

**LLEI Pre-service teachers' perceptions of doing their pedagogical practicum under the
virtual teaching modality in 2021.**

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A research report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Licenciado en Lenguas Extranjeras Inglés

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Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras Inglés

Decanatura de División de Universidad Abierta y a Distancia (DUAD)

Facultad de Educación

Bogotá, 2022

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Abstract.

This study emerged from the researcher's experience as a LLEI student and its objective was to analyze the pre-service teachers' perceptions about developing their Pedagogical Practices under the virtual teaching modality (PAT) while in Pandemic times in 2021. This study followed a descriptive research paradigm and a case study research methodology. To address the preservice teacher's perceptions, a survey and an interview were implemented with a group of 3 preservice teachers from the LLEI program who developed their pedagogical practices under the virtual modality in the period 2021-2. Following a thematic data analysis, there were relevant findings about the feelings that the participants had about the practice, some pros, and cons of virtuality, insights about the accompaniment in the practice, and teachers' actions and decisions for the virtual classes. As a whole, there was clear a relevant connection that pedagogical practices have with the teachers' growth and the need of these spaces in virtual modality to enrich the practice, also, there could be observed some positive feelings about the development of their teaching practices as well as some needs and lacks they consider they need in their future training.

Keywords: Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions, Pedagogical practices, virtual teaching modality (PAT), Pandemic times.

Resumen

Este estudio surgió de la experiencia de la investigadora como estudiante de la LLEI y tuvo como objetivo analizar las percepciones de los docentes en formación sobre el desarrollo de sus Prácticas Pedagógicas bajo la modalidad de enseñanza virtual o Presencialidad Asistida por Tecnología (PAT) en tiempos de pandemia en el año 2021. Este estudio siguió el paradigma de investigación descriptivo y una metodología de investigación de estudio de caso. Para abordar las percepciones de los futuros docentes, se implementó una encuesta y una entrevista a un grupo de 3 docentes en formación del programa LLEI que desarrollaron sus prácticas pedagógicas bajo la modalidad virtual (PAT) en el periodo 2021-2. Tras un análisis de datos temáticos, surgieron hallazgos relevantes sobre los sentimientos que los participantes tenían sobre la práctica, algunos pros y contras de la virtualidad, reflexiones sobre el acompañamiento en la práctica y acciones y decisiones de los profesores para la clase virtual. En su conjunto, quedó clara una conexión relevante que tienen las prácticas pedagógicas con el crecimiento del docente y la necesidad de estos espacios en modalidad virtual para enriquecer la práctica, además, se pudo observar algunos sentimientos positivos sobre el desarrollo de sus prácticas docentes. así como algunas necesidades y carencias que consideran necesarias en su futura formación.

Palabras clave: Percepciones de docentes en formación, Prácticas pedagógicas, Presencialidad Asistida por Tecnología (PAT), Tiempos de Pandemia.

Contextualization

In December of 2019, mankind faced the beginning of one of the worst events of the new world times: COVID-19. This respiratory and high contagious disease started in a public market in Wuhan, China; and in a very fast way, it spread all over the continents setting a whole new reality that disrupted all aspects of life including education. Global authorities took measures to control its spread, so a massive instruction was introduced to the world: Lockdowns for schools and every educational institution.

The lockdown of educational institutions in Colombia occurred in March 2020 and it marked a new reality for all its members (teachers, administrators, students, and parents) as classes had to be done from each one's homes and totally virtual. As UNESCO stated in a report of April 2020, around 11,062.902 learners were affected in Colombia due to the closure of schools caused by COVID-19 (UNESCO, 2021). This situation brought up the concept of "Teaching and learning mediated by technology (TLMT)", or as in Spanish "Presencialidad Asistida por Tecnología" (PAT), which had to be embraced by all the educational actors without much knowledge and limited tools defined by the reality in a country like Colombia.

In February 2021, the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN) of Colombia issued a new statute extending the measures taken (lockdowns) to fight against COVID-19 in the country, meaning that the virtual education or PAT at all levels should continue until the number of positive cases decreased (MEN, 2021). This instruction required the Licenciatura en Lenguas

Extranjeras Inglés- Universidad Santo Tomás de Aquino (LLEI USTA) students to take all their classes under this modality as well.

It is important to highlight that the concept of virtual learning is not new to the LLEI at all, because it is a distance learning modality program that mixes on-site lectures with online synchronic encounters. Nonetheless, this transition generated some challenges and experiences that are intended to be approached in this study.

The LLEI program is defined to develop creative and solid educators able to impact their communities and students have to take a mandatory and flexible component with a total of 56 academic spaces. In the mandatory component, pre-service teachers have to do their Pedagogical Practices in the 9th and 10th semesters. It is an academic space composed of two courses (Pedagogical practice I and Pedagogical Practice II) that require them to attend an educational institution face-to-face, to put into action all the theoretical foundations they had developed along with their professional formation, and to fulfill the objectives of achieving all the professional qualities needed to act as an educational leader able to transform the society in every aspect of the school context (Proyecto Educativo de Programa PEP, n.d.).

Preservice teachers in LLEI learn a lot from their pedagogical practice because it is for many of them the first experience they have at a school, or their first time receiving feedback from a mentor teacher. Of course, there are some others with some previous in situ teaching familiarity. However, due to the constraints mentioned before, the development of the Pedagogical Practice during 2021 had to be done under the PAT modality as well, meaning that

the preservice teachers had to live this experience with no explicit education and preparation to face it, especially because their training is addressed to teaching in face-to-face contexts only. Therefore, this study intends to approach the perceptions of a group of 3 preservice teachers of the LLEI program, who did their pedagogical practicum in 2021, under the virtual teaching modality.

This study is considered part of Research field 2 “*The Study of the English Language and its contexts*”, proposed by the research guidelines of the LLEI program, because it intends to recognize the particular needs and characteristics of an educational community (pre-service teachers of the LLEI) and reflect upon the meaning of becoming a virtual teacher in the country with such social constraints.

Research statement

In the LLEI program, there are several academic spaces that mix the theoretical and practical teaching components. One of them is the academic space “*Curriculum design*” which required the investigator, at that time the 8th semester- LLEI student, to do some class observations of another LLEI preservice teacher developing his Pedagogical Practice course. The observations were done with the aim to identify and analyze the different aspects of a classroom (syllabus, teaching techniques, classroom management, methodology, and approaches, among others). In those observations, there was also a chance to establish conversations with the pre-service teacher in charge of the course, and they discussed how he and his classmates were facing the development of the pedagogical practice during pandemic times and the integration of virtual teaching mediations. Hence, the researcher considered it interesting to portray the

experience that these preservice teachers were having when teaching virtually and thought of giving value to hearing them and sharing these experiences that would allow us to create knowledge.

In this sense, there is a need to listen to these preservice teachers' experiences due to the fact that education is being transformed after the arrival of COVID-19. Thus, this study is focused on describing and analyzing the preservice teachers' ways to live with this new reality that came with the pandemic and slowly seems to be taking place to stay. According to Fardoun et al. (2020), educators need to learn about all the experiences lived during pandemic times and start creating alternative teaching methodologies that may imply material design that responds to all the needs today's learners have.

Consequently, the researcher started questioning herself also about the challenges and the opportunities seen in the virtual classes, and the most important to this study is the perceptions that LLEI preservice teachers have towards the development of the pedagogical practices under this modality were a must in 2021. Preservice teachers that year set the benchmark for approaching their teaching roles and experiences in the virtual teaching modality without even being part of their educational profiles, and that is why this study focuses on listening to the voices and experiences they lived with this reality.

For the interests above, the following research question is considered:

Research question

How do preservice teachers perceive the Pedagogical Practices development under the virtual teaching modality (PAT)?

Based on the above, the following objective was established for the development of this research:

General objective:

Analyze the pre-service teachers' perceptions about developing their Pedagogical Practices under the virtual teaching modality (PAT).

Literature review

As the main goal of this study is to analyze the LLEI preservice teachers' perceptions about the development of their pedagogical practice in 2021 under the virtual modality, the following are some of the concepts that underlie the theoretical construction of this study Preservice Teachers' perceptions, Virtual teaching, (PAT modality), and Pedagogical practice.

Pedagogical practice.

