



Secondary Schools (A Dialogue)

SPECIAL COLLECTION:
POST-PANDEMIC
PEDAGOGIES
FOR LANGUAGE
EDUCATION

ARTICLES –
DIGITAL MODERN
LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this exercise was to consider how language teaching changed in response to the teaching conditions imposed by the pandemic (e.g., distanced online learning, face-to-face teaching with restrictions on activities, a hybrid situation where some pupils were present and some online, synchronous or asynchronous teaching) both during the pandemic (especially during lockdowns) and post-pandemic. Eight practitioners described their experiences honestly and openly through an asynchronous conversation, each giving an answer to six questions and then engaging with the answers given by others.

Key points that emerged

- All types of distanced learning magnified the challenges of regular teaching
- Examples of very positive use of technology to meet the challenges of distanced learning
- Departments tended to divide up responsibility for lesson planning to make this more efficient
- Assessment of routine language was made more engaging and easier to monitor via technology
- Stark differences between schools regarding teacher and pupil access to and expertise in technology

The contributions provide a rich source of information which could provide the basis for research into effective language teaching pedagogy generally.

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CONTEXT

All contributors are referring to their experience in England (seven participants) or Wales (one participant). A glossary is provided in the Appendix to explain terms for an international audience. It is highly recommended that international audiences familiarise themselves with the education system in the UK before reading the conversations. See https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371342/Additional_text_SR45_2014.pdf, pp. 3–6.

On Wednesday 18 March 2020 the UK government announced that most schools across England would be shut down from Friday 20 March until further notice, and Wales and Scotland also announced that they would close schools. The national lockdown was announced on 23 March. Teachers suddenly found themselves faced with the task of managing learning remotely.

With experience as a teacher and manager in a school specialising in teaching languages using efficient and effective technology, and as chair of the London branch of the Association for Language Learning with responsibility for organising and leading meetings in person and online, I was in a good position to be able to collaborate with others in order to provide the opportunity for teachers to meet together and share ideas and practice. Joe Dale and I had to cancel our annual tech conference planned for April 2020, and decided instead to offer weekly sessions which we named “Technology in Language Teaching” (TiLT) webinars. We started straight away on Thursday 19 March (webinar 41, <https://all-london.org.uk/webinars/>) and offered at least one and sometimes up to three webinars per week, inviting people from all over the world to share their experience. It was invaluable to have speakers from Asia in from the beginning, since they were already experiencing lockdown and could share their successes and failures. Other organisations also offered regular webinars, including Linguascope. The government announced that final examinations would not take place, and schools were required to calculate the grades which their students would be expected to get, based on Centre-Assessed Grades (CAGs). This was a big challenge for an education system which has such a high-stakes exam system, and it was poorly managed.

We continued the webinars through the various stages of the pandemic including the first phased reopening of schools from 1 June 2020 (with strict restrictions on movement and activity leading to a diluted curriculum for some), the period when when schools were still open during the second national lockdown (31 October–4 December 2020) and the third national lockdown when schools were closed (4 January– 8 March 2021). The cancellation of external examinations was announced in January for June 2021 and schools were required to estimate the grades which their students would be expected to get, based on Teacher-Assessed Grades (TAGs). Because teachers experienced two blocks of time when schools were closed, they refer to the national third lockdown as the second lockdown.

PEOPLE

The teachers I invited to participate in this exercise were regular attendees and contributors to these discussions, and I believe that they are in a very good position to be able to describe how pedagogy changed during the pandemic, and to identify the impact that such an experience might have had on post-pandemic teaching and learning. They are all managers in secondary schools and represent five state schools (non-selective and selective) and one independent school. Unfortunately, the teachers I approached in Scotland and Northern Ireland were unable to participate.

PURPOSE AND PROCESS

The purpose of this exercise was to consider how language teaching changed in response to the teaching conditions imposed by the pandemic (e.g., distanced online learning, face-to-face teaching with restrictions on activities, a hybrid situation where some pupils were present and some online, synchronous or asynchronous teaching) both during the pandemic (especially during lockdowns) and post-pandemic.

I provided six overarching questions and invited all participants to prepare their own answer to upload to a shared document. I provided a layout which I felt lent itself more to responsive and reflective, asynchronous structured interchange between six people, which provided a rich source of information. After each headline answer, I inserted a table into which others could comment or pose their questions chronologically, making it easy to follow the various threads that could flow from a headline answer. This worked well and allowed for cross-referencing to other headline answers. Significantly perhaps, organising and contributing to such asynchronous conversation with several threads was a skill which teachers developed over lockdown, when this was the norm! All participants were very happy to be part of this and said how much they valued being part of it. You can see from the relaxed and informal tone of the contributions that we all felt very comfortable with each other and were prepared to be honest about our experiences. I believe that this level of informality helps to get a true picture of experiences, not feeling the need to wrap them up in formal language.

AREAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

I believe that the contributions provide a rich source of information that could provide the basis for research into effective language teaching pedagogy generally. These questions are not new, but the experience of the pandemic forced all teachers to consider them, especially with respect to the use of technology. Although we are now post-pandemic, it is right that we are considering skills and experiences that we can now incorporate into our everyday teaching. Some aspects that could be explored are shown in [Table 1](#).

ASPECT	EVIDENCE	QUESTION
CURRICULUM		
Curriculum and lesson planning	Departments tended to divide up responsibility for lesson planning to make this more efficient.	What are the advantages and disadvantages of centralised curriculum planning?
TEACHING AND LEARNING		
The challenges and benefits of distanced learning	There were challenges for all types of distanced learning, whether synchronous or asynchronous or hybrid. They magnified the challenges of regular teaching e.g. effective exposition of concepts to suit different learners, different abilities, picking up on and correcting any misconceptions. Monitoring what students are doing and responding to misunderstandings in a timely way. Setting useful tasks which learners can carry out independently (something which can be difficult in a practical subject which traditionally depends so much on the presence of a teacher, especially for listening and speaking)	How can concepts be introduced effectively to a group of learners? Can technology (e.g. pre-recorded videos with associated interactive exercises) assist? How can learners practise independently for all skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) most effectively? Can technology assist? (e.g., interactive exercises in commercial/authoring packages)
Assessment	Assessment of routine language was made more engaging and easier to monitor via technology (e.g., apps which returned scores automatically). This reduced the burden on the teacher. Assessment of higher-level skills (e.g., essay writing) was more challenging (i.e., need to give individual feedback and support).	Which skills can be assessed using technology? How can technology assist effective formative and summative assessment in language learning? Which apps and platforms can assist?
Use of technology in language learning	There were examples of very positive use of technology to meet the challenges of distanced learning, especially helped by the generosity of companies in making some resources free during the pandemic.	What aspects of technology can be used for effective and efficient language learning? How can we ensure equal access to these tools?
Access to technology	There are stark differences between schools regarding teacher and pupil access to and expertise in technology.	If there are advantages in using technology for learning languages, how can we ensure equal access and training?

Table 1 Areas for further exploration.

Teachers are always looking for ways in which to make the process of learning efficient and effective, especially in the context of a pressured secondary school curriculum. For any practical subject (e.g., languages, music, Design & Technology) the presence of a teacher to model and interact frequently with learners in order to guide them is particularly important, but it can mean that pupils are less able to make progress outside the lessons. The experience of the pandemic forced us all to explore ways of supporting independent learning through effective use of distanced learning techniques, whether synchronously or asynchronously, and their use both then and post-pandemic.

I hope that this collection of experiences and reflections can help in continuing to explore strategies that promote language learning further.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the short-term impact of the pandemic on pedagogies – referring to autumn 2020 and summer 2021 onwards?
2. How did you use online learning platforms and associated software?
3. What has changed now for our current pedagogical practice as a result of our experience of the pandemic?
4. Following lockdown, how have remote platforms been used for students not in school?
5. What would we do if we had another lockdown? What have we learnt?
6. How has CPD been affected by the experience of the pandemic? What has been the impact of learning to use online training and webinars? Are there professional benefits to be gained from webinars/online forums etc.?

SHORT-TERM IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON PEDAGOGIES

QUESTION 1: WHAT WAS THE SHORT-TERM IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON PEDAGOGIES – REFERRING TO AUTUMN 2020 AND SUMMER 2021 ONWARDS

Areas you could consider:

GCSE AND A LEVEL

What did you have to do from a pedagogical point of view to ensure that students were prepared for:

1. CAGs in summer 2020, when schools were required to come up with centre-assessed grades on existing evidence (exams were cancelled).
2. TAGs in 2021, when schools were required to set internal assessments to provide evidence for teacher-assessed grades after the decision in January to cancel exams. This included the speaking endorsement.
3. Real external exams from summer 2022 onwards. Small adjustments, but largely as usual. In 2022 GCSE entries went up slightly by about 5,000, but the numbers actually sitting exams dropped – informal feedback was that MFL was seen as the least important/the subject students struggled with.

KEY STAGE 3

Did pedagogy for KS3 change as pupils came back into the classroom?

RESPONSES FROM CONTRIBUTORS

Mike Elliott

On the whole, we tried to maintain exactly the same Scheme of Work in the first instance. The biggest challenge was ensuring consistency across all different Key Stages and year groups. The idea of all teachers creating or re-creating resources remotely for all their classes was a

bit much, and we came up with a solution that involved centralised planning, that is, certain teachers took on responsibility for certain language and year group combinations. For example, one teacher might create all the resources for Year 7 French and Year 8 German. We were lucky that we had Google Classroom already (although not perhaps used to its full potential). In the first lockdown lessons were asynchronous, and resources were created on a central Google Classroom, and colleagues were then able to repost these lessons to their own individual Google Classrooms. This was a neat way of quickly sharing work (all work for the day had to be posted by 9 a.m.).

In the short term, we had to upskill – that was a necessary focus and target – and we had to be creative in terms of replicating what we would have been doing in the classroom, and transferring that to an online environment; not easy with a subject like Languages, where you have various skills to develop, some of which may require group work, listening, speaking.

In terms of preparation for summative assessments, we made use of existing data, and created formal internal assessments (similar to GCSEs/A levels) which enabled cohort ranking and enabled some mapping of cohort attainment compared to previous cohorts in our setting. Our Foreign Language Assistants were invaluable in terms of their support for the Speaking Endorsement, where students were given individual grades (Pass, Merit, Distinction) after each session, with additional comments. Additional work, obviously, but it made it far easier to award the final endorsement grade.

For KS3 there was a shift away from activities that involved a lot of moving around (e.g., Sentence stealers, Quiz-Quiz-Trade, etc) and we didn't do as much chorusing of vocabulary. Even whiteboard usage decreased, as this would have meant more things to clean and disinfect. So, some definite adjustment in the short term regarding classroom activities.

Comments on Mike Elliott's response to Q1

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	You say that “in the first instance” you tried to replicate the existing scheme of work, and that you upskilled in order to replicate what you would have been doing in the classroom. I can totally understand this, as we had no idea as to how long this was going to last, and this would presumably make the transition back into class easier. Did you continue with this strategy throughout the other lockdowns?
Helen Myers (2)	I agree – listening and speaking were the most challenging, but it seems from your other answers below that you managed to find some good apps to help in this respect. How did you manage to spread training among staff when you were all isolated?
Mike Elliott	By and large we stuck to the SoW where possible, although lockdown offered other opportunities for cultural activities and creative tasks. On the whole though, the SoW was adhered to, and Loom videos were didactic in nature – perhaps obviously?! – with students asked to pause and complete activities, then press play to check. With lockdown two, we adopted the same approach, although there was a difference between recording a video for all to use (lockdown #1) and creating resources for colleagues to deliver “live” (lockdown #2). At the risk of video overkill, some “training” was also delivered via short Loom videos, and regular Google Meets – we had team coffee once a week, 11 a.m. on Thursday I think, and we could discuss things then (or avoid work topics altogether and just catch up!)
Jennifer Wozniak	In our school, for the first lockdown we did not stick to the schemes of work because, as a school, we decided to concentrate on reinforcing what had been previously taught with our pupils and, like you Mike, we were doing more cultural activities and creative tasks. However, for the second lockdown, we followed the scheme of work.

