【研究ノート】

Lessons Learned while Teaching During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Thomas GOETZ

Christopher CARTNEY

Kenlay FRIESEN

Jeffrey BERRY

研究ノート

Lessons Learned while Teaching During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Thomas Goetz　　　Christopher Cartney

Kenlay Friesen　　Jeffrey Berry

Contents

［Abstract］
Lessons Learned while Teaching During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Many actual or potential social processes, such as race, gender, and profession impact foreign language learning. This article focuses on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic introduced several forced and unwelcome changes to daily life. This article records the various adaptations and innovations made to meet the educational needs of students wishing to learn a foreign language, in this case, English. Foreign language education can be described as a pathway for learners to transit from their first language to their target language. The paper uses a qualitative analysis method through a roundtable discussion that invites reflections and introspection from the teachers to record the various methods and approaches the teachers adopted in teaching English during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Introduction

No one asked for the pandemic. We were not asked if we wanted to use Zoom or Moodle, or Manaba for learning management. Some of us were told to do everything through the postal service. During the COVID-19 pandemic, life changed in many unwelcome and unavoidable ways. Those in foreign language education had to adapt with no foreseeable end. Was this now the new normal? Were we never to see a classroom again? Answers to these and other similar questions were few and far between. In the in-between time, the contributors to this article adapted, reacted, shaped, and reshaped the way they approached foreign language education. This article records the various adaptations and innovations made to meet the educational needs of students wishing to learn and acquire a foreign language, in this case, English.

Foreign language education can be described as a pathway that learners walk from their first language to their target language. This pathway, commonly known as Interlanguage (IL), is a system of linguistic organization which learners utilize while learning a second language. A learner's IL is neither exactly one's native language nor the target language but a language of

one's invention. IL is not a special form of language, nor a special ability on the part of the learner, but a componential system containing specific values about knowledge and control. These are relatively less advanced when compared to native speakers. In the classroom, teachers create acquisition-rich environments that maintain motivation levels and assist learners in progressing along the Interlanguage continuum.

During the pandemic, the classroom was replaced by differing approaches. One approach was the Zoom classroom with or without a learning management system, Moodle or Manaba, and an on-demand approach, often involving Moodle and Manaba, or even simply the post office.

Regardless of the learning environment, Zoom or on-demand, three essential processes comprise language acquisition: 1) the internalization of new linguistic forms, 2) the progressive organization of form-function relationships, and 3) the elimination of redundant forms (Ellis, 1985). Foreign language education is systematic, yet it is vulnerable to instability due to variability. There is enough variation from learner to learner, the attitudes and motivations that learners bring or abandon before coming to class. Still, due to the social circumstances of the pandemic, individual linguistic differences already latent would only become more exaggerated.

Individual linguistic differences that influence progression along the interlanguage continuum are nothing new. Zuengler argues that there are many actual or potential social processes, such as race, gender, profession, and in this case, the pandemic (Zuengler, 1989).

With or without the pandemic, teachers must contend with how learners would give up and cancel themselves out of meaningful and continued learning or fossilizing. Fossilization occurs when the learner, having achieved a competent level of L2 proficiency, ceases to learn any new forms or, indeed, much of anything new concerning the L2. In a more positive light, fossilization can be seen as a storage mechanism for the target language's items, systems, structures, etc., that can be accessed and started again.

A word about methodology

The approach for this paper is qualitative in that of a roundtable discussion that invites reflection and introspection from the very teachers who were participants. This approach is less common in second language education research than in a quantitative approach.

A qualitative approach concerns understanding the overall learning experience from a common frame of reference shared by teachers and students. Data are collected from naturalistic settings with no control group. The teacher is a participant and the subjects with a considerable exchange between the two. This approach is discovery-oriented and exploratory.

For this paper, the participants draw upon their observations. This is known as participant

observation. Participant observation involves the researcher in the activities under study. Usually, there is no pre-set hypothesis; it's very exploratory, as with ethnographic research, where a group gets studied by personal or participant observation. It was decided to report on the time of transitioning to teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic with an ethnographic approach. Its advantages are that it allows for introspection where participants are observers and interact within this roundtable format.

Chris Cartney – online lessons for English non-major students using moodle, Glexa LMS, and Zoom web conferencing during the 2020 pandemic

Differences in online privacy policy at different institutions.

In my own particular case as a part-time instructor, it was necessary not only to implement online lessons using different teaching LMSs (Moodle and Glexa) but also to work with different policies with regard to using Zoom web conferencing software.

