Navigating Virtual Language Learning Challenges: Insight into Teachers' Speaking Strategies

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Abstract: This study examines the challenges and solutions faced by teachers in virtual language learning environments, with a particular focus on managing student engagement, interaction, and the use of authentic materials. Adopting a qualitative narrative inquiry approach, the research investigates the experiences and strategies of teachers as they adapted to online teaching, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study identifies several key obstacles, including technological limitations, reduced student interaction, and difficulties in maintaining long-term engagement. In response to these challenges, teachers employed various adaptive strategies, such as assigning interactive group roles, utilizing multimedia tools, and incorporating creative digital practices to sustain student participation and motivation. The findings underscore the crucial role of teacher agency in overcoming the constraints of virtual learning, highlighting the importance of collaborative reflection and the integration of technology as essential solutions. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how teachers modify their teaching methods to ensure effective learning experiences in online classrooms, emphasizing the need for ongoing professional development and institutional support to improve digital literacy and pedagogical practices.

Keywords: Online teaching, Digital tools, Virtual classrooms

Introduction

The transition to virtual learning environments, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, has reshaped the educational landscape, introducing significant challenges for language teachers. Unlike traditional classrooms that rely on face-to-face interactions, virtual platforms require teachers to adapt quickly to unfamiliar tools and methods. Many educators were unprepared for this shift, facing barriers in sustaining student engagement, ensuring interactive communication, and effectively utilizing digital tools (Gacs, et.al., 2020). These challenges have not only disrupted teaching practices but also exposed critical gaps in the preparedness of teachers for online instruction. Research by Archibald et al. (2019) highlights that structured professional development for virtual teaching remains inadequate, leaving educators struggling to meet the demands of online learning environments.

Although previous studies have identified common challenges in virtual education, such as reduced student participation and technological barriers (Xie et. al. 2020; Gacs et al., 2020), research often stops at describing the problems rather than exploring actionable solutions. Limited attention has been given to the specific strategies teachers develop to overcome these obstacles, leaving a gap in understanding how educators navigate virtual classrooms effectively. Moreover, much of the existing research focuses on planned online learning

environments, whereas crisis-prompted virtual teaching, such as during the pandemic, presents unique and understudied challenges (Trust & Whalen, 2020). Goodyear et al. (2014) emphasize the necessity of exploring real-time problem-solving and strategy adaptation by teachers, particularly during educational disruptions.

One underexplored area is the role of teacher agency in overcoming these difficulties. Teachers' ability to proactively adjust their methods and find creative solutions is critical in managing issues such as unstable internet connections and reduced student motivation (Biesta et al. 2015). However, empirical findings on how teachers leverage their agency to develop innovative strategies for engaging students and delivering meaningful instruction remain sparse. This gap highlights the need for research that bridges theoretical understanding with practical insights from real-world teaching experiences. Studies by Blume et al. (2021) argue that teacher agency plays a pivotal role in shaping adaptive practices in dynamic and resource- constrained environments, particularly in virtual education.

A major challenge for teachers lies in creating authentic communication opportunities in virtual environments. Traditional language learning activities, such as group discussions and role plays, often rely on non-verbal cues and dynamic classroom interactions (Hampel et al. 2020). In virtual settings, these interactions are difficult to replicate, further complicating students' engagement and participation. While digital tools like video conferencing platforms offer potential solutions, their effectiveness depends on teachers' proficiency with technology and their ability to adapt these tools to foster meaningful learning experiences. This reveals a critical gap in understanding how teachers innovate within technological constraints. Studies such as Heitink et al. (2016) highlight that teacher digital competence and contextual adaptation are essential for successful technology-mediated teaching.

