

ENGLISH TEACHING AND LEARNING ONLINE AND IN-PERSON: A
COMPARISON DURING AND AFTER THE PANDEMIC

*ENSINO-APRENDIZAGEM DE LÍNGUA INGLESA EM AMBIENTES VIRTUAIS E
PRESENCIAIS: UMA COMPARAÇÃO DURANTE E APÓS A PANDEMIA*

*ENSEÑANZA Y APRENDIZAJE DE INGLÉS EN LÍNEA Y PRESENCIAL: UNA
COMPARACIÓN DURANTE Y DESPUÉS DE LA PANDEMIA*



Bruna Rodrigues FONTOURA¹
e-mail: brunar.fontoura@gmail.com



Rubens Fernando Mendes da SILVA²
e-mail: rubensl@outlook.com

How to reference this paper:

FONTOURA, B. R.; SILVA, R. F. M. English teaching and learning online and in-person: A comparison during and after the pandemic. *Rev. EntreLinguas*, Araraquara, v. 10, n. esp. 1, e024016, 2024. e-ISSN: 2447-3529. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29051/el.v10iesp.1.18777>



| Submitted: 07/12/2023
| Revisions required: 11/03/2024
| Approved: 07/04/2024
| Published: 28/05/2024

Editor: Prof. Dr. Rosangela Sanches da Silveira Gileno
Deputy Executive Editor: Prof. Dr. José Anderson Santos Cruz

¹ State University of Minas Gerais (UEMG), Passos – MG – Brazil. Faculty member of the Department of Letters and Linguistics (UEMG). Doctor of Linguistic Studies (UFMG).

² State University of Minas Gerais (UEMG), Passos – MG – Brazil. Student of the Biomedicine program (UEMG).

ABSTRACT: Mastery of the English language is essential for academic development and job market integration. In this context, the aim of this study was to compare two projects that provided an online English course during the pandemic and in-person for the internal and external community of the State University of Minas Gerais (UEMG) in Passos, Minas Gerais. Thus, two English courses were developed, basic levels in 2021 and 2022, and pre-intermediate in 2022, with classes designed to promote language learning combined with cultural exposure. The classes were conducted weekly online in 2021 and at the university premises in 2022. The high number of registrations indicates the need for adaptations to accommodate a broader audience. However, long-term language courses often face high dropout rates. To mitigate this issue, it is recommended that future course offerings include classes at various times, more level options, and various modalities.

KEYWORDS: University Extension. English language. English course.

RESUMO: O domínio da língua inglesa é essencial para o desenvolvimento acadêmico e inserção no mercado de trabalho. Neste contexto, o objetivo deste estudo foi comparar dois projetos que disponibilizaram um curso de inglês on-line durante a pandemia e de forma presencial para a comunidade interna e externa da Universidade do Estado de Minas Gerais (UEMG) em Passos, Minas Gerais. Assim, foram elaborados dois cursos de inglês, níveis básicos em 2021 e 2022 e pré-intermediário em 2022, com aulas que visavam promover o aprendizado do idioma aliado à exposição cultural. As aulas foram ministradas semanalmente on-line em 2021 e nas dependências da universidade em 2022. A elevada quantidade de inscrições indica a necessidade de adaptações para atender um público mais amplo. No entanto, cursos de idiomas de longa duração frequentemente enfrentam altas taxas de evasão. Para mitigar essa questão, recomenda-se que as futuras ofertas do curso incluam aulas em diversos horários, mais opções de níveis e variadas modalidades.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Extensão universitária. Língua inglesa. Curso de inglês.

RESUMEN: El dominio del idioma inglés es esencial para el desarrollo académico y la inserción en el mercado laboral. En este contexto, el objetivo de este estudio fue comparar dos proyectos que ofrecieron un curso de inglés en línea durante la pandemia y de manera presencial para la comunidad interna y externa de la Universidad del Estado de Minas Gerais (UEMG) en Passos, Minas Gerais. Por lo tanto, se desarrollaron dos cursos de inglés, niveles básicos en 2021 y 2022 y pre-intermedio en 2022, con clases que buscaban promover el aprendizaje del idioma junto con la exposición cultural. Las clases se impartieron semanalmente en línea en 2021 y en las instalaciones de la universidad en 2022. La alta cantidad de inscripciones indica la necesidad de adaptaciones para atender a un público más amplio. Sin embargo, los cursos de idiomas de larga duración a menudo enfrentan altas tasas de deserción. Para mitigar este problema, se recomienda que las futuras ofertas del curso incluyan clases en varios horarios, más opciones de niveles y diversas modalidades.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Extensión Universitaria. Idioma en Inglés. Curso de inglés.

