

Telecollaboration in the Era of Coronavirus

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the most important impacts of the Pandemic on Telecollaboration by analyzing the attainments and challenges of a series of initiatives conducted between the spring and autumn semesters of 2020. The paper is intended as an exploratory review based on firsthand observations of immersion-style language virtual assignments in the target languages (Spanish and English) performed by university-level students in the U.S.A. and Chile and facilitated by various technological platforms. The authors of this study are the instructors of the two language courses involved in the exchange. After a brief delineation of the literature and significant trends in the field of virtual exchange, the researchers will examine the role of Telecollaboration during the Pandemic and the lessons learned from the experience.

Keywords: Telecollaboration, Virtual Exchange, Computer Mediated Instruction during the Pandemic, foreign language.

1. Introduction

The Coronavirus crisis in 2020 and 2021 has altered nearly every aspect of life, and the domain of education is not an exception. With the abrupt cancellation of classes and temporary closure of university campuses worldwide in response to the growing pandemic outbreak, online courses have proven to be the most effective method for ensuring student retention and access to learning. As institutions rapidly adjusted their programs and operations, the academic world was able to attest to the potential of Telecollaboration and virtual exchanges in connecting individuals who were physically distant.

2. Literature Review

Telecollaboration is a term that refers to the establishment of virtual language and cultural connections between geographically dispersed foreign language learners in institutionalized settings using Internet communication tools in order to foster the development of (a) second language linguistic proficiency and (b) multicultural competence (Warschauer, 1996). For more than two decades, language education researchers and practitioners have welcomed this collaborative online model for its pedagogical benefits in fostering students' intercultural understanding and expanding the boundaries of the traditional classroom. Employed initially in foreign language learning at the high school level, Telecollaboration was implemented for the first time in post-secondary classrooms in the early '90s by the Canadian Telelearning Network of Centers of Excellence to develop partnerships between university schools at the Université Laval.

Throughout the years, numerous observers have investigated the virtual interexchange realm, the technological tools and platforms utilized, and the implications as an effective foreign language functioning mode. Furthermore, as new technological applications were crafted and implemented for educational purposes, new lines of research germinated, such as Stockwell's investigation into Mobile Assisted Language Learning (Stockwell, 2007, 2010, 2013; Oberg and Daniels, 2013), and the study on the role of Online Gaming, or MMORPGs, in L2 acquisition (Cornillie, Thorne, and Desmet, 2012; Gee, 2007; Sykes 2013; Thorne, Black, and Sykes, 2009; Thorne and Fischer, 2012), along with the use of Virtual Worlds (Liou 2012) through online virtual classrooms, 2012) through online virtual classrooms.

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The intrinsic nature of Telecollaboration as a virtual intercultural communication that involves a large number of constituents on an international scale, but lacks global collaboration among researchers, as well as broader dissemination and comparison of investigations beyond the local area, complicates a comprehensive view of new trends and usages. Additionally, owing to the program's international nature, which is administered by a variety of organizations in a very fluid manner in different countries across the globe, Telecollaboration has acquired a multiplicity of titles and connotations: Globally Networked Learning, Virtual Mobility, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), Teletandem, Global Connections, Global Learning Experience, Experiential Digital Global Engagement (EDGE), Online Intercultural Exchange (OIE), Internet-mediated Intercultural Foreign Language Education (ICFLE) are just a few of the terms used to define it. Within this universe of programs and initiatives, renowned intercultural communication organizations such as UNICollaboration are increasingly adopting the name Virtual Exchange (VE) as an "umbrella term" (O'Dowd & O'Rourke, 2019) to include all the aforementioned designations. In contrast to many other forms of remote learning, VE does not subsist just as a mere apparatus for virtual dialogue but serves as an instrument of intercultural correspondence between culturally diverse groups despite geographical distance and the inability to engage in physical mobility; it is a third educational space (Bax & Pegrum, 2007) for learning communities of collaborating students who speak different languages.

Telecollaboration is identified as a subset of COIL and the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers in the macrocosm of VE initiatives, explicitly focusing on language learning. Indeed, Telecollaboration is often structured as a "class model" or a "credit module" with the instructor serving as the empowered authority who leads and directs the language practice discourse. Communication between participants, one of the five Cs outlined in the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (2006), is the cynosure of the Telecollaboration partnerships. Students may collaborate and share information and ideas using tools such as email, synchronous chat, discussion forums, video meetings, and instant messaging on social media. As Cultura founder Gilberte Furstenberg framed it, "from the very beginning, students generated their cross-cultural data, elaborated their hypotheses, and were able to broaden their interpretations of culture via the mirroring effect of dialogue" (Furstenberg & English, 2016, p. 176).