Existing studies also tend to focus on isolated strategies or general recommendations without addressing how these strategies are adapted to specific virtual challenges. For instance, while some research has suggested the use of breakout rooms or multimedia tools (Trust & Whalen, 2020; Gacs et al., 2020), few studies have examined how teachers evaluate the success of these methods or modify them over time. Jewitt et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of iterative evaluation and refinement of virtual teaching practices to align with diverse learner needs in dynamic digital environments. These findings suggest a need for more research that provides actionable, context-specific insights into effective virtual teaching strategies. This study seeks to address these gaps by investigating two primary research questions:

(1) How do teachers describe their experiences with the challenges of managing virtual learning environments? and (2) What strategies do they use to address these challenges effectively? Empirical findings have consistently highlighted challenges such as technological barriers, reduced student participation, and difficulties in creating interactive online activities (Trust & Whalen, 2020; Blume et al., 2021). By focusing on these questions, the research aims to present a comprehensive understanding of the obstacles teachers face and the practical solutions they develop. The findings contribute new insights into how teacher agency, adaptive methods, and contextual factors shape the effectiveness of virtual teaching in crisis-driven contexts.

This study addresses two primary research questions: (1) How do teachers describe their experiences with the challenges of managing virtual learning environments? and (2) What strategies do they use to address these challenges effectively? Empirical studies reveal that teachers frequently encounter obstacles such as reduced student engagement, technological disruptions, and difficulties in maintaining interactive communication (Gacs, Goertler, & Spasova, 2020). The novelty of this study lies in its focus on crisis-prompted online teaching and its examination of teachers' real-time adaptive practices. Grounded in sociocultural perspectives, this research bridges gaps in understanding how teachers navigate these challenges, offering theoretical and practical insights to guide effective virtual language instruct

Method

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design grounded in narrative inquiry to explore the lived experiences of teachers in virtual teaching environments. Narrative inquiry was chosen for its ability to capture personal stories and provide an in-depth understanding of the meaning's teachers assign to their experiences in online education (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). By integrating multiple data sources semi-structured interviews, video observations, and WhatsApp group discussions the study constructed a comprehensive view of participants' unique challenges, adaptive strategies, and reflections. This approach emphasized not only what teachers said

but also how they framed and interpreted their experiences, highlighting their adaptability and problem-solving strategies. By prioritizing teachers' voices, the study offers valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of virtual teaching and the ways educators navigate its demands.

Participants

The study focused on teachers with experience in virtual teaching environments, aiming to capture their reflections on challenges and adaptive strategies. To ensure meaningful data, three teachers were selected using purposive sampling based on specific criteria (Patton, 2015). These criteria required participants to have at least five years of overall teaching experience and a minimum of two years specifically dedicated to teaching in virtual environments. This level of experience ensured that participants could provide detailed insights into the challenges faced and the strategies employed while managing virtual classrooms.

The participants represented diverse educational contexts, including teaching at beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. They utilized commonly used virtual platforms, such as Zoom and Google Meet, to deliver their lessons. This diversity in teaching levels and platforms allowed the study to explore a wide range of instructional dynamics in virtual settings. Table 1 below summarizes the participants' characteristics, including their teaching experience, virtual teaching experience, and educational contexts. This combination of extensive teaching experience and varied virtual contexts enriched the data quality, providing a nuanced understanding of how educators navigate the complexities of online education.

Table 1. Participant characteristics

Background Variables	Criteria/Description
Number of Participants	3 teachers
Teaching Experience	Minimum 5 years overall
Virtual Teaching Experience	More than 2 years in virtual teaching
Educational Context	Diverse teaching levels (beginner, intermediate, advanced)
Platforms Used	Zoom, Google Meet

Data Collection Instruments

This study used three primary data collection instruments to explore teachers' experiences in virtual teaching environments: semi-structured interviews, video observations, and WhatsApp group discussions. Each instrument captured different dimensions of participants' challenges and strategies, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of their experiences.

1. *Semi-Structured Interviews*:

The interviews included open-ended questions to explore participants' teaching challenges, adaptive strategies, and reflections. Conducted via Zoom, they provided flexibility for follow-up questions and were recorded for transcription and analysis.

2. *Video Observations*:

Video recordings of participants' virtual classrooms were analyzed to examine real-time teaching practices, including teacher-student interactions, use of digital tools, and classroom management strategies. Observations were conducted with participants' consent.

