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PUJILÍ CAMPUS

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY

ENGLISH MAJOR

MODALITY: RESEARCH REPORT

THEME:

<div style="border:1px solid black">

BLENDED LEARNING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

</div>

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

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PUJILÍ – ECUADOR
FEBRUARY - 2023

TUTOR'S ENDORSEMENT

In my capacity as a supervisor of the research report entitled "**BLENDED LEARNING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**", and researched by **ANA LISETH MONGA ARMAS** ID number **0503093544** 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, February 2023

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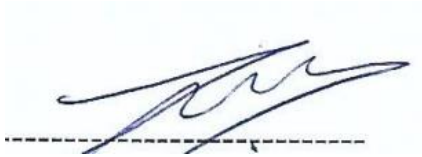M.Sc. Jorge Luis Rosero Menéndez
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COMMITTEE APPROVAL

The research report entitled "**BLENDED LEARNING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**", 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, February 2023

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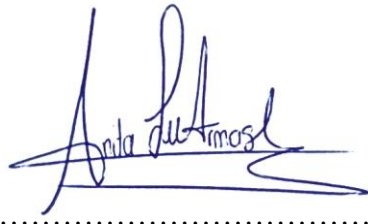PhD. Paulina Alexandra Arias Arroyo
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the fundamental pillar of my life: God, my mother and brothers. Who have taught me the value of faith and perseverance. They have supported me through thick and thin, who with their patience, understanding and love helped me never give up on my dreams despite some mistakes. Also, for the people who were always encouraging me and believing in my abilities, charisma, nobility and desire to move forward with humility. To the Technical University of Cotopaxi for giving me the opportunity to be part of its students, and helping me with the academic and humanist training in the area of education. It is also essential to dedicate this work to the teachers, who made my stay at the university a pleasant experience, who with their professionalism witnessed all my effort.

GRATEFULNESS

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI

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ABSTRACT

The post-pandemic is a relevant issue within educational changes. Teachers and students had to combine teaching and learning modalities. Blended learning was considered as a methodology that supports these educational processes. That is why the objective of the research was to describe teachers' perceptions of blended learning to teach English in the post-pandemic period. This research project used a descriptive qualitative method. The data was collected through an open interview. Main finding to two English teachers from the Isidro Ayora School. The main findings showed that there is no difference in teachers' experiences with blended learning according to the educational level of the student. Blended Learning in the pandemic, was a change that teachers faced when teaching. Blended Learning in the post-pancem, was a transition and combination of methodologies for the adaptation of resources and Blended Learning Strategies in English had strategies and activities supported by the use of technological resources to improve students' skills. In conclusion, blended learning in the post-pandemic period leads to the implementation of activities and strategies that support face-to-face through the use of technological tools.

Keywords: Post-pandemic**,** Blended Learning, Perceptions.

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RESUMEN

La post pandemia es un tema relevante dentro de los cambios educativos. Los profesores y los estudiantes tenían que combinar las modalidades de enseñanza y aprendizaje. Se consideró el blended learning como una metodología que apoya estos procesos educativos. Es por ello que el objetivo de la investigación fue describir las percepciones de los docentes sobre el blended learning para enseñar inglés en el periodo post pandemia. Este proyecto de investigación utilizó un método cualitativo descriptivo. Los datos se recolectaron a través de una entrevista abierta. Hallazgo principal a dos docentes de inglés de la Escuela Isidro Ayora. Los principales hallazgos mostraron que no hay diferencia en las experiencias de los docentes con el aprendizaje semipresencial según el nivel educativo del estudiante. Blended learning in la pandemia, fue un cambio que enfrentan los docentes al momento de enseñar. Blended learning después de la pandemia, fue una transición y combinación de metodologías para la adaptación de recursos y las estrategias de blended learning para la enseñanza del ingles tuvo como estrategias y actividades apoyadas en el uso recurso tecnológicos para mejorar las habilidades de los estudiantes. En conclusión, el aprendizaje semipresencial en el período post pandemia conduce a la implementación de actividades y estrategias que apoyan la presencialidad a través del uso de herramientas tecnológicas

Palabras claves: Post-pandemia**,** Aprendizaje combinado, Percepciones.

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Theme:

Blended Learning in English Language Teaching

Starting Date:

October 2022

Ending Date:

February 2023

Place of Research:

Isidro Ayora School, located in the province of Cotopaxi, Latacunga canton; La Matriz Parish in Quijano y Ordoñez 314, San Francisco neighborhood.

Sponsoring Faculty:

Pujili Extension

Sponsoring Career:

National and Foreign Language Pedagogy (English)

Linked Research Project:

Macro Project of the career: Formative process in the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Languages in the educational institutions of the province Cotopaxi.

Work Team:

- M.Sc. Jorge Luis Rosero Menéndez
- Monga Armas Ana Liseth

Knowledge área:

Education

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted educational practices around the world, changed the way classroom instruction is done and affected student learning. The purpose of this research was to examine the perceptions of the teachers of the Isidro Ayora School, and compare how the process of teaching in EFL has been at the educational levels from 4th to 7th grade regarding the pandemic and how the teachers addressed these changes in the post-pandemic period.

Due to this, the teachers saw the need to use a blended learning modality or also known as hybrid or mixed method. For having a contribution to student learning. This method combines school educational modalities with online education that is supported by available digital platforms. Barron et al. (2021) state that when learning is disseminated through technological tools, it is considered blended. In this case, after the pandemic, education and opportunities were transformed and generated changes for teachers and students. Telegrafo (2020) mentions that the COVID-19 emergency and social isolation caused educational entities to redefine their teaching system incorporating methodologies for the scholastic and progressive development of students.

That is why this research is based on the perceptions of teachers about blended learning in EFL after the pandemic. Thus, this project aims to answer the following research question:

1. What are teachers´ experiences about blended learning to teach English in post-pandemic?

3. OBJECTIVES

General objective

- To describe teachers' experiences about blended learning to teach English in post- pandemic.