Parallel to the examination of computer-mediated communication instruments and methods, commentators have spent the last two decades gathering evidence on the validity and advantages associated with the use of technology and VE in language acquisition. The majority of research compiled by scholars, experts in the field, or organizations directly involved in using Telecollaboration as a new pedagogical contrivance range from Buckingham's (Buckingham, 2008, p. 14) "relentlessly optimistic view" of an increase in L2 production fostered by online interaction to less optimistic expectations due to increased anxiety registered during some Telecollaboration sessions (Dooly, 2015). Moreover, O'Dowd and Ritter (2006) have identified four levels at which variables may contribute to communication failures: the individual, classroom, socio-institutional, and interaction.

The Telecollaboration scene has been dominated in recent years by the bilingual-bicultural communication paradigm, in which various native speakers meet virtually for exchanges of 'linguaculture' (Dooly, 2015). While the primary objective of online collaboration seems to be the improvement of foreign language competence, Dooly has recently noted a shift in the heart of Telecollaboration toward a more cultural and general sphere. Similarly, Kramsch (2006) argued that "[i]t is no longer appropriate to give students a tourist-like competence to exchange information with native speakers of national languages within well-defined national cultures. Instead, they need a much more sophisticated competence in the manipulation of symbolic systems" (p. 251) to compete in an intensively dynamic, multicultural global marketplace.

Increasingly, new trends in intercultural and virtual collaboration partnerships at the higher education level have emerged as a result of innovative, decentralized types of global teaching practices that have captured the attention of both university administrations and policymakers outside academia (Helm 2018) through various initiatives such as the *Erasmus + Virtual Exchange Program* (2018), sustained by the European Commission, and the *Soliya Connect Program Collaborate* (2018), the *Stevens Initiative*, and the *Virtual Exchange Coalition*. Since the launch of the first issue of the *Journal of Virtual Exchange* in 2018, communicative VE programs have shifted their focus to a more "Critical Telecollaboration" model, in which genuine engagement of participants "seeks to foster greater understanding of multiple 'other' perspectives and to address social and political issues in an increasingly polarized world that seems to be characterized by conflicts, inequalities, and injustices." (O'Dowd, 2016).

It seems clear how researchers involved in Telecollaboration and VE have come a long way, in terms of technological sophistication and cultural ambitions, from the earliest beginnings of the interscholastic exchange of the *Les Journal Scolaire* of Rene Daniel in 1924.

Nonetheless, as language education expands outside the classroom's defined bounds, new paradigms, teaching techniques, and research will undoubtedly develop (Dooly, 2015) in the data gathering of participants who are not physically present in the classroom.

TELECOLLABORATION DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

3.1 Context

Connecting learners from disparate continents is a didactically and administratively audacious endeavor. Additionally, over the past several months, the Covid-19 Pandemic has created a significant demand for remote instruction, forcing educators worldwide to rethink student mobility and academic collaboration among physically distant institutions, as well as to devise new modes of education and exchanges at a time when all academic activities have been abruptly disarrayed.

Telecollaboration, included in accredited post-secondary academic courses, is co-designed and co-taught by exchange faculty from distinctive institutions and geographical regions. When successful, Telecollaboration engages learning communities in meaningful interactions and fosters critical understanding of different cultures. These types of coordination provide participants with an unmatched opportunity to gain marketable skills; students acquire intercultural awareness and knowledge, while teachers gain a new perspective on their discipline, improve their digital literacy skills, and master working in virtual teams. In addition, institutions with little or no curriculum space for new courses have the potential to expand their educational programs, initiate new international partnerships to attract foreign students, and provide faculty and staff with additional global development training.