3. *WhatsApp Group Discussions*:

WhatsApp group discussions encouraged informal sharing of participants' thoughts and real-time experiences. This method added context to the interviews and observations by capturing spontaneous insights in a familiar platform.

By combining these instruments, the study triangulated data from multiple sources, ensuring depth, validity, and a well-rounded perspective on teachers' experiences in virtual teaching.

Interview

Semi-structured interviews served as the primary instrument for collecting in-depth, qualitative data on participants' experiences in virtual teaching. This method allowed the researcher to explore core topics such as technological challenges, student engagement methods, instructional adjustments, and reflections on teaching practices. Conducted via Zoom or Google Meet, these video interviews enabled face-to-face interaction while also capturing non-verbal cues, which added depth to participants' verbal responses (Opdenakker, 2006). Each session lasted 45–60 minutes, providing participants with ample time to discuss their experiences in detail without feeling rushed. The flexibility of semi-structured interviews ensured that both guided questions and unique insights from participants were captured effectively (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

All interviews were recorded with participants' consent to ensure accuracy in transcription and analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Transcriptions formed the foundation for coding and theme development, enabling the researcher to identify recurring patterns and subtle nuances in participants' responses. The interview data were then triangulated with video observations and WhatsApp group discussions, strengthening the validity of the findings through cross-verification (Patton, 2015). This combination provided a comprehensive view of teachers' experiences, allowing the study to highlight both shared themes and individual perspectives in managing virtual teaching environments.

Video Observation Techniques

Video observation techniques were utilized in this study to capture authentic, real-time data on teachers' practices in virtual teaching environments. Participants provided video recordings of their online lessons via YouTube links, serving as the primary source of observational data. These recordings allowed the researcher to analyze teachers' instructional strategies, classroom management techniques, and responses to technical challenges within the context of actual virtual classrooms. Observation notes were systematically recorded during the video reviews, focusing on key areas such as student engagement, instructional adjustments, and real-time troubleshooting of technological issues. This approach provided valuable insights into teachers' adaptive strategies in navigating the complexities of virtual teaching.

Including video observations added an objective layer to the data, complementing the subjective insights gained from interviews. This method allowed for cross-verification of self-reported practices and observed behaviors, enhancing the credibility of the findings through data triangulation. Observing teachers in action revealed both alignment and discrepancies between their perceptions and their actual instructional approaches, offering a more nuanced understanding of their teaching methods. Combined with interviews and WhatsApp group discussions, the integration of video observations contributed to a comprehensive examination of teachers' real-time practices and challenges, strengthening the study's overall reliability and depth.

WhatsApp Group Discussions

In addition to interviews and video observations, WhatsApp group discussions were used to provide an informal and spontaneous platform for participants to share their experiences. These discussions captured teachers' daily challenges and real-time problem-solving strategies in virtual teaching contexts. WhatsApp, as a familiar and accessible platform, encouraged open and candid communication, leading to authentic reflections that might not surface in formal interviews. Teachers were able to share immediate reactions and thoughts on issues they encountered, enriching the dataset with dynamic, real-time insights.

Screenshots of relevant chat conversations were collected with participants' consent to document these exchanges accurately. These discussions revealed the evolving nature of teachers' experiences, their collaborative knowledge-sharing practices, and the community support they provided to one another. The informal setting facilitated the sharing of practical solutions and personal insights that complemented the data from structured methods, such as interviews. By integrating these discussions with the other data sources, the study captured both planned and spontaneous aspects of teachers' instructional practices, providing a comprehensive understanding of their adaptive strategies in virtual teaching environments.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step approach, which allowed the researcher to systematically identify patterns and themes within teachers' experiences. The process began with familiarization, involving repeated review of interview transcripts, video recordings, and chat logs to capture key details and initial patterns. Coding followed, with data segments highlighted in various colors representing preliminary themes such as "technical challenges" and "engagement strategies." These codes were then grouped into broader themes, enabling the researcher to observe relationships and identify overarching insights. The final steps involved defining and naming the themes, presenting them in a structured narrative aligned with the research questions. Triangulating data from interviews, observations, and WhatsApp discussions enhanced the analysis's reliability and depth, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of teachers' challenges and strategies in virtual teaching contexts.