In the case of Fuji Women's University, the teachers had no restrictions in requiring students to have cameras switched on to ensure engagement. However, at Hokusei Gakuen University, the policy was that teachers could not insist on cameras being switched on. Despite being encouraged to join with cameras switched on, students were resistant to their usage, and it quickly became very difficult to have students comply with an unenforceable request. This problem was also observed in the literature (Morgan, 2022). In subsequent conversations, many students in Hokusei Gakuen admitted to taking a least effort attitude to Zoom lessons.

About Quizzes

The Moodle Quiz activity evaluates student understanding of the class material. Moodle quizzes consist of a Quiz activity that contains one or more questions. Multiple Choice, TF, Drag and Drop, Short-answer, and different kinds of questions. Feedback is based on student performance on the quiz. And there are ways to control student access to the quiz, passwords, dates, or through previous quizzes.

As discussed earlier, quizzes uploaded onto moodle or on Glexa LMS were necessary to ensure student participation and understanding in an environment without traditional teacher feedback. Fine-tuning was found to be necessary on both LMS. In particular, it was found to be advantageous to have a limited number of attempts and for the settings not to show the correct answers until a final submission. It was noticed that a significant number of students simply enter random answers in their first attempt to gain access to the correct answers, which they then input. There are good tools on quizzes to give feedback to incorrect answers, For example, explaining a related grammar point or linking students to coursework that further explains the answer.

Thomas Goetz： How did you teach presentation skills?

Teaching basic presentation organization and PowerPoint design was taught on-demand through moodle or Glexa-based activities and quizzes. The benefit of these exercises being done online is twofold. Firstly, students can work at their own pace, and secondly, by utilizing 'check your understanding' quizzes, the instructor can confirm the students have understood the teaching targets. This proved to be necessary as the teacher's ability to gauge understanding from facial cues was compromised. As discussed by Mukhtar, Javed et al. (Mukhtar et al., 2020), teachers are unable to assess students' understanding during online lecturing.

Delivery of presentations was now not the 'stand in front of the class with a laptop and projector screen' style of pre-pandemic lessons. Students, therefore, had to be guided on appropriate methodology for delivering online presentations. In particular, I made use of contemporary business-based web resources on how to create a good impression on Zoom conference calls. At that time (2020), there was very little geared toward educationally based presentation techniques. These business-orientated guides however did cover ubiquitous good practice for giving online presentations.

After students had prepared scripts and PowerPoint slides, they were randomly paired in breakout rooms to practice their presentation before being asked to read to a group. This proved a very necessary step to eliminating simple technical problems such as those affecting the audio level and issues involving screen sharing. In general, students demonstrated a high ability at overcoming routine technical problems and familiarity with relevant software..

TG： Were you surprised by the Zoom-based presentation results?

I was pleasantly surprised that the ability of lower-level students to accomplish their online presentation goals (to deliver a well-organized presentation on Zoom using PowerPoint slides shared on screen) were achieved at an above-satisfactory level. The students seemed encouraged by this and I reminded them that giving a presentation in English using new web conferencing software was something not accomplished easily and gave real-world applicable skills.

In fact, I felt Zoom conferencing presentations gave better results than pre-pandemic outcomes in face-to-face classes where students stood up in front of a class. I don't know how students approach and feel when standing up in front of a class, but it seems like they just go into automatic mode. However hard I try to push students in a face-to-face class to engage with the PowerPoint slides, make eye contact, use gestures, and generally have a good rapport with their audience, it doesn't happen. Students get up, read the script, sit back down again, and just want to get through it. However, I found that while using Zoom breakout rooms, the majority of students performed well. They were noticeably more enthusiastic. Now (fall 2022) that we are primarily teaching face-to-face on campus, I would quite like to have one or two classes a year where the students give their presentations on Zoom.

TG： Did you make use of the Moodle Forums?

The Moodle forum is one of the places where students can hold online discussions. Forums can be set up in different ways for different purposes. There are many different types of forums. In a discussion forum, students participate in an ongoing discussion where anyone can start a new topic, and others can reply. Another forum style is where there is only one topic. Students post replies but cannot start new topics. Forums can be used for private journals or for open journals. Forums can also be used for group work.

The discussion forums were occasionally successful but not always. The idea of the forum is to make a post depending on the topic and then give comments as feedback. The idea is to get an ongoing discussion. I found that the students gave a minimum level of response. They tended to just do the assignment and maybe just follow one or two students up afterward. One thing I noticed that you have to do is tell the students that once there are five comments on the post, they have to write comments on a different person's post. Otherwise, the one at the top is always the one that's commented on. One student would get perhaps 20 comments on their post, and then other students will get zero. So there were a few things to iron out.

