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Language Teachers' Emergency Remote Teaching Experiences During the COVID-19 Confinement

Experiencias con la enseñanza remota de emergencia de docentes
de lenguas durante el confinamiento por COVID-19

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This study describes 26 English language teaching faculty members' and 32 preservice English as a foreign language teachers' emergency remote teaching experiences and emotions. Verbal data gathered through an online questionnaire with open questions were analyzed using semidirected content analysis. Most faculty and all students reported negative feelings, which were connected with some faculty members' focus on delivering content without interaction and with insufficient Internet access. Some students' autonomy allowed them to overcome the first of these challenges. Teachers with online education training reported better experiences. Thus, universities and the State must provide more training and equipment to close the digital gap and ensure effective emergency remote teaching.

Keywords: COVID-19 confinement, emergency remote teaching, language teachers, learning experience, teaching experience

Este estudio describe las experiencias y emociones de 26 profesores y 32 docentes de inglés en formación con la enseñanza remota de emergencia. Los datos verbales, recolectados mediante un cuestionario con preguntas abiertas realizado en línea, se analizaron con un análisis semidirigido del contenido. La mayoría de los profesores y la totalidad de los estudiantes reportaron sentimientos negativos relacionados con la falta de interacción y con la brecha digital. La autonomía de algunos estudiantes les permitió afrontar lo primero. Los profesores capacitados en educación a distancia tuvieron mejores experiencias. Así, las instituciones y el Estado deben proporcionar más capacitación y equipamiento para reducir la brecha digital y hacer efectiva la enseñanza remota de emergencia.

Palabras clave: confinamiento por COVID-19, enseñanza remota de emergencia, experiencias de aprendizaje, experiencias de enseñanza, profesores de lenguas

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Introduction

Mexican institutions began to offer distance education massively during the confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This shift marked the abrupt, forceful maturation of the information and communications technology (ICT) introduction process that started around 1980 in Latin America (Conceição, 2006). However, the digital gap is an obstacle to implementing ICT-mediated instruction efficiently. In some developing countries, less than half of their population owns a computer, and wireless access is limited. Accordingly, in Mexico only 44.9% of the population owns a computer, 73.5% own a cellphone, and 52.9% have an Internet connection. A high percentage of Internet users (89%) pay for that service, and only 11% have wireless access (INEGI, 2019). The digital gap is probably the reason why face-to-face education continues to be the option favored by most of the population. As of 2019, more students (3,610,744) were enrolled in face-to-face higher education institutions, and only 641,411 were registered in online schools (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2019). Despite that fact, the vast majority of Mexican institutions have moved fully online since March 2020.

Teachers and students cannot attend schools as they did pre-COVID-19. As a result, they have to work online. Since the confinement came into being, institutions closed and teachers were in need to teach virtually, so they had to move abruptly to the online modality. According to Hartley (2007), the integration of ICT in education should be gradual, planned, challenging, and complex; however, in some contexts, that process can be careless and unplanned. Due to the health contingency, the transition to remote teaching could not wait even though some institutions were not ready to face the challenges brought about by such transition. Teachers and students working in a face-to-face setting had to move their classes to the online mode abruptly and, in many cases, with little to no preparation. Considering this complex reality, we conducted the study reported here and addressed the following research questions: (a)

What have been English language teaching (ELT) faculty members' and preservice teachers' experiences with emergency remote teaching (ERT) during the COVID-19 confinement? (b) How do teachers and students feel about working in that way?

Theoretical Framework

As stated by McAvinia (2016), "terminology describing the use of technology in education is in a constant state of flux, and this can make discussion of the field extremely difficult" (pp. 4–5). Cognizant of this fact, we adopt Paulsen et al.'s (2002) proposal of the features of online education: (a) physical separation of teachers and learners, (b) involvement of an educational institution that oversees the planning and execution of the process and provides constant support, and (c) the use of a computer network (the Internet) both to distribute the content and to afford interaction among teachers and students. The massive shift of higher education to a fully online delivery mode in Mexico and elsewhere has brought about a need for new terms to distinguish the carefully planned process of online education from the abrupt, unplanned delivery of content fully online brought about by crises like the COVID-19 confinement. One such term is ERT, which Hodges et al. (2020) define as follows:

A temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances. It involves the use of fully remote teaching solutions for instruction or education that would otherwise be delivered face-to-face or as blended or hybrid courses and that will return to that format once the crisis or emergency has abated. The primary objective in these circumstances is not to re-create a robust educational ecosystem but rather to provide temporary access to instruction and instructional supports in a manner that is quick to set up and is reliably available during an emergency or crisis. When we understand ERT in this manner, we can start to divorce it from "online learning." (Emergency Remote Teaching section, para. 1)

Hodges et al. (2020) highlight some features of ERT, namely limited resources for faculty support and training and the paramount importance of ensuring that content is accessible to all students in an inclusive and flexible manner. For that reason, they recommend privileging asynchronous options in ERT. They acknowledge that some traditional goals of online education, such as the promotion of collaboration and deep learning of content, might need to be de-emphasized in ERT due to its inherent limitations. Although Hodges et al. do not address it explicitly, we suggest that lack of student support and training in online learning skills is an important feature of ERT too. This is because students accustomed to traditional, face-to-face instruction may lack the digital literacies and autonomous learning skills necessary to learn effectively in ERT.

As implied by Hodges et al. (2020), faculty knowledge of ICTs as applied to education is important for the success of ERT. This principle applies to English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers too who, nowadays, are expected to know how to teach with ICTs. This knowledge includes several dimensions such as assuming new roles, learning to manage time, developing social skills, and even adopting different teaching styles. Teachers also need to be increasingly creative to teach online successfully (Hampel & Stickler, 2005, as cited in Guichon & Hauck, 2011). Teaching online demands time, effort, and engagement from teachers and institutions to employ ICT appropriately, reconceptualize teaching, and establish communication and interaction with students. Institutions seeking to migrate to distance education through online teaching and learning should do so gradually. In the transition to the online modality, institutions should prepare and support teachers and learners both pedagogically and technologically, especially those uninterested in teaching online (Comas-Quinn, 2011).

However, due to the unexpected and abrupt nature of the transition during the COVID-19 pandemic, the experience of moving to a fully online mode was likely a new and challenging one for unprepared teachers and

learners. In this study, experience is defined as something that happens to people, which involves a change in the ways they understand and relate to one another and/or to some aspect of reality (Sklair & Larrosa, 2009). The quality of teachers' and learners' experiences with ERT can be shaped by a variety of factors, some of which are described below.

Ideally, teachers and learners working together online should create communities of inquiry. A community of inquiry (CoI) is a group of people composed of teachers and students; they interact in a discursive process "to construct meaning and confirm understanding" (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008, p. 9). Garrison et al. (1999) proposed a framework to guide teachers to create learning experiences in CoIs. In those experiences, teachers should consider three recursive presences: cognitive presence, teaching presence, and social presence. They are vital in learning experiences to achieve successful learning outcomes (Rourke et al., 2001).

The cognitive presence integrates reflection and interaction to work with information. Students are exposed to it; they interchange information, conceptualize it, and apply it. This presence allows the construction of knowledge and corroboration of understanding through communication. The teaching presence is a component that ensures productivity in a CoI. Teachers are in charge of selecting the teaching methods and approaches, designing, facilitating, mediating, and directing the learning experience (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008).

The social presence is the ability of teachers and students to portray themselves and interact on the basis of their identities, which sets the basis for engagement in the CoI (Garrison et al., 1999). It creates a fun and productive community of learning and increases encouragement and cooperation (Garrison et al., 2001). It supports cognitive and affective goals. Cognitive goals are reinforced because social presence abets critical thinking. The second type of goals are supported "by making the group interactions appealing, engaging, and thus intrinsically rewarding, leading to an increase

in academic, social, and institutional integration and resulting in increased persistence and course completion” (Tinto, 1987, as cited in Rourke et al., 2001, p. 52). The framework by Garrison et al. (1999) should guide teachers to include the three vital presences necessary to obtain successful learning outcomes.

