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A Nethnographic Analysis of an Online Mexican English Teachers community

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Abstract

As new technology is emerging, students are in contact with the changes, and they try to adapt them to the way they learn. For that reason, teachers need to find interesting content and activities where they implement the use of technology. Some teachers try to ask questions with their peers, and some others have found virtual communities where they ask and share tips, material, or activities. This study will be focused on netnography.

This netnography research thesis aims to analyze an online community of Mexican English teachers. It has the purpose of exploring the values, interactions, and participation of the English teachers in that specific Facebook virtual community. As well as the benefits teachers have to join this type of sharing community, and if it is related to their teaching beliefs and practice. It also analyses the social impact that the virtual community provides to the members and how virtual reality impacts the teaching practice of the members of this online community.

Keywords: Ethnography, Netnography, Computer-Mediated Communication Virtual Community, Membership, Sense of Community.

DEDICATIONS

When I started studying my languages bachelor's degree fourteen years ago, I never imagined how far I could go with my education and professional development. I feel very proud of myself because, after almost nine years of working as an English teacher and studying hard to grow professionally and personally, I have finally reached one of my goals in life, finishing a second master's degree. This is my second master's; however, I believe, and I feel that it is the most important because is more related to the bachelor's I studied, and it is in the same place where I started. I want to thank all my family for their support.

I also want to thank all my family. First, my mother and my father who gave me the opportunity to study when I was younger, and even when they did not believe in me, they always were there. Second, Luis and Sofí, for helping me, and supporting me when I am in need. They always motivate me to be a better person and a better teacher. Finally, my dear uncles who are not here anymore, Felipe, Ramon, and Sergio. They were an important part of my life, and they are an important part of my family. Their absence feels terrible.

I really hope that I can go further in my professional development because I want to be a teacher who achieves great changes in the educational field.

Abstract	iii
DEDICATIONS	iv
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Purpose of the study	3
1.3 Context of the study.....	4
1.4 Rationale (significance of the study).....	5
1.5 Research questions.....	7
1.6 Methods used.....	7
1.7 Chapter Conclusion	8
Chapter 2 Literature Review	10
2. Introduction.....	10
2.1 Ethnography.....	10
2.1.1 Business ethnography	13
2.1.2 Medical ethnography	14
2.1.3 Educational ethnography	14
2.2 Nethnography or Online Ethnography	16
2.2.1 Types of Nethnography	18
2.2.1.1 Humanistic Nethnography	18
2.2.1.2 Digital Nethnography	19
2.2.1.3 Auto Nethnography.....	19
2.2.1.4 Symbolic Nethnography	19
2.2.2 Advantages of Nethnography.....	20
2.2.3 Disadvantages of Nethnography	21
2.3 Virtual communities	22
2.3.1 Characteristics of a virtual community	25
2.3.2 Sense of Community	32
2.4 Computer-Mediated Communication.....	34
2.4.1 Characteristics of Computer-Mediated Communication.....	35
2.4.2 Advantages of using Computer-Mediated Communication.....	39
2.4.3 Disadvantages of using Computer-Mediated Communication	41
2.4.4 The relevance of Computer-Mediated Communication in virtual communities.....	42

2.5 Chapter conclusion	43
Chapter III Methodology	44
3. Introduction.....	44
3.1 Approach	44
3.2 Method	45
3.3 Context.....	45
3.4 Participants.....	47
3.5 Instrument	49
3.6 Data Collection Procedures.....	49
3.7 Chapter Conclusion	50
Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion.....	51
4. Introduction.....	51
4.1 The focus group and the interview	52
4.1.1 Membership.....	52
4.1.2 Influence.....	57
4.1.3 Integration and Fulfillment of Needs	61
4.1.4 Shared Emotional Connection	63
4.2 posts analysis	67
4.2.1 Group Consciousness.....	67
4.2.2 Sharing Consciousness.....	72
4.2.3 Moral Responsibility	78
4.2.4 Members’ Interaction	82
4.2.5 Norm of Reciprocity	90
4.3 Chapter conclusion	95
CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSIONS.....	97
5.1 Introduction.....	97
5.2 Research Questions’ Answers.....	97
5.3 Limitations of the Study	124
5.4 Further Research.....	125
5.5 Conclusions.....	125
REFERENCES.....	127
APPENDIXES	131

Appendix 1..... 131
Interview for the focus group..... 131

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Humans have an impetus to communicate with each other and that is why every day they look for different options to be able to relate and to be in touch more easily. Today, society has adopted the internet as an important means of interaction, communication, and learning due to the growing technology. People began creating virtual communities thirty years ago (Ridings, Gefen, & Arinze, 2002) because it is a new form of socializing and engagement, and nowadays has become more common since the pandemic situation emerged.

In 2019, a big health problem appeared, and now has become a pandemic situation all over the world. As a result, people had a lot of free time, and they moved to virtual environments that helped them to have fun, entertain themselves, and help them learn something new. In Mexico, the pandemic situation started in March 2020. A lockdown that seemed never to end pushed the educational field to use the internet for learning purposes, taking online classes, and promoting autonomous learning in some cases. It also pushed people to seek to fill their need for social interaction by looking for groups of people on the internet who shared the same interests, and with whom they could “talk” about those topics they like.

In recent years, the online learning environment in academic educational settings has been increasing, as also the promotion of online classes. The internet offers a lot of content to learn new things with just the touch of a screen. Some learning content is free, and there are other courses you can pay to get the material or to enter the online sessions. Online learning is not something new. It can be traced back to as early as the 18th century and it was known as distance education (Sumner, 2000). As time passed by, technology and communications

technology evolved and grew in popularity. The internet emerged as new technology and the learning and teaching field took advantage of its power among people, so E-learning appeared as new way of helping students to increase their knowledge and take advantage of technology (Okonna, 2001).

The internet offers endless web pages where people can find content to read, listen to or watch and learn from it. One of those web pages is YouTube, which is a platform where people upload videos. The videos on YouTube present people talking or explaining different topics. The content of the videos is diverse, and people decide what to watch and when to watch it, and the purpose of watching the videos is different, it depends on the people's purpose.

Interaction among people was also affected during the pandemic. As face-to-face interaction is a social human characteristic, people began joining more and more virtual communities where they could interact with people that share the same interests and ideas. The pandemic enhanced teachers to be in touch with other teachers for sharing ideas, methods, and even material they can use in their online classes. They also took advantage of social media to share their teaching experiences during the lockdown. Some teachers did not know how to teach an online class. Nevertheless, some of the teachers did not give up and became autonomous learners. They took charge of their own learning and made the most of available resources on the internet (Palfreyman, 2010).

Kozinets (2010) explains that many people who join online communities partake in a complex world, and that world reflects and reveals their social and life experiences, likes, and interests, and it is a special unique social phenomenon. This social phenomenon also reflects the human need to communicate. Some of the virtual communities are dedicated to talking about

specific content found on YouTube. In these communities, people share ideas about the topics presented by the YouTubers they follow, they come together to share interests and ideas.

1.2 Purpose of the study

As the social phenomenon of virtual communities spreads, people try to take advantage of them to communicate, interact, and learn from others all over the world. English has been determined as the lingua franca to communicate among people from other non-English speaking countries. Jenkins (2000) uses the label lingua franca for pronunciation elements that are important for intelligibility in face-to-face communication, and this means that the pronunciation does not necessarily need to be perfect, but understandable. That is the main reason people want to learn and practice English. For many people, learning English is a goal they need to achieve in their lives to become successful, and this is where English teachers show up in the scenario of education.

English teachers are an important character in school. In Mexico there are private bilingual schools, private and public schools and all of them need well-qualified English teachers. However, being well-qualified does not always mean speaking the language or knowing how to teach it. Teachers need to be technology literate, and sometimes not all of them know how to use technology, or they do not know how to take advantage of it. In this case, teachers try to find other teachers' support, and if they do not find them in their school, they find them on the internet.

The purpose of this research is to explore the values, interactions, and participation of English teachers from Mexico in a Facebook virtual community. As well as the benefits teachers

have joining this type of sharing community, and if it is related to their teaching beliefs. It also analyses the social impact that the virtual community provides to the members and how virtual reality impacts the teaching practice of the members of this online community.

1.3 Context of the study

This research will be carried out in a virtual environment, more specifically in a virtual community. Ridings, Gefen, & Arinze (2002, p 273) refer that “the location of the virtual community, although not physical, is important because it establishes the virtual ‘place’ where the members meet”, and in this case, this virtual environment is a social media called “Facebook”. This Facebook group is called “English Teachers Mexico”. It is a private group, and it was created in June 2020. Three people created the group, and they are all Mexican. They decided to leave it as a private group because they wanted to keep posts private to avoid derision or misunderstandings from users outside the group. This Facebook community has the purpose to give English teachers a space where they can share ideas, experiences, and material, and occasionally, they can share job opportunities in the group. The most important thing in this community is that English teachers can know other English teachers from the same state or country.

It is not a small community, there are 2216 members and just a few new members join the group every month. Although it is a private community, It is not difficult to join the group, teachers just have to read the rules, accept the privacy policies, and that it. The members are all from different parts of Mexico, they are in an age range between 30 to 60 years old. They have different backgrounds and educational levels.

What these people have in common is that they like teaching, they want to be better English teachers, improve their teaching skills, and share their ideas and experiences with other teachers. As it has been mentioned before, the pandemic that struck in 2020 in Mexico, pushed people to find new means of interaction, activities where they could not lose the human communication. Some teachers found in social media the interaction they needed, so they join virtual communities to share ideas and interact with other teachers to “talk”, and exchange material, or teaching methods during the lockdown.

Besides the administrators and creators of the group, here are just a few members that are always active in posting and commenting. They are the ones that invite new English teachers and encourage them to participate in the interactions. They try to keep constant activity in the group even when they have other activities. The Facebook group has also the option to create surveys or start lives, however, those tools are rarely used. It means that face-to-face interactions are not common in the community.

1.4 Rationale (significance of the study)

With the evolution of technology, more people have access to devices that help them to connect to the internet. Thanks to the Internet, technology now offers new possibilities for interaction and endless resources on almost any topic, and it has helped people become autonomous learners of almost anything. Rogers (1973) explains that when a person discovers and appropriates new knowledge, and new skills all by himself, he has true learning, and that is the real meaning of autonomous learning. People try to find websites or online communities to practice and improve

what they learn by themselves. People are taking advantage of their time and their interests to experiment with new things from their homes and just with the touch of a screen.

The use of the internet for learning is called “open source” learning or “e-learning” as Paulsen (2002) has named it. Paulsen (2002) defines “e-learning” as an interactive learning experience in which the people take advantage of the resources online and manage their own learning experiences. They decide what they want to learn, and the specific material they want to use to achieve their goals in the learning process.

Due to the pandemic situation, many teachers dropped out their profession because they could not handle the new challenges that were presented to them. They felt frustrated and without guidance. Some other teacher started learning about technology, new teaching techniques and methods for the new teaching modality they were facing. They tried to learn all the new things by checking information on the internet, looking for pdf files, watching videos on some platforms like YouTube, and looking for groups on social media where they can share their objectives and communicate their ideas about what they are learning. the main purpose of teachers was to learn new things, become autonomous learners, for improving their teaching skills for their online classes.

Communication is also an important part of the teaching-learning process, and in this autonomous learning, communication cannot be left aside, and that is why teachers who decided to learn something new on the internet, tried to connect with other teachers who share the same problems, interests, and motivations as them. Komito (2001) explains that having social support when learning in a virtual environment is important because communication is a social need that is gratified through interaction with others. This social support helps people not give up on the

goals they want to achieve. With this communication, they share ideas, practice, exchange resources, or just receive support to continue. Even when it is just a virtual community, it is still a society where people need to communicate and help each other to follow a single path and succeed together.

1.5 Research questions

The present research addresses the following research questions:

1. Why do English teachers decide to join this virtual community?
2. How do they get engaged to become part of this online community and develop membership inside the virtual community?
3. What are the main topics English teachers discuss in this community and how do these topics reflect their teaching values?

1.6 Methods used

This research will be conducted using a qualitative methodology. It is important to mention that "quantitative data analysis has no greater or lesser importance than qualitative analysis. Its use is entirely dependent on fitness for purpose. Arbitrary dismissal of numerical analysis is mere ideology or prejudice" (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, 2018, P 520). The qualitative data will be collected by analyzing people's written posts from the virtual community, and questionnaires that some of the members will answer.

This is a case study where the Facebook virtual community “English Teachers Mexico” is analyzed, understood, and interpreted. It is also a netnography study, which is appropriate for understanding online group interaction. Netnography is a research approach that was developed by Robert Kozinets in 1998 in the area of marketing and consumer research, and as time passes by and technology takes over every part of people’s lives, the approach has found application in a lot of social sciences areas, such as sociology, anthropology, cultural and media studies. Kozinets (2015) defines “Netnography” as a qualitative research approach that adapts the traditional in-person ethnographic research methods to the study of the virtual cultures and communities formed through the internet, through computer-mediated communications (Kozinets, 2010). It provides guidelines for fieldwork, observation of special characteristics of culture, and gathering cultural, interaction, and communications data. By using netnography, you know people from all over the world through a computer, and the members of the virtual communities can be participants from different backgrounds, different ages, and educational levels.

1.7 Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter 1, this paper presented the purposes and context of this research, it also provided a brief introduction to the netnography field, the Mexican English teachers virtual community, the context where the study is carried out, and how it is related to the English teaching practice and beliefs. Chapter 2 will present a critical review of the literature that sets the theoretical framework this study follows. Chapter 3 deals with a thorough description of the methodological procedures used, and the instruments that were chosen to select, gather, and analyze data.

Chapter 4 is where the results of the observations and the recordings are presented in addition to some posts of the Facebook group that illustrate participants' experiences in the "English Teachers Mexico" Facebook virtual community. Chapter 5 states the discussion and the implications this research had in this specific context, as well as some of the limitations this work faced, and suggestions for further research. The following chapter presents the theoretical framework that supports this research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2. Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the literature that is relevant to this study. First, it explains ethnography and how it is related to netnography, and the similarities and differences that these branches have. The characteristics of a virtual community are presented, including virtual communities in the educational field, and the sense of community people acquire. Then, the theoretical framework, namely computer-mediated communication, is defined and inter-connected to virtual communities and the data analysis procedures. Finally, the literature review addresses new horizons for sharing and learning in virtual communities.

2.1 Ethnography

Ethnography is a branch of anthropology, and it focuses on the study of individual cultures and cultural phenomena. Harris & Johnson (2000) define it as a description of a particular culture

that includes customs, beliefs, and behavior. The information is collected through specific fieldwork where the researcher observes.

In the ethnography field, Franz Boas (1943) was the first person who brought new ideas because he made emphasis on the detailed description of cultures as integrated wholes. He improved the ethnographical data collection by gathering them and classifying them into terms of analytical categories such as material culture, mythology, social organization, the arts, and rituals (Briggs and Bauman, 1999). However, he did not have knowledge of the local language of the cultures he analyzed, which is why he used to work in partnership who helped him to record narratives and translate them.

After Boas' work, Bronisław Malinowski started doing fieldwork in the cultures he was interested in. He took Boas' ideas and added more to the ethnography field by explaining that an ethnographer needed to provide abundant experience descriptions, take more importance to language fluency and the study of worldviews (Klimczuk & Tomczyk, 2017).

According to the research of Klimczuk & Tomczyk (2017) Malinowski presented three main objectives for ethnography. The first was "The cultural anatomy", it refers to people's behavior. They act according to different patterns undisclosed to them. This is where the field worker (the ethnographer) must get ideas from their behavior by observing and inductive inference. The second is "flesh and blood". To accomplish this objective, the field worker must observe people's behavior in their activities, their social life, and their individual acts. The third refers to "subjective states", and it means that the ethnographer is interested in the opinions and ideas of people as members of society, not in people's psychology.

Ethnography became a research method in which the researcher does more than just observation. Hammersley (1990) explains that Ethnography is social research where the ethnographer needs complete immersion in the community and feasible participation to share his personal experience. it implies an intensive study of a field, culture, and language learning.

Hammersley (1990) presents some characteristics of this method. First, it studies people's behavior in an everyday context. Second, informal conversations are the main way to collect data. Third, when collecting data, it is unsystematic, which means that it does not follow a specific plan or order. Fourth, it focuses on a single group. Finally, analyzing the data is the process where the researcher interprets the meaning of people's actions and the explanation of narratives collected.

This research method uses three kinds of data collection: interviews, observation, and documents. The interview must be a unique moment where the interviewee and the interviewer feel comfortable with the questions selected. Patton, (1987) emphasizes some ideas for interviews; the ethnographer must design the questionnaire taking into account the purpose of the research and use understandable and appropriate language. For the observation, the researcher also needs to take into account the purpose of the research to focus on specific situations. Patton (1987) suggests being very descriptive and using quotations in the field notes that the researcher takes and catching the participants' views of their experiences.

The documents needed in the research also depend on the purpose and context of it. Krueger (1994) provides examples of possible documents to use, such as informational brochures, advertisements, menus, teaching materials, school records, newsletters, and websites.

Ethnography has a variety of emerging new settings in the field of anthropology. the ethnographer needs specific tools in the contexts and objects of study according to the culture space they are traversing (Marcus, 1995). There are different types of ethnography and all of them have different characteristics. In the following part, three examples of ethnographical research will be presented: business, medical, and educational ethnography.

2.1.1 Business ethnography

Business ethnography is one of the subfields of ethnography. Ethnographers can study and observe human societies and cultures, furthermore, if we take them to a business context, they would study how customers interact with a specific product or service. For marketing and advertising industries seem important to know what their customers look for in different products; whether they need specialized products or services or they just like their brands.

Morais (2013) explains that big companies like Microsoft and General Motors started hiring ethnographers to help them gather data by observing their customers interacting with their products. Ethnographers in the business field use observation and also interviews to identify unmet customer needs. They can carry out interviews within focus groups to know customers' opinions and ideas about specific products, and in this way, they can innovate or even create new products according to what people want.

Ken Anderson (2009) was one of the first people to take ethnography research into the business field. He is the principal researcher at Intel Corporation, and he started using ethnography to understand their customers' behavior with their products and their buying patterns. The data they gather has been helpful to create new products and to get into new markets.

2.1.2 Medical ethnography

Today, ethnography has many specific settings where this method can be used, and the healthcare area is one of them. Using this approach in this medical context, the ethnographer can observe the patient/nurse or patient/doctor interaction, and the patient's behavior which can lead to identifying health problems in the patient (Goodson & Vassar, 2011).

Last (2019) believes that medical ethnography is to see “the health of the public”. This type of research can help practitioners not only to understand and improve medical procedures but to understand the patient, and to gather the information that helps them find a proper procedure or treatment for the patient.

Another important aspect of medical ethnography is that helps identify errors in the healthcare area and tries to provide explanations and solutions by doing site observations and interviews (Dixon-Woods, 2003). As is known, medical services depend on people, teamwork, and the proper use of technology. Dixon-Woods (2003) stresses that ethnographic research in the medical context is appropriate because it can help to identify risky situations, especially where people and technology are involved. Ethnographers have a big responsibility here as they can make great contributions in the healthcare area by improving the quality and safety of medical services.

2.1.3 Educational ethnography

In ethnography research, the study is commonly carried out by anthropologists; however, in the educational field, the people who are more in touch with the school context are the ones who

become ethnographers. Green & Bloome (1997) affirm that teachers, students, teacher educators, and administrators can use ethnographic tools and perspectives to conduct observations for educational purposes.

In every context of ethnography doing observations, interviews, and interactions with the social group in specific locations are part of the actions of “fieldwork”. Mills & Morton (2013) point out that fieldwork was mainly conducted outdoors. This means that the ethnographer was in an open space to follow the study. As new settings are taken into account by ethnographers, as is the case of education, now classrooms are also part of those research spaces even when they are not considered “open spaces”.

the Ethnography of Education tries to focus its attention on the main characters of education, the students. Teachers observe students’ interactions and motivations, the way they relate with their classmates, and their attitudes and behavior. Although students can be the main object of study in this context, the curriculum construction, methods, techniques, goals, and objectives are also part of ethnographic research in education. Sousa (2013) describes education as societies, and social communities, with their own cultural, historical, political, and anthropological reality. For this reason, being an ethnographer in this field request total immersion in the field.

As the situations in the world are changing, a new branch of ethnography has emerged in this technological era which is called Netnography. In the following section, a clear and accurate description of this new branch will be presented.

2.2 Nethnography or Online Ethnography

Ethnography is a branch of anthropology, and in this branch, anthropologists focus their attention on studying the culture and community of a specific group. They go into an established community to be able to observe closely the way they act, interact with each other, and how they relate to each other within the community. Something similar happens in Nethnography.

The term “Nethnography” is a neologism and it was originated by a group of researchers (Bishop, Star, Neumann, Ignacio, Sandusky and Schatz, 1995) who tried to combine different methodologies to enrich their investigations in the ethnographic field. They wanted to use a specific method where they could observe and follow their research actors within an electronic setting.

Some years later, Robert Kozinets (1998) was the first person who started using the term nethnography and the methodology in virtual environments in marketing. This is a method adapted from ethnography, but now studying online setting communities.

