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FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

**“LEI student perceptions about the English language learning
experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the
COVID-19 pandemic”**

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“LEI student perceptions about the English language learning experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic”

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Dedications

To the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, my second home since 2017, because it is my alma mater and it gave me incredible people, experiences, money, and knowledge, among many other things, so forever BUAP in my heart and forever grateful.

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Dedications

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Abstract

This research project was conducted to determine LEI student perceptions about the English language learning experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic . The data collected was from 13 students pursuing a bachelor's degree in teaching English from the Faculty of Languages, BUAP. The participants were 21 and 30 years old. A descriptive qualitative method was used to answer the research questions. As a result, online classes were negatively affected during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The results indicated that students prefer face-to-face classes to online classes. In addition, these results showed that students feel more comfortable and motivated with courses within the school classroom with a teacher in front of the group because there is more significant interaction between teacher and student. Thus, learning turns out to be more effective. Therefore, it is suggested to continue with this study because ways to increase positive interaction between teachers and students during online classes could be investigated so that teachers improve and students develop academically more effectively; this could be done with a mixed study in which both students and teachers participate.

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Chapter I

1.1. Background

There are three modes of teaching: face-to-face education, which refers to when students have to attend their schools to receive teacher-student classes in a classroom; as well as hybrid education, which is a blended model because the student conducts their activities inside and outside of a classroom and finally the combined modality, which examines whether students addressed school or take their online classes. That study pointed out that although Online learning became popular due to the pandemic, it was not at all a new concept. It was defined as learning by utilizing devices such as laptops, smartphones, and an internet connection (Gonzalez & Louis, 2018, as cited in Septi, 2020).

Currently, due to the pandemic caused by COVID-19, schools were forced to change their teaching modality from face-to-face to online classes, where teachers have had to find different tools to teach students effectively so that they will be able to comply with the objectives of their study plan. For this reason, both teachers and students found it necessary to use new technologies. “Online learning is delivered synchronously or asynchronously” (Plaisance, 2018, as was cited in Septi, 2020, p. 233). There are tools such as Zoom and Google Meet which are only for videoconferencing; in this case, these tools are classified as synchronous classes because both teachers and students can have direct interaction, while applications such as Classroom, Moodle belong to the asynchronous classes because they only work to do and send the tasks assigned by the teachers in a certain time where the teacher can assign a specific type of evaluation parameters or score to each task or activity.

Septi (2020) investigated pre-service English teachers’ beliefs, they had about the implementation of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a qualitative study

with a total of 9 participants, of which 7 were women and 2 were men university language teachers in Indonesia. In this study, both hindering factors in online learning were found, such as the low skills of teachers to teach online classes because many of them were not trained for this type of teaching method and lack of support. Also, facilitating factors such as good practices were observed, which can be possible with the combination of synchronous and asynchronous modes. For future research, prior teacher training is necessary to improve the teaching-learning process.

The author Nartiningrum (2020, p.115) talks about 45 EFL students' challenges, suggestions, and materials which students used during these online classes. This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach with a total of 45 participants, comprising 7 men and 38 women, from a private university in Malang, Indonesia. In this study, different problems were found, such as the instability of the bad internet connection and the little feedback that the students obtained from the teachers. To go further, it is necessary to get involved in other contexts.

The author Moayad (2012, p.2) explored the shift from traditional learning to online learning practices with a mixed-method study that analyzed the effectiveness and impact of the student's English interaction online. The 7th, 8th, and 9th-grade students from 100 public schools in Amman Jordan, participated in this study. The data was collected through surveys. The results showed that the influence of technology inside and outside the classroom affected student learning and that teachers who were better trained managed to use technology for student learning.

The authors Zboun and Farrah (2021, p.13) mention that "This study aimed to elicit students' perspectives towards benefits and challenges of fully online classes at Hebron University." In this study, the mixed method was used to learn about the perspectives that

students have about online learning and thus formulate alternatives to provide a possible solution for better learning. For this study, there were a total of 114 students, they were from the first year of the University of Hebron. The data were collected through questionnaires. The results showed that students do not like online classes; students prefer traditional classes because there is more interaction, motivation, and participation. After all, online learning is not as efficient, in addition to poor internet connection. For further research, it is necessary to conduct interviews with more students.

The author Montiel (2018, p. viii) tells us that “This study examined four classes, two online and two face-to-face, where students took the second course of a 6-level program of English as a Second Language at El Bosque University in Colombia.” In this study, a mixed method was used to collect data. In this study, 103 students from 4 classes participated, using the face-to-face modality and the online modality, from El Bosque University in Colombia. Data was collected through examinations. The results showed that students perform better through online classes due to the quick feedback students receive from their teachers.

Citing Ahmed (2020, p.16), “The study aimed to measure the perceptions of PY students, Najran University, and the impacts of the students’ perceptions on the use of Blackboard as the sole learning tool of English courses in the period of COVID-19”. For this study, the quantitative method was used. In this study, a total of 228 PY students from Najran University participated, all were from the second semester. The results showed that, according to the students’ perceptions, the use of Blackboard as a learning tool during the COVID pandemic showed a great impact. For some, it was positive, and for others, it was negative. Therefore, more support is needed to overcome deficiencies and thus improve online learning.

The author Nur Fitria (2020, p.138) tells us that “this study aimed at investigating the online learning system in teaching English, which included the institution's support related to the online learning system and the lecturers' opinion in using the online learning system.” In this study, the descriptive qualitative method was used. The participants in this study were 81 English teachers from some universities or colleges in different provinces of Indonesia. To collect the information for this study, questionnaires with open and closed questions were used. The result of this research was that the online learning system is good because it has the potential to help both teachers and students in the teaching-learning process.

According to Shazi and Ajay (2015, p.1) “The study is aimed at understanding the learning trends of students who opt for online language courses and to assess the effectiveness of the same.” The mixed method was used for data collection in this study. For this study, there were 53 participants from different cities in the United Arab Emirates. The information gathering was done through a questionnaire and interviews. And the results showed that the main problems students faced were a lack of support for speaking activities and a lack of the teacher's presence, because students consider that presence is always necessary for a better language learning process. For further research, it is necessary to place oneself in different contexts.

Juárez-Díaz (2020) did a study where she collected information about the experiences teachers were having in the new teaching modality, which was part of the adaptation to the conditions that emerged in the COVID-19 pandemic. She posed a suggestion to continue retrieving information in the pandemic, but now from the learners' voices. That led to a new study where preservice teachers and teachers in services shared their perspectives about the teaching and learning process with the teachers' resources and platforms selected to promote the language learning (Juárez-Díaz and Perales, 2021). Another study by Juárez-Díaz and

Hinojosa (2021) indicated there were unfavorable online learning experiences due to misunderstanding and lack of interaction, lack of explanation, lack of reinforcement, and feedback, which suggested that two vital elements of online teaching were missing: the cognitive and teacher presence.

In another study, Juárez-Díaz and Ojeda-Ruiz (2021) explore the factors that were affecting the amount of students' participation when taking the online classes. Finally, Juárez-Díaz et al., (2023) identified how both teachers and students got adapted to be online and adopted and modified the teaching approach that was implemented at the beginning of the confinement due to Covid pandemic-2019, they observed that some teachers, who had negative views towards online teaching used sophisticated approaches, while other teachers with complex views about being online did not them due to problems faced in their jobs and family. There was still a digital gap and students' dishonesty and disengagement in taking part in the online classes and homework elaboration, which negatively impacted in the teaching approaches. Despite being online for almost two years, the teaching conditions continued to be a challenge for both teachers and students.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Nowadays, the use of technology has expanded to reach a new term, which is called online learning. According to Arroyo et al. (2020, as was cited in Zboun & Farrah, 2021, p. 13), the COVID-19 pandemic, technology-mediated learning has a significant impact on the educational process. For this reason, as we all know, online learning is not a new term because, for a long time, thanks to advances in technology, these tools have been used for distance learning. However, this term has taken on greater importance in the last year due to the current pandemic.

Our interest in this topic was born due to the fact that since 2019, the COVID pandemic has caused various complications worldwide, triggering many problems in different areas. One of them is education, which has been one of the most affected. Due to this pandemic, it is estimated that more than a billion students cannot receive lessons from their schools or universities (Mondol & Mohiuddin, 2020, as was cited in Septi, 2020, p. 232). Our concern arises because, as we well know, in our country, there is not enough support for education, and we were uncertain about how the process of teaching students would be managed. However, teachers found it necessary to adapt to new teaching tools for student learning.

In this case, we are going to focus on the LEI students' perceptions about the language learning experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, online education does not allow the same interaction between teacher and student. Afounch et al. (2020, as cited in Ahmed, 2020, p. 17) stated that the adoption of online learning during the crisis had its disadvantages, which demotivated students to learn online via LMSs. As we well know, despite living in a technologically advanced world, we well know that not all students have an electronic device, they do not have enough storage space, or they also do not have internet service. Apart from this, it was very noticeable that the overload of tasks for students was greater; that is, some students only worried about handing in assignments, but not about their learning. However, the problems mentioned above are only for the technical part, but Dhawan (2020, as was cited in Ahmed, 2020, p. 17) stated that many students also faced psychological problems during the crisis. There were stress, fear, anxiety, depression, and insomnia that led to a lack of focus and concentration. For this reason, these were some of the determining factors for the permanence or desertion of students in schools.

Furthermore, this research will collect and contribute ideas in the future so that teachers can use this research to improve student learning. In addition, another reason is that this research will demonstrate the effectiveness of learning in this modality which has taken on a very important popularity because students must have a good learning in the English language as a second language because it is a Universal language and widely used in international settings that has many opportunities both professionally and personally.

1.3. Objectives

1.3.1. General objective:

To identify LEI student perceptions about the language learning experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3.2. Specific objectives:

To distinguish LEI student language learning experiences during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in Online Classes.

To analyze LEI student perceptions regarding their language learning experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.4. Research questions

Due to the COVID pandemic, thousands of students were forced to take their classes in an online modality, and for that reason, there were many problems to face. Considering this information, it raises the following questions:

General questions

What are LEI students' perceptions about the language learning experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Specific research questions

1. What did LEI students experience when learning English in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What do they think about learning English during the confinement in Online Classes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?

1.5. Significance of the study

It is important to do this study because the results will help other teachers or people to take pertinent measures for better learning a second language in an online modality in case there are deficiencies. There are some studies on LEI student perceptions about the language learning experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, but currently, with the topic of the COVID pandemic, we consider that it is important to resume research on this topic to continue developing these kinds of studies. In addition, it will be helpful for future students who have an interest in the subject because during this pandemic, thousands of students were affected, and it could generate uncertainties. However, teachers who are trying to find solutions for better student learning can take this information into consideration in their classes.

1.6. Keywords

The COVID-19 pandemic “is an ongoing global pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)” (Wikipedia, 2020).

Online learning “is a method of education whereby students learn in a fully virtual environment” (Top Hat, s.f.).

Chapter II. Literature review

2.1 Importance of English as a foreign language

English language has become a world language; many people speak it more frequently. As a result, there are different varieties of English worldwide, which have different pronunciations and ways of using them, which are important and clearly understandable. (Broughton, 1980).

Notably, we can see that there are different types of English. For that reason, when we watch movies, listen to music, travel, and interact with people from other places, we realize that English has a lot of variety in its language.

There are two English types: the first one is the mother tongue (MT), which is spoken in the USA or Australia, and the second one is English as a second language (SL), which is used in administrative and educational institutions (Broughton et al., 1980). From this point, this study will focus on situations of English as a second language because, here in Mexico, this language has a great influence today. After all, we use it in academic work situations and even in our daily lives to be able to communicate, interact, and understand different things.

