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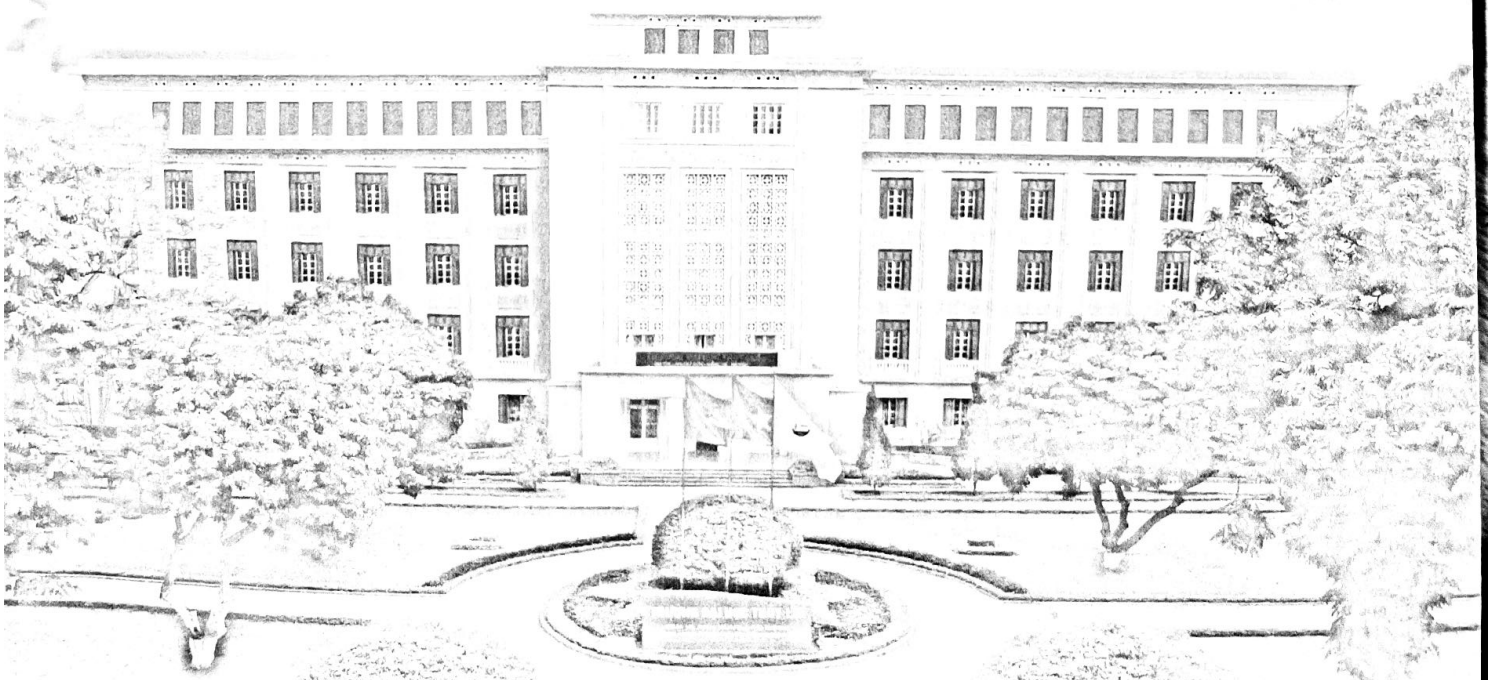

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INTERACTION IN ENGLISH ONLINE COURSES AT A TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY DURING THE COVID-19

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NTRODUCTION

nteraction has been used to understand w students construct knowledge in distance ucation environment. Moore (1989) ggested three types of interaction that ether constitute the sites for student gagement in distance education classes. ese are learner-content interaction, learner-structor interaction, learner-learner eraction. Another author, Swan (2002) cluded in his study, "three (and only ee) factors contribute significantly to the ccess of online courses. These are a clear d consistant course structure, an instructor o interacts frequently and constructively th students and a valued and dynamic mission". Having been cognizant of the eraction's role, this paper discusses the ons derived from online teaching through se study research context. Specifically, current study examines the relevant nomena focusing on the interaction olved in online English teaching at Hanoi niversity of Mining and Geology (HUMG). s, this study aims to answer the following search questions:

In what ways are the students actually eracting in English online courses?