Results and Discussion

Challenges in Virtual Language Learning

Engagement and Motivation Issues

Teacher A opened the discussion about the significant challenges of maintaining student engagement in the virtual classroom. *"It's difficult to keep students engaged when they often log in with their cameras off. It feels like I'm speaking to a wall,"* they expressed, emphasizing the disconnect created by invisible students. This lack of visibility not only hindered Teacher A's ability to gauge interest but also impacted the overall classroom dynamics, leaving them feeling isolated. Teacher B echoed this sentiment, stating, *"In my experience, when I can't see their faces, it's hard to tell if they're understanding the material. I often find myself repeating questions just to get a response, which is frustrating."*

Teacher C reflected on their attempts to use online rewards, such as badges, to encourage participation. *"I thought the badges would help motivate them, but after a few sessions, they lost interest. I feel like we need something more intrinsic to keep them engaged,"* they lamented. This collective experience highlights a common concern among the teachers regarding the difficulty of fostering intrinsic motivation in a virtual setting. The ongoing challenge of sustaining engagement revealed the need for innovative approaches tailored to the online environment. Without effective strategies, maintaining motivation over time proved to be a significant hurdle for all three teachers.

Interaction Limitations

As the discussion progressed, Teacher B raised concerns about the limitations of interaction in online classrooms. *"In physical classes, I can easily circulate and monitor group discussions, but in breakout rooms, I lose that ability,"* they explained, which was a recurring challenge. Teacher A shared a specific example, recalling, *"Once, I walked into a breakout room thinking everything was going smoothly, but I found students discussing their favorite cartoons instead of the assigned topic!"* This incident underscored the difficulties teachers faced in ensuring that students remained focused without direct supervision, leading to feelings of frustration.

Teacher C added to the conversation, stating, *"I find it hard to gauge whether students are struggling or just not engaged because I can't see their faces. It's challenging to create a collaborative environment when I can't monitor interactions directly."* The lack of non-verbal cues, which play a critical role in classroom communication, left the teachers feeling disconnected from their students and uncertain about how to best support them. These challenges highlighted the urgent need for better strategies to foster engagement and collaboration in the virtual learning space, as teachers recognized the importance of maintaining meaningful interaction.

Limited Use of Authentic Media

The teachers then addressed the constraints faced when trying to utilize authentic teaching materials in a virtual format. Teacher C lamented, *"Using flashcards and real objects in a physical classroom is so engaging. But transitioning that to online lessons is a nightmare."* They explained that adapting these materials for a digital setting proved challenging and often ineffective, diminishing the interactive experience that students thrived on.

Teacher A added, *"I attempted to use digital versions of those materials, but tech issues often disrupted the flow. The kids end up frustrated, and so do I."*

Teacher B also shared their experiences with digital adaptations, saying, *"Creating engaging digital materials takes so much time, and often, they don't have the same impact as physical resources."* This conversation revealed the teachers' collective frustrations and the recognition that transitioning to online teaching required a fundamental rethinking of how they used materials. The shift to virtual teaching necessitated creativity in using available resources effectively to maintain engagement and facilitate learning. Teachers acknowledged that without the tactile elements, students often struggled to connect with the content, further complicating the learning process.

Solutions to Overcome Challenges

Interactive Strategies for Engagement

In response to the challenges of engagement, the teachers discussed various interactive strategies they implemented in their virtual classrooms. Teacher B shared, *"I started assigning roles to students in breakout rooms. This way, everyone has a responsibility, and it keeps them accountable."* This structured approach not only enhanced student participation but also fostered a sense of collaboration among peers. Teacher A added, *"I've been using storytelling to engage my students. It's amazing how a well-told story can draw them in and make them more involved in the lesson."*

Teacher C emphasized the importance of incorporating fun activities into lessons, stating, *"I introduced speaking games that really help lower the students' anxiety. They're more willing to speak up and participate when they're having fun."* This shift towards interactive learning activities highlighted the teachers' commitment to enhancing student engagement despite the limitations of virtual instruction. By prioritizing these strategies, they recognized the necessity of adapting their teaching methods to meet the needs of their students in an online environment.

