

Elements of the Virtual Teaching and Learning Process that Promote Input and Significant Learning in EFL

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Abstract.

The foreign language teaching/learning process produces and relies on input to reach communicative competence. Successful face-to-face classes provide students with context, real-world examples, real-time interaction, social skills, and a sense of commitment that enrich input for learners to develop communicative competence. As a result of the worldwide pandemic Covid 19, online teaching approached education as an emergency virtual option through asynchronous and synchronous sessions. This case study is aimed at gathering the pedagogical positive outcomes that virtual learning promoted in Foreign Language students at Universidad Nacional. With that, it enhances the input that may be used prospectively as instructional reinforcement in face-to-face classroom settings.

Keywords. *blended teaching-methodologies, communicative competence, input, prospectivity, virtual learning outcomes.*

ELEMENTOS DE LA ENSEÑANZA Y EL APRENDIZAJE BAJO LA MODALIDAD VIRTUAL QUE PROMUEVEN EL INPUT Y EL APRENDIZAJE SIGNIFICATIVO EN INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

Resumen

El proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje de un segundo idioma se produce y se apoya en el input para lograr alcanzar la competencia comunicativa. Las clases presenciales que califican como exitosas proveen a las personas estudiantes de contexto, interacción, ejemplos en contexto real, interacción en tiempo real, habilidades sociales y un sentido de compromiso que enriquece el input para que los aprendientes desarrollen competencia comunicativa. Como resultado de la pandemia mundial Covid 19, la enseñanza en línea llegó al sistema educativo como una opción de virtualidad de emergencia con sesiones sincrónicas y asincrónicas. La enseñanza en línea emergente, resultado de una pandemia mundial, llegó al sistema educativo como una opción de virtualidad de emergencia con sesiones sincrónicas y asincrónicas. Este estudio de caso está enfocado en rescatar los resultados positivos a nivel pedagógico que dejó la virtualidad en relación al Input los cuales puedan ser usados prospectivamente como un refuerzo didáctico en entornos de clases presenciales.

Palabras claves: *metodologías, blended learning, competencia comunicativa, input, prospectividad, resultados de aprendizaje virtual.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The interaction that takes place during the foreign language learning (EFL) process becomes remarkable because of the input learners receive from professors, classmates, and classroom environment. Decoders, as for this research, foreign language students, exposed to a teaching process with different methodologies, linguistic skills, teaching resources, and human interchange get impacted by those aspects consciously and unconsciously. The accurate combination of explanations of contents in context and the involvement

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of students' learning skills make the prescriptive EFL process possible by decoding and encoding in and out of the classrooms. Actually, that interaction enriches communication and the fulfillment of the general and specific objectives through pedagogical mediation when receiving the linguistic stimuli called input. Krashen cited by Brown (2014) highlights the importance of input featuring the teacher's discourse, the textbooks, materials, output from other students as the visual and auditory reinforcement. The process of teaching and learning a foreign language by producing input has allowed EFL students to learn and acquire the target language in face-to-face classes. Hopefully, online teaching should be impacting in the same way language learning; however, language teachers should be aware of learners' emotional and psychological state due to these factors weaken the process of acquiring and learning the language in an optimal way.

Classes, focused on both the target language and interaction, give students more learning opportunities to deal with the culture, the process, and the target language itself. That language stimuli moves students smoothly along the developmental sequence. For Krashen (1991), its application through technology as part of the controlled language resources in the classroom manages to strengthen that input handled through language in the classroom to reinforce input. If the role of teachers is necessary to acquire a first language, doubtless that role is vital to develop the four basic skills for EFL learners. Haynes (2007) commented that:

Many researchers assert that comprehensible output is nearly as important as comprehensible input. Cooperative learning groups are one way for newcomers to receive ample input and output. A small-group setting allows ELLs to have more comprehensible input because classmates modify or adapt the message to the listener's needs (p. 6).

In order for this learning process to become the most favorable input, it should fulfill every single element that composes communicative competence whose production of meaning in foreign language learning is strictly related to how students learn and process the target language.