Specifics objectives

- To define theoretical research foundations about blended learning in English language teaching.
- To compare teachers´ experiences with blended learning according to the student's educational level (Curtain and Dahlberg's approach to Teaching a Foreign Language) in which they teach.

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

Specific objective	Activities	Verification Means
1. To define theoretical research foundations about blended learning in English language teaching.	Bibliographic research.	Theoretical Framework
2. To compare teachers´ experiences with blended learning according to the student's educational level (Curtain and Dahlberg's approach to Teaching a Foreign Language) in which they teach.	Analysis and discussion	Results

5. JUSTIFICATION

The present investigation focused on the perceptions of teachers about the use of the Blended Learning methodology for teaching English in EFL in the post-pandemic. Education after the pandemic takes a very remarkable turn since the return to normality. According to Iglesias et al. (2020) face-to-face education can no longer meet the demand of students since the distance modality does not fully cover the educational requirements, so the implementation of blended learning or mixed methodology plays a fundamental role in teaching of knowledge in schools to contribute to the cognitive processes of the student.

In addition, this project compares the perceptions of teachers taking into account educational levels in relation to their grade and Teaching English to Young Learners Stages (TEYL) according to Curtain and Dahlberg's (2016). Also, it is intended that the results of this research contribute that teachers can analyze approaches to students according to their layers of education development.

Another contribution of this research is to present information about Blended Learning to know and relate more with the methodology and stages or levels. According to Easton (2003), cited in Barbour (2017) "teaching in an online environment also requires a paradigm shift in the way teachers perceive time and space, manage instructional activities and assessments, and they get involved with the students" (p. 504). Moreover, research contributions focus on the interaction between teachers and students through communication to share information and improve educational processes based on the use of technological tools.

6. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL FOUNDATION

6.1 Background

In order to support the investigation, it is necessary to rely on sources that facilitate the knowledge and contribute to the fulfillment of the proposed objectives of this project. That is why some works are shown below.

Jokinen & Mikkonen (2013) in their research study "Teachers' experiences of teaching in a blended learning environment" had the objective of obtaining the experiences of teachers in the planning and implementation of teaching, based on blended learning in teachers of an undergraduate nursing program for adults. This research has a qualitative approach and data collection techniques through interviews with focused groups, which are made up of four to six participants. Also, the results obtained from the research reflect that the combined or mixed learning environment through the use of technological tools creates challenges that must be taken into account when planning content and implementing the teaching-learning processes of the students. The authors concluded teachers require deeper knowledge regarding the blended methodology and the pedagogical development approach. It is also emphasized that there is a lot of information regarding the experiences of the students and little information about the experiences of the teachers.

Another study conducted by Hensley (2020) regarding "Teacher Perceptions of Blended Learning to Support 21st Century Learners" aimed to understand teachers' perceptions of blended learning as an instructional methodology to address student needs. It had a qualitative approach and the data was collected from individual interviews with teachers with a total of twelve participants. The result showed that the use of blended learning contributes to the understanding and knowledge of effective instructional practices that improve and benefit teachers and students. The conclusion presented shows that the educational practices in the blended methodology are effective in reaching all students and improving those enabled through technology to support instruction, engage and empower students.

6.2 Theoretical Framework

Education

Education refers to the process of teaching and developing knowledge. According to Arslan (2018) "education is the practical and methodological training that is given to a person in the process of development and growth". As Durkheim (1956) quoted in Arslan (2018) states that "education is the influence exercised by adult generations on those that are not yet ready for social life" (p.71). Thus, the primary objective of education is to help children develop intellectual skills and improve their physical capabilities.

Also, education develops human personality, thoughts and social skills. It also prepares people for life experiences Abdulgani (2014). Education is part of a gradual process which produces changes in the behavior of individuals. Also, it is a process where knowledge is acquired through instructions or some other practical procedure. On the other hand, education can be divided into categories, types and processes depending on its functions and institutions to meet the educational objectives.

English Education

According to Trifena (2020), "English is the language of communication used by people all over the world" (p. 3). Currently, the teaching of foreign languages is fundamental because it allows one to improve knowledge and opens many doors in the professional field, since it is one of the most widely spoken languages. Moreover, from the point of view of Bayswater (2017), English is a language universally spoken by different countries as a strategic means of communication.

In addition, as Adda (2020) points out, English is the most widespread of all the languages in the world. It is spoken by more than 300 million people. This language had its beginnings 1500 years ago. Namely, the English language is an international language that is spoken and produced in many countries either as a mother tongue or as a second language. Definitely, the English language is considered the lingua franca,

that is to say that it not only occupies a space in communication but also extends in scenarios such as education, information, smart devices, processes, modes, and uses that are part of the daily life of human beings.

Most probably, English in education is the most complex and important part in each country in which it is intended to be developed, since the educational system could underestimate the skills that students and teachers could develop during different periods of the teaching and learning process. Quoting Adda (2020)

> Language acquisition and learning cannot be underestimated as a very simplistic model. Language acquisition consists of four fundamental skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is traditional practice in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) to refer to these basic skills as LRSW. The abbreviation and the content order signify important phases in language learning. It is also indicative of skill priority. It is said that most of the time, a good listener is a good talker. The abbreviation LRSW also implies the inseparability of the four abilities. Therefore, it is crucial to start with listening to achieve the ultimate goal of writing. English is a very important language and the ability to use this language has become a necessity for an educated person. (p.5)

Face-to-face Education

Face-to-face education is one that is characterized by the physical space and the interaction between teachers and students, as Acheampong mentions, face-to-face learning "is a live meeting between participants, instructors, and facilitators. Face-to-face interaction can help break down barriers and provide real intercultural experiences and networking opportunities" (n.d.). Thus, its objective is the exchange of knowledge between several people in a real space of the activities carried out by a tutor. Likewise, Acheampong (n.d.) highlights that "classes, seminars, workshops and conferences, in which all participants meet in the same facilities, are examples of face-to-face learning"

and with the contribution of the Southern Utah University (n.d.) "Students meet with instructors at regular times with synchronous learning, primarily in a classroom setting", students in face-to-face classes are generally expected to be physically present during the course and the teaching processes involved in the classroom, day and hour.

