



UNIVERSIDAD ESTATAL PENÍNSULA DE SANTA ELENA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND LANGUAGES
PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

**“PINE STUDENT’S PERCEPTIONS: TRANSITION
FROM ONLINE TO IN-PERSON ENGLISH
LEARNING”**

RESEARCH PROJECT

As a prerequisite to obtain a:

**BACHELOR’S DEGREE IN PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL
AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

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La Libertad – Ecuador

2026-1

ADVISOR'S APPROVAL

In my role as Advisor of the research paper under the title "PINE STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS: TRANSITION FROM ONLINE TO IN PERSON ENGLISH LEARNING" by Villacreses Vera José Francisco, undergraduate student of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major, School of Educational Science and Language at Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena. I declare that after being oriented, studying, and reviewing the project, I approve it in its entirety because it meets the requirements and is sufficient for its submission to evaluation of the academic tribunal.

Sincerely,



Limones Borbor Julieta Verónica, MSc.

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Statement of Authorship

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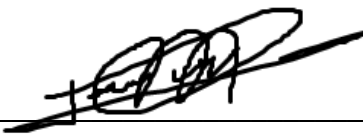
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jose Francisco Villacreses Vera', written over a horizontal line.

Jose Francisco Villacreses Vera

AUTHOR

Declaration

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Acknowledgment

I wish to express my most profound gratitude to everyone who, within the academic realm, contributed to my education and the successful completion of this research. To my Alma Mater, the Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena (UPSE), for being the foundation of my intellectual and ethical growth, and for equipping me with the essential tools to build my career. It is a great honor to have been educated at this renowned institution and to represent its values in my future endeavors.

To my beloved professors and advisors, for their unwavering willingness to share their vast experience and wisdom, and for their patience, academic thoroughness, and constant support throughout this journey. To the entire faculty of the Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena (UPSE): thank you for every lecture, for sparking my critical thinking, and for playing a decisive role in my development as a person and as a professional. Your commitment has left an everlasting imprint on this chapter of my life and on the path ahead as a future professional in Pedagogy in National and Foreign Languages (PINE)

Dedication

With profound gratitude and a heart full of love, I dedicate this thesis to my mother, Diana María Vera Delgado. You taught me something infinitely more valuable: resilience. You showed me that true strength lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we do. Thank you for believing in me, for your endless sacrifices, and for being my greatest example of perseverance.

To my sister, Vivian Domenica Villacreses Vera, my guide and pillar of knowledge. Thank you for your wisdom, your patience, and your constant support. Because of you and your unwavering guidance, I was never left without knowing what to do.

To my partner, Irina Paola Bravo Alvarado, my faithful companion throughout this entire process. Thank you for walking beside me every step of the way, for your unconditional support, for helping me in everything you could, and for being my safe harbor in moments of stress and uncertainty. Your love and encouragement gave me the strength to keep going when I felt like giving up.

To all of you, my deepest and most sincere gratitude. Your belief in me has been the fuel that kept this dream alive, and I carry your love in my heart as I close this chapter and begin the next.

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Abstract

The return to in-person English classes after prolonged online instruction has raised concerns about student adaptation and engagement. This qualitative phenomenological study explored the perceptions of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages (PINE) students at Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena (UPSE) regarding their transition from online to face-to-face English learning. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings indicated that students experienced mixed emotions: some valued direct interaction with teachers and peers, while others felt anxiety and discomfort in the physical classroom. Participation varied; some students were more active online due to the perceived safety behind a screen, whereas others engaged more in person. Motivation increased for most participants due to better communication and spontaneous speaking practice, though one student reported low motivation. Challenges included adapting to new routines, transportation, and reduced flexibility. Students recommended more interactive activities, consistent teaching styles across modalities, and additional speaking support. These results highlighted the need for student-centered strategies that address both academic and emotional aspects during educational transitions.

KEY WORDS: Transition, Online Learning, Face-to-Face Learning, Student Perceptions, English Language Acquisition.

Resumen

El regreso a las clases presenciales de inglés tras un periodo prolongado de instrucción en línea ha generado inquietudes sobre la adaptación y la participación del estudiante. Este estudio cualitativo fenomenológico exploró las percepciones de los estudiantes de Pedagogía de Lenguas Nacionales y Extranjeras (PINE) de la Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena (UPSE) respecto a su transición del aprendizaje de inglés en línea al presencial. Los datos se recopilaban mediante entrevistas semiestructuradas y se analizaron mediante análisis temático. Los resultados indicaron que los estudiantes experimentaron cambios emocionales: algunos valoraron la interacción directa con profesores y compañeros, mientras que otros sintieron ansiedad e incomodidad en el aula física. La participación varió; algunos estudiantes fueron más activos en línea debido a la seguridad percibida tras la pantalla, mientras que otros se involucraron más en persona. La motivación aumentó para la mayoría de los participantes debido a una mejor comunicación y práctica oral espontánea, aunque un estudiante reportó baja automotivación. Entre los desafíos se incluyeron la adaptación a nuevas rutinas, el medio de transporte y la falta de flexibilidad horaria. Los estudiantes recomendaron actividades más interactivas, estilos de enseñanza consistentes en todas las modalidades y apoyo adicional para el desarrollo de la expresión oral. Estos resultados resaltan la necesidad de estrategias centradas en el estudiante que aborden tanto los aspectos académicos como emocionales durante las transiciones educativas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Transición, aprendizaje en línea, aprendizaje presencial, percepciones de los estudiantes, adquisición del idioma inglés.