With the exponential proliferation of sole online learning classes across the globe during the 2020-2021 years of the Coronavirus Pandemic, the use of virtual tools for communication and interaction in all types of instructional courses has captured the attention of educators and researchers and sparked a new wave of discussions and dialogue among field experts. In this unfamiliar and more interconnected but disruptive world, it is critical for younger generations to be engaged in global learning. We already know that many college and university students in the United States are unable to participate in foreign collaborations because of financial constraints. Indeed, just 10% of undergraduate students have studied abroad in the past few years, while administrative challenges to establishing and maintaining robust Study Abroad programs and the prohibitive costs of the latter are determinant factors of those low participation numbers (Di Gennaro & Villarroel, 2018). In a time of travel restrictions, financial hardship, and social distancing, the inaccessibility of international learning has become universal and has added its basis to the argument in favor of VE projects and programs. Thus, a growing number of educators and program coordinators concerned about the economic sustainability of international mobility are promoting the internationalization of curriculum via Telecollaboration. In a time of travel restrictions, financial hardship, and social distancing, the inaccessibility of international learning has become ubiquitous, bolstering its basis to the argument in favor of VE projects and programs. As the Covid-19 Pandemic has impacted every facet of education, "it has also highlighted two things – the necessity for educators and students to be able to utilize technology and the importance of global competence to make sense of a global pandemic and its impact on the world" (Abdel-Kader, 2020). Without a doubt, interest among post-secondary institutions and international associations has increased, as evidenced by Unicollaboration's recent *Statement on VE and European Union Support Beyond 2020*, in which Soliya and the Sharing Perspective Foundation unanimously expressed their strong interest in continuing and expanding virtual programs seeking European Union support via the Erasmus+Programme (2021-2027).

As Dr. Keiko Ikeda, vice-director of the Institute for Innovative Global Education (IIGE), recently stated during the webinar on *Cooperation with Japan in Higher Education* co-hosted by the JSPS Alumni Club in Norway and Team Norway Japan in December 2020, "maintaining physical distance should not prohibit instructors and students from gaining the global collaboration skills needed to be successful in their courses, workplaces, and communities."

In a time of sudden self-isolation, connecting to others can be complicated. One way to ensure that language students do not feel isolated while studying remotely is to offer more focused one-on-one communication with native or native-level speakers. This current juncture unquestionably represents a considerable opportunity to use VE to foster global conversations on universal issues and to disseminate simulated experiences relevant to the future generation job market. Scholars and associations devoted to endorsing global collaboration via exchanges concur that, in this age of remote teaching and learning, VE may serve as a pivotal time to form new and deepen existing international alliances among academic institutions.

Presently Plateforme Échange Recherche et Intervention Sur la SCOLarité, Persévérance et réussite (PéRiscope) is investigating the topic in the context of community, while UNIColaboration recently hosted a virtual conference to reflect on the role of technology in education in an age of social distance and closed borders. However, additional research is needed to determine how the Coronavirus crisis disrupted and transformed the organization of Telecollaboration projects that were initially conducted in physical classrooms as well as how the transition to a completely virtual environment without the teacher's oversight has impacted and will impact students' motivation. By asking a basic question: what role did telecollaboration play during the Pandemic and what lessons can be gained from the event, this paper seeks to contribute to filling a vacuum in the current research area.

3.2 Methodology

The Telecollaboration project analyzed in this article consists of two sets of ten sessions, each embedded into two 14-week university courses offered by Edward Water University in Florida, United States of America, and Universidad de Los Lagos in Chile in spring and autumn 2020. With the guidance of their instructors, each international group held weekly videoconferences conducted half an hour in Spanish and half an hour in English to interview peers orally or via text on assigned topics.

Establishing, sustaining, and expanding partnerships between Edward Waters University and Universidad de Los Lagos through Telecollaboration is a primary goal of this ongoing collaborative virtual exchange program, which is now in its third year. Beginning with a pilot program in 2017, the Telecollaboration curriculum between the two sister institutions has expanded over time to include intercultural dialogues, reflections, small group conversations, synchronous sessions, videos, and student portfolios that are collected and stored on a Telecollaboration website, developed, and implemented by the Universidad de Los Lagos Computer Science students.

Connecting schools worldwide via collaborative projects is a critical function of virtual language learning because it forces students and teachers to go beyond their comfort zones. As the Covid-19 crisis arose amid the first session of Spring 2020, it presented many unanticipated challenges: digital equity, student isolation, and trustworthy online content and platforms were some of the problems not experienced during the program's early years. However, because of the quick response of higher education authorities, both institutions involved in the project were able to maintain educational continuity by rapidly establishing emergency remote learning systems, providing technological devices and institutional workshops to all professors and students, and creating new guidelines for synchronous and asynchronous sessions.

