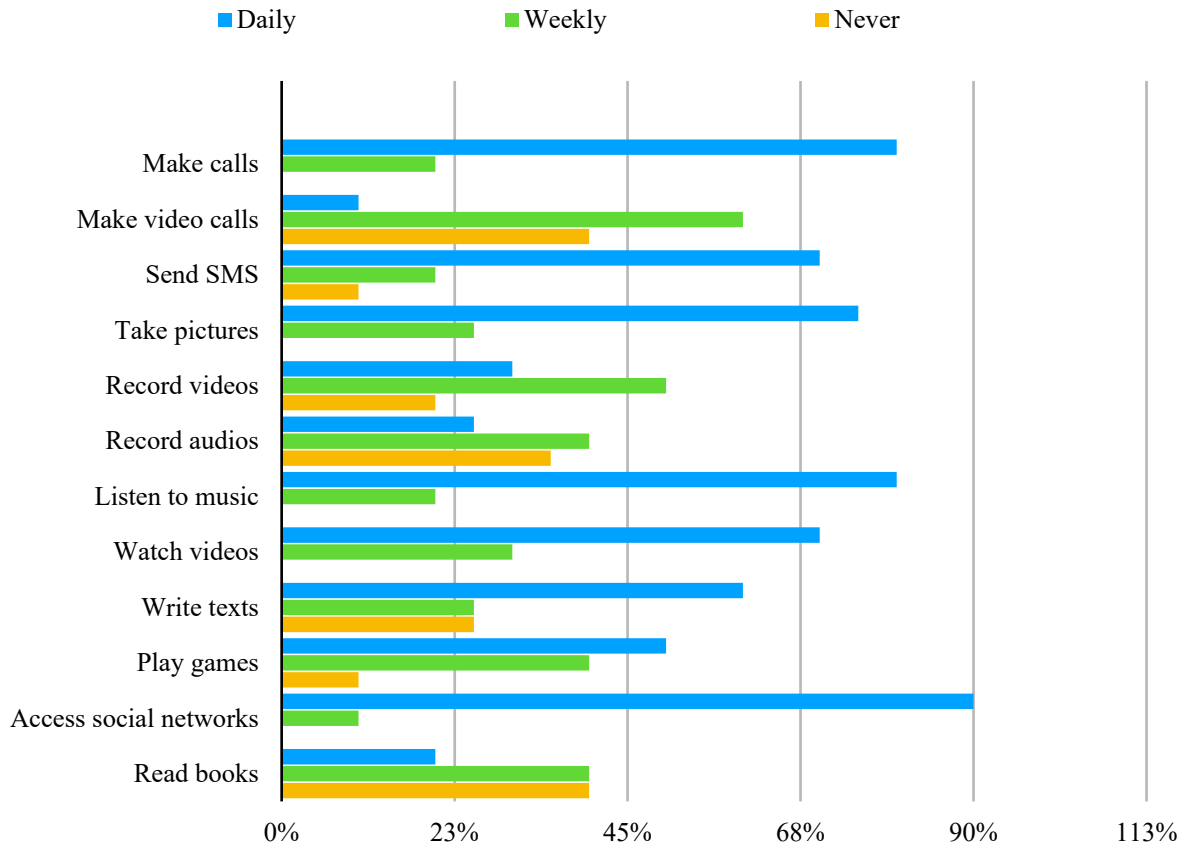
Taking the answers to the question “Which mobile devices do you own?” into consideration, most students have got mobile phones (46%) and some of them own laptops (34%). As we can see in Graph 1, tablets are still owned by few (20%), perhaps due to the fact that they are still rather expensive.

If we focus on Graph 2 and analyze their answers regarding the types of use they make of these devices in their daily lives, we can see that students are used to access social networks (90%), making calls (80%), send SMS (70%), take pictures (75%), listen to music (80%), watch videos (70%), etc. on a daily basis.

Some of the activities are undertaken on a weekly basis by a great group of students, namely video calling (60%) and video recording (50%). One of the things which is really impressive is the fact most of them do not write or read in their mobile devices. We were expecting this to be quite different, as tablets made this more practical and quite easier. This must be related to the fact that most students do not own a tablet.

