

World Conference on Research in Teaching and Education

12 - 14 June 2026

Tokyo , Japan

Reframing Virtual Education: Pedagogical Recommendations for Novice Teachers Based on Student Engagement and Self-Regulation Challenges

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Abstract

Since teaching English online involves much more than digital content delivery, this research reframes the challenges of virtual education by developing evidence-based recommendations for novice instructors. The study originates from the need to mentor new educators on how to navigate the complex life realities of online learners. To provide a solid foundation for these recommendations, the research was conducted with an initial population of 265 students enrolled in the 5th and 6th semesters of an online Pedagogy Program, in which ethical protocols were followed, resulting in a final sample of 249 participants, as 16 students declined to provide informed consent.

The methodology employed a quantitative approach using two validated instruments: the Online Self-Regulated Learning Questionnaire (OSLQ) to assess organizational strategies, and the Online Student Engagement Scale (OSE) to evaluate behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions of engagement. Furthermore, demographic variables such as employment status and internet stability were analyzed to identify external barriers to real-time interaction.

Findings indicate that participation in synchronous sessions depends not only on students' self-regulatory skills and social engagement but is also heavily moderated by external responsibilities, cultural contexts, and personal characteristics inherent to adult learners. In this sense, the paper proposes practical intervention strategies designed to transform virtual sessions into collaborative learning hubs that foster motivation, seeking to prepare the next generation of educators to understand that, in virtuality, human connection and pedagogical empathy are the primary drivers of interaction and success for students balancing multiple life roles.

Keywords: Adult learners; Cultural contexts; Human connection; Personal characteristics; Real-time

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interaction.