Virtual Education

With the passing of time, education, like the whole world, has been in a process of adaptation and constant changes, the growth of the digital age and the evolution of the Internet make its usefulness in different aspects essential, according to Palvia et al. (2018):

> E-education or online education is changing the way we approach teaching and learning. Changes in education delivery models have been rapid and transformational. As institutions worldwide adapt to these changes, a very dynamic education landscape has generated immense interest among researchers, educators, administrators, policymakers, publishers, and businesses. (p. 233)

From the author's position, online education is a viable path of opportunities and reinforcement used by everyone. Said implementation in the educational field considers digital environments and provides a comfortable education from anywhere the student or teacher is. Dhull & Sakshi (2017) points out that online learning helps students learn in a way that is feasible and convenient for their benefit. However, it is mentioned that this type of education also demands resources and a limitation may arise in education and its teaching processes. On the other hand, it is important to mention that in online education, teachers become guides and providers of knowledge while students build their own knowledge, giving rise to new learning skills.

Blended Learning

As education develops different scenarios to fulfill its learning functions, this blended model emerges from the mix of what was previously described as face-to-face and online learning. The mixture of these has been reflecting and gaining strength since the pandemic and since then its use is considered in institutions as a reflection of a need.

The concept of this modality according to Educase (2020) is an educational environment that mixes face-to-face school training with online education. That is, each class is complemented synchronously with virtuality. In addition, other authors mention that the characteristics of the combined modality are to provide and share information in different ways. Moreover, it is carried out synchronously and asynchronously and contemplates models of interaction between the teacher and the students. Besides, skills are developed in students for the use of technology and the correct selection of resources to be used during classes by teachers with pedagogical coherence.

Eventually, the duration of the session of each class is not exceeded and the adequacy of the contents to be taught is taken into account. Barron et al (2021). Also from the studies of Jost et al. (2021 as cited in IRCEELT, 2021) "hybrid learning (when possible) is the most effective way of teaching today, since it allows to easily adapt to the change to traditional learning or completely online without a lot of extra planning and preparation." In addition, in the investigative work of SEDUCA (2021 as cited in Marín, 2021) this methodology implies a consecutive development through which students and educators are immersed in the educational context from activities or classes. Regarding the modalities of hybrid education or also known as blended, both with a single terminology, they differ in different models presented by (Alina ,2019).

The Flex Model

Interpreting the concept, Alina (2019) expresses that "this model is implemented by secondary schools, online instruction delivery is a vital part of this model, teachers

deliver instructions online and students can access the online content in the sanctity of their home" (pp. 9). As well as, (Christensen, Horn, and Staker 2013 cited in Davis, 2019) argue that the flex model is focused on changing the classroom model and making in long time innovate in secondary and middle school (p. 2).

The Rotation Model

In the study by Alina (2019), she argues that "students have a switch from face-to-face instructions to online instructions based on a schedule established by the teachers". Ultimately, the primary school has a benefit as learning is divided" (pp. 10). Besides, Hanover (2020) manifests that this model can be included with small groups or whole groups with projects, individual tutoring, and the students completing assigned activities.

Face-to-face Driver Model

According to Alina (2019) states that "students can participate in online learning to depend upon their levels of ability and mastery…Average performing students may get remediation classes and more time to grasp concepts" (pp. 12). Moreover, Study (2015) argues that this type of teaching combines traditional methodologies with online instructions to increase the students' knowledge.

Advantages and disadvantages of the Blended Learning

The implementation of E-learning is quite favorable in education, so (Raspopovic et al.) (2017 as cited in Rawashdeh et al., 2021) ensures that, the advantages of using this methodology in student requirements generates the creation of objectives and compliance in less time because its effect on learning is to guide and advise students. On the other hand, Priscila (2021) states that with the use of this methodology it is possible to observe different forms of learning that are much more flexible to deepen learning through a different range of activities that are carried out through a digital platform with traditional. In other words, hybrid means flexibility when educating.

Moreover, in the research of Hunt (2016), sustains that the most notable advantages and disadvantages within this modality are:

Advantages

- Individualize learning, this has as a reference that the information is available for each one with availability without any schedule. Well, the characteristic of blended learning is the opportunity to provide personalized instruction that meets the needs of each student with free access to online material from anywhere and at any time, since modern technological devices allow teachers and trainers to arrive with information to their students.

- One of the most important and most notable from the point of view of a student is the benefit of the comforts since he does not have the need to travel to other places to access information or a classroom.

- Blended Learning provides a more interactive educational experience, with the use of technology the opportunity to communicate and learn through messages, videos, video conferences, chats, web content, platforms make education more attractive and innovative, leaving aside what is traditional.

Disadvantages

- Technology can be more challenging than helpful: One of the key issues is technological literacy, which can be a real problem for teachers. Not all digital resources are trustworthy and easy to use.

- Blended learning makes teachers work too hard: There is a lot of additional work for teachers involved in all stages of blended learning. They need to broaden their horizons, choose the most suitable curriculum, and spend much more time and effort to find the right balance between online and face-to-face learning. Unfortunately, not everyone is willing to do so.

- Students may also experience cognitive load: With a wide variety of possibilities provided by the blended learning model, teachers can start to go overboard with activities and educational content.

- Source credibility and plagiarism become an even bigger problem: Having a digital-friendly educational environment can cause more plagiarism from online resources. Additionally, there are a number of unreliable online resources that present false or misrepresented facts.

Blended Learning Strategies in English

Within the strategies for teaching the English language with blended learning, several playful options arise that are part of the planning of each one of the teachers, choosing the most appropriate for each educational level in order to develop cognitive skills based on the use of technological tools.