Introduction

Learning an additional language (LA) can be a highly enriching task, but it is also quite challenging. There are various reasons why an individual might decide to learn a new language, such as for academic growth and professional advancement. In these cases, the most widespread and demanded modern foreign language in Brazilian society today is English. In universities, we can see that there are several fields of knowledge that Brazilian researchers publish extensively in English, such as health and computing. For these researchers, it is crucial to share their findings with the entire global scientific community, not just with Brazilians. In large companies, it is common to have the need to communicate with branches outside the national territory, therefore, it is necessary for employees to know a common language, typically English.

However, we must question whether learning an LA should be solely focused on studies and work (Masi, 2000). Learning a language is also learning a culture. During the process of learning an LA, learners are exposed to a new universe of possibilities that range from music, movies, series, and books to the customs of those native speakers. Thus, it is essential that learners have access to the language in its entirety so as not to be restricted to just one of the four skills: reading, writing, listening, or speaking (Paiva; Sena, 2009).

Despite the growing need to learn English, the challenges faced by thousands of English learners are numerous. In the educational environment, difficulties start from the precarious situation students face when English is mandatorily introduced in the sixth grade of elementary school until the moment when their linguistic knowledge of English will be assessed in the National High School Exam (ENEM) (Souza; Dias, 2018). After entering university, the scenario does not seem to be more favorable, as there are few opportunities for students to learn English.

Considering the various benefits and difficulties of learning English, we decided to implement an English course that would help to address the lack of opportunities for learning the language. An online English course was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 and subsequently a face-to-face format in 2022, aimed at both the academic community and the external public of the State University of Minas Gerais, Passos Unit (UEMG-Passos). During the pandemic, the English course was implemented from the project titled “*PROJETO GO GLOBAL: CURSO ONLINE DE INGL S ELEMENTAR PARA ALUNOS E POPULA O³*”

³ Project go global: online elementary english course for students and population.

approved in the Internal Program for Extension Incentive (PROINE) in Notice No. 1/2021 of UEMG. In-person, the course with two different levels (basic and pre-intermediate) was developed from the “*Projeto CLI: Curso de Língua Inglesa*”⁴ included in Notice No. 1/2022 of the Support Program for Extension Projects of UEMG (PAEx/UEMG).

Our objective is to reflect on online and face-to-face English language teaching and learning through two projects. To this end, in the following sections, we propose to explain the difference between acquiring and learning an additional language (LA), then describe how autonomous learning can benefit learners, and how this autonomy can be enacted through available technology. After presenting this theoretical framework, we will narrate and discuss the projects. Finally, we will proceed to the concluding remarks.

Learning or Acquisition of an Additional Language (LA)

Learning and acquiring an additional language (LA) may seem synonymous; however, they are not. Krashen ([1982] 2009) advocates that there are two different and independent ways by which adults develop competence in an LA, also known as the acquisition-learning hypothesis. The first is language acquisition, which closely resembles how children acquire their native language. More specifically, language acquisition is subconscious, such that learners are generally unaware of the underlying rules of the language. Regarding the process of language acquisition, it is analogous in both the native and additional languages in that it requires interaction in both languages. In these situations, speakers are primarily concerned with the message and not with formal aspects. The second way to develop competence in an LA refers to language learning, also called explicit learning, that is, consciously obtaining a language; in other words, being able to talk about the rules of the language.

Given the scenario of late learning of an LA by Brazilians, it is relevant to consider that there are differences in the acquisition and learning of an LA. Thus, it is pertinent to ponder that learning an LA in a non-immersive context, outside the linguistic community of the target language, can pose some challenges. Now that we have established the difference between learning and acquiring an LA, we will discuss the context of learning an LA in Brazil, more specifically, the English language.

⁴ English Language Course Project.

English Language Teaching and Learning as an Additional Language in the Brazilian Context

Despite Law No. 13,415/2017 amending the Law of Guidelines and Bases (LDB) and ensuring the mandatory nature of English language education from the sixth grade of elementary school through high school (Brasil, 2017), this requirement did not guarantee that this teaching and learning would occur efficiently. Unfortunately, there is segregation in the teaching and learning of English, as only the more dominant classes have the necessary resources to access this language. We can observe that the teaching and learning of English in our country denote social prestige rather than a citizen's right. In differentiating rights and privileges, we must not forget that privileges separate people while rights equalize them. By excluding a portion of the population from quality English language education, we are denying opportunities that would come with access to this type of knowledge. Thus, we need to think about English language teaching in a more inclusive way, not to maintain the privileges conferred on some, but to ensure all rights (Leffa; Botelho, 2009).

