TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI

PUJILÍ CAMPUS

NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY ENGLISH MAJOR

RESEARCH PROJECT

> **EFL LEARNER'S PERSPECTIVES ABOUT THE TEACHING - LEARNING PROCESS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) IN ONLINE EDUCATION**

Research report before obtaining the bachelor degree in National and Foreign language Pedagogy, English Major

Authors:

Constante Cruz Denyse Ariana

Hidalgo Calderón Byron Alexander

Tutor:

Mena Vargas Nelly Patricia, MSc.

PUJILÍ - ECUADOR

MARCH 2022

TUTOR'S ENDORSEMENT

In my capacity as a supervisor of the research report entitled "EFL Learner's Perspectives about teaching - learning process of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in On-line Education", and researched by Denyse Ariana Constante Cruz, ID number 180420904-5 and Byron Alexander Hidalgo Calderón, ID number 172796541-8 for obtaining the bachelor's degree in National and Foreign language Pedagogy, English Major.

I CERTIFY THAT:

This research report has been fully revised and has the requirements and merits to be submitted for evaluation by the assigned revision Committee and its presentation and defense.

Pujilí, March, 2022

Mena Vargas Nelly Patricia, MSc.

ID: 0501574297

COMMITTEE APPROVAL

The research report entitled "EFL Learner's Perspectives about teaching - learning process of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in On-line Education", has been revised, approved and authorized for printing and binding, before obtaining the bachelor's degree in National and Foreign language Pedagogy, English Major; this meets the substantive and formal requirements to hand in for the presentation and defense.

Pujilí, March 2022

M.Sc. Andrade Moran José Ignacio

ID: 0503101040

Committee president

PhD. Arias Arroyo Paulina Alexandra

ID: 0502212095

Committee, Member 1

M.Sc. Chiluisa Chiluisa Marcia Janeth

ID: 0502214307

Committee, Member 2

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Pujilí, March 2022

Constante Cruz Denyse Ariana

ID: 180420904-5

Hidalgo Calderón Byron Alexander

ID: 172796541-8

GRATEFULNESS

First of all, we would like to thank God for blessing our lives, for guiding us throughout our existence and giving us the health and ability to accomplish our goal.

To our family, for being the main promoters of our dreams, who with their effort and dedication helped us to complete our university career and for having been our unconditional support during this long road of life.

Likewise, we thank our thesis tutor M.Sc. Patricia Mena who with her experience, knowledge, patience and motivation, guided us and imparted her wise teachings to complete successfully our research.

Denyse & Alexander

DEDICATION

We dedicate this work to our parents, for being the most important pillar and for always showing us their love and unconditional support in the most difficult moments of our career. To our siblings for always being present, because with their words they made us feel proud of what we are and what we can present to the world. Finally, to all the people who have supported us and have made our work successful, especially to those who opened their doors and shared their knowledge to advance in this path.

Denyse & Alexander

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI
PUJILÍ CAMPUS
NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY ENGLISH MAJOR

THEME: EFL LEARNER'S PERSPECTIVES ABOUT THE TEACHING – LEARNING PROCESS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) IN ONLINE EDUCATION.

Authors:

Constante Cruz Denyse Ariana

Hidalgo Calderón Byron Alexander

Tutor:

M.Sc. Nelly Patricia Mena Vargas

ABSTRACT

This project analyzed the EFL Learners' perspectives about English as a foreign language [EFL] teaching and learning in online education. The twenty-six EFL students belong to the sixth cycle of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages (English) career at the Technical University of Cotopaxi, which were randomly selected. Qualitative research was used initially to comprehend the problematic and a mixed methodology was applied, in which two phases of data collection were carried out. The quantitative phase applied an online survey using a Likert scale to obtain quantifiable data on the teaching-learning process of the English language in online education. For the qualitative part, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were used to gather information about the student's perceptions and the factors that influence their learning of English in a virtual environment. Data analysis of the interview was performed by a bottom-up approach focused on coding, transcription, and subsequent division into three categories and six subcategories representing students' views of the teaching-learning process in an online modality. On the other hand, for the analysis of the survey, the information was classified and related to the stated objective and the google forms tool was used to statistically extract the percentages for the analysis of results and discussion. Several factors interfere with the students' language learning inside the online classroom such as methodologies employed, technological resources, level of communication, the time established for each activity, motivational factors. Thus, it is essential to apply artful methods, techniques and activities in the teaching-learning process, focusing on improving the learners' language skills. The analysis of the interviews and the surveys provides guidelines for enhancing the use of the methods, learning platforms and resources in higher distance education regarding strengths and weaknesses of students. The beneficiaries will be the educational body since it will provide an informed approach of teaching English as a foreign language in a virtual classroom and the perspective of students regarding online learning.

Keywords: English, On-line Education, teaching and learning.

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI
EXTENSION PUJILÍ
PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS INGLES

TÍTULO: PERSPECTIVAS DE LOS ALUMNOS DE EFL SOBRE EL PROCESO DE ENSEÑANZA-APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA [EFL] EN LA EDUCACIÓN EN LÍNEA.

Autores:

Constante Cruz Denyse Ariana

Hidalgo Calderón Byron Alexander

Tutor:

M.Sc. Nelly Patricia Mena Vargas

RESUMEN

Este proyecto analizó las perspectivas de los estudiantes de EFL sobre la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera [EFL] en la educación en línea. Los veintiséis estudiantes de EFL pertenecen al sexto ciclo de la carrera de Pedagogía en Lenguas Nacionales y Extranjeras (inglés) de la Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi, fueron seleccionados aleatoriamente. La investigación cualitativa se utilizó para comprender la problemática y se aplicó una metodología mixta, se realizaron dos fases de recolección de datos. En la fase cuantitativa se aplicó una encuesta en línea utilizando una escala Likert para obtener datos cuantificables sobre el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma inglés en la educación en línea. Para la parte cualitativa se utilizaron entrevistas semiestructuradas con preguntas abiertas para recoger información sobre las percepciones de los alumnos y los factores que influyen en su aprendizaje del inglés en un entorno virtual. El análisis de los datos de la entrevista se realizó mediante un enfoque ascendente centrado en la codificación, transcripción y posterior división en tres categorías y seis subcategorías que representan las opiniones de los estudiantes sobre el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje en una modalidad online. Por otro lado, para el análisis de la encuesta, se clasificó la información y se relacionó con el objetivo planteado, se utilizó la herramienta de formularios de Google para extraer estadísticamente los porcentajes para el análisis de resultados y la discusión. Son varios los factores que interfieren en el aprendizaje de idiomas de los alumnos dentro del aula virtual como las metodologías empleadas, los recursos tecnológicos, el nivel de comunicación, el tiempo establecido para cada actividad, los factores motivacionales. Por lo tanto, es esencial aplicar métodos, técnicas y actividades ingeniosas en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje, centrándose en la mejora de las habilidades lingüísticas de los alumnos. El análisis de las entrevistas y de las encuestas proporciona pautas para mejorar el uso de los métodos, las plataformas de aprendizaje y los recursos en la educación superior a distancia en relación con los puntos fuertes y débiles de los estudiantes. Los beneficiarios serán las entidades educativas porque proporcionará un enfoque informado de la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera en un aula virtual y la perspectiva de los estudiantes con respecto al aprendizaje en línea.

Palabras claves: inglés, en línea, educación, enseñanza y aprendizaje.

INDEX

<div align="center">UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE WORK STRUCTURE</div>

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Theme: EFL Learner's perspectives about teaching - learning process of English as a foreign language [EFL] in online education.

Starting date: March 2021

Ending Date: March 2022

Place of Research:

San Felipe - Latacunga – Cotopaxi - Zona 3 – Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi

Sponsoring Faculty:

Pujilí Campus

Sponsoring career:

National and Foreign Language Pedagogy

Linked research project: Formative Research

Macro project of the career:

Training processes in the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in educational institutions in the province of Cotopaxi.

Work Team: M.Sc. Patricia Mena, Denyse Constante, Alexander Hidalgo.

Degree Tutor:

Mena Vargas Nelly Patricia, M.Sc.   0501574297

Researchers:

Constante Cruz Denyse Ariana   1804209045

Hidalgo Calderón Byron Alexander   1727965418

Knowledge Area: Education

Research line:

Education, communication and design for human and social development.

Research line of the career:

Innovation in the English language teaching and learning as a foreign language.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The pandemic situation affects the academic system directly causing unawareness in the use of educational tools and methods to enhance the English skills in online classes. Therefore, students and teachers were forced to adapt to this type of education in which virtuality prevails. The main problem is the methodologies to enhance English language within the online education are not carried out by teachers due to the unawareness of those methods that are perjudicial for the teaching and learning process in an EFL classroom at university. Cacheiro-Gonzalez et al. (2019) announced among the most outstanding functions of online learning platforms are forums that allow learners and teachers communication and collaboration in an asynchronous way, web conferences through video, audio and written communication, chat where users can send messages and receive responses in real-time. For that reason, E-Learning is one of these technological-integrated approaches used in an educational context that effectively incorporates active language teaching and learning. It indicates that the E-learning approach provides a flexible language-learning platform, supporting learners' academic achievement and influencing EFL education. Nevertheless, students do not acquire the proper development of linguistic skills causing a non-compliance of the fundamental knowledge of the English language, affecting their language proficiency and academic performance. Furthermore, teachers should be informed about pedagogical tactics of English as a foreign language in online education to ensure that students can communicate effectively in the target language. Besides, this investigation attempts to answer the following research question:

What are the perspectives of EFL learners about teaching and learning English as a foreign language in online education?

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 General Objective:

To examine EFL Learner's perspectives about English as a foreign language [EFL] teaching and learning in online education at 6th Cycle of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages (English) career at Pujilí Campus - Technical University of Cotopaxi.

3.2 Specific Objectives:

- To detail relevant information about the teaching and learning process of English as a foreign language in online education.
- To analyze EFL students' perspectives about the role of teaching - learning process of English as a foreign language.
- To determine the EFL students' reactions to the methods applied by teachers in E-learning of English language.