INDEX

Statement of Authorship	3
Declaration	4
Acknowledgment.....	5
Dedication	6
Board of Examiners	7
Abstract.....	8
Resumen.....	9
INDEX.....	10
Introduction.....	13
Chapter I.....	14
The Problem	14
Research Topic	14
Project Title	14
Problem statement.....	14
Justification.....	15
Problem question.....	16
<i>Specific questions</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>General Objective</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Specific objectives</i>	<i>17</i>
Chapter II.....	18

Theoretical Framework.....	18
Background.....	18
<i>Previous Studies</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>International Background</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>National Background.....</i>	<i>19</i>
Pedagogical Basis.....	21
Theoretical Basis	22
Legal Basis	25
<i>Constitution of the Republic</i>	<i>25</i>
Chapter III.....	27
Methodological Framework.....	27
Methods	27
Type of Research	27
Data Collection Techniques.....	28
Instrument.....	28
Type of Questions	28
Data Collection Processing and Resources	29
Population and Sample	29
Chapter IV	30
Analysis of findings.....	30

Introduction	30
Interpretation of Data from the Interview.....	30
Report of Questions.....	35
Chapter V	39
Conclusions and Recommendations.....	39
<i>Conclusions</i>	39
<i>Recommendations</i>	40
References.....	43
Annexes	45
Certificado Sistema Anti-Plagio	45
Apéndice	49
Apéndice A. Matriz de Consistencia.....	49

Introduction

The transition from online to in-person education became an important issue after the COVID-19 pandemic. Online learning provided flexibility, access to digital resources, and opportunities for autonomous study. In contrast, physical classrooms allow students to interact directly with teachers and classmates. These differences created new learning experiences when educational institutions returned to in-person instruction.

Previous studies have examined how students experienced both educational modalities. Wahid et al. (2023) reported that students faced changes when moving from virtual environments to physical classrooms. Similarly, Alcoy and Atthasit (2024) found that classroom instruction supported social interaction, communication, and concentration, while online education offered flexibility and access to digital resources. These studies show that each modality provides different conditions for learning.

This situation is particularly relevant in English language education because communication and classroom interaction are important components of language learning. Moving from a digital environment to physical classroom may change how students participate, communicate, and engage in learning activities. Understanding these experiences can help identify the difficulties students encounter as well as the positive aspects of classroom instruction.

In this context, the present study focuses on PINE student perceptions of the transition from online to in-person English learning. It explores their experiences during this change, including their motivation, adaptation, and participation. This research also examines the challenges and strategies that may support student adjustment and improve the effectiveness of face-to-face English learning at PINE.

Chapter I

The Problem

Research Topic

Online and Face-to-Face English Learning.

Project Title

PINE Student's Perceptions: Transition from Online to In-Person English Learning

Problem statement

Globally, the transition from online to face-to-face classes has been an important educational problem that came followed by COVID-19 pandemic. Keshari, Pradhan, and Sahoo (2025) explained that the return to education in classes possesses great difficulties in the acquisition of a second language because it must adjust to the educational environment. In the education of the English language, face-to-face communication can help greater confidence when speaking, promotes spontaneous communication, greater collaboration, while online classes provide greater flexibility and access to various digital tools.

In Ecuador, online education became relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic. Studies carried out with Ecuadorian universities identified advantages both in online learning and in face-to-face. Sevy-Biloon (2021) reported benefits such as greater flexibility, comfort and great access to learning at home, but also identified difficulties related to communication, self-motivation, technological resources and opportunities in the practical learning of the English language. Criollo et al. (2022) found that students expressed difficulties with communicative skills and attraction to the model of a virtual environment.

There is limited information about how students experience the transition between virtual and face-to-face, especially speaking of the PINE at Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena. Understanding these experiences is important because students may respond differently to the new learning environment.

Therefore, this study is focused on the student perception of PINE in the transition from a virtual environment to a face-to-face one. This seeks to understand their experiences, the challenges they face and the aspects of face-to-face learning that they perceive as beneficial. This research also aims to analyze possible aids to the adaptation of the students and contribute to a greater effectiveness in learning.

Justification

The importance of this study lies in its contribution to understanding student experiences during the transition from online to in-person English learning. The study addresses this transition from four dimensions: theoretical, practical, social, and methodological aspects.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to analyzing future information about changes between online and face-to-face learning process by focusing on student experiences and perceptions. It provides qualitative information about how changes in learning environments may contribute to the socioemotional and communicative English language learning.

From a practical perspective, the findings may provide useful information for teachers about students' preferences, concerns, and difficulties during the transition. This information may support lesson planning and the incorporation of activities that encourage communication and participation in face-to-face English classes.