In this globalized world, a competitive and exclusive culture is perpetuated. Creating a law mandating English language instruction does not mean the language will be effectively taught/learned; therefore, we need to create mechanisms to ensure that this right is not masked under false inclusion. We must demystify some widely held societal concepts that aim to perpetuate the difficulties faced by less privileged students. Thus, it is necessary to make society aware that even students from lower classes need this type of knowledge, although there is an attempt to spread the idea that they will never go to a country where English is the native language.

Learning a foreign language is a way of discovering a new world, considering linguistic and cultural aspects. Students uncover facts related to the culture of the target language countries, but they can also discover other worlds. English is used as an international language to communicate different findings in the field of science. Great authors have their works translated into English so that more people can study them; we have the example of the Brazilian scholar Paulo Freire. Acquiring a new language can lead to social ascension, but this type of knowledge can also be used for leisure. We must combat the idea that less privileged students must acquire knowledge only to be used at work (Masi, 2000). Those who learn a foreign language can use it for various purposes ranging from seeking better opportunities to entertainment options. In the digital age, a large part of the population has access to streaming

platforms to watch movies and series. Moreover, we see a vast selection of English-language music being played on radios across the country. Learners of English can engage with the language in various ways.

We must combat the disparagement of students' cognitive capacities, as they are capable of learning provided they are given the necessary conditions for learning. Furthermore, we must not forget that students arrive at school eager to learn; it is society that instills the notion that students do not want to learn and dictates which students can learn. The "hidden curriculum" teaches lower classes to be submissive while instructing the more dominant classes about their role in domination (Silva, 1999). Finally, we cannot overlook the role of the teacher as a facilitator and enchanter. The teacher mediates between the content and the student, and it is through this mediation that these difficulties will either be perpetuated or combated. The teacher also captivates the students with the content (Leffa; Botelho, 2009). One of the significant roles of the teacher is to help the learner become autonomous, that is, capable of being independent in their quest for knowledge. We will explore further how autonomous learning can benefit learners of an Additional Language (LA).

Autonomous English Language Teaching and Learning as an Additional Language

The development of autonomy appears to be one of the significant goals LA learners aim to achieve. However, the teacher's role is to provide an environment in which students can construct and produce knowledge (Freire, 1996). According to Paiva and Sena (2009), there are some prerequisites that must be met by the teacher for the learner to develop autonomy in LA learning. Firstly, the teacher instructing the LA must master it; otherwise, it will not be possible to impart knowledge that the teacher does not possess.

Next, it is necessary to reflect on the methodology employed in the classes. Although the teaching of English as an LA is massively oriented towards learning reading, given the need for interpretation and understanding of texts, such as in the National High School Exam (ENEM) to start undergraduate studies (Souza; Dias, 2018), Paiva and Sena argue that it should not be the teacher's choice to focus solely on this aspect. The language should be taught in its entirety so that learners' desires are not disregarded and they can enjoy all the possibilities of learning an LA. Learning an LA should be geared towards a purpose outside the school environment, whether listening to music, watching a movie, or communicating with a native

speaker of that language. Thus, LA classes should not be exclusively focused on learning reading or grammar. Paiva and Sena investigated a corpus of LA learning narratives and found that students become bored with classes solely focused on teaching grammatical topics. This situation worsens when students are forced to memorize grammatical rules and perform repetitive exercises year after year.

The classroom time allotted for Additional Language (LA) instruction in regular schools is severely limited; thus, it is vital to awaken the learner's interest in extending their learning beyond the classroom. According to testimonials collected by Paiva and Sena (2009), successful learners engage in LA activities outside the school environment. Teachers can help students engage in their learning by making teaching more collaborative and democratic. This can be achieved by allowing them to choose from various texts, music, materials, and activities. This approach modifies power dynamics, making learners feel actively involved in learning.

In teaching and learning an LA, it is necessary for learners to have the opportunity to read authentic texts, such as newspapers and magazines, that align with their interests and are appropriate for their language proficiency level. It is crucial that they develop written language skills, from crafting emails to filling out forms and greeting cards (birthdays and other celebrations). Moreover, learners should be encouraged to participate in chats to practice the LA in both its written and spoken forms. We will discuss how language use can be implemented in the following section and how learners' autonomy can be fostered with proper guidance.

Teaching and Learning Additional Languages with the Use of Technology

In this digital age, it has become more accessible to learn an LA as there is a plethora of materials available online. One can benefit from streaming platforms, such as YouTube and Netflix, to enhance auditory skills, and it is easy to find extensive written material. However, opportunities for meaningful interactions focused on language use are less frequent. An example of digital technology that aids language practice is the messaging app called *Tandem* (Clark, 2013). The name of the app anticipates its purpose because tandem in English refers to a bicycle with two seats and two sets of pedals; thus, two people need to make a joint effort to achieve a goal (Souza, 2003, 2020). For instance, if one person is a native Portuguese speaker and wishes to practice English, they will be connected to a person who is a native English speaker and wants to learn Portuguese.