4. ACTIVITIES AND TASK SYSTEM IN RELATION TO THE OBJECTIVES PROPOSED.

Specific Objectives	Activities	Means of Verification
To detail relevant information about the teaching and learning process of English as a foreign language in on-line education.	Review of several scientific articles about the function of the teaching and learning process of English as a foreign language in on-line education.	Theoretical Framework.
To analyze EFL students' perspectives about the role of the teaching - learning process of English as a foreign language.	Apply questionnaires and surveys.	Semi-structured interviews. Survey file. Analysis and discussion.
To determine the EFL students' reactions to the methods applied by teachers in E-learning of English language.	Gathering information on students' perceptions of the teaching-learning process applied by teachers in on-line education.	Conclusions and recommendations.

5. JUSTIFICATION

This project will be centered on analyzing the point of view of university students towards the teaching and learning process employed in online Education during English classes. Furthermore, the beneficiaries will be the teachers and students since it will encourage them to employ educational platforms as teaching resources to develop and improve the teaching-learning process focused on students' needs within a virtual environment.

In addition, the contribution will provide academic information to teachers and EFL students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi so that they can know and consider the testimonies and experiences of the students investigated on the use of educational platforms, advantages and disadvantages of online education, the factors that interfere inside the online classroom in order to promote motivation and autonomous learning in the teaching-learning process of the English language.

Moreover, the information obtained will enhance innovative research knowledge, develop critical thinking among researchers and encourage efforts to contribute to further research in the educational investigation centered on students' perspectives.

Therefore, the impact will be at a technological and educational level, since we intend to expose these methodological resources to motivate students and teachers to improve the teaching-learning process of the English language. Those resources will grant the success of the project and the findings found might contribute to the further studies of English in online education centered on students' perspectives.

6. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL FOUNDATION
6.1 Background

A previous research conducted by Khan et al (2020), who studied the Students' Perception towards E-Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic in India, the objective of their research was to examine the students' perception and readiness about the online-learning system adopted at the university level during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The participants were 184 students enrolled in various universities of NCT of Delhi, India. Qualitative research was employed in which a questionnaire consisting of two sections was used. Section A collects

personal information and section B gauges the perception and attitude of students concerning the effectiveness of e learning during COVID-19.

The research results reveal students' preferences for e learning, as it provides them with great freedom to connect with their teachers and fellow students, and to use study materials with the greatest convenience and flexibility of space and time. The research has an undeniable relation with the ongoing project because online education has emerged as a modern way of enhancing the educational process where social media may further improve the learning output. Otherwise, during online classes students have effortless access to educational resources and information leading to positive attitude formation of students towards English classes.

Another research conducted by Phutela and Dwivedi (2020) carried out a qualitative study of students' perspective on e-learning adoption in India, the objective of the research was to uncover how e-learning is giving a new shape to the education industry. In addition, it will encompass the students' perspective and experience of e learning. The participants were fifteen students, who have completed courses through online mode in India. The methodology used was semi-structured interviews to collect the primary data and understand the student's perspectives about the impact of information and communications technology (ICT) in the education industry. The results of this research revealed that most of the students are motivated to adopt e learning or engage themselves in courses through online education due to the ease in access of online courses. The students also highlighted that they adopted e-learning because of its captive nature. So, e-learning content could capture the interest of participants because of the use of multimedia, and in some cases its interactive nature.

This research is closely related to the project developed since it manifests the experiences of students within an online learning environment, which could contribute essential facts that help to improve the teaching and learning process within this new modality. At the same time, online education captures the attention of students since it has a great variety of educational platforms which motivates teachers to develop a new learning methodology.

Yang and Cornelius (2004) examined the quality of online education. The participants involved were three students taking three different classes offered at only two universities and one community college. This study was conducted for qualitative methods to investigate the perceptions of the students based on their own online learning experiences. The researcher used

in this study consisted of the structured and unstructured interviews, observations, and documentations. The findings of this research revealed that flexibility cost-effectiveness, electronic research availability, ease of connection to the Internet, and well-designed class interface were students' positive experiences. On the other hand, the students' negative experiences were caused by delayed feedback from instructors, unavailable technical support from instructors, lack of self-regulation and self-motivation, the sense of isolation, unfamiliarity of the use of new technologies, monotonous instructional methods, and poorly-designed course content. Therefore, the conclusion indicated that this study can be used to improve the teaching practices of future teachers and to understand students' preferences in relation to online learning.

This research has a great connection with the current project since it exposes the benefits and disadvantages of online education which argues that the ease of access to the internet, the flexibility of schedules helps the student to have a much better quality of education than face-to-face but there are several shortcomings such as the lack of pedagogical support and lack of knowledge of teachers on the use of new technologies are delays that lead to have a demotivated teaching process for students. That is why, teachers should be aware of their methodologies applied in the classroom in order to focus on the preferences of students to have a successful teaching-learning process on both sides.

7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

7.1 Education

Education is a process in which a group of people is immersed in a formal or informal way. It also means the upgrading of a person's skill to choose the best alternative available in any circumstance based on reasoning and experience. In the educational process academic authorities, professors, parents and students participate actively granting the acquisition, development and growth in the public or private institutions. Idris et. al (2012) mentioned that "the role of education is to help provide the opportunity for all people to develop as fully as possible". In other words, education is a learning process which consists of transmitting knowledge and understanding of different customs and values of a society in order to put them into practice in daily life.

7.2 Online education

Learning experiences in synchronous or asynchronous environments using different devices (e.g., mobile phones, laptops, etc.) with internet access. In these environments, students can be anywhere (independent) to learn and interact with instructors and other students (Singh & Thurman, 2019). Therefore, Online education is an innovative way that has been essential in higher education as it is a teaching-learning model that contributes to the coexistence of the teacher and the student within an innovative methodology in order to promote their knowledge in terms of technological tools, learning strategies during their acquisition of a foreign language.

7.3 Types of Online Education

Some educational scientists have identified types of Online Education based on learning tools, while others have chosen to focus on study time and content. The best known are the following: Ocando (2020) defined Synchronous Online Learning as:

> All types of learning in which learner and instructor are in the same place, at the same time, in order for learning to take place. In synchronous learning, students usually go through the learning path together, accompanied by their instructor who is able to provide support while students are completing tasks and activities. (p.1).

> Thus, It allows students to participate in learning activities at the same time using video conferences from anywhere in the world to carry out the teaching-learning process, in

which the teacher immediately solves any student's problem while communicating with other participants.

Asynchronous Online Learning: Students work through the study material themselves, and only occasionally interact with instructors through social media or email.(Rigo, F., & Mikuš, J, 2021). Besides, students learn independently at their own pace in different times and in different places without real- communication.

Cujba (2020) argues that Interactive Online Learning entails going beyond the passive one-way nodes of reading, listening, and watching static content. This way, chances for learners to interact should be higher and they should be more likely to retain the information and skills they obtain. (p.1). Therefore, Interactive e-learning allows students to become receivers and vice versa, thus enabling a communication channel between teacher and student in which they can modify their teaching and learning methods.

7.4 Benefits and drawbacks in Online Learning

Online learning has provided benefits and disadvantages inside of institutions affecting the educational process. It has been viewed as the ability to focus on the requirements of individual learners. For instance, focusing on the needs of individual learners can deliver knowledge in the digital age effectively as compared to educational institutions' needs or instructors (Huang and Chiu, 2015). It contributes to the development of critical thinking so that students reflect and construct their own knowledge in their learning environment. So, online education helps to balance a class containing fast or slow learners to acquire a foreign language to suit their needs.

Regarding the economic factor, students save on expenses such as traveling time and costs. "The students recognized the impacts of online learning such as having more extra-time for self-study, exposing to new and interesting forms of learning, and having easy access to resourceful materials online" (Dung, 2020, p.47). So, online classes provide a wide number of activities for students of all levels since learners have enough time and space to access the materials at any time either inside or outside the classrooms in order to promote their language proficiency. In addition, it allows the student to devote more attention to key topics of difficulty in order to practice the language more authentically. So, learners will learn at their own pace in

which the teacher can help accelerate the learning process by providing more advanced resources.

However, Online learning has presented some disadvantages during its application in the teaching-learning process as the lack of communication and face to face time between learners. The absence of essential personal interactions is the most noticeable drawback of e-learning, not only among colleague learners, but also between instructors and learners (Islam, Beer and Slack, 2015). For that reason, virtual learning confronts students with remoteness, since it reduces the possibilities of socialization, since there is no physical place where they must attend, which makes it difficult to establish personal relationships with the rest of their classmates and in turn it affects the relationship with the teacher, since it conditions the students' learning process when they have difficulties in making inquiries about a subject that they are having difficulty.

On the other hand, Martinez et al. (2015) argues that the difficulties arise when teachers have to implement e-learning teaching strategies, because they do not have developed the skills to work with digital tools, in addition to the lack of training and lack of knowledge of the use of ICT, which is one of the problems facing virtual training. In other words, there is low supervision by teachers and there is no effective method to analyze if students are learning at their own pace, not all students have knowledge on how to use these technological tools. There are also limitations, which implies that not everything can be taught through this method as there may be misunderstandings and confusion when teaching the English language.

7.5 Methods in Online education

Bali & Liu (2018) stated that methodology and didactic materials have a huge role inside the classroom to engage or demotivate learners. The mobile phone is used as a collaborative tool for students with the support of collaborative learning strategy (Sulisworo, Rahayu, & Akhsan, 2016). Regarding methodology, several methods are used day by day according to the necessities of the class and others are developed during the educational process. Otherwise, didactic materials are an essential part of the method because they support the students' acquiring of the information provided by professors. Consequently, each method will have a set of activities that students will access and explore through the appropriate use of the type of educational material guided by teachers.

7.6 English as a foreign language [EFL]

Arellano et. al (2015) stated that "teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) requires that instructors of this language keep up to date with the new tendencies in education in order to provide students with meaningful learning opportunities for them to acquire this language successfully". It is undeniable that teachers are constantly training about the modern methodologies of teaching English as a foreign language. For that reason, professors have to investigate updated ways of teaching in which technological platforms will support them inside the classroom.

Al Zumor et al. (2013) mentioned that employing technological tools in teaching classes enriches English skills satisfactorily, improving learners' confidence and cooperation for language learning. The online classes serve as a suitable space for enhancing the linguistic skills in the English language because learners can be immersed in an English environment.

Acquiring a language is not only understanding the concept or format of that language but being able to speak the language fluently is what makes learners acquire the language (Dong & Ren, 2013). The apprentices have confidence in using English because of two relevant reasons: afraid of making mistakes and feeling nervous, anxious (Souriyavongsa et al. 2013). As a result, students need to assimilate the language rules primarily, but taking into account the goal to convey messages without hesitation and accuracy.