Kozinets (1998) presents the idea of “netnography” as conducting ethnography on the internet and the digital interactions that a community follows. In this setting, the researcher uses this approach to analyze an online community, its culture, and its activities through computer-mediated communications. Kozinets (2015) expresses that there are some research methods that focus their attention on the Internet, the devices people use to connect to the internet, and the technologies connected with it, however, Netnography does not. This method focuses its attention on how people use technologies, how they integrate or join a virtual community where they try to get ideas or knowledge to apply in real life.

This method emerged firstly in the area of marketing and consumer research. It combined cultural studies, anthropology, and sociology to go inside consumer experiences. Afterward, Nethnography has been used in different areas such as technology, education, and some leisure research (Mkono & Markwell, 2014).

Braga (2021) highlights the differentiation of the terms “nethnography” and “netnography”. Even though they look very similar, each of them refers to something specific. “Netnography” is the term Kozinets adapted to marketing research and makes a big emphasis on customer behavior. Whereas “nethnography” presents a letter H of “ethno”, and it is more focused on the anthropological aspects and social interactions of the virtual environments.

On the one hand, in real life, people from specific communities interact face to face or by phone calls. As they belong to that community, there are tacit rules within that people learn and know how to behave, act and respond in different situations among the other people around them (Garfinkel, 1967). On the other hand, billions of people use the internet as a way to learn, interact and communicate. They find a way to share their ideas, their likes to interact, and create a community. In virtual communities and digital communication, people sometimes need improvisation when facing new situations or even unexpected events. Braga (2021) stipulates that as people within the virtual community try to adapt patterns of behavior taken from different contexts in real life, that is the way they start creating tacit rules for behavior in virtual settings, and here is where nethnography takes a relevant part in the research.

The ethnographer needs to integrate different methods that are useful in different contexts in order to observe, learn and analyze the digital setting of a virtual community. Braga (2021) describes the nethnography activity as the study of social behavior on the Internet and it is very

demanding. Internet social interaction results from a modern phenomenon where people learn and adapt rules from already existing rules and contexts. As those rules start being adopted in the virtual community, they become online cultural norms within the setting, and this is what a nethnographer has to observe and analyze.

Social media is the main setting where a nethnographer finds the communities to investigate. Some of the characteristics that the researcher can observe are mainly patterns of verbal or non-verbal expressions. Also, as there is an absence of physical presence to distinguish, a sense of freedom and anonymity can be identified. Features of online behavior, as well as friendship, intimacy, disrespect, or aggression, can be perceived in the way people interact within the virtual community.

2.2.1 Types of Nethnography

Kozinets (2015) categorizes nethnography into four types according to the objectives the researcher wants to achieve. This means that every category is focused on a specific field based on the direction the researcher follows. The nethnography can be considered “global” when is centered on general objectives, or it can be “local” if it is centered on specific objectives.

The four types of nethnography are humanistic, digital, auto, and symbolic. They will be described in the following paragraphs.

2.2.1.1 Humanistic Nethnography

This type of nethnography has a focal point in social issues, and the research questions that try to answer are always related to the social impact of the study. Kozinets (2015) explains that to answer the research questions with this type of nethnography, it is necessary a deep and

organized vision of social media. The nethnographer needs to go beyond to find different patterns in the structure of the social group.

2.2.1.2 Digital Nethnography

In this type of nethnography, statistical data analysis is closely linked with cultural understandings. This means that the amount of social data that the nethnographer needs to collect is vast, however, the data must be always guided by an extensive cultural understanding.

In the business area, Kozinets (2015) clarifies that digital nethnography helps to understand the existing condition of a business by reinforcing or improving the management and social practices within the business.

2.2.1.3 Auto Nethnography

Auto-nethnography has the special characteristic that autobiographical elements must be used by the researcher. This means that the data is presented through the self-reflection of the researchers, as they must have important participation and interaction on social media. Kozinets (2015) affirms that this type of nethnography has a “local” and “critical” form because the data is a reflection of the researcher’s identity.

2.2.1.4 Symbolic Nethnography

This type of nethnography is the most commonly used in the business field. It helps managers to translate people’s needs in the business area. If they offer a product, or even if they want to sell something, symbolic nethnography is useful to understand what customers want. Kozinets (2015) comments that symbolic nethnography focuses its attention on specific groups or fields to draw customers’ practices and needs.

2.2.2 Advantages of Nethnography

Nethnography is considered a new research method and has been accepted well in some fields such as business, technology, and education. Anthropologists, who used to do research with ethnographical methods, now have taken the opportunity to do nethnography and discover the advantages that this method can offer.

It is necessary to remember that with the nethnographical method, the researcher explores social practices in online communities or societies in virtual environments such as social media. Addeo et al. (2019) emphasize that one of the principal advantages that this research method presents is that the study can be extended to other parts of the world without the researchers having to leave the place where they live; the Internet can take them worldwide. Nethnographers take advantage of the magic of the internet.

Another advantage of using this method is the accessibility to the research population. The researcher knows that the online community has a specific place of reunion (social media, web blogs) where they can be found. This characteristic is very useful because the researcher can be in touch with all kinds of social groups with different conditions (Addeo et al., 2019).

The interaction between the online community and the Nethnographers is another advantage. The community shares determined channels of communication, and for this reason, it is easy to observe the activity the members do, the language they use, and how they interact among themselves (Kulavuz-Onal, 2015).

Finally, Addeo et al. (2019) point out that nethnography research can be less time-consuming because of the use of the internet. The researcher can observe, or make interviews at any time, at any place, and that is the best advantage a researcher can find in a method. It gives the opportunity to gather more data and analyze it.

2.2.3 Disadvantages of Nethnography

Some anthropologists have accepted nethnography as a good research method to expand their study boundaries and have found more advantages than disadvantages. Udenze (2019) prefers to transform the disadvantages into challenges, and he has identified two main challenges in nethnography.

- The settings: Virtual communities need a setting where they can collaborate, and this setting is the web page or social media where they interact. However, the research space can be difficult to explore because some of the members try to find other spaces to share information. This can be an obstacle for the researcher. For this reason, it is important to try to find different virtual environments where the nethnographer can be in touch with the virtual community.

- Ethics: the ethics of a study is related to the information that the researcher can mention or not in the study. In nethnography, Kozinets (2002) identifies a relevant ethics concern about the online site where the research is taking place. If the website is a public or private site, and if the researcher needs special permissions to access and interact. Another ethical concern is about the personal information the researcher is getting from the virtual community. In this case, the researcher needs to ask people for their consent, if they want to participate or not in the study, and the information they can show in the final results of the study.

2.3 Virtual communities

These online groups can be called virtual when they are represented only in a “virtual” environment (Matzat, 2004). They received other names like “online communities”, “digital communities”, or “cyber communities”, although “virtual communities” is the most common name. These communities are created for a person or a group of people that become hosts. They give structure to the group, and all the people together build relationships with each other. Little by little the group joins for a personal interest.

Back in 1993, when the internet and computer were something new for most people, and not all of them had access to them, Howard Rheingold presented the idea of virtual communities in his book “The Virtual Community Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier”. In this book, he shared his experience and explained how a parenting conference community could become a virtual community. Families used to meet once a year for conferences, however, as most of them started using computers and the internet, they began sending emails or chatting online. They kept communicating all year by using the internet, and finally, they met at their annual conferences. Rheingold (1993) noticed how this face-to-face community became an online community as soon as they used the internet to keep in touch. They already knew, but they create a sense of community by chatting and writing emails during the year.

Rheingold (1993) defines "Virtual communities as social aggregations that emerged from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace". This means that people in these communities not only share specific interest, besides they share feelings to create a bond.

Virtual communities are established within network society where information technology takes a relevant role in many different people's aspects such as economy, social interaction, and relationships. Fernback (2007) points out that physical communities are more complex than virtual ones. When a person is part of a physical community, they have a social responsibility that can be difficult to manage for some people. Within virtual communities, social responsibility can be reduced or be less relevant. These communities become more convenient for people because of the communication and the density of interactions they can have just by using an electronic device anywhere they are.

As social media is the environment where these virtual communities are established, Duggan et. al. (2015) identify different styles of social media and classified them into six types.

1. Blogs and micro-blogs: These are interactive websites where people share information about specific topics. It could be about personal commentaries or business content. Tumblr is a common example of a blog, and Twitter is the most famous example of a micro-blog.

2. Collaborative projects: this is a website where people work on the same online page and multiple users can edit the information content. The most famous example is Wikipedia.

3. Virtual game worlds: it is a computer-simulated environment where many users can create their own avatars and play together in real-time. Second life and the sims are the most common games in this category.

4. Social networking sites: these pages allow people to share ideas, post, photos, and videos with other people around the world. Some examples are Facebook, and Instagram.

5. Virtual social worlds: Users build these worlds where they can play. They allow the users to collaborate with others. They share specific objectives, rules, and the same tools to create their cities or landscapes. Minecraft and Fortnite are currently very famous.

6. Content communities: those communities are groups of people who share the same interests. They participate in the same space for the same purpose, creating, sharing, and consuming content of interest.

All these media are environments where virtual communities can come together, communicate, and interact among themselves to share their common interest and ideas. Fernback (2007) explains that virtual communities are too personal because people create a sense of community, they build relationships and share the same purpose within the community.

The media allows people to gather in a virtual space, and they are also bonded by a specific personal interest. The website mighty networks (2022) recognizes that communities can be classified by the interest or topics they share. Here are some examples of virtual communities.

- Health and wellness: subjects related to healthy habits and routines.
- Personal development: Explore people's potential.
- Hobbies: Free time activities like playing sports, films, crafts, or music.
- Careers or entrepreneurship: Students or entrepreneurs learn and share with each other.
- Mastering skills: Here you can learn something new such as language, marketing, drawing, or building something.
- Spirituality or religion: communities to grow in religious or spiritual aspects.

- Healing: people support each other to overcome traumatic experiences.

The primary purpose of a virtual community is to exchange information, but also foster interpersonal communication. For this reason, people try to find a group that has the same interest as them.

2.3.1 Characteristics of a virtual community

Real communities and virtual communities are very alike. They have certain characteristics to fulfill, so they can be called communities. Van Dijk (1997) demonstrates that virtual communities are as real as they coexist on the internet; they have strengths, weaknesses, and specific characteristics to fulfill. These characteristics are related to communication, membership, social organization, rules, culture, language, and patterns of interaction.

Van Dijk (1997) identifies four characteristics on virtual communities. They are represented in Table 1.

Characteristic	Virtual community
Composition and activity	Loose affiliations of special interest. Special activities.
Social organization	Not tied to place and time.
Language and interaction	Verbal and paralanguage (text, data, graphics, screens).
Culture and identity	Partial plural heterogeneous.

(Table 1)

The first feature refers to the kind of people that join. They could be from different ages, but they share the same target or interest. Social organization is the most remarkable feature of a virtual community because people do not have a specific place or time to meet; it works without ties. To communicate and interact, they can use more than verbal language, they can use other sources they can find on the internet like videos, graphics, or audio. The culture and identity are built by the members even before they join a virtual community. In this characteristic, people already have a common particular interest in some topics or activities, when they join a community, they are already heterogeneous because they can be the same age or from the same country,

Some similar characteristics are considered by Capece & Costa (2013). They identify five main characteristics of virtual communities.

1. Group consciousness: This feature refers to the community identity within and outside the community. This means that the members recognize their membership to the group all the time.


2. Sharing consciousness: This one is about channels and tools that the members use to keep communication inside and outside the community. Besides, they strengthen the culture, values, codes of conduct within the group, identity, and symbols.

3. Moral responsibility: This feature is about the support and good attitude to preserve old members and enroll new ones to actively maintain the virtual community.

4. Members' interaction: it is the communication among community members based on interests and experiences.

5. Norm of Reciprocity: this feature is about social norms and refers to the feeling of helping and supporting each other. Members grow this feeling that others inside the community would help them in the future if they need it.

Table 2 presents some examples of the characteristics of a virtual community according to Capece & Costa (2013). The examples are screenshots taken from the data collected from the virtual community being studied.

Characteristic	Example
<p>1. Group Consciousness</p>	<p>When members share a post with hashtags like #Englishteacher, or #teacherlife, they are recognizing their membership to the virtual community.</p> 
<p>2. Sharing Consciousness</p>	<p>Some of the members decide to use Facebook messenger or WhatsApp to keep communication outside the group.</p>



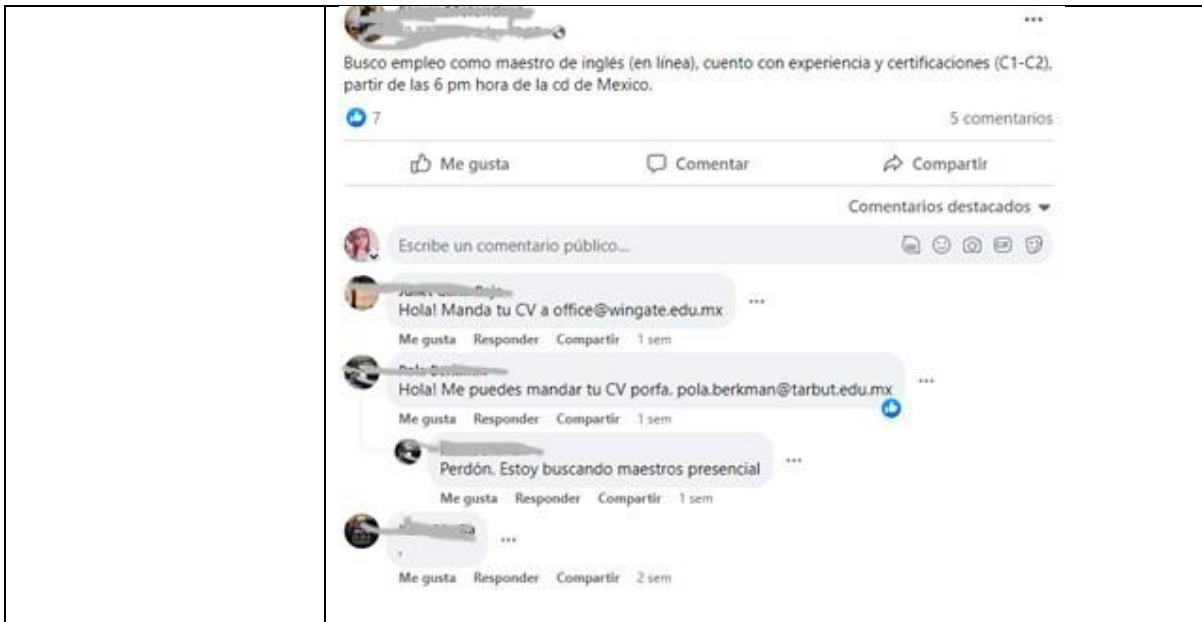
Inside the group, they way they communicate is by posting and sharing information.



3. Moral
Responsibility

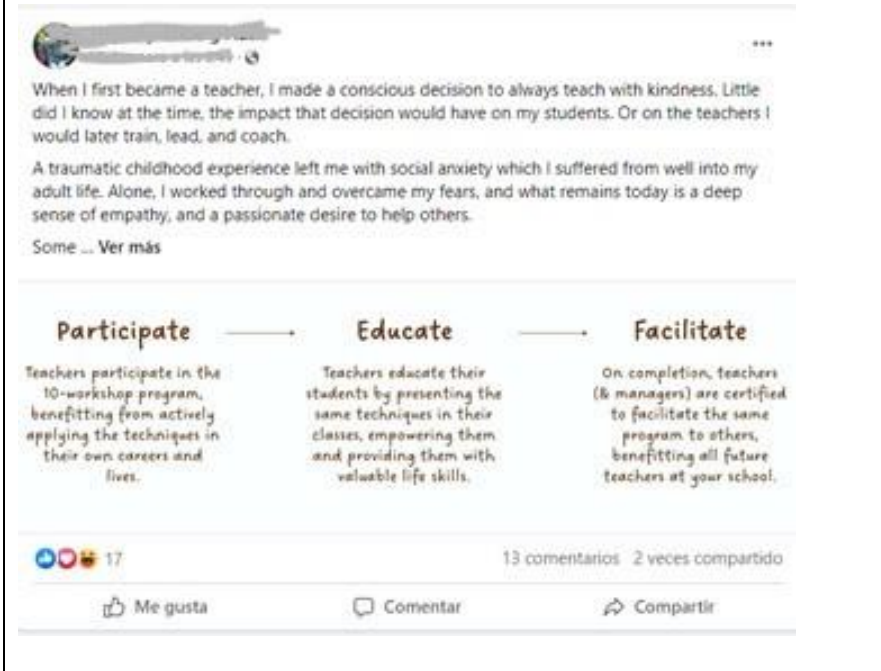
Welcome new members and invite old members to attract new people to join the virtual community.

	<p>As you join, please let us know where you are from. There is nothing like making connections nearby.</p> <p>7 35 comentarios</p> <p>Me gusta Comentar Compartir</p> <p>Ver 9 comentarios anteriores</p> <p>Hi , I'm from Morelos</p> <p>Me gusta Responder Compartir</p> <p>Verónica Gordo hello welcome vero! Thank you for joining!</p> <p>Me gusta Responder Compartir</p> <p>also, I recently posted a question. If you are interested please let me know commenting under that post</p> <p>Me gusta Responder Compartir</p> <p>thanks</p> <p>Me gusta Responder Compartir</p> <p>Verónica thank you Vero</p> <p>Me gusta Responder Compartir</p> <p>Hidalgo, Mexico.</p> <p>Me gusta Responder Compartir</p> <p>welcome!</p> <p>Me gusta Responder Compartir</p>
<p>4. Members' Interaction</p>	<p>Most of the topics of communication in the group are about interests and experiences. The members try to share job opportunities as part of the topics they have in common.</p>



5. Norm of Reciprocity

The members can share feelings and emotions about their teaching experience or life. Other members can share also experiences and show support.



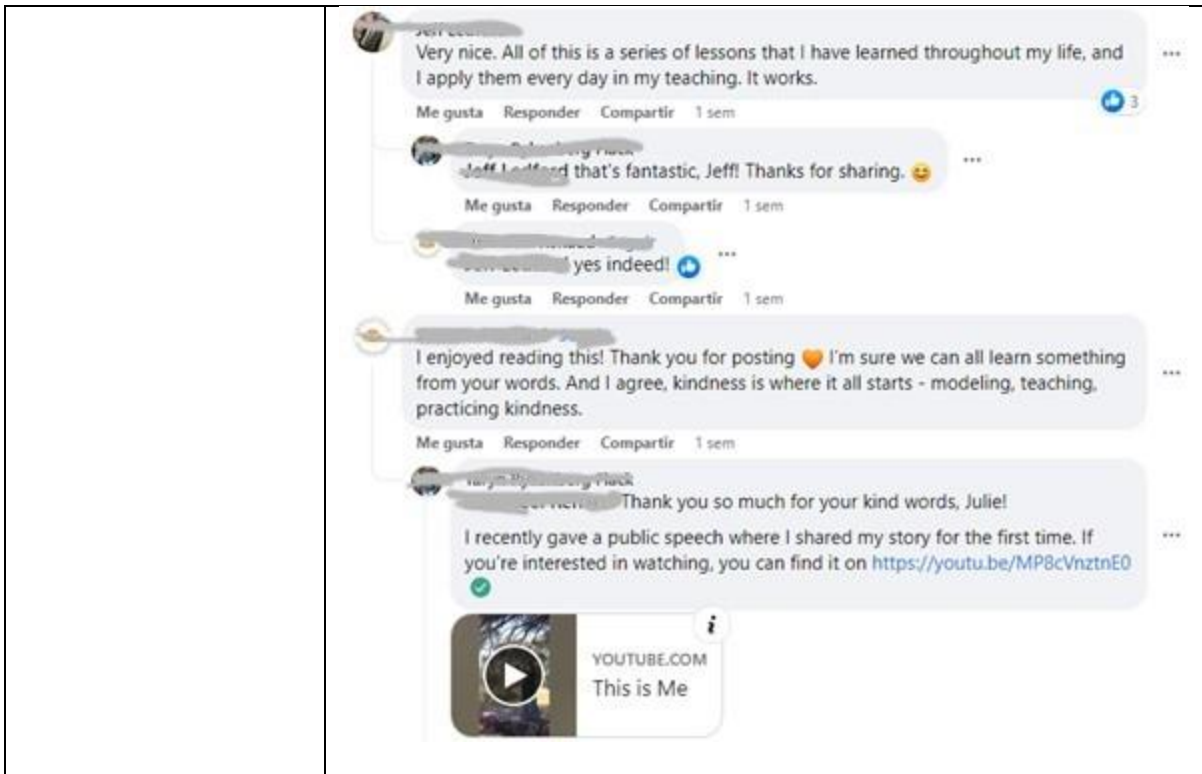


Table 2: Examples of the characteristics of a virtual community (Based on Capece & Costa, 2013)

There is one more author that presents a similar classification of the characteristics of a virtual community. Muniz (2001) presents a classification that includes membership, social interaction, and the communicative part that might exist in a virtual group. Here are the categories:

- **Membership:** This characteristic refers to the connection that links group members within the virtual community, at what degree people feel part of the group.
- **Influence:** This refers to the way members feel influential within that community and among other members. This influence can be reached through their interactions, and comments where they reflect on their ideas and values and try to share them with others.