Adapting Interaction Methods

As the conversation progressed, the teachers discussed methods for improving interaction in their virtual classrooms. Teacher A remarked, *"I've found that regular check-ins during the lesson help me gauge understanding. Asking students to give me a thumbs up or down has been really effective."* This strategy allowed Teacher A to receive immediate feedback, making it easier to adjust instruction on the spot. Teacher B contributed, *"I encourage follow-up questions to promote deeper discussions. It's great to see students engaging with each other's ideas."*

Teacher C noted, *"Smaller group discussions have made a big difference. Students feel less intimidated and are more likely to share their thoughts."* This insight underscores the effectiveness of fostering a supportive environment for dialogue. The emphasis on adapting interaction methods demonstrated the teachers' dedication to creating engaging and meaningful exchanges among students, which is essential for successful virtual learning.

Creative Use of Digital Tools

The teachers also emphasized the creative use of digital tools as a way to enhance the learning experience. Teacher C shared, *"Incorporating videos and interactive presentations has really captivated my students' attention. They seem to enjoy the multimedia approach much more."* This aligns with the principles of Multimedia Learning Theory, which suggests that people learn better when information is presented in both verbal and visual formats (Mayer, 2001). Teacher A remarked, *"I've started using online quizzes to keep students engaged. The instant feedback motivates them to improve."*

Teacher B echoed this sentiment, stating, *"Digital tools like collaborative documents allow students to work together in real time. They can see each other's contributions, which enhances teamwork."* The teachers recognized that leveraging technology effectively not only maintained student interest but also fostered a

dynamic learning environment. This creative approach to using digital tools highlighted the importance of innovation in overcoming the challenges faced in virtual classrooms.

Discussion

Challenges in Virtual Language Learning

Engagement and Motivation Issues

Engaging students in virtual classrooms is a significant challenge, as highlighted by Teacher A, who expressed frustration with students keeping their cameras off, saying, "It feels like I'm speaking to a wall." Without visual cues, it is difficult for teachers to gauge student interest or understanding, leading to a sense of disconnection for both teachers and students (Xie, Siau, & Nah, 2020). Teacher B echoed similar struggles, emphasizing how this lack of visibility complicates efforts to assess whether teaching methods resonate with students. According to Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory (SDT), intrinsic motivation driven by competence, autonomy, and relatedness plays a critical role in fostering engagement, yet virtual environments often fail to meet these psychological needs (Trust & Whalen, 2020).

Extrinsic motivators, such as badges, have limited effectiveness in sustaining engagement. Teacher C noted that students quickly lost interest in such rewards, reinforcing Ryan and Deci's (2000) findings that intrinsic motivation is more impactful for long-term learning. To address these challenges, educators can use SDT-aligned strategies like collaborative projects, peer feedback, and choice-based activities to enhance engagement. Research by Gacs, Goertler, and Spasova (2020) highlights the importance of designing lessons that resonate with students' interests, fostering both motivation and participation in virtual learning environments.
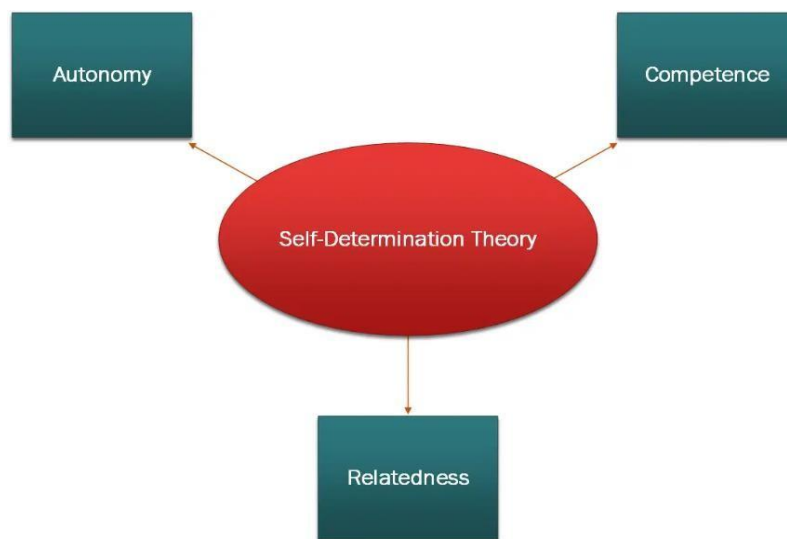