Initially, my goal in using forums was to help introduce students to an online learning environment. With first year classes, we are dealing with students who didn't get to experience the usual campus experience of getting to know new people. So, in the beginning, I used forums for students to introduce themselves, hopefully, say something interesting about themselves, and then post a photograph. I respect that Japanese people like their privacy, so I gave students the option of either uploading a photograph of themselves or, if they preferred, posting a photograph of their hobby or pet. Unfortunately, most photos were very benign, and in fact, almost no student posted a photograph of themselves. They weren't expressing themselves fully. Shyness is to be expected. This a cultural thing, and it was going on here.

TG： What about Assignments?

The Assignment activity in Moodle allows me, the teacher, to collect and evaluate student work. Managing student work using an Assignment activity gives you these benefits. The Assignment activity provides a convenient paperless database of student submissions that can be organized and managed online. There is also a grading interface through which grades can be entered and feedback provided to each student. Due dates for assignments can be set.

Assignments were typically used for on-demand lessons. Depending on the assignments, I would sometimes ask students to do the tasks within 24 hours. Then I could grade it while the lesson was still fresh in my mind. Otherwise, I didn't want to come to the end of the week and have 15 classes to grade on my weekend. So I told students that even if the class was on-demand, it was preferable to do the class during the time allocated on the schedule. A class that was on demand would still have the teacher available on Google Messages during the duration of the scheduled

lesson.. They could send me a message and get an instant response. Occasionally a student would ask a question. The students generally got the flow of following the deadlines.

TG : Earlier, we mentioned Interlanguage and how students are to progress toward their target language. Did you sense any difference here, or was it the same journey?

That's a problem because, usually, I do my classes using English immersion. Students are strongly encouraged to converse in English and only to talk in Japanese with their instructor after class time is finished. In face-to-face classes, I would demonstrate with a student to make a task process understandable and model a dialog that would reflect a real-life situation. In other words, I would get help from one of the more capable students, and we would demonstrate it to the class. The rest of the class could then follow the exercise. However, with online classes, that becomes a lot more difficult. And with that opportunity, small as it may be, to use English in a real-life situation disappeared.

TG : How did you stay connected with your students?

1) Real-time communication using the 'chat' function. Although undoubtedly increasing the instructor's workload, students were noticeably more comfortable asking questions to their teacher either about practical issues such as "How many times have I been absent this semester?" or questions about English language understanding. The ability to chat with the teacher on LMS (or Zoom) during real-time lessons was heavily utilized. Perhaps students felt more comfortable asking questions in which they do not disturb the class or because they were able to use translation software and prepare their questions in advance.

2) Deferred communication (e.g., email) Again, although email correspondence was available to students pre-pandemic, by necessity, it became much more utilized during the move to online lessons. This increased use of email to communicate with instructors continued once students returned to the classroom.

TG : So, what is the takeaway?

There were essentially two ways to approach emergency remote learning – In real-time using Zoom or on demand using LMS. On-demand was certainly less stressful for everybody. Still, whether that benefited the students so much is less clear. Are there dangers to an overreliance on on-demand lessons? Zoom lessons certainly have problems associated with real-time technology usage barriers, but in my opinion help, the student feels more connected to their instructor and classmates. A downside, however, is that students have frequently commented on Zoom fatigue from 90-minute Zoom lessons. From my practical experience, a hybrid format of having the lesson partly on Zoom and partly on demand achieved the best balance. This hybrid approach allowed for objective grading and the benefit of students being able to prepare and review the coursework.

Response by Thomas Goetz

The approach taken by Chris is best described as a collection of approaches depending upon the

nature of the tasks before him and his students. The flexibility and adaptability with a focus on the learner impressed me the most. It is evident that his finding of a "best balance" involved trial and error given the limitations of the Zoom lessons, often without cameras. Maintaining the immersion element it seems open up doors for students who were on the shy side to contact him one on one and not in front of their peers. This would not have happened in a classroom environment. To this end, the shift to the Zoom classroom was not only a discovery but a benefit. Now that we are away from Zoom teaching, I wonder how we can best carry this aspect into our current face-to-face situation.