We know that involvement is a key factor in determining a student's success. We know that without their engagement, students' success is jeopardized. We also know that the success of Telecollaboration initiatives is contingent on a plethora of variables (different degrees of collaboration between partner institutions, the participants' linguistic competencies, geopolitical factors, access to technology, insufficient support and acknowledgment by the administration, and faculty overloads). Due to the sudden shift to remote instruction at the start of the spring 2020 Telecollaboration project in response to the Pandemic crisis, technological challenges arose among students who lacked reliable Internet access, forcing the instructors to transition from the previous-used Skype platform to Zoom, Instagram, Google Docs, Meet, and Whatsapp in order to reach participants residing in remote areas with poor Internet connection. Additionally, technological adaptations to the video platform were used to facilitate the conferencing and monitoring of exchanges as well as to enhance collaboration between the two researchers to promote and maintain learners' involvement. Without the professors' physical presence as moderators in the in-class language laboratory, as was the case in pre-pandemic Telecollaboration context, participants became utterly independent in scheduling and controlling meeting content, delivery methods, and time. When the instructors transitioned from in-class to at-home Telecollaboration, they were cognizant of the fact that many students—and indeed, the majority—would lack the mental energy and time to commit to the kind of virtual project work that had been crafted for them. Hence, teachers announced that the task was exclusively "opt-in" and that abstention would have had no effect on the overall course grade.

The VE student cohorts were composed of four distinct groups of students that participated in the Telecollaboration and came from a variety of different academic courses and backgrounds. In Spring 2020, the groups consisted of sixty-seven students; in Fall 2020, the groups consisted of sixty-three students. The courses engaged in guided discussions and collaborated to develop common subject assignments, artifacts, and reflective activities that were meaningful to both groups of students. In addition, learners documented sessions, rated their performance, and offered their perspectives on the Telecollaboration Project in a Google Drive folder so that both instructors could track their progress regularly.

At the end of each semester, semi-guided student reflections and transcribed screen recordings of face-to-face interactions were gathered and coded using categories drawn from various frameworks.

Finally, using a bilateral classroom-to-classroom model and a variety of data sources, including questionnaires, surveys, and participants' portfolios, mixed-method content analyses of the communicative components of the exchange were conducted to identify and quantify perceived development of linguistic and cultural competencies and to annotate challenges and changes in learners' skills and attitudes. The analysis focused on what participants did and said, if and how it was connected to culture and the current pandemic, and the contrasts observed between the pre-pandemic in-class Telecollaboration exchange and the new at-home Telecollaboration model. Could students from both institutions overcome communication, cultural, and technological obstacles in order to engage in collaborative language practice?

3. Results And Discussion

The researchers reviewed, analyzed, and classified the recordings of two sets of sessions held in Spring and Fall 2020 into three categories (negotiation of meanings, methods, and topics) to identify patterns and differences between previous pre-pandemic Telecollaboration projects between the two sister institutions and the emergence of supplementary models.

4.1 Negotiation of meanings

The researchers observed that participants engaged in virtual discussions often had to pause the dialogue to negotiate other concerns such as technical issues, agreement on the language used for communication, scheduling conflicts, or tasks development. Students utilized repetitions, clarified one other's pronunciation, decelerated the speed of speech to be understood by the other, and used hand gestures. Zoom's chat feature seemed to be a convenient instrument that was often adopted by all participants to aid in understanding and clarifying utterances during their simultaneous discussion. Additionally, 75% of participants used choral readings of pre-prepared and displayed digital posters throughout the sessions. Zoom chats and choral readings were self-initiated students' contrivances that were never used during the pre-pandemic live sessions; at that time, conversations occurred in on-campus computer labs, and digital posters were created at the end of the semester, though participants did not have time to confront and discuss competing ideas. On the other hand, during the at-home Telecollaboration sessions, students took the effort to demonstrate cultural characteristics via well-crafted presentations.

4.2 Topics

The Coronavirus Pandemic had a strong impact on the project's themes; students depicted themselves and their friends as young people wearing masks and greeting one another with an elbow gesture, while others related personal experiences from the Covid-19 crisis. Conversations appeared to be conducted on a deeper and more intimate level than the pre-Covid Telecollaboration set of exchanges once students reflected on the struggle of being apart from family members due to travel limitations and quarantine status. For instance, one Chilean student recounted the anguish of being separated from his fiancée at the birth of their first child, while an American international student stranded in the Bahamas discussed her community's suffering during the Pandemic.

Students developed a stronger bond, and discussions often centered on the expression of the same feelings of despair and sorrow. By the fourth meeting, some participants were already referring to one another as "friends," rather than "pen pals," a term that had never been used in the semesters we are comparing. The impossibility of traveling and multiculturalism were recurring themes, even at the lower linguistic level; pupils from culturally and geographically disparate backgrounds seemed to have discovered common ground as a result of the pandemic experience they had to undergo.