Here is your new paragraph in English, following the same rules: only punctuation added where needed, no grammar or syntax corrections, and keeping the original wording exactly as provided.

From a social perspective, understanding the experiences of the students could contribute to the development of a more friendly environment. If we identify the difficulties both emotional and social related to the return to face-to-face classes, it could be provided of useful information for the help and understanding of the student confidence, anxiety, adaptation and interaction with classmates.

From a methodological perspective, the study provides a contextualized approach during a change in educational modality. The research process may serve as a reference for future studies examining similar educational transitions in other contexts or language-learning settings.

Problem question

What are PINE student perceptions of the transition from online to in-person English learning?

Specific questions

- What factors do PINE students identify as part of their adaptation to in-person English learning after online classes?
- How do PINE students describe the transition from online to in-person English learning in terms of their participation, motivation, and academic performance?
- What are the challenges that students face of the transition from online to in-person English learning at PINE?

General Objective

To analyze PINE student perceptions of the transition from online to in-person English learning by examining their experiences, participation, and adaptation process, to understand the strengths and challenges of the transition education.

Specific objectives

- To identify student perceptions regarding the transition from online to in-person English learning based on their academic and social experiences.
- To examine how PINE students experience participation, self-motivation, and language learning performance during the transition process.
- To determine challenges that may contribute student adaptation and the effectiveness of in-person English learning at PINE.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

Background

Previous Studies

Ligaya et al. (2022), citing Montiel-Chamorro (2018), state that online and face-to-face learning of the English language has been shown to be contradictory. They say online students are better than face-to-face students; others do not find any difference between the two and they say face-to-face students are better. But the authors conclude that if well-designed and well-supported teaching practices are in place, online learning will be as effective as face-to-face. This is consistent with the literature in educational transitions and supports the need to examine students' perceptions during the transition to another medium.

Meera and Sarkans (2020) conducted a qualitative research study on student views of online and in-person learning in Canadian higher education institutions. The objective of the study was to investigate student experiences with learner preference, interaction, workload, performance, and educational difficulty in both the online and in-person learning settings. The study examined 313 students from a community college in Ontario. Students liked to study online because they could take classes from anywhere and have their own schedule. But there were also issues with online learning: students could not interact with classmates and teachers, communication problems, technology issues, and group work problems.

International Background

There has been a lot of research done in both online and face-to-face learning environments around the world. Keshari, Pradhan, & Sahoo (2025) suggest the sudden change in the mode of education has caused the second language learners to have a lot of friction when working back to

the classroom after the pandemic is over. Learning English online to in person should be a smooth process from online to face-to-face, so students can transfer the digital autonomy they have gained online into the classroom environment that is a real-life interactive place. In ELT, presential interactions are essential to develop confidence in speaking, spontaneous communication, and working together.

Alcoy & Atthasit (2024) conducted a study in Thailand on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on foreign language learning. The findings suggest that real environment learning can increase social interaction, communication, and concentration, whereas online learning is more flexible, digital, and autonomy oriented. In addition, they suggest that a blended learning approach can develop student skills with both learning methods.

Gadtola (2023) notes that while there is a huge body of literature on online and face-to-face learning as independent processes, there is even less research on the reverse phenomenon: going back to the classroom. This gap in information indicates the need for more research in terms of what students experience and how they view this educational transition.

National Background

In Ecuador, online education was particularly relevant in the period of the COVID-19 pandemic when universities and educative institutions had to move from their face-to-face education to online learning.

As a result, several Ecuadorian scholars have studied student perception and experience of online education. Sevy-Biloon (2021) studied Ecuadorian university student perception of virtual and face-to-face classes during the pandemic. Students attending English Language Teaching courses at the National University of Education in Ecuador were part of the study. For some students, online learning was helpful in terms of safety, comfort, flexibility, and economic value.

Many students enjoyed having more time to complete their assignments or studying from home. The study also found that many students preferred face-to-face classes because they knew that talking to teachers and peers helped students in communication, learning, concentration, and language practice. In addition to internet connectivity problems, lack of technological resources and low opportunities to practice English in a virtual environment, students expressed challenges.

Criollo et al. (2022) carried out a study in Ecuador at the Language Center of the Technical University of Cotopaxi. The aim of this study was to investigate the student perception of online English language learning as a necessary step in higher education. The researchers used qualitative interviews with students from various academic programs and English levels. The findings have shown that students felt that English learning was necessary for job prospects and a good degree before graduation. However, the study also points out some problems with online English, including speaking skills and student engagement, communication during online courses, and the participation in the English language. Some students reported being afraid of mistakes and lack of themselves confidence in online classes.

In the context of the classroom life at PINE, this is an issue in contrast to what is expected from students and their actual classroom behavior. Having been so accustomed to virtual learning environments where digital translation tools and learning pace are in place and asynchronously for them, many students are still struggling with the transition. Instead of a smooth transition, teachers at PINE see a lot of student anxieties about English learning foreign language and passive resistance to speaking and lack of confidence from students when they are forced to communicate without digital intermediaries.