7.7 Teaching process

The teaching process follows pre-established stages to be applied regarding learners' level, subject, preferences among others. Naranjo & Naranjo (2017) stated "The use of methodological strategies in the classroom is a sequence of systematically planned and organized activities that allow teachers to identify criteria in order to guide the teaching-learning process" (p.165).
Consequently, teaching is directly related to learning because every person has a particular way of learning. Teachers must use strategies that contribute to the educational performance of each learner during the educational process.

7.8 Learning process

It is the process of acquiring new or modifying existing knowledge, behaviors, skills, values and preferences. (Tripathi, R., & Kumar, A., 2018). In addition, Gandhi argues that: "Learning is not acquired by birth, but it is the process of acquiring competence by using hereditary resources". (p.9). Thus, it is the process of assimilation of information through which new knowledge, technology or skills are acquired.

7.9 Technological tools in online education

Pratibha and Şahin Kızıl (2017) affirmed that the use of computers or laptops for online language learning does not only make learning available for everybody but also it encourages self-regulated learning and increases students' dedication and language competence better than traditional study. Consequently, those devices become undeniably essential to connect to classes on-line allowing students and teachers to work together to attain the academic goals. It also allows each student to enhance their capabilities during the learning process. However, in some cases some learners have a lack of devices disrupting their learning.

7.10   Teacher's role

The feasibility of acting in various roles allows the teachers to achieve the academic goals proposed by the school. Dias (2019) stated that teachers must find innovative methods of teaching that inspire students to keep focus on their studies achieving each aim. Professors must be determined on looking for a range of dynamics regarding the students' level to develop in class, where knowledge is built carefully between teachers and students. Therefore, professors need to employ the whole range of their abilities when they are giving a class resulting in a deep understanding of their students and personalities. The teacher's role is seen as an instructor that guides the student in the teaching process, to attain the desired results.

7.11   Student's role

It is pointed out when learners make decisions about their academic future, it allows them to lead towards their goal of education. (Conley & French, 2014) mentioned "when students practice ownership of learning they are responsible for monitoring their own progress, seeking help when required, persevering and persisting during challenging tasks, managing their time effectively and setting achievable goals." Therefore, students are considered as active agents since they are accountable for their own learning and engaged with the teacher.

However, it is strongly necessary that teachers find a range of strategies to catch students' attention. Several methods can be implemented in order to manage an on-line education in which learners have the possibility to get distracted more frequently. Fawaz et al. (2021) stated that learners are suffering changes in their behavior due to on-line methodologies applied to achieve promotion in college, resulting in poor academic performance. Thus, students should have a space for study that allows them to be concentrated, without noisy sounds, comfortable space, without distractions, causing learners to show their effort in classes and attain academic goals.

8. METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research was used in the project because it is centered on the observation of the object of study to interpret and explain the experiences or perspectives in a social context. Qualitative research aims to answer the "how," "why," and "what" questions of a phenomenon (Green & Thorogood, 2014). It is used to gain a better understanding that starts from specific premises to obtain a general closure. The information can be gathered from various sources such as interviews and observation.

In the current project, the mixed-method research was used to analyze the learners' perspectives about the teaching-learning process in English as a foreign language in online education to obtain, interpret and analyze the data responding to the research question. The mixed-method research is a procedure in which the researcher collects and analyzes the information mixing both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single or several studies to understand a research problem in a better way (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p.534). Therefore, this design provides a deeper insight into the phenomena since both strategies have different features that will help solve the problem differently.

Hence, it combines two types of methodology, such as the qualitative method that grants the comprehension of any situation providing details about the story instead of looking for the causes and consequences (Fraenkel et al., 2011). On the other hand, the quantitative method was also applied to collect numeric data from several people using instruments with preset questions and responses (Creswell, 2012). For that reason, the ongoing project applied mixed-method research to examine, describe and explain the data in its natural setting and also use mathematical and statistical analysis tools, granting the understanding and interpretation of the students' perspectives about the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language [EFL] in online education.

8.1 Sample and cite

In this project, the sampling approach that will be selected is random sampling since the researcher selects participants for the sample so that any individual has an equal probability of being selected from the population (Creswell, 2011, p.208). As a result, the data collected in this project was distributed to 26 students of the sixth level of the pedagogy of national and foreign languages career at Technical University of Cotopaxi which is conformed between 20 - 25 years old, divided into 14 women and 12 men. They were selected as they are familiar with the target language and the use of E- learning in an EFL classroom.

8.2 Data-gathering strategies

The research instruments were applied through semi - structured interviews and surveys to the participants to provide truthful and useful information that will contribute to verify the fulfillment of the objectives about the research problem.

Firstly, the data collection began with the application of an interview related to the qualitative phase, which will be conducted to six EFL students of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Career to know the students' perspectives about the research topic. The researcher performs a verbal communication so that participants feel more comfortable in expressing their experiences thus obtaining relevant information. So, the type of this interview will be semi-structured interviews, which Fontana and Frey (2000) described as "one of the most powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow human beings" (p. 645). As a result, the interview becomes more flexible, and subjects have the freedom to provide specific content about the problem to be solved and may deviate from the initial plan of questions elaborated by the researcher to express themselves more spontaneously in their meeting.

Moreover, semi-structured interviews use open-ended questions, which will allow participants to better express their experiences without being constrained by the opinions of researchers or the results of previous research. Consequently, the interview will be implemented in a virtual environment using the zoom application because it is straightforward to implement since it is possible to record the participants' stories about the research topic. Also, they feel more comfortable in a confidential space to carry out successful interviews.

On the other hand, survey research is a research instrument connected to the quantitative phase defined as "procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population" (Creswell, 2012, p. 376). Thus, the survey is a fundamental instrument to collect numbered data about the students' perspectives on the teaching-learning process of English in online education. In addition, a questionnaire was designed with ten statements through a Likert scale to obtain quantitative data. Besides, the statements were divided into three components such as (A) the role of online education, (B) the role of teaching-learning process, (C) Student's emotional state.

8.3 Data analysis

This research adopted a bottom-up approach for the interview data analysis from the English student's perspectives. Creswell (2011) argues that: "There are six main processes involved in this approach such as preparing, exploring, coding, representing, interpreting and validating". (p.80). Therefore, the first process was the data collection, and then all the information was prepared for the analysis. After that, the data were analyzed and understood to get a general sense of the information found and answer the question set about the problem.

Hence, the process consisted of an in-depth reading of all handwritten transcripts of the interviews in which the students' perceptions were analyzed. In addition, the data was coded into three categories and subcategories by assigning a code label to each one of them. Codes are tags or labels for assigning meaning to blocks of information. Thus, the researcher tries to capture the phrase or paragraph's primary idea concisely.

On the other hand, for the analysis of the survey data, the information was classified and related to the stated objective. Finally, to obtain the results, the google forms tool was used to statistically extract the percentages for the analysis of results and discussion.

8.4 Ethical Considerations

For the development of the research, a request for approval was submitted to the respective authorities of the Technical University of Cotopaxi. Then, the director of the career accepted this application. After that, an informed consent was sent by email to the six students selected for the interviews, which was consented by the participants and filed. Finally, for the survey, a statement was sent by e-mail to the tutor of the assigned level with a brief description of the research and the confidentiality clauses in order to obtain the respective validation to proceed with the application of this instrument.

9. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

9.1 Survey

The survey was applied to 26 participants of the sixth cycle of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages at Technical University of Cotopaxi. It was divided into three categories: (A) the role of online education, (B) role of teaching-learning process, (C) Students' emotional state. The findings found are presented below, shown in the percentages of each statement.

1. Do you consider online education an effective option for learning a foreign language?
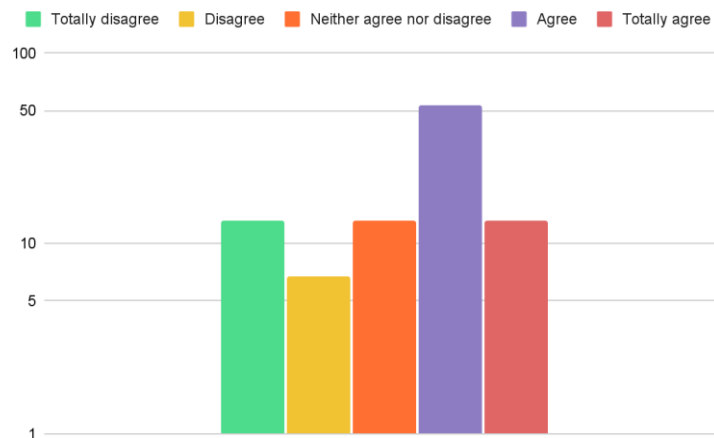
Graph 1: The role of online education
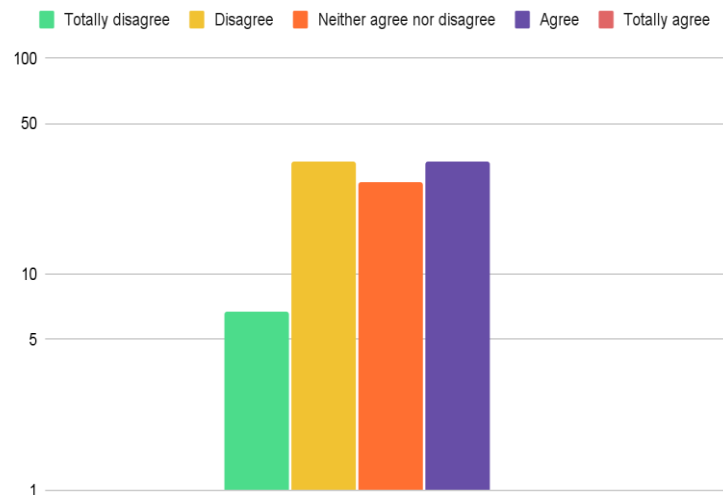
Source: Students' survey. (2022).

The first section was online education to find out if students consider that online education is a suitable option to develop their teaching and learning process of English language. However, the Likert scale shows that 30,8% answered that they agree, while 30,8% neither agree nor disagree, 30,8% disagree in the same way, 7,7% totally disagree with the established statement. As a result, the majority of students are not in favor or against developing an online education in the EFL classroom.