According to the Proyecto Educativo del Programa (PEP, n.d.) LLEI, the pedagogical practice at USTA is the opportunity to project with a social interest the preservice teacher into a context with the chances to make an impact on their own communities creating an opportunity to

do research. Without a doubt, for this study, the pedagogical practicum term enlightens us to understand the origin of this study, and to do so it is fundamental to look up for a clear concept, as the pedagogical practice is a crucial stage and one of the most influential in a teacher education (Trent, 2013). There are many layers to a pedagogical practice when referring to the one done by preservice teachers, and as Castañeda Peña et al. (2016) state, during a pedagogical practicum, didactic transposition takes place and knowledge is shared, learned, and constructed. One important idea to recall from this is that knowledge is constructed, the construction of knowledge requires participants.

Lucero and Roncancio (2019) clearly defined that pedagogical practicum has three main components: mentor teachers, pre-service teachers, and the context in which the pedagogical practicum takes place; and this unique mix of aspects is what makes the pedagogical practicum for preservice teachers relevant when preservice teachers can count with a mentor teacher that supports the process. There are various layers to a pedagogical practicum and while reading Lucero y Roncancio (2019), a good reflection arose: are BA programs concentrating efforts on providing a vast theoretical formation without foreseeing the importance of emotional dimension and its accountability when facing transitions? Those important aspects can not lose relevance as they help us to somehow project the challenges and experiences that this study aims to describe.

Not only challenges are supposed to be described here but it is worthy to include all the experiences that made up the pedagogical practice in 2021 lived by the preservice teachers as we aim at describing the experiences lived by them. It is important to understand the relevance that pedagogical practice has to preservice teachers in Colombia as it is a mandatory course that all of

them need to have in their final education stage. For LLEI USTA preservice teachers, the pedagogical practice is the opportunity they have to be located in a context with chances to design, apply and adapt a curriculum that projects them as the English language teacher. Pedagogical practices in USTA are set by the University and preservice teachers have a mentor teacher that supports them along with their processes.

Virtual teaching or Presencialidad asistida por tecnología (PAT).

After the lockdowns due to COVID-19 and the urgent need of giving continuity to education, institutions turn their look at one of today's most mentioned modalities: virtual teaching which resuscitates from the ashes as a tool to overcome the challenges that COVID-19 presented to educational institutions in terms to mitigate its spread. A basic but worth definition of this is found “ Distance learning, also known by various names such as distance education, e-learning, mobile learning, or online learning, is a form of education where there is the physical separation of teachers from students during the instruction and learning process” Simonson (2016) and it this definition that may set the basis for this modality to happen as well as some of the important aspects to consider when using it. Technology plays an important role in the existence of PAT through the utilization of different tools. A teacher may enrich the learning process by amplifying access to education as well as promoting interaction between learners. It is this mix of elements that presents a set of challenges to all of us not only in terms of accessibility but regarding the preparation of teachers, learners, parents, and all the members of the community as well as the techniques, and materials implemented in the classes. The COVID-19 pandemic opened the door to many new studies on this matter and as shown by Friedman (2020)

the real challenge is to know how to overcome each of these difficult situations, findings of previous studies situated that technical issues, distraction, and adaptability to unknown settings are some of the PAT challenges that teachers and learners face. Situating experience and training as key aspects to solve those challenges is essential to accomplish this study's objectives to be able to listen to LLEI preservice teachers' experiences and more importantly be able to describe them with the purpose of analyzing them.

As mentioned above, virtual teaching or presencialidad asistida (PAT) arose as the medium of instruction in every institution to fight against the spread of COVID- 19. The presencialidad asistida (PAT) is the innovative methodological solution based on the integration of didactics and technology to facilitate the teaching process.

Morales, M. J.et al. (2021) did a quantitative investigation in 2020 to identify the consequences that PAT methodology had on EAN university. They set a hypothesis and applied a set of questions (survey and interview) to solve their question. About the participants, they had to take into account students and teachers. Of the students who participated, 63.3% of them were females between 18 and 25 years old. 61.2% of them affirmed that this modality was good and 28.6% said it was regular. About the teacher's perceptions, 66.7% considered that their students did not pay attention to their classes and set their overall satisfaction level with the modality in 3. It is this last aspect of that study that enlightens the relevance of this study is aiming at listening to the preservice teacher's voices who are new to it as well as to their practice.

Preservice Teachers' perceptions

One of the constructs that frame this study is the preservice teachers as they are one of the actors in the lived process in 2021 in the pedagogical practicum. Listening to preservice teachers is one of the main purposes of this research, and as Area Moreira et al. (2018) affirm, teachers play a consistent role in the teaching-learning process by contributing with their experiences to build a new reality for the future. But it is the category of Pre-service teachers as their role that take part in this study as protagonists, (Lucero y Roncancio 2019) formulate a question that invites us to think about the different situations that institutions, mentor teachers, and preservice teachers take part: At what point should pre-service teachers meet the realities of putting into practice teaching during their major? This is key as our study is focused on the pedagogical practice done at the end of the BA. Also, they proposed a second question that may help rethink the way preservice teachers see their pedagogical practice. At what point in their major should pre-service teachers start recognizing and taking on their roles as English language teachers? These two questions can support the need of doing this study as they are aimed at understanding the perceptions of the pedagogical practice.

Perception is an experience that involves the organization of objects, events, or relationships leading to the process by which we interpret our sensory input (Eka, 2013). According to these definitions, it can be said that perceptions of the preservice teacher are beliefs and thoughts of their pedagogical practice and experiences; it can also be understood as the judgments they make on their practice.

Cherry (2016) affirms that perception is our sensory experience of the world around us and involves both recognizing environmental stimuli and actions in response to these stimuli. The author further said that perception not only creates our experience of the world around us, but it also allows us to act within our environment. This means that in the classroom situation, experiences lived while teaching such as classroom characteristics, teaching materials, and especially teaching strategies and skills create an image and get to define how the experience was.

Finally, in agreement with Lingam, and Raghuwaiya (2014), pre-service teachers are concerned about having enough knowledge to deal with teaching challenges. Therefore, those perceptions and challenges are the ones this study is looking forward to knowing, as they conform to some preservice teachers, the initial approach to teaching English, and what this implies.

State of the art.

Hereunder, some studies that relate to the present research will be displayed in order to justify the phenomena being discussed and what has been done in the field.

First, a study done by Fajardo-Castañeda (2014), demonstrated that the pedagogical practicum part of a BA underlines the importance of the connections between the theoretical component and the reality of being a teacher. These connections provoke a more reflective attitude in the preservice teachers about their practicum. This study, aimed at investigating the

construction of teacher identity by being put in a classroom setting in a group of 6 preservice teachers in their last year of their major from a Colombian university. The study found that the process of learning how to teach is constructed from the experience. It is this finding that allows us to connect them to our research interest as it places the focus on the relevance that pedagogical practice has in the life of a new teacher and more importantly their own perception about it is what we aim to investigate.

Second, Díaz, K. Y. A., & Picado, C. J. (2021) in their study called Particularities of the educational technological context in Latam before and during covid-19 with the goal of identifying technological skills and their respective motivation in Latin American teachers before and during the pandemic period, they carried out a bibliographic review about the development of abilities and skills in the educational environment and also applied as an instrument a set of questions to them about the matter in interest. Their findings stated that practicing teachers in Latin America had a beginner's level in the tools needed to teach virtually and this affected their motivation to teach. These findings are key to supporting this research's interest as it focuses on describing the preservice teachers' perceptions about the virtual teaching modality giving them a voice to share experiences and reflections.

Additionally, Camacho et al. (2012) deepened their study interests in the comprehension of how the reflection spaces proposed by Schön's theory (reflection *in* action and reflection *on* action) and Van Manen's three levels of reflection (technical, practical, and critical) while teaching occurs help preservice teachers in the first year of teaching experience. This study was done in five public schools in Colombia collecting data through classroom observation, semi-

structured interviews, and preservice teachers' journals. The main findings of this study presented that preservice teachers are committed to reflection and their teaching decisions sometimes are driven by what is occurring in the classroom at the moment. With this study, it is seen that there is a need of doing this research as the voices of preservice teachers need to be listened to especially when they are facing new educational settings as it is the virtual modality.

And finally, another study Macías and Sánchez (2015) focused their research interest on preservice teachers and their teaching practicum. The study mainly focused on the problem foreign language preservice teachers have in regard to classroom management. This study had a qualitative descriptive approach and concluded that classroom management and all that it includes is a real challenge to preservice teachers. These results became fundamental to support our research interest as ours is focused on a new teaching modality for preservice teachers and the important part is hearing from them how their experiences were.