Pedagogical Basis

The pedagogical basis of this study is blended learning and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Blended learning combines face-to-face instruction with online learning environments to enhance the learning experience of students. Koban & Engin (2024) state that blended learning blends online and face-to-face learning and that students benefit from both modes of learning.

Communicative Language Teaching also stresses the importance of communication and interaction in English language learning. As a result, students' learning experiences in face-to-face environments can be more meaningful and their motivation and knowledge levels improve. This study also relates to student-centered learning because it explores students' thoughts, attitudes, and experiences in their transition from online to in-person English learning (Koban & Engin, 2024).

The pedagogical basis of this research is based on online and face-to-face learning methods in English language education. According to Chapter I, online learning has become a very important educational mode for students not able to take traditional classes because of time and space limitations. Technology tools and online learning environments have opened an opportunity for students to get free education (Koban & Engin, 2024).

Ligaya et al. (2022) argues that in the online and face-to-face learning environments, it can be contributed to the development of the English language when this is well planned and is backed by more than adequate teaching methods. This study also takes out to reduce the leading role that has the interaction, the participation and the communication in this great learning process, especially to foster those oral skills and positive attitudes towards the teachers. This finding contributes with the idea that, regardless of the study modality, the interaction between students and teachers is important for the successful acquisition of the language.

Theoretical Basis

Garrison (2023) states that the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework provides a robust theoretical and methodological foundation for teaching and learning in both virtual and blended learning environments. This framework is particularly effective for developing a learning community based on the interaction of three central elements or 'presences' in higher education: social presence, cognitive presence, and teaching presence. These presences are essential for fostering meaningful learning experiences, as they promote interaction, collaboration, and active engagement among students and teachers, regardless of the instructional modality:

- **Social Presence:** It is the ability of learners in a learning community to project themselves socially and emotionally in the current technology-based communication spaces as real people. Social presence is more than just a social interaction; it is a mutual trust that helps to establish open communication, feel connected and provide the socio-emotional support to overcome the social isolation of online learning. When students are moving from online to face-to-face learning, social presence changes drastically and communication patterns change and so does the feeling of warmth of the classroom.
- **Cognitive Presence:** This is the capacity of learners to work hard and build meaning, and to reinforce it, and confirm it in the process of reflection and continuous reflection. This is achieved through a process of practical inquiry that starts with a physical trigger (identifying a problem), through the exploration of ideas, into the final discussion when the knowledge is being exchanged. When assessing language proficiency in this manner, it is necessary to determine which teaching method is most beneficial or harmful for progress through these critical inquiry stages.

- **Teaching Presence:** The glue for the whole CoI ecosystem. It has two important roles: designing and organizing the course (which occurs before instruction begins) and facilitating learning during the teaching process. The teacher manages the learning process, leads classroom discussions, asks questions that promote metacognition, and provides timely feedback. As Garrison (2023) emphasizes, when transitioning from online to on-campus teaching environments, pedagogical approaches must be adapted to ensure that scaffolding remains effective, enabling students to achieve successful learning outcomes.

The study of the shift in educational settings is based in constructivist theory and in particular Vygotskian social constructivism. Knowledge, according to constructivist theory, is not something that can be passed around to students in a vacuum and is not something that is in a passive context with the student. Learning is an active, endogenous and self-regulated process in which the subject constructs cognitive maps and meanings of their language by relating to the past and from constant interaction with the environment (Criollo et al., 2022).

In the context of second language acquisition (SLA), social constructivism is particularly relevant. Higher psychological and linguistic functions develop first on an interpsychological (social) level before being internalized on an intrapsychological (individual) level. Consequently, language is not acquired in isolation through rote memorization of grammatical rules, but rather emerges through socially meaningful interaction (Criollo et al., 2022)

Under this approach, three key theoretical constructs apply to English language learning:

- **Negotiation of Meaning:** During verbal interaction, learners collaboratively modify and restructure their linguistic output to ensure mutual comprehension. This process of clarification and adjustment drives communicative competence (Criollo et al., 2022).

- **The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD):** This represents the distance between a learner's actual development level (what they can do autonomously) and their potential development level (what they can achieve under the guidance of a teacher or in collaboration with more capable peers). Online and face-to-face modalities offer distinct scaffolding tools to facilitate transition through the ZPD (Criollo et al., 2022).
- **Collaborative Learning:** Dialogic social interaction provides a steady flow of comprehensible input and stimulates modified linguistic output. Therefore, any modification in the instructional delivery method substantially alters the nature, frequency, and quality of available social interactions, directly impacting the co-construction of linguistic knowledge (Criollo et al., 2022).

These represent the active operationalization of the linguistic system internalized by the subject to construct coherent and cohesive messages for specific communicative purposes:

- **Oral Expression (*Speaking*):** This requires fluent phonetic articulation, real-time lexical selection, and pragmatic adaptation to the sociocultural context of the interaction. Speaking is the skill that undergoes the greatest structural variation during the shift from online environments (where it is often reduced due to muted microphones or latency issues) to face-to-face environments (where face-to-face interaction is spontaneous) (Olmos & Atthasit, 2024).