2. Do you consider that the educational platforms have been helpful for the English teaching-learning process? (zoom, nearpod, google meet, google classroom)

**Graph 2:** The role of online education

Source: Students' survey. (2022).

The second section was the role of online education to find out if students consider that educational platforms have been useful for the English teaching-learning process. However, the Likert scale shows that 13,3% answered that they totally agree, while 53,3% they agree, 13,3% neither agree or disagree, 6,7% disagree in the same way, 13,3% totally disagree with the established statement. As a result, the majority of students about the influence of educational platforms was positive since most of the students agree with the sentence raised above.

3. Does internet connectivity interfere with English language learning?

Graph 3: The role of online education
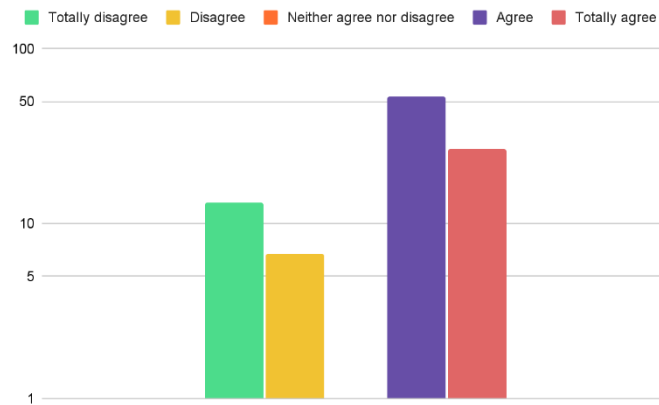
Source: Students' survey. (2022).

The next item allowed us to know if Internet connection has interfered with their virtual learning experience from the student's perspective. The results were 26,7% of the students totally agreeing with the statement, while 53,3% of the students agreed. On the other hand, no students were not sure, 6,7% disagreed and in the same way the other 13,3% of the students strongly disagreed. In conclusion, the highest percentage agreed that Internet connectivity has interfered with their English language learning.

4. Does the lack of knowledge about the use of technological resources affect your learning in online education?

Graph 4: The role of online education
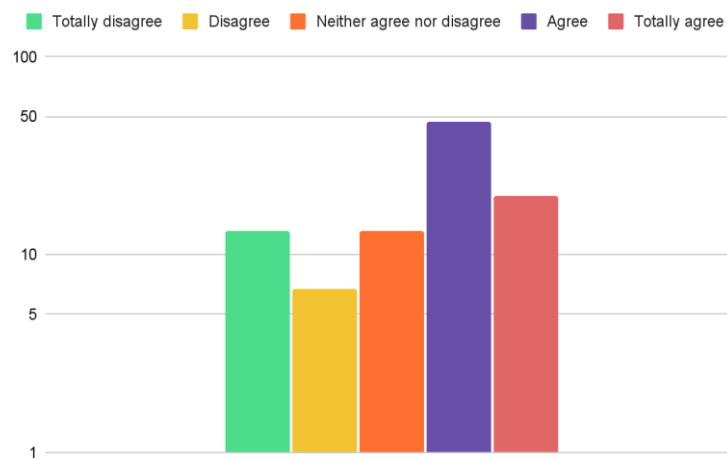
Source: Student's Survey. (2022).

This category aims to expose whether the lack of knowledge of the use of technological resources has affected the learning process in an online education. The results were that 20% of the students of the Pedagogy of National and foreign language totally agree with the use of this technology while 46, 7% of students agreed. On the other hand, 13,3% of students were not sure, 6,7% disagreed and 13,3% totally disagreed with the statement. Consequently, It can be determined that most of the students surveyed were in favor of the fact that the lack of knowledge of these technological resources has contributed to the deterioration of the learning process of this language.

5. Do you consider that difficulties have increased during your English language teaching-learning process in online education?

Graph 5: The role of teaching-learning process
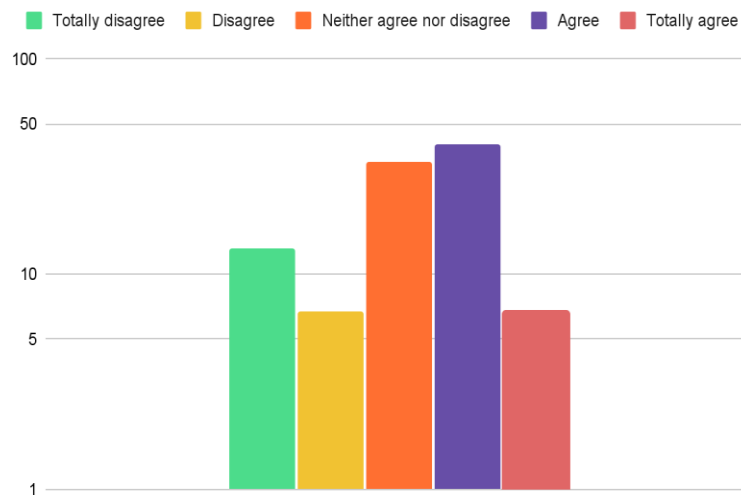
Source: Students' survey. (2022).

This item allowed the researchers to determine whether difficulties have increased during the process of teaching and learning English in online education. Therefore, 6, 7 % responded that they totally agree with this item and it represents the highest percentage. In addition, 40% of the group of Sixth level of students answered that they agree. On the other hand, 33,3% of them are not sure. Moreover, 6, 7 % mentioned disagreeing while 13, 3 % stated that they totally disagreed with this item about the teaching-learning process. Thus, the researchers concluded that there are several difficulties that affect this process in order for students to improve their skills and become more interested in learning English.

6.   Do you enhance your autonomy in English language learning during the virtual modality?

Graph 6: The role of online education
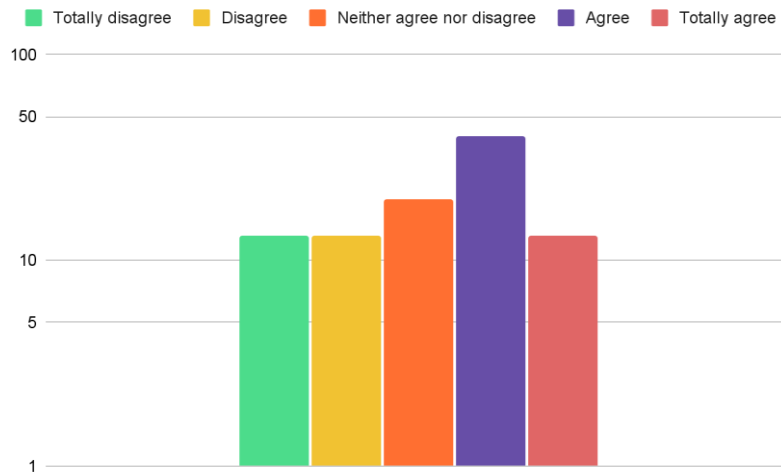
Source: Students' survey. (2022).

The sixth section was the role of online education to analyze if students have developed their learning autonomy of the English language during the virtual modality. However, the Likert scale shows that 13,3% answered that they totally disagree, while 13,3% disagree, otherwise 20% neither agree nor disagree, 40% agreed ,13,3% totally agree with the established statement. As a result, the majority of students showed that they are not in favor or against developing learning autonomy. However, a large part of the participants agreed about enhancing their learning abilities through online education.

7. Do the strategies used by your English professor benefited your language learning?

Graph 7: The role of teaching-learning process

| Totally disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Totally agree |
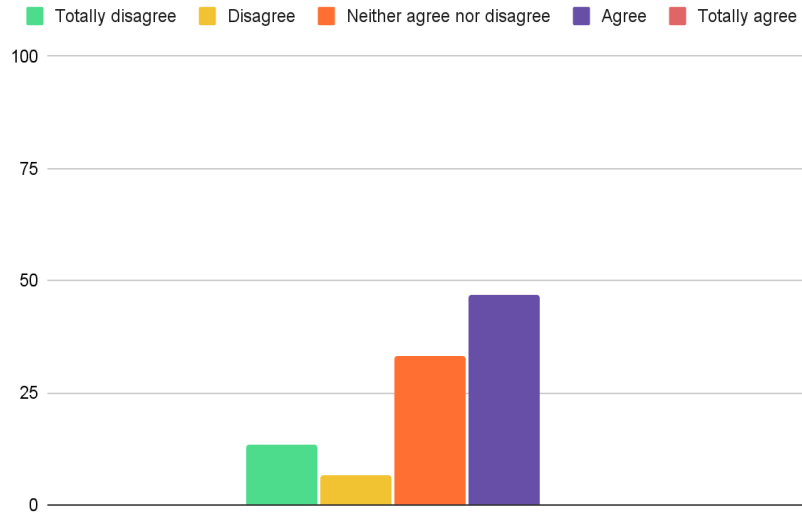
Source: Students' survey. (2022).

The seventh section was the role of teaching - learning process to analyze if the methodologies applied by the English teachers have facilitated the English learning. Consequently, the Likert scale shows that 13, 3% answered that they totally disagree, while 6, 7% disagree, otherwise 33% neither agree nor disagree and, finally 40, 7% agreed with the established statement. As a result, a large number of students were not totally convinced about the method used by professors during the virtual modality. Nevertheless, the remaining participants agreed up to a point that teachers use strategies that support the students' learning.

8. Do you think that your teacher has used updated methodologies during the virtual classes?
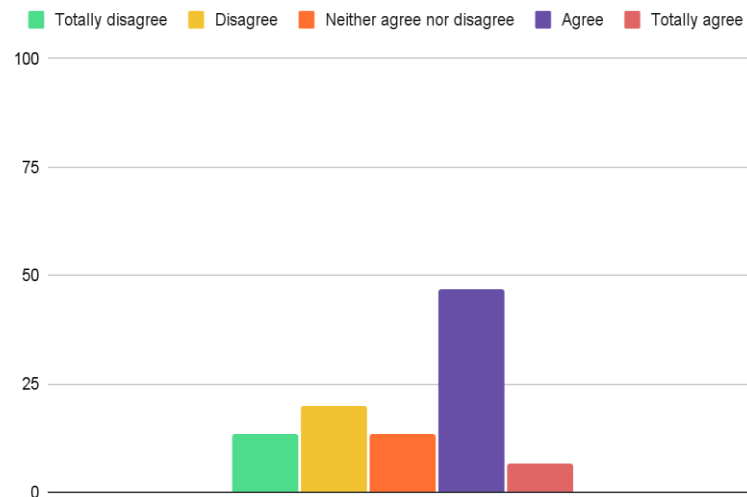
Graph 8: The role of teaching-learning process

Source: Students' survey. (2022).