An Instructor's Perspective on Four Universities' Implementation of 'Emergency Remote Learning'
Kenlay Friesen

The first COVID-19 cases were discovered in December 2019, and soon the four universities at which I worked decided to cancel face-to-face classes and go online. It's important to understand that we did not have time to prepare for this. According to Bozkurt and Sharma (2020) there are significant differences between what is normally referred to as 'online learning' and the kind of education we delivered during COVID-19. We were doing 'emergency remote learning', not carefully constructed distance education program. This is important to keep in mind when thinking through how these different universities reacted to this 'emergency remote learning' environment. Many studies have focused on the effect of emergency remote learning on students. However, my point of view here is of an adjunct lecturer working at four different Japanese universities. I will begin with a discussion of each university's approach and conclude with some general observations about what was challenging, what worked, and what should change.

My primary employer is Hokusei Gakuen Daigaku (Hokusei), but in the interests of privacy, I will refer to the others as universities B, C, and D.

Hokusei already had an LMS in place, in this case Moodle, so the only thing Hokusei really needed to do was to give all instructors an institutional Zoom account. The transition to emergency remote teaching was reasonably seamless. I have been using and presenting on Moodle for the past 10 years, so transitioning to Moodle was simple. Furthermore, there are many instructional videos and online support networks for Moodle, such as Online Teaching Japan and The Moodle Association of Japan. Instructors can get support if they look for it. My only criticism of Hokusei is that they expected us, adjunct lecturers, to set up a workstation at home complete with a computer, camera, mic, and high-speed Internet connection, and keep this up and running throughout the pandemic without any financial support.

University B had no LMS when the pandemic began. They decided to install Universal Passport (UNIPA) on their university server. This is a cumbersome LMS and not well-known. There are

no instructional videos available on social media sites such as Facebook or YouTube. It was complicated and difficult to use. After an initial encounter, the staff who taught English classes decided to switch to Edmodo, a free LMS, and use UNIPA only for attendance. There was a steep learning curve with Edmodo, but after a few days I was able to create quizzes, and assignments, do grading, and so on. UNIPA was another story. It is extremely user-not-friendly. Also, there is no online support, there are no instructional videos, and there is no online community to turn to. They also provided no financial support although we were expected to teach from home.

University C had just stopped using Moodle as their LMS and had switched to Manaba. This switch was unrelated to COVID-19. They immediately organized a faculty development orientation session to familiarize the faculty with Manaba, and after that we were expected to create our online classes on our own on that platform. There was a steep learning curve with Manaba, but the orientation session was helpful and we received ongoing tech support from the university. For instance, they provided us with pro-Zoom accounts and also had some tech support for Manaba. The biggest problem with Manaba is that there is only a very small online support community and no instructional videos are available. Again, they offered no financial support although we were expected to deliver our classes from home.

University D had no LMS before COVID-19 and decided (mistakenly in my opinion) that Moodle had too many security risks. Manaba was also rejected, although I am not sure why. They did not have a Google institutional account for the students so Google Classroom was also a no-starter. Instructors were to write out instructions for paper-based lessons in a Word document and email that to the university, where it would be printed. Photocopies of the assignments were then sent by mail to students using Japan Post. Students would complete the assignments (on paper) and mail them back to the university. The university collected the assignments and mailed them back to the instructors. After sending out four assignments, I received my first tranche of student work. I received, in the mail, 180 paper assignments, from two classes of thirty students. Some had forgotten to write their names and numbers, and most had no indication of which assignment they were completing. I was expected to respond individually to each student and send them a response in the mail.. After seven painful weeks, university D finally purchased an institutional account for Google Classroom. I do not teach there anymore.

Unrelated to the various universities' implementation of LMS and support, there were other significant issues. One expression that emerged during the pandemic was 'key-hole teaching', the idea that the students are in the classroom and the teacher is on the other side of the door, shouting at them, through a keyhole. That sums up the experience pretty well. I have always said 'I don't teach English, I teach students', meaning that I intend to implement a student-centered approach to learning rather than a subject-centered one. But during the pandemic, I became a subject-oriented instructor, against my best intentions. With the 'cameras can be off' policy I, literally and figuratively, lost sight of my students. I was unable to recognize their faces and

remember their names. I could not see the students' reactions and without their feedback, I didn't know what was working and what wasn't. None of the university's administrations addressed this issue and it seemed to me to be irrelevant to them.

A second major issue for me was testing. I found it difficult to gauge students' English ability via the medium of Zoom and online coursework. There are many wonderful online tools that make language learning easier, but they also make it really difficult to test and grade fairly. Imagine a matching question with a vocabulary list on one side and a list of sentences with words missing on the other. A student can hover their cursor over the vocabulary test words to get an immediate translation and copy and paste the sentences into Deep or Google translate. How can I, on the other side of the Zoom screen, control that? This was a problem with all of the institutions. University C gave instructors the option of doing in-class exams, which I gladly did.