Shield, Lamy, and Goodfellow (1984, as cited in Shield et al., 2001, p. 79) propose that there are two kinds of tutors in online environments: the cognitive tutor and the social tutor. The cognitive tutor pays attention to knowledge construction, and the social tutor focuses more on interaction. The interaction and roles of teachers depend on the type of tutor they are at any given time. The cognitive tutor’s role is that of an observer and content expert. The roles of the social tutor are those of a confidant trying to encourage students’ autonomy, a counselor who guides students through the problems they experience while working online, and a human being interacting with students at any time (Hauck & Haezwindth, 1999, as cited in Shield et al., 2001). The roles and types of tutor influence the dynamics of the learning environment. As suggested by Hodges et al. (2020), these ideal features of online education (the creation of CoIs, an adequate balance among the types of presence and tutor) may not be present in ERT due to its inherent limitations.

Method

This qualitative content analysis study examined teachers’ and students’ experiences while working online during the pandemic confinement. We chose a qualitative research approach because it allows for the study of “the meaning of people’s lives, under real-world conditions” (Yin, 2011, p. 29).

Context and Participants

The study was conducted in the College of Modern Languages (CML) of a large public university in central Mexico. The first author works in this college and is very familiar with the context. The second author works

elsewhere but is often invited to teach courses and supervise theses there. The college offers face-to-face, online, and blended-learning degree programs. However, most of the students are enrolled in the face-to-face mode, which is also where most of the faculty teach. Faculty members teaching in the online and blended-learning programs are trained to do so. Training in distance education for the rest of the faculty was not offered when the COVID-19 confinement began and only began to be offered after the data for this study were collected.

The sampling process was voluntary (Hernández-Sampieri et al., 2014). The researchers invited faculty and students of the face-to-face BA program in ELT to participate in the study via an email to the college’s listserv containing a link to a Google form (see below) on May 30th, 2020. Due to the low number of responses, we asked the program’s coordinator to re-send the invitation. The students and faculty who answered the invitation by June 26th were included in the study. The sample consisted of 26 faculty members (five men and 21 women) and 32 students (eight men and 24 women). The teachers’ ages ranged from 37 to 58 years old, and the students were 18–26 years old. All the students were enrolled in the face-to-face program at the beginning of the pandemic. Three of the teachers taught in both the face-to-face and online programs, and the remaining 23 only in the face-to-face program. In the excerpts below, the acronym *PTS* is used to identify participating teachers, and *PSS* to identify participating students.

Instruments

The participants who accepted the invitation received an informed consent letter and a questionnaire via email. Initially, we had planned to conduct an interview, but we discarded this idea due to time and Internet access constraints on the part of the participants. The questionnaire was adapted from that used in Juárez-Díaz (2020). This questionnaire was designed to investigate EFL learning experiences at the college level. It was

reviewed and validated by a panel of four Mexican and one Bolivian university professors with expertise and recognition in education and/or EFL, including this study's second author. It includes questions about learning experiences as well as feelings, thoughts, and actions arising from the experiences. The wording of the questionnaire was changed slightly to focus on online learning and, for faculty participants, teaching. The two resulting questionnaires (one for teachers and one for students, see Appendix) were sent to the participants as Google forms in Spanish. The participants answered the questionnaire in Spanish, thus, the excerpts in the results section are translations.

Procedures

After the participants' responses were received, the first author read them to make sure that they were clear and informative. She determined that two participating teachers had not provided enough information or the information they provided was not clear enough. Then, she contacted these participants by phone and asked them to elaborate on their answers. While speaking with them, she typed on the Microsoft Word files containing their written answers to capture the participants' new information.

The participants' responses were analyzed using semidirected qualitative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The first author read the participants' answers without initially looking for the presence of any theoretical constructs. As categories began to emerge from similarities and differences across different responses (Hernández-Sampieri et al., 2014), the first author noticed that many of them could be captured by existing constructs such as the two types of tutors or the three types of presence. She then began to reduce and label categories accordingly, while keeping the process open for other categories not present in existing frameworks. The resulting coding was audited by the second author, who read the transcripts and verified the applicability and consistency of the codes. The

principle of saturation was reached so that only 32 out of 43 responses were considered for the study (Álvarez-Gayou, 2003).

Results and Discussion

Teachers' and Students' Online Experiences

The data discussed below paint a picture of complex decision-making on the part of the teachers in the face of competing needs and no training for both teachers and students. This had a negative impact on students' and teachers' experiences and emotions, but a few were able to thrive thanks to their autonomous learning skills.