English as a second language is used in newspapers, radio, television, government, educational, commercial, and industrial organizations (Broughton et al., 1980). It is evident that both learning and knowing how to master the English language as a second language is very fundamental because it is like the key to good development in the social or economic aspect at a national and international level. For this reason, the role of English within a nation's daily life has an impact due to territorial, trustworthy, traditional, and governmental elements, not all of which are unchangeable (Broughton et al., 1980). Therefore, each person

who learns the English language as a second language has different purposes and also the resulting impact, development or growth will be different in each person's life.

As expressed above, English is important as a foreign language because each person learns the language for their own goals, whether on a personal or professional level, apart from the fact that English is a language spoken worldwide level, and it is very important.

2.2 Online learning

We are currently experiencing a difficult time in the COVID-19 pandemic, where the educational system changed from a face-to-face modality to a virtual modality; therefore, learning is now through an electronic device in order to receive online learning. According to Carliner (2004) Online learning is described as the study and other support media that can be accessed through electronic equipment.

As we all know, technology is becoming more popular every day and makes things easier for us in many aspects of our lives because we can find a large amount of information and resources for our education and other things. Hence, computers can provide a lot of permissiveness and diversity, producing online learning unstable and adaptable, as well (Carliner, 2004).

There are different ways for students to learn, mediated by technology. They are online and distance learning. It is important to mention that it is different from Online Learning as Distance Learning because distance learning is found in any educational situation in which the teacher and learners are apart by time and place (Carliner, 2004). In this case, this study focuses on online learning, because it is a measure that was implemented so that thousands of students can continue their education due to the security measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Currently, for both teachers and learners who had to change from a face-to-face to a completely online modality at some point, we have thought about whether virtual education is more effective than face-to-face education in a classroom. According to Carliner (2004) some authors maintain that online learning is more effective because more senses are involved, which means that the retention of the material is higher.

To summarize, online learning is a way in which students can continue taking their classes through an electronic device with the help of the Internet. In this case, it is a security measure due to the COVID pandemic.

2.1.1. Psychological factors necessary for learning.

In education, it seems that only students and teachers are the protagonists in this area. However, the social part, the family environment, among others, are also a fundamental part of education in the process of student learning (Pastor, 1998, as cited in Iglesias & Vera, 2010)

2.2.1.1. Motivation

Motivation is an internal state that can accelerate the development of the student's learning process. This term has become very important in psychological research because it is one of the factors that helps people to conduct or continue with some activity, and thus, it is possible to finish it, and both the person and the activity can be successful and satisfying (Huhtanen, 2019).

According to the Self-Determination Theory, developed by American psychologists Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (2000), all human beings have a set of innate psychological needs whose satisfaction is the objective of human labor (Huhtanen, 2019).

That is, motivation is a very important factor when starting an activity in which human beings want to be successful, and therefore, it is something that we use to satisfy our innate psychological needs.

According to Deci and Ryan (as cited in Huhtanen, 2019, p. 5), there are three innate needs:

1. Autonomy refers to the way in which we do things by ourselves without someone else's limitations.
2. Competence refers to the way people succeed in the tasks they do.
3. Relatedness refers to the union or connection between two or more people or things.

These are the main innate needs so that motivation is maintained for a long period of time and thus learners are encouraged to do some activity. They must be motivated, and for that reason, motivation must be promoted internally. That is, with those three innate needs, we must create a set so that there is a combination, and the motivation can be maintained, and the students feel satisfied with the results.

2.2.1.2. Memory

Memory is not a storage safe. According to the theory of education developed by the psychologist Jean Piaget in the 20th century, people build connections to be able to remember things more easily and effectively (Huhtanen, 2019).

Information is a very important part of the memorization aspect. Students must learn to process the information that they are receiving from the teacher and must make a connection with the new information and with what they have learned previously in past classes or lessons so that students can remember the information in an easier way. The construction of this knowledge is known as mental models because, in this way, we are active when we are

remembering the information and we not only store by storing the information (Huhtanen, 2019).

The construction of knowledge can be developed in a better way with interaction, that is, in a social environment, so that memorization would be reflected more easily (Huhtanen, 2019).

2.2.1.3. Attention

Attention is important because it is the part where the students have the information at their fingertips, but they only have to rescue a certain part, that is, the most important thing, which is most helpful to them. But it is a bit difficult because in the learning process, normally our attention takes more importance by nature towards things that are in action, towards what is large, very colorful, or noisy, something that draws our attention more (Huhtanen, 2019).

The attention is focused on experiences that we have had, and this helps us to learn more things in which we were previously familiar, because we already had a certain notion, it is not something new. This makes it easier to focus on particular things, and this way is known as the priming effect (Huhtanen, 2019).

A learning environment must be diverse and determined on important factors in order to capture the attention of students. (Huhtanen, 2019)

Because the attention span that human beings have is 15 to 20 minutes, for that reason students get bored or stop paying attention in presentations or lectures that have a long duration.

2.2.1.4. Emotions

Thought can be considered as if it were divided into two parts or two systems, that is, when we react to a situation intuitively or quickly, that is, we do not put as much

concentration. However, the other way is slow, that is, when we analyze the situation more, because there is greater concentration (Huhtanen, 2019).

Normally, human beings are used to fast thinking because it is something we do daily; however, to learn more complicated things, we must think more consciously and even then, we can feel more secure because we do not act on impulse and by feeling safe the learning process is easier to acquire (Huhtanen, 2019).

2.2.2. Components of online learning.

Components are important because knowledge, skills, and basic learning methods are related. Each learning has a result, for which it is essential to know their internal and external situations to encourage the different types of acquisition of their knowledge and skills (Buzzetto, 2007).

Due to the different types of learning outcomes, each student has their way of learning, their time and space; for that reason, as teachers, we must have different methods and ways to teach students because the conditions are different.

The learning objectives are related to the contents that are necessary and most appropriate for the teaching of students, this to achieve good performance and good content. According to Merrill (2011, as cited in Buzzetto, 2007), the use of instructional components must be effective, efficient, and attractive in directive tutorial material and environments for experiential learning.

This is because the approaches must be complementary and compatible (Buzzetto, 2007).

2.2.2.1. Creativity and motivation

Learning must include affective aspects and include strategies that are creative and innovative to capture the attention of the students, and that they are motivated so that

everything works well. Getting the attention of students in a class also means giving them a certain confidence so that they feel good about themselves, what they do, and feel safe. With motivation, it is also possible to maintain a certain commitment of the students.

The intellectual and affective operating environments of the brain are largely related (Price, 1998; Wager, 1998, as cited in Buzzetto, 2007).

For this reason, teachers should take advantage of this situation, that is, the cognitive-affective connection, because it is the time to motivate the students, because the motivation is very important, especially in the classroom, so that the students have a better development in their learning process.

Creativity in educational training produces creativity in students (De Villiers, 2005).

That is, when there is creativity at the time of teaching something new to the students, they lend more attention because their thinking is stimulated. It is essential to take into consideration that first, students have to learn to be participatory in the classes so that they interact with their classmates and then learn to use different technologies as support for their school activities, not vice versa (Buzzetto, 2007).

2.2.2.2 Customization

Customization refers to the way to adapt learning resources to the different needs and interests of students, considering different factors, for example: time, place, content, etc. (Buzzetto, 2007)

This means that educational resources with which teachers will teach some topic should serve several things; that is, they must adapt to each student, they must know their needs and interests to achieve success in the process of their learning. However, students must also have

their initiative; that is, they should consider the time, place, and content so that they are aware of their learning.

The personalization is according to each teaching situation; that is, in cognitive situations where constructivism applies, students have control over their learning because they can choose their activities, and so they can see their progress. However, constructivism is used according to the goals of each learner; in this way, learners can select the means of study content with which they prefer to work (Buzzetto, 2007).

2.2.2.3. Collaboration

Cooperative learning is described as a way to form a group of members where there is commitment so that everyone can efficiently and favorably meet the goals to be achieved.

The key elements of cooperative and collaborative learning are split objectives, positive interdependence, individual and linked accountability, communication capacity, interpersonal skills, learner empowerment, and suitable assessment (Johnson & Johnson, 1991, as cited in Buzzetto, 2007). Teamwork requires a lot of communication between all team members because it is a fundamental part of solving any problem that may arise during their school activities. On the other hand, in a team, members must perform to their different abilities; likewise, they can participate with their respective levels of cognition to contribute new ideas and be successful.

2.3. Social interaction in the online learning environment

We are currently experiencing a difficult stage in education because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The way of interaction in classes between teachers and students can be a frustrating factor for both because it is not the same to interact face to face in a classroom as to interact through a computer or telephone. “Social interaction refers to a reciprocal

relationship between two people or more” (Kožuh 2015, as cited in Lasfeto & Ulfa, 2020, p. 35). Based on Garrison and Anderson, there are four types of interactions in education, such as interaction between professor and learner, learner and learner, professor and content, and learners and content (as cited in Lasfeto & Ulfa, 2020).

According to them, it is important to maintain good interaction in all aspects since the success of the students' learning, the classes, and the satisfaction of the teachers depend on the four kinds of interaction, and their influence can be seen during and at the end of the classes and the course.

In the virtual educational environment, students have a fundamental role in achieving successful learning (Morris 1995 & Shaikh 2013 as cited in Lasfeto & Ulfa, 2020). This is because technology is already highly developed, and on the Internet, we can find different resources to improve learning. There is a lot of information available, including books, videos, tutorials, and different pages as a tool to help in the learning process.

It is important to mention that in an virtual learning environment, learners tend to have more control over their learning because they can control their time; that is, they program the time they will dedicate to their school activities, they decide if they connect or not to the class through a videoconference and if something was not clear in the class, they decide if they see any alternative material to reinforce their knowledge because currently, we can realize that many times the topics explained in class are not understood completely due to lack of time, because of the large groups of students that the teachers have, etc.

According to previous studies, self-learning is an approach where the individual makes the effort to identify their own learning needs (Guglielmino, 2001; Morris, 1995; & Shaikh, 2013 as cited in Lasfeto & Ulfa, 2020). In summary, students have an important role in the process of their learning. The relationship between teachers and learners, as well as the

attitude, responsibility, commitment, time dedicated to studying by students, and other factors, depend on a lot for a successful student learning.

2.3.1. Teacher qualities/characteristics

In the process of instruction and learning, the connection between professor and learner is very significant because the relationship between learner and professor is very notable when learning content knowledge in the classroom while leading to Some of the most representative categories while teaching are teacher personality, teacher knowledge, teacher teaching skills, and forms of interaction in the classroom (Covarrubias & Piña, 2004).

Teacher personality is where learners can see the difference between effective and ineffective teachers (Covarrubias & Piña, 2004). Effective teachers tend to be simple, open, fair, responsible, empathic, and congruent (Ryans, in Postic, 1982, as cited in Covarrubias & Piña, 2004). Moreover, the teacher should always represent order in the class because if the teachers easily provide all the confidence, students see them as guides (Covarrubias & Piña, 2004). That is, the teacher must fulfill the role of a competitive professional.

Teacher knowledge is described as the fact that the professors must know well about the topics they teach to the learners in the classroom so that the professors can answer the possible learner questions (Covarrubias & Piña, 2004). Besides having the knowledge and transmitting it to their students, they must guide the students during learning so that they achieve knowledge; that is, the teacher must guide students during the process. In other words, teachers must not only transmit information but must create an environment where both the teacher and the students work to solve any problem (Covarrubias & Piña, 2004). On the other hand, teachers should enrich the theoretical part with applied experience in the field because this helps students in their future professional lives. However, in the

COVID-19 pandemic, it is very difficult for this to be conducted because we cannot use the school facilities to do some practice; most of the information is only theoretical.