Figure 1. Self-determination theory model (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

This model illustrates the three fundamental psychological needs competence, autonomy, and relatedness that drive intrinsic motivation in learners. When these needs are met, students are more likely to engage meaningfully with the content, leading to improved participation and learning outcomes. Understanding this framework helps educators create virtual learning environments that address these psychological needs, as supported by research on student motivation and engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2020)

Interaction Limitations

Teachers faced significant challenges in facilitating interaction during virtual learning, particularly in breakout rooms. Teacher B expressed frustration, stating, "In physical classes, I can easily monitor discussions, but in breakout rooms, I lose that ability." Without direct supervision, students often became disengaged or veered off-topic, reducing the effectiveness of group activities (Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2021). Assigning clear roles during group work emerged as a practical solution. Teacher C noted that structured roles improved accountability and

participation, a strategy supported by Wang et al. (2020), who highlight the importance of clear expectations for successful collaboration in virtual settings.

To enhance interaction, teachers also utilized tools like shared documents, interactive whiteboards, and discussion forums, which facilitated real-time collaboration and dialogue. These efforts align with the **Community of Inquiry Framework** (Garrison et al., 2010), which emphasizes fostering Social Presence, Cognitive Presence, and Teaching Presence to create a supportive online environment. Encouraging students to turn on their cameras and actively participate further strengthened engagement by building connections and a sense of belonging (Chiu, Lin, & Lonka, 2021). By addressing these limitations with structured strategies and effective tools, teachers were able to foster more dynamic and engaging virtual classrooms.
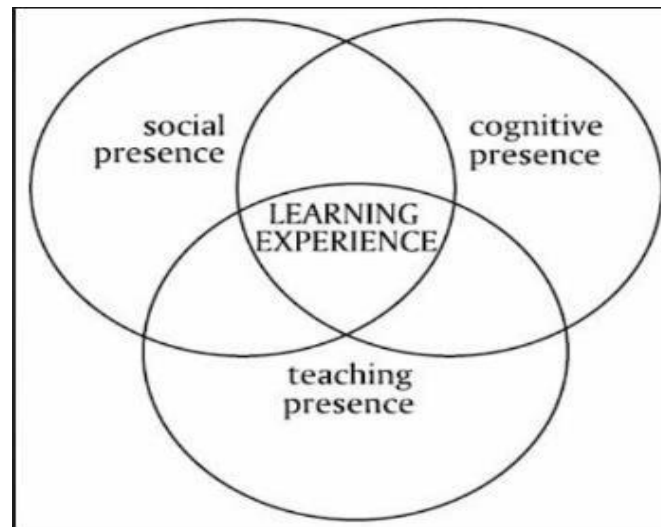

Figure 2. Community of inquiry framework.

This figure illustrates the Community of Inquiry Framework, which identifies three essential presences Social Presence, Cognitive Presence, and Teaching Presence necessary for effective online learning. This framework serves as a guide for educators to create a supportive and engaging online environment where students feel connected, are encouraged to think critically, and receive appropriate guidance from their instructors.

Limited Use of Authentic Media

Teachers encountered significant challenges in incorporating authentic materials into virtual lessons, reflecting broader issues of digital literacy and resource availability. Teacher C shared frustrations about adapting physical materials into digital formats, emphasizing the difficulty of creating engaging content without adequate training or resources. Teacher A's experiences with technical disruptions further highlighted the importance of reliable technology for effective online teaching. Teacher B added that designing engaging digital materials is time-consuming and often lacks the resonance of physical resources. Research supports the value of authentic materials in enhancing learning by providing real-world context and relevance (Gilakjani, 2012; Al-Hunaiyyan, 2020), but their limited use in virtual environments often hinders student engagement.