In the same vein, the interaction between the same cognitive structure with relevant learning strategies become scaffolding teaching ideas. It can be vinctuated to the Theory of the Ecology of Language Acquisition

proposed by Brown (2014) that involves innate factors and mentions others such as L.A.D (language acquisition device), the cultural scheme, intelligence, aptitude, and background experience. Actually, significant learning enclosed in any educational setting, taken into account in this research, may suggest that virtual teaching should also establish the necessary mediation to achieve communicative competence and fulfill the methodological sequence in the curricular planification [planning]. The interests of the teaching of a foreign language regardless face-to-face or virtual sessions have to focus on the production of input.

II. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. Input

Regarding Macmillan Dictionary (2022), input is "information that your brain receives from your eyes, ears, or nerves." Also, it is "help in the form of ideas, advice, or information, used in a process or in making a decision." That is to say that input is everything that is read, seen, touched, listened, and sensed in the language learning classrooms. Language learners are exposed to the target language during the EFL classes by hearing, talking, reading materials, and interacting to the teachers while mastering the class. Krashen (1991), thus, proposes the input hypothesis in which he mentioned that second language learners and acquires should keep learning and being exposed to context and extra-linguistic knowledge in order to improve their linguistic stage. However, Krashen (1991) explains that although comprehensible input is important in language acquisition, it is not sufficient to acquire the target language. It is such an important aspect that teachers should integrate techniques that expose learners to complex input in which they can use their current knowledge to acquire new input. The learning and acquisition process of the language should have the $i+1$ that Krashen stated in his book. The $i+1$ needs the accompaniment of comprehensible input, but the second language learners have to have an optimal attitude and a motivation to expand their linguistic competence and performance.

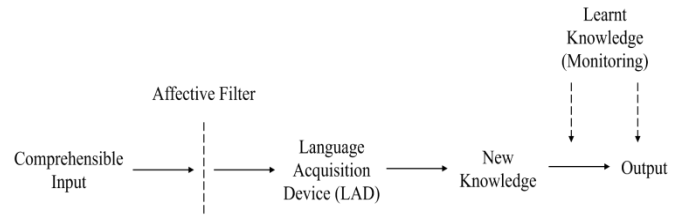
To achieve the goal of language learners understanding the language, the input should not only be finely tuned but also roughly tuned. Teachers should not point out just to $i+1$, they have to go beyond the natural order. When learners are exposed to roughly tuned input, they tend to go to their previously acquired knowledge in order to understand the message (Krashen & Terrell,

1998). The roughly tuned input can be varieties of the target language or another language which make the learners go further their current linguistic stage to comprehend and communicate. There are many other ways to bring roughly tuned input to language learners such as caretaker speech, foreigner talk, and teacher talk. According to Krashen and Terrell (1998) “they are giving optimal language lessons, providing input that is understandable and that ‘covers’ the child’s next linguistic stage.” (p. 34). Those ways of providing input modify the language to permit learners to understand the language and create communication.

The role of input hypothesis in the language classrooms is essential for learners’ linguistic growth and development. Language professors implement in their classes the five hypotheses that Krashen proposed while creating tasks and materials that contain extra context and meaningful information. The acquisition-learning (the distinction between acquiring a language in a natural environment and learning a language in a systematic way), natural order (language is acquired following rules in a natural way), monitor (using the learnt knowledge to edit the output), input (acquiring comprehensible input through extra linguistic knowledge), and affective filter hypothesis (emotions, environment, and psychological states affect the language acquisition) are elements of the input hypothesis model which explains the process of learning and acquiring the language. Krashen and Terrell (1998) stated that the learnt knowledge “[...] can only be used as a Monitor or an editor.” (p. 30). However, learners have to stay in a neutral position in the use of the monitor (editing their output).

In the language classroom, learners are able to keep a balance between the non-use and the overuse of the monitor through the error correction techniques that professors implement in their classes because as Krashen (1981) mentioned the overuse of the monitor will be only focused in the editing of the output rather than communicating with fluency, and not using the monitor allows the speaker to perform without modifications. The purpose of learning and acquiring a language is to understand and communicate using the target language with fluency as in the first language; nonetheless, if fluency is being affected by the monitor (editor), the communication process is going to be limited. Figure 1 explains the process of learning and acquiring new input.