Confronted with the reality of ERT and the absence of clear institutional policies and support, the unexperienced teachers made an effort to learn how to teach remotely on their own. Most of the participants worked with *Google Classroom*, *Schoology*, *WhatsApp*, and email to send materials, assign tasks, and store students' products. They had different reasons for using those platforms. Among those were ease of use and financial accessibility for themselves and for students who did not own a computer and/or did not have access to the Internet. Below are excerpts from the participants' answers that show their choices and the rationale behind them:

I used Schoology because I needed a platform to organize my courses. (PT5)

I chose to work with Edmodo and assigned activities weekly. I decided not to work through video conferences because there were students who told me that they did not have the means or financial resources to be connected. (PT3)

I use asynchronous materials presentations, explanations, online resources... I used them because not all students have Internet at home or at their workplace, so they could access the materials whenever they managed to have an Internet connection. (PT12)

I use WhatsApp because, when users refill their data plans, they get free social networks, and this works for almost the whole student population. (PT1)

Teachers used those platforms to work online; they allowed teachers to send materials and tasks. They received, stored, and checked students' tasks. They took advantage of the possibility to work synchronously or asynchronously according to their and the students' conditions and limitations (Conceição, 2006). In this way, teachers could give a chance to students to work when they could. The decision to promote learning through those tools suggests that teachers became cognitive tutors since they acted as content experts and focused on the construction of knowledge by concerning themselves with content delivery (Shield, Lamy, & Goodfellow, 1984, as cited in Shield et al., 2001). This is in alignment with extant recommendations for ERT in terms of prioritizing equal access to content (Hodges et al., 2020).

At the same time, the participants' focus on making material available and gathering students' products showed their lack of experience with online education. According to Conrad (2004) inexperienced online teachers tend to become content-oriented. This happened to most of our teacher participants as they focused on providing enough material to the learners, except those with training in online education. In other words, the type of interaction promoted by their online teaching was mainly student-material. Learner-learner and teacher-learner interaction, which is widely recommended for online education (Cundell & Sheepy, 2018), tended not to occur due to the limitations inherent to ERT.

Using the platforms to distribute and store content seemed appropriate to many teachers as they thought that this allowed them to support students who did not have technological tools and/or had rigid work schedules. Although this is a good ERT practice per Hodges et al. (2020), many students found it unhelpful. Most students reported that most teachers only provided content and assigned homework without giving opportunities to ask

questions. Thus, 54.5% reported disliking this way of teaching because they felt that they were on their own and did not learn as much as in face-to-face classes. Then, the absence of interaction and feedback did not fit these students' perceived needs. This affected them negatively, leaving them with questions and with the experience of not having learned:

I have an endless number of assignments, I felt stressed out because I did not understand, and I just delivered things. I did not learn the right way. (PS10)

Teachers just overwhelmed us with assignments and personally, I didn't learn anything. (PS11)

I feel like I'm not learning what I should learn. Many teachers only send homework and do not give any explanation as they used to do in face-to-face classes, and many times this is a bit complicated and confusing. (PS13)

I don't understand the classes, the teachers only send activities. (PS14)

The teachers assign a lot of homework and don't teach anything. (PS17)

Some teachers only sent the material and we didn't have any support or comments in order to understand the topics accurately. (PS18)

This result is similar to Allen et al.'s (2002) finding that students learn less in online courses because such courses involve less teacher-student interaction than face-to-face classrooms do. According to Rourke et al. (2001), it is necessary to integrate the three presences mentioned above in the learning experiences to reach the learning goals. Students' experiences suggest that teachers mostly performed the teacher presence in the sense that they organized the content and activities in the course. However, students perceived that teachers left aside the cognitive presence, which helps to verify understanding and develop knowledge (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). As for the type of tutor, students' reports that teachers mostly focused on content rather than interacting meaningfully with students or promoting meaningful student-student interaction dovetail with

teachers' own reports in suggesting that teachers were primarily cognitive tutors. Nevertheless, the focus on content was probably adequate in light of the recommended emphasis on content accessibility in ERT, its intrinsic limitations, and the digital gap in Mexico.