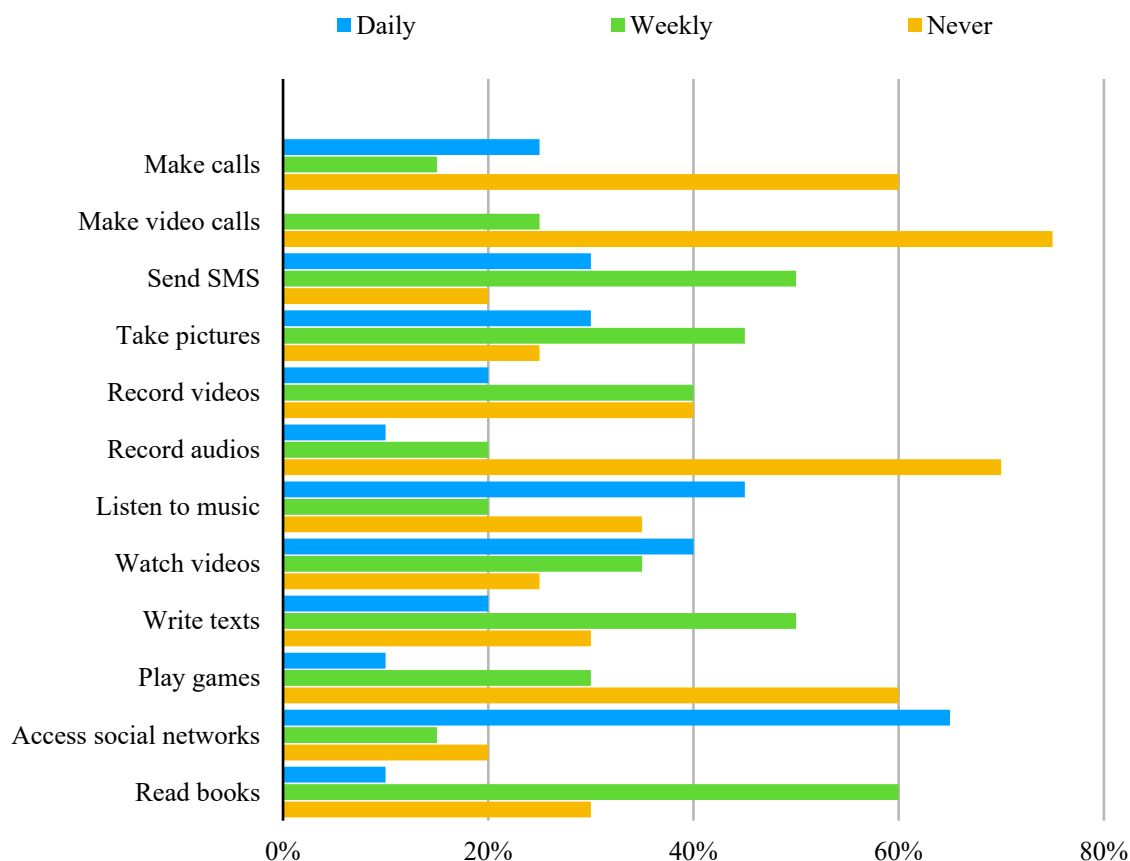


Graph 1 - Mobile devices students own



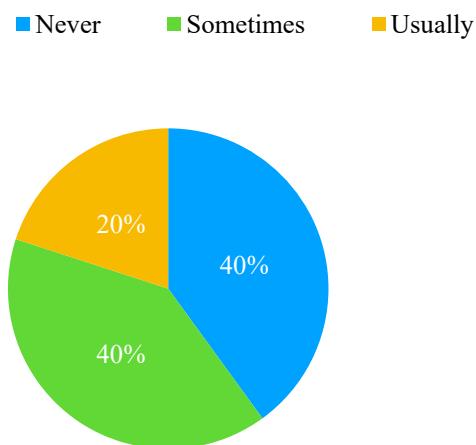
Graph 2 - How many times students use their mobile devices in their daily life to...

In Graph 3, and taking their answers in relation to the types of use they make of these devices for learning purposes into account, we can see a lot of differences. In fact, we can easily notice that most activities they undertake outside the classroom walls and learning environment on a daily basis are sort of forgotten. This is the case of pro-active tasks one can perform with the mobile phone, namely take pictures, listen to music, play games, record videos and record audios.



Graph 3 - How many times students use their mobile devices to learn...