Applied Educational Systems (2022) ensures that, the most applicable strategies in the blended learning methodology for teaching the English language are:

- Use various types of instructional materials: this considers that traditional educational models should be complemented with the support of technological tools in terms of material and tasks. That is, the teacher can use notebooks, pictures, among others and be able to complement this knowledge with songs, work links, etc.
- Several types of evaluations: the teacher has the possibility of evaluating the students in various ways, whether they are in the classroom or through some technological resource that the student can use from home, such as sending an audio.
- Mix work styles: This strategy focuses more on communication and interaction virtually or in person to generate collective knowledge among students.

These strategies contribute to students having a higher level of motivation, because taking them out of their comfort zones contributes to the development of reading, writing, listening comprehension and oral expression skills. In addition, blended learning as an educational strategy considers that interaction is the path to success.

TEYL Stages and Approaches

In order to know the theories of stages and approaches, it is necessary to take into account one of the greatest influencers of cognitive theory, such as Jean Piage, who argued that "the cognitive development of children occurs in stages" (Papalia & Feldman, 2011, p. 4). In the same way, it is relevant to mention Kieran Egan, explains how "cognitive development occurs in the child to the extent that he achieves greater sophistication in the use of language, which allows him to gradually make his way of understanding the world more complex, in ways that he calls understandings, which are associate tools" (Matte, 2018, p. 5). Moreover, to Curtain and Dahlberg who contemplate the benefits of teaching and learning a second language. "Learning another language can enhance knowledge of English structure and vocabulary" (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004, p. 3).

Citing Piaget's (1963) stages of child development, Egan's (1997) layers of educational development, and Curtain and Dahlberg's (2016) approaches for teaching a foreign language cited by Open & Mason (2022) the stages and approaches are shown in TEYL in Table 1.

Table 1

Stages and approaches

Age	Stages of congnitive development Piaget (1963)	Layers of education development Egan (1992)	Approach to teaching a Foreing Language Curtain and Dahlberg (2016)
2-4 years old	**Preoperational Stage (2-7)** - Are extremely - Egocentric. - Develop memory and imagination. - Do not think logically.	**The Mythic Layer (4-5 to 9-10)** - Vivid imaginations (animals can talk, magic is real). - Are very emotional and focus on how they fell.	**Preschool Students (2-4)** - Absorb languages effortlessly. - Adopted imitators of speech sounds. - Self centered, do not work well in groups. - Respond well to concrete experiences - and large motor involvement in language learning.
5-7 years old			**Primary Students (5-7)** - Learn best with concrete experiences and immediate goals. - Learn new concepts and vocabulary better when presented as pairs of binary opposites. - Like to name objects, define words, and

			learn about things in their own world. - Learning through oral language; can develop good oral skills, pronunciation, and intonation with good models.
7-11 years old	**Concrete Operations Stage (7-11)** - Show intelligence through logical and organized thought related to concrete objects. - Can reverse their thinking through reasoning,	**TheRomantic Layer (8-9 to 14-15)** - Begin to separate the world around them from their internal world; developing a sense of their own identity. - Like learning about special qualities that overcome the frightening world (courage, genius, ambition, energy, creativity) - Like collecting things (stamps, or amazing facts about a country). - Story form still important with emphasis on	**Intermediate Students (8-10)** - Begin to understand cause and effect. - Can work well in groups; may not like to partner with opposite sex. - Need context for language learning; can bring together vocabulary and functional chunks learned in earlier years and can apply them in more complex situations.

		realistic detail and real life heroes and heroines.	
11 and up	**Formal Operational Stage (11 and up)** - Show intelligence through logical use of symbols related to abstract concepts. - Can hypothesize & use deductive reasoning.		**Early Adolescent Students** **(11 and up)** - Are undergoing major development changes on widely differing timetables. - Need encouragement to develop positive self image. - Respond well to opportunities to learn in exhaustive detail about subjects that interest them.

7. METHODOLOGY

Research Method

This research project has a qualitative approach since the objective is to describe the perceptions of English teachers regarding the Blended Learning in EFL methodology in the post-pandemic. Pathak et al. (2013) mention that "the qualitative method is used to understand the beliefs, experiences, perceptions, attitudes, behavior and interactions of people, generating non-numerical data". Also, Cresswell (2012) ensures that, "qualitative research is based more on the opinions of the study participants" (p.16).

Research Context

This investigation is carried out at the public institution Isidro Ayora School, in the urban area of Latacunga INEC: 0501. It is located in Cotopaxi Province in La Matriz Parish at Quijano y Ordoñez 314, in the San Francisco neighborhood. This institution offers an educational level from initial to EGB, with its face-to-face modality and its two evening and morning groups. It has 65 teachers, in different academic areas with a total of 3 English in the morning session.

For this research, the coordinator of the English area with 12 years of experience working with 4th and 5th grade (Intermediate Students) children is taken into account. Also, one of the teachers who works with 6th and 7th grade (Early Adolescent Students) with 14 years of experience and a master's degree in Linguistics Applies to Teaching the English Language.

In addition, in this case the school worked with a mixed modality, because the students who at that time did not have internet access came to the institution for their worksheets and instruction by the teachers and they combined virtuality with face-to-face periods of time.

Data collection

The data was collected with open interviews to 2 teachers of the English area, who were in person within the institution in order to know their opinions regarding the blended learning modality, and their activities to promote the English language teaching in post-pandemic. Furthermore, to carry out the interview, an informed consent was adapted, which was read, accepted and signed by the participants, and the audios of the interviews were transcribed verbatim.

Also, for the interpretation of data, narrative analysis was used. Harappa (2021) explains that "narrative analysis is a form of qualitative research in which the research focuses on a topic and analyzes the data collected from interviews, observations or

other similar methods. Researchers write down their findings, then review and analyze them" (p. 3). Furthermore, according to Creswell (2012), a narrative research study must be consistent with the criteria for a qualitative study. In a narrative study, the following are guidelines that a researcher might consider when assessing the quality of the study. The problem was then identified, 2 participants were selected, the history was collected to analyze the participants' arguments, and the data was analyzed.

In addition, for the analysis and discussion, the following coding of the participants is carried out in order to differentiate them within the context of the investigation.