These students' and teachers' comments also show that the social presence was absent in the experience of learning and teaching online during the pandemic. The social presence is the basis for setting communication and motivating students to learn (Tinto, 1987, as cited in Rourke et al., 2001). The social presence creates a pleasant and productive community of learning. It increases encouragement and cooperation to learn (Garrison et al., 2001). As teachers neglected this presence due to the training limitations inherent to ERT, the learning outcomes were affected. This is an undesirable but potentially unavoidable feature of ERT, particularly at its early stages.

In the context of planned online education, online teachers must fulfill three main responsibilities: organizing the course (e.g., organizing content, managing time), monitoring students' understandings while promoting collaboration and reflection, and diagnosing learners' needs (Garrison & Anderson, 2003). Nevertheless, the experiences reported above by teachers and learners show that the teachers only took one responsibility out of the three they have as online tutors, which was organizing the course. They did not monitor students' understandings or promote collaboration and reflection. Furthermore, teachers did not accomplish their third responsibility, which was to diagnose learners' needs (Garrison & Anderson, 2003). These shortcomings are to be expected in ERT. They were compounded by the fact that, at first, the university did not implement any measures to diagnose learners' digital literacy and autonomous learning needs to better prepare them for an ERT situation.

The students' comments above suggest that those specific students (PS10, PS11, PS14, PS17, PS18) and others who made similar comments (PS7, PS9, PS12, PS23, PS26,

and PS30) are somewhat dependent on teachers rather than autonomous. It seems that they make teachers responsible for their learning outcomes and prefer to receive information passively as, unlike other students, they did not report taking an active role in their learning. This finding matches that in Mali (2017). ERT thus triggered an unfavorable learning experience in students accustomed to working in teacher-centered contexts.

However, not all students felt helpless in the face of minimal teacher support. A minority (21.8%)—exemplified by PS16, PS19, and PS24—overcame their learning difficulties by taking control of their learning process. Once they realized that interaction with teachers would be minimal or non-existent, they acted to learn and understand the topics by themselves. According to Grow (1991, as cited in Narváez-Rivero & Prada-Mendoza, 2005), self-directed students can learn with or without the help of an expert and move independently in the learning process. They plan, organize, carry out, and evaluate their learning. Thus, a few students took the responsibility of their learning outcomes, which is an essential characteristic of self-directed learning (Garrison, 1997). Here are their reported experiences:

I sought more information on my own in order to learn.
(PS16)

I learned by myself because online classes didn't work for me. (PS19)

I am autonomous and due to the lack of support from some teachers, I had to search more information on my own. (PS24)

It was advantageous for these students to have self-directed their learning processes. This allowed them to experience learning despite the absence of the teacher presence and the social presence. They actively worked on their learning process and felt that they had learned. In other words, they became autonomous learners. Similarly, other studies have found that online learning helped students become autonomous (Çelebi et al., 2016; Herrera-Díaz, 2012; Mali, 2017).

Although most of the teacher participants (54%) focused on providing material and assignments, a large minority (46%) used platforms that allowed them to interact, provide feedback and explanations synchronously, such as Zoom or Skype. They used these platforms to communicate with their students and monitor students' understanding:

We connect via Zoom, we practice and upload work in a virtual room. I consider it the best way to have "face-to-face" explanations. (PT17)

I used Zoom for interaction... WhatsApp to have communication and build trust and motivation. (PT20)

I use WhatsApp, mail, Skype, or Zoom. It has been the most practical way I have found to communicate and guide content work. (PT21)

The use of platforms where virtual sessions could take place generated positive learning experiences in students. In contrast to those students whose teachers did not interact with them online, students whose teachers held virtual classes reported more positive experiences. They found it convenient to have video conferences to clear out questions, receive explanations, and interact with their teachers. Such interactions generated a positive learning experience. This finding is similar to the one obtained in Muñoz-Marín and González-Moncada (2010), who found that students' learning experience was positive when teachers guided them with technology use, provided feedback and individualized attention. Below are some students' comments in this regard:

I like to have classes with Zoom because it has helped me to get answers for my questions. (PS1)

The online classes or videos with the teachers explaining helped me to learn. (PS4)

I learnt with the online classes, where I can interact with my teachers. (PS12)

I liked the online classes; they are easy to understand as they are similar to being in a classroom. (PS22)

I learned with the classes by video calls because the topics were explained to clarify the topics. (PS30)

In those experiences, the social, cognitive, and teacher presence were involved. Teachers made students feel as if they were working face-to-face with their teachers, and that helped them learn. Rourke et al. (2001) state that these three types of presences are vital for learning to occur. Besides, the participants found videoconferences useful to interact with teachers, clarify questions, address misunderstandings, and have a learning experience similar to that of a traditional classroom. Candarli and Yuksel (2012) obtained a similar result: Students work better with platforms that allow them to work alongside their teachers to construct knowledge.