Jane Basnett	This refers to summer 2020. We tried as much as possible to stick to our SoW but for Year 11 we moved away from the SoW as we had almost finished. We focused more on some cultural bits. For Year 13 I can remember teaching texts that were not on the syllabus that the students loved, as it gave them an opportunity to study something simply for pure pleasure. My colleagues chose topics/literature/music that they were passionate about and it was a highlight of my lockdown. Most of our language students at Year 13 go on to study languages at uni so they were all totally involved.
Helen Myers (3)	This sounds a great idea, Jane. Great that your students are motivated enough to continue their studies at uni. Does your experience of their additional enthusiasm at studying for pure pleasure indicate that the A level syllabus could be made more attractive if it were not so “packed” and allowed for more pursuit of language for pleasure?
Jane Basnett	Helen (3) – I think it showed me how tied we have to be to the curriculum and how the first year A level topics are actually quite boring.
Helen Myers (4)	I totally agree ... it was rather a leading question, wasn't it (like this one, I suppose)? So as far as the overriding theme of this sprint dialogue is concerned, one of the outcomes of the pandemic perhaps was to give us a chance to explore other ways to engage and teach our students, beyond the set curriculum.

Vincent Everett

We avoided things like choral repetition or pair work, which was an important factor, having not had that kind of interaction during lockdown. Especially given the emphasis on phonics.

Comments on Vincent Everett's response to Q1

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers	Have you found that the constraints on KS3 at this time regarding lack of opportunity to speak aloud in class have had a lasting effect (i.e. on current Years 9–11)?
Vincent Everett	We saw a definite impact on Y11 GCSE 2022. Lack of confidence for the speaking exam. This seems better this year.
Helen Myers	Thanks. I am not surprised to hear this, especially when students are usually comfortable speaking in the classroom with teachers like you who make them comfortable.

Sabine Pichout and Rebecca Jones

During lockdown lessons, whilst we weren't able to ensure or monitor choral repetition, we did make sure that we included plenty of modelling activities where students listened to recordings and/or teacher-led repetition and pronunciation tasks of key expressions and language from the sentence builders. We also encouraged repetition, even quietly, in the home or priority-student classrooms. Whilst some families reported back that they were heartened to hear their child practising the language at home, the impact on all students must have been very limited. We also ensured lots of online team games, notably as starters and plenaries, to help encourage attendance, build morale, ensure enjoyment and a sense of connection. Attendance and participation in online lessons was very good and students/families reported that they looked forward to their ML lessons. KS4 attendance was often at 100%. Writing tasks, particularly for KS4 students, were also run as games, such as translation races using multiple live slides on PowerPoint or open-ended questions on Mentimeter and Spiral. Whilst we still needed to rely on past papers, modified speaking mocks and traditional methods of assessment to help inform CAGs and TAGs once back in school, we did so in a low-pressure, supportive environment, and we felt that the students had at least sustained some level of involvement in their ML lessons.

Name of contributor	Comment/points arising/questions
Mike Elliott	<p>Re: Quiet repetition in the home – yes, good idea. We encouraged read-aloud tasks at home (not always checked) but set some reading tasks via Flipgrid that allowed for correction, etc.</p> <p>Enjoyed using Mentimeter too. Found that Socrative worked well for KS5 in particular, as you can monitor written answers as they are written (as opposed to Google Form, e.g., where answers are only visible once <i>all</i> questions have been answered).</p>
Helen Myers	<p>Yes, repetition/speaking aloud is so key in learning languages, isn't it? Jennifer mentions this as well, and Mike comments on how the speaking/listening element sets languages apart from other subjects. Like Mike, I set some read aloud tasks. When I relied on them to record and post to Class Notebook it was not really successful, but when I used Sanako Connect (later in the lockdown) that was much more successful as it was so straightforward and did not seem to cause the problems of finding compatible software. I'd be interested to know what other ways people used to encourage/capture speaking aloud!</p>
Helen Myers	<p>You should feel very proud of the level of pupil participation. You clearly used a great variety of strategies to hook them in ... are there any which you would especially recommend? Was there a magic way of communicating with students and parents to make them want to attend?!</p>
Sabine Pichout & Rebecca Jones	<p>In order to keep our students' engagement as high as possible, we ensure positive and prompt feedback to every task set, praise postcards and certificates were emailed to students, parents and tutors. We also shared weekly examples of the students' best work on Teams' posts so that students felt encouraged, and their efforts acknowledged. We used social media to promote students' work and competitions, to create momentum and motivation.</p>

Jennifer Wozniak

During lockdown, the only way we could monitor pupils' pronunciation was when they submitted spoken tasks. We asked our pupils to record themselves saying a few sentences. We used Padlet at KS4 and Vocaroo at KS3 for speaking and used a range of other materials for the other skills. Attendance at KS4 was great but not at KS3, so when we were back in class, we thought carefully about what was the most important knowledge that we wanted to check that pupils got before we moved on. In the classroom, even with masks on, we did some repetition. It was not easy as teachers to really check the pronunciation as it was not always clear with the masks on; however, we wanted to re-boost confidence as we did not want our pupils to think that they could not speak another language any more. During lockdown, or when pupils were self-isolating, we used Exampro to practise reading and listening, and then to prepare for CAGs and TAGs we used past papers, and pupils also completed the assessments created per theme by AQA that we conducted under exam conditions so we could have as much evidence as possible.

Comments on Jennifer Wozniak's response to Q1

Name of contributor	Comment/points arising/questions
Vincent Everett	<p>I am very interested in this idea of using technology for pupils to record themselves. But I have two big questions. One is about pupils recording a spiel. I suppose some would quite like it and it's more comfortable than talking in front of others. And the other question would be about the teacher sitting down and spending hours listening to them all!</p>

Vincent Everett	I did use Quiqr in the conversation mode for something like this. It's originally supposed to be for feedback on work. But I used it for structured speaking tasks and virtual conversations.
Mike Elliott	Regarding Vincent's first point above, agreed that there is a danger of creating a lot of online material to listen to and assess, coupled with the danger of having <i>too many</i> platforms/solutions, and then finding it difficult to stay on top of them all. I have found Flipgrid to be a good solution for KS4 and KS5, but I even use it to assess Year 7 pronunciation in the autumn term. Provided all submit the work (and you limit the length of recording) a whole class reading assessment can be marked in around 30 minutes.
Helen Myers	Taking into consideration Vincent and Mike's points above, what sort of guidance did you give students about speaking so that you were not faced with an unmanageable task of marking?
Mike Elliott	With the synchronous teaching during lockdown #2, this was less of an issue, as some level of interaction could take place during live lessons. I remember trialling a "describe a photo" task with Y12 and Y13 where one person described a picture and the others had to draw using whiteboard.fi. Setting timed tasks via Flipgrid was also good (and limiting recordings to 1 min. 30 sec.). Another task used was to share a short text via Flipgrid, and then ask students to read aloud and then provide a spontaneous translation.
Jennifer Wozniak	That's very interesting as listening to the recordings did not take a long time at all. First of all, pupils were not asked every lesson to record themselves but when asked to, I listened to them all (which would take me less than 20 minutes) and wrote down the mistakes or the problems with pronunciation and I did tackle that in the next live lesson, but also I kept a record of things to check when back in the classroom to ensure that pupils took the feedback on board. In terms of platforms, we only used Padlet at KS4 as I could have on a wall different questions on the same page. At KS3, we only used Vocaroo as a recording platform. Since lockdown we have kept Vocaroo and our KS3 pupils complete some phonics practice, reading aloud or answering a question. Again, we do not think that marking is a problem as it does not take too long to listen to all of them and then the next lesson in class, I will re-drill the words/sounds that pupils did not pronounce correctly. I hope that answers the points mentioned by everyone.
Helen Myers	Yes – that's really helpful. So, the instructions ensured that the output was defined to a certain time or content. I find that I learn a lot about the pupils' standard of speaking by listening to them read aloud texts I provide or their texts which I have already marked.
Jane Basnett	I like Mike's idea of getting students to share a short text via Flipgrid (Flip, nowadays) and read it aloud then provide a simultaneous translation.

Jane Basnett

In terms of TAGs in 2021, we knew from previous experience the year before that we would need to get as much "data" as we could but in a low-stakes sort of way, as we did not want to stress our students any more. Lots of our school community were not able to make it back to school (we're fully boarding) and so we taught hybrid lessons which we also then had to take into consideration when setting TAGs. We used an online exam tool which locks out use of the internet and access to the rest of your computer for internal mocks.

During school closure our IL [International Learning] team immediately had to upskill in IT. The IL team developed quickly the use of Google Classroom. Microsoft Teams enabled the team to meet regularly for consistency of planning and delivery and support. The focus for the TAGs 2020 for exam classes was to ensure that work was collated and evidence was secure in making a teacher judgement. It was fortunate at this point that mock examinations had been completed and evidence of work through revision tasks was also moderated. Regular use of Teams to discuss and quality-assure was key to ensuring we had made the best decisions for student outcomes. The team then developed a shared approach by creating amended SoW/resources on Google Drive and ensuring that classes had regular access to work.

We discovered very soon that we were overloading students,, and students were not completing, so we amended and set up tasks fortnightly which could be worked through. The team then upskilled in creating Loom videos to support lessons and Google Quizzes for instant feedback. The team shared and took collective responsibility. KS3 engagement was very low as students were prioritising core subjects. To try to engage KS3 we then also issued links to Linguascope/ Fable Cottage Fairy Tales. For KS4/5 we were concerned about speaking activities and ensuring students could interact. We started trialling Sanako Connect with KS5 to give the opportunity for students to practise speaking, especially in preparation for discussion on more complex themes, and to develop confidence in fluency, expressing ideas. In Wales, all students have access to the Hwb learning platform [<https://hwb.gov.wales/>, the curriculum platform for Wales], which also gives them instant access to Microsoft Packages, for example, Word, Excel etc.

During autumn 2020–spring 2021 we had to be prepared for school closure too, so we amended our SoW to ensure we had recorded lessons using Loom and sequence of Google Classroom [GC] resources. We would release these on GC. We were also then asked at different times to deliver limited live lessons for KS4/5.

As well as developing our GC we then started to develop the use of Sanako Connect for GCSE preparation even though we knew exams would be amended for summer 2021. This ensured that we were trying to target raising confidence in speaking, pronunciation and engagement in practising at home speaking modelled in class. We also used Sanako Connect for preparation for the exams, including role plays and general conversation.

In preparation for exams, we ensured there was a focus in face-to-face on modelling, group work and speaking. Confidence in focus and speaking were areas to be developed as well as content coverage, even with a reduction from the exam board.

For summer 2022, the challenge was ensuring teachers’ comprehension of simultaneous planning for different exam criteria depending on exam year. It was key to identifying which skills for exam classes needed to be areas of focus, and this obviously included speaking. The team clearly focused on key structures and reinforcement of these skills. We uploaded key revision materials, past papers, exam walkthroughs, exemplars for speaking/writing, vocabulary lists, knowledge organisers in GC so students could access both written and audio, whenever they needed. The Welsh Joint Education Committee also supported by issuing revision resources and challenge activities through their resources website, which again gave students choice and access.