4.3 Methods

During the at-home sessions, students created portfolios and representations of a variety of cultural topics, ranging from local cuisine and favorite music to geography, using photos, films, infographics, and other visual cues. The digital posters and portfolios appeared to be more complex and comprehensive than the pre-pandemic live sessions presentations, indicating that students devoted more time preparing for the meetings and were more technologically equipped.

Moreover, participants were confident performing complex tasks on the exchange platforms without the assistance of the in-class instructor; they were able to share screens, photographs, and artifacts independently, create links on a variety of conversation topics, and arrange and record conferences for the courses' folder. Learners' attitudes, technical skills, and digital literacy all improved because of the autonomous digital practice.

4.4 Other observations

Two surveys and the examination of 236 videos stored in shared drive folders were used to gather data. Since students could join from home, the actual space in which they conversed was quieter than it would be in a traditional classroom. Furthermore, because participants were not required to use the language laboratory's microphones and headphones, they communicated more freely through hand gestures; some students interpolated dialogue with exhibitions of household objects or musical instruments, while others displayed cooking receipts or took their exchange partner on a virtual tour of their domicile. Apart from that, without the actual presence of classmates or instructors, pupils seemed to be more comfortable and prolific in their generation of unique and innovative modules.

Participants had a greater interest in researching non-assigned subjects, which prompted the usage of new terminology linked to medical, environmental preservation, biology, and cultural identity, thus fostering the development of an authentic learning network; for instance, during a food session, a Chilean student majoring in agronomy shared his expertise and knowledge of Caribbean agriculture, while an American student illustrated the culture of the Junkanoo in the Bahamas.

The researchers registered an intensification of the speed of speech in both English and Spanish conversations. The fluency of speech in terms of filled and unfilled pauses, hesitations, and other aspects of fluency (speed, repair, breakdown), was assessed using the Speech Rater Meter Google Application on twenty-three samples from five pairs of students over the course of ten sessions during the second semester. Between the first three sessions and the last two sessions, an average acceleration of speech speed of 30% in English and 22% in Spanish was observed. Conversation length increased from the first three sessions to the last two sessions, with pauses between sentences being shorter by an average of 30 seconds. In the final sessions, English speakers delivered more Spanish paragraph-length statements but relied on first language inferences when the discussion veered from the planned topics.

Without the time limitations of a physical classroom, more extensive and articulated colloquia were conducted, while time-zone problems were handled swiftly by students, who organized project work autonomously and changed meeting times according to their schedule through telephone applications.

4.5 Challenges

One of the difficulties instructors encountered when they were forced to relocate the Telecollaboration to an out-of-class context was that the partners in the VE often had to pause the conversation to resolve technological problems on their own.

It was also observed that participants were prone to resorting to the writing chat tool more than in regular in-class periods; in the 236 Telecollaboration sessions examined, students spent on average 63% of the time writing on the Zoom chat rather than communicating orally. Additionally, without instructor supervision, learners seemed to rely on translation tools in lieu of resolving utterance discordance.

Three first-year students confined abroad owing to travel restrictions found difficulty in describing the university structure and academic life in the United States to their Chilean classmates. Moreover, students were unable to show their counterparts the school through live virtual tours, as was the case with pre-pandemic Telecollaboration projects, and were forced to depend on photos and videos from the web. Participants confined to their homes were unable to conceal and reciprocate vocabulary in the target languages related to daily and leisure activities; learners frequently used sentences like "asisto a clase y hago tarea, that is pretty much it" to describe their everyday lives and were unable to practice familiar vocabulary related to the aforementioned topics.

4.6 Surveys

At the end of the last semester, the researchers administered two distinct surveys; the first survey, conducted via Mentimeter.com, sought to ascertain students' perceptions of Telecollaboration through the use of a single significant word. The second survey, conducted via Survio.com, investigated students' general opinions about the project's challenges and tools. The analysis of survey results directed at the Universidad de Los Lagos was expounded during the final meeting report. All interviews were conducted in English, and answers were compiled after the semester's conclusion.

Twenty-eight university students from Universidad de Los Lagos and Edward Waters University responded to the first poll, while twenty-six Chileans replied to the second. The majority of interviewees were majoring in pedagogy, architecture, or social-political science, with about a quarter pursuing certification as English language instructors. Students were selected randomly after confirmation by email. Most respondents had no prior experience with Telecollaboration. Although there were more participants in the Telecollaboration, it was impossible to contact them due to Internet connection issues and the pandemic context.

