Exploring the Impact of Virtual Classes on Second Language Interaction among Pre-Service Teachers

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Abstract: The pandemic's transition to online learning modes forced numerous institutions to adjust to the changes it brought. The classroom environment was also altered, which affected discussion interaction. While interaction is a significant component in English language teaching and learning, given that language basically influences learning. Therefore, the aim of the study is to examine the effectiveness of virtual classes in second language interaction among pre-service teachers. The questionnaire that was employed in this research was from the study by Nesreen and Budoor (2020) on the impact of virtual classes on second language interaction. The data collected came from the pre-service teachers that are currently having online classes. Furthermore, the study analyzed if there is significant difference in the effectivity of virtual classes in promoting second language interaction across gender. The findings stated that the effectiveness of virtual classes on interaction is characterized as "satisfied." On the other hand, there is no significant difference when respondents are characterized according to gender. Thus, it implies that learners perceive interactions in virtual classes the same way they do in face-to-face classes.

Keywords: Language Interaction, virtual classes, English language, pandemic.

Introduction

Background of the study

Education is widely recognized to be a perennial and never-ending learning process. In order to make language learning input easier, interaction is very essential. Whether a complete and accurate interactive system for second language (L2) learners is implemented or not, the achievement of the learning process is dependent in some way (Alahmadi & Alraddadi, 2020). It was highlighted that teachers and students must find the right balance between (a) encouraging collaboration and (b) helping ensure that the process of learning is effective in terms of communication (Sari, 2018). Moreover, to obtain the learning output in an L2 language class, the process of learning should include both verbal and nonverbal interactions in order to improve interactivity through language input. As a result, in order to achieve the learning goals in an L2 language class, the correct patterns of interaction must be implemented (Alahmadi & Alraddadi, 2020).

The outbreak of the pandemic, brought up the need for various institutions to adapt a new method of teaching to effectively accommodate the needs of the students and sustain the conformity of education (Zydney, McKimmny, Lindberg, & Schmidt, 2019). In addition, the drastic alteration of traditional classes to online classes was one of the significant changes in the educational system brought by the pandemic (Chung, Subramaniam, & Dass 2020; McQuirter 2020; Yudiawan, et al., 2021). Hence, distance learning has gained popularity among various institutions around the globe. Almost all schools are now implementing virtual learning education to support the continuity of student’s learning (Allen & Seaman, 2014; Ko & Rossen, 2017; Sawang, Newton, & Jamieson, 2013). However, Lee (2020) asserted that the substitution...
of online teaching for face-to-face instruction may have an impact on student’s experiences and their participation in classes.

With the growth of information technology, there are several ways to gain knowledge, specifically in the context of English language interaction, where students can learn it through virtual classes. The emerging innovations and high-speed internet connections have also open up a world of possibilities for enhancing the communication skills of the students (Sarica & Cavus, 2008). Virtual classes gave an opportunity for students to experience a good quality of learning despite the crisis that we are experiencing right now. It uses technology such as digital tools and devices to integrate teaching and incorporate student’s learning even without attending classes face-to-face. “Higher education institutions” continuously search for innovative technological tools that will help stakeholders to re-establish the educational system efficiently and successfully. The integration of virtual classes helped the changing needs of the students, and encourage them to actively participate and work collaboratively (Cain, Bell, & Cheng, 2016; Lakhal, De Sherbrooke, & Bateman, 2017; Ramsey, Evans, & Levy, 2016).

Interestingly, researchers discovered that not only did students engage in profound ways with each other and their professors, but the online classes also increased their ability to interact. Shy pupils, for example, who would not have been as active in a real classroom, were shown to be significantly more active in a virtual classroom (Bianchi et al., 2019). While, in a sample of Saudi Arabian students, Hamouda (2020) discovered that those who were assigned to a virtual classroom had better interaction between learners, which resulted in higher speaking test scores than those who were taught in a traditional classroom setting. In higher education, English as a medium of instruction (EMI) is known for the usage of the English language in teaching in academe in specific countries where the first language is not English (Macaro et al. 2018). Moreover, Lee (2011) mentioned that interaction is a significant component in English language teaching and learning, given that language basically conveys meaning. Hence, in traditional learning classes the significance of interaction with the use of language in the teaching and learning process was also recognized (Ellis, 1994; Hellermann, 2003).