Despite these positive student experiences, teachers reported that access remained a problem for other students. Teachers said that some students missed the online classes because they did not have a computer or Internet access to work virtually. The participating teachers volunteered the following comments:

Not all students have access to the platform or the Internet. (PT2)

Not all students connect to the videocalls; the Internet keeps malfunctioning. (PT4)

The lack of equipment affects students, they do not have computers to carry out activities remotely. Some students live in communities where access to the Internet is spotty. (PT7)

It is not surprising that students missed online classes in light of the fact that computer ownership and Internet access remain limited in Mexico (INEGI, 2019). This issue confronted not only the students, but also at least one teacher: "Not all of us have easy access to a computer or the Internet. I am contributing not only my effort to cover the contents, but also my resources, my computer, my connection" (PT12).

Teachers also mentioned that some students who took the virtual classes did not engage in them; their participation was low and they cheated on the tasks:

Some students only entered the session, but they did not participate. (PT10)

There are some students who registered as members of the platform, but they do not do any of the activities that I request. (PT13)

I noticed that students cheated on the tasks, they asked some relatives or friends to do their homework, they handed in perfect tasks and in a Zoom meeting where we talked about the exercise experiences, they couldn't say their name or good morning in English. (PT22)

I scheduled my classes at 7 in the morning and 50% of the students did not log in. (PT11)

In online education, one of the teachers' duties is to encourage students to be involved and engaged in the sessions. De los Arcos and Arnedillo-Sánchez (2006, as cited in Rosell-Aguilar, 2007) suggest that online teachers employ teaching strategies to increase students' attention and interaction. Some researchers recommend telling students directly and precisely what teachers expect from them regarding engagement in discussions, attendance, and responsibilities in the learning process (Sharpe et al., 2006). In this way, students might have a clearer idea of teachers' expectations about their behavior, functions, and roles in the online learning experience. According to Comas-Quinn (2011), online teachers must reconceptualize their and students' roles and how they construct knowledge through online interaction. However, the rushed transition and the limited resources and support typical of ERT make it unrealistic to hold teachers to such high standards. In addition, the digital gap might make student participation impossible regardless of the strategies that teachers deploy. This problem demands an educational policy response at a higher level in order to train teachers to teach online in ERT circumstances and to reduce the digital gap. The next section turns attention to the participants' feelings.

Feelings Toward Online Teaching-Learning

Most teachers (56%) reported that they did not like to work online. They preferred face-to-face classes whereas

42.30% of the teachers expressed that they like to work online. Teachers had both positive and negative feelings about online teaching-learning. Some teachers felt uncomfortable working online because of the problems they encountered in the teaching experiences. Teachers had to work harder and for longer hours than they did in face-to-face classes before the confinement. In other studies, teachers experienced the same problems related to increased work time and workload (Cladellas & Castelló, 2011; Comas-Quinn, 2011; Weasenforth, 2001). The time demand and work overload generated negative emotional states such as feeling overwhelmed, annoyed, stressed out, tired, and frustrated. According to some researchers, negative feelings affect teachers' performance and health. Work overload causes them anxiety and stress and their general welfare is affected negatively (Houlihan et al., 2009). The participating teachers said:

Teaching online demands more time to prepare classes and follow up with each student in a personalized way, especially when there are large groups. (PT3)

I am overwhelmed with work. It is very demanding to work online. (PT10)

I am tired because the time I spend teaching has tripled. (PT13)

I feel stressed by everything, my students, my children, my house, the situation worldwide. (PT17)

It is crucial to prevent negative feelings because they cause mental and physical disturbances that affect teachers' performance. Stress, nervousness, anxiety, and anger may have severe or chaotic consequences not only at work but outside work. Those feelings can lead to poor decision-making (Cladellas & Castelló 2011).