Long before the app was launched in 2015, Donaldson and Kötter (1999) investigated tandem learning, promoting contact with the target linguistic community and developing students' learning autonomy. Their study involved a group of Germans learning English as an LA and a group of American university students learning German as an LA. At least one from each group had to interact on an instant messaging platform. The partners had to collaborate and perform tasks in their LA for an average of two hours per week over fourteen weeks. This cybernetic collaboration provides an authentic source of communication for LA learners, but without proper guidance, it can lose its purpose and become a pretext for digressions (Souza, 2003, 2020). Therefore, it is crucial to provide an environment where students can develop an emancipatory education (Freire, 1970). Learners are likely to be more engaged in the learning process if they have an active learning environment (Piaget, 1968; Vygotsky, 1978).

In the study by Donaldson and Kötter (1999), participants were encouraged to switch between English and German but were also advised to try using each language for about thirty minutes to benefit from prolonged exposure. Native speakers of the target language could model and guide LA students in the correct structures. Additionally, participants were required to complete at least two projects from a selected list and present them to others; this ensured they did not lose sight of the goal. The results suggest that participants were able to learn in an immersive environment, akin to an immersive language learning scenario. Investigations involving computer-mediated communication (CMC) and computer-assisted language learning (CALL) can offer an opportunity for using the target language.

The “*Projeto Teletandem Brasil*”⁵ by Telles and Vassalo (2006), conducted at São Paulo State University (UNESP), presents an opportunity for LA interactions. They used the instant messaging software, Messenger (MSN), to implement their research. MSN tools used included synchronous chats for reading and writing, voice calls for listening and speaking, video conferencing for facial expressions and body language recognition, and a whiteboard for writing and drawing. Each session could last two hours, one hour per language. Each hour was to have three phases: (i) free conversation between partners for about thirty minutes; (ii) feedback from the more proficient/native speaker for about twenty minutes; and (iii) a shared evaluation of the session for approximately ten minutes.

Graduate students and professors supervised the pairs. This type of project can foster CMC and CALL and, consequently, result in the use of English. Technological media facilitates

⁵ Teletandem Brasil Project.

connecting people from different countries, enabling more democratic learning conditions. Therefore, students can have greater access to the language and culture of the LA to develop a critical understanding, especially for those who teach and research the LA.

CMC and CALL can be very useful in times of adversity. During the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face social interactions were no longer possible. We had to find alternatives to face-to-face meetings, including classes. In this scenario, we relied on some tools for message exchange, such as WhatsApp and email, and we needed other platforms that could accommodate a larger number of participants and offer more stability, such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and Google Hangouts. Although Campos, Kami, and Salomão (2021) used Zoom for *Teletandem* meetings, mediation occurred in the language lab at UNESP after the sessions. Project participants usually gathered around a table to reflect on interactions with researchers, as they believe that constant evaluation keeps the learning environment on the right track.

After the closure of universities due to the pandemic, researchers had to explore other possibilities. They used WhatsApp to clarify doubts in chat groups and Zoom for group discussions. They found that mediation on Zoom proved to be the most fruitful because it resembled face-to-face mediation. However, mediation on WhatsApp was not as productive because it was challenging to maintain a good flow of interaction and take turns so that everyone could speak. Each group consisted of four or five participants, and the authors argue that it would be unfeasible to have larger groups. Participants also reported having trouble keeping up with the number of messages on WhatsApp and felt lost. Although we are no longer in confinement, this format can promote the participation of researchers from other universities, fostering collaboration between universities and integrating people in the field.

Experiencing the pandemic as Campos, Kami, and Salomão (2021), our “*PROJETO GO GLOBAL: CURSO ONLINE DE INGL S ELEMENTAR PARA ALUNOS E POPULA O*” in 2021 aimed to offer an online English language course to the internal and external community of the Academic Unit of Passos at the State University of Minas Gerais (UEMG). After the return of face-to-face classes in 2022, we reformulated this project for face-to-face meetings with a new name: “*Projeto CLI: Curso de Língua Inglesa*”. In the next section, we will describe the projects.

Project Methodology

We present a project proposal to mitigate the problem of linguistic inequality within the academic community at UEMG-Passos. The basic and pre-intermediate English classes offered by UEMG facilitate the inclusion of individuals, whether in the job market or in accessing information. Implementing an extension project that combines research and teaching enables the community to access the target language to solve or reduce inequalities in access to knowledge. Therefore, the practice of an English course through university extension can be considered an element for the democratization of knowledge (British Council, 2014; Pedrosa, 2019).