Addressing these challenges requires professional development programs that focus on improving teachers' digital literacy and pedagogical strategies. Innovative approaches, such as virtual field trips, interactive simulations, and digital storytelling, offer practical substitutes for physical resources while maintaining real-world connections (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021). Multimedia elements, like visuals and interactive activities, can also accommodate different learning styles, making lessons more engaging and effective (Mayer, 2001). Additionally, investing in reliable technology infrastructure and high-quality digital resources is essential to support teachers in delivering meaningful online lessons. By equipping educators with the tools and skills they need, schools can help ensure the successful integration of authentic materials into virtual classrooms.

Solutions to Overcome Challenges

Interactive Strategies for Engagement

To address engagement challenges, teachers employed various interactive strategies aligned with best practices in language instruction. Teacher B utilized assigned roles in breakout rooms, which provided structure and accountability, ensuring all group members participated. This approach reflects Collaborative Learning Theory, which emphasizes the role of group dynamics in fostering meaningful interaction and active participation (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Similarly, Teacher A incorporated storytelling to capture students' attention and create emotional connections to the material. Research highlights that storytelling enhances engagement by making lessons more relatable and memorable, promoting deeper understanding of complex concepts (Bruner, 1991). These strategies effectively combined structure and creativity to sustain student interest in virtual settings.

Teacher C's use of speaking games demonstrated the importance of creating a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment. Games can lower students' affective filter, as suggested by Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), making them more receptive to participating and taking risks in speaking activities. The teachers also recognized the value of fostering community in online classrooms. Collaborative activities not only encouraged peer interaction but also helped build connections among students, reducing feelings of isolation often associated with virtual learning (Chiu et al., 2021). By integrating these interactive strategies, teachers created dynamic online lessons that enhanced student motivation, engagement, and language development.

Figure 3. Interactive strategies for engagement

This figure illustrates various interactive strategies teachers can implement to enhance student engagement in virtual classrooms. Strategies such as role assignments, storytelling, and interactive games are highlighted as effective means of fostering participation and making learning more enjoyable. These approaches are vital for addressing the engagement challenges identified in the study.

Adapting Interaction Methods

Teachers employed various strategies to enhance interaction in their virtual classrooms. Teacher A used regular check-ins, incorporating gestures and verbal affirmations, to gauge understanding and foster participation. This approach aligns with formative assessment principles, which emphasize ongoing feedback to adjust teaching based on students' needs (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Teacher B encouraged follow-up questions to promote critical thinking and deeper discussions. This strategy reflects Socratic questioning techniques, which help students articulate their ideas, develop analytical skills, and build confidence (Paul & Elder, 2006). By fostering meaningful interactions, teachers created opportunities for students to engage actively and think critically.

Teacher C highlighted the benefits of smaller group discussion, noting that they encourage participation by creating a more comfortable environment for students to share ideas. Research supports this approach, indicating that smaller groups foster collaboration and a sense of community, essential for successful virtual learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Additionally, the teachers emphasized the value of professional learning communities, where they could share strategies and reflect on practices. Collaborative discussions among educators not only enhanced their teaching methods but also equipped them to navigate the complexities of virtual education more effectively. These adaptive interaction methods demonstrate a commitment to responsive teaching that addresses the unique challenges of online learning.

Table 2. Strategies for enhancing interaction in virtual classrooms

Strategy	Description	Expected Outcome
Regular Check- Ins	Encouraging gestures and verbal feedback during lessons.	Increased engagement and understanding.
Socratic Questioning	Using follow-up questions to promote critical thinking.	Deeper discussions and enhanced learning.
Smaller Group Discussions	Structuring activities in smaller groups for comfort.	Higher participation and collaboration.