An integral assessment of language proficiency involves determining whether the technological design of the contrasting modalities guarantees a didactic balance that stimulates both dense input processing and enriched linguistic output across the four described dimensions.

Legal Basis

Within the legal framework concerning the compliance with and support of current regulations for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) offering the Bachelor's Degree in Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages (PINE) in Ecuador, the following provisions are considered regarding the transition, quality assurance, and adaptation of learning modalities (online and in-person):

Constitution of the Republic

Based on the stipulations of the Constitution of the Republic, the following is stated regarding the guarantee of quality education and the adaptability of academic learning modalities:

Art. 26.- State that education is a fundamental right throughout life and a mandatory duty of the State, centering its focus on the holistic development of human beings. It guarantees access to quality education, which extends to adapting learning environments to contemporary needs (Reglamento a la ley orgánica de educación superior, 2022)

Art. 350.- Establishes that the Higher Education System aims for academic and professional excellence, ensuring that universities adapt their delivery models to guarantee high-quality professional training. (Reglamento a la ley orgánica de educación superior, 2022)

Organic Law of Higher Education (LOES)

Art. 5.- Guarantees the right of students to access a quality, pertinent higher education that provides adequate tools and resources for their academic and professional development. The transition between online and face-to-face instruction directly impacts how resources and teaching quality are perceived by the student body. (Ley orgánica de educación superior, 2026)

Art. 12.- Promotes the generation and dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge, validating both virtual platforms and physical classrooms as legitimate spaces for professional training. (Ley orgánica de educación superior, 2026)

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

Methods

This is focused on the lived experiences and perceptions of the students during the transition from online learning to face-to-face English. This research examines how the students experienced the change according to their participation, their self-motivation, the interaction in class and confidence when they speak the English language.

The study was conducted by students from the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages (PINE) program at Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena (UPSE), in Santa Elena, Ecuador. The participants had previous experience with both online and in-person English classes. The study was conducted during June 2026 academic period.

The phenomenological design was selected because the study aimed to understand student experiences and the meaning they gave to the transition. Rather than measuring relationships between variables, the research focused on describing and interpreting participant's experiences and perceptions.

This will be for the understanding of difficulties and challenges in transition from online English classes to in person English learning.

Type of Research

The research was phenomenological in nature, with a descriptive and interpretive approach. This approach is appropriate because the study focused on the actual experiences of students during the transition from online to in-person English learning. It explored perceptions perceived

in relation to their participation and motivation, how they felt about classroom interaction, and how comfortable they became when speaking English.

Phenomenology was relevant because it focuses on experiences as they are lived and on the common aspects found in different participants' narratives. This was significant for understanding a process that involved academic, social, and emotional dimensions.

As Erbas (2025) puts it: "we can go beyond superficial descriptions and go to structures of meaning, which are where we are most interested in the categories and language used by students.

Data Collection Techniques

The main data collection technique was the semi-structured interview. This technique allowed the researcher to use questions related to the research objectives while also asking follow-up questions when participants provided information that required further explanation. This made it possible to obtain detailed descriptions of students' experiences and perceptions.

Instrument

The research instrument was a semi-structured interview guide. The interviews were conducted through Zoom, while Google Forms was used to collect general participant information.

The instrument was designed to collect information about students' experiences and perceptions rather than to evaluate their academic performance. This process helped verify the clarity and relevance of the questions and the approximate time required for the interview.

Type of Questions

The interview guide contained open-ended questions. These questions allowed participants to describe their experiences in their own words and provide examples related to the transition. Follow-up questions were used when additional information was necessary.

The questions focused on the student experiences during the transition, including their participation, motivation, classroom interaction, and perceptions of the change from online to in-person English learning.

Data Collection Processing and Resources

Data collection was conducted following ethical procedures. They were informed about the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw from the research at any time.

The semi-structured interviews were then scheduled and conducted through Zoom. With the participants' consent, the interviews were audio recorded. The recordings were transcribed and organized for analysis.

The transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis. The researcher carefully reviewed the transcripts, identified recurring ideas, and organized the information into themes related to the research objectives and questions. This process allowed the study to identify common patterns in the participants' experiences and perceptions of the transition.

Population and Sample

The methodology was designed to obtain detailed qualitative information about how PINE students experienced the transition from online to in-person English learning. The combination of phenomenological research, semi-structured interviews, open-ended questions, and thematic analysis provided a way to understand the academic, social, and personal experiences described by the participants.

Chapter IV

Analysis of findings

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings obtained from the semi-structured interviews conducted with PINE students. The analysis focuses on their perceptions and experiences during the transition from online to in-person English learning. The findings are organized into the main themes identified in the interview data, including student adaptation, participation, motivation, communication, classroom interaction, and perceptions of the strengths and challenges of face-to-face learning.

Interpretation of Data from the Interview

Question 1

How would you describe your overall experience of returning to in-person English classes after studying online?