The eighth section was the role of teaching - learning process to analyze if teachers have used new methodologies during the virtual modality. However, the Likert scale shows that 13,3% answered that they totally disagree, while 20% disagree, otherwise 13,3% neither agree nor disagree, 46,7% agreed and, finally 6,3% totally agree with the established statement. As a result, the majority of students are not satisfied with the methods employed by teachers, considering that they are traditional methods rather than innovative ones. On the other hand, a large number of students agreed with the updated methods used by teachers.

9. Do you consider that your linguistic skills have improved satisfactorily in the virtual modality?

Graph 9: The role of online education

The ninth section was the role of teaching of online education to analyze if the linguistic abilities of students have been developed satisfactorily during the virtual modality. Therefore, the Likert scale shows that 20% answered that they totally disagree, while 26, 7% disagree, otherwise 40% neither agree nor disagree, 13, 3% agreed with the established statement. As a result, the majority of students are in complete agreement that they could not enhance their linguistic skills.

10. Do you think that motivation is an essential factor for learning English online?
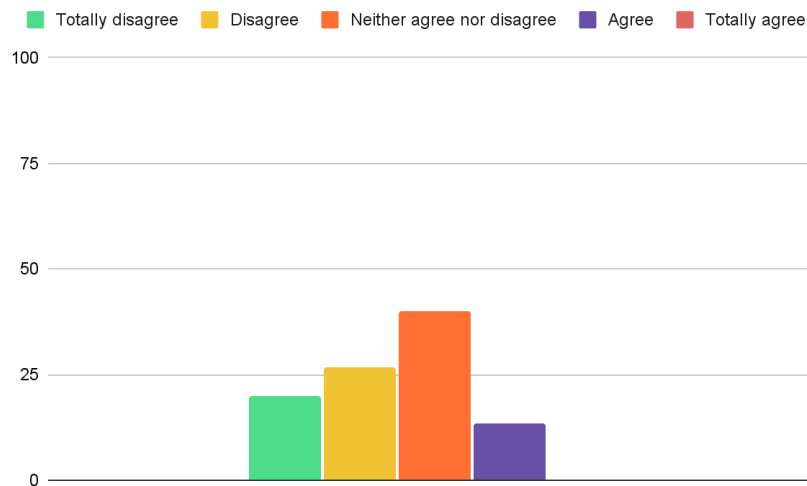
Graph 10: Student's emotional state
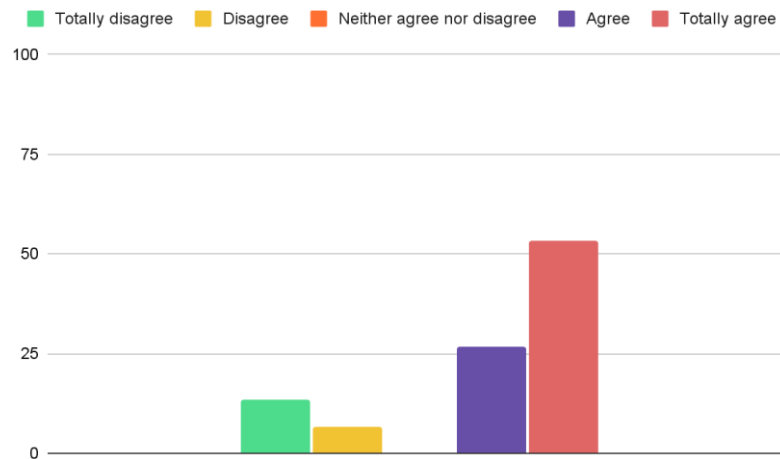
Source: Students' survey. (2022).

The tenth section was the role of teaching - learning process to analyze if motivation has a role during the virtual modality. However, the Likert scale shows that 13,3% answered that they totally disagree, while 6,7% disagree, otherwise 26,7% agreed, 53,3% totally agree with the established statement. As a result, the majority of students agree that motivation plays a huge role in virtual learning.

9.2 Interviews

The interview can be simply described as a form of consultation where the researcher seeks to know more of an issue as opinionated by the individual being asked (Adhabi, E., & Anozie, C. B, 2017). Thus, the interview is an interactive process in which a person asks questions about various relevant points of view of the person being interviewed in order to seek particular information. Besides, the method of data collection used was the interview to answer the research question on what are the perspectives of EFL learners about English as a foreign language teaching and learning in on-line education, which was applied to the students of sixth cycle of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Language Career, which was randomly selected. As a result, this data analysis presented categories and subcategories as shown in table 1.

Table 1

Categories and Subcategories about the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language in online education

Categories (Themes)	Subcategories
Teaching and Learning in online education	Online Issues
	Student's difficulties
	English Language skills
	Teaching Component
	Learning Component
	Work Preference
Curriculum component	Technological tools
	Overload of tasks and time component
	Pedagogical support
	Teacher feedback
Affective and emotional component	Family support
	Motivation factor
	Students' attitudes

Source: Teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language categories and subcategories. Constante, D., Hidalgo, A, 2022.

Category A: Teaching and Learning in Online Education

Online teaching and learning is the process of educating others on virtual platforms, including video conferencing and online tools to facilitate learning and gain a better understanding of the subject matter. Adebo (2018) argued that: "Online education is preferred by students who cannot participate in traditional classroom settings" (p.3). So, online education breaks down traditional teaching walls and helps adapt the learning experience to the individual learner. This category involves 6 subcategories such as online issues, students' difficulties, English language skills, teaching component, learning component and work preference.

Subcategory A.1: Online issues

This subcategory focuses on the problems or disadvantages that students present during their teaching-learning process in virtual education. According to the interviewees' opinions about the obstacles they have faced during their foreign language learning process through online learning, several students stated lack of internet connection, lack of knowledge about the use of technological tools, lack of face-to-face interactions with classmates, and the lack of flexibility and understanding of the teacher at the time of carrying out an activity:

> *"The internet is a detrimental factor because as everyone is connected at home, the internet becomes very slow and usually there are interruptions as it is usually disconnected and I am practically removed from the class so I could call it an obstacle that sometimes you do not have a good internet to maintain this interaction". (**J1C6**)*
>
> *"The virtual mode does not allow me to draw on other people 's wisdom". (**B3C6**)*
>
> *"I think that at the beginning because we did not know how to use them since we did not have 100% of the knowledge of using a technological tool". (**A2P6**)*
>
> *"Obstacles I could say that the pressure and the lack of flexibility of the teachers many times. In fact, nowadays it is very difficult to contact teachers or get an immediate answer to any doubt we may have, and this did not happen in face-to-face classes". (**L5P6**)*
>
> *"Sometimes there are teachers who send homework, they say do such a platform, let's say kahoot do it in 5 minutes, do it fast and sometimes the internet fails. Not all of us have the same advantages of the internet". (**G6O6**)*

Numerous studies emphasize obstacles faced in a virtual classroom. According to Dung (2020) "the quality of Wi-Fi connection does not level at all times, the students fear that online work and assessment might be lost halfway. They also fear that their poor IT skills can affect their performance at the final tests online" (p.48). Online access can affect how successful students will be in online classes (Anawati & Craig, 2006). Another research into online collaboration and education in international environments mentioned that keeping contact and communication is undeniable to grant the students' success. Therefore, the obstacles faced in virtual modality can affect students' performance due to lack of connection and knowledge of technological tools. Teachers should take into account the students' preferences to design classes, select the material, and games so that learners don't witness the same class routine and feel attracted to learn a new subject.

Subcategory A.2: Students' difficulties

Learners face difficulties during the learning process in which the virtual modality harms the students since some of them could not follow the rhythm of the classes nor complete activities of virtual platforms due to the internet connection and the lack of time that the teacher establishes. Otherwise, learners have problems using the language appropriately, or in many cases the topics covered in classes are incomprehensible for them. Due to the lack of knowledge about the use of an educational application, students prefer only to learn what teachers give them in class and do not reinforce what they have learned. Some interviewees mentioned:

> *"It's like we want to learn more but we don't know how to find the right tool for us to keep learning more". (B3C6)*
>
> *"It's like we are not in the rhythm of being able to learn, we are more concerned about handing in the homework and we are not focused on learning". (A2P6)*
>
> *"I haven't really achieved much; I haven't really learned much English. It hasn't really been a positive benefit for me according to my way of thinking, for me there has been no positive progress". (G6O6)*
>
> *"There are words that sometimes I cannot understand but you always have to know the vocabulary better or sometimes you definitely don't understand because the subject matter is complex". (E4S6)*
>
> *"Not everyone has the same internet power and it is difficult for some to complete these activities in a timely manner". (B3C6)*

The understanding between students and teacher is essential to allow the learning. In Fawaz et al. (2021) study, learners were worried about learning and evaluation methods, overwhelming task load, technical difficulties such as the internet, the lack of knowledge of education tools, and confinement. As a result, teachers have an essential role to guide learners in the educational process, using various methods that allow students attain academic goals.

Subcategory A.3: English Language skills

English language performance is the extent of understanding that the students have developed in English language skills through the teaching-learning process obtaining academic achievement. In this sense, English teaching needs to be focused on the fact that when students want to learn something and would like their teacher to use different methods of learning in the classroom, the support in classes or the use of updated platforms aids students to learn

significantly and develop their skills. Thus, interviewees mentioned:

> *"That the student and teacher put an article and try to make a talk or a discussion of what message the article is trying to give. Then the student can really visualize and discern their knowledge, for me it would be in the form of reading and discussion, that would be the most manageable".* **(G6O6)**

> *"I believe that activities should be done throughout the development of language skills, not just focusing on one part, for example, a speaking activity is very useful in class. However, the writing part is very important for writing articles, we as future teachers need to do homework, articles, essays, projects, theses, etc. It is also necessary that the teacher does not only based on a grammatical explanation or an exposition".* **(B3C6)**

> *"I think we can improve in this aspect, using more authentic materials for teaching, that is, materials that show us the real use of the language and that are not so much based on grammatical rules".* **(L5P6)**

Hos et al (2016) noticed that several learners had a positive attitude towards online learning due to the use of interactive material in teaching because it has various benefits for enhancing their language skills. A study conducted by Memić-Fišić & Bijedić (2017) revealed that students showed a positive attitude about the innovative design and structure of the teaching materials provided electronically. Altunay's study (2019) discovered that learners were pleased to enhance language skills in an online mode due to its asynchronous way of learning. However, various drawbacks were found such as they faced technical problems, an absence of some technological tools and the students' difficulties in learning English language skills. The university learners' perspective about classes has a huge impact on the performance in classes, causing an increase or decrease in the development and the proficiency in the English language.