The didactic skills that the teacher implements are important so that, as teachers, they have a better management of the group, as well as it favors the motivation of the students in order to create a positive and active environment (Covarrubias & Piña, 2004). Likewise, the interaction between professor and learner is essential to establish an interactive atmosphere, which is to say, an active environment so that students not only receive information but also contribute to their learning.

Verbal or audiovisual presentations are very limited for significant student learning because, with these presentations, it is only possible to grasp some concepts or theories in a general way (Covarrubias & Piña, 2004).

Forms of interaction in the classroom happen when two or more people interact and stand in an area that produces more interaction through topic conversation. Teachers and students must individually assume their own roles, that is, if there can be trust, but there must be a limit so as not to generate problems or misunderstandings; for that reason, communication must be to solve only academic issues. Some teachers provide too much confidence, others who are very strict and do not lend themselves to talking about non-academic problems with students, and finally, other teachers apply both parts, that is, they are strict and at the same time provide confidence so that students can explain their problems and receive help (Covarrubias & Piña, 2004).

2.3.2. Student-student interaction

The interaction between teacher and student is essential in a classroom; however, the interaction between students is also essential because students share their experiences or interact inside and outside their classes. "Constructive student-student relationships are probably an absolute necessity for maximal achievement, socialization, and healthy development" (Johnson, 1981, p. 5). According to (Johnson, 1981), the importance of student-student collaboration is presented below:

1) The relationship between the students is fundamental because the help and encouragement offered to each other so that their objectives are successfully achieved are favored because the students do not stop trying so easily, and thus their school performance is more important. (Johnson, 1981).

2) The relationship between classmates is important because when socializing with each other, this interaction facilitates the aspirations that each student has to achieve something and provides, in a certain way a help to achieve it, behaviors, attitudes, and ways of seeing each other's things. The conversation that they maintain can be more fluid, varied, and even very sincere. In their interactions with classmates, learners follow patterns of other classmates, and they recognize themselves with friends who have similar tastes (Johnson, 1981).

Some factors that influence the interaction between classmates are the way of expressing themselves, the type of clothing, the haircut, the music, shared activities, etc., because the students are looking for their identification.

3) Psychological health can be obtained, which is an important factor that influences peer relationships because students with positive mental health can learn better and they can also

develop their full potential more effectively. It can also reduce anxiety, low self-esteem, poor interpersonal skills, emotional handicaps, and psychological pathology are characteristics of classmate isolation.

4) It prevents social isolation of each student; for this reason, students must maintain a good constructive interaction with their peers so that in the future they are not so separated from social reality and thus can develop their skills to participate and be involved in activities where interaction and support are required.

5) In this part, it refers to the perceptions that each student has, and it depends on each one if they participate in issues that can generate conflicts when approving of bad behavior in their lives, such as drug consumption (Johnson, 1981).

6) Here, the relationship between classmates involves various activities where each individual adopts different impulses to defend themselves in a situation or to behave in society without aggressive behavior (Johnson, 1981).

7) The interaction that is maintained between peers helps each student to know and identify their sex-role identity. In this part, the relationship between classmates is very important because each student learns to develop their own capacities and learn to identify problems and solve each one from their own point of view, but also taking into consideration the perspective that some of their classmates have (Johnson, 1981).

8) Nowadays, it is very common to see rejection by some students towards their classmates; however, this affects the behavior and psychological health of students who are rejected because they do not feel included. The essence and quality of the interaction are fundamental. For peer-to-peer relationships to be fruitful and influential, they need to foster feelings of dominance and ownership, approval, support, and attention, rather than feelings of rivalry and disapproval (Johnson, 1981).

2.3.3. Synchronous and asynchronous learning

The educational contents with which students learn are only one part of the learning process, according to some authors, "all classrooms are conversations" (Levine et al., & Weinberger, 1999, as cited in Downes et al., 2008, p. 13). For this reason, during these times of the pandemic caused by COVID-19, where education is through online classes, it is important to analyze that these types of conferences that students have are very important because they are not only to progress in knowledge of some subject but to also progress in the level of understanding of the communication through the technologies in line that we have nowadays. On the other hand, there could be very little difference between students participating in a conference, that is, being fully active, and only being present in the same conference room but without omitting their opinions or being actively participatory (Downes, 2008).

Online learning is divided into two categories: Synchronous learning and asynchronous learning. In synchronous learning, teachers use video conferences that have software adjustable to the equipment, as well as high-quality web cameras. Likewise, in synchronous conferences, thanks to some new applications, the function to be able to communicate through audio and video is offered, but at the same time, it is possible to share different screens and applications, notes and comments, surveys as well as text messages among other functions. Some of the systems that are used for educational environments have some cost. However, others have no cost because they are commercial and are available to users; an example is the Skype application, it is an application that provides audio communication and video on a freeway (Downes, 2008).

In conclusion, with this type of learning, the students have a real-time interaction with the teacher because there is a video call where they communicate. Thus, the teachers can solve the doubts that the students may have, and both teachers and students interact at the same time.

On the other hand, asynchronous learning conferences are distinguished by the authority of text-based topics because there is a large repertoire of diverse formats. For this reason, this type of content is very remarkable because through this, it is easy to exchange both text documents and musical content, as well as popular podcasting. Besides, presentations, games, video content, and various animations, among other types of content (Downes, 2008).

Asynchronous communication has evolved to a large extent because, in the past the only thing that was used was famous blogs, which each person could use to their liking; they are already more updated; an example of them are Myspace and Facebook; there is a probability that the systems will have more updates in the future to achieve a balance between the social function and the identity of each person (Downes, 2008).

In conclusion, this type of learning allows students to be more independent because those in charge of organizing their school activities in time and form, because they have all the content at their disposal, and even if they have doubts, they can review the topics by themselves.

2.4. Challenges that students faced during their learning process in online classes

The COVID-19 pandemic provoked teachers to change their way of teaching, and students have had to learn differently. But, with the Internet's help, most of the students and teachers have achieved the teaching-learning process during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers and students constantly use applications with internet access. Online education environments

enable learners to access all information in an easy way, without time and place limits, and to organize their learning (Fresen, 2018 as cited in Öztürk, 2021).

However, it is not the same reality for everyone. In countries such as Mexico, there are many deficiencies. In this case, not all students have Internet service or the necessary resources to activate a mobile data plan. Even some rural areas do not have electricity or mobile devices with good capacity or a high range. “On the other hand, there are disadvantages such as staff training, labor costs for preparing course content, students feel lonely and isolated, lack of face-to-face interaction.” (Muir et al., 2019, cited in Öztürk, 2021, p. 175). These are just some challenges or problems that students and teachers have faced, but there are many more, either due to economic conditions or personal reasons.

The participation of students during online classes is impaired due to factors such as high demand for school activities, the forms established to evaluate, the figure of the teacher, the way of conducting school activities and personal life, adapting to different training tasks and how to adapt to online learning (Muir et al., 2019 as cited in Öztürk, 2021). But mainly, “the key problem facing online learning-teaching is individual attention” (Moreno et al., 2020, as cited in Hafeez et al., 2021, p. 331).

In conclusion, there are personal, social, and economic challenges that teachers and students face during the teaching and learning process in this new modality of online classes in the COVID-19 pandemic. The biggest problem is the access to the internet because that causes problems with the media to access courses or information, as well as the lack of interaction between teachers and students because in several times there is no time or space to resolve doubts with the topics explained in class and thus the students reflect other problems.

2.5. Strategies to learn the English language online

Learning strategies are all the necessary measures that are implemented when we are learning something new, in this case, the English language, and these can be both inside and outside of a classroom (Dansereau et al., as cited in Herrera, A. et al., 2009). Shahid (2017, p. 11) defines “language learning strategies as 'specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques – such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task – used by students to enhance their own learning”. That is, they are the ways or forms that students use to retain new information or to learn new things, either individually or in pairs or teams, for a better understanding of a topic and their learning.

Shahid (2017) states that for a strategy to be useful, “it should relate to the task undertaken, be compatible with the learning style of the user, and work in cohesion with other related strategies” (p.11). This is because each student learns differently. After all, not everyone has the same abilities to do things; everyone learns at their own time and at their own pace, and thus, considering all this, students can learn more easily, faster, and even in a fun way for them to achieve their learning successfully. The learning strategies not only help in learning a second language, but they also provide us with broad terms for the cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective processes of the students.

According to Oxford, as cited in (Shahid, 2017). The learning strategies can be divided into six categories; those strategies are described below:

2.5.1 Types of strategies

Memory strategies refer to a shallow understanding because they only need to be related to knowledge of the second language concepts.

Cognitive strategies refer to the student's mastery of their linguistic resources that they will use.

Communication and compensation strategies refer to all the resources that students use to understand the environment and the content that is being talked about or the environment; this is reflected in the oral message, which is read by tone of voice or facial expressions.

Metacognitive strategies help students organize their study autonomously.

Social strategies refer to when students ask for help from the teacher or their classmates to resolve their doubts about a topic that was unclear to them in class. Thus, they improve their learning.

Affective strategies refer to the relationship between the emotional part, the mood, and the emotions of students.

2.6. Recent studies

According to Lasfeto & Ulfa (2020), who looked for the relationship between self-directed learning and students' social interaction in online learning. The study was done using a scale and some server log files. In this study, 98 students from the Faculty of Education in Malang, Indonesia, participated. The findings were that students were self-supportive in online learning and that they had the opportunity to conduct their tasks while learning online. For further research, they suggest doing experimental research about online learning.

The author Öztürk (2021) explored students' experiences in asynchronous online learning. It was a qualitative research study. The participants were 28 students from the Faculty of Education at Aksaray University. The findings were that the interaction was passive in the asynchronous learning process, and they could not collaborate with their partners because

they were apart. For further research, they indicate that it is necessary to research students' experiences in the learning process.

The authors Hafeez et al., (2021) investigated the challenges that teachers and students face in the teaching-learning process during the lockdown due to the pandemic. This was a quantitative investigation. The members of this research were students and teachers from four different universities in Punjab, Pakistan. The results showed that teachers and students faced many obstacles during their online teaching-learning process. On the other hand, students' opinions about the virtual teaching-learning process should be considered for future research since they can help improve teaching-learning methods.

Wong (2007, p.p. 1-11) looked into whether teachers were motivated to acquire knowledge about the English language and analyzed the approaches that students use during learning. This was a mixed-method research in which 70 Chinese teachers from Hong Kong participated. The results showed that the members were motivated to acquire the English language. For future research, they showed that it is necessary to consider strategies to make the acquisition of a second language easier.

Iglesias and Vera (2010) investigated how to establish social and demographic elements related to students' school performance. A survey was conducted by 432 students from the Faculty of Chemical and Mathematical Sciences. The results showed a low level of bonding with the family, emotional intelligence, negative study habits, and poor school performance by the students. For future research, they suggest analyzing the elements concerning school performance to support students.

Covarrubias and Piña (2004, p. 47) analyzed the representations of university students about the pedagogical relationship with their teachers and their mastery of their learning. This was a qualitative study in which 25 psychology students participated. The results were

to obtain four categories of teachers' performance in the educational process. For future research, the authors point out that it is essential to consider strategies to make the acquisition of a second language better.

Alsayed (2003) investigated some elements that help success in learning English as a foreign language. This was a qualitative study in which the participants were students in training in the UK. The results showed that one of the fundamental elements for the acquisition of English as a second language is motivation, as well as the acquisition and teaching of English from an early age. For future research, the author recommends examining their contact with the English language since they are children.