Table 2

Participants coding

CODE	MEANING	OBSERVATION
Teacher 1	Teacher English	Coordinator área Intermediate Students' Teacher
Teacher 2	Teacher English	Early Adolescent Students' Teacher

8. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

To answer the research question about teachers' experiences and perceptions we identified main arguments related to Blended Learning in the pandemic, in the post-pandemic and Blended Learning as a teaching method in EFL. Teachers' anwers were compared since they work with students of different educational levels– Intermediate and the Early Adolescent Students

Blended Learning in the pandemic

Teacher 1 is a teacher who teaches fourth and fifth grade. She describes what education was like at school during the pandemic. In this first anecdote, she discussed how blended teaching is essentially effective teaching. From her point of view, one cannot be a good teacher, without being aware of and responding to multiple needs on multiple levels.

> *Sabe que, si ganó fuerza debido a la pandemia, blended fue la metodología que más se utilizó y se dio a conocer. Se sabe que era blended porque en muchas de las ocasiones los padres se acercaban a la escuela a retirar las fichas de actividades semanales para sus hijos y reforzabamos esos conocimientos en base a las sesiones virtuales con los estudiantes en las plataformas disponibles para los niños. Esta modalidad fue muy eficiente ya que gracias al uso de la tecnología no dejamos de enseñar y los procesos educativos no se vieron frenados en su totalidad. Tuvimos ciertas incertidumbres en cuanto a la tecnología y que no estábamos del todo capacitados para emprender con una educación en línea, el gobierno lo estableció por el bien de todos y considero que esos años escolares fueron de verdad una de los retos más grandes que tuvo la educación, pues nadie pensó en que una pandemia nos cambiaría tanto las perspectivas de enseñar y buscar recursos que ayuden a nuestros estudiantes.* [You know that if it gained strength due to the pandemic, blended was the methodology that was used the most and became known. It is known that it was blended because on many occasions the parents went to the school to pick up the weekly worksheets activities for their children and we reinforced that knowledge based on virtual sessions with the students on the platforms available to the children. This modality was very efficient since thanks to the use of technology we did not stop teaching and the educational processes were not completely slowed down. We had certain uncertainties regarding technology and that we were not fully qualified to undertake an online education, the government established it for the good of all and, I consider that those school years were truly one of the biggest challenges that the education, because no one thought that a pandemic would change our perspectives of teaching and looking for resources to help our students so much]

Teacher 2 teaches sixth and seventh grade (Early Adolescent Students). In the interview he had a similar criteria regarding education in the pandemic.

> *Si, yo considero que si tomó fuerza porque fue la modalidad que más se utilizó durante la pandemia como para no dejar de enseñar en momentos difíciles, esos procesos educativos con*

esa modalidad aportaron mucho en la efectividad del conocimiento de los estudiantes. Recuerdo que el ministerio junto con las autoridades competentes del estado establecieron esta modalidad y en la escuela nos llegó un comunicado y pues decidimos avanzar para el bien de toda la comunidad educativa. En la pandemia puedo acotar que mis niños trabajaban de manera autónoma con las fichas de actividades que se llamaban en ese entonces y nos veíamos una hora de clase por zoom con cada grupo, acorde al horario o a su vez los niños que no podían me llamaban y se igualaban las tareas. Fue difícil hasta acostumbrarnos y buscar las herramientas más apropiadas para que ellos puedan aprender, pero si fue una forma de trabajo mixta que se ajustaba a las necesidades de enseñar mediante la tecnología y nuestro apoyo pedagógico, incluso con ayuda hasta de los padres de familia que en ese tiempo tuvieron un rol fundamental en la educación durante la pandemia, ellos ayudaron y aportaron mucho gracias a su preocupación. [Yes, I consider that it did gain strength because it was the modality that was used the most during the pandemic so as not to stop teaching in difficult times, those educational processes with this modality contributed a lot to the effectiveness of student knowledge. I remember that the ministry together with the competent authorities of the state established this modality and at the school we received a statement and we decided to move forward for the good of the entire educational community. In the pandemic I can state that my children worked autonomously with the activities worksheets that were called at that time and we would see each other for an hour in class by zoom with each group, according to the schedule or in turn, the children who could not call me and tasks were matched. It was difficult until we got used to it and looked for the most appropriate tools for them to learn, but it was a mixed way of working that adjusted to the needs of teaching through technology and our pedagogical support, even with the help of parents who at that time they played a fundamental role in education during the pandemic, they helped and contributed a lot thanks to their concern.]

In comparison of the answers, the teachers have a similarity of thoughts regarding the time of the pandemic, taking into account Zamarro et al. (2021) "The 2020-2021 academic year was unlike any other, after school closures across the country" (p. 1). Education changes and adopts a security measure, so schools and colleges are forced to continue learning. These adaptations focused on virtuality.

Zamarro et al. (2021) teachers had to adapt to unexpected conditions, teaching in unprecedented ways, using instruction in different forms of work with different levels, while also being challenged to make connections with students, families, and

colleagues. Cepal (2020) in the field of education, many of the measures that countries adopted at all levels have given rise to three main lines of action: the deployment of mix modalities through a variety of formats and platforms, the support and the mobilization of educational staff and communities, and concern for the general health and well-being of students. "To demonstrate that these types of understanding have developed during evolution in a certain sequence, merging with each other to a great extent (though not completely) as each type has successively appeared" (Egan, 2016).

Blended learning in post-pandemic

In the second question, Teacher 1 told another story specifically about what education was like after the pandemic.