In reference to the remarks mentioned above, Chapelle (1998) observed that Bachman (1990) developed a broad interactionalist L2 construct definition. For him, it is a combination of knowledge and competence that are necessary for active interaction. On the other hand, Kramsch (1986) pointed out that successful interaction requires not just a common understanding of society and how communication works, but rather how shared internal context is being constructed. Students who are taking e-learning courses are more pleased with their respective courses as their interactions in class escalate (Nasri & Khodabandehe, 2019). Moreover, online interaction between students and their teachers encourages participants to engage in discussions (Smith & Hardaker, 2000; Alian et al., 2017). Supportive of this, as confirmed by Hitotuzi (2005), learners' participation in class discussions has made a significant contribution to their language learning process. Furthermore, Banafshi et al. (2020) and Asadiet et al. (2019) discovered that students who take online classes are more likely to be proactive in participation and interaction than students who take traditional classes. In a similar vein, Masjedi and Tabatabaei (2018), Sari (2019) asserted that students can actively participate in classroom interactions when virtual classes are not solely controlled by teachers.

However, in spite of the positive findings of several studies conducted by the researchers about virtual classes and L2 interaction, there is still limited literature that studies the topic. Although interaction has long been a popular topic for research in online learning, it has been highlighted that only a few studies have been conducted on the subject. From the earliest stage, many individuals have been dubious about the possibility for digital education to evolve into an electronic version of correspondence school, with even less connection between instructors and students (Alahmadi & Alraddadi, 2020). There is still an existing debate on L2 interaction highlighted in the Modern Language Journal due to the contradistinction between language acquisition and language use (Firth & Wagner, 1997, 2007; Gass, 1998; Gass, Lee, & Roots, 2007; Kasper, 1997; Larsen–Freeman, 2004, 2007; Long, 1997). Amidst such strong arguments
for virtual learning courses, limited number of researchers have only focused on investigating interactions between students and teachers in virtual or online classrooms (Banafshi et al., 2020). Therefore, the aim of the study is to examine the effectiveness of virtual classes in second language interaction among pre-service teachers. Furthermore, the study also attempts to determine the influence of gender on the impact of virtual classes in promoting L2 interaction to contribute findings to the existing pool of knowledge for an enriched understanding of the variables.

**Research Questions**

This current study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. How effective are virtual classes in promoting second language interaction among the respondents?
2. Is there a significant difference in the effectivity of virtual classes in promoting second language interaction across gender?

**Review of Related Literature**

**Virtual Classes**

The prevalence of technological innovations in several digital applications have made language acquisition and learning increasingly economical, feasible, and attainable (Lou, 2010). Virtual classes had been adopted by several higher education institutions to continuously promote learning. Numerous studies were administered diversely among students from different countries or places including Saudi Arabia (Alahmadi & Alraddadi, 2020), China (Ho & Xiao, 2020), United Arab Emirates (Malkawi, Bawaneh, & Bawa’aneh, 2020), Ecuador (Martinez, Cejas, Alvarez, Rodriguez & Velazco, 2021), Northeastern United States (Murphy, Edulgee & Croteau, 2020) and other countries as well. Virtual classroom is a digital learning environment that enables students and teachers to interact, communicate and collaborate virtually. It is a learning environment wherein learning and teaching resources can be expanded in such a way that technology can easily find feasible ways for students to learn (Beatty, 2013). This is similar to the contentions of (Cakyroglu, 2014; Conrad, 2004), which define "online learning" as a digitally based, virtual learning environment and a synchronous type of learning where students can engage and collaboratively work in their learning process with the integration of technological tools. Additionally, Fu, et al., (2015) mentioned that virtual learning creates an environment that fosters active participation and communication between teachers and students during classes. Interestingly, Moore and Kearsley (2012) claimed that virtual classes were utilized because it served as a replication of classroom-based instruction, but in a different context. In a similar manner, Hussein (2016) highlighted similarities in the features of virtual classes in comparison to face-to-face classes. However, these two concepts of learning mentioned beforehand also have their differences such as the limitations in academic resources, functionality issues/problems, and lastly no first-hand experience.