According to Wang (2005) analyzed the development of social and affective relationships, students' participation in online communication, and the impact of social relationships on learner learning. This was qualitative research in which only three students participated, and the results showed the differences between online communication and communication that exists within a classroom. For future research, it is recommended that more research be conducted on social interaction to contribute to the quality of online classes and student training.

Chapter III: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research paradigm, the methodology, the research scheme, the participants, the context of the study, the instruments, the data collection procedure, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research paradigm

The word paradigm refers to the loose collection of reasonably linked ideas, thoughts, and criteria that guide inquiries (Bodgan & Biklen, 1998, as was cited in Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). This study belongs to an interpretive paradigm because these inquiry approaches are intended to understand the world of human experience (Cohen & Manion, 1994, as cited in Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Besides, “the interpretive paradigm does not question ideologies; it accepts them.” (Scotland, 2012, p.12). Moreover, according to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) the fundamental methods of the interpretivist paradigm are the qualitative methods. On the other hand, there are quantitative methods, which can include instrument interviews, observation documents, and visual analysis of data for data collection.

3.2 Methodology:

The methodology used in this study was qualitative and a phenomenological approach.

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), qualitative research refers to a set of explanatory procedures and instruments that make the world more noticeable. These procedures change the world. They change the world in various shows, incorporating interviews, images, recordings, field notes, conversations, and personal notes. Likewise, qualitative research is

more adaptable to pose "why" questions to express and understand difficulties or "how" questions that explain processes or behaviors (Denzin et al., 2011 as cited in Creswell et al., 2013). In the qualitative method, there are some designs, one of which is the phenomenology design.

Phenomenologists “focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon” (Creswell, 2013, p. 76). Therefore, the study has a phenomenological approach because first, the data of the participants were collected, who, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, experienced a learning change from a face-to-face way to a completely online learning environment to be able to take their classes. “This description consists of 'what' they experienced and 'how' they experienced it.” (Moustakas, 1994, as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 76). Table 1 shows the research steps.

Table 1

LEI student perceptions about the language learning experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic

Step 1. Identify the problem	To know if the online classes implemented during the pandemic caused by COVID-19 as an emergency in this situation were really effective or not for the students of the Target Language group __ of the Facultad de Lenguas of the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla.
Step 2. Set objective/ objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To identify the disadvantages and advantages of learning in the two modalities. - To analyze de most important problems that influence the learning of students in the online mode. - To find out the impact that online classes have on students' learning. What advantages or disadvantages are there in face-to-face and online classes?
Research questions.	What were the main problems in challenges that students face in their learning in the online mode?

	Interpretivist/ constructivist paradigm.
Step 3. Identify the research paradigm.	Participants/context: Target Language students of the Facultad de Lenguas BUAP.
	Qualitative research.
Step 4. Determine methodology	Method: Phenomenological approach.
	Questionnaires
Step 5. Choose a data collection instrument	To create questions according to the research requirements.
	Instrument applying time
Step 6. Data collection	
	Instrument applying time
Step 7. Analyze data	To filter the information

Source: Taken from Mackenzie and Knipe (2006)

3.3 Participants

The participants were 13 students of the subject of Target Language 5 of the Degree in Teaching English of the Facultad de Lenguas BUAP. The participants were mainly from the ninth semester and different semesters of the degree. Of these 13 students, 8 were females, and 5 were males. Permission to use the participants' reflections was obtained

directly from the participants via instant messaging, thus ensuring voluntary participation. They were told that their participation would not affect their class grades at any time.

this was to ensure, from the beginning, that there would be no events that could affect them.

3.4 Context of the study

This study will be conducted in Puebla City, an urban area; the students belong to the Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés at the Facultad de Lenguas BUAP. La Facultad de Lenguas de la Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla is characterized by the certification of its educational programs and the internationalization of its teachers and students to consolidate its educational quality and position it in the international ranking. Contact with higher education institutions abroad translates into better preparation for students seeking to excel in language proficiency, thus paving the way for success in the 21st century (BUAP, 2023).

3.5 Instrument

The instrument used was a questionnaire with fourteen questions that the participants answered. The questionnaire was online, created in Google Forms, and shared through WhatsApp. The participants shared their experiences and insights during their online learning classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This questionnaire can be seen in Appendix A. The questionnaire was applied to thirteen students from the Facultad de Lenguas, BUAP. The instrument contains fourteen questions that students answered, and then the data collected was used to create graphics and figures. The questionnaire was according to the topic; the instrument was the most appropriate to collect the data that was needed to conduct this research. After answering the questionnaire, the data was kept and analyzed.

3.6 Data collection procedure

The instrument was created online and shared with the participants through an application called WhatsApp. In this case, we were in charge of distributing it to all the participants. The instrument was answered randomly by thirteen participants from March 4 to March 12, 2022. The age of the participants was from 18 to more than 30 years, 8 were women, and 5 were men.

Chapter IV: Results

4. Introduction

This chapter contains the data gathering process, the analysis and interpretation of the data, the findings, a discussion of the most salient result, and a conclusion. In this chapter, we reviewed the data analysis and procedure on the instrument used to collect the data of the participants who took the Target Language during the virtual classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The data were collected precisely during the season of the COVID-19 pandemic when the education system changed from traditional learning in a classroom to fully online learning; the participants are students from the Facultad de Lenguas, BUAP. The participants were selected from that faculty because they study the English language. As future teacher career students, the study can help current and future generations of teachers to improve teaching and learning in online classes. After reviewing the results, discuss and explain why they responded the way they did. Then, the results will be and encompassed the collected data will be taken into consideration, and the investigation will be completed with information from some theory that will support the students' responses to obtain a conclusion about this qualitative research. All information obtained is protected because it will not be used for any other purpose that would harm them; only information such as age, gender, and the semester to which they belonged was required.

4.1 Data Gathering

To obtain the data for this research, it was necessary to design an instrument according to the information that we wanted to get for our topic; the information was collected through a questionnaire that was prepared in Google Forms, which was sent through WhatsApp and Facebook to each of the participants, this was in this way because today

most people have access to social networks. However, the questionnaire designed at the beginning was piloted with classmates from Seminar II of the Facultad de Lenguas, BUAP, to see if what was expected as a result was successful or not. Once the classmates answered the questionnaire, the answers gotten by them in the class were analyzed, and classmates and the teacher gave points of view on each questionnaire; for this reason, it was decided to make some modifications to the questions.

The questionnaire had 14 questions, was prepared in English, and was sent to 13 participants. The questionnaire automatically collected emails. Each participant had to indicate her age, gender, and semester. However, the information obtained will not be shared since the data obtained would be confidential and used only for research purposes.

Being qualitative research, we applied a questionnaire of 12 open questions for students to give their answers freely according to their experience during online classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and only the final two questions were multiple-choice. The time for all the participants to answer the questionnaire was slow because all of them had other activities to do, but in the end, it was possible to complete the total number of answered questionnaires that were contemplated.

4.2 Data Analysis

To obtain the necessary data for the investigation, the questionnaire was sent to 13 participants of the Facultad de Lenguas, BUAP. The questionnaire was applied in English. The participants answered it and sent it later. Eight participants were women, and five were men, ranging in age from 18 to 30 years or older.

Thus, beginning with the emptying of information. First, a 6-column table was made in Word; the first column was for the questions, the second column was for the answers

of the participants, the third was to identify the recurrent pattern, the fourth was to identify the code, the fifth was to write the interpretation of the researcher and the sixth and last it was to search for some theory that would give some support to the answers of the research participants. By doing this process from the beginning, it was easier to read and compare each participant's thoughts or points of view. The next step was to look for the similarities or patterns each participant had in their responses to each question. When carefully reading the information, some similar words or phrases were highlighted, using different colours to distinguish them and obtain a pattern. Among all the answers, we have a general opinion. As a third step, the decoding of each question was made to process the data obtained in an easier way; with this, an idea was generated to see if the answers and the pattern were relevant and had some relationship. In this way, you can see if the answers answer the questions and if they are related to the code. Finally, the last column of the table was the theory; in that category, some authors were cited to support the responses of the participants, and thus, the information is related or verified in some cases.

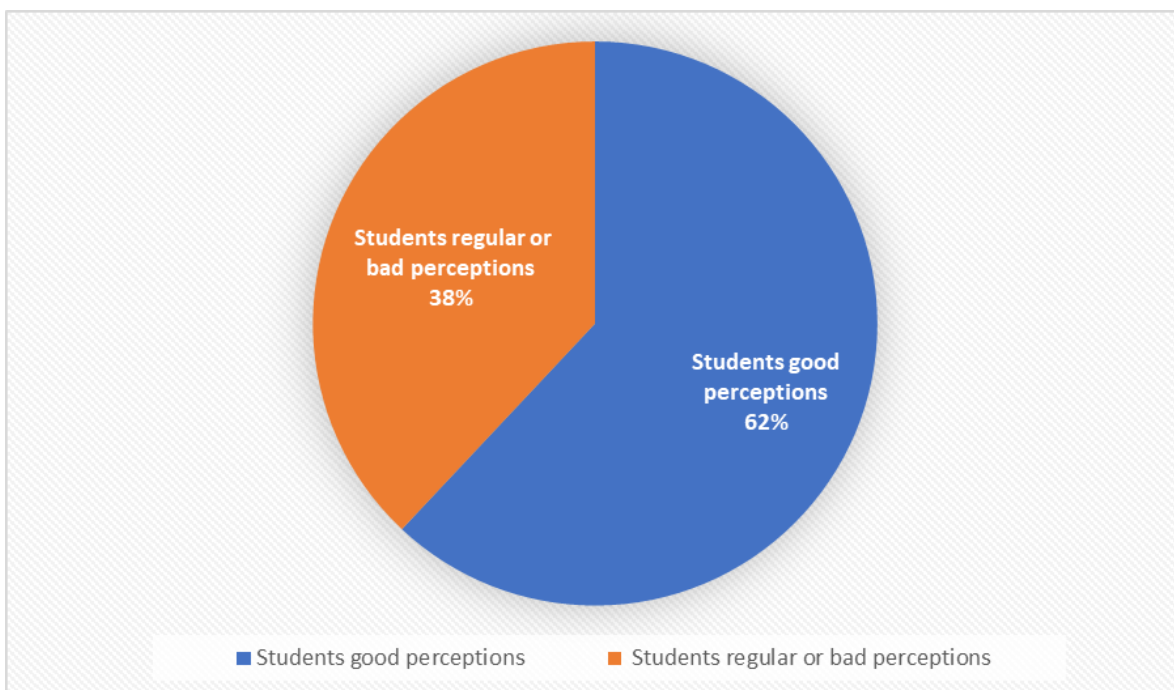
4.3 Findings and discussions

This text shows the online questionnaire results. The questionnaire contained fourteen questions. These responses were substantiated on the experiences and perspectives of participants who had online classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.3.1 Evaluation of online classes

As for question one, results showed that of a total of 100%, the blue part represents 69% concerning the good perceptions students have about their online classes. In comparison, the orange color represents 31% of the participants who referred to their online classes as regular or bad.

Figure 1: Evaluation of the online classes



Source: own elaboration.

As can be observed in Figure 1, most of the participants (62 %) said that their online classes were good. They gave different reasons; for example, one (P1) could learn new techniques, and another participant (P2) considers the teacher's work well and makes him interested in the classes. On the other hand, (P3) thinks there are good aspects of online learning, such as accessibility and revision of tasks; however, there are also negative aspects, such as doubts and communicative issues.

At the beginning of the pandemic, it was hard because I was unfamiliar with this kind of teaching and learning, so I had to learn new techniques and instruments to acquire the knowledge in the most effective way (P1).