Research Design

This research can be stated as formal research that falls into a descriptive paradigm because it aims at understanding aspects of the teaching process of the preservice teachers doing their pedagogical work in the virtual modality, and focusing to contribute with valuable information that future preservice teachers can use about what and how to teach in their practicums. As stated by Ellis (2012), this research falls into the descriptive paradigm because the phenomenon of study has been defined by the researcher who will somehow use the pre-

service teacher's experiences in order to get the research done hoping that results will contribute to the teaching process of preservice teachers when doing their pedagogical practicums.

Either way, it is interesting to understand that research in education can be mixed and have a glimpse of practitioner research under the exploratory paradigm. This research follows the descriptive research approach as it will produce qualitative information about a specific case (the preservice teacher's perceptions about doing their pedagogical practice under the PAT modality in 2021) and as it relies on the observation done and the reports gathered from the participants.

The type of study chosen for this research is a case study, as the objective here is to analyze a specific context and not make generalizations, this by using different sources of data (interviews, questionnaires) and approaching the experiences that the preservice teachers, participants of this study, had when doing their pedagogical practice in 2021 and to describe their experiences.

To achieve this we back up Yin (2018) who mentions that the characteristics of selected case study research are the focus on *how* or *why* types of research questions that are directed at exploring and understanding some phenomenon in depth and more importantly define the case and set boundaries to it (p.30). As the population of this study is already defined, a group of LLEI preservice teachers who did their pedagogical practice in 2021 virtually, and this matter is related to the context of the researcher as an LLEI student as well, who came up with a research

question, a proposition as a unit of analysis that looks forward to analyzing the experiences lived by that group of LLEI preservice teachers.

Taking into account the qualitative research tradition and the goal of analyzing the experiences the preservice teacher had while doing their pedagogical practice, the hermeneutic paradigm is the theory that could help the researcher to interpret the phenomenon of investigation through dialogue to produce shared understandings and meanings (Paterson & Higgs, 2015).

The study participants are 3 female preservice teachers of the LLEI program at USTA who did their pedagogical practice under the PAT modality in 2021. With one of the instruments, participants were asked for consent to participate and assured their information was appropriately managed. That is why, they will be referred to in this study as participant # 1, participant # 2, and participant #3 correspondingly in order to keep their information confidential.

Participants # 1 and # 2 are under the age of thirty, participant # 3 is around 50. The 3 participants were in the ninth semester of their major taking the academic course Practicum I. For 3 of the participants, this was their first time teaching in this modality. About the offline experience, participant #1 had between 1 to 2 years, and the other two participants had between 3 to 5 years of teaching experience. These three participants are considered a valid sample of this case study as they were the only ones who decided to participate voluntarily despite most of the group, taking up the Practicum I course, was invited. Also, it is important to highlight that the purpose of this study is not to make generalizations but rather to approach the voices of some of

the preservice teachers who lived the experience at the same time as the researcher did and became interested in the study.

It is LLEI preservice teachers whose opinion matters most in this study. Their interest and capabilities of teaching virtually are noteworthy points of this research. Therefore, two different procedures were followed to collect data:

The first instrument was a survey (Annex# 1) that according to Jansen (2010) is defined as a tool to determine the diversity of some topic of interest within a given population. The objective of this instrument was to ask preservice teachers about their perceptions of their teaching practice, their overall knowledge of teaching with technological support, and the professional development preservice teachers received while doing the pedagogical practice and the one they were expected to gain. The survey was constructed including questions about the participant's demographic information, teacher's backgrounds including gender, age, and the number of years of teaching experience (offline and virtually).

The survey included a second part with a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) as even though this is a social study with the goal of analyzing preservice teachers' perceptions, the Likert -scale survey in this study is proposed as a help to add validity and measure attitudes, as the estimation of the goal aspects of inquiry in the scale can be done through the sum of the scores of the different statements, as proposed by Cooper, Blackman, and Keller (2014) in their proposal "Likert's method of summated ratings".

This type of instrument, despite being used mostly for quantitative type of studies, can be used for giving quantitative value to qualitative data, as for the case of this study it intends to approach general perceptions towards some agreement and disagreements that could give an insight into the PAT modality in the teaching practices. In order to comprehend the opinions/ perceptions of participants regarding the matter of interest. In the Likert scale, this interest is manifested by many statements in it which are collectively matched to convey a determined extent of the research interest allowing to measure the whole case. As (Joshi et al., 2015) state, during the analysis stage, the score obtained from all items is summed up which logically totally measures a uni-dimensional aspect.

The second instrument was a semi-structured preservice teacher interview (Annex # 2) that according to Stuckey (2013) is defined as an instrument for qualitative research with an outline of topics and questions previously prepared by the researcher and has no rigid adherence as the goal is to allow the participants to reflect on the issue under study. Hence, the objective of this instrument was to approach their attitude toward teaching virtually and their experience in the pedagogical practice in 2021 individually. How preservice teachers perceive virtual teaching modality and their own skills to do so are fundamental questions that emerged to the researcher before designing and applying the instruments of data collection. As Palloff et al (2013) affirm, not all instructors enter the online classroom at the same level, and rarely, if ever, training is customized to fit the experience level of those who needed, that is why the relevance of giving the preservice teacher's a voice to share their experiences.

Validity and reliability are fundamental aspects of research. Paying careful attention to these two aspects can make a big difference in the quality of the job, especially in qualitative research work. The former concept focuses on the extent the results are reproducible, the latter one refers to the degree to which a measure provides the right answer affirmed Ellen (2011). This involves the instruments as well, according to Kane (2016) validity in research is not a property of the measurement instrument but rather refers to its interpretation and use of it. Based on this, the instrument needs to be validated for the specific recipients and goals. These two concepts were applied in this research, by choosing the appropriate instruments and by applying the instruments to a pilot population that was not involved in the study.

Data Analysis and Discussion

As mentioned above, a qualitative research approach was used in this study. To give an answer to our research question regarding the preservice teachers' perceptions of doing their pedagogical practice in the virtual (PAT) modality in 2021, a survey in Google Form (See Appendix A) was created with an electronic consent form (See Annex Appendix C). The survey has 25 questions in total which include a characterization set of questions with the goal to identify the preservice teacher's background. Also, the questions were aimed at gathering information about preservice's teaching practices and decisions, their knowledge and experiences of teaching virtually, and the professional development they gained during their pedagogical practice developed during pandemic times. The survey was completed asynchronously by each participant, and after getting each answer the researcher contacted the participants to set a date

for an individual interview (See annex Appendix B) to be held by Zoom. Each interview was recorded (video and audio) and then a manual transcription exercise (Figure 1) was done by the researcher.

The researcher closely examined the data to identify common ideas and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly by following some steps of Thematic Analysis such as familiarization when doing the transcription, coding by highlighting the sections of the text, and setting a set of labels to each of them to then put in categories following the Thematic Analysis. As Braun & Clarke (2012) state Thematic analysis is a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning. The researcher was able to observe a group of shared livings and identified the specific information that answers the research question.

Validity and reliability in the data analysis were done by contrasting, categorizing, and analyzing each piece of the information collected by the two different instruments in the light of the research question.

The information was transcribed separately and a color-coding strategy was used to identify patterns and common themes. Some methodologists believe that coding is just technical or work that is about preparing information but according to Miles & Huberman (2014) coding is analysis. In this way, we sort the information obtained to order data.

Similarly, for the case of the survey, the statements of which participants reflected their level of agreement or disagreement were classified in the same colors that appeared as themes within the interview and supported each of the emerging categories.

Figure 1.

Data analysis - Color coding Interview

Preservice teacher 1.

Question 1 I'm from CAU Bogota and I live in Paipa. Last year I had the opportunity to do my first practical with my teacher from the University. **It was a 100% great adventure. My tutor was an excellent teacher, he always was there for us, to give us the best advice.** We were connected by phone, and by email, we created a Whatsapp group. **He always was all the time there for us** because it was somehow difficult for him as **it was the first time to do the practice in a virtual way** and also **for me it was a challenge**. It was a 100 a great support for us. My first practice was with the teacher William, **he was a 100% the best tutor we had**, it was quiet hard for him and also for us because we were facing the pandemic. I did my practice in virtual way with FASE, **it was a new way to do this practice**. **I had to create new tools to do this practice**. I just say he was the best one **even it was hard we learned a lot**.