Moreover, Finch and Jacobs (2012) elucidate that virtual learning can possibly offer quality learning experience and effective learning environment despite the hindrance of not being able to attend classes in a physical classroom. Despite the difference in time and place, technology makes it easy for students to have virtual learning. Meanwhile, Bell and Fedeman (2013) discussed how digital technology has widely influenced education and how its continuous development has also resulted in the improvement of various technological tools that are used in the application of learning. Hence, the advancement of these technological tools has brought success of attaining a quality education for students. Using digital tools, people can develop a virtual community where their ideas and opinions can be shared, communicated, and interacted with, resulting in significantly more effective learning (Chen, et al., 2011; Lou, 2010; Richardson, 2007; Shih, 2010). The findings mentioned above also align with those of Barker and Gossman (2014), in which they investigated how virtual settings might be beneficial in
boosting student satisfaction, learning environment, and language competency. Moreover, Yilmaz (2015) investigated the effects of a virtual classroom on students’ academic achievement as well as reviews on the use of distance-learning technologies in a live virtual classroom.

Nevas (2010) and Sanders (2012) mentioned how online learning and the use of learning tools improved the communicative skills of students in terms of utilizing the English language. The findings of their study revealed that online learning tools help learners to effectively communicate and encourage them to engage in various activities throughout their language learning process. The findings of this study, is in harmony with those of Satar and Ozdener (2008), in which they disclosed that with the use of online learning tools to communicate and participate in class through “chat” either text or a voice message, have contributed in the English language proficiency among high school students. Along with the studies conducted by several researchers about virtual classes, the findings agree with those of Hamouda (2020) and Alhawiti (2017). They conducted a study to examine the efficiency of synchronous learning with reference to teaching learners to practice their communicative skills in the English language compared to face-to-face classes. The result of the study revealed that virtual classrooms are considered to be an effective platform for EFL learning, boosting self-esteem, motivation, and improving communicative skills compared to face-to-face classes because they are accessible and convenient for students to use in acquiring knowledge (Glenda, Joslyn, & Mariel, 2019; Hamouda, 2020; Herrera, 2017; Miltiadou & Savenye, 2003; Ozgur, 2015; Wang & Newlin, 2012). On the other hand, Neuhauser (2002) concluded that there was no substantial distinction found in terms of the learning platform as well as the efficacy of students’ learning.

Therefore, it is essential that this study about virtual classes must be given consideration in terms of the challenges noted that it affects the learning process of the students. Thus, it is significant that we should look for alternatives that could counterpart the issues/challenges that might arise in virtual learning. Remarkably, several researchers figured out "controversial results" despite the extensive number of institutions that had adapted this virtual learning platform to facilitate learning. Ng (2007) further found out, that virtual classrooms have their own drawbacks and students experience some technical issues that may hinder students' ability to learn effectively. The findings of his study emphasized that a virtual learning environment was considered to be an effective and essential accompaniment to a traditional classroom, rather than just a suitable alternative for learning. The purpose of this research is to determine the impact and effect of virtual classes on student second language interaction. Consequently, researchers suggest that there should be more investigations conducted to appropriately address the possible drawbacks of virtual classes.

**Second Language Interaction**

English is a universal language that is used to engage in conversation with individuals all over the globe. It is now a must-have for commerce, international trade, diplomacy, tourism, education, research, medical, and many other fields (Hamouda, 2020; Rao, 2019). In a nutshell, language is involved in all aspects of educational operations in the classroom, from providing feedback to monitoring, forming small groups, providing directions and justifications, correcting and challenging students. As a result, language plays a crucial part in the communication between teachers and students (Nunan and Lamb, 1996). On the other hand, interaction plays a bigger role in the student’s learning of the second language. Engaging with other people in a day-to-day conversation serves as a practice in the acquisition of their second language (Kim & Taguchi, 2015; Nagao, 2014; Sato, 2017; Wang & Castro, 2010). Moreover, second language interaction is highly acknowledged because, in addition to understanding language utterances, research reveals that regular L2 interactions boost language acquisition outcomes significantly (Mackey & Goo, 2007; Plonsky & Glass, 2011).

In addition, Berge (1999, p. 8) ‘asserted that when active communication is present within the scope of the online classes, students and teachers are likely to have a good foundation of relationships. Thus, students can express themselves and build confidence while learning with
their peers. Vygotsky (1987) mentioned the significance of learners' interaction in the development of their language skills. Learning merely by rote without practicing it does not guarantee the effectiveness of the development of the student's second language. Moreover, since interaction has been found to be an extremely efficient approach to learning a second language, English teachers strive to provide opportunities for students to interact with one another or with native speakers (Bowles, Adams, & Toth, 2014; Mackey & Goo, 2007). Additionally, in a classroom, students must engage with one another in order for the environment to be effective. In just the same way that interactions with native speakers facilitate effective English learning, learners' ability to interact with their peers allows effective English learning (Adams, 2007; Adams, Nuevo, & Egi., 2011). Additionally, researchers also mentioned interpersonal interactions in virtual classrooms. Interpersonal interaction in online environments has been associated with increased perceived learning (Richardson & Swan, 2003; Sher, 2009; Swan, 2002); higher levels of student satisfaction with the course (Cole, Shelley, & Swartz, 2014; Fedynich, Bradley, & Bradley, 2015; Khalid & Quick, 2016; Richardson & Swan, 2003; Sher, 2009; Swan, 2002); higher levels of faculty satisfaction with the course (Su et al., 2005); and improved student academic achievement (Long et al., 2011).