What are the implications to enhance eraction in English online courses?

ETHOD OF STUDY

his study is a quantitative research study ough a survey which was conducted online. participants involved in the study were tudents with 90 male students (85.7%) 15 female students (14.3%) ranging from first year to the fifth year in different faculties of HUMG. They were studying online English courses using Teams in the third term of the academic year 2021. In order to collect data, the researcher conducted a set of questionaires comprising 46 items. The questionaires were designed on five point Likert scale consisting of: Totally Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), Totally Disagree (1) and distributed to willing participants online through Google forms. After cleaning data process, the samples were 101 because 4 were dismissed for having all the answers "Agree". The cleaned data then were analyzed with the assistance of descriptive statistic IBM SPSS 25.0 software.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Student-content interaction

Table 1

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	4.3366	0.76521
Q2	4.2475	0.69866
Q3	4.1089	0.74701
Q4	4.0693	0.87473
Q5	4.2673	0.74687
Q6.1	4.4158	0.66734
Q6.2	4.3465	0.75413
Q6.3	4.2079	0.95202
Q6.4	4.1287	0.95565
Q7.1	4.3564	0.65703
Q7.2	4.2970	0.79429
Q7.3	4.2376	0.89609
Q7.4	4.2376	0.82642
Q8.1	4.2772	0.74992
Q8.2	4.4059	0.63527
Q8.3	4.2574	0.79566
Q8.4	4.2673	0.78602

The first 8 questions in the questionaires were designed to ask the students about the content being supplied. Table 1 shows a mean of over 4 to all the questions, that is the majority of the students involved in the survey agreed with these questions. The standard deviation below 1 indicates a concentration of the items so there is no big difference in the students' answers. It can be interpreted that most of the students found it convenient to access the materials supplied (Q1&Q2). They also spent enough time reading the materials (Q3) and could properly understand the materials (Q4). According to a great number of students, the teachers supplied them with different types of materials like textbooks (Q6.1); lecture slides (Q6.2); videos (Q6.3); website address and other references (Q6.4) and the students also spent time studying these materials (Q7.2, Q7.2, Q7.3, Q7.4). A majority of the students expected that the teachers should diversify the types of materials supplied (Q5) and they also thought they should make use of the various materials (Q8.1, Q8.2, Q8.3, Q8.4). From those statistics, it can be inferred that most of the students taking part in the survey were interacting relatively well with the content supplied.

3.2. Student-teacher and student-student interactions

Table 2

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q9	4.1980	0.76184
Q10	3.9208	0.92394
Q11	3.9703	0.89950
Q12	3.8911	1.01883
Q13	4.2475	0.76689
Q14.1	4.3267	0.70865
Q14.2	4.4158	0.68216
Q14.3	4.1782	0.82941
Q14.4	4.4356	0.62315
Q15.1	4.3564	0.68679
Q15.2	4.2277	0.76002
Q15.3	4.1188	0.82810
Q15.4	2.8713	1.43988
Q16.1	2.5644	1.49275
Q16.2	4.3960	0.60132
Q16.3	4.2772	0.74992
Q16.4	4.3564	0.64163
Q17.1	3.9802	0.92715
Q17.2	3.9505	0.98363
Q17.3	4.3861	0.61596
Q17.4	3.5941	1.10615
Q18.1	4.3168	0.64700
Q18.2	4.3861	0.69239
Q18.3	4.3069	0.64409
Q18.4	4.2376	0.72317
Q19.1	4.1980	0.70739
Q19.2	4.1782	0.72658
Q19.3	4.1881	0.74448
Q19.4	3.8317	0.99065