My English classes were great. My teacher used different strategies to make the classes interactive and catch our attention (P2).

There were good things, such as quick access to some platforms and keeping track of homework/assignments, and bad things such as teamwork or doubts about the class, which are difficult to transmit/communicate to classmates or teachers (P3).

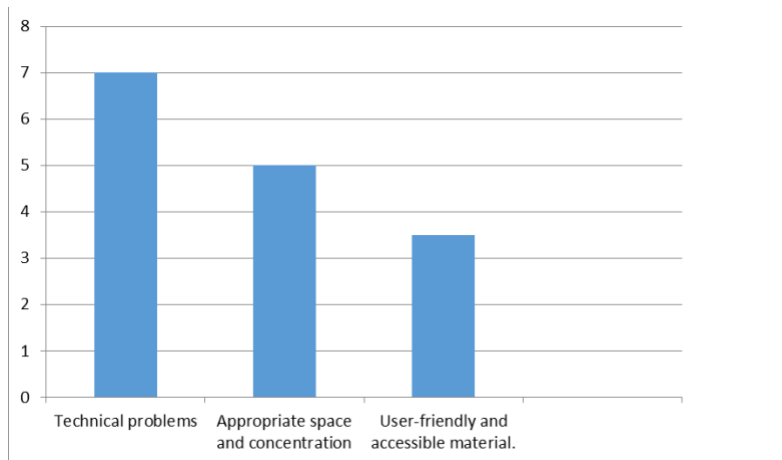
According to Kozma (2001 as was cited in Anderson, 2008, p. 16) “to promote higher order thinking on the Web, online learning must create challenging activities that enable learners to link new information to old acquire meaningful knowledge”. On the other hand, the researcher claims that computers are necessary to create models and simulations for students; for this reason, according to Kozma, the media contribute to learning. On the other hand, Kozma claims that computers are necessary to create models and simulations for the student; for this reason, according to Kozma, the media contribute to learning. Kozma argues that the computer is not the fundamental part that makes students learn; rather, it is just a design of models and simulations based on real life and active participation of students with these models. The computer simply facilitates processing and instruction delivery. (Clark, 2001, was cited in Anderson, 2008).

4.3.2 Challenges during online classes

As for question two, the first bar represents the challenges with technical problems; the second bar represents the challenges that some students had with the appropriate space to study and to concentrate, and the last bar represents not having material that is easy to access and use. As can be observed in Figure 2, the most common technical problems are having difficulty with the devices, for example, battery, space, poor Internet connection, etc. On the other hand, if students do not have a nice, clean, ventilated space, it is difficult for them to be motivated and able to concentrate in class. Finally, many times, the material found on the

Internet is not free to access or requires registration for various accounts, making it complicated to use the material.

Figure 2: Challenges during online classes



Source: Own elaboration.

Regarding the challenges, the participants said:

The most common challenges during the online classes were having difficulties with the equipment, such as poor internet connection and technical problems with the computer. The participants mentioned:

Sometimes, I have problems with my internet connection, and because of that, I won't be able to take classes (P1).

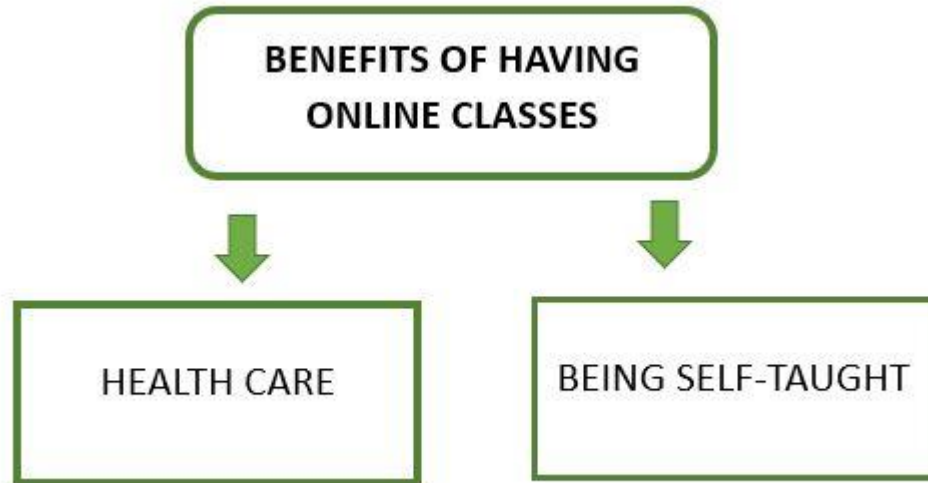
I think it's the technical problems with computers and, internet (P2).

“There are numerous tools accessible for online learning and teaching, but occasionally they may cause number of problems” “These difficulties and problems connected with new technology comprise of downloading, installation issues, login issues and audio and video problems” (Moreno et al., 2020, p. 331 as cited in Hafeez et al., 2021, p. 331). “This challenge needs to be addressed instantly so that everybody can acquire a quality learning through online learning” (Cojocariu et al., 2014 as cited in Hafeez et al, 2021).

4.3.3 Benefits of having online classes

Figure 2 represents the benefits of having online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 2: *Benefits of having online classes*



Source: own elaboration.

Among the benefits participants found in online classes, the most referred to were health care and autonomy. As participants 1 and 2 mentioned:

Talking about health, it was not taking risks in a hostile environment during a pandemic. Academically, it benefited me in being self-taught and not expecting everything from the teacher (P1).

Be more autonomous (P2).

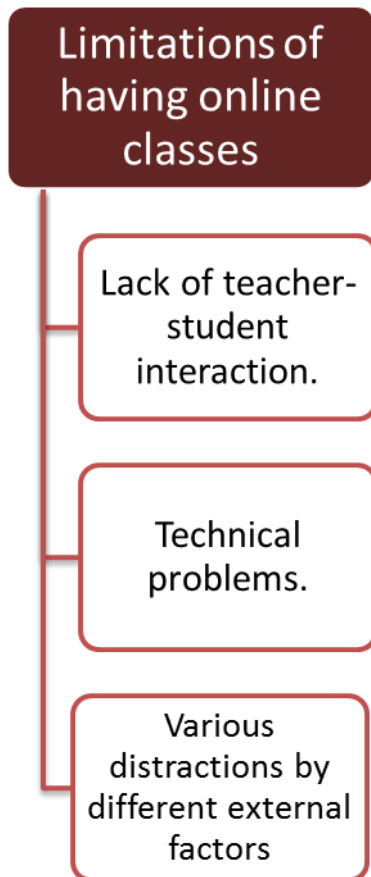
As can be observed in the figure, one of the main benefits for the participants was being self-taught because that helps students to be more responsible, set goals and achieve them. After all, you will not depend on a teacher, so you can realize everything you can achieve. That can be achieved using self-regulated strategies such as cognitive and metacognitive. For example, students who manage time, review material frequently, and investigate with their

peers and teachers are students who improve their learning skills and competencies (You & Kang, 2014, as cited in Gilbert, 2015).

3.3.4 Limitations of having online classes

Figure 3 represents the limitations of having online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 3: *Limitations of having online classes.*



Source: own elaboration.

Three participants answered:

Lack of communication with some teachers (P1).

It is not so common for the connection to fail in my town, but it sometimes fails, and so there were things that I did not fully understand in class (P2).

External factors such as internet connection, noise, and other distractions (P3).

As can be observed in Figure 4, one of the principal limitations is the lack of interaction between teachers and students because time passes very quickly, and it is difficult to attend student by each student, and sometimes it is only possible to teach a topic or answer specific questions but not completely. Another limitation was technical problems because most participants did not have a good Internet connection, which affected their performance in classes, apart from other factors such as not having enough space in the phone's memory or having a slow device. Finally, the external problems, that is, the noise of animals, cars, and neighbours, all caused distractions for the students in their classes. The limitations and problems found in this study, such as technological problems, were identified in (Juárez and Perales, 2021; Murgatroyd, 1992, as cited in Bartolic, 1999), and low interaction was also noticed in (Juárez and Ojeda, 2021)

4.3.5. Interaction with the teacher

Table 2 represents the main advantages of interaction that students had with their professors during the online classes.

Some participants said:

In some classes, it was very good, as well as the communication in class and out of class, there was a good atmosphere to be able to solve doubts, but with some teachers, it was difficult/impossible to reach them (P1).

It was so good; the teachers did their best to provide all the knowledge according to the career curriculum (P2).

My teacher did an excellent job. However, other teachers used to send work and dismiss video calls; instead, they opened a WhatsApp group to send notifications about the classes (P3).

As can be observed in the first place, the teacher solved doubts when a student had questions about a topic; the explanations were clear. Secondly, the classes had a good atmosphere because both teachers and students had a good relationship. Lastly, the knowledge that the teacher transmitted to the students was adequate because it was consistent with the curriculum of the career. According to Mehall (2002, p. 132) “When students receive feedback promptly, they can either have reassurance that they understand the content sufficiently, or conversely, students can request assistance to guide them in the right direction”.

Table 2

Interaction with the teacher

There was a good atmosphere in the classes.

Interaction with the teacher in the online classes.

The knowledge provided by the teacher was consistent with the curriculum of the career.

Source: own elaboration.

4.3.6 Interaction with Classmates

As for question six, Figure 6 shows the three main problems that occurred during the online classes according to the interaction between the students. As participants mentioned:

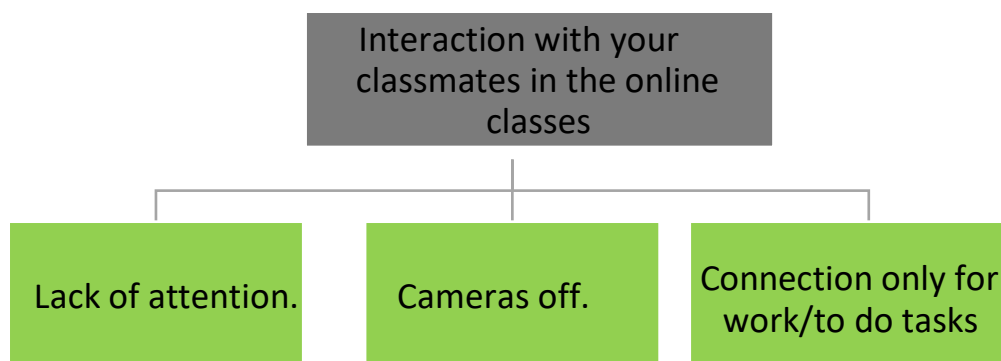
Good, but most of them do not connect the camera (P1)

In most classes, it was null unless you knew them from previous semesters (face-to-face). There was occasional teamwork, but not much interaction (P2)

It was just for work, so I talked with them just for work, and it was good. It was not interesting to make friends (P3)

As can be observed in Figure 6, the lack of attention due to some students did not pay attention to the teacher harmed the other students who were concentrated and that made the teacher lose patience in a moment. In addition, some students did not turn on the camera because there was no interaction, at least online, because both teachers and students could not recognize each other, since interaction, even though a screen, is important in this new modality during the pandemic. Finally, according to the students, in some classes, the connection they had was only to do work or homework; that is, there was no more interaction between teachers and students, and for that reason, the classes could be boring or cease to be important for the students because they need to interact. As Johnson (1980, p. 5) said, “Constructive student-student relationships are probably an absolute necessity for maximal achievement, socialization, and healthy development”.

Figure 4: Interaction with classmates



Source: own elaboration.