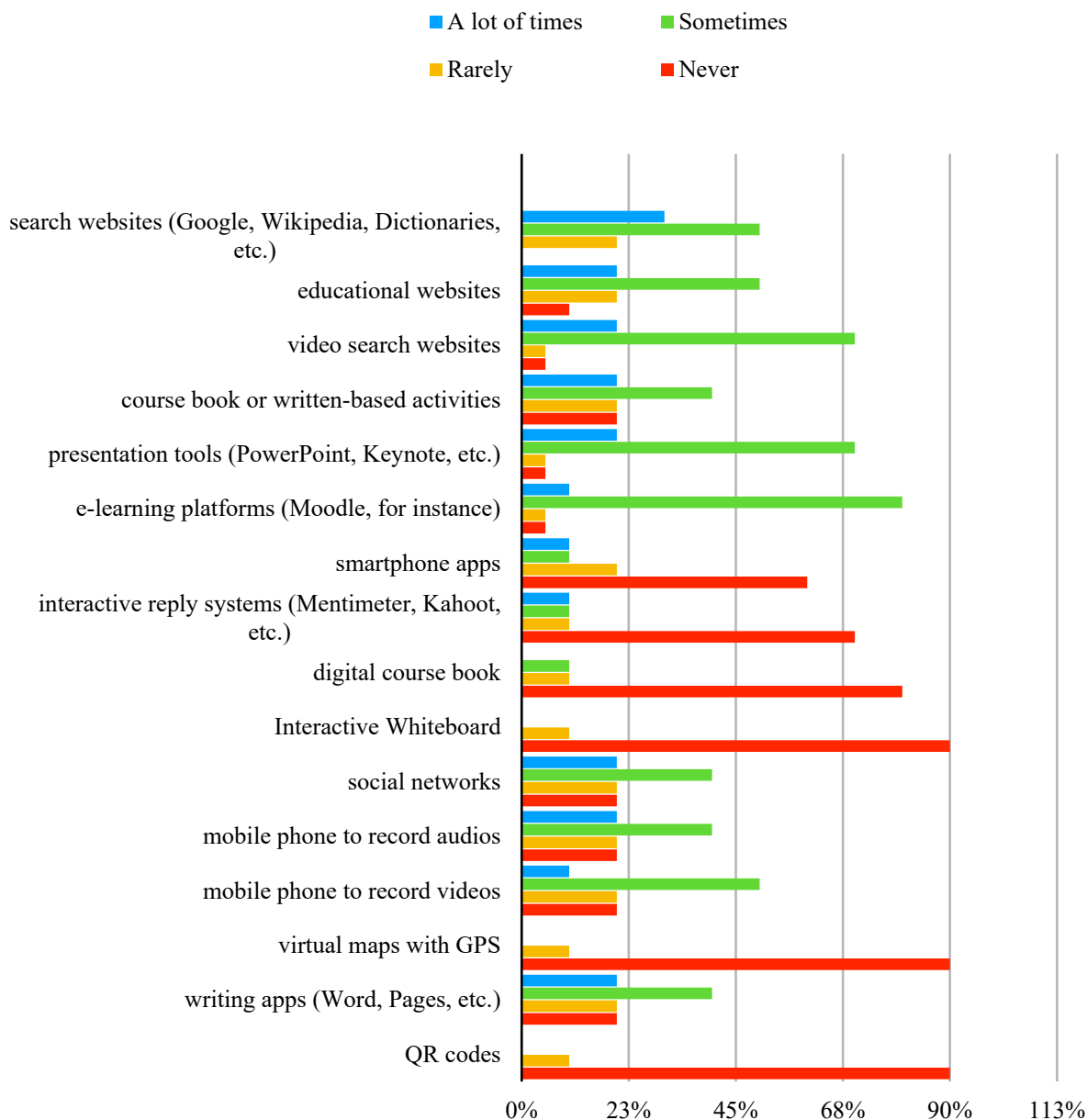
In relation to the question “Do lecturers let you use mobile devices within the classroom?” (see Graph 4), most students answer “Never” (40%) or “Sometimes” (40%). The students who answered both “Usually” or “Sometimes” mentioned some of the tasks they undertake with their mobile devices, by replying as follows: “search for answers and online dictionaries”, “interactive games”, “they always let us use whenever it is necessary, for example for a class search or for taking notes, “only for searching the web”, “search for information on an online dictionary”, among others.