FIGURE 1
THE INPUT HYPOTHESIS MODEL



Note: Adapted from *The effect of interactive task-based learning on learner's affective barriers in ELT*, by I. Han & I. Jo, 2010, p. 4. Copyright 2010 by 새한영어영문학회.

B. Communicative Competence

Hymes (1972, as cited in Brown, 2014) defines CC as “that aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts”. Also, the British Council states that CC “refers to a learner's ability to use language to communicate successfully. Canale and Swain (1980) defined it as composing competence in four areas: words and rules, appropriacy, cohesion and coherence, use of communication strategies.” For EFL students being able to know what to say, when to say it and how to say it means knowing the target language. In a formal environment, teachers deal with students' needs to fulfill their learning goals by using different methodologies and providing them with different strategies to develop a second language. After the pandemic Covid 19, there are more pedagogical issues that affect foreign language learning in terms of classroom atmosphere due to the technological support enhanced by EFL teachers in order to overhaul classroom management in virtual settings.

C. Virtual Learning

According to Overt Software (2022), “virtual learning is simply any learning experience that involves computers (or, increasingly, devices such as smartphones and tablets) and/or the internet”. Regardless of the educational setting it certainly enriches understanding and processing of foreign languages. Regarding understanding in terms of teaching and learning, Vygotsky (1978) mentioned by Edwards and Merce (1987) suggested that children's comprehension is influenced not just by direct experiences with the physical environment but also by

interpersonal interactions concerning a world that goes beyond mere sensory perception. This world is cultural, filled with meaning and significance, shaped mainly by language. Therefore, human knowledge and cognition are inherently cultural, deriving their unique attributes from the social dynamics of language, discourse, and other cultural expressions.

D. Significant Learning

When referring to significance, Ausubel (1983) proposes that a student's learning depends on the pre-existing cognitive structure related to new information. The term "cognitive structure" makes mention of the set of concepts and ideas an individual possesses in a specific field of knowledge, as well as the organization of those ideas. In the guidance of learning, understanding the student's cognitive structure is crucial. It's not only about knowing the amount of information they have but also understanding the concepts and propositions they handle, along with their degree of steadiness.

Ausubel's learning principles provide a framework for designing metacognitive tools that allow us to understand the organization of the learner's cognitive structure. This understanding facilitates better guidance in educational work. Actually, education is no longer seen as a task to be carried out with "blank minds" or the assumption that students start learning "from zero." Instead, learners bring a set of experiences.

According to the author, learning is considered meaningful when the content is related in a non-arbitrary and significant way to what the student already knows. Background knowledge plays a relevant role in the teaching and learning process. Substantial and non-arbitrary relationships imply that ideas connect with a specifically relevant aspect of the student's cognitive structure, such as an image, a previously relevant symbol, a concept, or a proposition. (Ausubel, 1983, p. 18)

After analyzing Ausubel's position in terms of significant learning, it may be stated that virtual teaching has been as successful as good face-to-face classes have been. It needs to be understood as a process designed by teachers but led by students. To have a clear understanding of what significant learning implies in the context of EFL, table 1 presents its characteristics regarding learners' role, material, the cognitive teaching approach, and its framework.

TABLE 1
CHARACTERISTICS OF SIGNIFICANT LEARNING

The new information is related to the existing information in the cognitive structure in a substantive way, not arbitrarily, nor literally.
The student must have a favorable attitude or disposition to extract the meaning.
The learner possesses relevant prior knowledge or anchoring concepts.
A framework or conceptual network can be built.
Material: logical meaning.
Student: psychological significance.
Appropriate strategies such as advance organizers and concept maps.

Note: Adapted from Estrategias docentes para un aprendizaje significativo, by F. Díaz Barriga & G. Hernández Rojas, 2010, pp. 29-30. Copyright 2010 by McGraw-Hill.

The learning community which involves the whole educational setting becomes a cognitive factor in the foreign language learning process because of the natural way to provide learners with sufficient input immersed in the reality of language production. University students depend on input and output obtained in a formal environment as the only place for them to practice. Here, it is important to talk about natural input versus formal practice. Actually, foreign language learning is also the result of the policies the government implements to deal with newcomers and native speakers. Interaction gives learners more learning opportunities to deal with the culture, the process, and the language itself. The research concern is related to how virtual learning provides students with those opportunities to develop communicative competence.