Some students had mixed feelings about the experience of experiencing in-person English classes. Some were looking forward to getting to the classroom and talking to the teachers and classmates while others were anxious and uncomfortable. Annette said: "I think in-person English classes are much better because I learn a lot more than online classes." María said: "My motivation increased a lot when I started in-person classes because I was able to connect with classmates and practice speaking better." Other participants reported difficulty, however. María also described: "After spending so much time in the virtual world, I got very anxious and scared when it came to class, and I had to come out and participate in class." Xavier clearly loved online learning: "I prefer online studying because I don't think in-person classes are an old model." Yulissa also gave a

different take on it: “It was very strange in some ways to go back to a shared learning format, so I did go on to study independently, but it was wonderful.” Angely said: “It was a positive experience because I enjoyed interacting face-to-face and practicing English with my classmates.” Keshari, Pradhan, & Sahoo (2025) found these shifts from one mode of learning to another presented very challenging barriers for second language learning at the time of when students would return to the classroom as start to get back to the regular way of life after the pandemic.

The findings of this study correspond to this observation, students showed mixed emotions and different levels of adaptation during the transition process.

Question 2

What do you miss most about online English learning now that you are in face-to-face classes?

Students described some aspects of online learning they miss. Xavier said: “The comfort and saving money.” María missed the technology convenience: “The ability to take notes on the computer rather than on the internet and getting the information out there in a matter of seconds.”

Yulissa appreciated the interactive nature of virtual classes: “The virtual classes were more interactive, and we had more of a hands-on approach through online activities and games and was it that the topics remained relevant to everyone in the group as they were all there in the virtual classes.” Annette said simply: “I miss studying from home because it was more comfortable.” Angely said: “I miss the flexibility and convenience of studying from home.” These findings are in line with Alcoy & Atthasit (2024), who found that students value online learning for its easy access to the Internet and the ability to learn at their own pace, while they appreciate face-to-face instruction for the better social interaction it provides.

Question 3

What do you value most about in-person English classes compared to online?

Students valued interaction and direct communication in-person classes. Yulissa said: “I liked the interaction with my classmates; in-person classes allow everyone to better explain and convey their points of view and clearly express their opinions.” Annette said: “I liked the teacher interacting with me and my classmates because it helps me learn more.” María appreciated the instant support of the teacher: “I think in face-to-face classes it’s easier to ask the teacher any questions or for the teacher to see if I’m understanding or not.” Xavier added: “Probably my classmates.” Angely said: “I value the face-to-face interaction and the opportunity to practice speaking with my classmates.”

A Alcoy & Atthasit (2024) study found that face-to-face learning has some advantages of social interaction, communication and concentration while online learning has flexibility, access to digital resources and opportunities for learning fully autonomously. This study indicates that students are interested in the social and communicative aspects of in-person education.

Question 4

How would you describe your participation in face-to-face classes compared to when you were online?

Students reported different experiences in participation. As Yulissa said: “I really found I had more interaction in virtual classes as opposed to face-to-face classes where I was behind the camera and I felt more social in virtual classes and I was more comfortable.” Similarly, María said: “I’m shy so I could turn off my camera and go in and participate in class online and I wasn’t afraid of it but with face-to-face classes the fear increases.”

Annette said: “I do more in the face-to-face classes because I am more invested in it,” Xavier said. Angely said: “I participate more in face-to-face classes because I feel more motivated and involved.” Sevy-Biloon (2021) found that Ecuadorian university students had mixed perceptions about online and face-to-face learning. While some preferred online classes for reasons such as safety, comfort, and flexibility, others wanted to return to face-to-face instruction because they felt there was little interaction with classmates and teachers, could not practice English authentically, and had difficulty concentrating online. This study, however, shows that some students were more comfortable with being online, with less anxiety and the ability to hide behind a camera.

Question 5

How has your motivation to learn English changed since returning to in-person classes?

Most students felt there was more motivation in person. Annette said: "My motivation has increased because I learn better and enjoy the classes more." Yulissa stated: “In-person classes offer more practical demonstrations, as they allow for direct contact with the teacher; seeing them demonstrate their knowledge boosts my interest and motivates me to improve.” María shared: "My motivation increased a lot when I started in-person classes because I was able to connect with classmates and practice speaking better." Xavier put it differently: “Very low.” Angely said: “My motivation has increased because I feel more engaged and enjoy interacting with my classmates.”

Criollo et al. (2022) highlighted that motivation, teaching strategies and interaction influence students' perception of learning. The present study confirms that face-to-face interaction will boost motivation for most students, but there are individual differences.

Question 6

What difficulties have you experienced during this transition, and how have you dealt with them?

Students experienced several difficulties with the transition. María said: "The biggest challenge was learning to adapt to a classroom and uncomfortable situations compared to sitting at home with my desk and chair to my liking."

Xavier said: "The transport, lunch and physical books, I had to work to get rounds." Yulissa said: "I haven't had so much trouble with in-person classes as teachers haven't changed a lot in their methods, so it's been easier to have classes." Annette said: "At first, it was hard to get used to the new routine, but now I have adapted." Angely said: "I had some difficulties getting used to the new routine, but I dealt with them by staying organized and practicing regularly."