Moreover, several studies by various authors posit that online classes promote interactive learning for students. Consequently, the findings of the study conducted in Taiwan support the claims of (Hariri & Bahanshal, 2015; Lan, 2015), in which they assert that the online learning environment has a valuable contribution to the development of the student's language proficiency in English. In similar vein, Toth (2008) claimed that students can collaborate together to construct meanings and adjust their output, and their interactions give comprehensible input to each other. This is an important aspect of an EFL classroom because it has been found to aid in effective language learning. In theory, virtual EFL courses should allow for this type of L2 engagement, but whether they actually do so is debatable. Hence, using digital tools to virtually communicate supports the student's second language interaction. It promotes a more meaningful learning experience to learners in improving their communicative skills and competence (Chang, Chen, & Hsu, 2010; & Chun, 1994, Kern, 1995, Kern et al., 2004). According to Warschauer (2000), students are more motivated when they participate online because they don't have to worry about making mistakes like they do in traditional classes. In comparison to face-to-face classes, online courses encourage students to collaborate more (Arabloo et al., 2020; Heidari et al., 2018). On the contrary, Vonderwell (2003) indicates in his study that one of the shortcomings in virtual classes is the lack of interaction between the teachers and the students. In support with this claim, Woods (2002) discovered that learners feel excluded from their peers and their teacher in virtual learning courses, while Levin, Kim, and Riel (1990) disclosed that the IRF pattern is rarely seen in online classes.

However, in the context of EFL learners, researchers have learned that the learner's communication skills are prevalently weak in correlation with their other macro skills (Al-Jabry, Salahuddin, & Al-Shazly, 2014; Hamouda, 2020; & Hussein, 2016). Meanwhile, educators still don't agree on which interaction tactics are most helpful in promoting effective student learning and satisfaction, despite the need for more. Faculty members are frequently pressured to improve the quality of their online courses, but they are often unaware of ways to encourage students to communicate with one another using the second language (Paquette, 2016). Moreover, many academics have discovered that EFL learners' speaking abilities are generally fairly low in comparison to their listening, reading, and writing abilities, especially when there are limited opportunities to engage in English (Al-Jabry, Salahuddin, & Al-Shazly, 2014; Hamouda, 2020; Hussein, 2016). According to Hussein (2016) and others (AlJabry et al., 2014), one of the reasons for students' inadequate speaking abilities is that they have limited opportunity to practice speaking. Similarly, there have been certain issues with interaction in virtual classes that have been pointed out (Al-Kathiri, 2015). One of the disadvantages of virtual classrooms, according to some, is the possibility of technological difficulties (Al-Kathiri, 2015; Bianchi et al., 2019; Ng, 2007; Olbertz–Siitonen, 2015). Students can suffer delays or "lagging" in virtual
learning environments that rely on video, for example, which can diminish the effectiveness of the engagement (Rusk & Pörn, 2019). While these types of delays are common in video-mediated learning environments, research suggests that learners may usually be able to keep meaning and create certain L2 learning methods to deal with the difficulties they may face.

In reference to the remarks mentioned above, there is a need to thoroughly investigate the impact of virtual classes in promoting L2 interaction among pre-service teachers.

**Methodology**

**Research Design**

In this current study, the implemented design that was employed by the researcher was a quantitative research design. This is quantitative research because the variables may be examined using instruments that ask closed-ended and preset questions, and the resulting numerical data can then be statistically analyzed (Creswell, 2009; Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). The present investigation aimed to determine the effectiveness of virtual classes in promoting second language interaction among the respondents.

**Respondents**

The respondents of the study were a total of 103 pre-service teachers enrolled in the academic year 2021–2022 at Western Mindanao State University. The majority of the participants (83, or 80.6%) were female, and the participants' ages ranged from 18 to 32 years old, with a mean age of 21.02 (SD=2.07).