E. Didactics of English Teaching

According to the English teaching study plan of Universidad Nacional (2023), Integrated English I is the first course in which the student is intended to initiate the development of the four basic skills of the language: listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. While the student continues to acquire a theoretical and practical understanding of the functions of the various grammatical structures required in situations of oral and written communication, the student must be allowed to use the basic vocabulary that is necessary to express himself with greater precision; fluency development and self-correction are encouraged with the purpose to achieve the object. In addition, the use of the laboratory is not only for listening comprehension but also for

practicing the grammatical concepts learned. The continuing courses are to be developed in the same methodological framework as the first semester but acquiring more advanced and contextualized competencies. Aldana-Mendoza (2011) defines didactics as “the art of teaching” which makes emphasis on the conduction of the teaching and learning process. A relationship must always be established between the teacher, mediation (materials, assumptions, approaches), and learning. That relationship and relevance of the methodological framework and the whole planning to develop language learning through pedagogical Input have to continue along the major. Figure 1 shows the elements involved in language teaching and learning.

FIGURE 2
ROBERT GARDNER'S SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL
MODEL

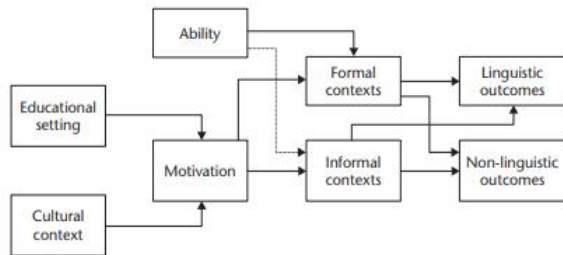


Figure 12.1 Robert Gardner's socio-educational model (Gardner, 2007)

III. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted through a case study design in which the researchers worked on collecting information about the positive aspects resulting from virtual teaching in terms of Input to conclude how virtual learning supported the development for communicative competence. Fourth level university students at Campus Coto, who received both face-to-face classes and online teaching, collaborated to provide those insights. Initially, the researchers designed the study through a qualitative methodology using a questionnaire to gather data and then analyze it according to the categories of analysis. Because of the pandemic and the emergency virtual learning environment, the researchers developed an interest in the topic of rescuing methodological outcomes that can contribute to the second language face-to-face teaching process prospectively. The ultimate goal is collecting information to identify the relationships among two variables in this case which are input produced during virtual learning, and virtual input applied to EFL in the English teaching major. Actually, the researchers, employing an inductive approach, sought to understand students' replies within their own frame of reference.

The epistemological foundation and research type were selected with the purpose of defining the elements of virtual teaching, EFL, whose input developed language learning. This corresponds to a phenomenological case study driven by the interest in understanding the students' perspective. Monterola and Otzen (2013) explained that research has as its main objectives first the generation of knowledge, by producing new ideas, and the solutions to practical problems. Framed as a case study, the reality was interpreted analytically, acknowledging its dynamic nature due to ongoing changes in culture and teaching-learning processes. The research focuses on virtual education and the resulting input applicable to the new reality of post-pandemic face-to-face EFL teaching. This qualitative study adopts a flexible, immersive, and emergent case study design.

Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis of this research is the teaching elements used during virtual language classes that produced relevant Input in EFL classrooms with the purpose of generating and supplying new knowledge that may be significantly applied to post pandemic face-to-face modality. The categories are presented as part of the researcher's job to gather and synthesize the qualitative data to refer to the conceptualization of the objectives regarding this research. Context, interaction, didactic elements, social skills, and the sense of pedagogical commitment EFL teachers demonstrated during virtual sessions are aspects to be analyzed to understand how much Input that virtual environment produced to benefit students to learn English.

IV. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The information presented in this section shows the data gathered from the questionnaire held by the subjects of the study. It is important to note that the data obtained has been grouped together, and it was provided by two groups who shared a common element which is that both groups experienced virtual and in-person classes in different periods. However, one group started in virtual modality, but they graduated in face-to-face modality. The other group started in traditional teaching, was sent to virtual modality and then got back to physical classrooms. The most important aspect is their experience in both teaching modalities as the object of the study.