The first poll asked students to choose an isolated word to describe their experience during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Table 1. Survey Question: Describe your Telecollaboration experience during the Covid-19 Pandemic



Results showed favorable feedback from the interviewees; Telecollaboration was deemed by the majority to be an engaging and exciting activity.

The second poll included five questions and elicited twenty-six answers; questions were framed considering the pandemic backdrop and perceptions of the initiative.

Table 2. Survey 2, question 2: “How do you evaluate your experience of at-home Telecollaboration during the Covid-19 Pandemic?”

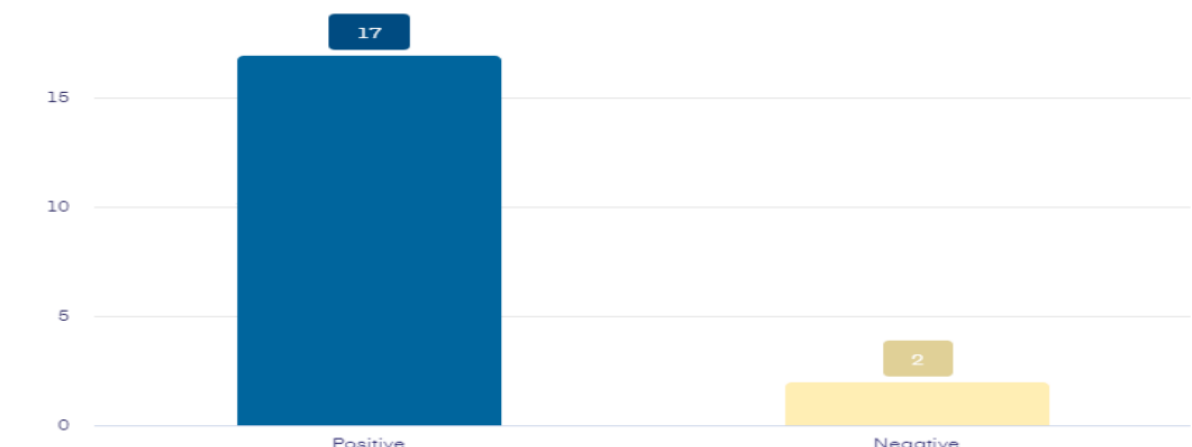
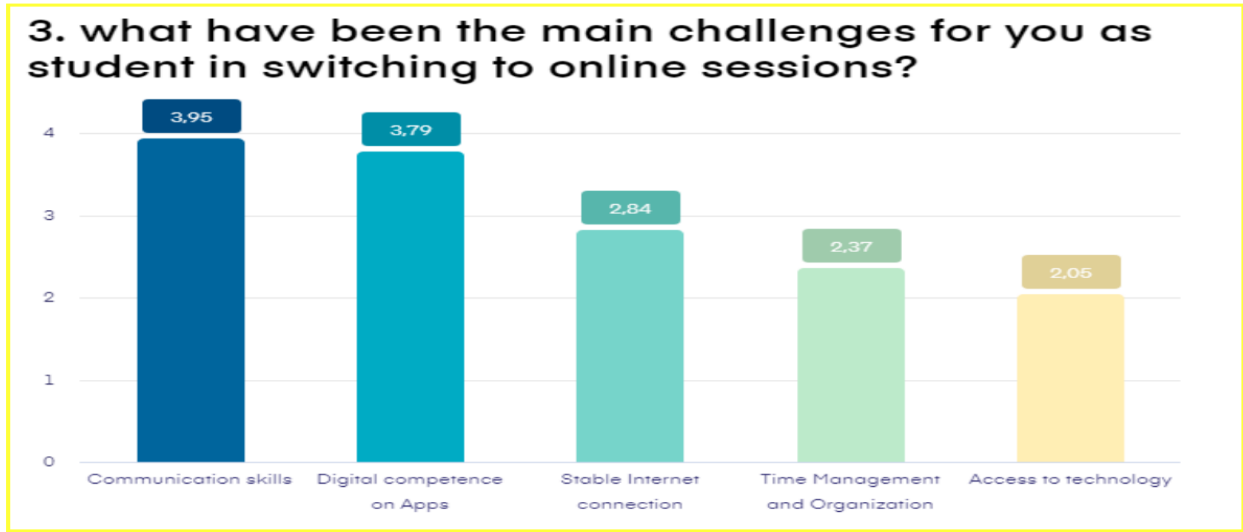


Table 2 illustrates the classification rendered by participants: 90% of students had a favorable impression of the initiative, whereas 10% of students questioned expressed a negative attitude.