Question 2: Well, when we study for this carrer and arriving after and before this pandemic situation, somehow **it was a great opportunity to be in this situation**, because we had the chance to do it in a virtual way, for me it was a great opportunity because now I can say I have 1 year of practice. Thanks to this situation, even it was hard because **I didnt know how to manage the technological (computer, tablet, telephone)**. I needed to learn, it was an excellent situation.

Question 3. For me, **it would say that is needed to have more practice and to learn how to use the computer systems, for example: Zoom, Meets**. I needed to learn it for myself **everything**. I needed to get someone who could explain to me how to interact with the chat, how to record, and how to use the board. This is something it was missed from the University. In the end I managed it.

Question 4: I didn't have any difficult to complain about just the normal in this virtual way. Sometimes the internet didnt work properly, **sometimes I couldn't share properly my PPT**. **The students were so kind** that they would help me. That was great, **that was an excellent experience. I learned a lot**.

Note: The graphic represents the transcription done by the researcher to each participant's interview and the color coding used to identify the significant data.

After the color-coding in each of the participant's interviews and survey answers, the information and identification of patterns were done (Figure 2) by means of a table in which the researcher put all the similar information found in both instruments and started to assign names for the groups.

Figure 2.

Data analysis - Patterns identification.

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A1	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1		Opinions about the practice	Mentor teacher in the practicum	Materials/ resources/ techniques/strategies	Teacher's actions	Possible Improvements of the practice	Difficulties/ challenges in the development	Opinions about the students and its characteristics	Preservice teachers emotions/ feelings
2		It was a 100% great adventure.	My tutor was an excellent teacher,	I had to create new tools to do this practice.	what I do all the time is to talk all the time with them	it would say that is needed to have more practice and to learn how to use the computer systems, for example: Zoom, Meets. I needed to learn it for myself everything.	Sometimes the internet didnt work properly	The students were so kind	At the beginning, we were really nervous.
3		For me it was a challenge.	he was a 100% the best tutor we had	I used a virtual quiz for each lesson	I used the 4 skills and the students find it entertaining	I didnt know how to manage the technological (computer, tablet, telephone)	sometimes I couldnt share properly my PPT.	Some of them feel confident,	We were all virtual, some people were nervous, fear, and curiosity
4		It was a new way to do this practice	I received a lot of support comments, and feedback from my teacher	to invite them to attend my classes, I made a poster, which said, don't forget that today you have	I teach English as we learn Spanish.	I think in 3 areas: planning, assessment, and homework monitoring.	in my case, sometimes the noise.	They didnt turn on the camera,	At the end, we were so pleased that we did it.

Note: The graphic represents the categorization done by the researcher with all participant data collected from both instruments.

And finally, when the patterns or themes were identified, a final step based on contrasting the information gotten from the two instruments was followed. It aimed at reducing the data and consolidating the categories (Figure 3) that may provide answers to our research question.

Figure 3

Data analysis - Contrasting & Categorizing

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1										
2	Opinions and feelings about the practice	It was a great opportunity	Nervous	Mentor teacher in the practicum	Excellent teacher	Opinions about the materials/ resources/	Had to create new tools		Possible improvements of the practice	I didnt know how to manage the technological (computer, tablet, telephone)
3	Preservice teachers emotions/ feelings	A lot of learning	Curios		Supportive		I mainly used Powerpoint presentations, I was looking for many images with examples, tables or graphs.			I think in 3 areas: planning, assessment, and homework monitoring.
4		No previous virtual teaching experience	Pleased to finish		There at all times					I consider I will have to look for more and do a lot of training in control the time
5		It was challenging	Unconfident with the virtual modality		Helpful		Fun activities			how to adapt the approach that we know to the online environment.
6		It is necessary to have virtual practice	Worried							how to make communication easier between students and between the teacher too.
7			Anxious							
8										
9	Difficulties/ challenges in the development	Internet connection problems		Opinions about the students	Students are kind		Opinions and feelings about the practice	Advantages and Disadvantages of virtuality	Accompaniment in the practice	Teachers' actions and decisions for the virtual class
10		Background noise			They didnt turn on camera		Teacher technology	Mentor teacher		Materials and resources
11		time management			Students enjoyed virtuality		Students	St-SG and T-Ss interaction	Training (Things to improve)	Class activities and strategies
12		No camera on (Student's side)			Few student's participation			Environment		
13		Relation with students								
14		Making students take part in class								

Based on the previous steps, plus some more discussion and revision of the data collected in the two instruments, the perceptions of the preservice teachers who did their pedagogical practice in 2021 were consolidated into four categories and some subcategories as shown (Figure 3) below:

- 1) Feelings about the practice,
- 2) Advantages, and Disadvantages of virtuality,
- 3) Accompaniment in the practice,
- 4) Teachers' actions and decisions for the virtual class

Figure 4

Data analysis - Categories

Feelings about the practice	Advantages and Disadvantages of virtuality	Accompaniment in the practice	Teachers' actions and decisions for the virtual class
Teacher	technology	Mentor teacher	Materials and resources
Students	Ss-SS and T-Ss Interaction	Training (Things to improve)	Class activities and strategies
	Environment		

1. Feelings about the practice.

The development of the pedagogical practice in 2021 required pre-service teachers to face the virtual teaching modality. In its process, the participants of this research gave a clear account of some general opinions and feelings towards that experience. Those feelings were

related to the main actors that played an important role in their classes: They as pre-service teachers & their Students. So, this first category is divided into two subcategories called: **1.1. Me Teacher** and **1.2. My students**.

1.1. Me Teacher

The data showed some general feelings that the preservice teachers had towards their own roles as the head teachers in the English classrooms when in the pedagogical practice. In general, there were observed multiple comments that refer to the pedagogical practice as a positive experience that gave them a lot of learning, opportunities, and experiences.

In this regard, the participants shared some of the following ideas to describe their practicum experience:

- It was a 100% great adventure. (Participant # 1. Interview)
- It was a new way to do this practice. (Participant # 2. Interview)
- That was an excellent experience, I learned a lot. (Participant # 3. Interview)

Additionally, they reflected that the virtuality taught them to find new ways to face the teaching of English and that they could for the first time put into practice what they learned during their teaching training along with their careers. This can be seen in comments like:

- the pedagogical practice in a virtual way. I learned a lot and I now know how to teach English in a virtual way. (Participant # 2. Interview)
- Now I could apply what I learned the year before. That was a good experience. (Participant # 1. Interview)

On the other hand, those feelings were not always as positive since they found themselves within an unknown world that caused them to feel stressed, scared, and unprepared. For instance, some participants expressed:

- we don't feel secure, especially when we have to talk. (Participant # 1. Interview)
- In the beginning, we were really nervous. (Participant # 2. Interview)

In conclusion, from the data analyzed, it can be said that despite preservice teachers having some positive and negative feelings before and during the virtual pedagogical practice, they still considered it a meaningful experience that challenged them and gave them good tools to become good English teachers.

1.2. My Students

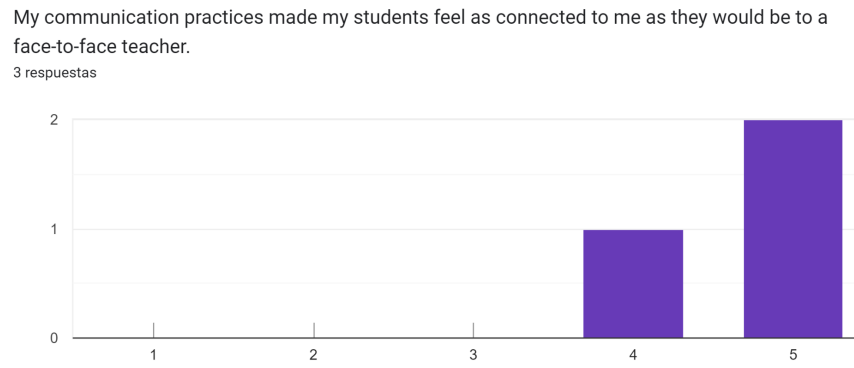
The data analysis displayed some final comments that the preservice teachers had about their students while doing the pedagogical practice. There were identified various opinions that are linked to their student's behaviors, expectations, and general performance.