Teaching English as a foreign language implies the creation of a real learning context into a formal teaching process. Traditionally, it has been proved that during students' developmental sequence of a new language, EFL

teachers become the first teaching strategy that produces Input. As Porras et al (2012) mentioned, teachers are in charge of making pertinent decisions, processing information and analyzing their role from a route of introspection to finally reach students' production. In the English Teaching major, the stakeholders of the process have already experienced both: virtual and face-to-face classes to fulfill social and professional expectations of public universities. This is why it is relevant to collect data from students' perception supporting the elements of the virtual teaching process to conclude which of them produced meaningful Input for language learning. For the purpose of this study the participants are going to be cited as P [participants] and a number from 1 to 8 respecting the order of participation.

A. Classroom Interaction: Participation and Language Comprehensibility

Participant students, who responded to the research tool, highlighted the importance of interaction to the development of language. In their case, they remarked on the fact that their learning experience was affected by an emergency EFL virtual process. According to their experience, some of the necessary aspects to be present in an EFL learning environment are human contact, interaction, a well didactic conditioned -shared space [room], group work and good management of the classroom information. Actually, they recognized that virtual teaching had other challenges more than teachers' language comprehensibility.

Despite the fact that they accepted that face-to-face classes provide the learning process with more opportunities to understand English, they pointed out that the milestone was more into the mental and physical breakdowns and internet connections than in understanding or not professors' language. P1 says "At that moment, we needed that human contact, especially because we were in our last year of the major". Definitely, it can be concluded that virtual classes need to have the same level of human interaction that characterizes language development. EFL teachers should worry about both linguistic issues and technological approaches but also about the concern that regardless of the platforms and digital tools used in class, students respond to encoding and decoding emotionally and language is a human condition. P4 also mentions "As human beings, it is easier to learn by interacting within us, sharing the same room, and learning environment. We get a lot of benefits working and learning together in a face-to-face class." The new challenge virtual teaching has is to use pedagogical strategies to make students feel comfortable and human in this modality. So far, it is evident that there is reluctance to a process if taken as

pioneers. Traditional in-person teaching seems to be more positive than it was thought before the pandemic.

When talking about the interaction between the stakeholders of the EFL process, participant students maintained the same judgement that physical classrooms provided them with more learning opportunities. Even when they mentioned negative aspects in regard to technology and internet issues, some of their answers started to get softer. P4 explained face-to-face classes by saying that "The interaction is more natural. In real life there is no "my mic is not working" or "you got stuck" situation". However, P8 admits: "I think that virtual modality gave more space for questions or comments since your participation could be either talking or writing."

In these first two questions there is a clear acceptance that in-person classes are better, but they shed a light of positivism on virtual teaching.

B. EFL Stakeholders' Communication

It is important to mention that these students experienced a version of virtuality whose implementation emerged as a reaction to the pandemic. In terms of communication, the participant students expressed that virtual modality provided a wider space for horizontal communication and for a broader access to teachers. They said that virtual modality made teachers be more worried about contacting students than in face-to-face classes. It is interesting to analyze that even when they expressed discomfort in the previous category because of internet issues, they accepted that virtual modality provided them with more availability and access to the professors. Being in touch with teachers made it better for them and the process itself. P3 said that "Virtual modality because as I said before, professors had to figure out how to teach a class and how to make it understandable". P3 said that he thought that in the face-to-face modality they did not have that problem, he recognized that the professors did not have to give that extra effort as in the virtual modality to convey a message.

One of the students, P6, mentioned in-person classes because communicating was easier than in a virtual modality. If you have something to ask outside classes, you can just go to that professor's classroom and ask the question directly. While on the virtual modality you had to send a message or email which was not always answered fast.

However, in terms of communication most of the participant students agreed that in physical classrooms, it was more difficult to be replied by professors regardless of the means of communication being used. It is interesting to

find out that the same learning and social issues students face in face-to-face classes appeared in virtuality. P7 said “My experience was not bad because I chose a group of responsible people to work with, but when I couldn't choose my group work, I felt frustrated”. Class atmosphere in both modalities depend on teachers' management of the classes.