Table 3. Survey 2. Question 3: What have been the main challenges for you as a student in switching to online.



Following that, participants were asked to rate the primary barriers faced while transitioning from an in-class to an at-home online environment in order of importance (five being the most significant and one being the least significant). (Table 3)

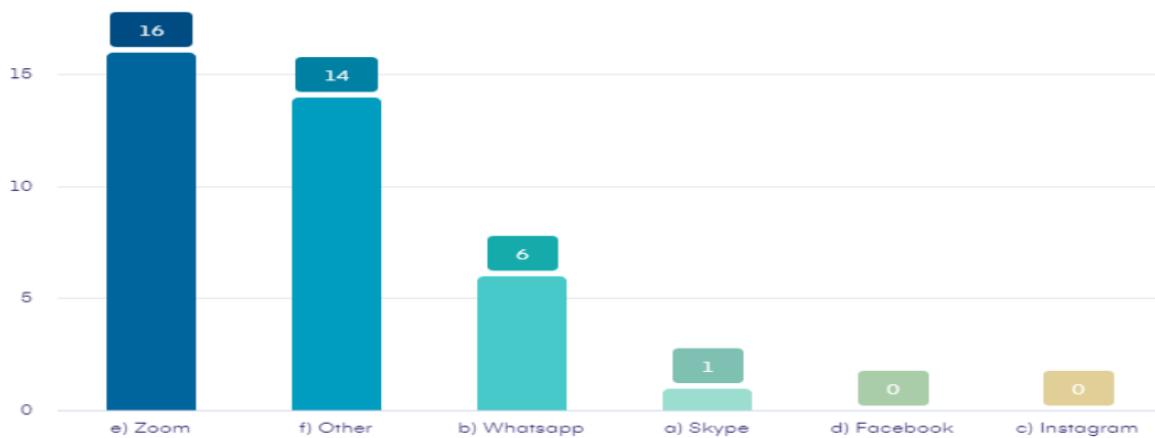
Respondents identified communication skills as the most considerable challenge faced during the Telecollaboration project (3,95), followed by digital competence (3,79), a stable internet connection (2,84), time management and organization (2,37), and access to technology (2,05).

As Covid-19 has shown to students and educators around the globe, educational and learning opportunities may occur anywhere and at any time. Although access to technology is not ubiquitous, open sources found on the web, student-generated content, and an expeditious response from the institutions partnering in the exchange in terms of providing technological devices and support during the transition to all-remote instruction created digital and democratic equity for students and a sense of belonging in a knowledge-building community.

The fourth question (table 4) pertains to the online sessions' usage of the digital platform. Students were required to choose at least two options.

Table 4. Survey 2, question 4. Which platforms are better to use for online sessions?

4. Which platforms are better to use for online sessions?



Answer	Answers	Ratio
a) Skype	1	3.85%
b) WhatsApp	6	23.08%
c) Instagram		0%
d) Facebook		0%
e) Zoom	16	61.54%
f) Other	14	53.85%

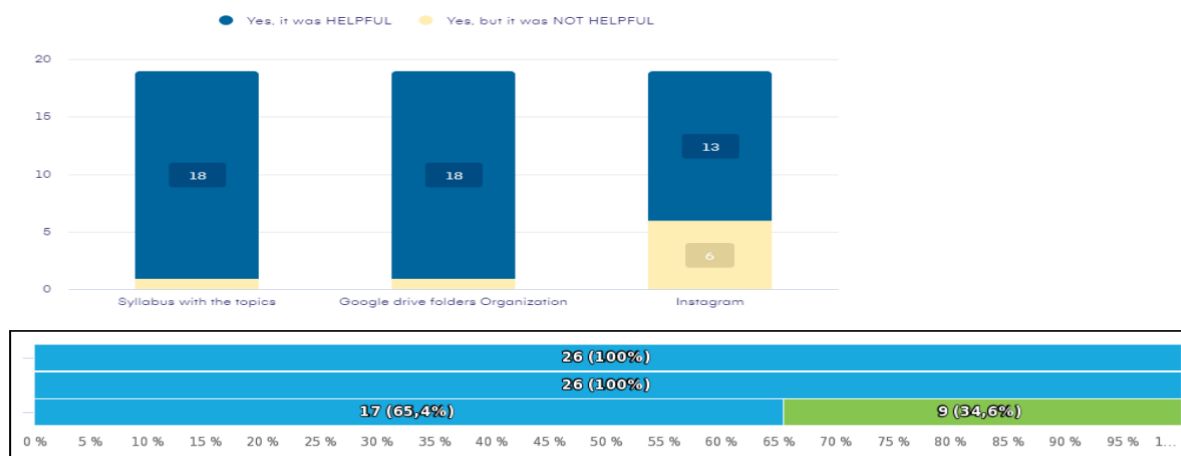
The preponderance of students (62%) selected Zoom as their preferred application; 54% of participants favored other platforms, while 23% of the respondents indicated WhatsApp. No answers were provided for Instagram and Facebook.