KS3 return to classroom limited interaction and speaking activities due to wearing masks and facing forward.

Comments on Jill Snook’s response to Q1

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	Thanks Jill. This really captures the ongoing task teachers had of responding to how students reacted to systems and resources and adapting accordingly. You write that you managed this through regular staff discussions using Microsoft Teams as your platform. What was it about Google Classroom that made you use this platform rather than using the Microsoft suite of tools (e.g., class teams with associated resources, notebooks, monitoring systems)? (This overlaps with Question 2 I know!)

Jill Snook (1)	School had adopted GC and there was a working party immediately in place at first lockdown to lead virtual training. It was decided that having too many platforms would be confusing. However, one of my team experimented with Microsoft tools and we still used these initially for sharing notes/discussions from meetings.
Helen Myers (2)	<p>I'm interested in the resources you used which you found worked. I really like both ones you mention. I always find Linguascope is attractive to pupils – I think they like the familiar, short game formats and the bright colours and fun graphics and for teachers it is very simple to set up the tasks. How did you know if they had carried out the tasks?</p> <p>Just the title “Fable Cottage Fairy Tales” sounds appealing, doesn't it?! I used this one-to-one with a cousin's daughter: I shared my screen, played the audio of the story in paragraphs (really high-quality audio, read with appropriate expression, and not in a condescending way!) then asked her to translate into English. She gained so much in terms of vocabulary, and we were both frankly impressed at how much she could work out within the context of a familiar story – albeit often with a twist, which always made us laugh! What sort of activities did you give pupils working independently with this resource?</p>
Jill Snook (2)	Linguascope was an opportunity, and we did not check on interaction as this was extension or giving them opportunities for extra. However, with the Fairy Tale we would set a simple task like “identify words for ...” and there are some already prepared worksheets we could ask them to complete. We have now continued use of this as I have used it for a Year 7 SoW on “Identity” through working on the Snow White story...
Helen Myers (3)	You mention Sanako Connect in several of your posts. I used this too with my GCSE and A level classes. Would you perhaps have an example/screenshot of how you used it? What features attracted you to using it rather than other available platforms/apps which could be used?
Jill Snook (3)	We used it by showing a YouTube video on a theme and asking them to write what they understood. I also set up some live sessions. I would issue a role play/general conversation questions for students to respond too. Or we also used gap fill/multiple choice.
Helen Myers (4)	You mention the use of exam board support resources. I have a feeling that our situation gave teachers time to explore more of what was available and this included seeing what was already available on exam board sites or what they had produced in response to the current situation. AQA has a very good, related product called ExamPro which our school started to use more fully at this point and carried on using later.
Jill Snook (4)	Yes – these are great – WJEC has resources both interactive and printable https://resources.wjec.co.uk/default.aspx__ and also challenge activities https://resource.download.wjec.co.uk/vtc/2015-16/15-16_01/MFL-eng/index/german/index-german.html?brand=cbac

USE OF ONLINE PLATFORMS AND SOFTWARE

QUESTION 2: HOW DID YOU USE ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORMS AND ASSOCIATED SOFTWARE

Context: In April 2020 there was a situation where in some schools (including especially independent schools) pupils had their own electronic device and the school was set up with a learning platform (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom). Equally there were many others

who engaged in a very steep learning curve setting up learning platforms for pupils and staff without being able to do face-to-face training. In your answer to these questions can you describe your own context? Describe the journey of school/department/individual in outline. Refer to online/hybrid situations.

Suggested areas you could cover:

Teacher perspective

How did teachers respond to distanced teaching in general?

How did teachers' pedagogy change during the pandemic?

What skills did teachers develop/gain? (digital/non-digital literacies)

What skills did teachers lose? (digital/non-digital literacies)

Learner perspective

How did learners respond to distanced learning in general?

What skills did learners develop/gain? (Specific digital/non-digital literacies. Autonomy. Working with peers.)

What skills did learners lose? (Digital/non-digital literacies)

Post-pandemic – is there a social digital divide?

RESPONSES FROM CONTRIBUTORS

Mike Elliott

Reaction from colleagues was mixed, closely aligned with the individual's confidence with online platforms and resources. Centralised planning certainly paid dividends to minimise workload, and the creation of Loom videos to support student learning was a particular highlight. With Year 12 and Year 13 we were able to continue with live lessons throughout (including the speaking classes) and there was a high level of effort, attendance and application.

For Years 7, 8 and 10 video lessons became the norm in French, and for Year 7 we were trying to maintain the revised key department principles (comprehensible input, engaging activities to aid retention, etc). Well over 60 videos were created for Years 7 and 10.

Key highlights included Loom videos, the creation of Google Quizzes, and marks imported to Google Classroom; use of Flipgrid to encourage speaking and read-aloud tasks; the use of Flippity to recreate Sentence Builder tasks remotely; the use of Learning Apps for starters; Adobe Spark video to promote speaking skills. A number of colleagues attended a number of webinars, and good ideas were cascaded to the rest of the team. I was asked to present key findings to the whole staff during an April INSET.

Student feedback for the video lessons was largely exceptionally positive, with students seemingly enjoying their interactive/didactic nature, i.e. explaining concepts and trying to replicate the "classroom experience" as much as possible. A key challenge for the Languages team, in particular, was trying to maintain standards in each of the four skills, with the development of listening and speaking skills in particular difficult to replicate remotely. Flipgrid provided an excellent way to get students to record themselves speaking, although of course missing the key aspect of spontaneity, so important in speech.

Finding a satisfactory way to mark and give feedback was challenging, and the team trialled several different approaches, including Mote voice recording; editing Google Docs (using Kami, Word, Notability); comments in Google Classroom; recorded videos as part of feedback in Flipgrid, or Loom videos to explain essay feedback for Y12 students.

During the second lockdown, we continued with centralised planning (individuals taking charge of planning a particular language-year group combination and cascading to team members via Google Classroom). Contributions were, by and large, excellent. Live teaching was the norm and was well received. One obvious downside to live remote teaching was that it made it more difficult to liaise with colleagues, which was far easier in the first lockdown. Remote marking remained a challenge, particularly with detailed essay-style marking.

Name of contributor	Comment/points arising/questions
Helen Myers (1)	The students must have really appreciated the videos. I know that you, Mike, are a real pro at this. I've seen your YouTube channels and heard your wonderful songs! Did it take a long time for other staff to be trained in how to create videos?
Helen Myers (2)	You talked about the videos being interactive and didactic. How did you get feedback from pupils on the didactic elements? Vincent mentions the danger of pupils skipping over the didactic elements and rushing to the interactive parts. How did you monitor participation in the interactive parts? Did Google Classroom help you to do this?
Helen Myers (3)	In what way was remote marking of detailed essays more of a challenge than marking and returning in class? Is it the lack of opportunity to respond to immediate questions from the students and to give verbal feedback?
Mike Elliott	<p>(1) Not all staff produced videos regularly, although more than half the department did (5 colleagues out of 8). Loom and Screencastify are relatively intuitive, and some colleagues used Google Meet to create videos too. On the whole I don't think a lot of time was required in terms of training. It was far more straightforward than advanced editing with something like iMovie or Filmora.</p> <p>(2) Good point. A risk of asking students to pause during a recording is, of course, that they won't, and they will just speed through and copy out the answers before attempting the exercises. Eternal optimist that I am, I would hope that this wasn't the general rule, but I started to set exercises and delay answers until the following lesson. In between time there would have been a Google Classroom assignment to complete, so participation could be monitored.</p> <p>(3) I think this is more a personal preference, in that I prefer to mark with a pen! And I struggled to find a way of satisfactorily annotating documents with comments (maintaining clarity and not messing up formatting).</p>
Helen Myers (4)	<p>(2) Yes, it was a challenge to set "self-marking" work and know that the results were valid. I suppose we need to weigh up the risk of "cheating" with the risk of reinforcing a wrong answer by waiting for feedback!</p> <p>(3) I know exactly what you mean! It was easier if they had presented something electronically I suppose. I tend to copy their answer then highlight areas on which I was commenting, so the original was still there as evidence of what had been presented.</p>
Jane Basnett	<p>Centralised planning is hopefully something that you have been able to bring through to your current practice?</p> <p>I understand your point about listening. We ran live lessons for all students, and we would give time for students to complete listening tasks, but I was never certain that some students had listened properly. That was the time I was most uncertain about their efforts.</p>
Mike Elliott	Yes, by and large we are well resourced – and have central drives with usable resources – I have no great desire to fundamentally change the SoW any time soon! Videos created during lockdown have also been used for cover lessons – again, we have an advantage in that students bring their own devices to lessons, and so can access Loom videos independently...

We took free subscriptions to everything going! From the platforms offered by the major publishers, to quirky lyric-based or immersive roleplay videos. Learners spent a lot of time getting high scores on some platforms, e.g., Education Perfect. Although when we came back into school and I had the chance to see what they were actually doing, they weren't following the scheme of learning really. They skipped the slides and the videos to get straight to the questions, quizzes and points. One thing that surprised me when I surveyed the pupils was how many positive mentions good old Quizlet got.

Comments on Vincent Everett's response to Q2

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Vincent Everett	I have just remembered that in lockdown I also created printable resources for each unit for every year group, with self-contained activities where no other resources or help were required. This was an enormous task. The resources have since been used for absent pupils. This was done for all subjects.
Mike Elliott	Was the expectation that pupils printed these resources at home?
Vincent Everett	No. They were posted to pupils who didn't have internet access. Or now they are emailed when pupils are self-isolating etc
Helen Myers (1)	I am not surprised that pupils were more interested in the quiz elements than in the passive/didactic parts Vincent! I suppose the trick is to make the didactic part itself interactive, as demonstrated in something like Duolingo which presents everything as an interactive challenge but is in fact careful structuring/sequencing the learning. Of the apps and platforms you used, are any your own favourites? Any idea why the pupils favoured Quizlet? Were the Quizlet games ones which you had designed?
Helen Myers (2)	If possible, could you say which platforms you used, e.g., which publishers, where you sourced the lyric-based videos and immersive roleplay videos? They sound fascinating!
Jennifer Worziak	Just like Vincent, Quizlet was and still is one of pupils' favourites. I also discovered Blooket during lockdown and pupils loved it. I think because it was different.
Helen Myers (3)	Was it the whole class Quizlet live which they liked, or the other exercises? Yes, Blooket went down well as being "new", but personally I found that some of the game formats did not encourage them to gain many points as this made them targets for others to swap their scores. One class was very honest with me about this! Also, generally, a downside of Quizlet can be that the answers are very obvious if multi-choice is automatically generated. In the end I spent hours and hours creating my own grids to upload for multi-choice games. I'll add a link to this later in case anyone wants to use them for the remaining life of the current GCSE!
Jane Basnett	Quizlet (Live and the practice element) was always a favourite before lockdown, but it really came into its own during lockdown and remains a popular tool in our current teaching. Both teachers and pupils alike see the benefits of Quizlet. Post-lockdown, back in the classroom we delved into Quizlet match as well – this is really popular with students, but I see it as a moment of fun.