In terms of the respondents’ year level, the sample size is composed of the following: first year (21 or 20.4), second year (17 or 16.5), third year (34 or 33.0%) and fourth year (31 or 30.1%).

**Research Tools**

The questionnaire that was employed in this study was from the study by Nesreen and Budoor (2020) on the impact of virtual classes on second language interaction. There were 19 closed-ended statements on the questionnaire. Moreover, the authors used a 4-point Likert scale for each response, indicating how much participants agreed or disagreed with the statements by selecting one of the given responses (ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree) (Dörnyei, 2007).

The statements were divided into four sections. The first section presented data on the effectiveness of virtual classes in terms of English interaction. The second section discussed the attitudes of pre-service teachers toward the use of virtual classes in English learning (positive statements). The third section depicted participants' attitudes toward speaking English in virtual classes (negative statements), and the final section depicted pre-service teachers' attitudes toward interaction in regular classes (neutral statements).

**Pilot Testing and Reliability**

A pilot test with 51 pre-service teachers was investigated to assess the reliability of the research instrument. In the study conducted by the researcher, majority of the respondents were female with 70.59%. Further to that, the age of the respondents varied from 19 to 28 years old. Among the respondents, 6% were 19 years old; 31% were 20 years old; 47% were 21 years old; 10% were 22 years old; 4% were 23 years old; and 2% were 28 years old.

Due to the time constraints imposed by the pandemic, the survey was conducted online using Google forms. The respondents were given consent and instructions prior to actually responding to the questionnaire. Pre-service teachers will be surveyed via an online survey. The survey should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. As a result, there are no correct or incorrect answers, and they are encouraged to be truthful in their responses. Cronbach's Alpha reliability test was used to analyze the data, and the result was a value of (a=.857), indicating that the data is reliable or acceptable.

Furthermore, quantitative research involves numerical data (Dörnyei, 2007), the questionnaire
statistical analyses were performed utilizing SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software to obtain the data among pre-service teachers. SPSS had been used to calculate the frequencies, percentages, and mean scores of the responses, as stated by Dnyei (2007).

Table 1. Reliability Scores of the Instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>No. of Statements</th>
<th>Reliability Cronbach’s Alpha Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Effectiveness of virtual classes in terms of English interaction</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Attitudes of pre-service teachers toward the use of virtual classes in English learning (positive statements)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Participants' attitudes toward speaking English in virtual classes (negative statements)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pre-service teachers' attitudes toward interaction in regular classes (neutral statements)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.401</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that the overall internal consistency ($a=.857$) is reliable.

Coding Procedure and Statistical Treatment

To enable the analysis of the data gathered through the research instruments, the responses were coded. For the demographics, gender (1 for male, 2 for female), age (in numerical figure), for course (1 for BEED, 2 for BECED, 3 for BSNED, 4 for BSED, 5 for BCAED), for year level (1 for first year, 2 for second year, 3 for third year, 4 for fourth year). For responses in the questionnaire, 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for agree and 4 for strongly agree). Since the instruments did not contain any negative statements, no reverse coding was performed.

Data Gathering Procedure

After validation and pilot testing, the research tools were finalized and digitized utilizing Google Forms. Since physical data collection via printed copies of the instrument is restricted due to the outbreak, this option was acknowledged as being practicable and sensible to use. Respondents had first been identified and communicated with and the students were given the link.

Result and Discussion

Effectiveness of Virtual Classes on Interaction Using the Second (English) Language of the respondents

The responses of the Effectiveness of Virtual Classes on Interaction Using the Second Language (L2) questionnaire were analyzed and interpreted. In this data analysis, descriptive statistics, mean (M) and standard deviation (SD), were used. In Table 2, it presents the analysis of the data. Included in the table are the participants’ responses to each item of the questionnaire (frequencies and equivalent percentages), mean (M), and interpretation (Interp.) - 1.0 to 1.74 (Very Satisfied [VS]), 1.75 to 2.49 (Satisfied [S]), 2.5 to 3.24 (Dissatisfied [D]), and 3.25 to 4.0
The descriptive analysis of the data provided in Table 1 shows that the effectiveness of virtual classes on interaction, on the average, is characterized as “satisfied” (Mean – 3.23, SD – 0.30). Furthermore, this indicates that the highest average score was associated with the first statement “English language instructors can effectively interact with the students” with a mean of 3.23 and SD of 0.717.