There are numerous examples of extensionist projects for teaching the English language that serve university students who need training in another language and do not have access to private courses, such as those at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) and UNESP. The outcomes of these projects demonstrate the formation of capable students, who reported improved performance in subjects that require a foreign language. As an extension proposal, it was evident that the audience was able to recognize a change in behavior toward language learning (Ono; Gomes, 2018).

Next, we will elucidate all the mechanisms and materials that supported the English language course of the “*PROJETO GO GLOBAL: CURSO ONLINE DE INGL S ELEMENTAR PARA ALUNOS E POPULA O*” conducted in 2021 and the “*Projeto CLI: Curso de Língua Inglesa*” implemented in 2022.

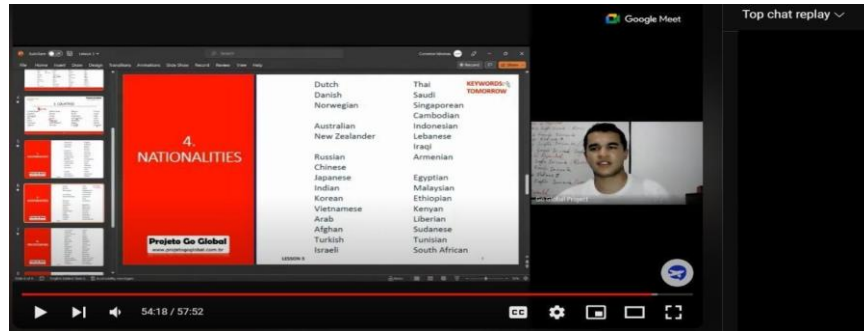
Project Go Global: Online Elementary English Course for Students and Population

This elementary level course aimed to provide online classes that promoted language learning and cultural enrichment. After twenty days of promoting the course, we counted 2,365 registrations and all registrants were enrolled. The classes began on May 31, 2021, and ended on December 9, 2021⁶. They took place twice a week via YouTube, in synchronous meetings

⁶ It should be noted that the classes followed the university's academic calendar and began in the last week of April due to the atypical scenario of the pandemic. Furthermore, extension projects at UEMG must be approved through a specific university announcement, in this case, PROINE. Following the university calendar, the classes were paused for the school break from September 1 to 24, and according to PROINE's Announcement No. 1/2021, the project was scheduled to conclude in December.

lasting approximately one hour each. Forty-five content classes were conducted. In the image below, we can see how the synchronous classes occurred.

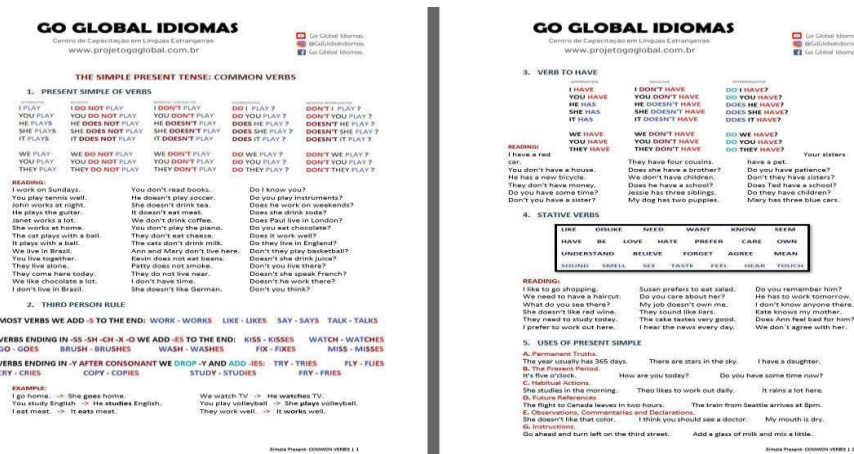
Figure 1 – Example of Classes on YouTube⁷



Source: Developed by the authors.

The methodology involved exposing students to the grammatical and vocabulary content of the lesson, working the content taught through oral, written, and auditory exercises. The content of the elementary course classes covered fundamental knowledge of the English language, based on the book English Vocabulary in Use Elementary with answers (O'dell; McCarthy, 2016), as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Example of Material

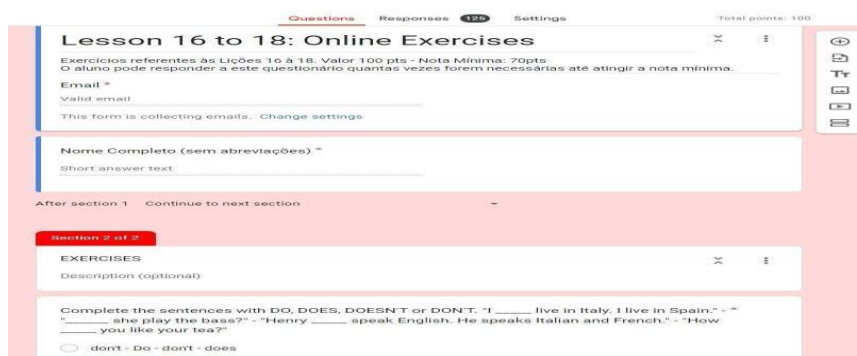


Source: Developed by the authors.