<p>Helen Myers (4)</p>	<p>Thanks – Perhaps we could come up with what the benefits are particularly about Quizlet and which particular activities work best for pupils; engagement and learning.</p> <p>Engagement: the engagement of a task when you are working in a team of people collaboratively (e.g., helping each other) within a competition.</p> <p>Learning: the immediacy of feedback on a task; the natural repetition which happens when playing a sequence of games using the same corpus of language.</p> <p>Any other ideas?</p> <p>I used Quizlet, but I mainly used Kahoot and Textivate.</p>
<p>Jane Basnett</p>	<p>Quizlet Live is really for fun and I think students appreciate this. I think it does help with comprehension and simply remembering meanings. But for me, the benefit of Quizlet is the “learn” feature and my students get this too. The chance to type out the word or chunk really ensures they know it properly. Also, Quizlet enables them to hear words and chunks and that is useful too.</p>
<p>Helen Myers (5)</p>	<p>Yes, I agree Jane. I think there is a danger that we forget about the “learn” tools.</p> <p>I like the feature of Textivate that allows the teacher to create a pathway through the various game activities that can replicate the sequence often used in teaching, i.e., comprehension followed by production. I’m not sure whether Quizlet allows for this, but if students understand the need for the learning part, it may be that they do not need the guidance.</p>
<p>Jane Basnett</p>	<p>Helen (5) Yes, I love that part of Textivate too and I very rarely give students the freedom to choose their own activities on Textivate. It may be possible to simply share a link to a learn path on Quizlet. Here’s one: https://quizlet.com/213988397/learn So, in this way we can direct students to the task we want them to do.</p>
<p>Helen Myers (6)</p>	<p>That’s brilliant! I had not used that function. It seems that this gives students a path, but they do have the option to skip sections or go back to sections, whereas the Textivate system I think requires you to go through a stage before moving on to the next one.</p>
<p>Jane Basnett</p>	<p>Helen (6) Yes. With Textivate I sometimes get it wrong and set a task that is too time consuming.</p>

Sabine Pichout and Rebecca Jones

Our school uses Microsoft Teams and we had fortunately just begun training in school on how to use the platform for homework etc. before lockdown began. The ML department was also one of the leading departments in terms of starting to use Teams beforehand for home learning. Having said that, training and encouraging staff to embrace the challenge of teaching online was a steep, and at times frustrating, learning curve. The willingness was there, but unreliable internet connection at home and long hours preparing suitable materials was challenging. We quickly developed lesson formats, ensured strict routines and shared resources. To this end, the team was divided up so that one or two teachers led on developing the lessons for a particular year group. During the first lockdown video lessons were created, recorded on Screencastify and shared on our ML YouTube channel. We used set lesson times to be available to answer questions and help with technical issues.

During the second lockdown, we taught half of the lessons live through Teams and shared pre-recorded video lessons through a virtual classroom that we created on Teams. Where able, we also combined classes and team taught. This teaming-up also enabled one teacher to chase attendance by calling up students through Microsoft Teams, or dealing with technical

issues reported by the students, monitoring the chat while the other teacher continued with the lesson for the rest of the class. This was also a very helpful format to enable our trainee teachers to lead on different aspects of the lessons.

So essentially, pedagogy changed dramatically: the immediate incorporation of online sites and games into lessons; the use of Microsoft Teams to communicate, teach and monitor involvement and home learning; and teamwork being crucial to the success of the lessons and mental well-being of the team.

Learners also needed to embark on this journey and so training videos were quickly made to help facilitate access to Teams and Class Notebook and their lessons. Some of our more capable students kindly made videos and screen recordings to help explain how they overcame technical issues to help others. The school was also quick to audit access to internet and IT facilities and ensured bids were made, through government funding, to get laptops for those students who needed support. Alternatively vulnerable students were also encouraged to come into school to join the key-worker students. The willingness and resilience of students to overcome these challenges was not always evident, especially during the first lockdown. In spite of all our efforts, there is of course a social divide in terms of access to devices, but also a challenge in families with several children and in homes where several members of the family required access to digital devices and access to a less-than-reliable internet service throughout the day. Unreliable internet was probably cited as one of the most frustrating issues.

Post-pandemic it's not so much the social divide that seems to be the biggest concern, but more the impact of being isolated from peers and the significant rise in mental-health issues and the refusal to come to school.

Comments on Sabine Pichout's and Rebecca Jones's response to Q2

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	Your teaching videos were great – I saw some of them! And thanks for making them available to others. I made videos too, but I was never really convinced that the pupils actually watched them all... I think they were generally too long, and I tried to cover too much. What would your tips be for the ideal video to appeal to secondary aged pupils?
Helen Myers (2)	What a great idea to get pupils to create training videos for their peers!
Helen Myers (3)	If you have time, could you mention your recommended sites and games which you used?
Sabine Pichout and Rebecca Jones	(1) We also realised that our videos were lengthy and so adapted them in the second lockdown. We then focused the videos on modelling the language and pronunciation and checking answers. (3) The websites we have used were Blookey, Flippity, Wordwall, Screencastify, Menti, Spiral, Genially, Learning Apps, Quizlet, Wooclap, Textivate, Puzzgrid, Teachvid, Padlet, Vocaroo.

Jennifer Wozniak

In my school, not all pupils have a device at home. We received some devices from the DfE but that did not cover all the pupils who needed one, so we prioritised Y11, then Y10 and so on. The two lockdowns were very different in terms of work set. The first did not involve a great deal of online lessons. The teachers were setting work and projects for pupils to complete. Feedback was given in a written way via Microsoft Teams. However, for the second lockdown, each teacher had to deliver a certain number of online lessons for KS3 and KS4. We also used pre-recorded videos, and again a range of tasks were given to pupils to ensure that they did not only have work to do online (thinking of some of our pupils who could not attend live lessons and did not have enough devices for everyone in their family). Microsoft Teams and School Synergy were used to set work for pupils and to tell parents when the live lessons would take place that week. Work was collected via Microsoft Teams and feedback was given. One of the

biggest challenges for teachers was to find a way to formatively assess our pupils, as this is something that we always do in the classroom, and we had to learn to find ways of doing it online. During live lessons, we used Spiral a lot as we could see everyone’s answers and that was a great tool for formative assessment.

We also used other online platforms to practise the language such as Flipitty, Linguascope, Quizlet, Kahoot, Vocaroo, and Genially. Vulnerable pupils and pupils of key workers were accessing the live lessons via school.

The structure of our MFL lessons had to completely change as the amount of speaking that could be done online was very limited.

As I previously mentioned, we had some pupils who did not engage with online learning despite contacting home and talking to the pupils. We also had some pupils who logged on to the live lessons but did not take part. So we wondered if they were doing something else instead! Another problem we faced was the unreliability of Wi-Fi. Some of our pupils lost connectivity numerous times. In class, we keep encouraging our pupils and pushing them to do even better, but during online learning, we felt that a core of pupils were giving up too easily because we were not “physically” there to encourage them.

It’s fair to say that, very quickly, teachers and pupils became more digitally expert. However, pupils missed the interaction with peers and teachers. They are so used to speaking in MFL lessons that the lack of interaction and pair work activities was something that everyone found difficult during lockdowns, and it’s something that we could not wait to put back in place when we were back in the classroom. However, we had to re-establish rules and expectations as pupils did seem to have forgotten.

Comments on Jennifer Wozniak’s response to Q2

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	Thanks, that’s a really useful list of apps/sites which you used to get the pupils to interact with language. If you have time, could you give an example of how you used, say, Spiral in a live lesson?
Helen Myers (2)	Your answer really highlights what sets ML apart from other subjects, as I said to Mike above in Q1, speaking and interaction. And you mention in particular the necessity of having a teacher physically “there” to encourage them. Our subject does not really lend itself as well to open-ended “projects” does it?! It’s made up of loads of interactions ... every interaction is a form of formative assessment when you decide as a teacher what the next step will be. And this process does depend on the skill of a teacher to provide the appropriate environment for this to take place – with “rules and expectations” – as you say!
Jennifer Wozniak (1)	During live lessons, I used Spiral in every single one of them so, for example, I would spend some time introducing a concept. I remember teaching Y8 the topic of town and we were looking at adjectives and adjectival agreement so I would explain it to the class, show them examples and then we will go to Spiral. I would ask them a question to check that they have understood and can apply what we have just discussed. I would use Spiral just like I used my mini-whiteboards in the lesson. What I liked as well is that pupils could not see each other’s boards. I made sure that I did not give pupils too much time to think about it so they could not have time to type the question and get the answer on Google Translate. We did many examples and as we were doing them pupils became more and more confident. We also used Spiral for short quizzes.
Jennifer Wozniak (2)	Absolutely!!

Helen Myers (3)	Thanks for the example! Good idea not to give too long to be able to look up an answer! I wonder whether the fact that they knew others would not see their answer might have made it less competitive, and therefore it would not have been worth “cheating”! Sometimes competition can be an incentive, but if a pupil is unsure/anxious they could just give up/disengage.
Jane Basnett	Spiral was such an amazing tool in lockdown. Like you, Jennifer, I used it like a mini whiteboard. If I hadn’t planned anything in advance, I would simply use the quick-fire feature to pose some questions to ensure comprehension. Students liked this and they liked looking at each other’s and spotting any issues.

Jane Basnett

During lockdown #1 we were able to hit the ground running as we had already started our Teams/Microsoft Class Notebook journey, and this simply galvanised all those who had been slow to get going with the technology to get up to speed. As an MFL department we were already keen users of many online tools and were leading the way in our school, and we fully explored all the functionalities of the Class Notebook. I recorded many tutorial videos using PowerPoint and Loom for my colleagues, demonstrating how to record tutorial videos to embed into Class Notebook, how to share screens, how to use new tools etc.

As we were already working with Teams before we were rudely sent home for the first lockdown, we had set up a resource team per year group per language, and all relevant teachers were added to these teams. In addition, we gave access to each other’s Class Teams which gave us the opportunity to use each other’s resources. It was a sort of centralised planning as we all fell into a pattern of creating and sharing our work with each other so that no one had to plan all their lessons from scratch but could take and amend as they saw fit.

In all lockdowns we taught synchronous lessons thanks to Microsoft Teams and Class Notebook. We did have to think carefully about lesson planning to give students (and us) time away from looking at a screen and from being in that “live” situation for 40 or 80 minutes at a time. In fact, lessons were shortened by five minutes to give a much-needed break from screens. There was a focus on the outline of a lesson; how we would get to the end point given our new scenario. We were guided by some key principles of teaching – questioning, quizzing (or retrieval practice) and collaboration.

We made the most of cold calling which ensured that all students were engaged, and we would have used any of a plethora of wheel spinners for this. Teams also gave us the opportunity to put in some quick polls which gave us an insight into student progress and understanding.

For collaboration we used the Class Notebook infinite collaboration space (a space that can be extended to be as big as is needed), which we quickly learnt to split into neat sections so that we avoided merging issues. We also used Padlet, embedding the link into the Class Notebook page, and sometimes explored Microsoft Whiteboard, though that did not work so well for us, then.

Teams meant that we could put our classes into breakout rooms, and in this way we dipped in and out of collaborative spaces where students were speaking. Admittedly, it was difficult to ensure that everyone was on task, but we would think carefully about the speaking task given to ensure that there was a goal. Genially gave us the chance to create some fun games that incorporated speaking questions, and the students enjoyed these. In Quizizz we posed oral questions which we recorded, to which students had to respond with the written word – not ideal, but still a useful task. We used this feature as well as a type of dictation. We did this too in the Class Notebook which was another form of useful listening activities.

Flip (formerly Flipgrid) was well used especially for KS4 and for GCSE Oral describing a photo.

The fact that we shared resources gave us much-needed intel on the online tools that were available and how they might be used. We obviously discussed these in our regular meetings and basically explored tools such as Quizlet, Gimkit, Quizizz, Blooket, Learning Apps, Carousel, Seneca and Spiral, exploring these together to see how they might work from both teacher and student perspective.

Many sites “opened” up all their functions to non-paying customers, and that was so helpful. The big new site that really enabled us to include all learners was Spiral Education. This tool had many great features (it is now no longer in existence, which is a great shame) which we made the most of. It was loved by students and teachers alike and we used it back in the classroom too.