Graph 4 - Do lecturers let you use mobile devices within the classroom?

Going further on the analysis, if we ask them to assess how many times they undertake different activities, we can

easily find out that some of the resources/activities may be considered as almost forbidden within the classroom walls due to the fact that they are scarcely used or almost not used at all, namely: interactive reply systems, virtual maps or QR codes. However, video websites search, presentation tools, e-learning platforms and course-book and written-based activities strike as the most popular tasks undertaken in educational contexts (see Graph 5, for further details).



Graph 5 - What do students use their mobile devices in classroom for

Summing up the results we obtained with the applied questionnaires, we may say that students are not taking the most out of their mobile devices within classroom walls and learning environments. On the one hand, as we have seen before, mobile devices should be used continually, i.e., if students use their mobile phones or tablets to explore the world outside the university, they should be using these devices within the university to explore learning experiences and get involved in interactive, engaging and gasified tasks, as much as possible (Toledo, 2015; Osore, et al, 2013; Álvarez, 2016). Even though they are using technology in classroom, most of the times they are using it as passive consumers, rather than avid and active producers of knowledge. In Spanish A2 and Spanish B1.2 curricular units we implemented some activities which catered for an active posture of students towards learning, which we will analyze in the following subchapter.





Figure 4 - Mentimeter “How was Inca empire?”

The *Kahoot!*'s experience tackles all of the Octalysis core drives and for this reason is considered to be a true gamified application. Within the scope of our project we implemented the *Kahoot!* questionnaire entitled “How much do you know about Latin America?”, which can be accessed here: <https://play.kahoot.it/#/?quizId=468cbd0c-9da9-4fa9-a546-9cc3a51624d2>. Throughout this game, students have the chance to answer questions related to topics such as history, geography, culture and language varieties of Spanish-speaking Latin American countries, including vocabulary, expressions and accent of Spanish language in the region (see Figure 5, for more details).

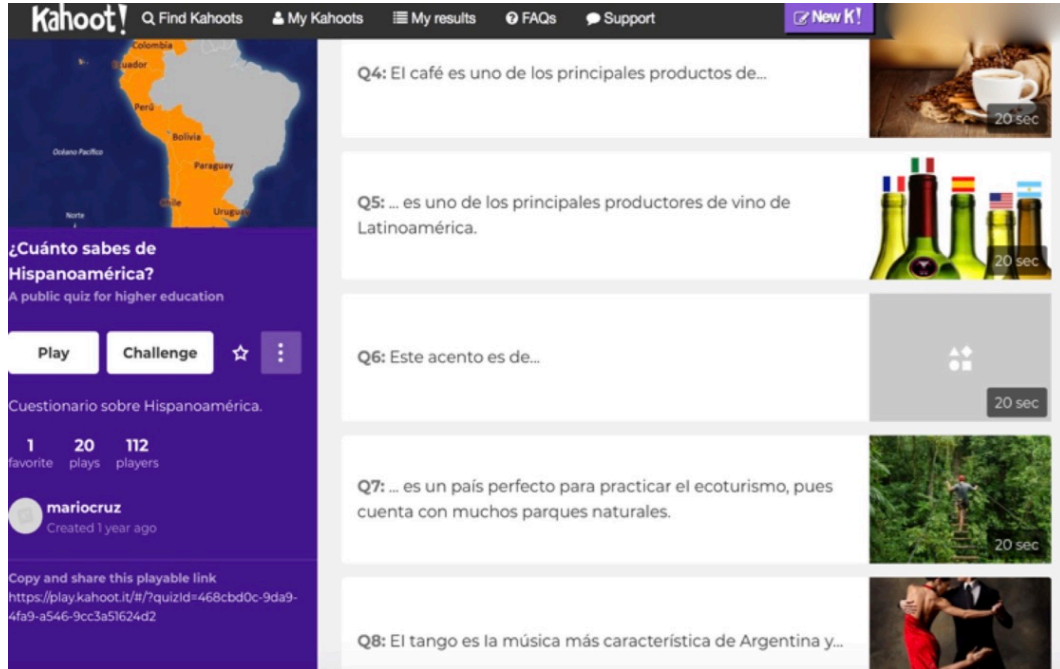


Figure 5 - Kahoot! “How much do you know about Latin America?”