By contrast, online teaching generated positive feelings in some participants such as satisfaction when teachers could develop new teaching strategies, learn about ICT, and apply their knowledge to ERT. This was true of the three experienced teachers but also of a few more. The former ones were comfortable because they

already had online education training and experience; the latter adapted to the new way of working. They felt challenged to look for ways to continue working and being in touch with their students. When they witnessed students' academic development, they felt satisfied and happy:

I feel satisfied, I think it was a beautiful experience where I learned new ways to teach. (PT26)

I feel comfortable, it is in fact a process that I have already practiced for 6 years. (PT14)

Unlike the teachers, who had more varied feelings on both the positive and the negative side, all participating students reported that the experience of learning online during the confinement triggered negative feelings in them. This was true even for those who felt that they had learned and interacted with teachers. The students felt stressed out, frustrated, overwhelmed, sad, unsatisfied, confused, anxious, bored, empty, and pressured. They attributed those feelings to the number of assignments, the lack of computer and/or Internet access, boring classes, and lack of understanding and learning. Similarly, online learning has been found to provoke negative feelings such as depression, anxiety, and disinterest in non-ERT contexts (Whitman et al., 1984). It was to be expected that such negative feelings should increase in an ERT situation considering the uncertainties in education and life at large brought about by the pandemic (Hodges et al., 2020). The student participants expressed the following:

I feel frustrated, confused, overwhelmed, unmotivated because in online classes I am not learning effectively and it only generates excessive physical and mental fatigue. (PS2)

I am stressed out about the homework and worried about learning because online classes don't work, and we weren't ready for this. (PS19)

I feel stressed out because sometimes the technical failures of the Internet interrupt my online classes and I also feel that this tool has not been enough for my learning. (PS22)

Students felt stressed out from working online because they were not prepared for ERT, lacked autonomous learning skills and, in some cases, had inadequate ICT resources. These difficulties resulted in an increased cognitive and emotional burden as most students felt unable and were untrained to cope with the demands of ERT. When students feel stressed out, they can also feel disempowered. In turn, this might affect their performance, cognition, decision-making, and attention (Whitman et al., 1984). Teachers' reports of academic disengagement and difficulties with content appear to confirm these negative effects. However, as discussed above, some students met the challenges of ERT, overcame stress and felt an increased sense of competency.

Conclusions

The experiences of most teachers with ERT during the confinement revolved around providing content and assignments and performing the teaching presence as cognitive tutors (i.e., focusing on knowledge via content delivery), but without the social presence or the reflective, metacognitive component of the cognitive presence. Most teachers refrained from using video calls or other synchronous types of communication out of a desire not to exclude those students with limited equipment or Internet access. Accordingly, the experiences of most students focused on completing and submitting assignments, without opportunities to ask questions and clarify misunderstandings. These students reported that they did not learn. Nevertheless, a few students experienced this absence of cognitive presence as an opportunity to take command of their own learning by looking for and processing information on their own.

However, a minority of teachers (including those with previous online teaching experience) used video calls and synchronous communication, which allowed them to perform the cognitive and social presences and to act as social tutors. The students of this second type of teacher report that learning occurred. Nevertheless,

these teachers also reported that some students were excluded, did not participate at all, or cheated on their assignments. Exclusion and lack of engagement might have been caused by the digital gap. As such, these data speak of a trade-off between exploiting interactive technologies like video calls and inclusion. In other words, the concern of the first group of teachers that using data-intensive tools like video calls would exclude some students appears to have been validated by the second group's reports of disappearing and/or disengaged students. This resonates strongly with Hodges et al.'s (2020) recommendations to work asynchronously and prioritize equitable access to content in ERT over other goals such as promoting collaboration and deep content learning.

Regarding feelings, the second group of teachers reported satisfaction from professional growth and from witnessing student learning. However, the digital gap, students' attitudes, and increased work hours and workload caused the online teaching experience to trigger negative feelings. From the students' standpoint, the online learning experience triggered many negative feelings. That finding is similar to the one obtained in Herrera-Díaz (2012), whose participants had negative feelings while working online and were in favor of face-to-face classes.