4.3.7. Materials to explain the topics

As for question seven, Figure 7 shows some images of the materials that the teachers used to explain the class topics. As a participant said:

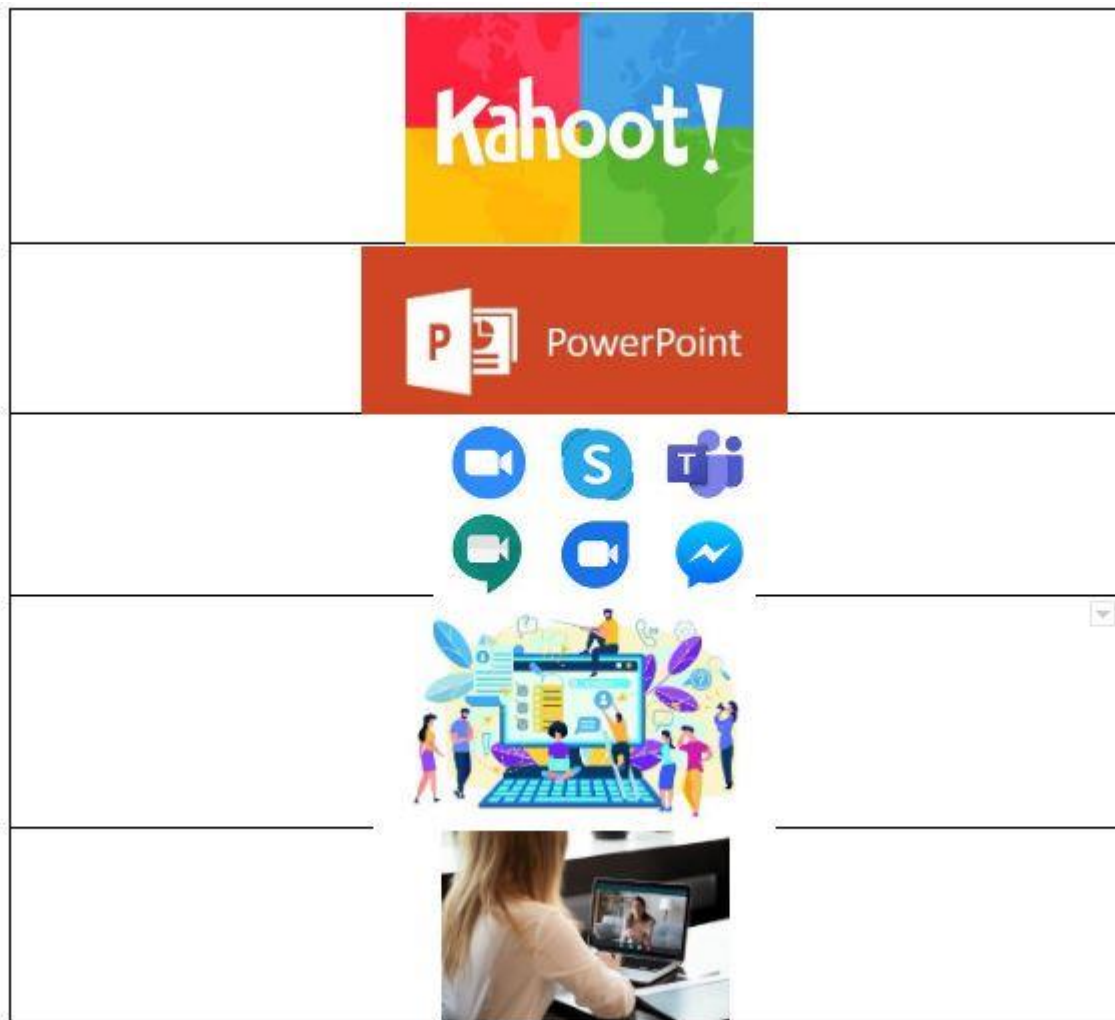
Articles, videos, presentations, Kahoot, etc. (P1)

PDF, copies, videos, web pages, platforms, Word documents, Teams, Classroom, Zoom (P2)

Slides, videos, and websites focused on teaching (P3)

As can be observed in Figure 7, some of the materials were PowerPoint presentations that teachers prepared especially for a specific topic, while others used different digital platforms through which they could both interact virtually and assign some homework or class work; another tool was the videos, audios or slides and even some exclusive free Internet tools to create quizzes in the classes that serve to learn or reinforce learning. As well as Saito (1994) who was cited in Aytunga (2008, p. 331), depending on the type of material it is, these give the opportunity to work in a different way and process, and thus, the student will be able to conduct different activities.

Figure 5 Materials to explain the topics



Source: own elaboration.

4.3.8. Doubts solved effectively

As for question eight, figure 8 has two colors, the blue color represents 58% of the participants whose answer was positive, and the red color represents 42% of the participants whose answer was negative, according to the doubts they had, and if they were solved by the teacher in the online classes. As the participant mentioned:

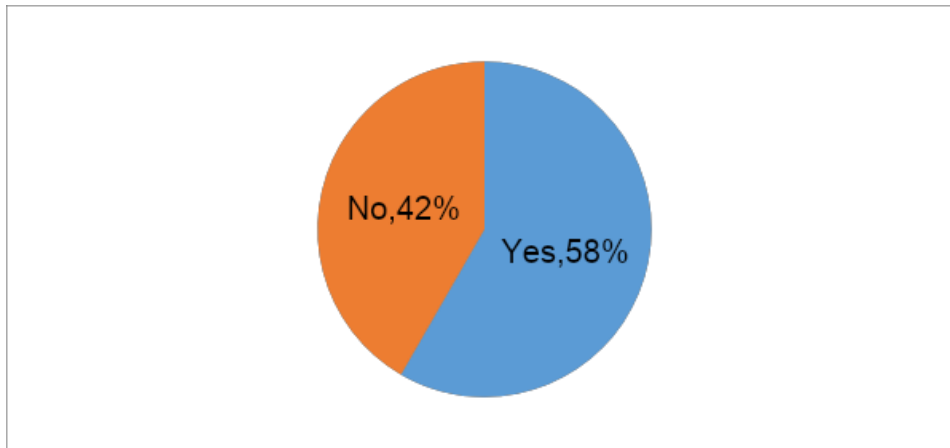
Yes, they were. For example, in grammar, the teacher gave us some examples through audio to listen to the correct use of some points (P1)

Yes, he tried to explain different examples. The grammar was explained by a series of sentences (P2)

Most of the time, they were nevertheless, I remember one time when the course started, the teacher was explaining what the course was about and the task and how it would be done and sent, so I lost my internet connection and immediately recovered, and I asked the teacher to explain it one more time briefly, but she refused because of the lack of time. Accidents happen, and my internet wasn't the best. After that, some classmates solved my doubts, but not the teacher (P3)

As can be observed in Figure 8, most of the participants responded positively because the teacher resolved their doubts in class, since the teacher explained with some extra exercises, gave other examples, or even with tools from the web, according to the topic that the students had doubts. For that reason, communication plays an essential role in online learning because students do not attend school, and the only way they have to interact is through their phone or computer. If the communication between teachers and students is good, doubts can be easily solved because students can ask the teacher anything without fear. According to Lorenzetti (2003), as was cited in Betts (2013, p.2). "In online education, effective communication is particularly important because students may never or infrequently come to campus. Hence, there may be limited or no face-to-face communication and interaction throughout a student's enrollment."

Figure 6 *Doubts solved effectively*



Source: own elaboration.

4.3.9. Online classes vs face-to-face classes

As for question nine, Figure 9 shows the reason for each of the class preferences if students prefer online classes or prefer face-to-face classes. As participants mentioned:

Face-to-face because you pay more attention, and you have fewer distractions, and you can have more interaction with your classmates and teacher (P1).

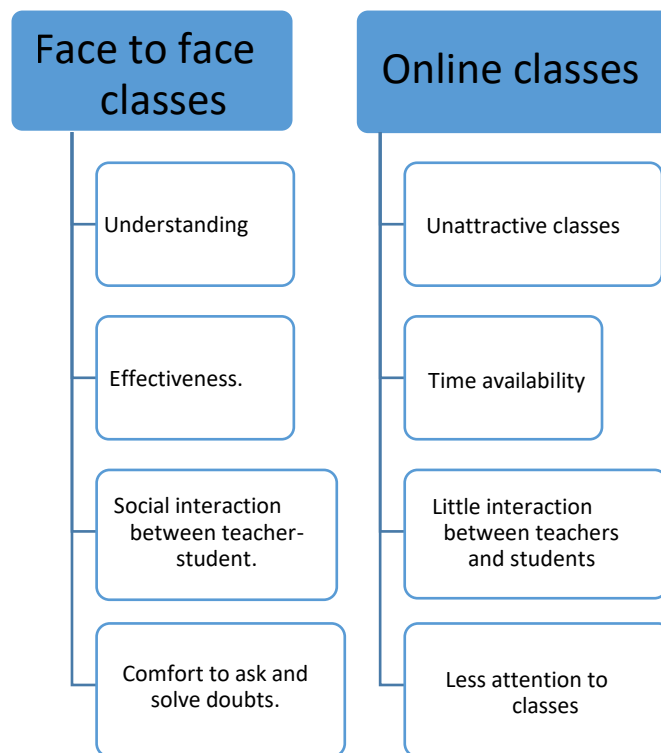
Well, in some cases, I would prefer online classes just because I have to work every day, and sometimes the schedule is too hard to have adequate space to go to class in school. However, I prefer face-to-face classes because of the interaction and the meaningfulness of the knowledge (P2).

Online classes because I'm just studying professional practice (P3).

As can be observed in Figure 9, the first part is according to face-to-face-classes; according to students' opinions, there is greater understanding, effectiveness, social interaction between teachers and students, and confidence on the part of the students so that they ask their doubts to the teacher, and he resolves them peacefully. On the other hand,

according to online classes, and according to the opinion of the students, the classes are not attractive, the teachers sometimes take more time than established, there is less interaction between teachers and students, and the students accept that they pay less attention to the classes. All these opinions are logical because education was a total change for everyone during the pandemic. No one was used to receiving and teaching through an electronic device, so learning became very difficult for some students. Nobody was prepared, and it is normal. A computer can never replace a teacher in a classroom. According to Platt, Raile & Yu (2014) “Face-to-face courses are perceived by students as offering higher levels of interaction, both with the instructor and with other students in the class, than online courses.”

Figure 7: Online classes vs face-to-face classes



Source: own elaboration.

4.3.10. Necessary materials in online learning

As for question ten, Figure 8 shows the materials that students consider necessary for online classes. As participants said:

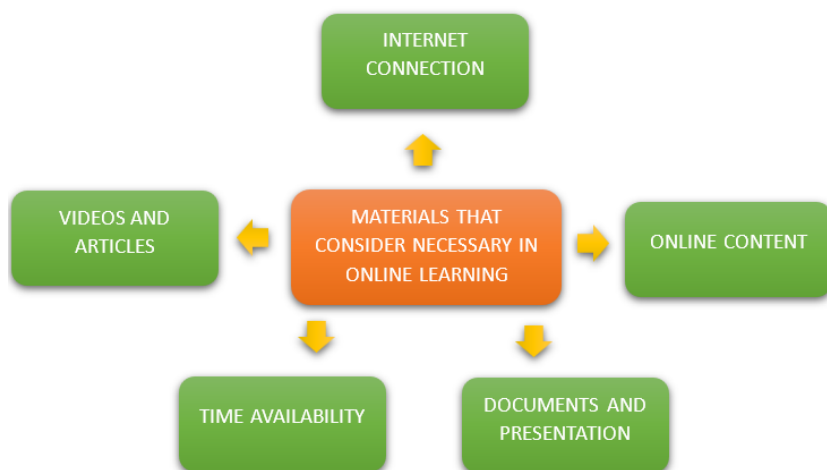
Many resources, such as online content, can be available to help the students with the materials that they need in case of Seminarios de Investigación (P1).