- **Integration and fulfillment of needs:** This characteristic refers to the ability of the whole members as a group to fulfill the needs of every member, to join them together by communicating, sharing, and exchanging information or different topics.
- **Shared emotional connection:** This characteristic is built when the members share similar stories, feeling, and emotions. They share similar situations, and they identify with the other members. The members receive other members' support.

People in virtual communities become a network society that develops certain characteristics and rules they need to follow as a real-life group. All the features mentioned before can be applied to any type of virtual community if they want to stay active for a long time.

2.3.2 Sense of Community

Just as it was mentioned before, a virtual community shares interests and creates a bond to build relationships inside and outside the community. Blanchard & Markus (2004) point out that when the members build relationships within the group, they are developing a sense of community. Some authors have tried to define what is the real meaning of a sense of community because it can also be connected to real-life communities. However, García et al. (1999) explain that there is no specific definition since every community is different, and for that reason, to understand the sense of community, various factors are needed to take into consideration.

McMillan & Chavis (1986) elucidate that there are three dimensions that build up the sense of community; membership, influence, and immersion.

1. **Membership:** when people grow positive feelings of belonging to a virtual community.

2. Influence: The influence the members have among other members or within the community.

3. Immersion: The interaction and the flow that the members experience in the community.

The components of the sense of community are closely connected to members' behavior within the community, and they can be observed in the interactions they have and the way they communicate.

After analyzing the three dimensions presented by McMillan & Chavis (1986), other authors tried to define the sense of community. Later, Hoffman & Novak (1996) define the sense of virtual community as the psychological state of recognizing the three dimensions, membership, influence, and immersion, developed through the activities and interactions of the virtual communities.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) build a theoretical model to explain how the sense of community is developed within a community. It must be emphasized that today, this model can be applied to virtual communities. The model is represented in figure 1.

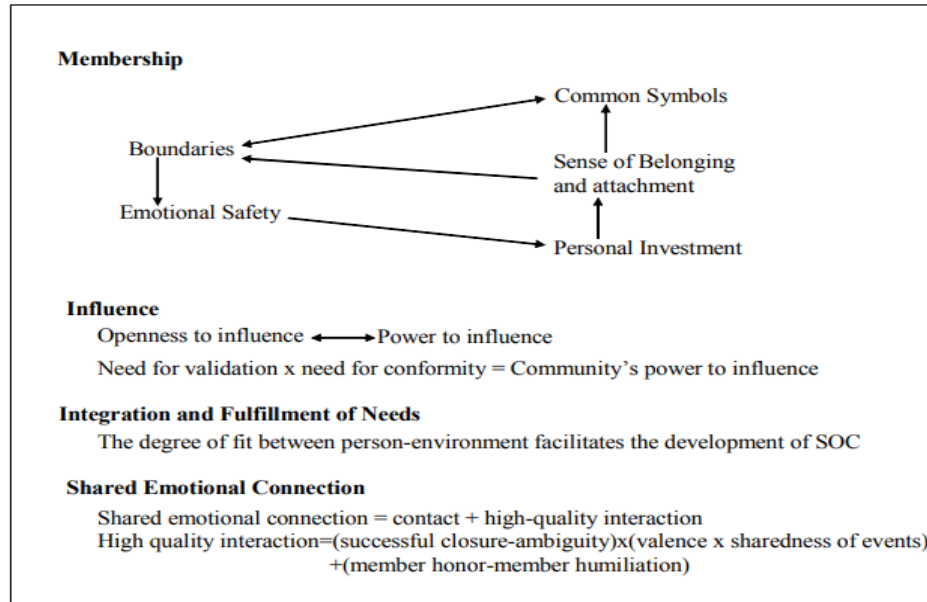


Figure 1: Elements of a sense of community (McMillan and Chavis, 1986).

Figure 1 represents the three dimensions mentioned before and how they integrate to develop a sense of community. It can be observed that the members get rewards just for being members of the community, and they grow in status within the community. In addition, they share an emotional connection that arises and increases with the interaction. the more the interaction, the greater the emotional connection that the members develop.

2.4 Computer-Mediated Communication

Technology has transformed the impact of communications among people. Now technology has a big implication for human relationships (Chesebro, 1999). Oldenburg (1999) presents the idea that people need a second or third place where they can fulfill the essential need for social interaction and communication. These places can be conceptualized as virtual spaces, and this is where computer-mediated communication becomes part of people's daily life. People connect to

the internet and communicate through social media, and that communication is part of what CMC encompasses.

December (1996) defined CMC as a method where people create, exchange, and perceive information that helps them to decode and transmit a message through the use of the internet, emails, cellphone texts, or instant messages. This includes any human interaction that can be written or oral.

2.4.1 Characteristics of Computer-Mediated Communication

Communication through the internet involves a higher interaction frequency. CMC has become very popular and useful because it has helped people to keep in touch with their family and friends, besides, it has displayed that now the internet is no longer used only for task-oriented purposes (Wellman & Hampton, 1999).


According to Romiszowski (1990), Computer-mediated communication has certain characteristics. Some of them are:

- **Interactive:** It is highly Interactive. It means that you can send, and receive written or oral information. This characteristic also allows people to react to other members' publications.
- **Multiway communication:** This characteristic refers to the way people can receive and respond to messages from different participants. In one single conversation can participate more than two people.
- **Synchronous communication:** This communication is like a face-to-face conversation. The response is received immediately like in a phone conversation or a classroom discussion.

• Asynchronous communication: In this communication, the person who sends a message needs to wait for an answer. This could be like writing an email and waiting for a response.

Taking into account the data that is being collected for this research and the virtual community being studied, Table 3 shows examples of the characteristics of CMC in the virtual group “English Teachers Mexico”.

Characteristic	Example
Interactive	All the communication presented in the community is written. It starts when a member posts something on the group. People in this group can use English or Spanish to communicate. Then, other members comment or react with emojis on the post if they want to share their ideas or feelings about the information presented. The interactions are regulated by the group’s administrators, the comments must be checked and authorized by them before any other member can see them in the post.

	
<p>Multiway communication</p>	<p>Members in this group can use other channels to communicate.</p> <p>If they are willing to do it, they can be in contact using Facebook messenger, or WhatsApp.</p> <p>If other members decide to keep the communication just by posting information and sharing comments, they can do it in the facebook group, in this way, all the members can interact inside the facebook virtual community.</p>



	
<p>Synchronous communication</p>	<p>To keep synchronous communication, members use Facebook messenger or WhatsApp.</p> 
<p>Asynchronous communication</p>	<p>Not all the people in the group can or want to keep this type of communication, and for this reason, the ones who decide to maintain just asynchronous communication can comment on other members' publications or post their own publications.</p>



Table 3: examples of computer-mediated communication (Based on Romiszowski, 1990)

CMC can also rise problems of communication or miscommunication, especially with expressions or the use of emoticons. Social media enables people to express their ideas. Nonetheless, they start changing expressions' meanings, they use emojis for specific messages or specific words. These can lead to misunderstandings. If a person does not know the real meaning or use of an emoji, a word, or a phrase, they can misunderstand, or just not understand the message. Walther (2013) claims that there is a possibility to avoid misinterpretation by following social cues that real-life context, the Internet, or social media can offer.

2.4.2 Advantages of using Computer-Mediated Communication

The internet has changed people's lives all over the globe. Today, people use computers, tablets, and cellphones to connect to the internet. Rogers (2003) estimates that in 2002, there were 544 million people using the internet all around the world, and the numbers continue increasing. Due to globalization, the use of technology in people's everyday lives, and the use of the internet,

computer-mediated communication results in an important part of the innovation in the communication area of business, education, and leisure (Althaus, 1997).

One of the most relevant advantages of using CMC is time and place. The combination of the internet and the cellphone allows people to be in touch anytime, anywhere (Barnes, 2003). People can send and answer instant messages or emails at work, or even on the street. It does not matter if the people who receive the message are available, they would receive the messages and respond later. Berry (2004) considers that the asynchronous and synchronous communication characteristic is the best advantage of CMC because allows people to keep long conversations, and share ideas at any time.

CMC allows people to communicate and be in touch with many people simultaneously in any part of the world. This advantage can result convenient when people need to transmit information to a large number of people (Althaus, 1997). They can send just one email or message and add as many addresses as they want.

Berry (2004) believes that there are no limits to communication in CMC. It helps people to build long-distance relationships in business or education and helps people to keep in touch with family and friends. The best part of this communication is that cell phones and other devices enable people to save conversations or any other information they share through CMC. The information can be checked for future reference (Berry, 2004).

2.4.3 Disadvantages of using Computer-Mediated Communication

Berry (2004) identifies that some of the problems of using CMC are related to people who do not know how to use technology properly. Barnes (2003) describes some disadvantages when using CMC.

- Instant response: Most of the messages or information sent through CMC need a reply, however, the people, who receive the message, might not be available or might have technical problems which do not allow them to respond immediately. This situation can lead to problematic situations, especially in the business and educational context.

- Non-verbal communication: in computer-mediated communication, there is an absence of verbal communication, all the messages or information is sent via computers or other devices. When people receive messages, they cannot identify expressions or feelings in the words. This situation can lead to misunderstandings or miscommunication problems.

- Excess of information: Having access to information and communicating with people at anytime, anywhere can be fabulous, nevertheless, the overflow of information can result in a very problematic situation. Receiving too much information can create stress. This is known as “overflow” and leads people to in feeling frustrated (Lane, 1994).

- Reliability: As CMC is carried out via computers or other devices, people do not have real face-to-face interaction. This means that they do not know in real life, and they can feel distrust when receiving messages from new people.

2.4.4 The relevance of Computer-Mediated Communication in virtual communities

There are different elements that have contributed to the creation and upgrowth of virtual communities. The need for communication has led people to find different ways to be in touch with others from different parts of the world and the internet has created the perfect channel to do it. Besides, Technology is evolving, so that all people can have access to various devices that allow them to connect to the Internet from wherever they are. Paniaras (1997) claims that the emergence and growth of Computer-Mediated Communication systems have allowed people to interact in a synchronous and asynchronous way from any part of the globe.

The participants in an online community might find limitations derived from CMC, however, they are still able to replicate the features of a real face-to-face community such as generating social structures and functions, psychological benefits, involvement, and identity, and most importantly, communication (Papadakis, 2003). The online community members make use of the different tools CMC provide them to interact and transmit the information they want to the other members. They set their ways of communication, they share socioemotional content, and at the end, they create a sense of community just based on electronic discourse.

Virtual communities take advantage of all the CMC characteristics. Papadakis (2003) explains that virtual groups are social organizations that share an interest, they create their organization based on communication, and that is why they need to send and receive messages. Here is where all the characteristics of CMC are relevant for the community. They need to interact and find different communication channels. The members decide if they keep synchronous or asynchronous communication among themselves.

2.5 Chapter conclusion

This section of the research presented literature concerning ethnography, nethnography, and a clear definition of a virtual community, and its characteristics. The following chapter will discuss the methodology used in this investigation.

Chapter III Methodology

3. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology used in this research. First, the approach and method used to carry out the study are presented. Second, presents the study into a context and introduces a deep description of the participants. Third, the instruments and the data collection procedures are described. Finally, a conclusion of the chapter is provided.

3.1 Approach

The present study follows a qualitative approach. Mogalakwe (2006) refers that qualitative research is more related to social sciences such as anthropology, philosophy, psychology, history, and sociology. Using this approach, allows the researcher to find explanations for specific social problems or situations. It involves gathering and interpreting non-numerical data by collecting evidence using interviews, observations, and focus groups. It also pursues answers to questions related to social issues (Mack & Woodsong, 2005).

Specifically, this qualitative research follows an ethnomethodological approach. It was first developed by Harold Garfinkel (1967) as a method to study and understand social actions and organization. It has been very useful to analyze conversations and for membership Categorization Analysis. Liddicoat (2020) explains that this approach helps the researcher explore large social groups by examining routine, practical, everyday activities with the purpose

of understanding the actors' membership within a community, the events, and even the objects that form their social world.

3.2 Method

Harling (2012) defines a case study as a holistic search that investigates a social phenomenon within a specific context. This means that the study is presented as an individual case. This research presents a case study since the virtual community is well defined and all the members share the same interest to join this group, and the same geographical location.

As mentioned in chapter 2, this study follows a nethnographic research orientation whereby a virtual community is analyzed. Within this group, cultural and communicative characteristics such as interactions, communication, and membership are observed and analyzed in a depth way.

3.3 Context

The study is carried out in a virtual community, more specifically on Facebook social media. Davis (2016) defines social media as an ensemble of net applications. All social media platforms have the same characteristics such as allowing people to create, organize and share content in a collaborative or individual way. Some examples of these platforms are Wikipedia, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Even when all social media platforms share the same characteristics, they are unique in their structures, design, norms, and user bases (Davis, 2016).

Facebook is a social networking site where people can connect and share with friends, family, or people all around the world. It was created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. In the

beginning, it was designed just for Harvard University students. This social media was a big success in this place, and for that reason, Zuckerberg expanded Facebook to all users in the world. The only requirements to fulfill to join Facebook were to be over the age of 13 and to have an email address (GCFGlobal, 2015).

Facebook created a special tool for people who share the same interests. This option is the Facebook Groups. It was launched on the platform in 2010. It is a virtual space where people create, connect, and share information with other people who enjoy similar interests (GCFGlobal, 2015). Any person can create a group on Facebook and the topics are endless. Today, there are thousands of groups on the Facebook platform, and the categories are very varied, there are groups about music, fashion, business, education, science, and more. Some of them are public and others are private, and people can join as many groups as they want. That is how virtual communities start in this social media.

The virtual community studied is a Facebook group is called “English Teachers Mexico”. It is a private group, only the administrators can decide who enters this virtual group. The group was created in June 2020. The characteristic that all the participants have in common here is being English teachers from Mexico. It is a big group because there are over 2200 members, and it is still growing.

Members join this Facebook group by answering a few questions and accepting the norms and rules established by the creators and administrators of the virtual community. The people who created the group regulate the information members can share, the postings have to be related to teaching English or being an English teacher.

3.4 Participants

There are many members in this group, however, not all of them can be part of the study. The participants are users who have constant activity and participation within the group. They are female and male and are all English Teachers working in public and private educational institutions from different levels. They are all from Mexico, from different states. The teachers' age range goes from 30 to 60 years old, nevertheless, the most active members of the group are the youngest.

The participants have different levels of education, some of them have just a bachelor's degree, and others have a master's and Ph.D. Degree. They are experienced teachers, about 10 years or more of experience. Some of them have worked in one single level like university, nonetheless, others have had the opportunity to work in different levels such as primary, middle high school, and high school.

A more detailed description of the participants in the focus group is given in the following table. In order to protect the participants' identities, their names have been changed to be presented here.

Name	Age	Experience as English Teacher	Member Since (in the virtual community)	Frequency of interaction in the virtual community	Communication with other members
Elly	34	12 years of experience mainly in primary and	2020	Twice or three times a week.	Facebook group.

		middle-high, and high school.			Facebook messenger. Whatsapp.
Alma	32	8 years of experience in middle-high school.	2020	Twice a week.	Facebook group. Facebook messenger.
Dany	36	10 years of experience mainly in primary school.	2021	At least once a week.	Facebook group. Facebook messenger.
Lucky	42	20 years of experience at the university level.	2021	Once a month. But he reads the posts and information.	Facebook group.
Jimmy	28	5 years of experience in high school.	2021	Once a week, but only if he wants to share or ask something.	Facebook group.

3.5 Instrument

Following a qualitative direction, this study first takes posts and comments that members of the virtual community share and use. Then, an online focus group interview is used in order to triangulate the data. The posts under study are taken from the virtual group, and it is information members share and comment on to interact and communicate among themselves. In those posts, the members' names have been covered in order to protect members' privacy and identity.

The focus group interview was carried out online because the teachers who agreed to participate lived in different parts of Mexico, and it was not possible for them to meet in one place. The advantage of doing this interview in a focus group was that the participants felt more comfortable when they realized that they shared similar ideas and experiences. The interview was carried out in Spanish to provide the teachers more confidence to express more and better their ideas in their mother tongue. The participants in this focus group were four English teachers. They have about 10 years of experience working as English teachers and they have worked at different educational levels.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

After gathering all the data and applying the instruments, all the information was analyzed and classified in order to answer the research questions of this study. First, the screenshots of the posts taken from the virtual community were classified. Capece & Costa's (2013) proposal of characteristics of virtual communities is considered for the classification of the posts since the features they present are very similar. Then, the interview carried out in the focus group was transcribed. The most relevant information taken from the focus group was also classified into

Muniz's (2001) classification of characteristics of a virtual community. Those categories helped to answer the research questions. Finally, using the classification, and information from the transcription and the posts, the research questions were answered to find a conclusion to the study.

3.7 Chapter Conclusion

In the present chapter, the approach and method used in the research were discussed. It also showed in detail the specific elements to carry out the study such as context, participants and the instruments applied. The following chapter will present the analysis of the collected information and the findings according to them.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

4. Introduction

In this chapter, findings from the data collected in this research will be presented and discussed. The data obtained through the methodology mentioned in Chapter III is analyzed, presented, and discussed in detail. First, an analysis of the interview carried out in the focus group will be presented with charts and proper classification of the information got from the interviewees be discussed. Second, the classification of a nethnographic analysis of the posts got from the virtual community will be presented with a chart, a classification, and a discussion.

As was stated previously, this study aimed to explore the values, interactions, and participation of English teachers from Mexico in a Facebook virtual community. As well as the benefits teachers have to join this type of sharing community, and if it is related to their teaching beliefs. It also analyses the social impact that the virtual community provides to the members and how virtual reality impacts the teaching practice of the members of this online community. To accomplish the goal of this study, it was important to bear in mind the research questions posed in the first chapter of this investigation. These are as follows:

1. Why do English teachers decide to join this virtual community?
2. How do they get engaged to become part of this online community and develop membership inside the virtual community?
3. What are the main topics English teachers discuss in this community and how do these topics reflect their teaching values?

In the following sections, the results, and the analysis of the interview with the focus group and the analysis of the posts will be explained.

4.1 The focus group and the interview

During the first step of the data analysis, the interview was carried out within a focus group formed by 5 members of the virtual community. The interview was online because the members are from different parts of Mexico, and they could not travel to a specific place because of their jobs. The interview was recorded and transcribed. With the answers obtained in this interview, the data were classified into four categories. As it was explained in Chapter 3, the interview transcription was analyzed and classified by using the suggested categories Munis' (2001) proposes, membership, influence, Integration, fulfillment of needs, and Shared emotional connection. The results are explained in the following sections.

4.1.1 Membership

Membership is the characteristic that the community develops when there is a connection that links group members within the virtual community, and it refers to what degree people feel part of the group (Munis, 2001). In the interview, certain questions lead the interviewees to share what kind of posts, information, or interactions made them feel that membership.

For example, generally speaking, they felt membership when they took some time to check the posts and comments in the virtual community. However, three other cases of membership expressions were identified: sharing funny posts, venting about teaching tiredness and sharing materials and teaching ideas. These expressions may be seen in the following excerpts.

Dany	<p>... intento ponerme al corriente con todo lo que han publicado y comentado. Me tomo un momento para leer las publicaciones y así poder comentar algo.</p> <p>... I try to catch up on everything others have published and commented. I take my time to read posts and then follow up on comments.</p>
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Some of the members really take some time every day to check what is new in the virtual community. They comment on other members' posts, share their ideas or experiences, and react to what they find fascinating. It is interesting to see how some members are very active in the group because they post and comment every day in the virtual community. They get involved in conversations and even arguments that can last for days. They are very passionate about their participation in the virtual community.

Membership of the virtual community by sharing memes or funny posts about English teaching.

Alva	<p>... las cosas graciosas sobre maestros, donde uno se ve reflejado.</p> <p>... Funny things about teachers where I can see myself reflected.</p>
Lucky	<p>... algunas veces me identifico y más con algún otro meme que comparten sobre la vida de docente,</p> <p>... sometimes I identify myself, but when I identify the most is when members share something funny about the teachers' life.</p>
Dany	<p>... Creo que con el hecho de que te puedas reír un poco y verte reflejado en un meme, hace que te relajes.</p>

	... I believe that with the fact that you can laugh a little and see yourself reflected in a meme, it makes you feel relax.
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As some of the interviewees mentioned, being a teacher is difficult. For this reason, they find in the virtual community a place where they can laugh at themselves and at situations that seem frustrating, but at the same time funny. It is important to relax, and some of the members believe that laughing is the best way to do it, thus, they create memes, share them, and comment about it. Other members see themselves reflect on the memes, they react, and they even share the memes with other colleagues at work.

As the interviewees referred, memes are an important part of the virtual community, and it is not something bad to laugh at the situations that happen at school or with their students, on the contrary, it is better to laugh because they can see that other teachers live similar situations as they. Therefore, memes can lead to conversations where members can share funny situations or experiences related to what the memes are representing.