In terms of feedback, we used the Student Review Tool in Class Notebook, which meant that we could see what students were doing during the lesson, which ensured engagement, and if appropriate we would share a student’s work with the rest of the class so that they could participate/learn. We marked work when necessary, on a screen, although I will admit that sometimes it felt too awful to look at a screen again. At this point, we started setting translations on Microsoft Forms as these could be easily marked straightaway and students got immediate feedback. Spoken feedback was also given.

Comments on Jane Basnett’s response to Q2

Name of contributor	Comment/points arising/questions
Helen Myers (1)	<p>You really did lead the way for many of us during lockdown with respect to both an approach to management and the use of Teams, Jane. Thank you! We must include links to your webinars in the appendix to this dialogue.</p> <p>I really liked the idea that you all had access to everyone else’s team. You must have a team where staff are very comfortable sharing and do not feel that they are being monitored for compliance.</p>
Helen Myers (2)	<p>The pedagogy practice is really interesting. This sprint dialogue highlights what makes ML teaching distinct from other subjects: the centrality of the teacher–pupil interaction through question/answer. This is where your promotion of quizzing tools is so important (polls/spinning wheels etc).</p>
Helen Myers (3)	<p>Regarding use of CNB [Class Notebook], what do you mean by needing to avoid merging issues? Is that where you created boxes within which pupils had to work?</p>
Helen Myers (4)	<p>I know you did loads of work on getting pupils to speak, and I think you covered these in some of the webinars – again it would be good if I could put links to these in this document. You are the first person to mention Genial.ly I think in this dialogue. Could you perhaps explain what a speaking game might look like using this program (if time – no problem if not!)</p>
Jane Basnett (2)	<p>Helen (1) Yes, I’d like to think that we are all good at sharing and don’t think anything of it any more. No one is judging and actually sometimes it’s great to have someone spot an error or suggest a better way. I am always grateful for that. Nothing is “closed” any more.</p> <p>Helen (3) Yes, exactly that. We created grids on a page so that in the collaboration space students were not working/writing over each other. That caused merging issues. Here’s a sample (Figure 1).</p> <div data-bbox="379 1760 847 2033" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> </div>

Jane Basnett (3)	Helen (4) Here's a link to a Genial.ly game. https://view.genial.ly/607ad61a33338f0d2474d48d/game-uv-oral-prep Students roll the die, move over the grid, land on a square and then respond to the question which may have been linked to Quizlet, or a translation or an oral question. Or describe the picture. We also created escape rooms and noughts and crosses. I rarely use Genial.ly now but there's no reason why I shouldn't.
Helen Myers (5)	Jane (3) What a fantastic way of combining these apps to make an engaging game (I can hear Joe [Dale] calling this "App smashing...!") I especially like the way that you have brought in a Quizlet test disguised as a game! Clever you!
Jane Basnett	I'm blushing.
Sabine Pichout and Rebecca Jones	Thank you, Jane, for supporting our department in the summer term after the first lockdown. I remember you took time to train us and shared your expertise. We had at the time a good knowledge of how to use Teams but needed your input, support and guidance on how to use Class Notebook for our students. We implemented this in September, and this proved very useful for the second lockdown.

Jill Snook

Initially there was a lot of uncertainty about distance learning regarding the skills of the team and also balancing work/home life in the whole situation. The team was quickly engaged and positive to upskill. They were trained in the use of Microsoft Teams, which was the key communication point for collaboration, support and planning. As a team we then used Google Classroom to set up classes and to issue work and also collect/monitor submissions. Regular use of Teams and school training plus webinars supported the team in developing use of Padlet, Google Quizzes. We already had a subscription to Linguascope. Many of the team attended webinars to develop ideas and share them with the team. We also issued links to Fable Cottage Fairy Tales for KS3 to engage. Loom videos were made for classes, which were shared across the team. Opportunities were also made for the team to develop introductions to more than one language. The focus became digital and by sharing resources with students, they felt supported in accessing whenever they needed and to re-watch whenever they wanted too. We focused more on refining and setting short sharp tasks and building lots of opportunity for reinforcement, necessary as we knew that students might not engage as frequently as when in school. We used Sanako Connect for many of our KS4/5 classes to engage in listening/speaking. Teachers found it more challenging to reach all learners if there was lack of engagement. Teachers became better at looking for ways to ensure instant valuable feedback without increasing an impossible workload. This was done by self-marking activities such as Sanako Connect – gap fill/multiple choice/verbal feedback.

Learners would have some challenges in setting up Classroom or accessing work; however, this became less of an issue into the academic year of 2021. Learners were supported in access by ensuring laptops were issued to students if they did not have digital devices at home. Access to the Hwb platform across Wales allowed for sharing of resources across consortia and beyond, in addition to supporting learners access Microsoft.

Through asking learners about their experiences [Learner Voice] we identified that speaking/listening were issues; however, students liked access to Loom and the sequence of GC resources. This meant they could access at their own pace too.

KS4 and 5 were positive about being able to use Sanako Connect for speaking, modelling and receiving verbal feedback. In preparation for exams, we ensured there was a focus in face-to-face lessons on modelling, group work and speaking. Students have become able to access resources digitally well; however, in class, resilience in completion of written work has been challenging as well as group interaction.

Name of contributor	Comment/points arising/questions
Jennifer Wozniak	<p>The Fable Cottage Fairy tales are great and it's something that I've discovered during lockdown. I had never heard of them before.</p> <p>I have noticed that you and Helen are mentioning Sanako Connect, is it something that you would recommend schools to get?</p>
Helen Myers (1)	<p>I am aware that there are many apps out there which offer the facility to make recordings "for free", but I am always concerned about how they might use the recordings, how they are stored, and how I can be sure to access them in future. That's why I have always preferred having a paid, secure system.</p> <p>I find that Sanako was very intuitive for the pupils, and they just clicked and recorded. I especially liked the feature which allows you as the teacher to record a question and then they can "insert" their answer easily into the track – quite a feat for an online app.</p> <p>I'll let Jill say more as I know she was at Language World talking about this so may have more examples. (I will add a link to my example later – I included it in a show-and-tell webinar.)</p>
Jill Snook (1)	<p>Yes, defo – we started using Sanako Connect as it has flexibility to create; however, now they are also producing some content and templates to adapt.</p>
Helen Myers (2)	<p>What a wide range of platforms and resources. This is so helpful as a reference of what is available!</p> <p>It seems that the key was having a Google Classroom from which you then posted links to the other platforms you used, e.g., Sanako, Microsoft. Were teachers required to keep records of what students had done on different platforms? (I note that Mike suggested that eventually they chose to limit their range in order to make things more manageable. I suppose there is a balance to be struck of ease of management/variety of engaging resources for a wide range of learners.)</p>
Jill Snook (2)	<p>We would track on Google Class – however, a Sanako link token would be issued via Google so they could access verbal feedback.</p>
Helen Myers (3)	<p>You talk about the Hwb platform (a great feature in Wales ... in England, there is less coordination across an authority).</p>
Jane Basnett	<p>Your point about the impossible workload is spot on – screen fatigue definitely became a thing for me and my team.</p>

PEDAGOGICAL CHANGES POST-PANDEMIC

QUESTION 3: WHAT HAS CHANGED NOW FOR OUR CURRENT PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE AS A RESULT OF OUR EXPERIENCE OF THE PANDEMIC?

Context: Many schools have adopted packages such as class charts which will change the practice of all teachers – the emphasis in this question is on things particularly pertaining to Languages.

Suggested areas you could cover:

Has the experience of the pandemic changed the way on which teachers approach T&L in a regular school context?

Has the experience of the pandemic changed the way on which learners approach T&L in a regular school context? Are they more autonomous? Do they interact more/less with peers?

Has there been an impact on attendance/engagement?

Mike Elliott

On the whole, changes to teaching and learning have been minimal, although we have retained some of the online solutions we discovered, for example the Flippity Randomizer for classroom pair work (we are lucky that all students have their own devices in lessons), or LearningApps for a variety of activities. Both of these have been good for independent work and revision-type activities. Just prior to the first lockdown we had made some significant changes to our KS3 curriculum – especially in French. We took the decision to do away with textbooks for the most part, instead focusing on a bespoke Scheme of Work with more intended recycling, more practice time. We had also moved to booklets to replace textbooks – an approach we have kept. No clear pattern in terms of how learners were impacted – everyone’s experience of lockdown was unique, and whereas some struggled to engage with online learning, there were others who thrived in our context. Similarly, autonomy and interaction with peers has been varied – although we have witnessed, perhaps, an overall improvement in terms of digital literacy, although this is a little “horses for courses”...

Comments on Mike Elliott’s response to Q3

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	You said in answer to the first question that you aimed to replicate the classroom as far as possible online ... so is it that the essential pedagogy underpinning your practice is the same (you mention having the didactic part and the interactive parts) but you have added a few extra tools (e.g. Flippity). Or do you think that these tools actually enhanced the pedagogy (e.g., perhaps increased opportunity to hear individuals speak?) (You don’t have to say yes!!!)
Helen Myers (2)	I find it interesting that most people so far have responded in a similar way with regard to pupils’ skills and the fact that there is no common result. There is perhaps a temptation to assume that increased opportunity to access resources remotely will lead to increased autonomy/independence in learning. But this is not what people are reporting here. (I like the way Vincent contrasts two aspects of independence in his answer below!)
Mike Elliott	(1) Yes, I would say so. Lexical items, key grammar points, recycling, etc; Flippity allowed us to recreate the sentence builder idea (and incidentally Flippity could be – and was – used with Flipgrid to offer students the chance to generate random sentences and record themselves reading them aloud and translating). I think they were good solutions in a time of need, but not always best suited for the classroom. (2) My personal feeling is that the key factor here is the individual’s experience of lockdown. This could be down to the area/environment where they worked; access to Wi-Fi; need for socialisation; support from parents; general level of organisation with personal admin...!
Helen Myers	(1) Yes, we have a wide range of interactive games/methods to get pupils to drill words without tech in the classroom I suppose. But the tech can help replicate drilling when working outside the classroom/independently? (2) Yes, I agree – environment and people are the key factors for successful learning!

Vincent Everett

Homework setting and taking in of work is now all online, with follow-up comments etc. also online. Some have developed more independence in this. Others use their independence by not doing it... I think nationally there has been a hit to attendance since we came back to school.

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	The increased use of an online platform for managing, setting, collecting and feeding back on homework seems to be common across everyone who has responded so far. Which system does your school use for this, Vincent? Do you find this change makes a difference to teaching and learning? (e.g., the option to make comments on the work electronically).
Helen Myers (2)	I love the way you contrast two aspects of independence! I put in a comment to Mike (above) that there is a tendency to equate the opportunity to access resources remotely with independence/autonomy in learning.
Vincent Everett	We use SatchelOne. Mainly for setting and taking in work. It has other functionalities, but we tend to use Google apps for these.
Helen Myers (3)	Thanks.

Sabine Pichout and Rebecca Jones

Post-pandemic we have worked hard to sustain the gains from online teaching and learning. We have spent a few years campaigning for and have finally gained a set of laptops for use in the ML classroom now. We continue to use a variety of free and subscription sites both in class and for home learning, such as Flippity, Wordwall and Sentencebuilder. Mathswiteboard and Mentimeter are used for open-ended answers in class and allow longer, more detailed answers than would be possible on a mini-whiteboard, as well as whole-class correction and review. Languagenut is used as a weekly online home learning. Teams and Class Notebook are also still used for KS3 and KS4 to set homework and type up and organise written work, as well as reading, translation and speaking tasks.

Pupil autonomy is variable as always. Much time as always is spent chasing home learning. The excuses are, however, minimised given that access to lessons that might have been missed is always provided, and clear instructions and notifications are provided weekly, all through Teams. Monitoring of work is also much easier through Teams and Languagenut.