The next highest average score was for the third statement, “The English language instructor can respond efficiently when I interact,” with a mean of 3.19 and SD of 0.643. This implies that during the teaching and learning process in English classes, teachers provided substantial responses when they are asked. Similarly, Cakiroglu (2014) proved that teachers can better interact during discussions using synchronous presentations, videos, and other modes of content, stimulating learners to develop their communication skills. This finding is consistent with Luo (2011), who found that positive course outcomes from online classes included the improvement of useful classroom communication skills as well as practical experience in content oral skills. Moreover, this phenomenon is in line with the observations of Chang, Chen, and Hsu (2010), who reported that online interaction could stimulate students to disclose their own

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### Table 2.0. Respondents’ Effectiveness of Virtual Classes on Interaction Using the Second (English) Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Interp.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>English language instructors can effectively interact with the students.</td>
<td>SD N %</td>
<td>D N %</td>
<td>A N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Virtual classes provide balance Students Talk Time (STT) VS (TTT) Teacher Talk Time.</td>
<td>SD N %</td>
<td>D N %</td>
<td>A N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The English language instructor can respond efficiently when I interact.</td>
<td>SD N %</td>
<td>D N %</td>
<td>A N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I feel confident when I interact using English language.</td>
<td>SD N %</td>
<td>D N %</td>
<td>A N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I think interaction is successful in virtual classes.</td>
<td>SD N %</td>
<td>D N %</td>
<td>A N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I can interact effectively with other students in virtual classes.</td>
<td>SD N %</td>
<td>D N %</td>
<td>A N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I enjoy interacting using English language in virtual classes.</td>
<td>SD N %</td>
<td>D N %</td>
<td>A N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I believe effective interaction is possible through virtual classes.</td>
<td>SD N %</td>
<td>D N %</td>
<td>A N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Virtual classes have no difference to interaction in regular classes.</td>
<td>SD N %</td>
<td>D N %</td>
<td>A N %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall Effectiveness of Virtual Classes on Interaction: 2.7

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concepts with their instructors in order to broaden their understanding of the topics.

On the other hand, the lowest average score was associated with the ninth statement “Virtual classes have no difference to interactions in regular classes” with a mean of 1.89 and SD of 0.928, followed by the second lowest average score for the fifth statement “I think interaction is successful in virtual classes” with a mean of 2.62 and SD of 0.830. Thus, it implies that learners perceive interactions in virtual classes the same way they do in face-to-face classes.

**Gender in the extent of virtual classes in promoting second language interaction across gender.**

To determine whether there is a statistical difference in the respondents’ second language interaction in virtual classes across gender (male and female), the data was treated with the parametric statistical tool known as the t-test for independent samples. Table 2 contains the results of the analysis.

**Table 3.0.** T-test result on the difference of effectiveness of virtual classes in promoting second language interaction across gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness of virtual classes in promoting L2 interaction</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>.498</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis presented in Table 3 suggests that there is no significant difference between the gender and the effectiveness of virtual classes in promoting second language interaction (sig. value = 0.148 > a = 0.05). Furthermore, it was discovered that both genders (male and female) have a “satisfied” result in terms of assessing the effectiveness of virtual classes for interaction using L2. In relation to the result abovementioned, Salbego and Tumolo (2015) found that the respondents have positive attitudes toward their interactive online learning experiences.

Consequently, the study cited was conducted in traditional face-to-face sessions, illustrating a discrete modality and context. Hence, it is supposed that gender has no impact on the effectiveness of virtual classes in promoting second language interaction.

**Conclusion**

The study concludes that the effectiveness of virtual classes on interaction among pre-service teachers is characterized as “satisfied”. It was also stated in the result that learners perceive interactions in virtual classes the same way they do in face-to-face classes. Moreover, it was found out that gender has no significant difference on the effectiveness of virtual classes in promoting second language interaction. Thus, this implies that both male and female have a “satisfied” result in terms of assessing the effectiveness of virtual classes for interaction.

It was found in this study that despite the shift from traditional face-to-face classes to virtual classes, students were still satisfied with the effectiveness of classroom interaction during class discussions. It was also emphasized that the teachers provide students with substantial responses when they are asked in virtual classrooms. However, the findings also revealed that when it came to second language interaction, face-to-face and virtual classes were no different.

This implies that the classroom setting and the use of a second language affect the student’s motivation to interact during class discussions. This study clearly emphasizes that the shift to virtual classes has an impact on second language interaction. Thus, teachers must look into these influences and allow students to improve.
References