Membership referring to how being an English teacher or just being a teacher is exhausting.

Alva	... También cuando comparten publicaciones donde dicen lo cansado que es ser maestro porque me siento de la misma manera, o cuando cuento los días para las vacaciones. ...Also, when other members share posts about how tiring teachers' lives are because I feel the same way, or when I count the days for vacation.
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Lucky	<p>... algunas veces me identifico y más con algún otro meme que comparten sobre la vida de docente, que es cansada o que te pasa tal o cual cosa y el meme lo representa con claridad. Dirían los chavos, “sí, soy”.</p> <p>... Sometimes I identify myself with some of the memes that other members share, and I identify myself even more when they are about teachers’ lives, how tiring it is, and this or that, and the meme represents very clear the situation. How teenagers would say, “I am”.</p>
Jimmy	<p>... pero en serio que la vida docente es cansada. Es mucho trabajo y más si trabajas con niños.</p> <p>... Teachers’ lives are very tiring. It is a lot of work and even more when you work with children.</p>

Being a teacher is a very exhausting job, and that is an idea that most of the members of the virtual community agreed with. They share memes and ideas about it, and sometimes, they even count the day for vacations. They create posts and memes where these vacation cravings are reflected. There are some specific moments during the school year when teachers are looking forward to a break because they feel tired.

Membership when they find interesting posts related to teaching or material they can use to teach or similar ideas with other members just because they know that the other members are English teachers as they are.

Elly	<p>Me podría identificar con el material que comparten porque es la forma en que yo también trabajo. Y con los memes también.</p> <p>I could identify myself with the material members share because it's the way I work too. And with the memes too.</p>
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Alva	<p>... tienen las mismas ideas que yo. Cuando expresan algunos compañeros que hay que prepararse más, es ahí donde me identifico porque yo tengo esa misma idea.</p> <p>... They have the same ideas as me. When some colleagues say that you have to prepare more, that's where I identify myself because I have the same idea.</p>
Lucky	<p>... me agrada ver que hay muchos maestros de inglés en México y que encontramos un espacio específico para compartir.</p> <p>... It's glad to see that there are many English teachers in Mexico and that we found a specific space to share.</p>
Dany	<p>... una ventaja es que me entero de cosas de la docencia que no sabía, en específico de ser maestro de inglés.</p> <p>... One advantage is that I learn things about teaching that I didn't know, specifically about being an English teacher.</p>

Elly	<p>... he conocido a gente genial con la que puedo hablar de lo mismo e intercambiar opiniones.</p> <p>... I have met great people with whom I can talk about the same thing and exchange opinions.</p>
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It is very common that in this virtual community, other members share material about reading, vocabulary, and grammar. They share the material without expecting anything in return, however, there are other members who create interactive or printable material that other members can purchase for a small amount of money. The administrators of the virtual community allow this exchange because the effort of the creators of the material is remunerated since it is specific and sometimes personalized material.

According to the ideas that the interviewees mentioned, it is clear that they reach this specific characteristic of the virtual community: membership. They feel part of this community because they are English teachers, they are all from Mexico, and what joins them more is to know they are sharing ideas with people that understand and understand what it means to be an English teacher.

4.1.2 Influence

Munis (2001) explains that influence is the way members feel influenced within the virtual community and among other members of the community. This characteristic can be achieved within the virtual community and among the members by sharing ideas that reflect their values

and the way they conduct and behave in the real world. In this case, their values, and ideas as English teachers, how they teach, lead their students, and how they behave with their peers in real life and in the virtual community.

The interviewees expressed feeling influenced in two main cases; when they reflect their values in their posts and comments sharing their ideas.

Lucky	<p>... Por eso también intento que mis valores como persona se vean reflejados en los comentarios, e incluso mi formación académica. Me gusta escribir correctamente.</p> <p>... That is why I also try to reflect my values as a person in the comments, and even my academic training. I like writing correctly.</p>
Jimmy	<p>... al estar en un grupo donde la mayoría de las personas tiene determinada formación académica, es importante reflejar lo que eres.</p> <p>... Being in a group where most people have a certain educational background, it's important to reflect who you are.</p>

On one hand, for most of the members, being respectful of people inside and outside the virtual community is important because it reflects their education and their values. They believe that even when they do not see the other members face to face or they do not know them, they must show their values in the way they write or in the content they share. whether they write in

English or Spanish, they try to understand when it is right to be formal and informal in their comments. This includes writing contractions, abbreviations, or even emojis.

On the other hand, there are just a few members inside the virtual community that are rude with their comments or expressing their ideas. It is good to express ideas and share them with others. Some of the rules in the community are to respect each other, be respectful with comments, content, and ideas, and not insult others; however, there are members that break the rules by starting arguments when they disagree about other members' ideas or opinions. In this case, administrators take the rude members out of the group to avoid further troubles within the virtual community.

Another way of expressing their influence is when they reflect their way of teaching in the content or ideas they share.

Alva	<p>... en caso de que publique algo, esa publicación representa la forma en que a mi me gusta enseñar a mis alumnos. Ya sea material de lecturas, o si es algún cartel informativo.</p> <p>... In case I post something, that post represents the way I like to teach my students. Whether it is reading material, or if it is an informative poster.</p>
Lucky	<p>... Casi no publico en el grupo, pero de igual manera, si llego a hacerlo, el contenido representa lo que a mí me gusta enseñar a mis alumnos ...</p> <p>... I hardly ever publish in the group, but in the same way, if I do, the content represents what I like to teach to my students...</p>

Elly	<p>... En cuanto a mis creencias como maestra, pues no se sí lo que publico refleja eso, pero si estoy segura de que refleja los métodos que yo empleo con mis alumnos.</p> <p>... Regarding my beliefs as a teacher, I don't know if what I publish reflects that, but I am sure that it reflects the methods that I use with my students.</p>
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Sharing material is very common in the virtual community, and sometimes members explain how the English teacher can work. some others share videos where members can see or do activities for their students.

In this group, there are English teachers from different educational levels, and all of them have different ways of teaching, different material, and activities that can be useful for everybody. Sometimes, members ask for specific material they are looking for, and many members share what they have without asking for anything, just gratitude.

Influence is important for the members of this virtual community to share and reflect their education, ideas, and values as English teachers because it is something that they also do in real life, in the school where they work. besides, sharing material and methods reflect members' influence because their care about their peers in the virtual community and They are not envious to share the material they have or that they themselves create.

4.1.3 Integration and Fulfillment of Needs

This is a characteristic where all the members in the group need to fulfill the needs of other members and try to join the group as a whole by communicating, sharing ideas and support, and exchanging information on different topics (Munis, 2001). This characteristic is very similar to Influence because members share their ideas; however, the difference between one and the other is that with Integration and Fulfillment of Needs they just need to communicate to integrate with the community. Communication is an important part of humans. People have this tremendous need to communicate with their peers, no matter what is communicated, the important thing is to perform a communicative act. That is the way in which one of the main needs of the human being, communication, is fulfilled.

The interviewees show integration and fulfillment of needs in two main instances; when they share teaching activities that can be useful for every teacher in the group.

Alva	... estaba buscando grupos en Facebook donde pudiera encontrar apoyo de parte de otros maestros, material, métodos o estrategias que me pudieran ayudar en mis clases en línea. Y la verdad es que los grupos de Facebook me ayudaron mucho durante las clases en línea. ... I was looking for groups on Facebook where I could find support from other teachers, material, methods or strategies that could help me in my online classes. And the truth is that the Facebook groups helped me a lot during the online classes.
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<p>Lucky</p>	<p>... ya dentro del grupo, encontré apoyo, buenas ideas y material para poder trabajar en línea porque también andaba medio perdido y abrumado con lo de la pandemia.</p> <p>... when I entered the group, I found support, good ideas, and material to be able to work online because I was also kind of lost and overwhelmed by the pandemic situation.</p>
<p>Jimmy</p>	<p>... Lo que me llamó la atención de lo que me dijo fue que compartían material para trabajar en clase y como a veces me cuesta trabajo encontrar material, vi una oportunidad en este grupo.</p> <p>... What caught my attention from what she told me was that they shared material to work on in class and since I sometimes have a hard time finding material, I saw an opportunity in this group.</p>

Members share their methods, materials, and even their difficulties of teaching during the pandemic times. Most of the members agreed that working online was difficult at the beginning, and they needed to find something or someone to vent. They found this virtual community and started sharing ideas, material, and experiences that help them need their hunger for communication and understanding.

Another way to express their Integration and Fulfillment of Needs is when they help each other by finding job opportunities.

<p>Elly</p>	<p>... el grupo me ayudó a encontrar otra fuente de ingresos.</p>
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	... the group helped me find another income source.
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The pandemic situation was something difficult for most of the members of the virtual community, and for that reason, they start sharing online job opportunities to help other members who lost their jobs. Many of them managed to find temporary or permanent jobs in schools where they offered online classes and face-to-face classes. The important thing is that these job offers are shared without expecting something in return, members only do it because they want to help other colleagues in this virtual community.

As all the members are English teachers, they try to fulfill their needs by sharing material, ideas about their way of teaching, and their ideas about education. They wanted to find a place where they can be understood as English teachers, and they found the place in the virtual community of English teachers.

4.1.4 Shared Emotional Connection

The last characteristic suggested by Munis (2001) can be built when the members of the virtual community share similar stories, feeling, and emotions. They share similar situations, and they identify with the other members. The members receive other members' support.

In this criteria, the interviewees feel an emotional connection in three significant instances; when they find support from other members.

Alva	<p>...Aparte como me uní en plena pandemia, estaba buscando grupos en Facebook donde pudiera encontrar apoyo de parte de otros maestros ...</p> <p>... Besides, since I joined in the middle of the pandemic, I was looking for groups on Facebook where I could find support from other teachers...</p>
Alva	<p>... Encontré apoyo cuando más lo necesitaba en el momento de pandemia.</p> <p>...During pandemic times, I found support when I needed it the most.</p>

As it was already mentioned, the pandemic situation was difficult for most of the teachers, and many of them started looking for groups where they could find emotional support because they started feeling stressed and sad. Members started sharing their difficulties with their online classes, they found people who understood them and felt the same way as they were feeling.

When they feel motivated by the members of the virtual community, and motivated by the posts other members share.

Alva	<p>... las publicaciones donde se nos motiva, donde se dan comentarios positivos sobre la docencia. Así siento que no soy la única que a veces quisiera tirar la toalla.</p>
------	--

	<p>... the publications where we are motivated, where positive comments about teaching are given. So, I feel like I'm not the only one who sometimes wants to give up</p>
Alva	<p>... las ventajas es la motivación y el material que he tomado del grupo. En cuanto a la motivación, me da alegría saber que no soy la única con dificultades.</p> <p>... the advantages are the motivation and the material that I have taken from the group. Regarding motivation, it gives me joy to know that I am not the only one with difficulties.</p>
Lucky	<p>Me di cuenta de que muchas personas se sentían frustradas. Leer sus comentarios me daban ideas y me motivaban a seguir adelante.</p> <p>I realized that many people were frustrated. Reading their comments gave me ideas and motivated me to keep going.</p>

Some of the members wanted to quit their jobs as teachers during the pandemic situation because they were not motivated to continue. Students were also in difficulties, and they did not want to participate or do their activities at home. In the virtual community, teachers found support and motivation from other members to continue. They could see that they were not the only ones having a hard time. This group helped many teachers to continue with their jobs. Also, members have shared that they tried to motivate their students to not give up their education during that tough situation that was the pandemic.

And, when they find people to communicate, and they share the same ideas.

Alva	... Encontré apoyo cuando más lo necesitaba en el momento de pandemia. También he mantenido contacto con personas que me han aportado mucho. ... during the pandemic times, I found support when I needed it the most. I have also kept in touch with people who have helped me a lot.
Elly	... he conocido a gente genial con la que puedo hablar de lo mismo e intercambiar opiniones. ... I have met great people with whom I can talk about the same thing and exchange opinions.

Sometimes it is hard to find people who share the same ideas and understand the same topics, and in this virtual community, members found teachers colleagues that understand the topics and share the same ideas as they do. Even when the members are not from the same city or state, they keep in touch, and some of them have also found friends.

Not all the interviewees shared ideas about emotional connection because they have not reached this characteristic within the group. They showed other characteristics because they only identify themselves with the content other members share in the virtual community.

The interview transcription and the previous classification can be found in the Appendix.

4.2 posts analysis

The second part of the data analysis was the classification and analysis of the posts from a nethnographic approach. To do this, Capece & Costa's (2013) proposal of characteristics of virtual communities was considered for the classification in this part. This classification includes five categories: group consciousness, sharing consciousness, moral responsibility, members' interaction, and norm of reciprocity. The results of the categorization are explained and illustrated with data in the following sections.

4.2.1 Group Consciousness

Group Consciousness is a feature that refers to the community identity within and outside the community. This means that the members recognize their membership to the group all the time (Capece & Costa, 2013).

Capece & Costa (2013) explain that when members share a post with hashtags like #Englishteacher, or #teacherlife, they are recognizing their membership to the virtual community.

Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Group Consciousness



Some of the members reflect their membership by sharing what is happening in their lives. In this first example, this member shares a picture with the word “Holiday” written in the sand, and she explains that she is now on vacation for a few days. She wants to share this with the virtual community to express how relaxed she feels. Members in this group can share experiences or any other important thing or situation happening in their lives.

When they share posts making fun of what being an English teacher is.

Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Group Consciousness



Expectation vs Reality 😊

Did you have this experience?

#Memes #TeacherMemes #fun

lesson plan how it goes
in class



One of the members shared this post because lesson plans should be very well structured when you design and write them. However, when you put everything into practice during the class, it could result in a real mess. This meme represents the idea in two pictures and other members

understand the funny part of the messy bricks on the right side of the picture because it is true and it is something that happens to any teacher all the time.



Some teachers are very focused on teaching grammar and one of the members shared this meme about how he feels when a student makes a grammar mistake, he feels like dying. Other members react with laughs because they also feel the same way.



Some teachers still work in online classes and they know how difficult is that students to send their activities on time. One of the members shared this meme that seems to be a cover of a video that is about doing witchcraft to get your students' homework on time. She sees herself reflected in this post because is something that happens to her very often. She just tries to laugh at the situation, and other members do the same by sharing comments or funny reactions to the post.

When they share memes about their English teacher lives.

Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Group Consciousness



Sin dinero pero contento #YoDocente #LoQueCallamosLosMaestros



It's been a long year 😊
Obviously this is the first thing that came to my mind when I saw the flounder memes circulating...more SLP ones to come 😊
#slp #schoolbasedslps #slphumor #boredteachers #teacherhumor #teachermemes #thelittlemermaid #schoolslp #teacherproblems



**Teachers
in
August**



**Teachers
in
May**

Some of the posts that members share reflect teachers' life, what they do or what they expect during the school year, and sometimes their posts make reference to situations that most

of the teachers can face in their lives. The first post represents teachers during vacation. Sometimes they want to travel or do something different during the break. There are some teachers that do not earn enough money to be able to save and travel. Nevertheless, they feel happy to have a moment to relax. Members of this community know that breaks are important because they can rest from the stress and from their students. Other members understand the post and react with a happy emoji because they are also glad to have a break during the school year even if they do not have any money.

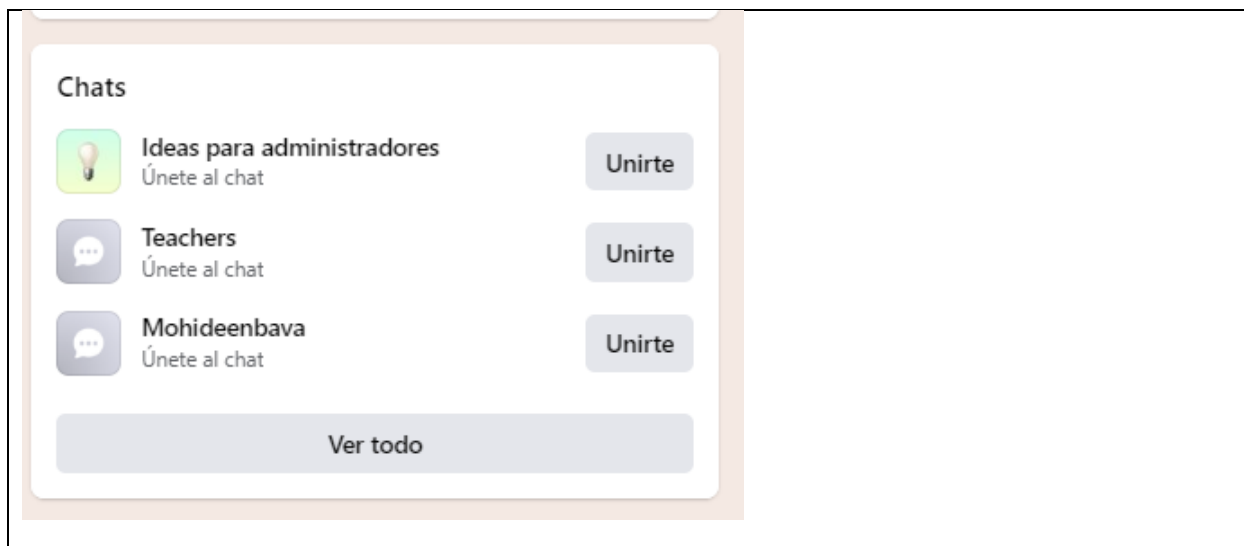
In the second post that a member shared, she is representing how teachers feel motivated, glowing, and excited when they start a new school year. Nevertheless, as the school year goes by, they start feeling tired and they lose their glow. This represents the fatigue of the teachers. Members know the feeling and react to the post to express their understanding.

4.2.2 Sharing Consciousness

This characteristic is about channels and tools that the members use to keep communication inside and outside the community (Capece & Costa, 2013). Also, they strengthen the culture, values, codes of conduct within the group, identity, and symbols. Some of the members decide to use Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp to keep communication outside the group.

Members can communicate using the new tool in Facebook groups. This new tool allows members to create chat rooms and name them with the topic they want to chat about, and any of the members can join and communicate with instant messages.

Example of the chat rooms found inside the virtual community



As it is a recent tool, the administrators integrated into the group, and there are just a couple of chat rooms in the virtual community and members still do not know how to use it well. For this reason, they have not taken advantage of these new chat rooms to create debates or conversations about specific topics.

Another way of communication is by commenting on members' posts. Their comments can express ideas and thoughts. The exchanging ideas process starts by posting something, then the members start commenting on it. Most of the comments express teachers' values and ideas about teaching and even as people in a society, respect and tolerance.

Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Sharing Consciousness



ELTACTION.COM

CLIL as the Way to Catch Students' Attention - EltAction

by Zofia Aktonorowicz-Sobótka Have you ever wondered what your "ideal" class would look li...

2 comentarios

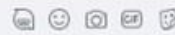
Me gusta

Comentar

Compartir



Envía tu primer comentario...



It's difficult for teachers to understand how CLIL works cause publishers have failed on actually giving good training when offering books that carry out this methodology .

Me gusta Responder Compartir 4 d Editado






I absolutely love teaching CLIL courses as well as training teachers to teach CLIL. It's so much fun.


Me gusta Responder Compartir 3 d


A member shared an article about the CLIL approach because she believes it is a good approach, but it is a little unknown and misunderstood, and this is how members start interacting about a topic they are interested in or they want to know more about it.



Publicación de True


 I see what you mean. However, just look at their posts and their comments. They have more mistakes in their writing than any of my students. Don't waste your time with them and report them instead so I can solve any issues amongst members.


Me gusta Responder Compartir 2 d   3


 deberías eliminar de este grupo a quienes toman este tema como algo chistoso, no le veo la gracia a que te falten al respeto.



Me gusta Responder Compartir 2 d   3

 Estoy de acuerdo contigo, porque somos adultos y Docentes (no somos adolescentes) Estoy de acuerdo.

Me gusta Responder Compartir 2 d 

 I think that the terms "fun" and "dynamic" are getting confused. As a teacher, there are instances when it's required to be serious and traditional, others (maybe most) where you must plan dynamic lessons, and some of them can be fun. Asking a teacher to plan only "fun" lessons is misleading and seems to give priority to entertainment rather than to learning. Maybe this was the meaning of their posts.... However, there is no reason to openly mock any teacher, just clarify what you meant, and why.

Also, when this teacher mentions "discipline", she doesn't necessarily mean behavior.

These are some interesting comments where some members are arguing on a post because a member did not respect the rules and shared something forbidden and made fun of other members' ideas. In these comments, members demand respect and that the administrators remove the person from the community. They explain that they show their values and professional respect.

Publicación de Vivi



Me gusta

Comentar

Compartir

Comentarios destacados ▾



I think if genuinely you are an English teacher you shouldn't degrade yourself by charging 50 pesos an hour. Also I know it's not intentional but it's an industry in which is being constantly exploited. You should be setting a happy medium between 10 to 15 dollars an hour. Do it for yourself.

...