Comments on Sabine Pichout's and Rebecca Jones's response to Q3

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	Your answer shows just how much you have embraced the technology that you encountered during this period of lockdown. You said above that you were already learning how to use Teams before the lockdown as a department, leading the way for others in the school. It seems that this period gave you a chance to refine what you were already doing. Is that fair to say?
Helen Myers (2)	Your use of Teams to manage work presumably makes management/collaboration with others in your team much more effective and efficient. Do students all have access to a laptop for every language lesson? If not, how do you manage with continuity from one lesson/homework to another if all work is managed via Teams?
Jane Basnett	I agree about the monitoring of work through Teams – I find it easy to see who has viewed, handed in, and I like to return work for “revision”. Some students click “handed in” when they have not done it!
Sabine Pichout and Rebecca Jones	(2) We are in a fairly affluent area and the majority of our students have their own devices. In addition, our IT support department equipped all the students who did not have laptops through government funding and the Trust funds. We now have a set of laptops for the department which teachers can book out. They are not used for every lesson, just as and when relevant.

As a school, we have kept Microsoft Teams and are using it to set our homework. However, submission of work depends on the work – it's sometimes online or sometimes in pupils' books, but all homework is set on Teams. In MFL, we have kept using Vocaroo for pupils to practise reading aloud and phonics.

I don't think pupils are more autonomous; some of them really lack resilience and independence – a lot more than before the pandemic. Attendance of some pupils has been an issue, and since the pandemic we have an increased number of pupils suffering from mental health issues.

The MFL department is also using Teams where schemes of work, resources and important information are being shared. This is the folder that we refer to and use the most. We also have the Markbook for summative assessment saved on it so that we can all edit it at the same time, and it allows the curriculum leader to monitor. We also have our online tablet booking system on it.

Comments on Jennifer Wozniak's response to Q3

Name of contributor	Comment/points arising/questions
Helen Myers (1)	You seem to be a real champion of Vocaroo! (I asked in Q1 if you could say how you set up the task to make it manageable for the teacher to mark.) I am not surprised, given your passion for getting pupils to talk in lessons. (And I have seen the various treats you line up for those who participate...!)
Jennifer Wozniak	<p>I will set the task on Teams. Here is an example that I've set this year as homework (but it was the same principle during lockdown):</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Please record yourself in one continuous recording saying these words in Spanish. You can record on your phone or record on the internet using the website www.vocaroo.com. Send your recording on Teams via the assignment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hola 2. Regular 3. Muy bien 4. Cuatro 5. Siete 6. Amigo 7. Diez 8. Me llamo 9. ¿Cómo te llamas? 10. Porque <p>Pupils will then submit their work on Teams. I will listen to them all (which won't take long) while writing down some of the words/sounds that a number of pupils did not pronounce right. During lockdown, I would then ensure that in the following live lesson, I would say those sounds or words and ask pupils to say them as well – some pupils were muted and therefore I could not check that they were then saying them right, so I used to include those words/sounds the next time I set them another speaking/reading aloud task.</p>

	<p>Here the example was reading aloud words, but other times it was reading aloud a few sentences, sometimes I gave pupils a sentence, e.g., ‘Quelle est ta personnalité?’, and pupils had to speak for a certain amount of time (e.g., 15 seconds/30 seconds).</p> <p>Other times I would ask pupils to all record one question in the TL, and I would then send those questions to different pupils, and they had to answer it (again speaking for a certain amount of time). The questions were simple and pupils liked it. We had questions like “Comment ça va?”, “As-tu un animal?”, “As-tu des frères et sœurs?”, “Tu aimes le foot?” etc...</p>
Helen Myers (2)	Thanks, great to have such a full example!

Jane Basnett

We are a 1-2-1 Surface School (i.e. we have a contract for using Microsoft Surface tablets, allowing for every pupil to have access to one), so we are committed to using Teams and Class Notebook (CNB). Teams is used to set “prep” (as a boarding school we aim not to use the term “homework”) and we make the most of CNB by using all its features where possible. We can front load the CNBs with useful notes for students and with links to practice papers etc. More importantly, we can embed links to many online tools that we still use in the classroom.

Learning Apps, Quizizz, Quizlet, Blooket are all still really useful in the MFL classroom when it comes to learning and retrieval practice. They provide different ways to practise skills such as listening. We probably do not use Flip as much as we did, but this is more to do with issues that some students have connecting (for some unknown reason) and because we can hear them speak face to face and actually engage in conversations.

Recently, I have taken to using Microsoft Reading Progress in Teams to set prep that tests pronunciation. It can be time consuming, but I spread out the “marking” of this. Teams highlights the issues it hears but is not always right, so it does need me to check. When I first set such a task, I thought that students might not like it, but in fact they really do, because I think they see it as an “easy” task. Teams picks out five words for them to practise again and they like this too.

As an MFL team we continue to share resources and planning and we use online tools regularly as well as more traditional methods. Most of my students like a good mix. The vast majority are confident in their use of online tools but also want it to be purposeful, and I am with them on that.

Comments on Jane Basnett’s response to Q3

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	<p>It sounds as though lockdown gave you a chance to discover more tools to use in what was already a successful setting. Thanks for all this information.</p> <p>Thanks for mentioning the reading progress tool, which is quite new and seems to have great potential for independent pronunciation practise with feedback I’m interested in your students’ reactions – they seem to be more forgiving and patient than I am...! (Personally I was quite irritated that it picked up a word which I had to practise – je m’appelle ...!! – and I was pretty confident that I was pronouncing it correctly...!)</p>
Jane Basnett	I think my students really liked the opportunity to practise speaking in a safe way and they knew that ultimately, I would listen to them. I agree, it’s very sensitive...

Jill Snook

Our approach to teaching and learning has changed to a blended learning approach. We have maintained the use of Google Classrooms as a way for students to access work, resources and assignments. We also purchased 30 Chromebooks for the IL Faculty in addition to the

school access we have to 20 laptops. We ensure that this access to digital resources is regular in school, and students' access out of school. We have built in the use of Sanako Connect as assessment for Year 7. We continue to use it for KS4/5 for tasks set at home and also the "Live" function, which allows all students to respond to a question in class at the same time, while the teacher can collect all individual responses.

Learners will interact differently depending on their experiences and year stage. We find Year 9 currently (Year 7 in 2021) challenging in their levels of resilience, motivation, engagement and attitudes to learning. This is based on their experience of being taught in their own area not integrated into the school, and not having the start to their new school/expectations/not part of the school community. We believe this impacted on consistency of learning too – stopping and starting. However, Year 7 seem very engaged, confident and resilient. They are also open to learning experiences. We have some poor attendance; however, we can still ensure we provide work digitally for students to try to engage, though the interaction may be limited.

Teacher feedback has changed/expectations of marking changed. We reviewed how feedback should be impactful and sometimes less is more. We may focus on one element/developing whole class feedback/self-marking and have increased verbal feedback in speaking using Sanako.

Comments on Jill Snook's response to Q3

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	<p>Your practice seems to incorporate much more use of technology as a result of the pandemic. Do you think this has changed anything essential about your underlying pedagogy, for example in the way you sequence learning?</p> <p>Some things I find change with using tech, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tech makes a difference to the way I present the French language. Knowing that they can hear as well as see a word when it is introduced means that I can introduce its written format more quickly/at an earlier stage. - I deliberately teach pupils how to use translation tools, e.g., DeepL For example, I demonstrate how to use the tool, and in particular show how useful it is to translate a suggested text back into English as a way of seeing how accurate it is.
Jill Snook (1)	<p>Absolutely Helen – agreed. We can offer support videos on GC/ material which students can use for flipped learning and also to support as they can access/re-watch when they want.</p>
Helen Myers (2)	<p>I appreciate your reference to the way you give feedback has been influenced by your experiences. I really think this is a significant way in which teachers in all subjects changed their practice, and that tech can give language teachers in particular a more effective way of giving meaningful, individualised feedback.</p> <p>I can give more individual feedback via chat in Teams – and this can also have the effect of getting a better rapport with the pupils</p>
Jane Basnett	<p>I also appreciate your new approach to feedback. It's much lighter on you – the teacher. Tech is also a great help, as you say. I think students expect and like that immediate feedback that only a tech tool can give – do you find that too?</p>
Jill Snook (2)	<p>Absolutely both – the feedback orally has made a difference to workload and is more impactful for students especially for speaking.</p>

QUESTION 4: FOLLOWING LOCKDOWN, HOW HAVE REMOTE PLATFORMS BEEN USED FOR STUDENTS NOT IN SCHOOL?

Context: illness etc. (attendance currently 90%). Significant numbers of pupils who have severe persistent absence. With some it may be due to anxiety, that is, they may wish to engage in learning but struggle with coming into school.

Has there been an impact on setting work for students/expectations?

Aspects identified after four responses (5 April)

Aspect	Variables
Access to platforms	Retained/reduced/removed/never used
Which platforms?	Microsoft Teams/Google/Classcharts/Course-related (please name course e.g., Studio)/Other (please name)
Management expectation on teacher use	Regular/occasional/never (e.g., expectation to be used for attendance/distribute/collect/assessment/report)
Teacher expectation on pupil use	Regular/occasional/never
Pupil expectation on teacher use	Regular/occasional/never (e.g., expectation that all lessons are available remotely)

RESPONSES FROM CONTRIBUTORS

Mike Elliott

We have maintained the use of Google Classroom for homework setting and sharing resources quickly in class (students all have devices, iPads in KS3, iPads and laptops from KS4). There is still the expectation that students take responsibility for their own learning, and should proactively catch up on any missed work, by asking a peer, for example. Clearly, this doesn't always happen, and we find ourselves in a transition phase where there is a greater expectation for resources and lessons to be shared online. The line is perhaps slightly blurred given the fact that the school was required to share lessons for students who were self-isolating, and students started to get into the habit of checking Google Classroom, and requesting resources if nothing was there. It is pleasing, on the one hand, that some students are actively taking charge of their learning, but the number of requests has increased.

Comments on Mike Elliott's response to Q4

Name of contributor	Comment/points arising/questions
Helen Myers	Delicately put! I find it is more demanding to provide resources for remote access when it is a language lesson which will have significant speaking/listening/interactive elements (in contrast with other subject areas).
Jennifer Wozniak	As you mentioned Mike, asking pupils to take responsibility for their own learning is key! In my school, this is still a message that we keep pushing as we are really not there yet. Too many pupils still think that they should not complete the homework if they were off the lesson, it was set etc...

Vincent Everett

We have gradually dropped most of the platforms we used. Partly because we kept them going with catch-up money which has dried up. Better platforms for setting homework are there to support learners absent long-term or short-term with getting work to them and for them to submit it.

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	Which platforms/apps have you retained? If you had the money, which would you have liked to retain?
Helen Myers (2)	You mentioned above the paper booklets which you have produced for pupils to use if absent. These sound an excellent idea – especially as they do not rely on hardware/software/connectivity. How do you make these available now?
Vincent Everett	Our booklets are printed. I do send Word docs to pupils for off site learning. We don't have any subscription sites at the moment. It's not a sustainable way to plan our curriculum. You never know what funding or prices will be like next year...
Helen Myers (3)	I understand. It's good that you have a very reliable in-house sources for providing stimulating resources!

Sabine Pichout and Rebecca Jones

There has certainly been an increase in school absence, notably from students suffering from mental health concerns and anxiety. Lessons are always provided through Teams, as are instructions and explanations for any home learning. Quizlet is also provided through Teams to help reinforce the language from the SBs. All students have a Sentence Builder Booklet for the year, and access to one via Teams if needed. When hybrid lessons were taking place, we were also able to run lessons through Teams so that students at home had access as well as those in the classroom. Students use their Class Notebook to record all their marked and assessed written work, so we are able to give feedback easily to students who are not in school and complete work from home.