C. Techniques and Strategies

Regarding the strategies used in the virtual modality, students mentioned as positive in their language learning process, the use of games, videos, asynchronous classes, the post-recorded classes, research implementation, virtual apps such as Vocaroo and Exe-learning that allowed pair and group conversations. They also pointed out that in virtual classes the activities in break up rooms made them feel as if they were in classes. As one important strategy, P4 said “Allowing all students to speak is very necessary, as well as respecting when someone does not want to speak.” In other words, virtual learning gave students the chance to participate in a freer way.

Related to their dealing with learning gaps, they answered that virtuality forced them to use and learn more about technological techniques and material because even when the contact with the professor was accessible, they needed to look for help on the Internet; they said it was positive. P3 said:

[...] the professors had to do tons of things to make us understand the message. It is not the same to be in a classroom, see the professor, see how he/she uses body language, uses the board, uses the walls, decorations, etc etc. In virtual modality that was not possible, so professors had to figure out how to "replace" face-to-face modality the best way possible.

The participant students concluded that the use of material, techniques, strategies, and internet resources in general was done by both teachers and students. They highlighted the fact that doing individual work was not that negative. The use of videos, research on the internet, getting electronic books is something they used to teach now in their in-person classes as professionals. P5 said: “When learning a language, it was relevant to participate and include the second language as a goal whether it is a virtual or face-to-face scenario. I use digital resources and realia in both scenarios, and I was constant and a regular student”.

D. Teaching Materials

The use of didactic materials was a helpful tool to acquire input as the participant students mentioned in the

instrument: the post-recorded classes gave them the opportunity to develop themselves at their own pace. Activities where the blended learning was applied allow them to not feel frustrated while doing assignments. P1 mentioned that “The post-recorded classes were a useful element because you could watch as many times as you needed to understand the topics”. This technique presented a unique opportunity to learn that face-to-face classes do not provide them. Moreover, P8 emphasizes that “Asynchronous classes and assignments” were elements that help them to have a better learning of the content, as mentioned before, it gave them the opportunity to work at their own pace.

The use of additional resources was pointed out by participants as a key in virtual learning for professors to explain a topic, concept, or structure. P3 explained that “the professors had to do tons of things to make us understand the message. It is not the same to be in a classroom, see the professor, see how he/she uses body language, uses the board, uses the walls, decorations, etc etc.” This highlighted the importance of using body language and many other tangible resources such as the whiteboard when explaining a topic or even understanding the professor's lecture. P2, however, reaffirms a positive aspect which is “Internet tools. There are plenty of ways of searching information, material, and data”. Even though there are not as many resources as in-person teaching, there exists digital tools and resources that can be used to teach a virtual class and replace what is needed from the face-to-face modality.

Participants, at the same time, agree with the fact that they acquired input through the use of technological tools that made the classes interesting and dynamic because of time issues. P8 stated that “Use different apps and activities to keep student's attention” is a useful technique that professors implemented in their virtual class that help him/her to acquire input. P6 also replied that “the use of different resources to make the classes more dynamic is something I would definitely use” making emphasis on the strategies and techniques that he/she would use to teach a virtual class. On the other hand, P5 argues that:

As a teacher, it was useful to learn how to prepare and handle a virtual class. It was also important getting to know our students as it happened during the pandemic. I remember there was a teacher who implemented a questionnaire to know about student's realities according to the digital gap presented at that time as the access to Internet connection and IT know-how. I also use multiple learning styles to make sure everyone learns.

Virtual modality also let great input in how to handle a virtual class and techniques to help learners overcome the psychological effects of the pandemic. It is essential that professors should know about students' realities even in face-to-face classes in order to provide an optimal learning environment where students feel comfortable and motivated to learn. Moreover, technological skills were a must in virtual learning, and not only professors had to learn how to deal with technology to give a class and prepare it, but also students had to learn how to use it for carrying out their assignments, taking their classes, and studying.

Table 2 shows the participants' appreciations of their learning experience in the virtual modality by comparing their insights in their face-to-face learning.