Me gusta Responder Compartir 1 d

16



okay, you're right but there are people who can't pay by an English class and I'm not the only teacher in Mexico or online, I just charge 10 or 15 dollars for hour when I give Spanish class

...

Me gusta Responder Compartir 1 d



I charge the same, but for in person classes to a small community that has financial hardships. Personally I don't mind because I make it accesible to those kids who actually want to study it.

...

Me gusta Responder Compartir 22 h



agreed.

...

Me gusta Responder Compartir 17 h

Me gusta

Compartir

Comentarios destacados ▾



Up to 250 MXN

...

Me gusta Compartir 4 d



Thanks. This is helpful.

...

Me gusta Compartir 4 d



Anywhere between 150-300 depending on which part of Mexico you're in. I'm in a small town so my local students struggle with affording 150/hr, whereas in DF \$300 is fairly common.

...

Me gusta Compartir 3 d

3



\$300 mxn

...

Me gusta Compartir 3 d



It depends on the expertize of the teachers.

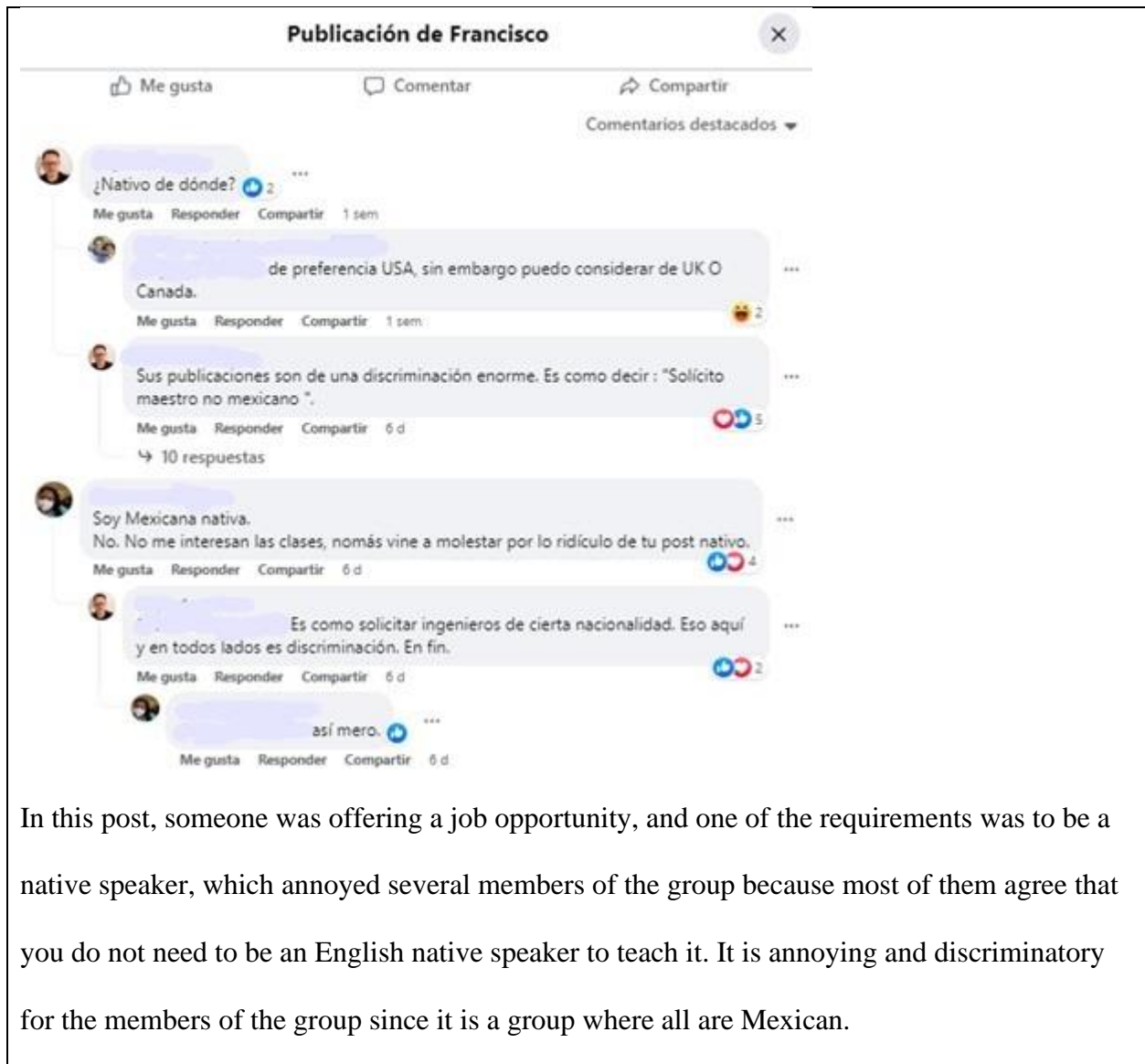
...

Me gusta Compartir 3 d

These two comment chains started because two different members asked about how much an English teacher can charge for private online lessons. Some members shared their experiences, and ideas and gave them some ideas about it. They explained that they do not have to devalue their work just because they teach online, and the charge should be different if it is for a single person or for a small group, as well as if it is per hour.



In this example, a member was reporting someone that was disrespectful to her, but the way she did it was very rude. Other members were complaining about it because she was asking for respect, however, she was not showing any and this is something that made angry to other members.



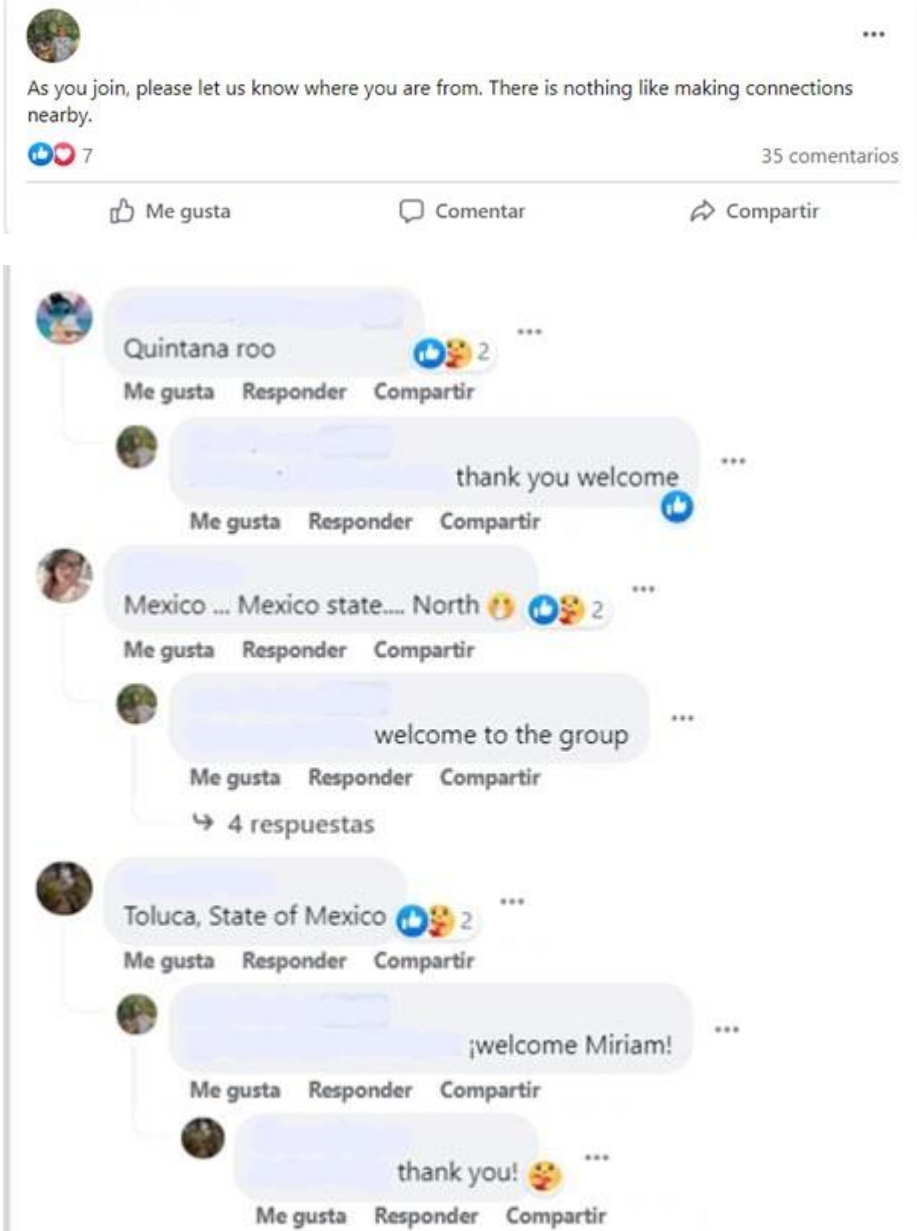
In this post, someone was offering a job opportunity, and one of the requirements was to be a native speaker, which annoyed several members of the group because most of them agree that you do not need to be an English native speaker to teach it. It is annoying and discriminatory for the members of the group since it is a group where all are Mexican.

4.2.3 Moral Responsibility

This characteristic is about the support and good attitude to preserve old members and enroll new ones to actively maintain the virtual community (Capece & Costa, 2013). Old members or even the group creators' welcome new members and invite other members inside the group to attract new people to join the virtual community.

Posts and comments where members welcome new ones.


Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Moral Responsibility



From time to time, the administrators post a welcome message and ask the new members to say hello and comment the city where they live and work. Old members also welcome those who are commenting and it is shown in this example post.

Posts where new members thank the opportunity to be part of the virtual community.

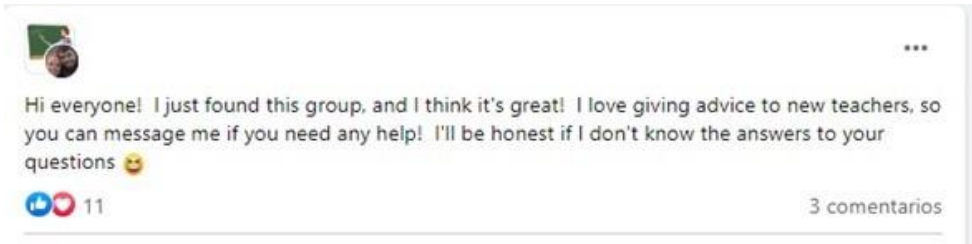
Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Moral Responsibility



Thank you for letting me in.

1 1 comentario

Me gusta Comentar Compartir



Hi everyone! I just found this group, and I think it's great! I love giving advice to new teachers, so you can message me if you need any help! I'll be honest if I don't know the answers to your questions 😊

11 3 comentarios

Sometimes, new members post greeting messages, therefore, other members say hello to them, or start communication with the new members. It is common to find posts where new members thank being allowed into the virtual community. Old members usually just react to the post or comment “welcome”.

Post and comments where members introduce themselves.

Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Moral Responsibility

The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook post and its comments. The post is from a user with a profile picture of a person in a white shirt. The text of the post reads: "HELLO I'M AN ENGLISH TEACHER, I'VE BEEN WORKING AS A AN ENGLISH TEACHER FOR ABOUT 6 YEARS, SO I'M INTERESTED TO JOIN YOUR ENGLISH TEACHERS CLUB. IS IT NECESSARY TO HAVE A PROPER INTRODUCTION WITH ALL MEMBERS?". Below the post, there are three reaction icons (like, love, wow) and the number "3". To the right, it says "7 comentarios". Below the post, there are three buttons: "Me gusta", "Comentar", and "Compartir". Below these buttons, it says "Comentarios destacados".

The comments are as follows:

- Comment 1: "welcome man, enjoy!" with three dots to the right. Below it are the buttons "Me gusta", "Responder", and "Compartir".
- Comment 2: "I HOPE YOU GUYS HAVE A GOOD DAY TODAY 😊" with three dots to the right. Below it are the buttons "Me gusta", "Responder", and "Compartir".
- Comment 3: "I WOULD LIKE TO BE PART OF THE ENGLISH TEACHERS CLUB 🙌" with three dots to the right. Below it are the buttons "Me gusta", "Responder", and "Compartir".
- Comment 4: "I've never done that, but that's pretty cool. Welcome buddy!" with three dots to the right. Below it are the buttons "Me gusta", "Responder", and "Compartir".
- Comment 5: "THANK YOU GUYS 😊" with three dots to the right. Below it are the buttons "Me gusta", "Responder", and "Compartir".

The second post is from a user with a profile picture of a group of people. The text of the post reads: "Hello guys, thank you for adding me. I am an English teacher's teacher LOL. I live in Mexico and I am originally from California. I teach advanced conversational classes, the TKT, and soon.... A SUMMER COURSE for teachers (How to teach online in a more dynamic way, from lighting to activities). It is going to be very affordable and we will even have scholarships. I am here to help and to be helped. Nobody is perfect so I am here to give and get feedback. SHOOT!". Below the post, there are three reaction icons (like, love, wow) and the number "3". To the right, it says "2 comentarios". Below the post, there are three buttons: "Me gusta", "Comentar", and "Compartir".

The comments are as follows:

- Comment 1: "Hello!!! Welcome Caro! Thanks for joining! I have sent you a message thru inbox, I hope we can speak more. Thank you!" with three dots to the right. Below it are the buttons "Me gusta", "Responder", and "Compartir".
- Comment 2: "Sure thing man!" with three dots to the right. Below it are the buttons "Me gusta", "Responder", and "Compartir".

There are other members that introduce themselves, hence old members can welcome them or contact them to be in touch. Some of the information the new members share is their experience, the year they have been working as English teachers, their professional and professional background, activities they like or dislike, and what they expect from the community. These types of posts allow people to know and start conversations because they have things in common.

4.2.4 Members' Interaction

This feature refers to the communication among community members based on interests and experiences (Capece & Costa, 2013). Most of the topics of communication in the group are about interests and experiences being English teachers in Mexico. The members try to share job opportunities and questions about certifications in the English language as part of the topics they have in common.

Members often share experiences and questions about English language certifications.

Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Members' Interaction



...

Hi there, looking for some advice and recommendations.
I've received my 120-hour TEFL certificate and have a degree. However, I have no formal teaching experience. I wondered if there were any online agencies that are willing to take on newbies in the industry?
Would love some advice too for anyone willing to give their time.
Thanks you 😊

👍 9

21 comentarios

👍 Me gusta

💬 Comentar

➦ Compartir



Escribe una respuesta...



There are always lots of people needing to learn English. Try talking to friends and family and acquaintances so they know you can teach online ne lessons. Also, find local teachers groups on fb, and university groups as well.
After working at differe... Ver más

...

Me gusta Responder Compartir 2 d

👍 3

➔ Ver 1 respuesta



Hi do you speak other languages? ...



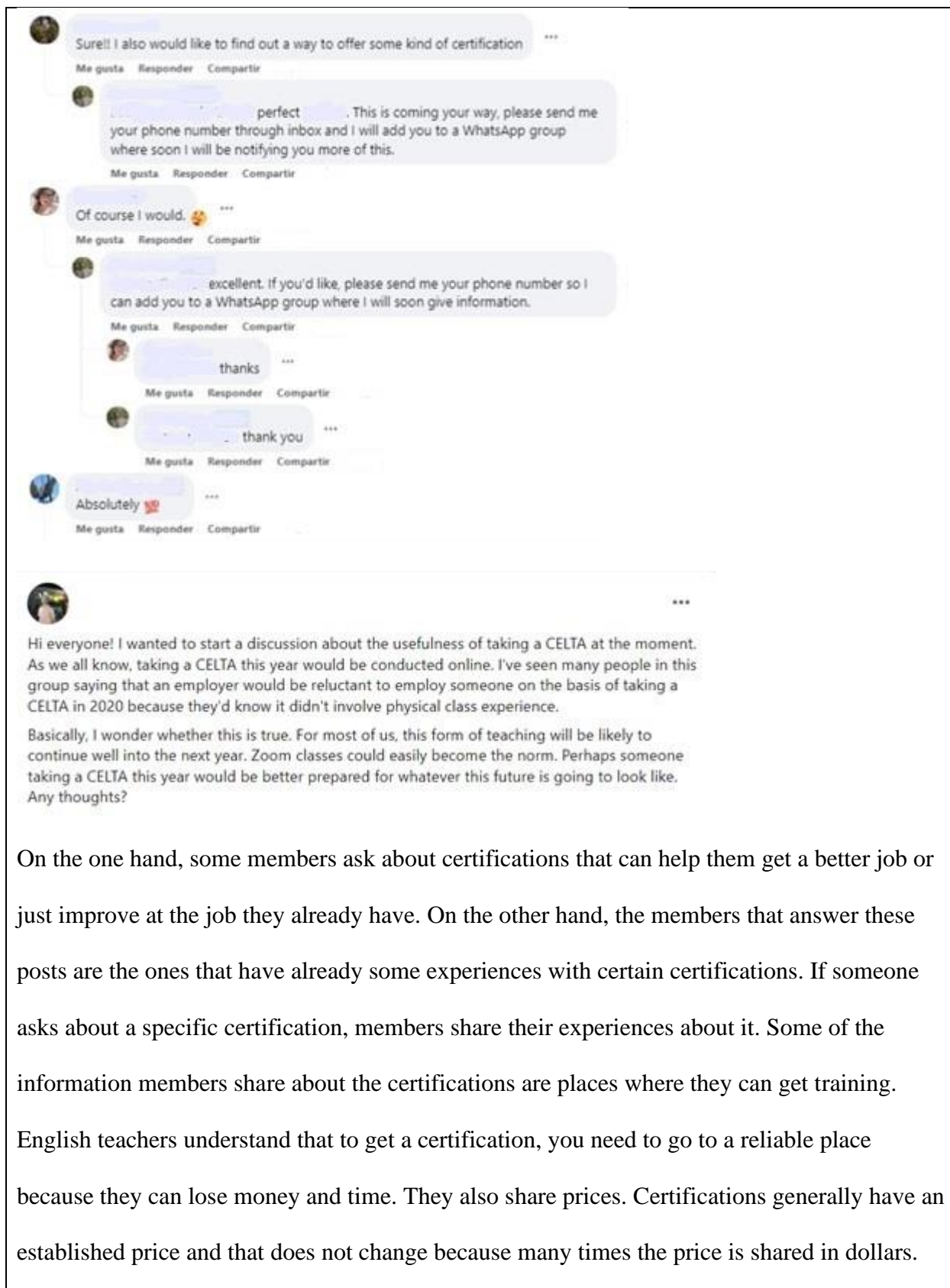
...

Hey everyone
Where is the best place to get a TEFL certificate?
Thank you



...

IMPORTANT QUESTION:
If you had the option to certify or validate your particular language classes for your students, either individually or group wise, would you? This way your classes/work would have added value...



On the one hand, some members ask about certifications that can help them get a better job or just improve at the job they already have. On the other hand, the members that answer these posts are the ones that have already some experiences with certain certifications. If someone asks about a specific certification, members share their experiences about it. Some of the information members share about the certifications are places where they can get training. English teachers understand that to get a certification, you need to go to a reliable place because they can lose money and time. They also share prices. Certifications generally have an established price and that does not change because many times the price is shared in dollars.

Finally, members share experiences such as the advantages and disadvantages that the certification might have. If they have a good experience answering the test, or if it has been helpful in their professional development.

Members also share job opportunities or ask if anyone knows about a job opportunity.

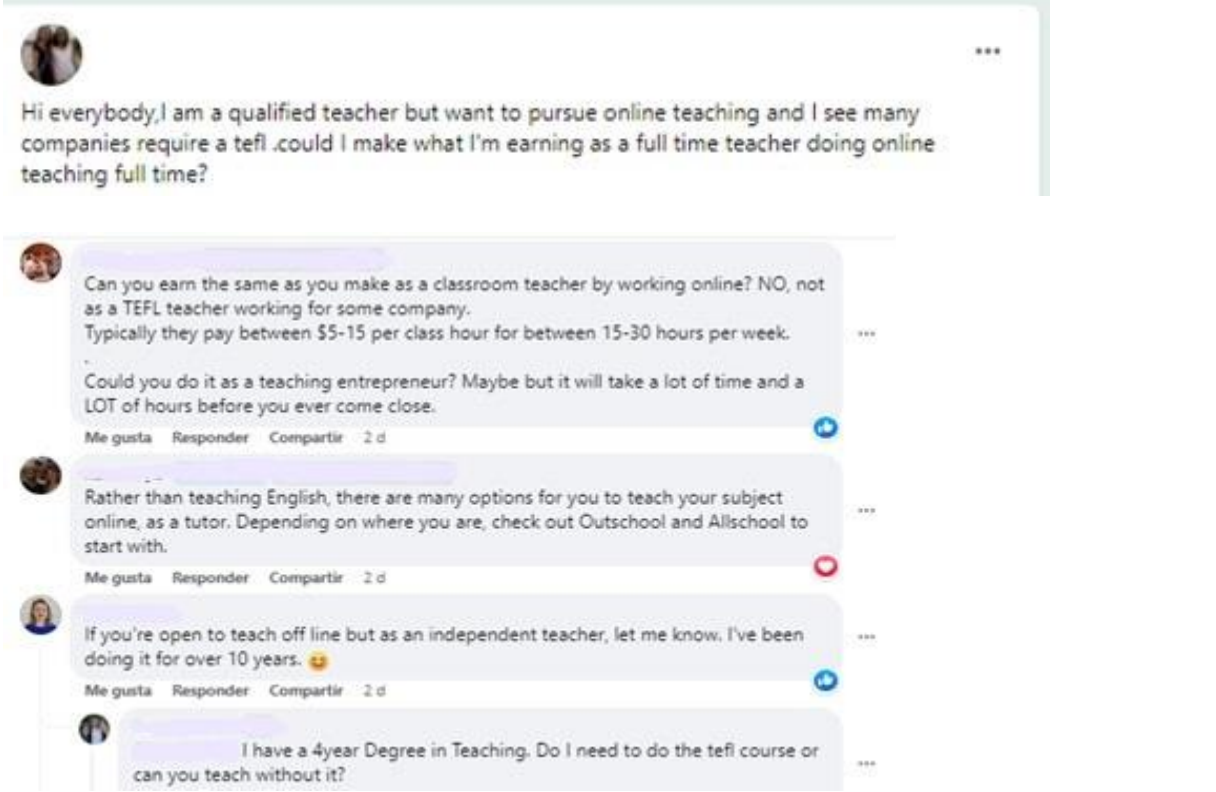
Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Members' Interaction



When members do not want to search through all the posts for job opportunities, they decide to post that they are looking for a job. Many members add information about their professional training; if they are interested in teaching classes online or face-to-face, and where they are from.