Comments on Sabine Pichout's and Rebecca Jones's response to Q4

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers	This sounds great. (I asked the question above about students' access to a tablet.)

Jennifer Wozniak

When some pupils are suspended, sent to another school for a few days or for those who are not attending school for a specific amount of time, all teachers set work on Teams with clear instructions and pupils can contact their teachers if needed. It's a lot easier than having a pack to send home or to another school.

I have a student who has not been attending for months and we communicate via Teams. I set work for that pupil to do every week, it is submitted, and I give feedback on the work produced.

Comments on Jennifer Wozniak's response to Q4

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers	Your student is lucky to have you to do this! I especially like the way you can communicate via Teams. Do you do this through the chat/through a class area/on a document?
Jennifer Wozniak	Sometimes I send it via the assignment on Teams but most of the time I send it via the chat (as it does not necessarily apply to the whole class). On the chat I will give them the instructions for the work I want them to complete and attach all the documents they need. When I set homework to the class via the assignment, I would also send a private message on Teams to the pupils who are suspended or not attending school that the homework is also for them to complete.

Jane Basnett	Are you able to chat to your student via Teams too? Is she keen?
Jennifer Wozniak	Yes, we can. I would not say that she is keen, but she reads the messages and acknowledges the feedback given.
Jane Basnett	Well, that's a good start.

Jane Basnett

We taught “hybrid” lessons with some students in class and some at home or isolating in the boarding house. Lessons would be recorded to start with and so students took it upon themselves to catch up. Nowadays, we still use Teams during lessons if a pupil is away long-term and wishes to attend the lessons (very few incidences of this now) and we sometimes record if we are covering a particular important grammar point (for example). However, we have mainly moved away from recording and providing lessons via Teams. All lessons are available on the Class Notebook.

Jill Snook

There has definitely been an increase in absence and long-term absence. This seems to be triggered by mental health issues or family health concerns. Google Classroom is our main point of sharing resources for students to access and assignments for them to complete. Engagement is mixed depending on reasons for absence or and levels of motivation. The expectation is students will complete assignments; however, we often find that students do not engage and follow up comes from external agency support.

LESSONS FOR ANOTHER LOCKDOWN

QUESTION 5: WHAT WOULD WE DO IF WE HAD ANOTHER LOCKDOWN? WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT?

Context: One of the key developments in the last twenty years in ML teaching has been the use of technology. BECTA did a research series to show that ML showed the greatest gain in outcome as a result of using technology. But in many cases, schools/teachers were not able to use it effectively (access, training etc.)

Did the pandemic offer an opportunity to develop this aspect? And if so, has it continued on return?

RESPONSES FROM CONTRIBUTORS

Mike Elliott

It would be quicker to get up and running. The MFL community was excellent in terms of support and in terms of webinars, ideas and proactive solutions to allow teaching and learning to continue. Upskilling was necessary – and provided varying degrees of challenge – but proactive division of labour and centralised planning for certain year groups was a success and would no doubt be repeated. Since this time, we have invested in the website Sentence Builders which we would doubtless make use of if required.

In terms of workload, marking written work was a challenge – we struggled to find a satisfactory way to give written feedback during this period, but we were pleased with websites that enabled the setting – and self-marking – of assignments. This was a positive development and we have continued to make use of websites such as This Is Language and Sentence Builders in particular. Furthermore – now that we have found solutions that work – we would find it easier and less time-consuming to get set up.

Knowing that previous Linguascope webinars are available via the Staff Section would also help considerably.

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	You sound very well organised. You mentioned the challenge of feedback on more advanced writing tasks in an earlier response. I suppose this is an element which cannot be automated and is done ideally face to face. I wonder if anyone else has any ideas about how to tackle this?
Mike Elliott	I'm all ears! But, yes, face to face. Unsurprisingly (!), I have created feedback videos for essays too, but this requires close marking beforehand – again with pen, ideally!
Jennifer Wozniak	The first time we set a written task I was marking Google Translate, which really annoyed me so then we were careful in terms of the written work we asked our pupils to produce so that it was their work and not an online translator. Did you find that as well with your pupils?
Helen Myers (2)	I think that any written work I set GCSE students was always based on model texts/substitution tables, so I was almost deliberately not inviting them to be original (knowing that this might lead to over-use of translators where they would not understand what they were writing). This reduced the amount of correcting I had to do. For 6th form work, I was teaching Y12 using a course where writing was practised and assessed mainly in the form of answers to comprehension questions – so again, fairly focused and less likely to require originality. I think that you have bigger classes than most at 6th form Mike, so essay marking is probably more time-consuming for you. (The downside of being such a successful department ...!!) There is perhaps quite a lot of discussion to be had in how to respond to the use of online translators etc.
Jane Basnett	Regarding automated feedback, one tool that we did use in lockdown was Carousel and that does provide solutions to longer responses in my opinion as it gives sample answers (written by the teacher).
Helen Myers (3)	We must include a link to Carousel in the appendix. Thanks Jane.
Mike Elliott	Yes, thanks for mentioning Carousel. I found myself printing, marking, scanning and either re-sending or recording a video talking through the corrections – for A level I should add. And our numbers are not always as high as we would like!!

Vincent Everett

I think we did have lots of useful technology in lockdown. Since lockdown we've reduced our use of fancy platforms and subscriptions. What we do use are tasks we make in Word, with scrambled sentences or drag and drop words. This has been embedded as a focus on form, as well as review of previous material.

Comments on Vincent Everett's response to Q5

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	I remember that you tried out many aspects of technology. I really enjoyed seeing you present on your use of Google Maps and the way you created interesting, near-authentic experiences! We'll put a link here! Are the tasks in Word ones which are accessed online, or are these the booklets you have made? Is it possible to share an example? (No problem if not!)

Helen Myers (2)	(Asked above ... which platforms/subscriptions have you retained?)
Vincent Everett	The Word tasks are done in the computer room as they involve dragging words into place. Or putting spaces into sentences etc.
Helen Myers	Thanks. There is a tendency for us to forget the effective and efficient way standard software such as Microsoft can be used to create engaging interactive resources and activities. It is very sensible to have core resources which do not rely on a subscription/connectivity.

Sabine Pichout and Rebecca Jones

If we had another lockdown, we would be quick to set up learning routines and continue with our sharing of resources via a year group lead for each ML. We would continue to use Teams to set work, deliver live lessons and Class Notebooks for students to complete work on. We would share our growth and knowledge with others. We would build in time for colleagues to attend or review webinars such as the TILT webinars which provided an absolute lifeline for ML departments across the world! We would use videos to model the use of technology to staff and students.

Comments on Sabine Pichout's and Rebecca Jones's response to Q5

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers	All so helpful – thank you! Your enthusiasm and appreciation for the webinar presenters was such an important element in creating that sense of community. Thanks for all you have already shared.

Jennifer Wozniak

The lockdowns made us learn a lot more about technology and made us evaluate a range of different online platforms that we are now using more efficiently.

If we had another lockdown, the first thing I would do is to ensure that I know exactly in all my classes what device all my pupils are using because doing work on a phone or on a laptop is not the same. I would also ask who is sharing devices with other siblings so I can take that information into account.

As teachers, I think we would be quick at identifying what platforms we want to use.

Comments on Jennifer Wozniak's response to Q5

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers	Yes, excellent idea to collect that information if possible – presumably as a whole-school initiative?
Jennifer Wozniak	Yes, so we can have a record of who has what at home and how many are sharing with other siblings.

Jane Basnett

I think we would be ready to go. We now know what works for us and thanks to seeing some of the amazing features of Quizizz during lockdown we have now bought a whole subscription and we would make the most of the live lessons features which would give us similar features as Spiral Education gave us.

I feel we have more tools available too – so we would use Microsoft Reading Progress and Reading Coach for our students to practise their pronunciation.

I would use Carousel as a way to alleviate the pressure of written feedback for lower years. Or I would model responses more – which is something I do now anyway. But for Years 10–13 the pressure will remain to mark individuals' work.

As with the first lockdown, I would expect to share what we do with the whole staff body and I would love to be involved in sharing such tools with the MFL teaching community; it made me feel really useful!

Comments on Jane Basnett’s response to Q5

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers	You certainly were useful, Jane! I really appreciated the way that schools could benefit from pioneers, which were often in the boarding/independent sector and in countries that had already experienced lockdown before the UK.
Jane Basnett	Well, thank you for the opportunities you gave me to share with others.

Jill Snook

Lockdown certainly gave teachers and learners an opportunity to have access to digital technology to enhance learning.

If there was another lockdown situation we are well prepared to continue learning online.

Opportunities during lockdown via webinars for languages teaching was incredible. It became part of a working week online to attend webinars and many of my team would attend different training to share and develop expertise in the team. Virtual meetings on Teams have made collaboration easier and it is something we have continued to use cross consortia for Teach Meets and CPD [Continuing Professional Development].

The training offered throughout lockdown has given us an awareness of what is possible and something my team has embraced.

Our use of Sanako is now being developed to be used across Primary School Cluster, to ensure that there is a consistency of opportunity to access materials and ensure transition for students to familiarise themselves with use of something they will be using in Secondary.

Time is now the block for attending webinars, as lockdown created more time flexibility.

Comments on Jill Snook’s response to Q5

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Jane Basnett	Yes – I felt I had more time for attending webinars. Now I miss so much because I just don’t have the time.

IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON TRAINING

QUESTION 6: HOW HAS CPD BEEN AFFECTED BY THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PANDEMIC? WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT OF LEARNING TO USE ONLINE TRAINING AND WEBINARS? ARE THERE PROFESSIONAL BENEFITS GAINED FROM WEBINARS, ONLINE FORUMS ETC.?

Have the kinds of online conversations that happened during lockdown carried on, and have different areas of language education become more connected as a result?

RESPONSES FROM CONTRIBUTORS

Mike Elliott

The MFL community in particular was fantastic in terms of support, and we were lucky to have such a myriad of first-class practitioners ready and willing to share their ideas and time so generously. Without that, students would have ultimately suffered, and teachers would have found the whole period even more challenging that it ended up being. Big shout outs to Helen Myers, Joe Dale and Stéphane Derône at Linguascope for their gargantuan efforts during this period and all the fantastic guest speakers who gave freely of their time. The contributions made to mental health and well-being probably shouldn’t be understated here either.

And the quality of presentations and ideas was excellent, and an hour spent with expert practitioners who were speaking from a position of authority, expertise and experience was an hour well spent. You would always leave with something, whether it be a new idea,

validation or reassurance. Esmeralda Salgado’s contributions here were tremendous – easy-to-implement, engaging solutions that have remained a part of post-lockdown practice. Flippity – first highlighted by Joe Dale – was a game changer for me, and I still use it regularly to generate customisable worksheets, randomisers, treasure hunts, board games, all features that work just as well in the classroom as they do online (IT facilities permitting).

The professional benefits were massive, both in terms of practice and networking. I would say that there have been fewer requests for official CPD courses because webinars exist, and the quality is assured, with instantly usable ideas.

Being able to publicise these things on Twitter and to be able to build connections and start conversations with other educators was another good thing to come out of this period. This could perhaps also be seen to have filled a socialisation need, especially for those self-isolating.