Subcategory A.4: Teaching component

The teaching component is the process of transmitting knowledge, ideas, and skills to others who do not have them facilitating the learning. It includes teaching methods, didactic materials, activities and resources to carry out a class. In addition, it is used to promote meaningful learning for students and allows teachers to carry out an active, participatory, cooperative and experiential learning process. Some interviewees claimed:

> *"The activities we use are new forms of platforms such as Nearpod, kahoot, Canva, Jamboard, something dynamic in order to capture our attention and not be bored".* **(A2P6)**

"The teacher was in charge of preparing the class and looking for material outside or on web pages to give us the grammar and through this we could understand the context, the structure, the meaning to help us understand how the language works". **(L5P6)**

"The activities were very good because they apply writing activities such as writing short sentences and then they make us read a paragraph and complete a three-question grid. Or they usually do a speaking activity in which we have to record ourselves saying sentences, then they make a class designed where the student can learn and apply all the language skills". **(B3C6)**

Nevertheless, there are some barriers in on-line education because of the material, time for activities and tasks considered by teachers. These variables have affected the teaching-learning process producing demotivation. Some interviewees said:

"Lately we are doing everything virtually since we don't have the book, simply the Cambridge platform". **(A2P6)**

"There is a teacher who applied all these methodologies and planned his class so well and it is to be admired, but the bad thing is that he gave very little time". **(B3C6)**

"Few professors really help you participate in class and you really understand what they are saying but the other majority just send you to research and that's it". **(G6O6)**

Participants' comments related to academic activities during on-line classes, are consistent with the findings of Brown (2002) pointing out that training grants progress academically when learners put on practice the information received. Meanwhile learners are working with their peers, a suitable environment, formal or informal, allows them to enhance their skills and knowledge. Nonetheless, another study carried out by Boling et al. (2012) discovered that various students agreed on drawbacks in online learning such as poor interaction among teachers and peers, feeling of isolation, disconnected with the course content. Consequently, it is challenging to coordinate and perform academic activities or follow the learning guides provided for the teachers.

Subcategory A.5: Learning component

Learning component is the way in which a person acquires knowledge in a formal or informal way. It refers to the knowledge of how a person learns and uses the suitable strategy to manage the information received. There are many manners to learn and apprentices can choose and develop their own way to organize, analyze and interpret the knowledge. Self-learning is a way

of learning in which learners have the capabilities and resources to learn without a professor. Interviewees claimed:

> *"Self-education has allowed me to teach myself and use my knowledge and not only depend on the teacher".* ***(L5P6)***

> *"When I get homework from the Cambridge platform I usually look for videos on YouTube to help me understand the grammar better and when we have to do an essay or create a graphic organizer I usually look for PDF documents that provide me with information about the research topic".* ***(A2P6)***

> *"I learn by listening to different words, different expressions and they stay in my head and that is what helps me to continue, how I get the doubt to continue investigating and I keep that as a learning experience. If I learn something that they don't know, I share it with them and it forms significant learning".* ***(B3C6)***

> *"I have read a lot of papers because I do not understand the subject, so a learner has to reinvent oneself, try to analyze, look for other help".* ***(G6O6)***

The participants' comments regarding their self-learning of the English language during online classes are consistent with the findings of Yazedjian et al. (2008) that mentioned taking good notes and actively participating in classes were also frequently cited as means to promote self-directed learning, a finding presented in previous research. Therefore, students need to research various virtual platforms or internet sources in order to reinforce their knowledge on a new topic or practice their English language skills.

Subcategory A.6: Work preference

Work preference refers to activities carried out by students in the classroom either in groups or individually. There are several ways to work in classes such as individual and in a group. Learners usually choose one way rather than another to develop the activities. However, in some cases learners can decide the group and they feel unmotivated to learn. Some interviewees claimed:

> *"I think 50% individual and 50% group because I have a course that does not like to work in groups because sometimes some do not collaborate and I have more workload but I also do not think it would be good to do individually because in a group at least you learn from other people".* ***(A2P6)***

> *"The truth is that I like to do individual work, I don't like group work, because there are people who don't really participate in group work or don't help, when you already have*

*the idea, the way to do the work". **(G6O6)***

*"I really like working in a group, but because of affinity, then on the other hand I also like working individually because from my point of view, from my way of learning. In group work, sharing ideas with my colleagues, with my friends, I learn better and share ideas with them. I give them my point of view, a learning process is formed and we can do our homework". **(B3C6)***

Participants' comments with respect to the work preference they had experimented during this pandemic, which are consistent with the findings of several authors that argued group work in online classes is beneficial because it enables learners to develop higher order and critical thinking skills as well as to build knowledge and meaning (Conrad & Donaldson, 2004). Likewise, students mentioned that there are many difficulties working in groups in online classes due to lack of time or lack of cooperation of their classmates in developing a task, but it also benefits them because they can learn from the other person and share new knowledge ideas on a topic. On the other hand, some students announced they prefer to perform tasks individually because it is more feasible to get a good grade on their merit. Thus, it is evident that there is a shared preference on the participants since 50% prefer to work individually and the other 50% in groups in the virtual classes.

Category B: Curriculum Component

It focuses on the objectives, materials, methods, and evaluation employed for teachers during the teaching-learning process in online education. Therefore, this section contains 4 subcategories: technological tools, overload of tasks and time component, pedagogical support and teacher feedback as part of the implementation of the EFL students based on their experiences.

Subcategory B.1: Technological tools

These are didactic educational programs designed to support teachers' work in the teaching-learning process and are intended for teaching and autonomous learning, which allows the development of specific cognitive skills. Many interviewees argued that educational tools are helpful in online classes due to their facilities such as performing, sending, editing, accessing and finding a large flow of information from any area. Above all, those tools encourage creativity as students interact with information and generate more dynamic content that easily captures the attention of their classmates. Interviewees mentioned:

"Google academics gives me the wisdom of others to guide me and help me do my homework". **(B3C6)**

"Google classroom has been a great tool that has helped me because it makes it much easier when sending because as we open a document in the classroom we can send it from that application". **(J1C6)**

"Yes, these are interesting because they allow different activities that help to make the class more dynamic to develop the tasks such as making slides and writing about something interesting". **(E4S6)**

"In fact, they are a great help, it is the most feasible way for online education to take place". **(L5P6)**

The benefits of the application of technological tools are various such as organizing the classes, tasks and tests, educational games can be applied during on-line learning, keep students eager to learn, and manage the time to develop each activity appropriately. Sica et al. (2012) argued that: "tools have the ability to motivate learning, increase knowledge and skill acquisition and support traditional teaching methods" (p.108). Some interviewees stated:

"Nearpod is a very good educational platform because apart from the fact that we can create slides, the games allow us to create other types of activities such as matching pictures or filling in spaces, which helps the student to understand and learn the language in a dynamic way". **(J1C6)**

"Kahoot is a super good application that opens your mind, keeps you active and above all captures your attention quickly as you have to be attentive to select the correct answer". **(A2P6)**

"The Cambridge platform is good because I needed that grammatical approach to teach me new things which has been a great help even to improve our conversation skills, how to extend our vocabulary, knowing the correct use of grammar, etc". **(L5P6)**

"I use Duolingo to chat with people from other countries and it also helps me to acquire more vocabulary as it is a good pedagogical tool". **(E4S6)**

"I am using Tandem which is an application where you find many friends who help you even improve your writing or sometimes we make video calls where they correct your way of speaking".] **(A2P6)**

Participants' comments regarding technological tools during the teaching - learning process are similar with the findings of Escobar & Buitrago (2017) stated that: "The incorporation of ICT as an option of didactic tools for teaching seeks to motivate students to learn, to develop

autonomous learning, to strengthen creativity and self-learning skills, and to provide access to diverse educational environments" (p.1). Consequently, the use of technological tools is essential for students to practice their English language skills to enhance their weaknesses so that they can better understand the target language.

Otherwise, educational platforms have some drawbacks if they are not employed adequately. A crucial factor is the time to fulfill an activity in any platform on time, and learners feel pressure due to the overload of activities in the platform. A few interviewees agreed and claimed:

> *"It depends on how the student and teacher apply it, for example if the teacher applies the kahoot with half minute questions and speaks that half minute it is impossible".* ***(G6O6)***
>
> *"The Cambridge platforms are like just sending us to fill out, it 's not good that they send us 100% to do it at home and sometimes we don't even know where to start".* ***(A2P6)***
>
> *"From Cambridge, it can have both advantages and disadvantages. One is that sometimes for us as students it is very tedious and very stressful to have the pressure that we have to be there completing the units, the activities that the teachers give us, and that".* ***(L5P6)***

Participants' comments emphasized that there are benefits and drawbacks in educational tools, which are consistent with the findings of Valencia et al. (2017) when they states that: "The virtual educational platforms are fundamental elements that help to strengthen the process of teaching and learning generating interest in the pedagogical practice of the professor" (p.2). As a result, teachers have tried to employ interactive activities to catch the students' attention, facilitating the learning process and achievement of academic goals, but some students are not satisfied with their time management on each assigned activity on a platform as they are unable to fill it in time.