Members share their experiences as English teachers, and some others ask for advice about teaching.

Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Members' Interaction



The screenshot shows a social media thread with four posts. The first post is a question from a user asking about online teaching. The second post is a reply providing information on earnings and suggesting entrepreneurship. The third post is another reply suggesting alternative online teaching options. The fourth post is a reply from an experienced teacher. Each post includes a profile picture, text, and interaction options like 'Me gusta', 'Responder', and 'Compartir'.

Hi everybody, I am a qualified teacher but want to pursue online teaching and I see many companies require a tefl .could I make what I'm earning as a full time teacher doing online teaching full time?

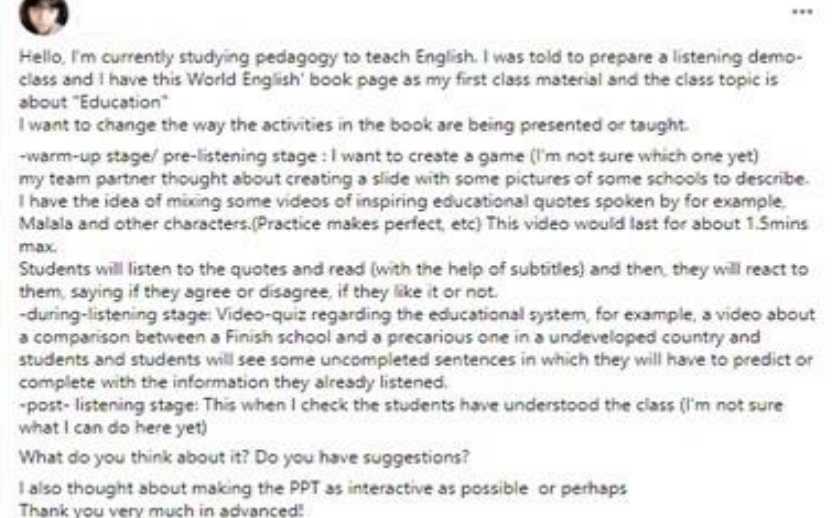
Can you earn the same as you make as a classroom teacher by working online? NO, not as a TEFL teacher working for some company. Typically they pay between \$5-15 per class hour for between 15-30 hours per week. ...
Could you do it as a teaching entrepreneur? Maybe but it will take a lot of time and a LOT of hours before you ever come close.

Rather than teaching English, there are many options for you to teach your subject online, as a tutor. Depending on where you are, check out Outschool and Allschool to start with. ...

If you're open to teach off line but as an independent teacher, let me know. I've been doing it for over 10 years. 😊 ...

I have a 4year Degree in Teaching. Do I need to do the tefl course or can you teach without it? ...

Online teaching has become more common due to the pandemic, hence many of the members ask for advice or experiences of how others have started teaching online, or how they can start teaching that way.



The screenshot shows a social media post with a detailed lesson plan. The user is a student of pedagogy who wants to change the way activities in a book are presented. The post lists three stages: warm-up/pre-listening, during-listening, and post-listening, with specific ideas for each.

Hello, I'm currently studying pedagogy to teach English. I was told to prepare a listening demo-class and I have this World English' book page as my first class material and the class topic is about "Education"

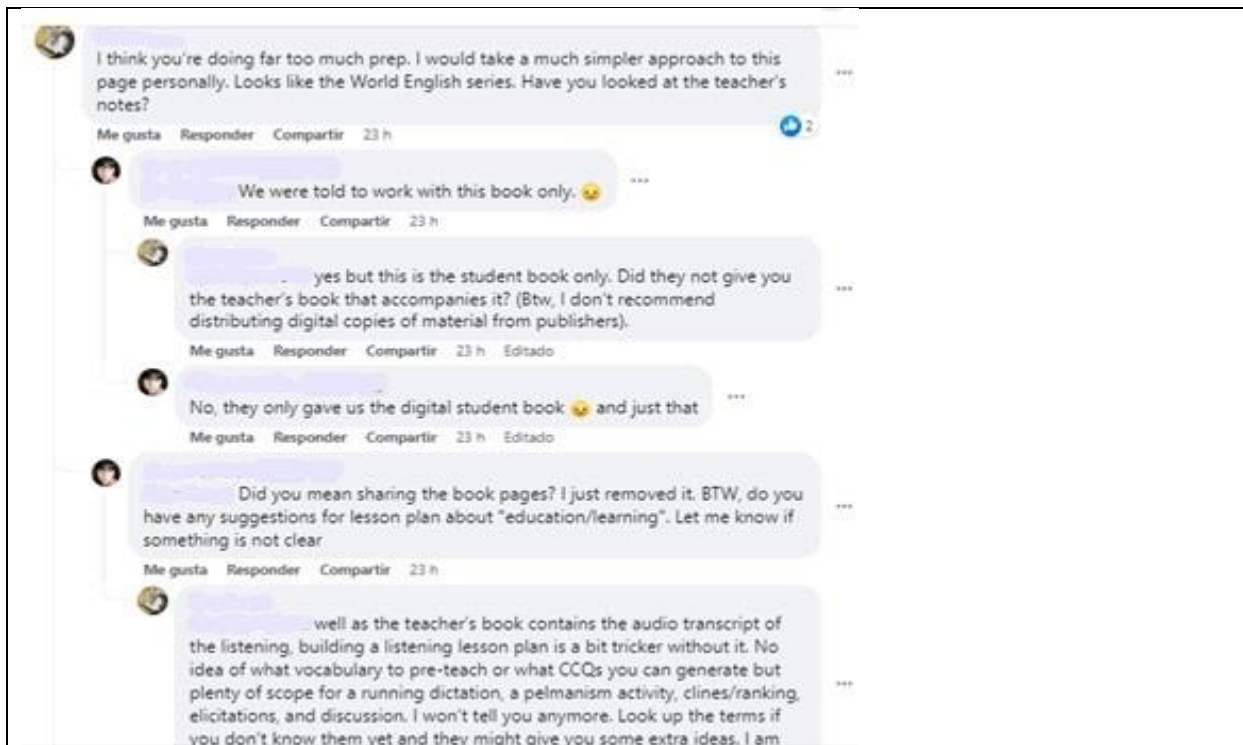
I want to change the way the activities in the book are being presented or taught.

- warm-up stage/ pre-listening stage : I want to create a game (I'm not sure which one yet) my team partner thought about creating a slide with some pictures of some schools to describe. I have the idea of mixing some videos of inspiring educational quotes spoken by for example, Malala and other characters.(Practice makes perfect, etc) This video would last for about 1.5mins max.
- Students will listen to the quotes and read (with the help of subtitles) and then, they will react to them, saying if they agree or disagree, if they like it or not.
- during-listening stage: Video-quiz regarding the educational system, for example, a video about a comparison between a Finish school and a precarious one in a undeveloped country and students and students will see some uncompleted sentences in which they will have to predict or complete with the information they already listened.
- post- listening stage: This when I check the students have understood the class (I'm not sure what I can do here yet)

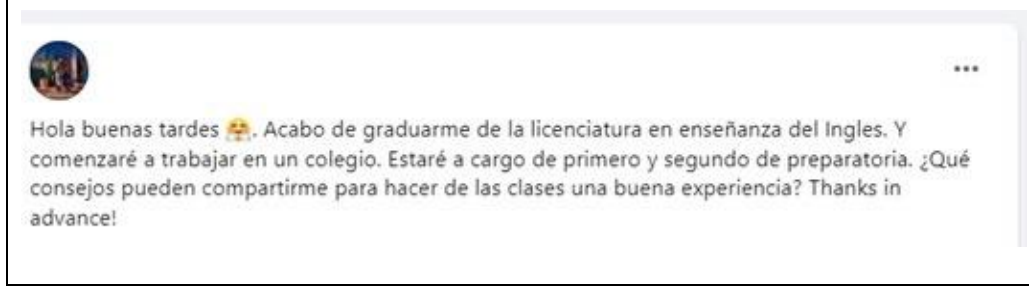
What do you think about it? Do you have suggestions?

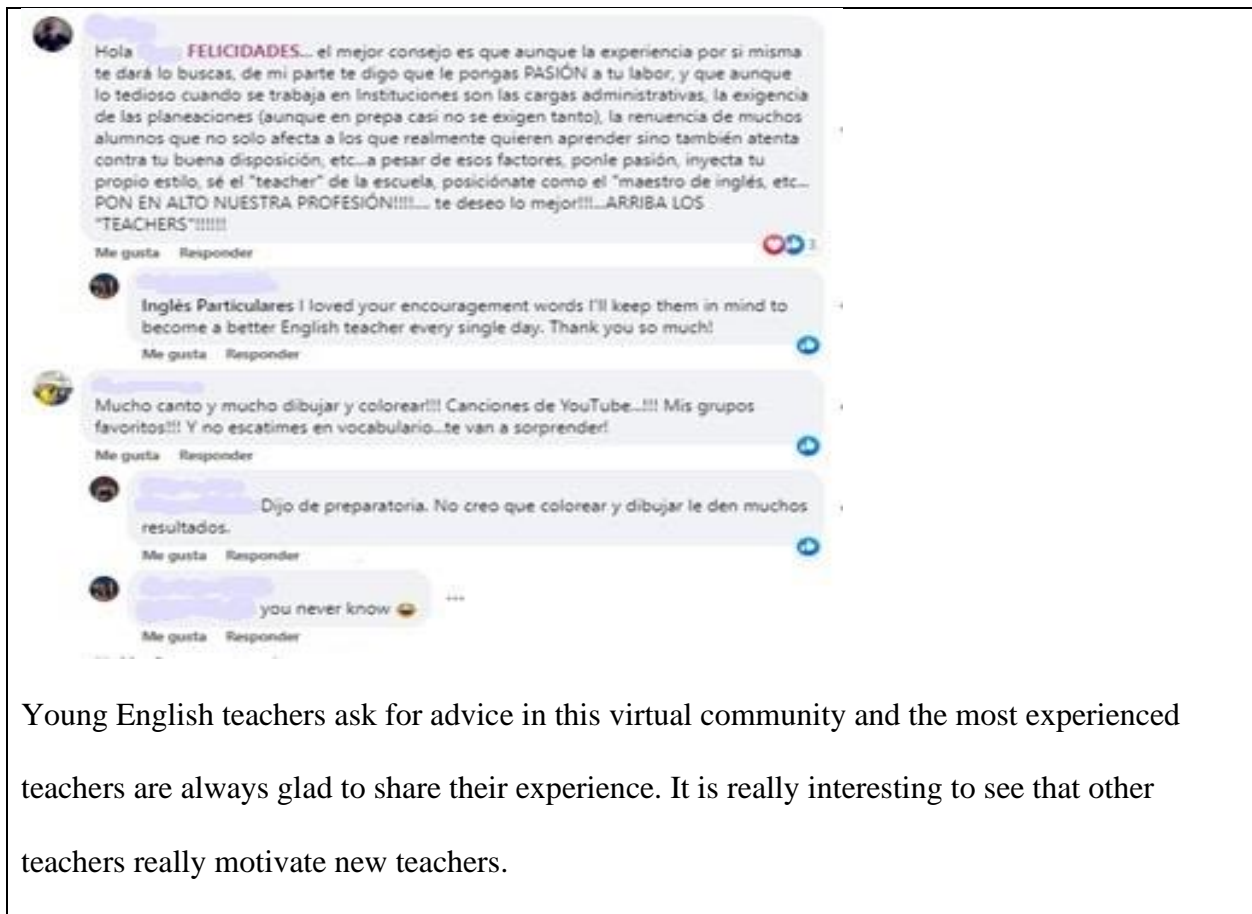
I also thought about making the PPT as interactive as possible or perhaps

Thank you very much in advanced!



When some members feel lost in their classes, they also ask about activities they can develop. The other members help them to order their ideas, share material they can use with specific approaches and topics they can teach.





Young English teachers ask for advice in this virtual community and the most experienced teachers are always glad to share their experience. It is really interesting to see that other teachers really motivate new teachers.

Some members ask to share specific material, virtual emojis, or stickers for their students.

Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Members' Interaction



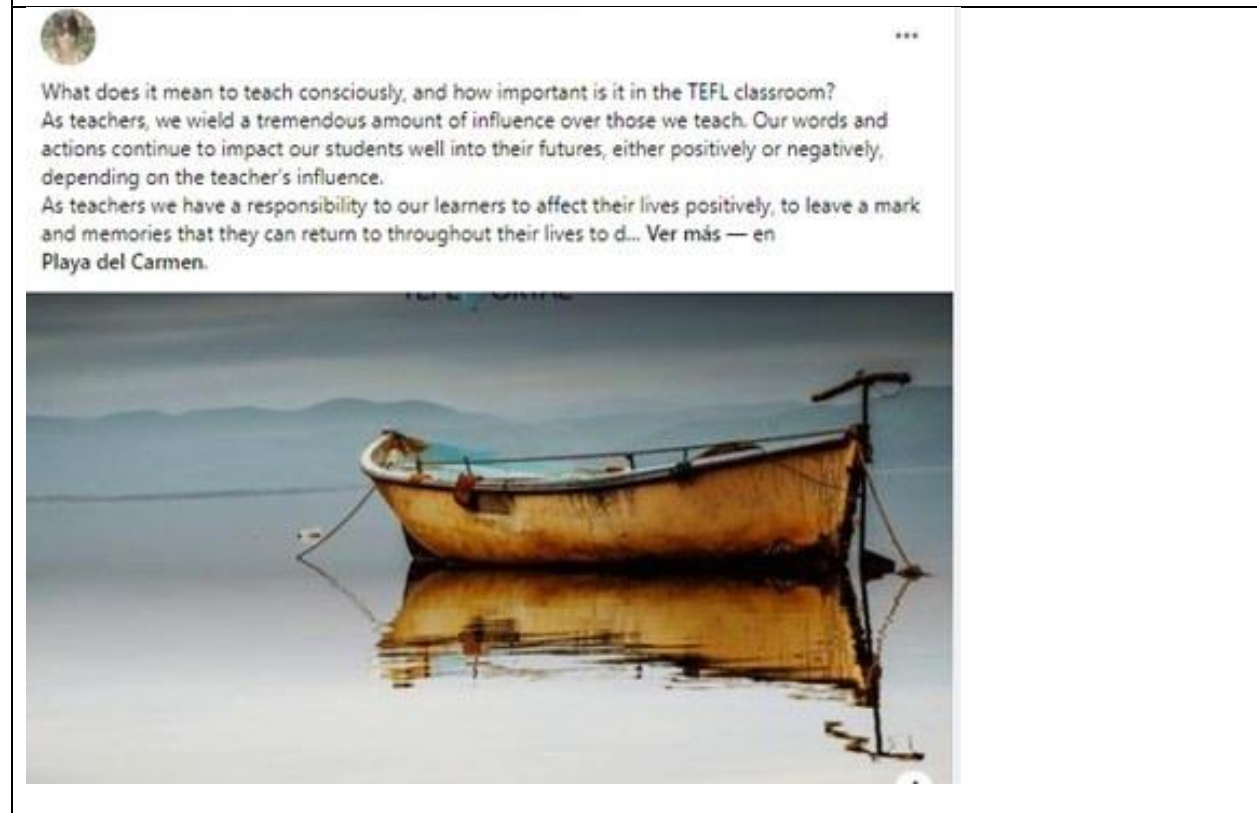
English teachers from this virtual community keep communications with their students via WhatsApp, and for that reason, they sometimes ask for stickers or emojis they can send to their students to tell them that they are doing a good job or that the homework they sent was good.

4.2.5 Norm of Reciprocity

The norm of Reciprocity is about social norms and refers to the feeling of helping and supporting each other (Capece & Costa, 2013). Members grow this feeling that others inside the community would help them in the future if they need it. The members can share feelings and emotions about their teaching experience or life. Other members can share also experiences and show support.

Some members share support when they share motivational messages. They want to motivate teachers with messages that help them to keep doing well in difficult situations.

Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Norm of Reciprocity



The image shows a screenshot of a social media post. At the top left is a circular profile picture of a person. To the right of the profile picture are three dots. The text of the post reads: "What does it mean to teach consciously, and how important is it in the TEFL classroom? As teachers, we wield a tremendous amount of influence over those we teach. Our words and actions continue to impact our students well into their futures, either positively or negatively, depending on the teacher's influence. As teachers we have a responsibility to our learners to affect their lives positively, to leave a mark and memories that they can return to throughout their lives to d... Ver más — en Playa del Carmen." Below the text is a photograph of a small, weathered wooden boat with a blue interior, floating on a calm body of water. The boat is reflected in the still water. In the background, there are low mountains under a clear sky.



Teacher appreciation week. 🍎

Not all heroes wear capes. Some become teachers.

Thank a teacher and their support staff who change the lives of students every day.



Teachers are also human beings and It is normal that sometimes they feel apathetic, unmotivated, or feel bad because they are going through difficult moments in life. In this virtual community, other members understand those situations because at some part in their lives, they have gone through the same, and they want to help others by sharing positive messages. Those kinds of posts are good because members react with a happy face and gratitude messages. They feel that their peers in the virtual community support them to continue with their job and that they are doing great.

Some other members ask for advice and give advice about teaching or emotional support.

Examples of posts found with the characteristic of Norm of Reciprocity



The image shows a social media post and its comments. The main post is from a user with a profile picture of a woman. The text of the post is as follows:


Hello you guys. I'm here for some advice.
As we all know, we're now Teaching Online but... What's the "ideal" number of students to have in an online session.
I have groups around 15 or 25 students per class. Is that number ok? How do you deal with those students who don't answer. I mean, those who are just there, but you call them, and call them, and call them... And they just don't answer. It is so frustrating! I waste too much time and then I get msgs from angry parents telling me their sons are "not learning" anything, and when I tell them this, they just say: "he is ALWAYS in class, we bought a new computer for his classes... It is impossible... Blah blah blah..." I'm kind of frustrated right now.
Any tip? 😞

Below the post, there are four reaction icons (like, love, wow, sad) and the number '4'. To the right, it says '16 comentarios'.

The comments are as follows:

- Comment 1: "I work with groups of 20 to 25 students, they're middle schoolers. It's hard to make them all participate but u can do it" (with a sad face emoji)
- Comment 2: "What I'd recommend is talk to them and change the way you're evaluating"
- Comment 3: "Also, include participation in the evaluation"
- Comment 4: "I've tried songs, videos, breakout rooms to have them speak, games, kahoot, whatsapp dynamics... Nothing!" (with a sad face emoji and 2 reactions)
- Comment 5: "Teenagers are challenging. But don't give up on trying" (with a sad face emoji)
- Comment 6: "Students think homeschool is difficult just for them." (with a sad face emoji)
- Comment 7: "That's true. But if parents haven't done it, we've got to teach them to be sympathetic too." (with a sad face emoji)


Each comment has a profile picture, a text area, and options for 'Me gusta', 'Responder', and 'Compartir'.


 ...


Good morning everybody. I'm looking for some advice and guidance. I want to start giving private English classes. What is everything I need, besides the lessons of course, to do that? I'm speaking more of the legal side. Do I need permits of any kind? Thank you

6 comentarios


Me gusta Comentar Compartir

 😊 I'd like to know too ...
Me gusta Responder Compartir


 You need to go to the haciendo and get an RFC, then online you can inform them of what kind of business you are involved with. I believe you pay taxes bimonthly, not 100% sure, and if you are charging companies you can get honorarios with your RFC to be able to charge them. ...
Me gusta Responder Compartir

 You can check out the website:
<https://loginda.siat.sat.gob.mx/nidp/wsfed/ep?id=ciec&sid=0&option=credencial&sid=0> ...