Taking the Octalysis framework (Chou, 2016) into account, we considered the following while designing this activity: a) core drive 1, as students are called to solve problems in the form of short but difficult questions; b) core drive 2, because there is a points and leaderboard system, which gives them the sense of progression or not; c) core drive 3, as they have to tackle some issues, by analyzing pictures and videos, and feel important by giving them such power; d) core drive 4, as they participated in the activity in small groups and groups have to “fight

against” other groups during the questionnaire application; e) core drive 5, competition drives them to try to defeat other groups in the following rounds in the game; f) core drive 6, as winners would win a prize which was a CD from a famous Latin American music band, which acted as a kind of token; g) core drive 7, as uncertainty and curiosity upon what comes next move them within the game; h) core drive 8, as they tend to avoid bad things from happening, such as their group losing one of the rounds.

Concerning other gamified platforms, our students had the chance to develop other warming up activities, as the one related to the use of *Heads Up!* (<https://itunes.apple.com/pt/app/heads-up/id623592465?mt=8>) and the revision/activation of vocabulary on the topic “clothes”. Some of the vocabulary was of Latin American origin, namely *pollera*, *remera*, *musculosa*, etc. As we can see in figure 6, students were divided in groups of two members. One of the students has to perform some gestures and sounds, giving some clues, and the other one has to guess the words on the card present on the tablet on his/her head, before the timer runs out. They may flip the tablet down if they guessed the word correctly and up if they did not guess it properly or simply want to pass to another word, avoiding the loss of time.

Due to its nature, the platform allows for repetition of some of the words which allows students to find new strategies to make their partners guess them. At the same time, it permits recording their partner’s performance while giving gestures and uttering sounds, so that it can be analyzed in a critical manner.

In relation to the Octalysis framework (Chou, 2016), we designed the activity taking the following core drives into account: a) core drive 1, as students feel this is a meaningful activity for them; b) core drive 2, as progression is also stimulated and encouraged by the repetition capabilities which the application offers and the instantaneous feedback which *Heads Up!* system gives in the end of each game; c) core drive 3, because students have to be creative so that their partners guess the words through their gestures and sounds; d) core drive 4, as they are involved in a true group activity which is bigger than themselves; e) core drive 5, as there is a lot of competition involved, in relation to the number of words guessed per group.



Figure 6 - Students playing *Heads Up!* game on vocabulary related to clothes

### **B) Students as producers of hypermedia content**

One of the things we figured out in the answers students gave in the questionnaires we implemented is that students do not quite have the chance to get involved in the creation of content through mobile devices. In this section we will give examples of activities which can foster students’ involvement and engagement in the analysis of topics,

creation of news reports or even instructional dialogues.

One of the applications which contribute for the development of oral production skills is *Flipgrid* website (<https://flipgrid.com>). In this platform, students get the chance to share ideas and learn together while recording small videos about topics you want them to discuss. All of their videos appear in a grid, as one can see in Figure 6. One of the activities which students participated in is “Which animals of the Spanish-speaking world are in danger of extinction?”. First students had to search for information on one of the animals of a specific or group of specific Spanish-speaking countries. Second, they created their text on the topic and had the opportunity to train their performance before recording a definite version. Third, they had to record their video directly from the *Flipgrid* app within their mobile devices.

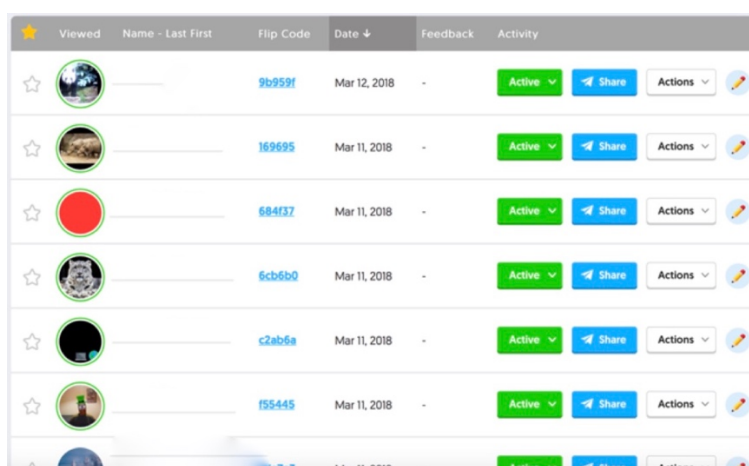


Figure 7 - *Flipgrid* on the topic “Animals from Spanish-speaking countries in extinction”

What is special about this platform is its interface (Figure 8), which allows for instantaneous feedback both on other students’ and teacher’s counterparts in a *Facebookian* style. Students get assessed by the teacher in relation to their performance (from 1 to 5 points) and ideas (also from 1 to 5 points). Students get ranked according to their points. Other students may also assess their fellow mates’ performances, selecting smileys and emoticons (hearts, rockets, etc.), which makes the activity quite funnier.