Videos, articles, documents, and presentations (P2).

The connection and the participation through different social media to catch the attention (P3).

As can be observed in Figure 10, students said that the main materials were good materials, such as videos, articles, documents, and presentations, but technology is also important for students, mainly the internet connection. For that reason, technology plays a very important role in online classes because all teaching and learning is through an electronic device; for this reason, if classes are online, the environment and technological tools for students are necessary. “Hardware, software, and financial commitments are the only necessary conditions for successful online learning” (Ping, 2015, p. 3).

Figure 8: Necessary materials in online learning



Source: own elaboration.

4.3.11. Suggestions as an LEI student provide for online learning

As for question eleven, figure 8 shows the suggestions that the participants, as students of the English Teaching Degree, give for online learning. As participants mentioned:

Solve student doubts, explain the topics, and give examples (P1).

Having a lot of contact with the language, with songs, videos, and series, not being afraid of making mistakes, and not paying attention to bad comments from classmates or teachers (P2).

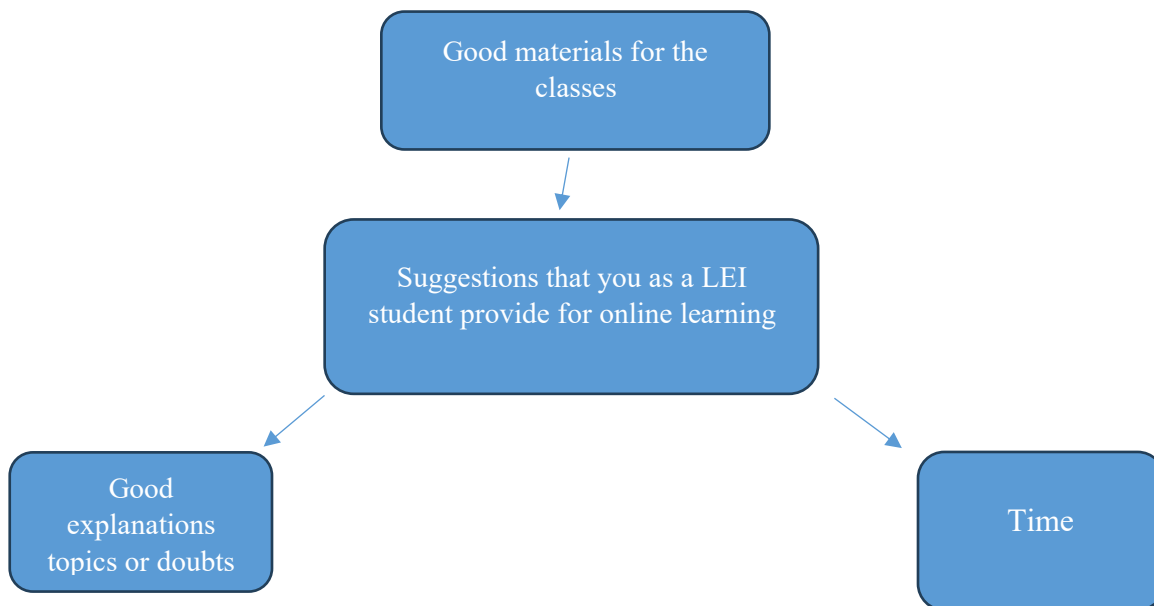
Teachers can be more aware of the difficulties that some students have in taking classes, as well as design study programs that can be adapted to the difficulties and necessities of each student (P3).

Short time in classes because two hours are boring (P4).

As can be observed in Figure 11, the students suggest having good material for the classes, that is, innovative, exclusive, accessible and interesting material, as well as; these materials

are complemented by explanations by the teachers, that the teachers solve the doubts or questions that arise in the classes so that the topics are facilitated, and finally, the distribution of time, that is, the teachers organize the times for each activity to be carried out in class, because if there are two full hours of class, it is boring, for that reason they stop paying attention and start to get distracted easily. According to Naffi et al. (2020 as was cited in Piseth, 2021) some ways to improve online learning are to produce accessible materials, opt for appropriate digital technologies, record conferences and subtitles and audio content, adopt inclusive teaching and adopt a frame that easily adapts so that students are more participatory and be understanding of the needs of students.

Figure 9 Suggestions as a LEI student provide for online learning

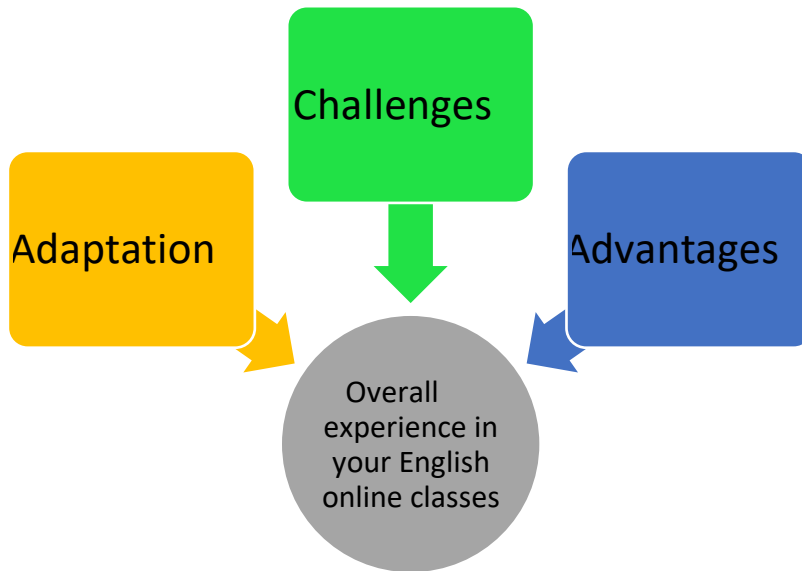


Source: own elaboration.

4.3.12. Overall experience in online classes

Figure 10 shows the general experience of the participants in the online classes, including challenges, advantages, and adaptation.

Figure 10: Overall experience in online classes



Source: own elaboration.

Regarding the advantages that students had during online learning, the following answers are shown:

Good things: I didn't have to travel to the university every day, so I saved money on food and travel, and I was able to spend my time well to do my homework (P1)

Good! I did my best to learn and to take advantage of the whole online course (P2)

Most of the participants responded positively to this question; almost all of them explained that they had to face different challenges, such as:

My experience was complicated because I had many challenges to face, such as the lack of internet and the interaction with my classmates and teachers (P3)

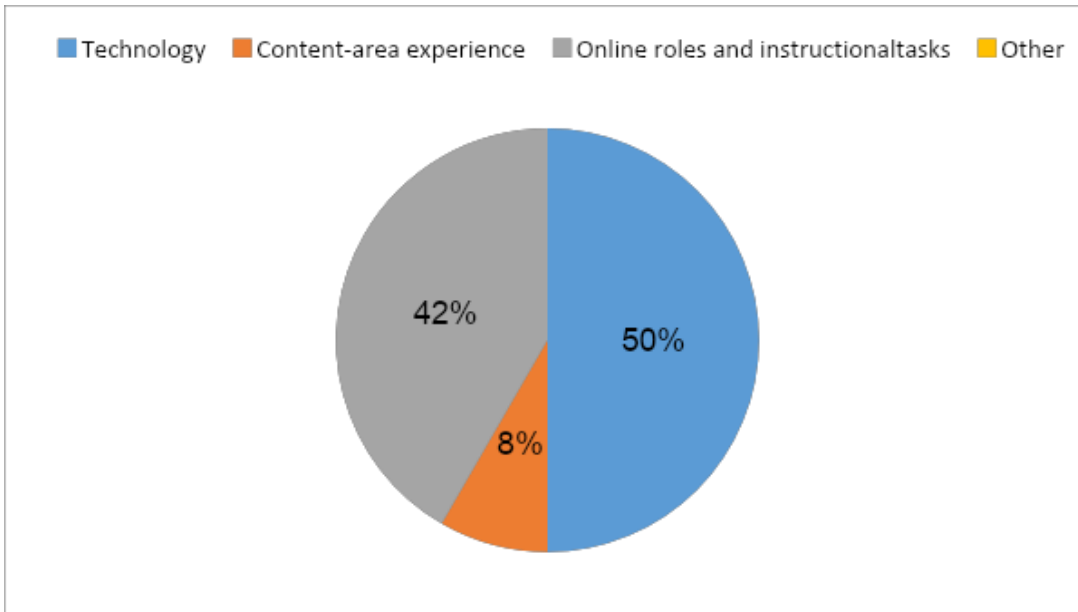
From 1 to 10, I would rate 8 because, being a new modality, adaptation was the most difficult. Some teachers tried to adapt but gave up under the stress of spending many hours in front of a computer (P4)

According to previous answers, students had to adapt to the most recent way of teaching and learning. The adaptation was the most difficult challenge that students faced in this new modality because nobody was prepared for a change in education; some of the challenges were getting used to being at home all the time in front of a phone or computer to take classes and to interact differently with teachers and friends. Finally, one of the advantages was not having to travel to school every day, so students could save money on public transport and meals. According to Carliner (2004, as was cited in Pannekoek, 2004), Online learning cannot replace a classroom. However, online learning complements and improves classroom learning because mixing online learning programs with face-to-face programs will allow each medium to do what it does best.

4.3.13. Factors that benefit learning in online classes

Figure 11 shows the factors that benefit online learning. Blue represents technology at 50%, green is 42% and represents online roles and instructional tasks, and red is 8% and represents content area experience.

Figure 11: Factors that benefit learning in online classes



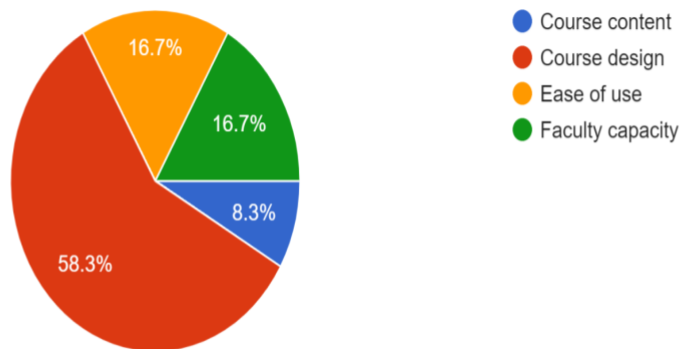
Source: own elaboration.

As can be observed, technology benefits learning in online classes because it can motivate students and thus maintain attention more easily due to the different content that can be found. On the other hand, online roles and instructional tasks plan online training and select the most appropriate tools for the content of the student's learning according to their needs. Finally, experience in the content area helps because teachers may have greater competence and skill development in teaching. According to Cartwright (1994), technology and distance education are connected, as distance education often employs multiple forms of technology to facilitate learning.

4.3.14. Factors that constrain learning in online classes

Figure 12 shows the factor that constrains learning in online classes. Blue represents course content, which is 8.3 %; green represents faculty capacity, which is 16.7 %; yellow represents ease of use, which is 16.7%. Finally, red represents course design, which is 58.3 %.

Figure 12: Factors that constrain learning in online classes



Source: own elaboration.

The design of the course facilitates the teaching-learning process because the content will be attractive and effective for students to learn the content of an online course. According to Sims and Sims (1995), “The course design is the process of selecting a series of events to facilitate learning. This process requires the instructor to operate within an instructional system and select those specific aspects of the system that he or she determines will result in the desired learning” (p.12).