LOGINDA.SIAT.SAT.GOB.MX
loginda.siat.sat.gob.mx
Me gusta Responder Compartir

 ...

what advice or tip would you give me about teaching english online

 ...

Hi there,

I'm looking for some advice please .

I currently teach a small group of adults English once a week and we keep running into the same issues whereby they are pronouncing the ED at the end of certain words (eg confused, amused, etc) I've tried a few ways to tackle this but nothing seems to be clicking with them. They rightly get confused when sometimes the ED is more pronounced with certain words and the ED has to be said (eg committed, voted), but I'm struggling ... Ver más

The sound is actually the schwa sound. What they should sound is the last consonants and mute the e.

Me gusta Compartir

Such as the troublesome word "clothes" and I would like to point out that others in my group (<https://facebook.com/groups/for.teacherpreneurs.only>) may have additional suggestions for the OP.

Lead To Going
Attract
Implement

Online Teachers (Even Coaches) - Independent, Fulfilled & HIGHLY Paid!

Me gusta Compartir

Papa English has a great video on this on his YouTube channel.

Me gusta Compartir

Hi
There are rules for the pronunciation of ed endings
<https://www.englishclub.com/pronunciation/-ed.htm>
You could go through these with them and drill them.

ish ENGLISHCLUB.COM
How to Pronounce -ed | Pronunciation | EnglishClub

Advice to a teacher who is struggling with lesson planning and organization:

1. Prioritize your objectives: Begin by clarifying your goals for each lesson and identifying the most important concepts and skills you want your students to learn.
2. Create a lesson plan template: Develop a lesson plan template that suits your teaching style and includes all the necessary components, such as the objective, the learning activities, and the assessment.
3. Use technology: Take advantage of digital tools that can help you organize and streamline your lesson planning process. There are many free or low-cost tools available, such as Google Docs, Trello, or Asana, which can help you keep track of your plans and ideas.
4. Collaborate with other teachers: Seek advice and support from your colleagues, who may have valuable insights into lesson planning and organization. You can also consider working together to create shared lesson plans or resources.
5. Reflect and adjust: After each lesson, take the time to reflect on what worked well and what could be improved. Use this feedback to adjust your lesson plans and improve your organization for future lessons.

Remember that lesson planning and organization are skills that can be developed over time with practice and persistence. Don't hesitate to seek help and support when you need it, and keep experimenting with new strategies until you find what works best for you and your students.

#lessonplanning #organization #classroommanagementstrategies

New members and old members share ideas, advice, and experiences, and that is what the norm of reciprocity is about. It is to trust to the people in the virtual community to ask and answer about professional topic. They are not afraid to ask because that know they would have at least one answer and nobody would make fun of them.

4.3 Chapter conclusion

This chapter presented the gathered information. To sum up, it could be said that virtual communities are societies inside the internet. The members build up small societies with certain characteristics, topics, and rules that they try to follow. Even when they do not notice, they develop all the characteristics that Capece & Costa (2013) and Muniz (2001) have proposed in the field of netnography.

It is interesting to notice that some people have specific purposes when joining a virtual community. However, there are some others that join the community without knowing what to expect. In this specific virtual community, “English Teachers Mexico”, when new members join, they do not believe that all the members are English teachers, and for this reason, they do not think they can find valuable content. When they start checking the content, interacting with old members, and commenting on posts, they realize that all the members in the group are English teachers, and that is where they start developing the most important characteristic inside a virtual community, membership.

After analyzing the content from the virtual community, and the information got from the interview in the focus group, it can be said that members start building membership in the very first moment when they identify themselves with the name of the community. They are all English teachers, that is the first thing they all have in common. They continue creating this membership by commenting on other members’ posts, taking time to interact with the content, sharing information, and interacting with other members inside and outside the community.

As all the members in the virtual community are English teachers, they share the same topics, and sometimes, the same needs such as advice, jobs, and motivation. They share their

experiences and motivate other members when they ask for it. All the members really try to create a virtual space where they can be what they are in real life and help their peers.

This chapter of the research presented the obtained results and used what was stated in chapter two according to the characteristics of virtual communities propose by Capece & Costa (2013) and Muniz (2001). In the following chapter, the conclusions, the significance of the study, and the limitations of this research will be presented.

CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter first presents the findings of this research related to the purpose and research questions stated in chapter one. Second, its restrictions, and additional research suggestions. This chapter discusses some relevant conclusions and their significance. Besides, the implications and limitations of the research and the probabilities for further research are provided in this section.

5.2 Research Questions' Answers

In this section of the study, the research questions of this study are answered. The RQs are presented again hence the reader can see the answers eventually. This paper sets out to answer the following research questions.

1. Why do English teachers decide to join this virtual community?
2. How do they get engaged to become part of this online community and develop membership inside the virtual community?
3. What are the main topics English teachers discuss in this community and how do these topics reflect their teaching values?

The answer to the first RQ is something very personal because every member has different reasons in mind when looking for and joining virtual communities. Sometimes they do not even have a specific purpose, or they do not have a specific idea of what they would find in the community. For this reason, there is no general answer to this question; however, there are some reasons that some of the members agreed with.

The main reason to join this specific virtual community is the name. As members are English teachers and they are from Mexico, they immediately identify themselves and want to be part of the group.

Alva	<p>... Y como soy maestra de inglés y de México, que mejor grupo para explorar.</p> <p>... And since I am an English teacher and from Mexico, that was the best group to explore.</p>
Lucky	<p>... creo que el nombre del grupo lo relacionamos con lo que somos y con el tipo de contenido que podríamos encontrar en él.</p> <p>... I think that the name of the group is related to who we are and to the type of content that we could find in it.</p>

Names of virtual communities are important because it helps to give an idea about the purpose of the group. The topic or the content that people would find in the virtual community. When people are looking in social media virtual communities, they just write specific words in the search engine to find what communities have these words in their names. Sometimes, they can explore the content and they can see what members share in the community and decide if they want to be part of that community. However, there are other private virtual communities where people cannot see the content shared in it until they are admitted as part of the group.

These specific English teachers' virtual community is private, and people feel curious about the content they would find, and for that reason, they join the community.

Alva	<p>... En este caso, en el grupo de English Teachers, al ser privado, no sabía qué encontraría. Así que me arriesgué a unirme para saber el tipo de contenido que se compartía en este grupo</p> <p>... In this case, in the English Teachers' group, being private, I didn't know what I would find. So I took a chance to join it, and to find out what type of content people share in this group.</p>
Lucky	<p>... También es por eso por lo que decidí unirme, quería saber qué cosas compartían. Más que nada fue por curiosidad.</p> <p>... That's also why I decided to join, I wanted to know what people shared. More than anything it was about curiosity.</p>
Dany	<p>... Yo no tenía ningún propósito o motivo en específico, pero ahora que lo comentan los compañeros. Creo que fue por la curiosidad de saber qué contenido ofrecía ese grupo...</p> <p>... I didn't have any specific purpose or reason, but now that my colleagues have commented on it. I think it was about curiosity to know what content this group offered</p>

It is normal that people feel curious about the content in a private virtual community and even more if the name is related to what they are and the country where they live. In social media, it is common to find private communities because that is the way administrators control who enters the group. To be admitted in this community, people need to answer questions about their interest in the group. Why they want to join or what they expect from the community. They also need to read the rules and accept them. Rules are very important for the administrators, and if members do not respect them, they would be expelled from the community. Many of the rules are related to values that teachers should practice every day in their classrooms, and it should not be difficult to continue practicing those values in a virtual community.

Another reason to join this community is to find help, support, and motivation from other English teachers,

Alva	<p>... Aparte como me uní en plena pandemia, estaba buscando grupos en Facebook donde pudiera encontrar apoyo de parte de otros maestros...</p> <p>... Besides, since I joined in the middle of the pandemic, I was looking for groups on Facebook where I could find support from other teachers...</p>
Lucky	<p>... Y como menciona la compañera, ya dentro del grupo, encontré apoyo, buenas ideas y material para poder trabajar en línea porque también andaba medio perdido y abrumado con lo de la pandemia.</p>

	... as my colleague mentions, when I entered the group, I found support, good ideas, and material to be able to work online because I was also kind of lost and overwhelmed by the pandemic situation.
Dany	... y el hecho de que la pandemia nos orilló a buscar apoyo de cualquier lugar para poder seguir adelante con las clases en línea. ... and the fact that the pandemic situation forced us to seek support from anywhere to be able to continue with online classes.

For most of the teachers, the pandemic situation was a difficult part of their professional and personal lives. They needed to find a place where they could be understood, and a virtual community of English teachers was the place for many of them. Members found support because all of them were living similar situations. They also found motivations to keep working and not give up. Even today that education has returned to the face-to-face modality, teachers in the virtual community still look for emotional support and motivation to continue their teaching activities with new rules that were adopted due to the pandemic.

They also join the community to find material to work with.

Alva	... Aparte como me uní en plena pandemia, estaba buscando grupos en Facebook donde pudiera encontrar apoyo de parte de otros maestros, material, métodos o estrategias que me pudieran ayudar en mis clases en línea. Y la verdad es que los grupos de Facebook me ayudaron mucho durante las clases en línea.
------	--

	<p>... Besides, since I joined in the middle of the pandemic, I was looking for groups on Facebook where I could find support from other teachers, material, methods, or strategies that could help me in my online classes. and the truth is that the Facebook groups helped me a lot during the online classes.</p>
Lucky	<p>... ya dentro del grupo, encontré apoyo, buenas ideas y material para poder trabajar en línea porque también andaba medio perdido y abrumado con lo de la pandemia.</p> <p>... when I entered the group, I found support, good ideas, and material to be able to work online because I was also kind of lost and overwhelmed by the pandemic situation.</p>
Jimmy	<p>... Lo que me llamó la atención de lo que me dijo fue que compartían material para trabajar en clase y como a veces me cuesta trabajo encontrar material, vi una oportunidad en este grupo.</p> <p>... What caught my attention from what she told me was that they shared material to work on in class and since I sometimes have a hard time finding material, I saw an opportunity in this group.</p>

For some teachers, it is difficult to find the correct material to work with their students, they sometimes do not have a specific book. In this virtual community, members are not envious to

share material that they themselves create or get from their jobs. Members are always pleased to share helpful material for their peers. There are some other members that create interactive or printable material for sale. They create their ad and share a list of the material and topics they have. In their ad they explain how other members can get the material and the prices. This type of material is not expensive, members ask for no more than \$50 pesos. Administrators allow other members just to sell digital material and any scam must be reported to the administrators.

Some members join to find new job opportunities.

Elly	<p>... Como andaba buscando oportunidades de trabajar en clases privadas en línea, mi compañera me dijo que en ese grupo a veces publican oportunidades de trabajo presenciales y en línea. Así que por eso me uní.</p> <p>... As I was looking for opportunities to work in private online classes, my partner told me that in that group they sometimes post face-to-face and online job opportunities. So that's why I joined.</p>
------	---

As has been mentioned, the pandemic situation affected many teachers, they lost their jobs, and the virtual community was the best place where they found a good job. Today, members still ask and share online jobs and face-to-face classes.

Even though all the members in the virtual community are English teachers, they all had different reasons to join it, and some others share the same reasons such as curiosity, emotional support, motivation, and finding material for their classes.

In order to answer the second question, it is necessary to state that the information was analyzed from the posts and the interview in the focus group by using the characteristics of virtual communities proposed by Capece & Costa (2013) and Muniz (2001). This question is closely related to membership: How do they get engaged to become part of this online community and develop membership inside the virtual community?

First, they get engaged in the virtual community and develop their membership when they start reading, posting, and commenting on the group.

Alva	<p>... No es que esté muy activa en los grupos. Soy de las que le gusta leer lo que publican y algunas veces comento las publicaciones. Tal vez unas dos veces a la semana...</p> <p>... It's not like I'm very active in groups. I am one of those who likes to read what they post and sometimes I comment on the posts. Maybe twice a week...</p>
Lucky	<p>... me gusta mucho leer lo que los demás comparten...</p> <p>... I really enjoy reading what other members share...</p>
Dany	<p>... Yo al menos una vez a la semana intento ponerme al corriente con todo lo que han publicado y comentado. Me tomo un momento para leer las publicaciones y así poder comentar algo...</p>

	<p>... I try to catch up on everything others have published and commented. I take my time to read posts and then follow up on comments. I take a moment to read the posts so I can comment on something</p>
Elly	<p>... También pocas veces publico, pero sí comento las cosas que los demás compañeros comparten. No es que todos los días revise el grupo, al menos unas tres o dos veces a la semana para no perderme de nada relevante.</p> <p>... I also rarely publish, but I do comment on the things that other colleagues share. It's not like I check the group every day, at least three or two times a week because I don't want to miss anything relevant.</p>

Once English teachers are part of the group, they start examining all the content that the virtual community offers. Some members have their first interaction when they create a post to introduce themselves or comment on the post where the admins welcome new members. After that, members decide whether they want to create their own posts to share ideas, ask about something, share material; or comment on other members' posts to begin communication with other members.

Examples of posts where members reflect participation in the community

Publicación de Vivi



Me gusta

Comentar

Compartir

Comentarios destacados ▾



I think if genuinely you are an English teacher you shouldn't degrade yourself by charging 50 pesos an hour. Also I know it's not intentional but it's an industry in which is being constantly exploited. You should be setting a happy medium between 10 to 15 dollars an hour. Do it for yourself.

...

Me gusta Responder Compartir 1 d

16



okay, you're right but there are people who can't pay by an English class and I'm not the only teacher in Mexico or online, I just charge 10 or 15 dollars for hour when I give Spanish class

...

Me gusta Responder Compartir 1 d



I charge the same, but for in person classes to a small community that has financial hardships. Personally I don't mind because I make it accesible to those kids who actually want to study it.

...

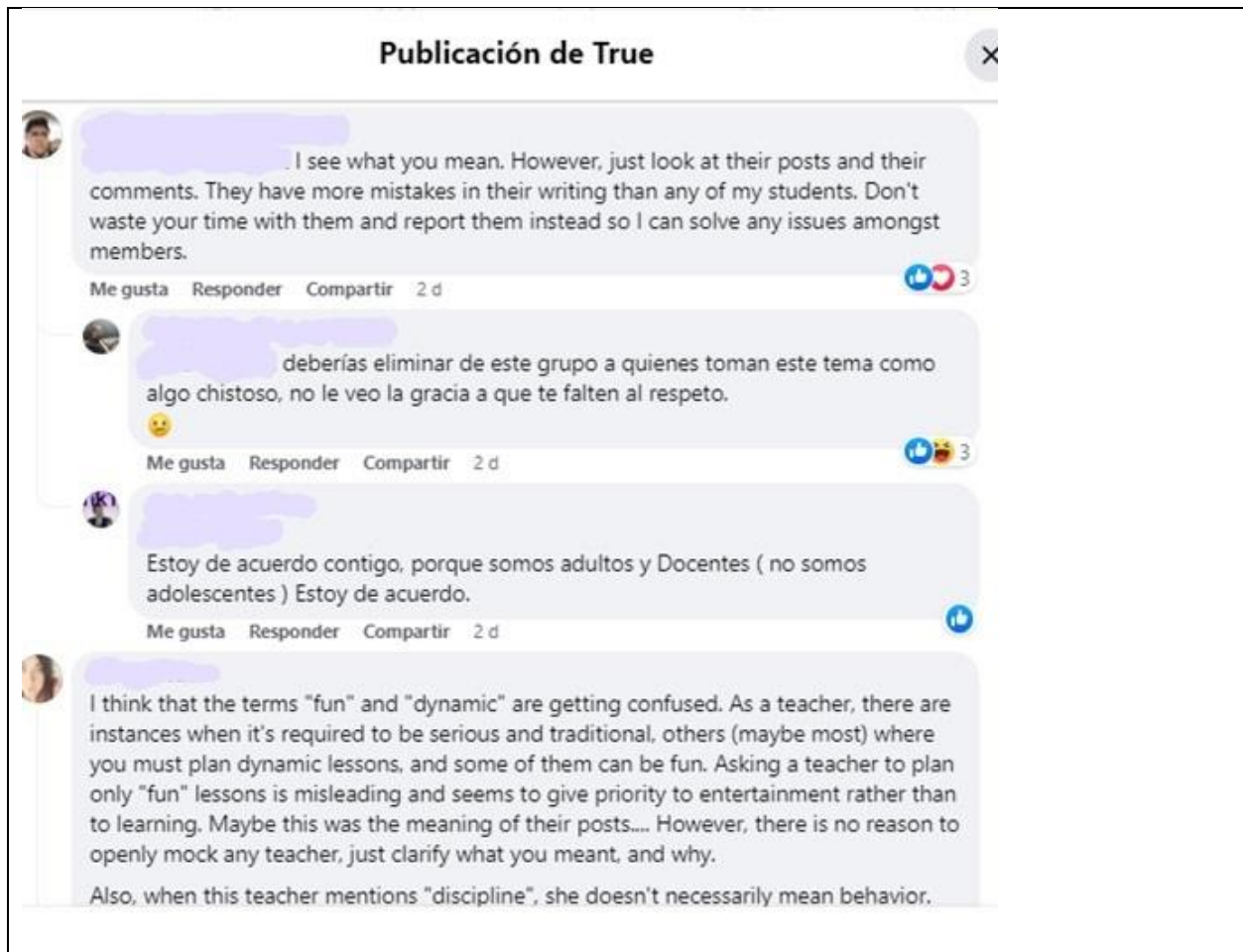
Me gusta Responder Compartir 22 h



agreed.

...

Me gusta Responder Compartir 17 h



Members get engaged in comment chains where people exchange experiences or ideas about teaching. It is absorbing to see how some members get passionate in the conversation and in some cases they even get angry. Certain comment chains have turned into insulting conversations, that is where the administrators enter to moderate the conversation by deleting the post, or expelling members who have been rude. There are other members that just react to the posts or comments, they occasionally comment, ask or share something, nonetheless, They are always aware of what is happening, and they know the latest news in the virtual community.

Second, they get engaged and develop their membership when they share the same ideas as other members.

Alva	<p>... .. tienen las mismas ideas que yo. Cuando expresan algunos compañeros que hay que prepararse más, es ahí donde me identifico porque yo tengo esa misma idea.</p> <p>... They have the same ideas as me. When some colleagues say that you have to prepare more, that's where I identify myself because I have the same idea.</p>
Lucky	<p>... me agrada ver que hay muchos maestros de inglés en México y que encontramos un espacio específico para compartir.</p> <p>... It's glad to see that there are many English teachers in Mexico and that we found a specific space to share.</p>

Members begin feeling engaged when they know that the virtual community is made up of English teachers from Mexico. Even though the members are from different parts of Mexico, they feel confident to know that the people there understand what is to be an English teacher in the same country. Some of them have the same educational background and they share the same ideas. The members reflect these ideas on their posts, comments and on the experiences they share.

Examples of posts where members share ideas.

Publicación de True ✕

El respeto se gana no se pide 2 ...
Me gusta Responder Compartir 2 d

el respeto no se niega sin motivo. ...
 7
Me gusta Responder Compartir 2 d

eso sí amigo ...
Tienes razon
Me gusta Responder Compartir 2 d

el tema es: ¿como puede pedir respeto está señora si no es capaz de darlo? 😞 ...
Me gusta Responder Compartir 2 d

lo que comentas aquí no aplica. ella no lo dió y peor aun!! ¿¿cómo se gana uno el respeto de los demás faltando al respeto?? ...
Me gusta Responder Compartir 2 d

nunca dije que el respeto se gana faltando el respeto. Solo pienso que no se debe pedir el respeto de nadie. No se lo que habrá pasado pero tampoco se debe faltar el respeto ...
Me gusta Responder Compartir 2 d



Members share ideas about values. They emphasize respect when commenting on other members' posts and when addressing others. All the members must remember that it is part of the rules.

They also share the same ideas about methods and approaches. As some members are very interested in certain methods or approaches, they post articles about it, and other members ask about it or share some ideas or experiences they have had.

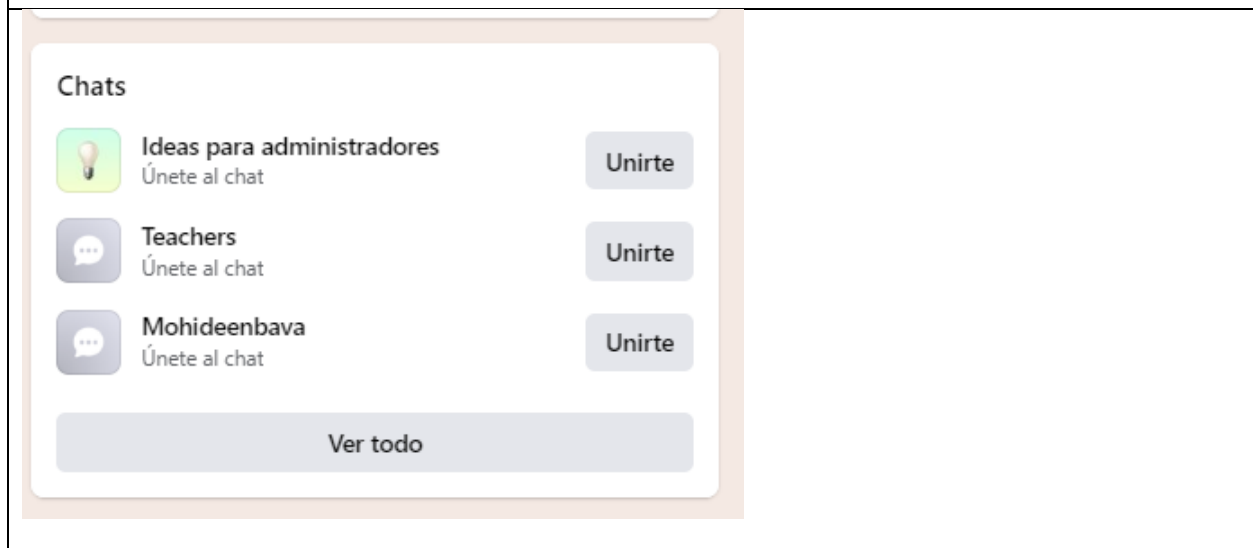
Third, members get engaged and develop their membership when they keep constant communication with other members of the community.