About this matter, the preservice teachers shared some of the following ideas to describe their students in the practicum experience:

- Students really enjoyed it and loved it. (Participant # 1. Interview)
- I have to say that they always did their best. (Participant # 2. Interview)
- The students were so kind. (Participant # 3. Interview)

Figure 5

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 2



In this statement from the survey, *My communication practices made my students feel as connected to me as they would be to a face-to-face teacher*, showing the preservice teacher's perception of their students in the practicum experience about the good communication flow they had while the process was ongoing.

In addition, the participants reflected that virtuality presented them and their students with new situations to face while learning and teaching English and that it was a good opportunity to improve and to reflect on how the process was being done. This can be seen in comments like:

- They were hiding behind the screen (Participant # 3. Interview)
- Sometimes it was kind of hard to get my students to participate in the class.
(Participant # 2. Interview)
- Students are people who I don't know. That's really hard because I have to look for activities and exercises to make a good lesson plan for all. (Participant # 1 . Interview)

To sum up, teaching virtually was new to participants, and with this, few changes in behaviors and simple interactions happened. Virtual education or computer-mediated communication (CMC) changes the way professors and students interact and develop relationships, are influenced by others, and manage reduced social cues (Sherblom, 2010); it is this that makes relevant the reflection made by the participants along with the study as the pedagogical practice provided them the space to use what they learned in the LLEI training and find by themselves solutions to the new challenges.

2. Pros and cons of virtuality.

The evolution of the virtual pedagogical practice in 2021 set pre-service teachers in a field of experimentation with various new tools to develop their practices. The participants of this study provided some insights into what this virtuality meant to them as preservice teachers. Those insights were linked to various aspects that made up the pros and cons of the practice. Consequently, this second category is divided into three subcategories called: **2.1.** IT, **2.2.** Classroom interactions and **2.3** Environment.

2.1. IT

The collected information presented viewpoints that the preservice teachers had towards the development of their pedagogical practice as virtual teachers in regard to technology. As across-the-board perceptions, there were comments of difficulties with managing virtual classrooms and tools to develop their classes.

With reference to this, the participants granted some of the next perceptions to report their pedagogical practice journey:

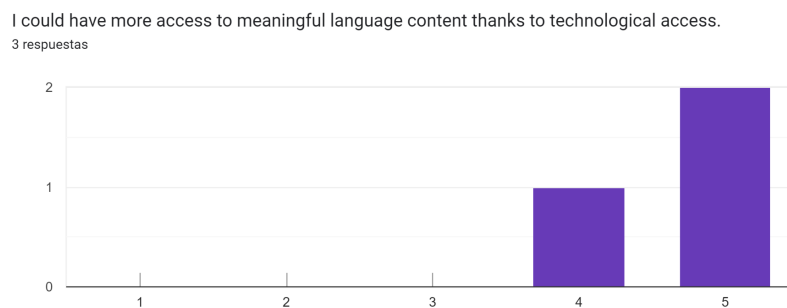
- Sometimes the internet didn't work properly. (Participant # 3. Interview)
- Sometimes I couldn't properly share my PPT. (Participant # 1. Interview)
- The main problem was the internet situation. (Participant # 2. Interview)

Although, there were some reflections made on the positive side that technology brought to them as teachers and to the development of their pedagogical practice as follows:

- When you develop a lesson that is online you can use a lot of tools that you can find on the internet (Participant # 3. Interview)
- New preservice teachers should take the opportunity of teaching virtual, we became more practical (Participant # 1. Interview)
- I consider that what changed the most was the direct interaction and the tools that I was able to use more easily since they were more striking and visual. (Participant # 2. Interview)

Figure 6

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 6



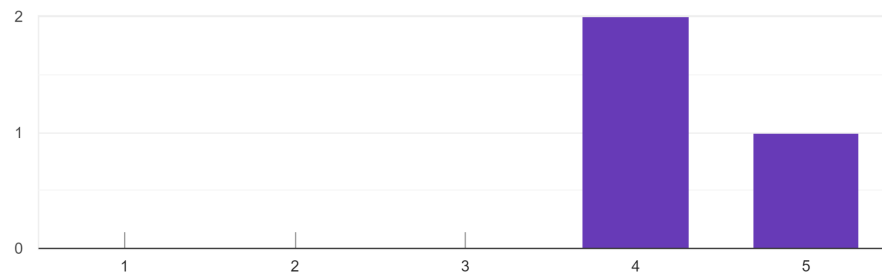
In this statement from the survey, *I could have more access to meaningful language content thanks to technological access. The participants felt they had more opportunities to improve their pedagogical practice by accessing meaningful language content thanks to the modality.*

Figure 7

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 12

I used different assessment and evaluation strategies and tools to keep a record of students' progress and learning.

3 respuestas

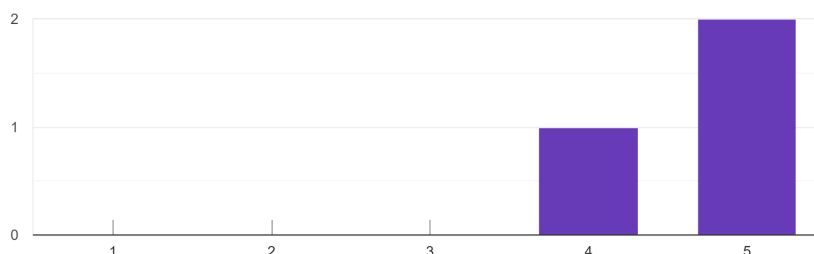


In this statement from the survey, *I used different assessment and evaluation strategies and tools to keep a record of a student's progress and learning* the participants shared their perception that being part of this modality allowed them to grow in their teaching by accessing assessment tools that impact their student's progress.

Figure 8

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 18

I could innovate in the selection, adaptation and design of resources thanks to the virtual modality.
3 respuestas



In this statement from the survey, *I could innovate in the selection, adaptation and design of resources thanks to the virtual modality*, the participants agreed on the opportunity of innovation this modality brought to them as new teachers in terms of selection and adaptation of resources, seeing this as an advantage.

To conclude, from the data reviewed, it can be affirmed that preservice teachers experimented the advantages and disadvantages of technology during the virtual pedagogical practice, stating that virtuality allowed them to earn needed teaching experience as teaching English virtually became an imminent reality. As Cooperman (2018) affirms teacher's technological competence and access is an obvious necessity. This thought goes in the direction that now the world is migrating to a digital era that everyone needs to be capable of facing.

2.2. Classroom interactions

An aspect that was portrayed by the preservice teachers' opinion in the data collected was the classroom interactions that occur during the virtual development of the pedagogical practice. The perceptions toward the teacher-student interaction were a mix of challenges and achievements that this modality brought as the following:

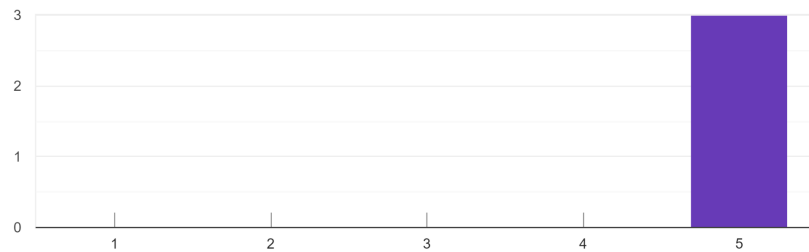
- It is hard to make that all the students have their attention on you or on your material. (Participant # 2. Interview)
- I answered all the questions from the students, I think it was a good relationship. (Participant # 3. Interview)
- The relationship between the teacher and the students I think is easier, the most part of the time it is the teacher who is talking, it shouldn't be like that, I know! But that's the reality and more virtual because we need to regulate, to be sure that students are understanding. We tend to repeat a lot, asking if they are there. I consider that we make the most part in that relation. (Participant # 3. Interview)

Figure 9

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 3

I always responded to students questions and requirements in a timely manner.