> *Pues todo vuelve a tener un proceso de aprendizaje, las transiciones son cambios que uno puede ver notablemente después de la pandemia, como la flexibilidad y la comunicación. Tras la pandemia, nos ajustamos y adaptamos incluso a nuevos recursos didácticos, ya no es únicamente buscar información, ahora ya depende mucho también lo que se utiliza para enseñar, es decir el material didáctico presencial y los recursos en línea que puedes aplicar como para que ellos sigan el hilo del aprendizaje, es por eso que todavía se mantiene el blended como aporte en la educación, eso sí nos ayuda ful. Con experiencia propia le digo que eso de la modalidad combinada es un aporte bueno, en la pandemia enviabamos tareas, información, fichas de actividades y ahora lo seguimos haciendo porque son cosas que sirven en la actualidad para los niños y nosotros.* [Well, everything has a learning process again, transitions are changes that one can noticeably see after the pandemic, such as flexibility and communication. After the pandemic, we adjusted and even adapted to new teaching resources, it is no longer just looking for information, now a lot also depends on what is used to teach, that is, the face-to-face teaching material and the online resources that you can apply so that they follow the thread of learning, that is why blended is still maintained as a contribution to education, that does help us a lot. With my own experience, I tell you that the combined modality is a good contribution, in the pandemic we sent tasks, information, activity sheets and now we continue to do so because they are things that are currently useful for children and us.]

In comparison of answers with Teacher 2, it is argued that the post-pandemic is a new educational challenge that they face.

La nueva realidad educativa en la pos pandemia si es un nuevo reto incluso hasta ahora en la pos pandemia, porque si bien es cierto aun seguimos con secuelas de la pandemia y los estilos y modalidades que utilizamos. Hace un tiempo atrás, usted conoce que nosotros trabajabamos de lunes a miércoles presencial y los jueves y viernes virtual, porque es una transición fuerte que requiere tiempo hasta volver a tener una supuesta normalidad .Yo hablo por mi, pero nos ha costado un poco la enseñanza y aprendizaje en base a esta modalidad combinada, si es una transición bien grande que tienen los niños y nosotros, como le digo ya el material también entra en esto de la pos pandemia, necesitamos incorporar nuevas cosas, imágenes en el aula, carteles y todo en dependencia de los niños y su nivel de conocimiento para que no les estemos perjudicando en nada e incluso los grupos y links que se vean en referencia a lo que el niño debe aprender. [The new educational reality in the post-pandemic is a new challenge even so far in the post-pandemic, because although it is true, we still continue with the consequences of the pandemic and the styles and modalities that we use. Some time ago, you know that we worked from Monday to Wednesday in person and on Thursdays and Fridays virtually, because it is a strong transition that requires time until we return to a supposed normality. I speak for myself, but it has cost us a bit. teaching and learning based on this combined modality, if it is a very big transition that the children and we have, as I already told you, the material also enters into this post-pandemic thing, we need to incorporate new things, images in the classroom, posters and all depending on the children and their level of knowledge so that we are not harming them at all and even the groups and links that are seen in reference to what the child must learn.]

According to the English teachers' answers, a contrast of ideas is reached without much difference, since both, despite the distinction of their educational levels in which they teach, perceive post-pandemic education as a challenge. The arguments told perceive these changes as transitions of time, material, space and place in education. McGrath et al. (2021) said that the post pandemic has changed many ideas about teaching and learning in education, more than a year has passed later, and there are still teachers who continue to teach, supervise and evaluate through digital means to streamline educational processes. As Lemay (2021) opines, the transition to online learning after the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers and students faced a transitional change in teaching and learning to develop successful interventions and correct learning deficits. Kauffman (2015) ensures that students and teachers perceive the blended methodology

as a different way to return to school, they consider that they are educational processes of adaptation.

Regarding the technological resources that continue to be part of the teaching by these professors, Egan (2016) states that teaching planning can be structured or guided, through the principles of learning and vary according to the type of understanding of the people or groups. Moreover, Early Adolescent Students and Intermediate Students they worked synchronously and asynchronously through the technology and established activity sheets because according to Curtain and Dahlberg (2016) "students in ages 4th to 7th grade, as was the case of teachers who taught, they respond well to learning opportunities in exhaustive detail about the topics that interest them and you understand their cause and effect" (p. 1).

Blended Learning as a teaching method in EFL

The perceptions that are presented to be compared have blended learning approaches for teaching English as a foreign language. Teacher 1 began her story of what it is like to teach, so she takes different aspects into account.

> *Es una pregunta buena, ¿sabe por qué? porque hoy en día se enfocan en cómo aprenden los niños pero no como enseñan los maestros, el rol de nosotros los profesores ya no es pasivo ni tradicional en las aulas como hace tiempos atrás como por ejemplo; en el tiempo de nuestros abuelitos. Creería que una de las cosas principales de enseñar es mantener la motivación de los estudiantes, y una planificación correcta, porque nosotros somos los encargados de hacer que ellos aprendan el idioma. Entonces en mi forma de pensar, ellos al igual que nosotros necesitan estar motivados en cuanto a las actividades, recursos y adaptaciones que esta modalidad requiere. Ahora estamos en un entorno más interactivo con los niños y los docentes desde que regresamos a la presencialidad después de vivir una pandemia junto con nuevas formas de enseñar mediante lo que son recursos tecnológicos.* [It's a good question, do you know why? Because today they focus on how children learn but not how teachers teach. The role of us teachers is no longer passive or traditional in the classroom as it was in the past, for example; in the time of our grandparents. I would think that one of the main things in teaching is to keep the students motivated, and correct planning, because we are the ones in charge of

making them learn the language. So in my way of thinking, they, like us, need to be motivated in terms of the activities, resources and adaptations that this modality requires. Now we are in a more interactive environment with children and teachers since we returned to face-to-face after experiencing a pandemic along with new ways of teaching through technological resources.]

Teacher 2 in his account of what it is like to teach refers to what education is like now.