Alva	<p>... Si hay algo que alguien comparta y necesite más información, contacto a la persona por Messenger.</p> <p>... If there is something someone shares and I need more information about it, I contact the person on Messenger.</p>
Lucky	<p>... pocas veces interactúo por mensaje con otros miembros.</p> <p>... I rarely interact by message with other members.</p>
Dany	<p>... A veces contacto a otros miembros del grupo por Messenger para comentarle algo o pedirle algún dato sobre lo que se ha publicado.</p> <p>... Sometimes I contact other members of the group through Messenger to comment on something or ask for some information about what has been published.</p>
Elly	<p>... Algunos de los miembros me han contactado también por Messenger y hasta me han agregado a grupos de whatsapp de maestros donde comparten ofertas de trabajo.</p> <p>... Some of the members have also contacted me on Messenger and have even added me to teachers' WhatsApp groups where they share job offers.</p>

There are members that try to keep constant communication with other members of the community. They usually send instant messages by messenger to communicate outside the

group. And that is the way they keep in touch. There are other members that create WhatsApp groups where they can send job opportunities, material, stickers, or emojis that can be useful for the members. Not all the members decide to keep communication outside the community because they feel more comfortable just posting and commenting in the group from social media.

Chat rooms in the virtual community show the constant communication members keep.



Creating chat rooms is a new tool that Facebook has implemented in virtual groups, and it allows members to create chats with specific purposes. They give the chat room the topic name they want to chat about, and members decide whether they want to join or not. These chat rooms can be saved; however, the conversations can be raised easily. As it is a new tool, members are still getting familiar with, and they hardly use it.

Finally, members get engaged and develop their membership when they identify themselves with memes and posts other members share.

Alva	<p>... También cuando comparten publicaciones donde dicen lo cansado que es ser maestro porque me siento de la misma manera, o cuando cuento los días para las vacaciones.</p> <p>... Also, when other members share posts about how tiring teachers' lives are because I feel the same way, or when I count the days for vacation.</p> <p>... las cosas graciosas sobre maestros, donde uno se ve reflejado.</p> <p>... Funny things about teachers where I can see myself reflected.</p>
Lucky	<p>... algunas veces me identifico y más con algún otro meme que comparten sobre la vida de docente, que es cansada o que te pasa tal o cual cosa y el meme lo representa con claridad. Dirían los chavos, "sí, soy".</p> <p>... Sometimes I identify myself with some of the memes that other members share, and I identify myself even more when they are about teachers' lives, how tiring it is, and this or that, and the meme represents very clear the situation. How teenagers would say, "I am".</p>
Dany	<p>... Creo que con el hecho de que te puedas reír un poco y verte reflejado en un meme, hace que te relajés.</p>

	... I believe that with the fact that you can laugh a little and see yourself reflected in a meme, it makes you feel relax.
Elly	<p>... Tal vez sí porque soy maestra de inglés. Me podría identificar con el material que comparten porque es la forma en que yo también trabajo. Y con los memes también.</p> <p>... Maybe because I am an English teacher. I could identify with the material they share because it's the way I work too. And with the memes too.</p>

The interviewees explained that laughing is important when you have a difficult job as it is to be a teacher. At work, they usually get stressed, feel directionless, and frustrated, therefore, laughing is like therapy for them. Members share posts where common teacher situations are represented in a funny way. On the one hand, most of the members feel identified and even find the funny part of the situations. On the other hand, only a few members are offended by such posts.

Examples of posts about memes where members identify themselves

How to torture an english teacher.





Memes are usually represented with pictures, they do not need explanation, and the only context members need to understand is being an English teacher. Generally, a meme does not have to be funny, it just needs to represent some part of teachers' lives to feel identify with it. Members use hashtags to share memes because is another way to add a description to their posts.

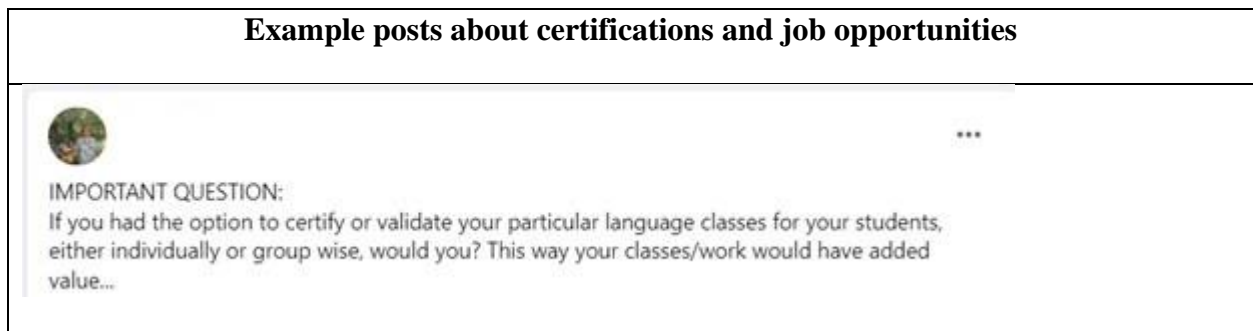
As membership is the first characteristic on the list proposed by Capece & Costa (2013) and Muniz (2001), is the most important feature that members should develop in a virtual community. If they do not reach this characteristic, it can be said that they are not real members

of the virtual community. People can be in the virtual group, however, if they do not comment on the posts, or share their ideas and experiences, they are just ghosts in the community and they do not feel part of it.

The last RQ is related to the content and ideas members share inside the virtual community: What are the main topics English teachers discuss in this community and how do these topics reflect their teaching values?

According to some posts found and analyzed, certifications and job opportunities are the most recurrent topics in the virtual community of English teachers, follow by memes and materials for teaching.

Example posts about certifications and job opportunities



Sure!! I also would like to find out a way to offer some kind of certification ***
 Me gusta Responder Compartir

perfect . This is coming your way, please send me your phone number through inbox and I will add you to a WhatsApp group where soon I will be notifying you more of this.
 Me gusta Responder Compartir

Of course I would. 😊 ***
 Me gusta Responder Compartir

excellent. If you'd like, please send me your phone number so I can add you to a WhatsApp group where I will soon give information.
 Me gusta Responder Compartir

thanks ***
 Me gusta Responder Compartir

thank you ***
 Me gusta Responder Compartir

Absolutely 🍷 ***
 Me gusta Responder Compartir

Hey everyone
 Where is the best place to get a TEFL certificate?
 Thank you

Hi there, looking for some advice and recommendations.
 I've received my 120-hour TEFL certificate and have a degree. However, I have no formal teaching experience. I wondered if there were any online agencies that are willing to take on newbies in the industry?
 Would love some advice too for anyone willing to give their time.
 Thanks you 😊

9 21 comentarios

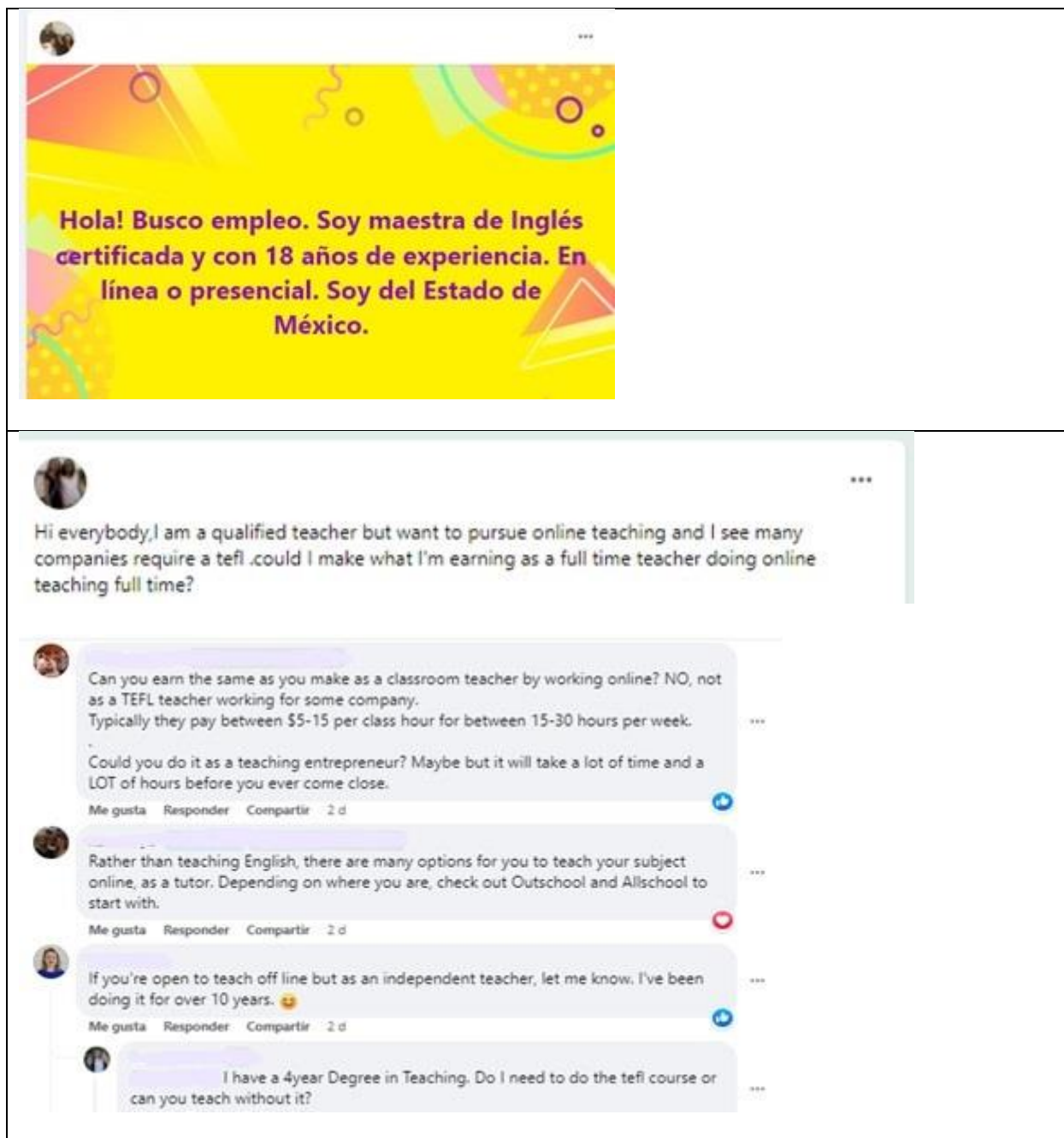
Me gusta Comentar Compartir

Escribe una respuesta...

There are always lots of people needing to learn English. Try talking to friends and family and acquaintances so they know you can teach online ne lessons. Also, find local teachers groups on fb, and university groups as well.
 After working at differ... Ver más
 Me gusta Responder Compartir 2 d 3

Ver 1 respuesta

Hi do you speak other languages? ***



Certifications are important for English teachers because they are related to their qualifications. They mean that they know the language, they know how to use it and they know how to teach it. In this community, members ask about experiences with certain certifications, and if they have more value in certain jobs. They also ask about prices and places where they can

take the examination. Due to this certification topic, members ask about job opportunities. As has been mentioned, some members entered the group with the purpose to find job opportunities. According to the rules, it is allowed to post job opportunities or ask if someone knows about it, and both types of posts are common in the virtual community.

These two topics, certifications and job opportunities, not only reflect their teaching values but also reflect their values as people in real society. They mention that they are teachers and students see them as role models, hence they need to show respect, tolerance, and empathy not only outside and inside the classroom, they can show and reflect these values on the internet, more specifically, in the virtual communities they belong to. Besides, for teachers in this virtual community, certifications are something really important. They constitute a synonym for well-qualified English teachers.

Alva	... Pienso que no sólo refleja mis valores y creencias como maestra, sino como individuo. En cuanto a valores, es importante dirigirse a las personas con respeto y que todos por igual nos tratemos de la misma forma. Siempre que comento la publicación de otra persona, intento hacerlo de la mejor manera posible para que no se malinterprete o suene grosero mi comentario. Es importante que todos aprendamos valores como la tolerancia, respeto, igualdad e incluso profesionalismo, ya que nos encontramos en un grupo de maestros donde todos somos profesionistas. Y en caso de que publique algo, esa publicación representa la forma en que a mi me gusta enseñar a mis alumnos. Ya sea material de lecturas, o si es algún cartel informativo.
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	<p>... I think it not only reflects my values and beliefs as a teacher, but as an individual. Regarding values, it is important to address people with respect and that we all treat each other in the same way. Whenever I comment on someone else's post, I try to do it in the best possible way so that my comment doesn't get misunderstood or sound rude. It is important that we all learn values such as tolerance, respect, equality and even professionalism since we are in a group of teachers where we are all professionals. And in case I post something, that post represents the way I like to teach my students. Whether it is reading material, or if it is an informative poster.</p>
<p>Lucky</p>	<p>... Los alumnos, en especial los niños, ven a los maestros como modelos a seguir. Entonces si yo en redes sociales ando insultando a las personas o ando publicando contenido que es inapropiado para todos, estoy dando un mal ejemplo. Por eso también intento que mis valores como persona se vean reflejados en los comentarios, e incluso mi formación académica. Me gusta escribir correctamente. Casi no publico en el grupo, pero de igual manera, si llego a hacerlo, el contenido representa lo que a mí me gusta enseñar a mis alumnos, como videos informativos porque hoy en día los alumnos son muy visuales.</p>

	<p>... Students, especially children, look at teachers as role models. So, if I am insulting people on social networks or posting content that is inappropriate for everyone, I am giving a bad example. That is why I also try to reflect my values as a person in the comments, and even my academic training. I like to write correctly. I hardly ever post in the group, but still, if I do, the content represents what I like to teach to my students, such as informative videos because now students are very visual.</p>
<p>Dany</p>	<p>... Hay personas que sólo andan buscando peleas en las redes sociales. Quieren insultar a los demás por comentarios que hacen, pero ahí es donde entra el respeto. Debemos entender que no todos piensan lo mismo que nosotros. Cada cabeza es un mundo.</p> <p>... There are people who are only looking for fights on social networks. They want to insult others for comments they make, but that's where respect comes in. We must understand that not everyone thinks the same as us. Each head is a world.</p>
<p>Elly</p>	<p>... No me agrada esa gente que anda ahí en los comentarios dándole me divierte porque no piensa igual que los demás o empieza discusiones absurdas sobre algo insignificante. En cuanto a mis creencias como maestra, pues no se sí lo que publico refleja eso, pero si estoy segura de que refleja los métodos que yo empleo con mis alumnos.</p>

	<p>... I don't like those people who are there in the comments reacting with a funny reaction because they don't think the same as the others or start absurd discussions about something insignificant. Regarding my beliefs as a teacher, I don't know if what I publish reflects that, but I am sure that it reflects the methods that I use with my students.</p>
<p>Jimmy</p>	<p>... al estar en un grupo donde la mayoría de las personas tiene determinada formación académica, es importante reflejar lo que eres. Y obviamente ahí entra lo del respeto, y especialmente la tolerancia. Como ya lo comentaron, en redes sociales hay gente que no es tolerante a lo que creen o piensan las demás personas, pero tampoco está bien querer corregir a los demás.</p> <p>... being in a group where most people have a certain educational background, it's important to reflect who you are. And obviously, that's where respect comes in, and especially tolerance. As already mentioned, on social networks there are people who are not tolerant of what other people believe or think, but it is not ok to want to correct others either.</p>

Values are closely related to the rules in the virtual community. Since the very beginning, when the administrators created the group, they decided to establish rules for the members, rules that are not difficult to follow for professional people. Teachers also establish rules inside their

classrooms, they ask their students to follow and respect the rules, consequently, teachers can also respect rules in other spaces. Teachers understand that they are role models for their students, and as some of the interviewees mentioned, they need to reflect their values inside and outside their classroom values that they have as professionals and as human beings.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

This section presents the limitations of the present study. Firstly, it is important to mention that as this is a case study, no generalizations can be drawn. Every virtual community might be different. Even when people use the same platforms and share the same likes and interests, results might be contrasting in other virtual communities. Besides, the number of participants was limited. As it is a big community, there cannot be interaction with all of them.

Secondly, time was also a limitation. As it was mentioned before, it is not a small community, and the people in the focus group were just a small part of the representatives of the virtual community. If there had been more time to develop the research, more members would have participated in the focus group interview, and they would have shared more valuable information for this study.

Finally, although technology allowed the researcher to collect data for this study carrying out the interview online, a face-to-face interview would have been a better option to interact with the members of the virtual community outside the internet. A face-to-face interview resulted in a difficult plan because the participants are from different parts of Mexico, and they have different schedules to work.

5.4 Further Research

As previously mentioned in the limitations of the study, one way to enhance this research would be to invite more members of the virtual community to participate in a reunion where they all can share their ideas and experiences within the virtual community. Moreover, to develop an instrument with more items, and with questions, try to cover more specific aspects of the members and the community itself.

In addition, similar research could be carried out in a completely different community. A virtual community that is not exactly related to education. Instead, could be a leisure community where people from different parts of the world can be found. Therefore, a comparison of the results could be interesting in order to see if the same characteristics are developed in a different community with different topics and people.

5.5 Conclusions

I decided to start this research because I am part of many different virtual communities, from educational to leisure communities, and it is very interesting to see how members interact, the content they share, and how they create a big community inside the internet. It is wonderful to see how people from all over the world can be joined for one specific topic.

I strongly believe that membership is one of the most important features that virtual communities can develop because that is how people feel part of something. People create small words inside virtual communities. They can also create words to name the members of the group, and even drawing or pictures that represent the whole virtual community. Later, those elements can be used in the posts, or the conversations inside the group.

Finally, I feel that virtual communities are good support. In the case of the English teachers' community, they felt emotional support and motivation during pandemic times. Some of the members mentioned that they found the group in those specific moments because they felt tired and frustrated about online teaching. In the virtual community, they found emotional support, motivation, and even material for their online classes. Online communities can be full of good and interesting things.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1

Interview for the focus group

Introducción:

Hola. Buenas tardes. Primero quiero agradecerles por aceptar participar en esta entrevista. Me gustaría enfatizar que sus nombres e identidades serán protegidos y sólo se utilizará la información que proporcionen aquí para propósitos enteramente académicos y de investigación. Ya que esta es una entrevista de grupo focal, iniciaré con una pregunta y todos tendrán oportunidad de contestarla, sin embargo, no habrá un orden específico, por lo que los exhorto a sentirse en completa libertad de indicarme si desean iniciar un comentario respecto a la pregunta, si desean complementar lo que alguno de los compañeros ha mencionado, o si tienen duda respecto a algo. Comencemos.

1. ¿Cómo fue que conociste y encontraste el grupo de “English Teachers Mexico”?
2. ¿Por qué decidiste unirte a este grupo en específico?
3. ¿Pertenece a otras comunidades virtuales dentro de Facebook? ¿Cuáles?
4. ¿Cuál es la forma en que permaneces activo dentro del grupo de Facebook (Publicando, comentando las publicaciones de los demás, manteniendo contacto con otros miembros del grupo)?
5. ¿Piensas que el contenido que publicas o la forma en que comentas en otras publicaciones, reflejan tus valores y creencias como maestro de inglés? ¿Por qué o cómo?
6. Del contenido que comparten dentro del grupo, ¿Qué es el que más te atrae?

7.. ¿Hay algo del grupo que no te agrade? ¿Por qué?

8.. ¿Te identificas con el contenido o comentarios que comparten los demás miembros del grupo? ¿Cómo?

9. ¿Piensas que el contenido o los comentarios de los otros miembros tienen algún impacto en tu práctica profesional? ¿Cómo o de qué manera?

10. Al pertenecer a esta comunidad virtual, ¿Cuáles dirías que son algunas ventajas o desventajas?

11. ¿Has tenido algún conflicto dentro de la comunidad virtual? ¿Cuáles? ¿Cómo?

12. En general, ¿has tenido una buena experiencia perteneciendo a esta comunidad virtual de maestros de inglés? ¿Por qué?