3 respuestas



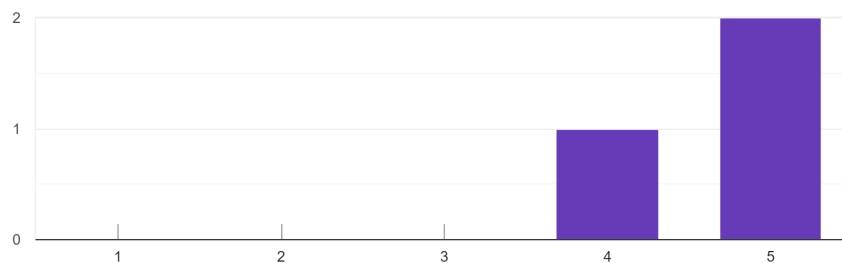
In this statement from the survey, *I always responded to students' questions and requirements in a timely manner*. The participants felt that the teacher-student interaction was an achievement of the modality allowing them to respond to their student's inquiries promptly.

Figure 10

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 18

Communication and interaction in the virtual environment was active and fluent with the teacher and students

3 respuestas



From the survey, the statement *Communication and interaction in the virtual environment was active and fluent with the teacher and students*. The participants felt that the

teacher-student interaction was an achievement of the modality between the academic actors by perceiving it as fluent.

Additionally, the preservice teachers commented on the student-student interaction showcasing the challenges that this modality brought to them and to the development of the classes. This can be seen in comments like:

- It is kind of hard for the relationship between student- students. Why? It also depends on the platform you are working on. For example, in my case, it was in Google Meet. In Google Meet I hadn't the opportunity to create small groups, so I never could do that conversation by pairs or by group between them. (Participant # 2. Interview)
- the student-student interaction was not the easiest, in my case. (Participant # 3. Interview)

In brief, from the data examined, preservice teachers lived their virtual pedagogical practice with the opportunity to reflect on all the aspects that compound the classroom and its interaction, challenging them to find new ways to become better virtual English teachers. As Alfaro (2018) for his part states, the good use of the virtual classroom and its interactions play a fundamental role in the success of education.

2.3. Environment

With the data analysis, there was an aspect that the preservice teachers shared as a layer of the virtual pedagogical practice: the environment. All those external and internal aspects that might have affected the development of the practice. Preservice teachers' perceptions towards this can be seen in comments like the following:

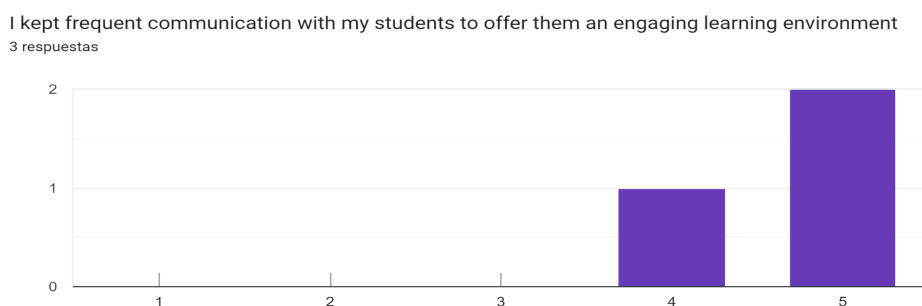
- The place where my students were at the moment of the lesson, sometimes they had the mic open and their families were talking. (Participant # 3. Interview)
- Another important issue was the camera. They didn't turn on the camera, That was harder for me to know which one was focused, and which one was following me. (Participant # 3. Interview)
- Sometimes I felt I was speaking to a screen. (Participant # 2. Interview)

Moreover, the preservice teachers made comments about the flow of the class in the virtual modality such as:

- When you want to correct your students, here in the virtual classroom, I tried, well, with Google Meet you can not send just a message to just one student. If you use the chat the message is for everybody. So you can not correct them individually. (Participant # 2 Interview)
- Some of them felt scared because they said that everyone was going to listen. (Participant # 1 Interview)

Figure 11

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 1



In this statement from the survey, *I kept frequent communication with my students to offer them an engaging learning environment*. The participants felt that the flow of the virtual learning environment was engaging as there was frequent interaction between the teacher and the students.

In conclusion, from the data analyzed, it can be said that even though the preservice teachers faced a variety of external and internal challenges in the development of the virtual pedagogical practice in 2021 these challenges show them the importance of rethinking the teacher immediacy in the online setting and the impact it has in the virtual teaching modality of English.

3. Accompaniment in the practice.

The process of doing the pedagogical practice in 2021 placed pre-service teachers in the virtual teaching modality. In its process, the participants of this study expressed themselves about the different factors that made up this experience. These ones were related to two aspects: Their mentor teacher & the need for more related training. So, this third category is divided into two subcategories called: **3.1. My mentor teacher** and **3.2. Room for improvement**.

3.1. My mentor teacher

The data exhibited some perceptions that the preservice teachers had concerning their mentor teacher role in the pedagogical practice in 2021. In general, there were found various comments that refer to the mentor teacher as a positive and helpful accompaniment in their process.

Some of the following ideas to describe their experience:

- I received a lot of supportive comments, and feedback from my teacher.
(Participant # 2 Interview)
- My tutor was an excellent teacher, (Participant # 1 Interview)
- He always was all the time there for us (Participant # 1 Interview)

Moreover, the preservice teachers talked about the support their mentor teacher gave them to successfully develop their pedagogical practice in this modality. This can be seen in comments like:

- Our teachers try to do all that was in their hands to help us develop, how to approach students in this virtual reality so for me they did a great job. (Participant # 1 Interview)
- My teacher taught us how to develop our own resources, and some internet platforms where we have to make our own materials. (Participant # 3 Interview)
- I received a lot of recommendations and a lot of tips to do my lessons more attractive to my students. (Participant # 2 Interview)
- The teacher gave us many good recommendations during the classes. (Participant # 2 Interview)

Asención (2012) states that mentors can facilitate the implementation of standards by acculturating the new teacher into school policies, this is key as the role that they play is fundamental into fostering skills. Based on the data, the preservice teachers found on their mentor teachers that meaningful exercise of a helping relationship that cared for them but also responded to their needs in pro of their professional development.

3.2. Room for improvement

The participants shared some of their concerns about the training received in their professional program LLEI regarding the virtual modality. In general, there were found comments that refer to the need of learning how to use the tools for virtual teaching modality. This can be seen in comments like:

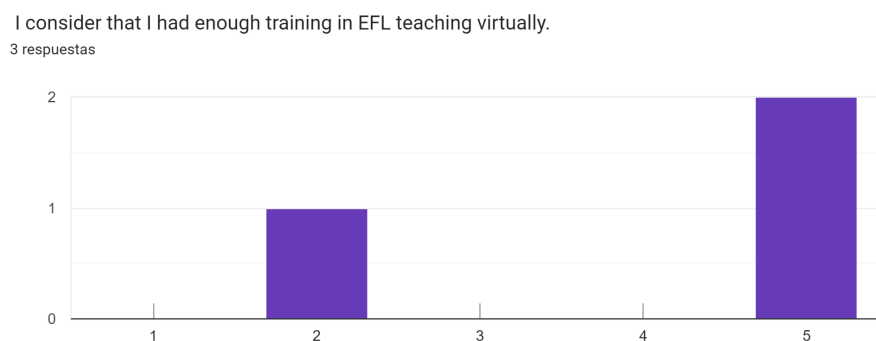
- I would say that it is needed to have more practice and to learn how to use the computer systems, for example, Zoom, and Meets. I needed to learn everything for myself everything. (Participant # 1 Interview)
- I didn't know how to manage the technological (computer, tablet, telephone) (Participant # 1 Interview)

Also, the participants shared some of their concerns about the training received in their professional program LLEI regarding the classroom dynamics and teaching techniques. This can be seen in comments like:

- I would like learning to be more continuous even outside the classroom, so I would like to leave meaningful homework to monitor student learning. (Participant # 2 Interview)
- How to adapt the approach that we know to the online environment. (Participant # 1 Interview)

Figure 12

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 19



In this statement from the survey, *I consider I had enough training in EFL teaching virtually*. The participants partially agreed on that as some of them feel there is room for improvement in their pedagogical and professional development.

Lastly, the preservice teachers uncovered some of the future training needs they find useful for their professional practices. This can be seen in comments like:

- I need more training on that and is to handle the time in my lessons and also with the interaction with my students. (Participant # 3 Interview)
- In the design and development of my own resources online. (Participant # 2 Interview)
- Consider very important is how to make communication easier between students and between the teacher too. (Participant # 3 Interview)
- I need more training on that and to handle the time in my lessons and also with the interaction with my students. (Participant # 3 Interview)

As expressed, from the data analyzed, it can be affirmed that pedagogical practice in the teacher's formation is crucial. As Lucero (2016) states there is a need of providing pre-service teachers the adequate knowledge and tools for facing the classroom so they can tackle issues and build their own realistic perception of teaching. This knowledge gained from being in the pedagogical practice and the awareness of the improvement needed will generate a unique approach to the profession.