⁷ We chose to omit the names and photos of the participants.

After each lesson, students were required to complete the online exercises. Each exercise consisted of approximately fifteen multiple-choice activities totaling 100 points, as exemplified in Figure 3. The online exercises served to verify the students' attendance and assimilation of the content, and for this purpose, participants were required to submit the exercises with a minimum score of 70 points.

Figure 3 – Representation of the Online Exercises



Source: Developed by the authors.

At the end of the course, there was a comprehensive review of the main topics covered during the classes and a final objective assessment of all the content taught. The final assessment did not affect the issuance of the participation certificate, which was based on attendance in classes and the submission of online exercises.

The written assessment consisted of forty multiple-choice questions about the grammatical content presented. Each question was worth 2.5 points. This assessment aimed to quantify and qualify the students' development, the material prepared, and the methodology used during the course.

Students who achieved at least 75% attendance in submitting online exercises by the end of the course received the participation certificate. The participation certificate was issued by the project coordinator and the student responsible for teaching the classes.

Despite the high number of registrations (2,365), only fifty-three students completed the English course. The large number of interested parties suggests a need to expand the offering of free foreign language courses in Brazil, as about 77% of those registered are from various locations across the country.

Moreover, we did not have funds for scholarships in this project. At the start of the project, we had two other volunteers who worked on creating the online exercises, but they had to withdraw due to the need to find paid employment. The students started the project very enthusiastically, but the lack of a scholarship ultimately demotivated them.

Project CLI: English Language Course

We aimed to offer learning and continuous education in English, considering the previous project's offering. To this end, we formulated a course with two distinct levels: a basic course and a pre-intermediate English course. The basic level aimed to introduce English to students who wished to start learning the language. The pre-intermediate level was designed to continue the studies of those who had prior knowledge, whether those who began studying English in previous projects promoted by the institution or those who studied elsewhere.

The English classes commenced on May 25, 2022, and concluded on December 13, 2022. The lessons were held in person twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 5:00 PM to 6:40 PM, except on holidays and academic breaks, as per the official calendar of the institution. A total of fifty classes were conducted. Figure 4 illustrates the space used for the classes at the university.

Figure 4 – Example of In-person Classes⁸



Source: Developed by the authors.

⁸ We also preferred to obscure the faces of the participants and show only the instructor's face.

Inspired by Paiva and Sena (2009), we reconsidered our methodology and decided to adopt materials that would facilitate the comprehensive development of the four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The reference used in the basic course classes was *American English File 1 – Student Book* (Latham-Koenig, Oxenden, Seligson, 2013a) and for the pre-intermediate course, we used *American English File 2 – Student Book* (Latham-Koenig; Oxenden; Seligson, 2013b). The classes exposed students to resources such as videos, audio, and written texts to work with the content in a contextualized manner.

Two written and two oral evaluations were conducted throughout the project. Students who maintained at least 75% attendance and achieved 60% of the points on assessments received a participation certificate, issued by the project coordinator and distributed to the students by the scholar responsible for the class.

While the primary and pre-intermediate levels began with 60 students⁹, only five students completed the basic course, and eight completed the pre-intermediate course. We understand that the high dropout rate can be attributed to the course duration, as courses lasting longer than three months often experience student withdrawals. External factors, such as lack of time, excessive workload, academic life, and personal issues, affect course progress. Offering shorter modules with more intensive hours could serve as an alternative. Moreover, providing more levels (intermediate, advanced) and different formats (instrumental, pronunciation, and conversation) might attract another segment of the audience, whether they have prior knowledge of the language or not. The number of interested parties indicates a need to expand the availability of free foreign language courses at the unit, as we have interested participants from both the academic community and the general public.

Additionally, not having funds for more scholars was a significant obstacle. The same scholar managing more than one class became overwhelmed. Ideally, each scholar would be responsible for one class.

⁹ The basic level had a higher number of interested parties, but we did not have a space to accommodate more students.

Discussion

The *GO GLOBAL* and CLI projects aimed to make English language learning more accessible to both the internal and external community of UEMG-Passos (British Council, 2014; Ono; Gomes, 2018; Pedrosa, 2019). The first was conducted remotely with synchronous online classes during the pandemic in 2021, and the second was conducted in person in 2022. Moreover, we aimed to offer both learning and ongoing training in English. For this purpose, the community had access to a primary/elementary course (2021, 2022) and a pre-intermediate English course (2022). In the basic/elementary course, students were introduced to the process of learning English, while the pre-intermediate course aimed to continue learning English for those who had previously begun studying the language.