A third issue was a lack of student motivation and signs of depression. I could feel enthusiasm waning as the semesters dragged on, and it was a constant struggle to get students to participate in breakout rooms and attend Zoom classes. I had students who would wake up 2-3 minutes before class began, log onto the zoom meeting, respond to the attendance roll-call, and then go back to sleep. This kind of thing was not an isolated incident. I am not sure exactly where the boundaries are any more in terms of encouraging the students to do basic life skills activities like 'get out of bed before class begins' and 'try washing your face before joining a Zoom class'. I would not have encroached into my students' private lives in such a way prior to the pandemic. Multiple academic studies have shown that many students suffered depression during the pandemic; as many as 87% of our students suffered some level of depression. (Islam et al., 2020, Pelucio et al., 2022). I observed both decreasing motivation and depression in my students, and as an instructor felt both powerless and complicit. I felt all four universities were not paying much attention to this obvious and serious side effect of 'emergency remote learning' and also that it was unfair to expect me, as an adjunct lecturer, to try to deal with this.

Before the pandemic, I was a big proponent of blended learning and embraced technology enthusiastically. During the pandemic, that knowledge helped me deliver a modicum of emergency online education, although, without a doubt, it was not perfect. But since we've gone back to the classroom, I've found myself going back to paper and pen. The pandemic showed me how hard it is for students to stop using technology once they get used to it, translation software and other online tools, for example. Now, it is kind of exciting to see them put away their devices and try to answer questions on paper. In my classes, students often work in groups. I used to interrupt them when they spoke in Japanese, telling them to switch back to English. But now I often let them chat and socialize in whichever language feels more comfortable to them, aware that they need this social interaction for their mental health. The pandemic has actually made me less reliant on technology and more sensitive to the emotional state of my students.

From the perspective of an adjunct lecturer thrust into the milieu of emergency remote learning, there are three things educational institutions should be doing now. First, universities should have an LMS up and running before the need to go online commences. Second, there should be programs in place so that instructors know how the LMS works, and these should be combined with ongoing tech support. Third, the LMS should be one that is widely used in Japan so that users can find instructional videos and online communities. Choosing a popular LMS, installing and updating it even when there is no pandemic, offering ongoing faculty development seminars about how to use the LMS, and providing tech support are common sense things universities can do to facilitate a better transition to emergency remote learning should the need ever arise again.

Furthermore, universities should have had policies and programs in place to address the mental health issues that arose during the pandemic. Just as I began to see teaching as a focus on the subject rather than the students, so too the educational institutions focused on policies and implementation of a plethora of new rules and guidelines. For example, the decision to not require students to turn on cameras in Zoom meetings was made to safeguard the institution from accusations of invasions of privacy, but without any regard for the impact that would have on the instructor's ability to teach a class or have students interact in a meaningful way with each other. The decision by university D to not use any LMS but rather rely on Japan Post was not made because this would be a good educational idea, but because they were afraid of technology and privacy issues. These ill-considered institutional decisions had immense negative curricular repercussions. Going forward, all of the stakeholders in our educational institutions need to put the students at the forefront of the educational experience, rather than the rules and guidelines designed to protect the reputations of the universities.

Response by Jeffrey Berry

During our discussions and after reading what Kenlay Friesen wrote, what struck me the most was the need for the institutions to be prepared for such an occurrence again. As teachers, we can only do so much, and many times we have to follow the rules that are set upon us by the institutions that we work for. Also, as teachers, we need to hold ourselves accountable regardless of what the institutions are using as an LMS. To me, as a teacher, I'm beholden to the students and always want to help them the best that I can. Although we all have many obligations within our own lives, both personally and professionally, requiring some type of basic online education of the institution's LMS for teachers could greatly benefit both the teachers and the students, helping to create a more seamless transition should we be mandated to teach online again.

I feel that institutions should set up classes that are somewhat uniform so it will be easier for students to attend different classes online but also set up in a way that meets the specific needs of that class. For example, a communication class focusing on speaking and listening has different needs than that of a reading and/or writing class. Further, I believe that both the

teachers' and then the students' input should be utilized to maximize the efficiency and efficacy of the online class. While we all have different teaching styles and students have different learning styles, a bit of institutional uniformity could benefit all parties involved.