4.4 Discussion

The students like that the teachers are well-prepared academically because they like that the classes are attractive and interesting, which motivates them. They like that the teacher solves their doubts effectively, and those teachers are serious in their classes. In addition,

they like interaction, despite taking distance classes, most prefer classes through a platform to be able to interact; visual expressions and communication are important keys to their learning and development. Another aspect is the health issue; we know that when the pandemic began, we were all at risk of getting infected. However, it was the older adults who had the highest risk of becoming infected and having complications. For this reason, we could think that the young people did not take the risk seriously and could easily be neglected for the simple fact of being young. However, in this research, we can realize that this is not the case because this study showed the importance of staying at home and taking care of their health and their family to avoid getting sick.

4.5 Conclusion

This study showed different factors influencing student learning in virtual classes, as well as the impact students had in making the change from face-to-face learning to fully online learning. Online learning focuses on the use of technology; for this reason, there are several elements to consider for this teaching and learning process, such as the interaction strategies for the achievement of the objectives, the structure of the course, the limitations that the students of the group have, as well as the characteristics that the teachers and students must have for the online classes, etc. since the well-designed online learning can be successful in student learning since it is not only educational issues but also emotional, communicative, technical and environmental issues. Current research findings provide ways online classes can be improved to be more effective for student learning.

Chapter V: Conclusion

5. Introduction

The topic of this research is "LEI student perceptions about the language learning experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by COVID-19 are presented". As well as a self-reflection and highlights of the study. In addition, the limitations of the study (limitations of context, theoretical limitations, limitations of methodology), directions for future research, and the conclusions based on the results that this research developed and the findings of this work.

5.1 Research questions answers

The main purpose of this study was to analyze the learning acquired in online classes (in the COVID-19 pandemic) in comparison with the learning acquired in the face-to-face classes of the students of the Facultad de Lenguas, BUAP. Furthermore, it aims to identify the advantages and disadvantages of learning in the two modalities, as well as to analyze the most relevant problems that influence student learning in online classes and to find the impact that online classes have on students' learning. And after analyzing the data, we can respond the research questions.

RQ1: What advantages and disadvantages are there in face-to-face and online classes?

According to the data, the advantages of having online classes were the following:

One of the main advantages was being autonomous because in this modality, the teachers were often not 100% with the students, so the students had to learn to control their time, discover their ways of studying, etc., which is something beneficial for the students in the

future. “The freedom given to the learners to be independent in learning plays a very important role in managing the learning process. (Benson, 2011, as was cited in Octaberlina, 2021, p. 51) states that there are three dimensions that learners need to have responsibility to trigger autonomy in learning”. First, learners need to have the power to manage their learning model. They must analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the place where they learn, the time they will be in best condition, and the strategy of learning that is most effective for them to apply (Huang & Benson, 2013, as was cited in Octaberlina, 2021, p. 51). “They should assess how far they acquire the knowledge for measuring their cognitive achievement, and measure which personal psychological factors affect their success in learning. They may consider some factors like emotion, internal and external motivation, and their belief” (Benson, 2011, as was cited in Octaberlina, 2021).

Another advantage was being at home because students had the possibility of being able to connect to the Internet quickly and search for any type of information or electronic material. For this reason, the material to work on in class was easy and fast to obtain. Finally, another advantage was health care because these were difficult times for everyone; going out on the street and being in crowded places was a danger because we were exposing our health by being able to catch the virus from COVID-19, so staying at home was very important for the students.

According to the data, the first was the lack of interaction between teachers and students because, in online classes, there is often not enough time available for all students in the class. The second was the different technical problems that the students had because most of the time, their electronic devices did not work or the internet was very slow. The third was the various distractions due to external factors that the students had, that is, noise in the street

or in the house, whether by people or animals, and the lack of exclusive space for them and their study.

On the other hand, the advantages of face-to-face classes are:

According to the data, the social interaction between teachers and students is fundamental because students feel more comfortable in the class and feel free to ask the teacher questions if they have any questions, and so the teacher can help them or guide them through a problem. This is because they feel confident with the teacher by sharing time face-to-face. According to (Gunawardena, 1995, as was cited in Hsiung, 2000, p. 2), “social presence is necessary to enhance and improve effective instruction in both traditional and technology-based classrooms”. Due to this, the effectiveness of the classes is more significant because the students say that they learn more, and the topics and the content become more interesting because of what they see and feel, a change in their learning.

Likewise, there are disadvantages to face-to-face classes, and they are the following:

According to the data, students do not have the material requested at the time of the class because sometimes students have to take a laptop from home, or have to find an internet cafe or necessarily go to the library to find information that the teacher asks in class.

RQ2: What were the main problems and challenges that students face in their learning in the online mode?

According to the data, the students did not practice all their language skills, and this is important because it is how students can express their ideas correctly to other people, it is how they can make themselves understood, and also understand others, that is, communication skills are really important in almost any situation. In addition, there was not much interaction in some classes and with some teachers. The teachers only assigned

homework, but did not connect through a platform to explain the topics or the doubts that the students might have.

On the other hand, according to the data obtained, the main challenge that most of the students faced was poor Internet connection because their Internet was very slow, and that prevented them from being able to connect stably to the classes or when they were in the class their internet will fail, and they will lose the total connection.

5.2 Limitations of the study (context limitations, theoretical limitations, methodology limitations)

During the process of this research, some limitations were found regarding the method and the interview. The limitation of the method was the difficulty in communicating with the study participants due to the fact that the study was conducted during the pandemic; that is, not all the students were available at the same time due to various time issues, work, and technical failures etc. Another limitation of the qualitative method was the lack of information provided by the students because not all the participants performed naturally and, therefore, gave very short answers, making it impossible to collect enough information. Finally, the last limitation was regarding internal validity because what our participants said is not something that we can generalize with the other population since our investigation is only based on a small group of university students, but we do not know if other populations are the same, something similar, or something completely different (Palacios, 2006).

5.3 Implications

The findings suggest improvements in online learning, both in teachers and students and in aspects of school resources; considering that, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, future studies on the quality of online learning will be very important because it is logical that at this time of the pandemic, there would be no quality of online teaching and learning completely since the main objective was to save students' learning and not lose their school year. However, after the pandemic ends, schools, especially universities, must have teacher training programs because they must reach another learning level and use the experiences of teaching during the pandemic as an impetus to improve so that future teachers have the abilities and knowledge necessary to achieve successful learning in an online modality.

First, one of the general results showed that students were unsatisfied with online classes; they prefer traditional classes in a room with their teacher and classmates face-to-face because they participate more, feel more comfortable, interact more and feel more motivated to take the classes because the content of the topics is different, explained and better understood by teachers and students, so it is evident that the effectiveness of online learning is not the same and cannot be compared both with learning where the teacher is present in classes to help the students. Therefore, some problems were present, such as the lack of interaction between students and teachers, the lack of immediate feedback from teachers by not solving students' doubts, the lack of electronic material available for learning and for students to practice their skills, as well as the lack of training in the use of new technologies. In this research, it was observed that online classes have several negative aspects and not so many positive ones, so the effectiveness of the classes was greater when the students learned together in the presence of a teacher. Based on those results, some suggestions for teachers

are provided: teachers have to be aware of students' learning styles and at the same time be aware of their needs because English and even any language is something new for students; therefore, teachers should adapt attractive and fun materials to develop students' interest in learning a new language, and activities can also be implemented so that classes, even if they are online, can be more fun and interesting. Fourth, it is essential to contact the communications companies responsible for solving the Internet network connection problem so that students do not have problems with the service, and thus, learning is sufficient. Online learning requires improvement from the perspective of students as well as teachers, and the materials they work with. In short, the main challenges students faced during online classes in the COVID-19 pandemic were unstable networks, a lack of materials, and social interaction. Therefore, online learning is an essential topic that needs to be discussed.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

It is necessary to continue with this study because it could investigate ways to increase positive relations between professors and students during online classes so that teachers improve and students develop academically more effectively; this could be carried out with a mixed study in which both students and teachers are interviewed because the opinion of both is extremely important in the teaching-learning process and thus obtain data that shows us how online learning could improve. For this reason, future studies may be very valuable.

5.5 Conclusion

The research called “LEI student perceptions about the language learning experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic ” was based on an urban context of Puebla City with students from the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, to find the impact, advantages, disadvantages, and problems that the students had

during online classes. COVID-19 has undoubtedly affected traditional learning in most academic institutions at all levels. Therefore, online learning is a fundamental topic that needs to be discussed. First, one of the general results showed that students were not satisfied with online classes; they prefer traditional classes in a room with their teacher and classmates face-to-face because they participate more, feel more comfortable, interact more and feel more motivated to take the classes because the content of the topics is different, explained and better understood by teachers and students, so it is evident that the perceptions that LEI students have about their English language learning experiences during online classes due to the lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic are not the same and cannot be compared with learning where the teacher is present in class to help students. Second, the limitations were the lack of interaction between students and teachers, the lack of immediate feedback from teachers by not solving students' doubts, the lack of electronic material available for learning and for students to practice their skills, as well as the lack of training in the use of new technologies. In this research, it was observed that online classes have several negative aspects and not so many positive ones, so the effectiveness of the classes was greater when the students learned together in the presence of a teacher. Thirdly, as teachers, it is primordial to be aware of students' learning styles and at the same time be aware of their needs because English and even any language is something new for students; therefore, teachers should adapt attractive and fun materials to develop students' interest in learning a new language, and activities can also be implemented so that classes, even if they are online, can be more fun and interesting. Fourth, it is essential to contact the communications companies that are responsible for solving the Internet network connection problem so that students do not have problems with the service, and thus learning is sufficient. Online learning requires improvement from the perspective of students as well as teachers and the materials they work

with. In short, unstable network, lack of materials, and lack of social interaction were the main challenges students faced during online classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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APPENDIX

“LEI student perceptions about the language learning experiences in Online Classes during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic”

Hello, thank you for participating in my questionnaire. These are the questions for a research project I am conducting. The purpose of this questionnaire is to know if the online classes implemented during the pandemic caused by COVID-19, as an emergency in this situation, were really effective or not for the students. There are no right or wrong answers. I am interested in each of your perspectives and experiences. By participating in this questionnaire, you are indicating that you understand that your responses are anonymous and will not be identified with you in any way, and that you are at least 18 years old. Thank you.

Email: _____

Age:

- 18-20
- 21-24
- 25-29
- 30+

Gender:

- Female
- Male

Semester: _____

Instructions: Read carefully all the questions and answer them according to your own experience about English Language Learning in Online Classes. Describe your experience in as much detail as possible.

- 1. How do you evaluate your online English language classes during the pandemic?**
- 2. What were the challenges you faced during the online classes?**
- 3. What were the benefits of having online classes?**
- 4. What were the limitations of having online classes?**
- 5. How was the interaction with the teacher in the online classes?**
- 6. How was the interaction with your classmates in the online classes?**
- 7. What materials did the teacher use to explain the topics in your online classes?**
- 8. Were your doubts solved effectively by the teacher in your online classes? (Can you give an example?)**
- 9. Do you prefer online classes or face-to-face classes? Why?**
- 10. What are the materials that you consider necessary in online learning?**
- 11. What are the suggestions that you, as a LEI student provide for online learning?**
- 12. How was your overall experience in your English online classes?**
- 13. What are the factors that benefit learning in online classes?**
 - Technology
 - Content-area experience
 - Online roles and instructional tasks
 - Other
- 14. What are the factors that constrain learning in online classes?**
 - Course content

- Course design
- Ease of use
- Faculty capacity

Statement of confidentiality: The purpose of this questionnaire is to share the perspectives regarding the Effectiveness of the English Language Learning in Online Classes. this study is conducted by Andrea Sánchez de León and Karla Vanessa Miranda Hernandez, students of Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. The information obtained will remain confidential and will be used for research purposes only.