Subcategory B.2: Overload of tasks and time component

Overload of tasks refers to the amount of activity or work assigned to a portion of the educational population. It may consist of one or more units of work which can be detrimental to our free time. Otherwise, the time component refers to a certain period to perform several activities. In some cases, tasks become stressful for students for various reasons, such as complicated topics, without enough time to complete, many tasks, and pressure. A few interviewees said:

> *"There are classmates from previous cycles who have already withdrawn because they don't really understand the virtual classes, why they sometimes send a lot of homework and the pressure and stress".* ***(G6O6)***
>
> *"The tasks should be focused on something more balanced because we also have a family to enjoy a weekend or some time off. Sometimes there is no time to take that time off and be with the family and that brings great consequences".* ***(G6O6)***
>
> The time factor has a significant role in the learning of a second language. It is undeniable that the practice time produces better results in the development of linguistic skills. The majority of interviewees agreed and mentioned:
>
> *"More than two hours per week are needed to maintain the frequency with which the student can become familiar with second language instruction".* ***(J1C6)***
>
> *"There is a teacher who gives us a very short time to complete the exercises".* ***(A2P6)***

Participants' comments with respect to the overload of tasks and time component during these on-line classes, are similar to the findings of Mukwevho (2018) when he claimed that "The stress experienced is due to lack of time management skills and being overwhelmed by the tasks being performed" (p.6). As a result, overload of tasks and the time component has been a great challenge for students since they are pressured by the time limit assigned by their teachers, which is affecting their academic performance. That is why teachers must reestablish a schedule in which students have enough time to complete each task and have better results in their learning process.

Subcategory B.3: Pedagogical support

Pedagogical support refers to complementary actions to strengthen the teaching process through the strategies, methods, and resources used by teachers in teaching students in order to achieve meaningful learning. So, learning guides, translators and e-books are tools employed frequently by learners since this type of support helps them to complete their teaching assignments and promote them to achieve their learning goals in which, interviewees said:

> *"These guides are very important because through them we can develop our tasks, this can help us with a document that we have to read and solve a task". (**J1C6**)*
>
> *"I think so because in fact if there was no such support we would not be able to perform some tasks because we do not have the support of the teacher all the time". (**A2P6**)*
>
> *"Both the translator and the dictionary are very useful, but the dictionary does not translate the word but rather gives us a definition of the word and helps us to acquire more vocabulary". (**J1C6**)*
>
> *"I use e-books because I like to read papers, some authors and I also look at some essays that some students have done and try to see what mistakes they have made". (**G6O6**)*

Nevertheless, in the specific case of translators, they bring some benefits and drawbacks such as providing more than one meaning of a context word; however, it is challenging for learners to acquire new vocabulary, a literal translation, unknown of grammatic.

A few interviewees agreed that:

> *"The translator gives me more meanings of a word in different contexts. For us as second language learners, it is difficult to learn new words because when we want to express a sentence, the translator does not give us the meaning we want". (**B3C6**)*
>
> *"For some parts it does, but it does not correct you well because it does not translate in context but rather word for word and you have to know grammar to write well". (**E4S6**)*
>
> *"So, I do not consider the translator as an aid as it should not be used all the time, it is not advisable". (**G6O6**)*

Participants' comments concerning the pedagogical support during online classes are similar to the findings of research that has shown that college students also need explicit help and direction with learning the content and skills in their courses (Hartwig & Dunlosky, 2012; Kornell & Bjork, 2007; McCabe, 2011). To conclude, the use of these study guides and e-books have been of great pedagogical help for the students in order to search and reinforce some complex subject

of understanding within their teaching and learning process, but the use of the translator is not adequate for the students as they will not acceptably develop the linguistic competences. The comprehension process will be laborious because learners waste time translating words instead of the whole sentence to assimilate the message provided.

Subcategory B.4: Teacher feedback

Teacher feedback specifies a method of reinforcement to reintroduce the content obtained from an activity for apprentices to control and optimize their understanding of the subject. Tutorial classes are the space to reinforce the students' learning in which the teacher has the responsibility to guide and solve any doubt that a learner has. Interviewees stated:

> *"In the tutorials one can understand more about how to solve the doubts, the gaps we have in the class, how we can reinforce the last topic we had".* **(B3C6)**
>
> *"To a certain extent yes, because you can ask questions that you did not understand in the class, they answer your doubts and it is a little more personalized, in fact it is the space in which you learn the subject better".* **(E4S6)**

Otherwise, tutorial classes usually are seen as an obligation for students that have a low performance inside the classroom. It also produces insecurity and demotivation in students and some teachers give them inappropriate feedback. Interviewees claimed:

> *"Many times teachers make the mistake of giving a correction or feedback in a wrong way that makes the student lose confidence".* **(L5P6)**
>
> *"The main objective of tutoring is to provide academic reinforcement, but the truth is that it is more of an obligation than a motivation to attend tutoring, so it is always said that from the second cycle onwards, students with an average of less than 7 have the obligation to attend".* **(L5P6)**
>
> *"Totally considered that they are motivational, some are forced, for me it should not be an obligation. It should be that the student is passionate about going and some questions deal with him and the teacher, solve what is the problem he had and find adequate answers to his question".* **(G6O6)**

Participants' comments with respect to the teacher feedback in online classes, share a similar perspective with the findings of Binu (2020) when he argued that "Giving positive feedback enables students to build self-confidence, self-awareness and enthusiasm for learning. To give the students a sense of achievement and motivate them to progress further, it is important to give them daily feedback" (p.3). Thus, the feedback influences directly in the development of

the apprentices for that reason a poor execution of the reinforcement causes low scores, lack of motivation among others.

Category C: Affective and Emotional Component

"If emotional life is the basis of human happiness, a good emotional relationship will be the fundamental ingredient for learning. One does not learn without the bond, even in spaces where the cognitive aspect prevails" (Campoverde & Godoy, 2016, p. 2018). This category has a relevant function in the learning of a second language since it intervenes in the emotional state of learners and how they face emotions, feelings, thoughts, etc.

Subcategory C.1: Family support

Family support helps to clear the mind of all the negative things as it encourages learners to move forward, trying to act in the face of conflicts and deal with them in a better way. This component represents a significant role in the learning process because apprentices can unconditionally count on family support. In addition, it provides a suitable environment to grant the learning and aids with the economic factor. Many interviewees mentioned:

> *"Yes, because they motivate you to fight for your dream because without their support we would stop studying and we would dedicate ourselves to work or any other situation". (E4S6)*
>
> *"The virtual family support has been very constant I could say, that is, the understanding of my family that there are times when I have to be 100% in my studies, homework more than anything else to turn them in on time. All this has been very essential for me not to feel more stressed and I think that family support is very important these days". (L5P6)*
>
> *"Yes, it is a support, but sometimes you are also stressed by the classes and all that, so also a little bit, it has a negative discharge, but they are a great support. The family is a great support to continue both economically and motivationally". (B3C6)*
>
> *"Of course, my children and my wife support me all the time to keep me going. Because sometimes they have encouraged me to withdraw because I am not really satisfied in those virtual classes". (G6O6)*

Family support can contribute to the development of learning competencies and learning motivation and enhance student e-learning engagement (Gao, et al., 2021). Consequently, the

attention and interest of parents in students' learning causes a great impact on academic performance since learners who get more interest and support from family members tend to be more engaged, dedicated, and outstanding in learning.

Subcategory C.2: Motivation factor

The motivation factor focuses on exposing the variables that involve the student in a stimulating relationship in the learning process and the self-development of their abilities. There are ways to motivate students to participate in classes, such as giving extra points for a well-done task, asking questions to start a debate, and providing timely feedback. Some interviewees said:

> *"I think the best way they motivate us is when they offer extra points to raise your academic score". (E4S6)*

> *"My teachers motivate me in class by asking me questions about a subject or doing an exercise, so I could say that most teachers motivate us in this way by making us actively participate in the class". (J1C6)*

> *"Specifically, I believe that the teacher gives us the confidence that if we make mistakes there is no problem because mistakes are part of learning". (L5P6)*

On the other hand, motivation can be performed erroneously by teachers. It can be interpreted as the lack of motivation for that reason students do not want to participate actively in classes. Interviewees mentioned:

> *"Everyone always says the cameras, to try to participate in class and integrate. There are few that really motivate us, the others have not really motivated me". (G6O6)*

> *"Unfortunately, the motivation they give us is, I'm going to call by list and because they don't participate, I'm going to lower a point, I'm going to give them a "sad face". I don't think that is a motivation on my part, so I didn't participate because I don't like the pressure, so I don't think it has been a good motivation this semester because the teachers are taking to heart that we don't turn on the camera, so there has been no motivation". (B3C6)*

Participants' comments with respect to motivation factor in the teaching learning process, are consistent with the findings of Richards (2001) that holds "a sound educational program should be based on an analysis of learner needs" (p.51). Likewise, students mentioned that they feel eager to learn if they receive an effective type of motivation, but if it is negative, they do not feel motivated to participate.

Subcategory C.3: Students' attitudes

Attitudes are a person's state of mind when expressing in a certain way what he feels at any given moment about some new change in his environment. These aspects have a considerable influence on the educational process because learners can develop academic goals. In addition, it helps significantly in the learning process since learners can manage how they confront the classes. Several interviewees stated:

> *"They always told us that the university tries to make us, as future teachers, collaborative people, that we are people who can be worked with other people and can collaborate with different things, creative even to make slides, it is considered a very important point in the learning process". (B3C6)*
>
> *"This is where creativity comes in, the willingness to not only stay with the information provided by the teacher but to look for more information that in the end solves our doubts and in many cases there is no longer the need to go to the teacher to solve a doubt". (L5P6)*
>
> *"Of course 100%, everyone must have a positive attitude every day, try to help your classmate if you can, try to participate actively in class is what I do a lot. I try with my knowledge of what I have read, participate in class, ask questions to the teacher because a learner is going to learn and ask not to be quiet in class". (G6O6)*

Participants' comments related to their attitudes during an on-line class, share a similar view about the emotional state of each student can play a significant role in acquiring the information and developing meaningful learning. In addition, mindset has a huge role in the successful learning of language because it allows learners to increase their opportunities to get proficiency in a second or foreign language (Lightbown & Spada, 2003). Thus students who possess a great attitude to perform in an academic subject can have the enthusiasm and predisposition to develop any class content without seeing it as an obligation but rather as a goal to achieve a good grade.

10. Research Impacts (social, environmental, education or economic):

The current project might be employed as a guide for developing further research, making an immersive analysis, and comparing the information presented. As participants mentioned, teachers will apply several educational methods during the online classes between traditional and innovative. In addition, it allows us to analyze the effectiveness of those methods to enhance English learning through the students' perspectives. So, it would be beneficial to further research contributing to the results obtained from this project to determine the validity and usefulness by drawing some conclusions.