Most teachers and students experienced difficulties with ERT during the pandemic. Many teachers worked asynchronously by providing content and assignments. While this is recommended practice in ERT (Hodges et al., 2020), it was not satisfactory to most students. During normal online education, teachers must promote appropriate learning experiences with the cognitive, teaching, and social presences that are necessary for the learning cycle to occur. Additionally, both teachers and institutions must promote learner autonomy in the context of online education. However, due to insufficient training and the abrupt nature of the shift to ERT, most teachers used ICTs in content-focused ways and most

students were not able to learn autonomously. All of this had a negative impact on learning outcomes.

Because such negative effects on learning are intrinsic to ERT, Hodges et al. (2020) recommend adjusting grading methods to reflect that reality. Unfortunately, the grading practices at CML were not adjusted to the circumstances of ERT, which probably contributed to the stress and anxiety that teachers and students felt while working online. Therefore, a recommendation for institutions preparing for ERT is to provide not only technical support but also emotional support. In addition to adjusting grading practices, such support can include stress management strategies. Managing stress positively helps students learn. On the contrary, when stress is not coped with successfully, it affects students' and teachers' decision-making and general welfare. Therefore, stress management should be a component of institutional support during ERT.

Another implication of this study is that, when preparing for ERT, training needs to be provided not only to teachers but also to students. This training should address not only technological skills but also autonomous learning skills. As discussed above, this type of skills appears to have helped some student to have positive learning experiences despite the asynchronous, non-interactive nature of the teaching they were exposed to at CML.

The digital gap (INEGI, 2019) made inclusion in the online modality difficult as evidenced by the fact that not all students attended virtual sessions or participated in them actively. This digital gap, along with insufficient teacher preparation in online teaching and student preparation in autonomous learning indicates that Mexican institutions such as the one where this study was conducted were not ready to implement ERT in an effective and inclusive manner. These shortcomings challenge public institutions and the State itself to take action to reduce the digital gap in Mexican higher education.

Because ERT events may happen again in the future due to the increased likelihood of extreme climate events (Diffenbaugh et al., 2017) and even new pandemics (Yamey et al., 2017), it is important for educational institutions to minimize harmful impacts on learning by addressing critical ERT areas. This study has identified four such areas: the digital gap, teacher training, student training in both ICT use and autonomous learning, and stress management support. At the time of writing this manuscript and after the initial shock of moving to ERT abruptly, CML and other institutions have begun to provide ERT support. The nature and impact of such support must be investigated by future studies.

Conducting such studies would be important to increase the field's knowledge of ways that ERT support can contribute to the resilience of EFL educational systems in the face of catastrophic events. While there are published studies of educational resilience following earthquakes (Kinchin, 2019), we are not aware of any studies that have addressed ERT as part of EFL educational systems' resilience and pandemic preparedness. Pandemic preparedness in particular appears to have been addressed primarily from the perspective of health systems (Yamey et al., 2017). However, as the current COVID-19 pandemic has shown, educational systems are also critical for the functioning of societies. Therefore, their pandemic preparedness and resilience must be theorized and investigated in order to maximize opportunities for meaningful learning to occur in the context of ERT events.

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Appendix: The Two Questionnaires

Note. The original language of the questionnaires was Spanish.

The preservice teachers' questionnaire:

1. As a student, how do you feel during this confinement period?
2. Why do you think you feel this way?
3. Do you like how your teachers are working during this confinement period in your different courses? Why?
4. How do the teachers of your different subjects teach their classes during this confinement period?
5. Do you reflect on what you learned in your different subjects during this confinement period? Yes or no? Why?
6. What has helped you the most to learn during this confinement period?
7. What has made it more difficult to learn during this confinement period?
8. What else can you say about your learning experience during this confinement period?

The faculty questionnaire:

1. How do you teach the content of the courses to your students during this confinement period?
2. How do you feel about the way you are working during this confinement period?
3. Why are you working the way you mentioned in Question 1?
4. How are your classes during this confinement period?
5. Do you think that your students have learned in your different courses? Why?
6. Have you had any favorable teaching experiences during this confinement period?
7. As a teacher, what has been the best thing you have experienced in the different courses you teach?
8. Have you had any unfavorable teaching experiences during this confinement period?
9. As a teacher, what has been the worst thing you have experienced in the different courses you teach?
10. What other aspect do you consider relevant to talk about regarding your teaching experience during this confinement period?