Wahid et al. (2023) found that students find face-to-face learning to be more effective and efficient but online learning features remain important. Adaptation problems are common but can be mitigated with time and support in this study.

Question 7

What recommendations would you give to your teachers to improve in-person English classes?

A few recommendations for teachers were made by the students. Yulissa suggested: "Every teacher has a different teaching style, so we can adapt online and in-person lessons so that we understand the material very well."

Annette suggested: "More interactive activities and speaking practice." María suggested: "Classes should return to being more interactive, with games or educational activities so that they are not boring and repetitive." Xavier said: "Don't spend money on expensive stuff and only use

it twice.” Angely said: “I recommend using more interactive activities, group work, and speaking practice to make classes more engaging.”

These recommendations also align with Ligaya et al. (2022) who argued that universities need to implement interactive methods to enhance students' learning experiences in online and face-to-face environments.

Question 8

What recommendations would you give to the PINE program to support students during this transition?

Students made suggestions about the PINE program. María said: “Do everything possible to make sure that from the first face-to-face meeting everyone is valued and that students are encouraged through recreational activities as a way to build trust more quickly.” Yulissa suggested: “It is great when the teaching style provides that students don’t feel a sudden change in instruction.” Annette recommended: “For the students who need help, they are encouraged to work on speaking more and receive some extra support.” Xavier said: “Make classrooms more challenging and focus on speaking instead of just repeating writing homework.” Angely said: “I recommend providing more interactive activities, support, and opportunities to practice English in real-life situations.”

Report of Questions

Tabla 1 *Teacher answers about experiences with traditional and TPR methods*

CATEGORY	FINDINGS	AUTHORS
1. Adaptation to Face-to-Face Learning	Students experienced mixed emotions and different levels of adaptation during the transition.	Keshari, Pradhan, & Sahoo (2025)
Online Learning Preferences	Students valued comfort, flexibility, access to digital resources, and possibility of studying from home.	Alcoy & Atthasit (2024)
Face-to-Face Interaction	Students valued direct interaction with teachers and classmates, communication, feedback, and speaking practice.	Alcoy & Atthasit (2024)
Participation and Motivation	Participation varied among students, while most reported greater motivation in face-to-face classes.	Sevy-Biloon (2021)

Challenges During the Transition	Students experienced difficulties related to anxiety, classroom adaptation, transportation, routine changes, and loss of flexibility.	Wahid et al. (2023)
Strategies for Improvement	Students recommended interactive activities, speaking practice, gradual adaptation, recreational activities, and additional support.	Ligaya et al. (2022)
CATEGORY	FINDINGS	AUTHORS

2. Adaptation to Face-to-Face Learning	Students experienced mixed emotions and different levels of adaptation during the transition.	Keshari, Pradhan, & Sahoo (2025)
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Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

This study investigated how PINE students perceive the transition from online to in-person English learning after a prolonged period of virtual instruction. Through a qualitative phenomenological design, five students shared their classroom experiences and reflections on this educational change. The findings revealed that the transition from online to face-to-face learning is a complex process that involves challenges related to adaptation, participation, motivation, and confidence.

Regarding the first research question, the study concludes that several factors influence PINE students' adaptation to in-person English learning. Students identified classroom environment, teacher support, peer interaction, and personal confidence levels as key elements that shaped their adaptation process. The students managed to identify successfully the classroom environment, the support of the teacher in charge and the interaction with their classmates with optimal confidence levels as key elements that shaped their adaptation process. Those students who received encouragement from their teachers and classmates expressed feelings much more secure and encouraged them to be able to participate in activities of their class. However, in some cases, students experienced certain difficulties related to transport and changes of routine with the adaptation to the physical environment of the classroom after having become accustomed to the comfort and flexibility that online learning provides.

According also to the second research question, these results showed that the participation of the students tends to vary quite a lot during the transition. Some of these came to manifest being

more active in the online classes because they came to feel more comfortable in front of a camera, while others felt more involved and participative in the classes that are face-to-face. The motivation varied among the participants. Great majority of the students reported greater motivation in person due to more direct contact with the teacher and classmates, which facilitated them great communication and practice of the language. However, one of the students expressed very low motivation.

As for the third research question, this analysis of perceptions of the students also offers valuable contributions and data to improve the teaching strategies in PINE. Several recommendations were provided, among some of them are to incorporate more interactive activities, to increase the oral practice more, to maintain coherence in the teaching of the online and face-to-face modalities, and to provide additional support to the students during this transition. These suggestions mention the importance of a student-centered approach; it is needed that it addresses both the academic and emotional aspects in the process of the learning of English.

Recommendations

The recommendation towards the teachers is that they continue with the interactive activities and increase them the oral practices in their English classes since the approach fosters the participation motivation and confidence that exists in the students. Selecting These activities promotes a better oral expression and great interaction among the classmates these routines created by teachers make the learning of the language more attractive and natural. Combining communicative tasks with consistent teaching styles helps students connect their online learning experiences with in-person instruction. Moreover, starting or finishing classes with interactive activities helps teachers maintain students' attention. In a supportive environment, this increases self-confidence and fosters a positive attitude toward speaking English.