Hence, the project provides a comprehensive view for further researchers to internalize the students' perspectives about the educational process of the English language in an online mode. Results showed that various students were strongly affected due to the virtual education resulting in a lack of knowledge about technological tools, deficient progress in the English language, and loss of interaction with their peers and teachers. That's why it would contribute to finding updated ways to solve those problems in virtual education.

Thanks to the development of this project, the reality of virtual education was analyzed in-depth, determining the weaknesses and strengths. Professors must adjust the methods regarding students' level through training, learning the use of technological tools and being conscious of the situation in the class. Otherwise, the methods erroneously applied to cause the wrong compliance of the educational objectives and academic underachievement. The project would be feasible to adapt to new realities and discern the priorities from the whole objectives.

11. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1   Conclusions

- It was essential to gather information about the terminologies presented in the current project. The range of data collected was helpful to have a broad understanding of the meaning of the educational process of English as a Foreign language in virtual modality. However, there is a slight deficit of knowledge to use the educational platforms due to the pandemic, which has affected teachers' and students' English language educative process since the traditional methods apply expositions, exams, and research prevail.

- Questionnaires and surveys were analyzed to interpret students' perspectives in which technological tools which have been of great support to the students due to the facilities to practice and strengthen their language skills. However, it is pointed out that learning English through online classes has caused stress, demotivation, and anxiety due to an overload of tasks, technological issues and lack of communication between teachers and peers. Otherwise, it is undisputed that performing several exercises for a limited amount of time is not enough to become familiar with the vocabulary or grammar of the language. Nevertheless, the translator has had a negative influence because the students want to look up a word they do not know, but the translator is not used to translating according to the context of a sentence.

- It was discovered that teachers applied a range of methods in which the majority were considered traditional rather than modern. The students' point of view shows that teachers would use classic methods to teach English in online classes. On the other hand, pedagogical support such as learning guides and e-books are helpful because students can search for information to reinforce their skills. Apart from that, the teacher feedback is not being well-executed due to communication problems and methods application, as students lose motivation and interest to attend and the class topics are not adequately reinforced. Affective and emotional components show how students face the online modality; it points out that learners do not feel eager to learn the English language due to the lack of encouragement by teachers and family members.

11.2 Recommendations

- The teaching-learning process of the English language in online education has passed through some changes that directly affect learners and teachers. For that reason, teachers must investigate and address the updated teaching methods to apply inside the virtual classroom to enhance the educational process of the English language, avoiding demotivation, stress and misunderstanding on students.

- Family support has an essential role in helping students' goals. Also, teachers play a role in the students' performance, directly affecting their learning. For that reason, both reinforcements are undeniably necessary to improve students' emotional and linguistic skills, and they have to work together to grant educational success.

- Teachers are responsible for students' comprehension of the English language, so thus they have to investigate a variety of ways in which learners could naturally assimilate the language. It will grant that every learner avoids translating one single word and begins to understand the whole message. Apart from that, educational institutions must offer capacitation for professors to mix traditional with modern methods that support students better understanding the English language and apply varied educational platforms.

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13. Annexes

Appendix A

SURVEY

Encuesta sobre el Proceso de Enseñanza - Aprendizaje del Inglés como idioma extranjero [EFL] en la educación en Línea.

Analizar las perspectivas de los estudiantes sobre la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del inglés como idioma Extranjero [EFL] en la educación en línea.

Este formulario registra automáticamente los correos de los usuarios de PORTAL TECNOLOGICO. Cambiar configuración

¿Considera que la educación en línea es una opción adecuada para aprender un idioma extranjero? *

○ Totalmente en Desacuerdo

○ En desacuerdo

○ Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo

○ De acuerdo

○ Totalmente de acuerdo

¿Considera que las plataformas educativas han sido útiles para el proceso de enseñanza -aprendizaje del inglés? (zoom, nearpod, google meet, google classroom) *

◯ Totalmente en Desacuerdo

◯ En desacuerdo

◯ Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo

◯ De acuerdo

◯ Totalmente de acuerdo

¿El desconocimiento sobre el uso de recursos tecnológicos ha afectado su aprendizaje en la educación en línea? *

◯ Totalmente en Desacuerdo

◯ En Desacuerdo

◯ Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo

◯ De acuerdo

◯ Totalmente de acuerdo

¿Cree usted que han aumentado las dificultades durante su proceso de enseñanza - aprendizaje del idioma inglés en la educación en línea? *

◯ Totalmente en Desacuerdo

◯ En Desacuerdo

◯ Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo

◯ De acuerdo

◯ Totalmente de acuerdo

¿Ha desarrollado su autonomía en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés durante la modalidad virtual? *

○ Totalmente en desacuerdo

○ En desacuerdo

○ Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo

○ De acuerdo

○ Totalmente de acuerdo

¿Las estrategias de enseñanza aplicadas por su docente de inglés han beneficiado el aprendizaje del idioma? *

○ Totalmente en desacuerdo

○ En desacuerdo

○ Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo

○ De acuerdo

○ Totalmente de acuerdo

¿Cree que su docente ha empleado nuevas metodologías durante las clases virtuales? *

◯ Totalmente en desacuerdo

◯ En desacuerdo

◯ Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo

◯ De acuerdo

◯ Totalmente de acuerdo

¿Considera que sus habilidades lingüísticas se han desarrollado satisfactoriamente en la modalidad virtual? *

◯ Totalmente en desacuerdo

◯ En desacuerdo

◯ Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo

◯ De acuerdo

◯ Totalmente de acuerdo

¿Cree usted que la motivación es un factor relevante para aprender inglés en línea? *

◯ Totalmente en desacuerdo

◯ En desacuerdo

◯ Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo

◯ De acuerdo

◯ Totalmente de acuerdo

Enviar   **Borrar formulario**

Appendix B

VALIDATION

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE COTOPAXI

Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas
EXTENSIÓN PUJILÍ

CONSTANCIA DE VALIDACIÓN

Quien suscribe, **Víctor Hugo Romero García**, con documento de identidad Nº **180302793-5**, de profesión **Catedrático universitario** con Grado de **Magister**, ejerciendo actualmente como Docente universitario, en la **Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi**. Por medio de la presente hago constar que he revisado con fines de Validación el Instrumento (encuesta), a los efectos de su aplicación en los estudiantes del sexto nivel de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (inglés) de la Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi.

Luego de hacer las observaciones pertinentes, puedo formular las siguientes apreciaciones.

Parámetros	DEFICIENTE	ACEPTABLE	BUENO	EXCELENTE
Congruencia de Ítems				X
Amplitud de contenido			X	
Redacción de los Ítems		X		
Claridad y precisión				X
Pertinencia				X

Fecha: 18 enero 2022

1803027935
VICTOR HUGO
ROMERO
GARCIA

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C.I. 180302793-5

Appendix C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Información institucional

- ¿En qué semestre estás?
- ¿Estás en esta universidad desde el primer semestre?

Bloque de información específica

Componente de aprendizaje virtual

- ¿Considera efectiva la manera de enseñar del docente?
- ¿Cuáles son el tipo de actividades que su profesor aplica en clases virtuales?
- ¿Cómo cree que debería ser la enseñanza de un idioma extranjero mediante el aprendizaje virtual?
- Desde su punto de vista, ¿cuál ha sido la contribución de las herramientas educativas para el aprendizaje del idioma inglés? (classroom, google meet, youtube, zoom)
- ¿Qué tipo de plataformas virtuales o actividades le gustaría que su maestro use para enseñarle inglés?
- ¿Cuáles son los beneficios académicos que ha alcanzado en esta modalidad?

Componente afectivo-motivacional

- ¿Cuáles han sido los obstáculos que ha tenido que enfrentar durante su proceso de aprendizaje del idioma extranjero mediante el aprendizaje virtual?
- ¿Cuál es su opinión acerca de la enseñanza del docente en esta modalidad?
- ¿De qué manera sus maestros le motivan para aprender activamente en las clases en línea?
- ¿Qué opina acerca de la motivación como un factor en el aprendizaje del idioma en inglés en la modalidad virtual?
- ¿Cómo crees que el apoyo familiar influye en los resultados de las clases en línea?
- Desde su punto de vista ¿Considera que las tutorías son agentes motivacionales para los estudiantes?
- ¿Cuáles son las actitudes y capacidades (creatividad, colaboración, perseverancia) necesarias para el desarrollo académico?

- ¿La manera de enseñanza de sus maestros ha afectado sus resultados académicos?

Componente Micro curricular

- ¿Cómo realiza las tareas?
- ¿Utiliza libros o guías para completar las tareas en inglés?
- ¿Qué aplicaciones educativas usas para mejorar tus habilidades en el idioma inglés?
- ¿Considera el traductor o diccionario útiles en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés?

Componente de preferencias de aprendizaje

- ¿Cómo le gustaría aprender el idioma Inglés?
- ¿Qué modalidad educativa prefiere virtual o en línea? ¿Por qué?
- ¿Cómo cree que debería ser la enseñanza de un idioma extranjero mediante el aprendizaje virtual?
- ¿Qué tipos de actividades académicas prefiere realizar? (lectura, escritura, exposiciones)
- ¿Qué tipo de herramientas educativas o actividades le gustaría que su maestro use en la enseñanza del idioma inglés? (nearpod, kahoot, lyrics training)
- ¿Cómo considera el uso del idioma inglés durante toda la clase?
- ¿Le gusta hacer actividades en grupo o individual? ¿Por qué?
- ¿Qué aspectos consideras que se deberían mejorar el aprendizaje del idioma inglés mediante el uso de herramientas educativas?
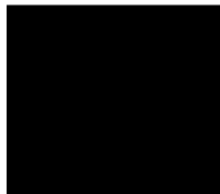
Appendix D

INFORMED CONSENT

HOJA DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

Yo, ███████████████ consiento que Denyse Constante y Alexander Hidalgo, estudiantes de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (Inglés) **octavo ciclo paralelo "B"**, utilicen la información y comentarios sobre mi experiencia **estudiantil** que emito de manera voluntaria, para fines académicos y científicos, incluyendo publicación y divulgación, con la garantía de confidencialidad y resguardo de los datos que puedan identificarme de manera personal.

Latacunga, 09 de Junio de 2021

Firma

C.I.: ███████

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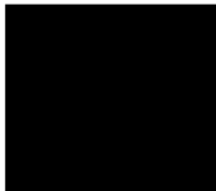**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE COTOPAXI**

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