Que puedo decir, la educación actualmente es diferente porque, con esta forma de enseñar cubrimos las necesidades de los estudiantes mediante la tecnología y recursos modernos junto a lo tradicional de las aulas. Antes los niños solo podían vernos en la escuela pero, después de la pandemia osea ahora, ellos ya tienen comunicación directa con nosotros, gracias a la tecnología y la comunicación que se crea con ella mediante grupos o así llamadas y hasta mensajes para saber qué es lo que tienen que hacer y no atrasarse. Por ejemplo; antes de la pandemia no utilizabamos mucho la tecnología porque ya se llamaba al padre de familia únicamente por comunicados y en ocasiones los niños perdían el papel de comunicado y era algo complejo. Actualmente ya el profesor tiene la potestad de comunicarse directamente y eso ya es distinto, hasta para enseñar ya una mismo se envía cosas y no somos tan tradicionales obviamente eso requiere una planificación y una adaptación previa para continuar pero si que se ha venido haciendo y es bueno. [What can I say, education is currently different because, with this way of teaching, we cover the needs of students through technology and modern resources together with the traditional classrooms. Before, the children could only see us at school but, after the pandemic, that is, now, they already have direct communication with us, thanks to technology and the communication that is created with it through groups or so-called and even messages to find out what it is. What they have to do and not fall behind. For example; before the pandemic, we did not use technology much because the father of the family was already called only by communication and sometimes the children lost the communication paper and it was something complex. Currently, the teacher already has the power to communicate directly and that is already different, even to teach one already sends things and we are not so traditional, obviously that requires prior planning and adaptation to continue, but it has been done and it is good.]

The answers obtained do not differ in their entirety. The teachers facilitated the knowledge of their students by making use of the same activities and strategies through the use of technology as support for face-to-face and the didactic resources used in class. Considering Commonwealth (2019), the growth of blended learning is

considered new and attractive to teach. Well, this is different and prepares students to learn and become global citizens of the 21st century in mediation with teachers and their knowledge. In addition, Horizons (2023) ensures that the role of the teacher in blended learning is not only a facilitator of knowledge, but also a provider of information on the well-being of students. This change does not mean that the teacher plays a passive or less important role in the training of students. In contrast, with blended learning, teachers have the power to influence and have a deeper effect on communication and interaction.

Blended learning is a methodology that integrates technology into EFL teaching processes. Lemay (2021) "teachers and students can perform differently in different modalities, and even in some cases they can perform better in online or blended learning environments" In such a way, that the adaptations must correspond to the educational reality in which they find each other. Reynosa et al. (2021) "adaptation is essential to transform the school paradigm for a relevant education" In blended learning after the pandemic, as Howart et al. (2006) the adaptation serves to modify how a learning experience is developed, with the aim of improving the success and satisfaction of each student.

Considering that it is a new way of teaching, Teacher 1 also refers to the activities and strategies that he uses with middle-level students, combining his face-to-face resources with technology to improve the level of understanding of the learners.

Honestamente, le comento que en entorno a las actividad que se utiliza en clases son variadas y depende del grupo con el que esté trabajando, de lunes a viernes mi horario es alternado con cuartos y quintos grados. No tengo uno solo en específico. Los aprendizajes en línea con actividades y tutoriales de youtube, juegos, worksheets, se han vuelto mis estrategias en cuanto a los deberes, siempre refuerzo mis temas de clase con esto. Solo en la casa, porque pedirles que impriman o que traigan algún material si es bien complicado con los pequeños, nunca traen todos, se atrasan, se olvidan y mejor yo hago material didáctico que ellos ven en clase y ya reforzamos con algún link en especial para la casa. Yo me encargo de buscar la información

más clara posible, porque siento que enseñar a muchos niños, porque son 45, uh…, siempre se distraen entonces, en su casa ellos ya pueden ver el video y como que entienden mejor al estar sin tantas personas y en un espacio cómodo, entonces por ejemplo; una actividad es ver el video y la otra es responder unas preguntas en base al video, que no son complicadas estas son acorde a su nivel de conocimientos y así ya tengo una calificación y le cuento que no les ha ido del todo mal cuando hacen eso, y para asegurarme les pregunto en la clase lo mismo del video pero con otras preguntas similares. Incluso ellos me envían audios, fotografías, mensajes que yo califico sin problemas. [Honestly, I would like to tell you that the activities used in classes are varied and it depends on the group you are working with. From Monday to Friday my schedule alternates with fourth and fifth grade. I don't have a specific one. Online learning with YouTube activities and tutorials, games, worksheets, have become my homework strategies. I always reinforce my class topics with this. Only at home, why ask them to print or bring some material if it is very complicated with the little ones, they never bring all of it, they get late, they forget and better I make didactic material that they see in class and we already reinforce it with a special link for the House. I am in charge of looking for the clearest possible information, because I feel that teaching many children, because they are 45, uh..., they always get distracted so, at home they can already watch the video and they understand better being without so many people and in a comfortable space, then for example; one activity is to watch the video and the other is to answer some questions based on the video, which are not complicated and so I already have a grade and I tell them that it has not gone badly for them when they do that, and to make sure I ask them in the class the same as the video but with other similar questions. They even send me audios, photographs, and messages that I qualify for without problems.]

Unlike teacher number 2 who tells us about their strategies and activities, these do not differ much, because the same resources are used and they only change their level of knowledge instructed for Early Adolescent Students'.

Una actividad muy recurrente en mi enseñanza con los niños es aprender un tema de clase por ejemplo; personal pronouns, ellos ven conmigo la temática y luego yo les envio un archivo para que revisen y puedan hacer la tarea, que no es mucho… máximo se hacen 5 oraciones tomando en cuenta la realia, es decir cosas reales del entorno del estudiante. Muchas de las veces también para no hacer las clases aburridas ellos traen hojas impresas que les envió con anterioridad para que puedan imprimir, con eso me ayuda el docente tutor de ellos quienes les califica que hayan traído y de igual forma yo les reviso. Con esto no he tenido problemas, porque ellos son ya más grandes y saben su responsabilidad de las tareas en clase. De ahí si

utilizo también videos, hojas de lecturas, links, documentos etc. para que mis estudiantes si aprendan y no le tengan miedo al inglés. [A very recurring activity in my teaching with children is learning a class topic for example; personal pronouns, they see the theme with me and then I send them a file so they can review and do the homework, which is not much... maximum 5 sentences are made taking into account the realia, that is, real things from the student's environment. Many times, also to avoid making the classes boring, they bring printed sheets that he sent them previously so that they can print, with that their tutor teacher helps me, who qualifies them for what they have brought and in the same way I review them. I have not had any problems with this, because they are older and know their responsibility for the tasks in class. Hence, I also use videos, reading sheets, links, documents, etc. so that my students do learn and are not afraid of English.]