In conclusion, both institutions and teachers need to now be better prepared for the reality that we all may be forced to teach online again. I want to believe that we all have learned a great deal from our past situation, and perhaps next time, we won't feel the need to call it "emergency remote teaching," and we can think of it more as a necessary transition to teaching back online.

Jeffrey Berry – Hokkai University

At the start of the 2021 academic year, I began teaching at a new university, and I was happy to learn that we would be conducting our classes face-to-face. I became a teacher to interact with my students, and teaching online was just not the same. Unfortunately, the face-to-face classes only lasted one week, and we went to teaching online as the Covid case numbers continued to grow. For me, this truly was "emergency remote teaching" (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020), as I had never taught these courses before. My university had an LMS in place, G-Plus, and my department used Moodle, but I was unfamiliar with both, so I hit the ground running with applications I was more familiar with, Google Classroom and Zoom. The university had a Zoom account setup so that was good for the instructors. I was primarily teaching second-year students, so they too were familiar with these applications. I will now share some of what I learned teaching online and how I believe I can offer better lessons in the future if returning to the online format becomes necessary again.

I will focus on student engagement and motivation as I believe without good student engagement, the students' motivation will diminish, and thus learning can be a painful process and not the enjoyable process which I wish to promote. When I talk about engagement, there is student/student engagement as well as student/teacher engagement. The curriculum was set by the department, but how I chose to implement it was up to me. There was a bit of trial and error in my process, but I also often relied on student feedback and my observation of the students' reactions and attitudes.

At first, a few students would join the Zoom class and leave their cameras off. I requested that they turn them on so they could be more engaged in the class, just as if they were in the classroom. Even though we were in an online classroom situation, I wanted the students to try their best and interact as if we were face-to-face. Luckily, I did not receive much pushback from the students, and I was not notified of any school policy that did not allow me to require the students to keep their cameras on while in class. I feel I was quite lucky to have students make the most of a situation that was not so ideal. When students were placed into breakout rooms, and they could interact with each other on a more personal level, I could sense a change in their energy as if they

were communicating face-to-face and it wasn't so virtual.

I found that with teaching online, I did use more videos as examples and the students seemed to enjoy this format as it was something new and different as opposed to me simply lecturing. As English learners, the students will encounter many different dialects and pronunciations in real-life, and I feel that using the various online videos helped to promote this experience. Successful language learning can be closely related to the students' attitudes and motivation (Gilakjani et al., 2012). I noticed that students' attitudes and enjoyment went up a bit with the simple use of emojis. As our Zoom lessons progressed through the semester, I saw that more students were interacting and engaging with each other by simply sending a positive emoji showing approval or agreement. In a face-to-face class atmosphere sharing this feeling of approval or agreement might not happen as freely. Of course, this could get out of hand at times, but for the most part, I found it to be very positive. It helped reinforce the students' confidence and helped motivate other students to share more.

The class structure is to teach for 90 minutes, and for many students, it seemed a bit difficult to hold their attention online. Not only did they have my class online, but they had all their classes online, and I could sense that staring at and interacting with a computer screen all day was wearing on them. In a study (Bıyık et al., 2021), one common student suggestion was that the lesson duration should be shorter. After reading this study and putting myself in the students' position, I found myself agreeing with them. I feel that breaking the class time into two equal sections with an equal number of students could be a benefit for the students as well as the teachers. With shorter online class times, it would be easier to hold the students' attention the entire time, and as teachers, we could give more individual attention to those students in a timely fashion. The other half of the class period could be used for offline assignments that would need to be turned in at the end of the day or whenever the teacher deems it appropriate.

In conclusion, I feel that I learned a great deal from this experience and I believe I will be better able to offer more productive and enjoyable lessons should we need to go back online again. Providing the students with the best possible lessons that keep them motivated and engaged during their university years while only taking classes online is certainly not an ideal situation but I think we all must do our best for the students.

Response by Christopher Cartney

It is clear from discussions with J. Berry that the experiences of what is referred to as "emergency remote teaching" and moving to an online method of instruction were fairly universal. Although we teach at different institutions, it seems apparent that universities that do not allow an opt-out for cameras have English classes that perform better in terms of student-student and instructor-student engagement. One workaround that I heard an instructor use was to offer students the

option of turning off their cameras on condition they emailed him with an explanation of why they felt it was necessary in their case. This simple hoop to jump through was enough of a deterrent to ensure almost 100 percent compliance with the instructor's wish to have cameras on while also protecting the students' privacy if they wanted it.