The first project had a different scope from the second, as it primarily focused on the grammatical and lexical content typical of the elementary level – based on O'Dell and McCarthy (2016). Upon reflection, we recognized that this may have demotivated some learners. We started the project with 2,365 registrants and ended with fifty-three. As pointed out by Paiva and Sena (2009), such an approach can become tedious. It is not enough for the teacher to master the LA; careful choice of methodology is also necessary, as the teacher's role is to facilitate and engage (Leffa; Botelho, 2009). Thus, classes need to transcend the boundaries of the physical or virtual classrooms so that students' interests are respected, and they feel motivated to pursue autonomous and successful learning. It is only through autonomous education that learners can independently continue their quest for and construction of knowledge (Freire, 1996).

Given this scenario, we reformulated the *GO GLOBAL* project to try to solve these issues in the CLI project. We adopted a material known to encompass the four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing at the basic level (Latham-Koenig; Oxenden; Seligson, 2013a) and at the pre-intermediate level (Latham-Koenig; Oxenden; Seligson, 2013b). However, we noticed that attrition remained high, with only five out of sixty participants completing the basic level course and only eight out of sixty completing the pre-intermediate level.

The eight learners who completed the pre-intermediate level expressed interest in continuing their studies in English. We also had other participants interested in pursuing additional levels. Thus, we would like to explore a project such as tandem learning (Donaldson, Kötter, 1999; Telles; Vassalo, 2006; Campos; Kami; Salomão, 2021) in the future, which promotes the use of English and autonomous learning. We understand that this type of project

requires the mediation of a scholar so that English language learning does not become secondary (Souza, 2003, 2020). Therefore, it is necessary for the English language usage sessions to be well-defined to fulfill a pre-established purpose.

Furthermore, it should be considered that the learners in the projects were predominantly adults, constituting late learners. As previously discussed, learning a foreign language later in life differs from acquiring a foreign language (Krashen, [1982] 2009), especially in our non-immersive learning environment. Given the learning context of the project participants, we must not forget that learning in a formal context differs from acquisition in naturalistic environments. Therefore, it is crucial that means are provided for learners to develop proficiency in the additional language; without this, they will not be able to pursue increasingly autonomous learning.

Final considerations

This article aimed to contribute to the studies of English language teaching and learning in both virtual and face-to-face environments. In this way, we compared two extension projects that offered English language teaching at UEMG-Passos. In the first project, classes were conducted remotely, and in the second, face-to-face. We understand that projects promoting the teaching and learning of the English language are crucial, as linguistic barriers can limit the individual's academic growth, access to the labor market, and personal growth. Offering a free English course enables access to knowledge for people of different ages and socio-economic conditions. It also contributes to the academic development of students, cultural enrichment, and interaction between educational institutions and the regional community.

This study will help stimulate future projects aimed at implementing language teaching in Brazilian public universities, whether these are virtual or face-to-face. Based on this article, researchers/teachers will be able to consider which mode the classes will be offered in and even the material to be adopted.

Both projects experienced numerous dropouts; therefore, in the future, we would like to collect data to try to understand the reasons for dropout, whether due to participants' personal limitations or our methodology. Despite the high dropout rate in both projects, we found many interested in registering and continuing their English language studies. This reveals the need for the creation of permanent linguistic policies for the constant offering of English at Brazilian universities.

REFERENCES

BRASIL. Lei n.º 13.415, de 16 de fevereiro de 2017. **Diário Oficial da União**: seção 1. Brasília, DF, 2017.

BRITISH COUNCIL. **Demandas de aprendizagem de inglês no Brasil**. 1. ed. São Paulo, 2014. Available at: https://www.britishcouncil.org.br/sites/default/files/demandas_de_aprendizagempesquisacompleta.pdf. Accessed in: 14 Jan. 2024.

CAMPOS, B. S.; KAMI, C. M. C., SALOMÃO, A. C. B. A mediação no Teletandem durante a pandemia da COVID-19. **Revista Horizontes de Linguística Aplicada**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 1, p. DT3, 2021. DOI: 10.26512/rhla.v20i1.36452. Available at: <https://periodicos.unb.br/index.php/horizontesla/article/view/36452>. Accessed in: 15 July 2023.

CLARK, M. Tandem – a great way to learn a new language! **British Council**, 2013. Available at: <https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/blogs/life-around-world/tandem-great-way-learn-new-language>. Accessed in: 15 July 2023.