Regarding the activities carried out by teachers, in the words of (Piaget', 1963, Egan's, 1997, Curtain and Dahlberg, 2016, as cited in Open & Mason, 2022) in The Romantic Layer activities, concrete operations are already carried out and intelligence is shown through logical thinking and an organized thought. They also relate objects with reasoning. On the other hand, the Early Adolescent Students experience a degree of development in schedule changes, they need encouragement to develop some activity and they respond well to opportunities for change with topics of interest to them. For this reason, there is a slight difference between teaching 4th and 5th graders and 6th and 7th graders. The same ones that the teacher mentioned in the interview regarding the activities and tasks to teach through blended learning.

Arabi (2014) states, the importance of class activities lies in their effectiveness to achieve learning results, create a more collaborative environment and improve student learning in a more practical way. Online content provides self-directed learning Commonwealth (2019) "resources and teachers continue to be a key part of blended learning". Wortham (2021) says that teachers need to make students "understand how they feel, where they need to go and how they can get there". And, how far they have come along the way, to feel good and not lose motivation for their progress. "The types of understanding have at least the virtue of revealing the characteristics of the thinking and learning of the students and the teaching of the teachers who have a prominent and powerful role in their lives through the appropriate strategies" (Egan, 2016).

As we learn more about language teaching, we know that maintaining an atmosphere in the target language is an important key to student learning and is an essential part of classroom instruction with different teaching methodologies. The central task for the language teacher is to create a focused and meaningful climate in communication and surround students with their new language regardless of the tools or strategies you use. Curtain & Dahlberg (2016).

9. RESEARCH IMPACTS

This research project has an educational impact with a theoretical contribution regarding the Blended Learning methodology. The work will allow teachers to become more interested in this methodology so that they can continue using it in the teaching of the English language.

10. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

- It is concluded that based on the experiences and perceptions reported by English teachers, blended learning in the post pandemic has given rise to new educational strategies to continue with the teaching-learning processes in EFL. Teachers see this methodology as a contribution that allows combining methods with technological resources for teaching. Likewise, according to the arguments and comparison, there is no notable difference in terms of blended learning and its teaching-learning levels between Intermediate Students and Early Adolescent Students, since teachers adapt and adjust their strategies and activities based on the needs of students according to their dependency on age and age knowledge.

Recommendation

- It is recommended to deepen the subject so that blended learning continues to be used for teaching the English language to develop the 4 skills progressively and successfully.

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12. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. Informed Consent

Universidad Técnica de cotopaxi
Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros
Extensión Pujilí

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

Fecha: _____

Yo _____, identificado con cédula de Identidad N°_____, declaro que he sido informado e invitado a participar en una investigación denominada "BLENDED LEARNING IN TEACHING ENGLISH", éste es un informe de investigación que cuenta con el respaldo de la Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi, previo a la obtención del título de Licenciado/a en Pedagogía de Lenguas Nacionales y Extranjeras (Inglés),

Entiendo que este estudio busca conocer *el motivo por el cual los docentes de inglés deciden continuar utilizando la modalidad combinada "Blended Learning" para impartir clases de inglés en la Escuela Isidro Ayora*, y sé que mi participación se llevará a cabo *en la ciudad de Latacunga en la Escuela Isidro Ayora*, y consistirá en responder una entrevista acorde al tema antes mencionado. Me han explicado que la información registrada será confidencial, y que los nombres de los participantes serán asociados a un número de serie o letra, esto significa que las respuestas no podrán ser conocidas por otras personas ni tampoco ser identificadas en la fase de publicación de resultados.

Estoy en conocimiento que los datos no me serán entregados y que no habrá retribución por la participación en este estudio, así que esta información podrá beneficiar de manera provechosa al autor y por lo tanto conozco y entiendo que también tiene un beneficio para la sociedad dada la investigación que se está llevando a cabo.

Asimismo, sé que puedo negar la participación o retirarme en cualquier etapa de la investigación, sin expresión de causa ni consecuencias negativas para mí.

Sí. Acepto voluntariamente participar en este estudio y he recibido una copia del presente documento.

Firma participante:

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

Fecha: 21 de Diciembre 2022

Yo _____, identificado con cédula de Identidad N° _____ declaro que he sido informado e invitado a participar en una investigación denominada "BLENDED LEARNING IN TEACHING ENGLISH", éste es un informe de investigación que cuenta con el respaldo de la Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi, previo a la obtención del título de Licenciado/a en Pedagogía de Lenguas Nacionales y Extranjeras (Inglés).

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Asimismo, sé que puedo negar la participación o retirarme en cualquier etapa de la investigación, sin expresión de causa ni consecuencias negativas para mi.

Sí. Acepto voluntariamente participar en este estudio y he recibido una copia del presente documento.

Firma participante:

APPENDIX 2. Interview Guide

Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi
Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros
Extensión Pujilí

GUÍA DE ENTREVISTA

DATOS INFORMATIVOS

Entrevistador: …………………………..   Entrevistado: …………………..................

Fecha: ………………………………...........   Lugar: …………………………............

1. ¿Podría usted hablarme de su información personal, es decir información relacionada con su nombre, género, lugar de residencia etc?

2. ¿Podría usted hablarme acerca de su vida profesional como docente de inglés??

3. ¿Cree usted que la modalidad Blended Learning tomó fuerza debido a la pandemia?

4. ¿De qué manera ha sentido el proceso y la transición del regreso a clases es decir la post- pandemia?

5. ¿Desde su punto de vista considera que blended learning es una manera distinta de enseñar y aprender entre docentes y estudiantes?

6. ¿Cómo promueve el blended learning en sus procesos de enseñanza?

7. ¿Ha tenido dificultades o limitaciones para enseñar mediante esta modalidad?

8. ¿Podría usted mencionar cuál ha sido la influencia de la metodología blended para la enseñanza del idioma inglés después de la pandemia?