The next 11 questions aimed at getting the answers on personal interaction in online courses. Questions 9,10,11,13 intended to find out students' ideas on their teachers' method in activating interaction synchronously and asynchronously. For those questions, the statistics in Table 2 indicate most of the students agreed that their teachers applied various types of activities to boost interaction (Q9) and they were also ready to answer students' questions when being contacted asynchronously (Q13). Yet, the below-4-mean of items Q10 and Q11 shows a number of students didn't agree that their teachers used the applications like Quizzes, Nearpod or designed pair/group projects to encourage interaction among the students. Questions 14,15,16 focused on asking how the students synchronously interacted with the teachers and their classmates. Specifically, the statistics on the items 14.1, 14.2, 14.3, 14.4, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3 16.2, 16.3, 16.4, all has a mean of above 4 with a relatively low standard deviation, which describes students' high degree of agreement when being asked if they interacted with the teachers by: posing questions to the teachers (Q14.1), posting answers in Teams chat (Q14.2), raising hand to answer questions (Q14.3), answering questions when being called (Q14.4), if they interacted with other students: in Team Chat (Q15.1), on interactive

...vations launched by the teachers (Q15.2), ...rate discussion room (Q15.3), if during ... online classtime: they listened to the ... (Q16.2), they noted down the ...mation (Q16.3), they joined all the ...ities (Q16.4). In this question group, the ...15.4 (if the students didn't interact) and ...(if the students just joined the class but ...actually learn) has a below-3-mean with ...standard deviation of over 1.4. This ...ates a big difference in the actual ...cipation in online class activities among ...students surveyed. Question 17 asked how ...students asynchronously contacted with ...teachers and other sudents and the ...est number chose Teams (Q17.3) while a ...ber used email (Q17.1), social network ...2), and other ways (Q17.4). Questions 18 ...ed at getting student's ideas on how to ...ove interaction and the statistics indicate a ...sistent mean of over 4 and a relatively low ...dard deviation of the items. Most students ...ed that they should improve their ...nomy in: studying the materials supplied ...1), asking and answering questions ...2), participating in all activities (Q18.3), ...chronously contacting their teachers and ...smates (Q18.4). Question 19 wanted to ...out students' expectations on their ...hers' ways to boost interaction and a great ...ber of them thought that the teachers ...ld provide more referencing materials ...1), diversify the activities during ...time (Q19.2), use interactive applications ...3). Yet for the item 19.4, according to ...tatistics in Table 2, a number of students ...t think that the teachers should assign ...group projects as homework to improve ...action. From the above analysis, it is clear ...the majority of the students surveyed ...lly invoved in interaction synchronously ...synchronously, however a small number ...take part in any type of interaction. ...the students' perspective, their teachers ...doing a lot to help improve interaction in ...class.

...Teaching and learning implications

...the students, they should be aware of ...portance of interaction in online courses. They should actively engage in all interactive activities as well as enhance their autonomy in studying the content supplied. Moreover, they should be willing to give feedback on the efficiency of interactive activities launched and express promptly their wishes for the expected types of content and activities supplied by the teachers. For the teachers, the accessibility, relatedness, readability and diversity of the content provided should be taken into account. During the online classtime, a variety of activities with the use of interactive applications should be preferred, yet not to be overloaded. To best make use of the activities, a set of rules should be made by the teachers in order to elimilate the cases when the students just joined the class for attendance while learning nothing. Students' expectations on content and activities provided should be paid attention, however, the teachers should also direct their students to the effective ones like pair/ group projects.

4. CONCLUSION

Interaction is essential in teaching and learning languages for it gives students opportunities to practise the target language. Face-to-face interaction in English classrooms at HUMG has been taken into account, and how this issue is being dealt with in online courses is worth being studied. As one research in the field, this paper found out relatively positive results on the ways the students are actually interacting in English online courses with the support and guide from their teachers. Moreover, the reseacher also suggested the teachers and students be more cognizant of the issue so that interaction could be better improved.

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