Table 2 outlines effective strategies for enhancing interaction in virtual classrooms. These strategies, including regular check-ins, Socratic questioning, and smaller group discussions, aim to improve student engagement and participation. By implementing these methods, teachers can foster a more interactive and collaborative online learning environment, ultimately leading to better learning outcomes.

Creative Use of Digital Tools

The teachers demonstrated creativity in using digital tools to enhance virtual learning. Teacher C incorporated multimedia resources, such as videos and interactive presentations, to engage students and cater to diverse learning styles. This aligns with **Multimedia Learning Theory**, which emphasizes that combining verbal and visual formats improves learning outcomes (Mayer, 2001). Similarly, Teacher A used online quizzes with immediate feedback to maintain student interest and participation. These tools not only foster a sense of achievement but also support **formative assessment principles**, enabling students to assess their understanding in real-time (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). By leveraging these digital tools, teachers created dynamic and engaging virtual learning environments.

The effective use of technology requires ongoing professional development to ensure educators can maximize its potential. Training in emerging technologies empowers teachers to design lessons that fully utilize digital tools, such as interactive simulations or collaborative platforms. Teachers' willingness to experiment with innovative strategies reflects their adaptability in addressing the challenges of virtual teaching. By embracing new technologies and refining their practices, educators can better meet the diverse needs of their students. This creative and flexible approach underscores the importance of staying informed about best practices in digital education to ensure teaching remains effective in a rapidly evolving landscape.
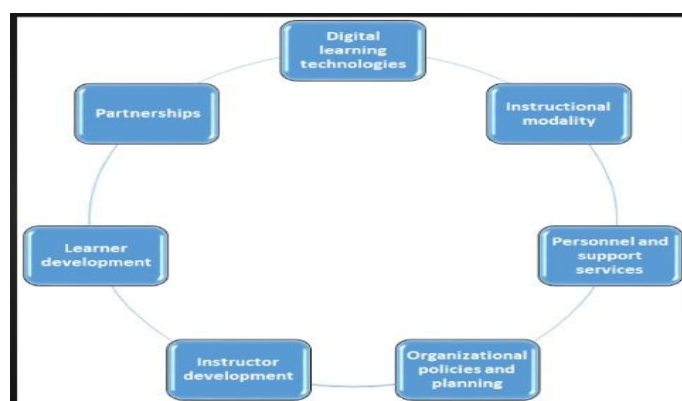

Figure 4. Benefits of using digital tools in education.

This figure summarizes the key benefits of integrating digital tools into education. These benefits include increased engagement, timely feedback, and adaptability, all of which contribute to a more effective learning experience in virtual environments. Understanding these benefits can help educators make informed decisions about incorporating technology into their teaching practices.

Conclusion

This study identifies key challenges faced by teachers in virtual language learning environments, including student engagement, limited interaction, and difficulties with using authentic materials. However, the findings

show that teachers have effectively addressed these challenges through interactive strategies, such as role assignments, multimedia tools, and fostering collaboration among students. By adapting their teaching methods and utilizing digital tools creatively, teachers can enhance student engagement and create a more dynamic online learning experience. The study also highlights the importance of ongoing professional development to equip educators with the skills necessary to navigate the complexities of virtual teaching. Overall, this research underscores the value of teacher adaptability and collaboration in overcoming the challenges of online education, providing insights for enhancing the virtual learning experience.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that teachers continue to adapt their instructional strategies to foster greater engagement in virtual classrooms. Teachers should explore and incorporate more interactive methods, such as breakout room activities with assigned roles, to increase student participation. Additionally, leveraging multimedia tools and incorporating authentic materials can enhance learning outcomes, making lessons more relevant and engaging for students. Schools and institutions should invest in ongoing professional development programs that focus on enhancing digital literacy and effective use of technology in the classroom. Furthermore, creating opportunities for teachers to share best practices and collaborate can foster a supportive community of practice, enabling them to overcome challenges collectively. Finally, fostering a sense of community in virtual classrooms, through peer interactions and collaborative projects, is essential for maintaining motivation and student well-being in online learning environments.

Scientific Ethics Declaration

Conflict of Interest

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