DONALDSON, R. P.; KITTER, M. Language learning in cyberspace: Teleporting the classroom into the target culture. **CALICO Journal**, [S. l.], v. 16, n. 4, p. 531- 557, 1999. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24147756>. Accessed in: 15 July 2023.

FREIRE, P. **Pedagogia do Oprimido**. 17. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1970.

FREIRE, P. **Pedagogia da autonomia**: saberes necessários à prática educativa. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1996.

KRASHEN, S. **Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition**. Oxford: Pergamon, [1982] 2009.

LATHAM-KOENIG, C.; OXENDEN, C.; SELIGSON, P. **American English File 1 – Student Book**. 2. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013a.

LATHAM-KOENIG, C.; OXENDEN, C.; SELIGSON, P. **American English File 2 – Student Book**. 2. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013b.

LEFFA, V. J.; BOTELHO, G. Por um ensino de idiomas mais incluyente no contexto social atual. In: LIMA, D. C. (org.). **Ensino e aprendizagem de língua inglesa**: conversa com especialistas. São Paulo: Parábola Editora, 2009.

MASI, D. **O ócio criativo**. Rio de Janeiro: Sextante, 2000

O'DELL, F.; MCCARTHY, M. **English vocabulary in use elementary with answers**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

ONO, F. T. P.; GOMES, J. P. F. Internacionalização, letramento crítico e extensão: a experiência democrática do English-Club na UFMS/CPTL. **Revista Leitura**, [S. l.], v. 2, n.

61, p. 76–91, 2018. DOI: 10.28998/2317-9945.201861.76-91. Available at: <https://www.seer.ufal.br/index.php/revistaleitura/article/view/4211>. Accessed in: 15 July 2023.

PAIVA, V. L. M. O.; SENA, A. E. L. L. O ensino de língua estrangeira e a questão da autonomia. In: LIMA, D. C. (org.). **Ensino e aprendizagem de língua inglesa: conversa com especialistas**. São Paulo: Parábola Editora, 2009.

PEDROSA, A. B. R. O combate à desigualdade linguística no curso de letras-ingles: um relato da extensão universitária. **INTERAGIR (UERJ)**, [S. l.], v. 1, n. 26, p. 68–72, 2019. DOI: 10.12957/interag.2018.39664. Available at: <https://www.e-publicacoes.uerj.br/interagir/article/view/39664>. Accessed in: 15 July 2023.

PIAGET, J. **On the Development of Memory and Identity**. 2. ed. Barre: Clark University Press, 1968.

SILVA, T. T. **Documento de Identidade: uma introdução às teorias do currículo**. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 1999.

SOUZA, R. A. Telecolaboração e divergência em uma experiência de aprendizagem de português e inglês como línguas estrangeiras. **Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada**, Belo Horizonte, v. 3, n. 2, p. 73-96, 2003. DOI: 10.1590/S1984-63982003000200004. Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/rbla/a/fHDWzF8JzsZXSfqtqVvMkYL/abstract/?lang=pt>. Accessed in: 15 July 2023.

SOUZA, R. A. **Jornadas por uma língua outra**. 2020. 113f. Memorial (Professor Titular) – Faculdade de Letras, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, MG, 2020.

SOUZA, R. A.; DIAS, E. M. Considerações sobre o Ensino de Leitura em Inglês como L2 a partir de um Estudo Experimental sobre o Reconhecimento Visual de Palavras. **Revista da ABRALIN**, [S. l.], v. 16, n. 1, 2018. p. 376-420. DOI 10.25189/rabralin.v17i1.496. Available at: <https://revista.abralin.org/index.php/abralin/article/view/496>. Accessed in: 15 July 2023.

TELLES, J. A.; VASSALLO, M. L. Foreign language learning in-tandem: Teletandem as an alternative proposal in CALLT. **The ESPECIALIST**, [S. l.], v. 27, n. 2, 2011. Available at: <https://revistas.pucsp.br/index.php/esp/article/view/1629>. Accessed in: 15 July 2023.

VYGOTSKY, L. S. **Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes**. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.

CRediT Author Statement

Acknowledgements: *PROGRAMA DE APOIO A PROJETOS DE EXTENSÃO DA UEMG* - PAEx/UEMG through notice 01/2022.

Funding: *PROGRAMA DE APOIO A PROJETOS DE EXTENSÃO DA UEMG* - PAEx/UEMG through notice 01/2022.

Conflicts of interest: There are no conflicts of interest.

Ethical approval: There was no need for submission to the ethics board.

Data and material availability: Materials are available for consultation.

Author's contributions: Bruna Rodrigues Fontoura – ideation, design, and writing of the article; Rubens Fernando Mendes da Silva – writing and review of the article.

Processing and editing: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.
Proofreading, formatting, normalization and translation.