Similarly to Jeff, I also found that students were more active in breakout rooms (typically 4 to 5 students) rather than in a full class. There is clearly some dynamic at play in which students feel more free to express themselves and use their English skills in smaller groups. Perhaps, in future, I will incorporate break-out rooms with warm up or break the ice activities. In particular, I found students responded well to random mixing of participants. However, from a practical point of view, I would appreciate the ability to be able to mix groups a second time without some members being paired with the same participants as in the first round. An option lacking in Zoom.

Finally, I also found that students frequently reported that 90-minute Zoom lessons were too long to maintain concentration. I came to the conclusion that a hybrid class often felt like the best compromise. I would have a 30 – 45 minute Zoom lesson followed by moodle assignments or quizzes (or vice versa). In these situations, students were told that their instructor was available online in real-time (using 'chat') for any problems or questions they may have during the off-Zoom segment of the class. Certainly, that is the model I would try to use in a recurrence of emergency remote teaching being enacted.

Thomas Goetz

At first, I thought teaching online was going to be a breeze. For about eight years before the pandemic, I had been researching and learning Moodle in addition to developing the Moodle site for my university's largest English language program. Going into the pandemic, we had a Moodle footprint for all of our first and second-year courses, all connected to metacourses that housed publisher-provided and locally adapted unit quizzes, placement tests, and final exams. One would think that would have been enough, but there was more. Each local class had locally adapted publisher-provided material meant to enhance, not replace, but enhance the textbooks and thus assist in extending the reach of each teacher.
What were PDF exercises on a CD Rom from a teacher's book had already been converted into a Moodle Quiz. The publisher-provided quizzes were converted over into Moodle quizzes with multi-media plugins.

What was missing? The teacher-student connection. And, with a no-camera rule in place, I had never felt so isolated from the very people I was trying to help.
To answer this, I organized a group to create Moodle quizzes for each textbook activity for the first-year program, World Link Books 1, 2, and 3 (*World Link, Third Edition*, 2016). The Lesson A side of each unit had sections: video, vocabulary, listening, speaking, grammar, and

communication. For the Lesson B side, there were sections for vocabulary, listening, reading, grammar, writing, and communication. Already written in Moodle quizzes were Preparation and Review Quizzes that included unit and lesson vocabulary items based up the corresponding World Link Workbooks and grammar lessons from the workbooks and textbooks.

Early on, some or many students would log on to class, join through Zoom with their cameras off and not participate. In other words, they were in class but not there mentally.

To answer this problem, I organized a group of teachers who would write Moodle quizzes for the Lesson A video, vocabulary, and listening sections. Lesson B vocabulary, listening, reading, and writing sections. We began this project as we were teaching the very lessons, but after a while, we were ahead and, over the summer break, could complete everything in time for the start of the fall semester. All quizzes were organized into Moodle courses for sharing, and those teachers who wished to use them had access.

As for me, I used them in a way that encouraged participation during class on Zoom. The quizzes for the day were initially hidden; when needed, I informed the students to go online and do a particular quiz. Typically I gave them a set time, preset in Moodle, minutes, for example, and a cut-off time during class. If, after five minutes, they were still working, Moodle would automatically save their work so that we could move on to the next activity. The purpose was to ensure they were both physically and mentally present even if I could not see them.

To build communication in the Zoom class, I would ask students to give me their answers. I showed them my notebook, where I would enter a dot next to their names for each answer they gave me. The dots would become points for their final grade. They were quick to figure that out. Actually, one nice aspect of Zoom is that shy students would give answers over Zoom chat. Then, I would say their name, and they were correct. Once this became an accepted pattern, I never had to worry about a stale or stagnant class. Students who answered then had to select the next person to answer the next question. If such a student did not respond, we would know that the student had logged on but was not a part of the Zoom class. The meaning was this, the students would get an attendance mark for the day but an absence for class participation.

There was a learning curve associated with this plan. Participation was lower in the first two weeks of classes than later in the semester. The effort paid off. I continued to use these quizzes even in a face-to-face environment. It helps students to gain confidence in answering questions. Remember that these are all non-English majors and are keen to be correct in front of others. Do I miss teaching on Zoom? Not at all. I would only do it again if I absolutely had to.

Response to Thomas Goetz by Ken Friesen :

One of the things that stands out to me in Tom's summary of his experiences is the reliance on technology, especially making more quizzes from the material in the textbook. I think many of use who are comfortable with technology tried to use tech to solve this whole slew of new teaching challenges. Thom's trajectory from focusing on technology and quizzes to focusing on the students and their experience reflects my own path through the epidemic.