School ought to aggressively promote these supportive strategies. For instance, administrators could create workshops where educators can exchange helpful resources, classroom management strategies, and their own experiences supporting students during transitions. The professional development seminars mentioned help to foster collaboration and self-reflection among the teachers; with this, they manage to adapt their approaches for a diverse application in the classrooms. The educational institutions must guarantee flexible and fertile learning environments so that the students can express themselves freely, without fear of the errors that these may commit. When the organizations recognize and value these student-centered approaches, a great pleasant and interactive educational environment is promoted that can benefit all the students involved.

At a larger perspective, the Ministry of Education could enhance the national curriculum by including more precise recommendations for supporting students during transitions between educational modalities. This would assist in ensuring teaching methods throughout the nation are more uniform and successful. Providing teachers with resources and guidelines for supporting students' adaptation would help ensure fairness by offering rural as well as urban schools adequate strategies. Moreover, official support for this approach would appreciate teachers' creative efforts and encourage them to continue employing dynamic and inclusive teaching techniques consistent with the EFL curriculum (MinEduc, 2020–2025).

Finally, future researchers ought to keep studying how the transition from online to in-person learning influences other aspects of language acquisition, including speaking confidence, participation, and motivation over time. Long-term studies would reveal continuous advantages to supporting students during educational transitions, like that of the online modality to face-to-face, especially in the early development of the language. When including the perspectives already seen

of the students in future studies, would provide great knowledge regarding the emotional implication and the adaptability when being in different modalities. Thus, this future research should start the linguistic results, but also the emotional and social components, thanks to this, the transition manages to be successful and centered in the human being.

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Annexes

Annexe A: Certified Anti-plagiarism System**Certificado Sistema Anti-Plagio**

En calidad de tutor del Trabajo de Integración Curricular denominado "PINE STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS: TRANSITION FROM ONLINE TO IN-PERSON ENGLISH LEARNING" elaborado por el estudiante Villacreses Vera José Francisco de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, de la Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación e Idiomas, de la Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena, me permito declarar que una vez analizado en el sistema anti plagio, luego de haber cumplido los requerimientos exigidos de valoración, el presente trabajo de investigación, se encuentra con 3% de la valoración permitida, por consiguiente se procede a emitir el informe.

Atentamente,



Lic. Verónica Limones Borbor

MSc. TUTORA

**Certificado de análisis**

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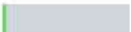
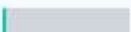
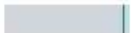
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Annexe B: Questionnaire

UNIVERSIDAD ESTATAL PENINSULA DE SANTA ELENA
FACULTAD CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN
BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND
FOREIGN LANGUAGES

1. How would you describe your overall experience of returning to in-person English classes after studying online?
2. What do you miss most about online English learning now that you are in face-to-face classes?
3. What do you value most about in-person English classes compared to online?
4. How would you describe your participation in face-to-face classes compared to when you were online?
5. How has your motivation to learn English changed since returning to in-person classes?
6. What difficulties have you experienced during this transition, and how have you dealt with them?
7. What recommendations would you give to your teachers to improve in-person English classes?
8. What recommendations would you give to the PINE program to support students during this transition?

Apéndice

Apéndice A. Matriz de Consistencia

Título	Problemas	Objetivos	Variables	Dimensiones	Indicadores	Metodología
PINE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS: TRANSITION FROM ONLINE TO IN-PERSON ENGLISH LEARNING	Formulacion del problema How do PINE students perceive the transition from online to in-person English learning, and in what way does this transition influence their adaptation, participation, and English learning process?	Objetivo General To analyze PINE students' perceptions of the transition from online to in-person English learning by examining their experiences, participation, and adaptation process, in order to understand the strengths and challenges of the transition education..	Students' Perceptions of the Transition from Online to In-Person English Learning	Adaptation Process	• Comfort level • confidence • confidence	Approach: Qualitative Scope: Descriptive Design: Non-experimentall Métodos: Cualitativo Población: Estudiantes de Pine
	Sistematización del problema What factors do PINE students identify as part of their adaptation to in-person English learning after online classes?	Objetivos Especificos To identify students' perceptions regarding the transition from online to in-person English learning based		Participation and Interaction	• Classroom participation • communication with teacherss • communication with classmates • collaborative activitie	
				Learning Experience	• collaborative activities • perceived	

	How do PINE students describe the transition from online to in-person English learning in terms of their participation, motivation, and academic performance? What are the challenges that students face of the transition from online to in-person English learning at PINE?	on their academic and social experiences. To examine how PINE students experience participation, motivation, and language learning performance during the transition process. To determine strategies that may contribute to improving students' adaptation and the effectiveness of in-person English learning at PINE.		advantages learning preferences	
			English Learning Development	- Speaking practice - listening comprehension - perceived effectiveness	