4. Teacher's actions and decisions for the virtual class.

When facing the virtual modality for teaching English the preservice teachers were set to take many different decisions regarding its development. The participants of this research gave some defined opinions regarding that experience. Those opinions were about the teacher's actions and decisions for the virtual classes. So, this last category is divided into two subcategories called: **4.1. Materials and resources** and **4.2. Class activities and strategies**.

4.1. Materials and resources.

The data showed some general perceptions that the preservice teachers had towards their own decisions and actions in the materials and resources for their virtual classes. In general, there were observed various affirmations that refer to the materials and resources used in the pedagogical practice as interactive and dynamic.

About this matter, the participants expressed some of the following ideas to describe their decisions about this matter in the practicum experience:

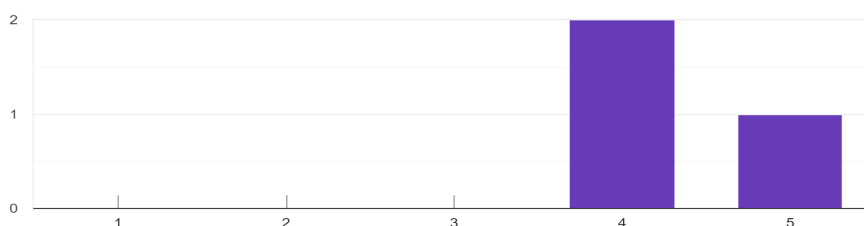
- I mainly used Powerpoint presentations. (Participant # 1 Interview)
- I had to create new tools to do this practice. (Participant # 1 Interview)
- When you develop a lesson that is online you can use a lot of tools that you can find in your internet. (Participant # 1 Interview)

- I used British Council to design my lesson plans, in this almost everything is ready. (Participant # 1 Interview)

Figure 13

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 10

I had the chance to create and handle course components to integrate students' personal interests in the topics.
3 respuestas



In this statement from the survey *I had the chance to create and handle course components to integrate student's personal interests in the topics*, the participants agreed that their decisions while doing their pedagogical practice in this modality allowed them to have dynamic and interacting experiences.

In addition, the participants made a reflection on the characteristics their materials and resources had in the virtual pedagogical practice, mentioning that live activities were mainly implemented. This can be seen in comments like:

- Another characteristic of the resources is that they could do it now, at the moment. If it is a worksheet I didn't use a physic worksheet. It was a website where they are live so students had to do it at the moment. (Participant # 3 Interview)
- Aso that it could be like a game, not per se a game always, but that they could interact. (Participant # 2 Interview)

From the data analyzed, it can be said that even though the preservice teachers faced for the first time the development of the virtual pedagogical practice in 2021 they were able to choose their materials and resources accordingly as Granito and Chernobilsky (2012) mention, “Because students respond positively to technology and are motivated by technology, teachers should make conscious efforts to create activities that encompass some form of technological tool.” Preservice teachers were motivated to engage their learners and motivate them to learn English.

4.2. Class activities and strategies.

The collected information gave some general perceptions that the participants had towards their own decisions about the class activities and strategies in the English classrooms when in pedagogical practice. There were different comments that made reference to their class activities and strategies as accurate and allowed them to have a meaningful process.

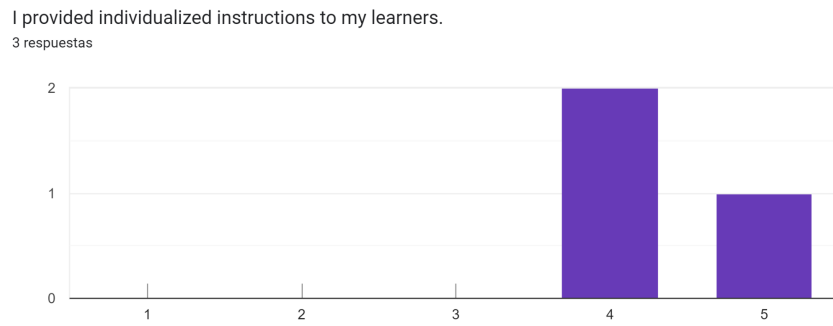
About this, the pre-service teachers shared some of the following ideas to describe their experience:

- I used a virtual quiz for each lesson. (Participant # 2 Interview)
- Sometimes multiple-choice questions were asked where everyone tried to choose the correct answer. (Participant # 1 Interview)
- I was looking for many images with examples, tables, or graphs. (Participant # 2 Interview)

- For the activities, I sent the links or shared the screen with multiple choice questions for the students to choose from. (Participant # 3 Interview)
- Sometimes I did a letter soup and I give permission to someone who could share their screen and do the letter soup by themselves. (Participant # 2 Interview)

Figure 14

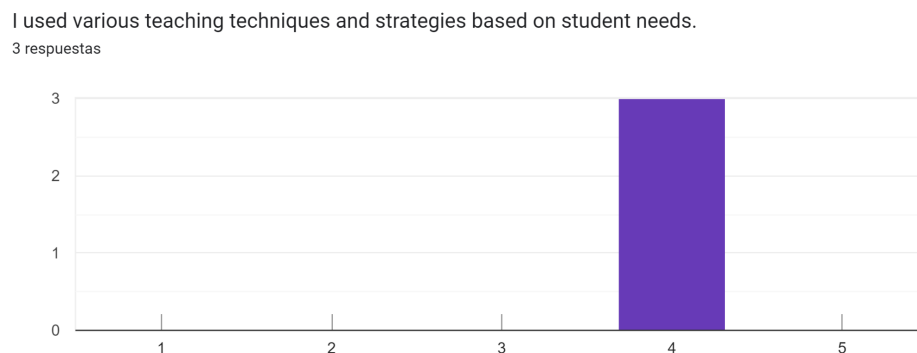
Data analysis - Survey Statement # 8



In this statement from the survey *I provided individualized instructions to my learners*, the participants agreed on their perceptions of having a good and individualized accompaniment to their learner's learning process in this modality.

Figure 15

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 9



In this statement from the survey *I used various teaching techniques and strategies based on students' needs*; it can be seen that the participants agreed on the chance they had during their pedagogical practice by discovering and implementing different teaching strategies that could benefit their learner's process.

The participants also expressed the decisions taken about their classes while in pedagogical practice, mentioning that certain actions were guided by their own professional input. This can be seen in comments like:

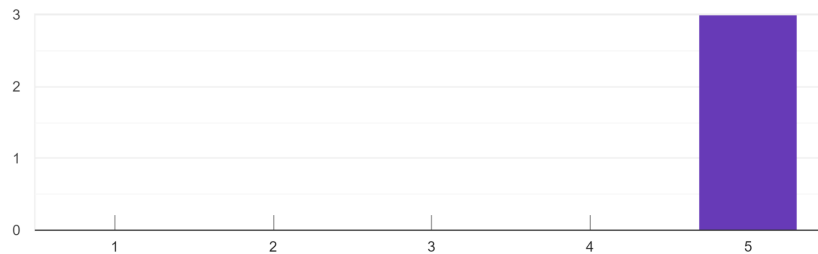
- I don't like to use explanation videos, because I am the one who explains the topic. (Participant # 2 Interview)
- What I do all the time is to talk all the time with them. (Participant # 1 Interview)
- I teach English as we learn Spanish. (Participant # 1 Interview)
- I tried always to follow my syllabus plan, I tried to follow the plan and I did at the beginning of the course so I could make sure that the students at the end of the course could have the skills that I have planned for them. (Participant # 3 Interview)
- I always try to get the exercise that was according to my student's level. Not higher, not lower. (Participant # 3 Interview)

Figure 16

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 4

I always answered questions and gave clear explanations about the content seen.