TABLE 2
PARTICIPANTS' APPRECIATIONS OF VIRTUAL MODALITY

Participant	Appreciation
P1	It was very productive and effective but not better than face-to-face classes.
P2	Average
P3	Very bad. I know it has many advantages, and right now, there are investigations and special training for teachers to do a good job in the virtual modality, but at that moment it was such a disaster, nobody was ready for that.
P4	I am proud to say that it was of the same quality. Both modalities were very beneficial and allowed me to learn a lot.
P5	It was good, I give an 8 out of 10 because it was something new for all of us as teachers and students. I prefer face-to-face classes after all.
P6	The virtual is helpful for some specific reasons, but I think the face-to-face is definitely a better environment to learn.
P7	It was good because it depends on the student's attitude to learn. However, it was stressful due to the bad internet connection.
P8	My virtual learning process was a little bit difficult since it was something completely new, but it was more relaxing when I got used to it. Face-to-face classes are more demanding of time, but you feel more comfortable with your classmates and professors.

Note: This table contains participants' appreciations of their virtual process that were gathered in the questionnaire.

IV. CONCLUSION

The disruption caused by the Pandemic in 2019 affected every single aspect of human life and formal education was not the exception. Public universities in Costa Rica embraced the challenge transitioning from face-to-face classes to virtual teaching. At first, this worldwide crisis, which tested the human capacity to resilience, shocked the world regarding health, economy and consequently education. Aspects such as the usage of technology, the knowledge teachers had to deal with virtual environments and digital tools, the accessibility students had to participate in their classes, and internet issues were some of the milestones that stopped stakeholders from being active participants of a fluent and natural EFL process.

This research paper presents conclusions that were drawn from the analysis carried out to the data compiled from the eight participant students that answered the research tool and also received both virtual and face-to-face classes. Accordingly, students reinforced the idea that there were positive methodological aspects and pedagogical implementations to be rescued from their experience during virtuality in their major. The researchers analyzed the information looking for specific aspects that promoted Input during the EFL virtual learning experience, and the results are the source for the following conclusions.

Virtual teaching offers a more continuous pedagogical mediation and horizontal communication from teachers. There is more awareness of the importance of guiding students' processes and the immediacy for feedback. Recording lessons is a virtual element that provides students with more opportunities for learning and reinforcing what they did not learn. Another element of the pedagogical guidance is the use of new digital tools that take students to research and be part of an inverted classroom by being prepared before classes. Virtual teaching, moreover, makes students be comfortable with activities of oral performance and presentations such as interacting with the teacher, class discussion and debates. That is, implementing the right activities for instance warm-ups, research, questionnaires, and self-evaluation makes both learning modalities worth it, not their nature. Even though availability of technology is a necessity variable, it is not sufficient for effective virtual learning; pedagogical mediation keeps being the answer. Individual research, on the other hand, is reinforced in virtuality because it allows students to learn at their own pace. It is important to say that virtual teaching fosters students to do more research than face-to-face modality due to the need of acquiring extra knowledge and understanding either a concept, topic, or structure. In regard to communication, virtuality makes professors' availability positive; they are more concerned about their students' needs. For students, classroom communication was so positive that virtuality is

used as a means of active feedback during face-to-face classes due to less time consuming and accessibility.

After the analysis and the systematization that researchers carried out, it is concluded that learners and teachers should be provided with the academic space to create digital and pedagogical resources to facilitate effective teaching and learning in both virtual and physical classrooms. That is, Blended Learning enriched with the best of both experiences. Furthermore, activities that promote the self-learning of students such as asynchronous activities bring optimal and inclusive learning. Teachers should plan lessons considering aspects of differentiated classrooms. Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010) explain differentiated classrooms as learning spaces where students' variations are important, and it ensures that teachers make specific and continually evolving plans to connect students with the content. It also brings a flexible approach to teaching and learning while considering students' variance. Therefore, having students surrounded by positive and comfortable learning environments increases the probability of students acquiring Input and producing meaningful output. Asynchronous activities, for instance, bring students better learning experiences by allowing them to learn by themselves at their own pace which makes them not feel frustrated to accomplish the tasks in a determined time. Without regard to the method of learning and the technology available, EFL teachers have a significant impact on the learning process functioning as agents of Input production.

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