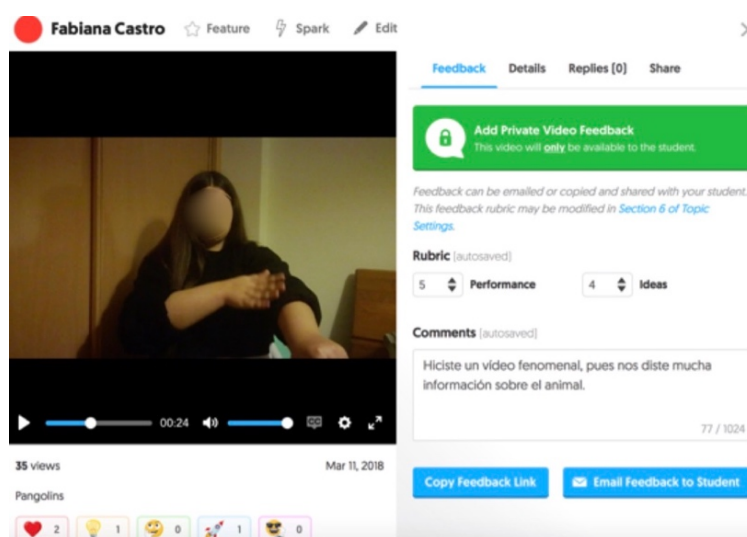


Figure 8 - Example of a *Flipgrid* video on the topic “Animals from Spanish-speaking countries in extinction”

Bearing in mind that a lot of students are nowadays true videobloggers, a lot of them felt really engaged and empowered during this kind of tasks, in which teachers tend to discover new talents or that some of the timid students are not really that timid as they usually show in traditional class environment. Students of Spanish A2 curricular unit also had the chance of using *Flipgrid* to present their parts of the house and the objects they entailed.

A sample of this activity can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQZUZwADL0Y>.

Another interesting activity, which was developed within the scope of our project, is the one related to news reports. First, students had the opportunity to analyze multiple types of news on multiple platforms from the Spanish-speaking diaspora, focusing on newspapers, websites and TV channels from Spanish-speaking countries. Second, they had to create a written report on one of present-day topics, which would be corrected by the teacher. Finally, they had to convert it on both a studio and street report, recording a video and formatting it using video editing software. Students had the chance to experiment on the job of a journalist, as some of the students choose this type of career as their master's degree.

In Figure 9, we can see one of the project works created by a group of two students of Spanish B1.2 curricular unit. By watching it, we easily find out that these students mastered both their written and oral production skills, but also skills related to video production, including the work with technological means, by using a mobile phone or a tablet.

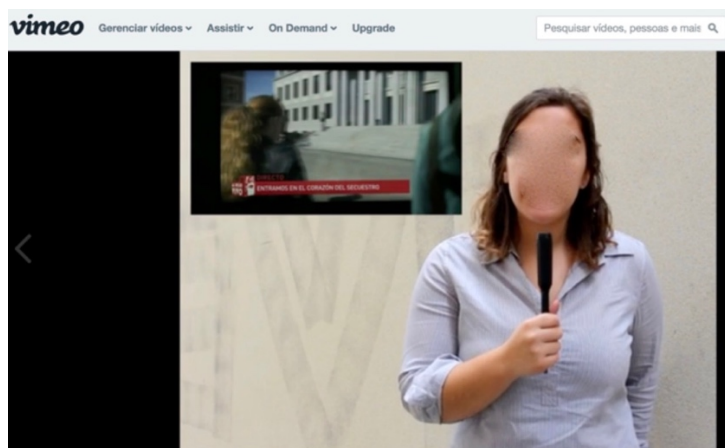


Figure 9 - Example of a News Report created by a group of students (<https://vimeo.com/279823407>)