3 respuestas



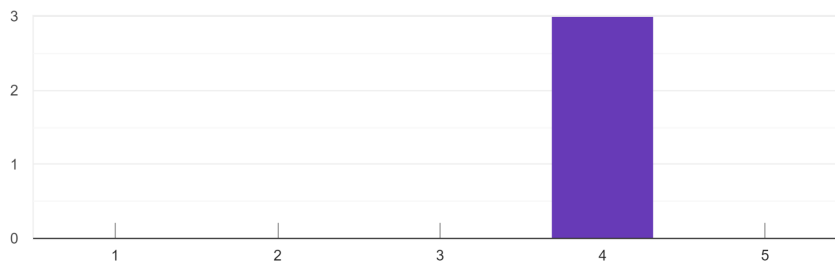
In this statement from the survey, *I always answered questions and gave clear explanations about the content seen*; the participants strongly agreed on their decision of having good communication with their learners and providing clear explanations about the topics as they are fundamental in the teaching practice.

Figure 17

Data analysis - Survey Statement # 11

I always customized resources for individualized learning.

3 respuestas



Here from the survey, *I always customized resources for individualized learning*, the participants showed their agreement on the actions taken in their pedagogical practice sharing that customizing resources helped them in their teaching.

Finally, from the data analyzed, it can be pointed out that preservice teachers made their decisions regarding class materials, strategies, and resources based on what they considered was the best fit for their classroom based on their beliefs. This is in concordance with what Gilakjani & Sabouri (2017) affirm in terms of the greater impact that teacher's beliefs have than teacher's knowledge on different aspects of teaching such as lesson planning, teacher's decision making and classroom practice as they determine actions based on what it is believed to be about teaching and learning processes.

Conclusions

Preservice teachers' perceptions shared in this study allowed us to acknowledge some of the aspects that make the experience of becoming a virtual foreign language teacher for the very first time. The findings in this study in the first place, show that the pedagogical practice let preservice teachers comprehend what the teaching of a foreign language virtually demands and it helped them to shape the required abilities for the job.

Also, the categories that emerged allowed the researcher to observe that the teaching of English virtually meant for the participants a lot of positive and negative emotions when facing the pedagogical practice experience under the PAT modality. This means that the individual subjectivity and educational and work background of the preservice teachers play an important

role in the facing of such educational new contexts. Similarly, the participants unveiled that the use of technology in the classroom, while presenting some advantages to respond to the demands of this globalized world and that worked as a rapid answer to face the pandemic situation, still means that teachers' education and educational institutions present difficulties, limitations and things to be improved.

Teaching virtually implied the creation of online environments that also represented the opportunity to become more practical teachers and include more up-to-date information and resources to get the students connected to language learning. However, the categories demonstrated that there are some external aspects that go beyond the teachers' decisions and that bring to reflection the need of governmental policies and economical support to stop the justice and equality gap in our Colombian societies.

As for the pedagogical practice, based on the results it can be affirmed that it achieved its goal of setting preservice teachers in a real context where all the training received along their professional studies was put into practice. The preservice teachers had a reflective and positive attitude in regard to their teaching and this finding goes in agreement to what Molano states about the praxis:

“la praxis plantea una relación entre teoría y práctica que no supone oposición, sino una mutua subordinación. Es decir, la práctica, o mejor, la praxis pedagógica sería la acción reflexiva de los maestros que puede transformar y construir los saberes que la rigen” (2013, p. 61).

Thus, it is positive to find that the self awareness of the preservice teachers as agents of change interested in producing a change in the educational practices was evidenced as this adds to pedagogical practice as the space of development in this new teaching modality.

Consequently, the participants shared their perception on the different elements of the pedagogical practice in the virtual modality as the key role their mentor teacher had as a support for the professional development, in concord with making visible the need for more virtual teaching practice spaces that can allow preservice teachers to share experiences and learn from each other. In this fact, Lucero (2016) affirms that the pedagogical practicum is a stage in the teacher's life that brings feelings, beliefs, and past experiences of mentor teachers and pre-service teachers about teaching a language and the fact of being a teacher. Having in mind this, it is suggested that further research is done on how the relationship between all the academic actors can be strengthened to achieve higher levels of impact on both sides in the virtual setting.

The findings showed the need that the teacher training program LLEI at USTA is asked to give preservice teachers in terms of virtual teaching training spaces where they can apply what they learned so the knowledge acquired can be articulated to teaching virtually and the opportunity for reflection and improvement is ongoing towards this modality is undeniable. The reality of teaching virtually involves multiple areas and effective online development and depends on collaboration between the "stakeholders," who, Palloff and Pratt argue, must make student learning their primary focus (p. 47). There is an opportunity to extend the insights gained to studies where the role of the virtual teacher and its evolution in this specific modality is covered.

The development of this study made relevant indications emerge in the importance that listening to preservice teachers' voices have in the growth of the discipline of teaching English as a foreign language as well as in the coming novice teachers. Having identified the achievements and challenges that the LLEI preservice teachers perceived in their pedagogical practice in the virtual modality opens a new door to improvement in many ways. Aring (2013) states “one of the most important ingredients in successful schools is the inverse of conflict: intensive collaboration among administrators and teachers, built on a shared sense of mission and focused on improved student learning.” As is this ongoing improvement that preservice teachers expressed interest in for them and the university is an opportunity to study further on how the program can be improved from the inside.

On top of that, the findings of this study are valuable additions to the program as it has earned a recent general description of its pedagogical practice spaces in the PAT modality by its own students, also it opened the door to future pre-service teachers to get a more realistic image of what teaching English virtually means and implies and more important, requires from them as preservice teachers. With the achievement of this research, the researcher got a deep understanding of the reality of a virtual teacher, learned that every teacher faces multiple situations on what and how to teach and that teaching requires a set of actions that are taken in the classroom for which preparation is key.

Furthermore, this study permitted the researcher to be able to design, apply and implement a qualitative study as well as be able to identify and analyze the preservice teachers

doing their pedagogical practice perceptions in the virtual modality to showcase them to the academic community with a deep analysis of the findings so further research can be done.

Finally, we can conclude that preservice teacher's perceptions and shared experiences are never-failing starting points for consideration when thinking about program improvements, curriculum designs or upcoming training and their voices should be always listened to as it was achieved in this study. It is suggested that further research is done on each of the findings of the study as the relationship between academic actors in the PAT modality, the current role of the teacher and the need for evolution for the modality as well as the possible adaptations of the curriculum of the program to respond to the new educational era.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Preservice teachers survey

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ZzzQoMa4bDdRtJZqHvDPjvqEJFR71SK_uBx5SJQi9f8/edit

Appendix B Preservice teachers interview

Professional knowledge gained while doing the pedagogical practice.

1. How would you rate the support and training you received from your mentor teachers while doing your pedagogical practice in 2021? Why?
2. Mention one situation in which you found the training received during your LLEI formation useful.
3. Mention one situation in which you found the training received during your LLEI formation not sufficient.
4. What other difficulties and challenges (not related to the training) did you have in your virtual pedagogical practice? Why? How did you cope with them?
5. 5. What kind of external factors (technical issues, noise, study environments, etc.) do you consider might have affected the development of virtual pedagogical practices?

6. 6.. What kind of internal factors (feelings, emotions, preferences) do you consider might have affected the development of virtual pedagogical practices?
7. 7. How do you think your students perceive their virtual learning experience? Why?
8. 8. How would you describe the teacher-student and student-student relationship when developing your virtual pedagogical practice?
9. 9. What characteristics did your resources and materials selection has for your virtual teaching practice? Why?
10. 10. What professional areas do you consider you need additional training on after the development of your pedagogical practice in 2021? Why?
11. 11. You had to do your pedagogical practice virtually due to the pandemic. So, what differences do you think there would have been if you had done your pedagogical practice face-to-face?
12. 12. What recommendations would you give to other preservice teachers doing their pedagogical practice under the virtual modality?
13. 13. In your opinion, how can virtual pedagogical practices generate more impact on preservice teachers?

Appendix C Consent form

You are invited to participate in a study being conducted by Sigrid Maria Sanchez Neira. The purpose of the study is to analyze the pre-service teachers' perceptions about developing their Pedagogical Practices under the virtual teaching modality in 2021.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about the pedagogical

practice done in 2021. Your survey answers will be stored and analyzed by the researcher for only academic purposes. At the end of the survey, you will be asked to participate in an additional interview by Zoom which will be recorded and your answers will be transcribed, however, no names or identifying information would be included in any publications or presentations based on these data, and your responses to this survey will remain confidential.

If you have further questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this study, you can contact the researcher via email at sigridsanchez@ustadistancia.edu.co.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below. Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that: you have read the above information, you voluntarily agree to participate and you are 18 years of age or older.