Comments on Mike Elliott’s response to Q6

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	This is such a comprehensive answer covering so many ways in which the MFL community came together – thanks! As I said to Sabine and Becky in question 5, those who attended webinars made those who presented feel very special! For the purposes of this project, I think it would be helpful for us to put together a list of links to some of the areas you mention. There really is a wealth of international expertise and experience out there from which we can still learn
Jane Basnett	I couldn’t agree more with Mike’s comments. I also loved watching webinars back – as I had more flexibility to stop/start as desired. Helen you were also amazing – thank you for organising everything for us.
Helen Myers (2)	It was definitely a team effort: Joe Dale had the contacts, the contacts were willing to present, and I did the behind-the-scenes stuff! We learnt so much from each other and made lasting friendships! (Cue dramatic, uplifting music...!)

Vincent Everett

Huge increase in online webinars, through subject association and others. And a real sense of community.

Comments on Vincent Everett’s response to Q6

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers	Yes, I agree. And thank you for the part you played in this! We must put in links to your webinars!

Sabine Pichout and Rebecca Jones

Access to free and flexible CPD via webinars and online forums has been transformational. We have had access to learning from some exceptional teachers and learnt so many techniques about the digital tools that we already used, which have helped us modernise and lift our teaching for the benefit of our learners. A wonderful and supportive online Modern Language community opened up in this time and we are so grateful to remain part of that.

Comments on Sabine Pichout’s and Rebecca Jones’s response to Q6

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Mike Elliott	Agree with all of the above.
Helen Myers	This is great to read. There was a lot going on to do with tech before the pandemic, but the universality of the conditions brought tech to the fore for everyone. It’s great that friendships have been forged, and the community shares ideas and practice which goes well beyond technology but using technology as a vehicle for discussion and debate.

Personally, it was the best part of lockdown. I have been able to attend so many online webinars and I learned so much from colleagues around the world. In general, I think most teachers attended more CPD during lockdown than ever before.

There were tons of ideas and resources shared. All the ALL webinars, including the TILT ones and the Linguascope ones were refreshing, innovative and I think made us even stronger as a MFL community. We never stopped learning. There were a lot of ideas also shared on Twitter and on the Facebook MFL groups as well. What I think is incredible is that it has not stopped after the pandemic, there are still a great number of webinars for language teachers by language teachers being delivered regularly.

We were also very lucky that despite the lockdown some conferences still went ahead but online, for example the Language Show Live and the Language World. The Research Ed conferences that are more aimed at general teaching and learning also happened online and access to videos were made available for free.

Comments on Jennifer Wozniak's response to Q6

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Mike Elliott	Agree with all of the above.
Helen Myers	Thanks for all those references, and thanks so much for your part in presenting during webinars. We could add links to these various groups as part of an appendix.

Jane Basnett

I'm not sure I can add any more to what has been said. I will just add that now I am unable to attend all the webinars as there are just so many and I just don't have the time.

Comments on Jane Basnett's response to Q6

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers (1)	I understand. The key thing is I suppose that we are perhaps more aware of networks which exist. For me, as you all know, ALL is a good umbrella organisation which can represent/coordinate support, but I know that individual academies and groups of schools also provide good support and training.
Jane Basnett	Thank heavens for ALL.
Helen Myers (2)	:)

Jill Snook

CPD was a great opportunity for IL. There were opportunities provided by Linguascope, ALL, our own EAS consortia [Education Achievement Service, <https://sewaleseas.org.uk/>], UK German Connection, Cardiff Uni Mentoring, Sanako training videos/webinars and even teacher to teacher links. The support offered among the language community was superb as it provided realistic practical support as well as professional guidance/support in challenging times.

There are definitely more opportunities for online CPD; however, I think time is the limitation.

Comments on Jill Snook's response to Q6

<i>Name of contributor</i>	<i>Comment/points arising/questions</i>
Helen Myers	Thanks, a great list of providers. Perhaps we could include links to these organisations in an appendix. I expect many of them have resources upon which we can still draw.
	I agree that time is the limitation on continuing this level of activity, but at least teachers are now generally comfortable with the idea of meeting online rather than face to face. ALL London had been

providing Adobe Connect webinars between 2011 and 2020, drawing on my experience interacting with the worldwide TEFL community who used these platforms to interact, but this was not common practice, and I found people were reluctant to embrace the tech!

APPENDICES

ACRONYMS, TECHNICAL TERMS, PRODUCTS AND LINKS

6th form	Year 12 (16/17 year olds) and Year 13 (17/18 year olds) preparing for post-GCSE qualifications
A levels	Advanced levels. Terminal examination for Year 13. Usually students take three subjects
Adobe Spark (now Adobe Express)	https://www.adobe.com/express/learn/blog/welcome-to-adobe-spark . Program for creating presentations
ALL London Webinars	The Association for Language Learning London Branch Webinars. For those relating to the pandemic era, please see numbers 40 onwards
AQA	https://www.aqa.org.uk/ Assessment and Qualifications Alliance – one of the three exam boards offering qualifications in Languages
Association for Language Learning	The Association for Language Learning (ALL) is an independent registered charity and the UK's major subject association for those involved in the teaching of foreign languages at all levels. https://www.all-languages.org.uk/
Blooket	https://www.blooket.com/ . Online interactive games – authoring package
CAGs	Centre Assessment Grades for GCSEs and A levels used in summer 2020 when external examinations were not offered
Cardiff Uni Mentoring	https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/learning-hub/supporting-students/student-mentoring . The Student Mentor Scheme at Cardiff University supports students to make the transition to university life
Carousel	https://www.carousel-learning.com/ . Online interactive program
Class Notebook	https://www.onenote.com/classnotebook . A Microsoft extension creating a personal workspace for every student, a content library for handouts and a collaboration space for lessons and creative activities
CPD	Continuing professional development
DfE	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education . Department for Education, responsible for children's services and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy
EAS consortia	https://www.estyn.gov.wales/ . Education and Achievement Service. Inspection service for education and training in Wales
Exampro	https://www.exampro.co.uk/ . Exam preparation tool provided by AQA (past exam papers available for teachers to create internal papers)
Fable Cottage	https://www.thefablecottage.com/ . Bilingual tales for language learners
Filmora	https://filmora.wondershare.net/ . Video editing software
Flip (formerly Flipgrid)	https://info.flip.com/en-us.html . Interactive video platform
Flippity	https://www.flippity.net/ . Online platform to author interactive activities
Flippity Randomizer	One of the 28 activities available in Flippity

GCSE	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/gcse-subject-content . General Certificate of Secondary Education. External examinations taken by students at the end of a two-year course in Year 11 (15/16 year olds). Typically students take 8 or 9 GCSEs, each awarded a grade 9–1
Genially	https://genial.ly/ . A platform for creating interactive content
Gimkit	https://www.gimkit.com/ . A platform for creating interactive content
Google Classroom	https://edu.google.com/workspace-for-education/classroom/ . Online learning platform and management system
Google Quizzes	https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/ . A Google extension. A Google form can be made into a quiz
Hwb	https://hwb.gov.wales/ . Online platform with support for Curriculum in Wales
IL	International Languages
iMovie	https://www.apple.com/uk/imovie/ . Video-creating tool
INSET	In Service Education and Training
Kahoot	https://kahoot.com/schools-u/ . A platform for creating interactive content
Kami	https://www.kamiapp.com/ . Online tools for creating online content and interacting with learners
key-worker students	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision . Children of critical workers who were allowed access to schools during lockdown
KS	Key Stage. The secondary system has four official Key Stages, and the 16–18-year-old phase is often referred to as Key Stage 5. Key Stage 1: Year 1 (5–6) and Year 2 (6–7). Key Stage 2: Year 3 (7–8), Year 4 (8–9), Year 5 (9–10) and Year 6 (10–11). Key Stage 3: Year 7 (11–12), Year 8 (12–13) and Year 9 (13–14). Key Stage 4: Year 10 (14–15) and Year 11 (15–16). 16–18, often called Key Stage 5: Year 12/Lower 6th (16–17) and Year 13/Upper 6th (17–18). For information about the education system in the UK, see https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum
Languagenut	https://www.languagenut.com/en-gb/ . Digital language resources
Learning Apps	https://learningapps.org/ . Online platform to create interactive resources
Linguascope	https://www.linguascope.com/ . Interactive language learning platform with ready-made content
Loom videos	https://www.loom.com/ . Video production software
Mathswhiteboard	https://mathswhiteboard.com/ . Online blank whiteboard
Mentimeter	https://www.mentimeter.com/ . Online presentations with interactive polls
Microsoft Forms	https://forms.office.com/Pages/DesignPageV2.aspx . Microsoft tool to create forms and quizzes
Microsoft Reading Progress	https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/training/educator-center/product-guides/reading-progress/ . Microsoft tool to assess quality of reading aloud
Microsoft Teams	https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft-teams/teams-for-work . Online platform and management system with add-ons to suit school management needs
Microsoft Whiteboard	https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft-365/microsoft-whiteboard/digital-whiteboard-app . Online whiteboard
Mote voice recording	https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/mote-voice-notes-feedback/ajphlblkfppdpkgokiebjfjohfohhmk?hl=en-GB . Google extension to allow recording of comments

Notability	https://notability.com/ . Online presentation software
Padlet	https://padlet.com/ . Online interactive boards
prep	Term used for work done by students outside lesson time in boarding schools
puzzgrid	https://puzzgrid.com/ . Online authoring game to prompt learners to make connections between words/phrases
Quiqr	https://qwiqr.education/ . Audio feedback online tool
Quizizz	https://quizizz.com/?lng=en . Online quiz creation tool
Quizlet/Quizlet Live	https://quizlet.com/latest . Online interactive activity creation
Quiz-Quiz-Trade	https://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/quiz-quiz-trade . Cooperative game played in class where students teach each other
Reading Coach	https://techcommunity.microsoft.com/t5/education-blog/introducing-reading-coach-for-personalized-practice-and-other/ba-p/3223533 . Microsoft tool to check reading fluency
Research Ed	https://researched.org.uk/ . Training events focused on teacher research
Sanako Connect	https://sanako.com/connect . Language teaching software
SatchelOne	https://www.teamsatchel.com/ . Cloud management system
School Synergy	https://www.schoolsynergy.co.uk/home . School management system
Screencastify	https://www.screencastify.com/ . Screen recorder
Seneca	https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/ . Online learning platform
Sentence stealers	https://frenchteachernet.blogspot.com/2019/02/sentence-stealers-with-twist.html . Reading aloud game
Socrative	https://www.socrative.com/ . Classroom app for interactive assessment
SoW	Scheme of Work
speaking endorsement	In 2021 GCSEs, A “teacher endorsement” was given as evidence to exam boards to prove that students could speak the language
Spiral	Interactive learning platform, now taken over by Discovery Education https://www.discoveryeducation.com/details/discovery-education-acquires-award-winning-interactive-learning-platform-spiral/
TAGs	Teacher Assessed Grades used in summer 2021 when external examinations were not offered. Assessed grades were produced using the unit results students achieved through banked assessments
Teach Meets	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TeachMeet . An organised but informal meeting (in the style of an unconference) for teachers to share good practice, practical innovations and personal insights in teaching
Teachvid	https://www.teachvid.com/ . Online platform to create interactive exercises associated with existing or uploaded videos
Textivate	https://www.textivate.com/ . Online platform for creating interactive exercises
UK German Connection	https://ukgermanconnection.org/ . Organisation promoting German
Vocaroo	https://vocaroo.com/ . Online voice recorder
whiteboard.fi	https://whiteboard.fi/ . Online whiteboard
WJEC	https://www.wjec.co.uk/ . Welsh Joint Education Committee – qualifications for Wales
Wooclap	https://www.wooclap.com/ . Online tool to create interactive presentations
Wordwall	https://wordwall.net/ . Online tool to create interactive resources

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