Following that, participants were asked to rate the effectiveness of three organizational tools utilized for the Telecollaboration: the syllabus with subject ideas, the shared Google Drive folders, and the Instagram project page (table 5).

Most respondents rated the syllabus and Google Drive folders as beneficial, while 65% of respondents rated the Instagram project page positively.

Table 5. Survey 2, question 5. Evaluate the following: yes, it was helpful, yes, but it was not helpful.

5. Evaluate the following



Finally, table 6 depicts students’ answers to the following question: in your opinion, when the university will fully reopen, could Telecollaboration remain part of the Institution’s practice?

Table 6. Survey 2, question 6. Could Telecollaboration remain part of the Institution’s practice?

- Yes, I think it will. This is a great way of connecting to people from around the globe, and if we can help other universities with this telecollaboration, I don't see why we wouldn't keep doing it. :D
- We always should have this program, I was studying English before, and when we didn't have classes we lost the possibility to practice and talk in english yo do not forget and lose our speaking skills, same that in another careers for people who are interested in learn
- I think it will remain because we need that this program has more promotion in the University. It is a comfortable and helpful way to put English into practice. I don't know how this is going to be but I hope we have all the appropriate conditions to make the Tellecollaboration program be carried out.
- We it will. It's important to keep in touch with native speakers.
- I think I should continue, as it is a great tool to give students greater opportunities to perform better in their future professional careers
- Absolutely, I think that telecollaboration was a great experience
- (2x) Yes
- Yes, I think Telecollaboration must be present in the future. The idea of learning English, and learning new cultures throughout English is something very helpful for the future in terms of understanding the history of a country or just simply the traditions and behaviour of people around the world. It also helps to open our minds and have a different vision of the world.
- I really hope so; Telecollaboration is a very helpful program so it will be amazing if this program could remain as a permanent part of the institution practice.
- Yes, is a really nice experience
- I hope the telecollaboration remain as part of the Institution practice because it is really helpful to improve the students skills
- Yes and getting better.
- Sure, it was a helpful experiences to learn about different cultures
- Yes

4. Conclusion

While the Telecollaboration experience has been overwhelmingly positive, it is critical to continue exploring ways to yield renewed perspectives, high-level thinking and learning questions and activities, and generative outcomes that will help students develop global awareness, appreciation, and foreign language competency.

The exchange of cultural knowledge, even though the linguistic exercise of L2 practices, can certainly bring cultural empathy and understanding of others in order to “close the cultural competency gap that continues to wedge the world’s haves and have nots” (Poe, 2020) . Although the transformative impact of digital literacy and technology on education in 2020-21 has not yet resulted in education inclusion, it has finally elevated VE experiences from a marginalized position as an afterthought activity conducted by individuals or specialized centers of learning to the center of the educational landscape.

What we learned from the Telecollaboration experience during the Pandemic crisis is that a) individualized remote language learning pushes students and faculty beyond their comfort zones, b) it is critical to utilize a variety of remote technologies that can be used with a variety of different types of devices, c) realistic expectations for teachers and students with flexible schedules and targets need to be set, d) participants also acknowledged their satisfaction with their participation in this project despite the disruptions and technological difficulties due to the Pandemic context, and e) successful Telecollaboration experiences often begin with the successful pairing of instructors.

As Telecollaboration instructors move forward into this post-Pandemic world and institutions and organizations explore new forms of online language to face the long-term effects of the crisis in education and students’ mobility, we could conclude that these types of learning projects based on the integration of language, content, and digital skills through telecollaborative project work can be considered not just an ‘emergency tool’, but a powerful pedagogical practice.

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