The same occurred with another task developed by students of Spanish A2 curricular unit. A lot of our students tend to become air hostesses once they finish their graduation degree studies. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to give them contexts in which they can train skills they are going to need in their future jobs. That is why we asked our students to create an instructional video on the topic “airplane security before and during flights”. At first, students watched different videos from diverse Spanish-speaking flight companies, such as *Iberia* or *Volaris*. Then, they prepared their own videos (plot, setting and text). Last, they had to record it using their mobile phones. Students got quite involved during the task, by showing a very professional attitude and very rigorous oral performance regarding the use of the Spanish language (see Figure 10, for an example and a link to the video).



Figure 10 - Example of an Instructional Video about Airplane Security (<https://youtu.be/wmfhK372rjw>)

As we can see, creativity can also be stimulated. The screening of short films from Spanish-speaking countries, especially from Mexico and Argentina, induced us to foster the creation of this type of videos within the community of our students in the Spanish A2 curricular unit. In fact, one of the tasks they liked the most was the creation of a short film, in which they would be using verbs in present tense. These short films can be watched on *Vimeo* platform here: <https://vimeo.com/251930220>, <https://vimeo.com/251944241> and <https://vimeo.com/251931271>.

After having carried out all these activities, students were asked the following “Taking the Spanish classes you attended into account, mention resources and educational strategies used by the teacher which you consider as the most effective ones. Give examples of things you learned and experiences you had based on the use of digital resources in the classroom.” Most students enjoyed the lessons, especially because of their dynamic and interactivity (“I really enjoyed classes with Internet access and *Kahoot!*, as they turn out to be more dynamic.”). Some other students understood the power of mobile devices in their learning process, as tools which can empower them (“The use of mobile phones to create small videos like a YouTuber was really inspiring and stimulating”). Others uttered some words on either the applications and developed activities (“I really loved creating short films and developing micro-tasks in *Moodle* platform, and at the same time I enjoyed writing small stories or inventing comics”) or the contents related to linguistic and cultural varieties (“I find it defying to get to know words as “Vaina” which is used in specific contexts in Latin America, especially in Venezuela”; “Up until now I did not know that Spanish had such a diversity in its linguistic component. Now I know words such as *petaca*, *valija*, *boleto*”; “I loved to learn new things on my own related to *Quiroga* or even the *Inca* empire. It was really inspiring. Latin American countries are really exotic and overwhelming!”).

### Conclusions

Some of our present-day education systems are still tied to a Taylorist model of staff preparation for a full-employment economy, being not capable of creating citizens for the 21st century. Within this context, teachers tend to rely on course books to offer adapted activities to their students. However, some researchers feel that these: lack in variety of strategies, offer a poor response to the true needs of students, diminish opportunity for spontaneity and curricular flexibility, and also do not stimulate creativity in the use of the language itself (Cunningsworth, 1995). As Allwright (1981, p. 8) mentions, “content (potential intake) is not predictable. It is, rather, something that emerges because of the interactive nature of classroom events.”

Language learning is about dealing with specific contexts, spontaneous and vivid ones, which entail diversity that our *glocal* society offers. If one thinks about foreign language teaching, and specifically in Spanish as foreign language learning process, one should be offering students opportunities to contact with that diversity, in order to make them become as plurilingual as pluricultural as possible, as learning speakers of the target language.

As we have seen in this article, we believe in a pedagogy which uses technologies, especially mobile devices, the Internet and the apps it offers, to aim at the constant transformation of the conditions in which one learns. Moreover, it implies the development of a social responsibility, a critical awareness of the state of the society and a proactive role by the learners in the whole process.

Therefore, through some mobile technology-driven and gamified activities, prepared within the Octalysis framework (Chou, 2016), students felt empowered within the learning process. In this way, we may conclude that:

- a) Mobile phones and tablets allow for the empowerment of students and convert them in pro-active producers;
- b) Technology-driven methodologies may allow us for the creation of a society of multilingual, multiliterate, multicultural and critical thinkers who possess both linguistic and technological knowledge, rather than monolingual, mono literate and monocultural test-takers only.;
- c) the gamified materials seem to be suitable instruments to be used in the SFL class, since the students learn the varieties of Spanish language in an interactive and pro-active manner, either re(building) their views on language or cultures or even creating new knowledge.

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