Tom mentions feeling isolated from the very people he was trying to help, which I assume means his students, and his response was to make more quizzes. This may sound a bit odd but I can completely understand this reaction. It's a reaction to the feelings of isolation and impotence brought out be the situation.

Another thing that stands out to me here is that you can see a change in how Tom approached the curriculum. From working with Tom over the years I feel fairly confident saying that his approach to curriculum is learner centered, giving students the opportunity to solve problems on their own and learn from experiences, in the hopes that student grow and transform through their experiences. The struggles he faced, I think, can be seen as an inability to live up to his own goals. The environment created by Zoom (with cameras off) and Moodle quizzes does not lend itself to a humanistic approach to teaching. Instead, it encourages a kind of operant-conditioning / behaviorist approach, which is obviously not what Tom wanted to employ. Thom's frustration with this leads him to focus more on the students as the epidemic progressed and eventually, he was able to find incremental ways to incorporate his educational philosophy into the realities and constraints of online teaching.

This struggle between, on the one hand, the realities of this structured / subject centered / behaviorist approach that online learning encourages and facilitates, and on the other hand the desire to be a student centered, problem solving, and (perhaps) transformative teacher, lies at the core of the frustration that Tom is describing. It is, I believe, why he says, 'Do I miss teaching on Zoom? Not at all. I would only do it again if I absolutely had to.'

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that during the disruptive time of the pandemic and its impact on all aspects of teacher and student life, teachers had to start again not only to teach a foreign language, in this case, English, but to reverse the on-set of fossilization as a linguistic condition among the learners so they would continue to develop communicative competence in their target language. The various approaches mentioned here, both at Hokusei Gakuen and other universities, show the eagerness, adaptability and initiative teachers took to make ends meet for their students and each other. It is hoped that this record will preserve a look at the lessons

learned for teaching during the time of the pandemic.

〔References〕

Bıyık, M., Savcı, A., Güçlü, S., Caner Aksoy, C., & Perçin Renders, D.（2021）. Evaluation of Online Education Provided to Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic： A University Experience. *Florence Nightingale Journal of Nursing*, *29*(3), 312–323. https://doi.org/10.5152/FNJN.2021.21001

Bozkurt, A., & Sharma, R. C.（2020）. *Emergency remote teaching in a time of global crisis due to CoronaVirus pandemic | Zenodo*. https://zenodo.org/record/3778083#.Y1p-oOxBxBU

Ellis, R.（1985）. Sources of Variability in Interlanguage. *Applied Linguistics*, *6*(2), 118–131. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/6.2.118

Gilakjani, A. P., Leong, L.-M., & Sabouri, N. B.（2012）. A Study on the Role of Motivation in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching. *International Journal of Modern Education and Computer Science*, *4*(7), 9–16. https://doi.org/10.5815/ijmecs.2012.07.02

Islam, M. A., Barna, S. D., Raihan, H., Khan, M. N. A., & Hossain, M. T.（2020）. Depression and anxiety among university students during the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh： A web-based cross-sectional survey. *PLOS ONE*, *15*(8), e0238162. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0238162

Morgan, H.（2022）. Alleviating the Challenges with Remote Learning during a Pandemic. *Educ. Sci.*, *12*(109). https://doi.org/10.3390/ educsci12020109

Mukhtar, K., Javed, M., Sethi A., Arooj, M., & Ahsan, S.（2020）. Advantages, Limitations and Recommendations for online learning during COVID-19 pandemic era. *Pak J Med Sci.*, *COVID19-S4*, S27-S31. https://doi.org/doi： 10.12669/pjms.36.COVID19-S4.2785. PMID： 32582310; PMCID： PMC7306967

Pelucio, L., Simões, P., Dourado, M. C. N., Quagliato, L. A., & Nardi, A. E.（2022）. Depression and anxiety among online learning students during the COVID-19 pandemic： A cross-sectional survey in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. *BMC Psychology*, *10*(1), 192. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-022-00897-3

World Link, Third Edition: Developing English Fluency - National Geographic Learning.（2016）. https://eltngl.com/search/productOverview.do?N=200+4294918503&Ntk=NGL%7CP_EPI&Ntt=PRO0000000589%7C76848440527699545317768474452982950685&Ntx=mode%2Bmatchallpartial&homePage=false

Zuengler, J.（1989）. Identity and IL development and use. *Applied Linguistics*, *10*, 80–96.