Teaching through the Covid-19 pandemic

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Landscape review: Review of Ministry of Education response during the COVID-19 pandemic, English language teaching and learning

John Shackleton
In March / April we asked our British Council colleagues around the world to review how Ministries of Education were responding to the impact of Covid-19, to give us a view of the landscape within regions and across regions.

The review was based on Ministry of education plans available in the public domain and structured interview with a representative of the Ministry.
Landscape Review

We asked questions about:

• The current situation regarding school closure and remote learning
• Steps taken to minimise loss of learning
• Support provided to Ministries of Education from other organisations
• Planning for the return to face-to-face teaching
Landscape Review

We looked at the responses and brought the insights and indications together into a report to help us:

• develop and refine the resources we make available for teachers and teacher educators during the crisis

• understand better the challenges and requirements of effective remote delivery in general

• inform a more focused insight gathering exercise in September, looking at the evolution of MoE response and how the British Council can continue to provide effective support
Insight reports

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/covid-19-insight-reports
What’s in the report?

- Response by region against a continuum, to provide both a global and regional snapshot
- Aggregated responses to individual questions
- Challenges (ranked multiple instances of selected comment as a % of responses)
- Selected practical examples of how countries/territories were responding
Key insights, indications and further research avenues
Learning content

The quality and appropriacy of learning content was inconsistent – with significantly more learning content being provided asynchronously than synchronously.
Teacher competence

Teachers, if they were engaging with remote delivery, did not have the skills to fully exploit the remote learning environment.
Teacher support

Support to help teachers develop their remote delivery skills further, where it existed, was generally not at scale and did not allow for the consolidation of new skills acquired.
Pace of response

The absence of guidance on online safety for example in 2/3rds of responses received is an indication of the challenge of responding at speed.
Most visible challenges: ranking

Access was the most frequently cited challenge – how to overcome barriers to connecting to digital content (connectivity, availability of device, cost of data)
Most visible challenges: ranking

In addition to teacher competence, teacher support and quality and accessibility of digital and non-digital alternatives to F2F content, the two other highly visible challenges cited were learner motivation and assessment of learning.
English language teaching

No significant indication of specific MoE support compared to the teaching of other subjects. However, some indications emerged from response comments to support the following hypotheses:

• English language teachers enjoy more professional development support through their national associations

• English language teachers were more likely to be engaged in remote delivery already

• The remote learning environment and the impossibility of F2F interaction has a higher impact on loss of learning in language teaching than in the teaching of other subjects

• Parental support for English language learning is more challenging than for other subjects
With these key insights and the detail of the aggregated responses in mind, we will carry out a second snapshot review in September 2020. We aim to focus in detail on these areas, as they relate to the teaching and learning of English:

• Challenges inherent in the nature of remote teaching and learning of English
• The current state of school closure and challenges of reopening in the countries surveyed
• Approaches to remedial teaching and accelerated learning
• Factors influencing variety of response within and across regions
• Barriers and approaches to organising large-scale synchronous teaching and the role of teacher support and application of newly acquired teacher competence in this
Focus of September snapshot

• Barriers and approaches to providing relevant and high-quality asynchronous learning access and content
• Levels of teacher competence in respect of virtual delivery and priorities for targeted professional development support
• Barriers and approaches to ensuring more equitable access to learning
• Barriers and approaches to the assessment of online learning
• Approaches to ensuring online safety
• Barriers and approaches to involving parents in the learning process
Focus of September snapshot

- Expanding the example activities featured in this report into more detailed process guides and case studies
- (and overall in sum) what kind of support is the most needed and how can it most effectively be deployed in overcoming loss of learning during times of crisis and facilitating new ways of teaching and learning English in the future
A survey of teacher and teacher educator needs during the Covid-19 pandemic | April - May 2020

Ellen Darling

www.britishcouncil.org
Overview of the survey for teachers and teacher educators

1. Aims and approach
2. Respondent profile
3. Main findings
1. Aims and approach

• Find out what the challenges and resource needs are for teachers and teacher educators during remote teaching as a result of the pandemic.

• Survey Monkey

• 3 April to 31 May 2020

• Three different surveys were delivered, a global survey and two adapted for use in East Asia and China.

• 23 questions, both closed and open.

• The surveys were completely anonymous.
2. Respondents

Figure 1: Responses by region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global survey</td>
<td>5518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>2237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia</td>
<td>1729</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Bar chart showing responses by region](chart.png)
3. Respondents: age of learners/language level of learners

**Figure 2: Age of learners taught**
- Very Young Learners (aged 3-6) - 19%
- Primary students (aged 7-11) - 22%
- Secondary students (aged 11-16) - 32%
- Older secondary students (aged 16-18) - 25%
- Adult students (18+) - 10%

**Figure 3: Language level of learners taught**
Answered by teachers working in private institutions.
- Beginner A1 - 22%
- Pre-intermediate A2 - 25%
- Intermediate B1 - 25%
- Upper-intermediate B2 - 18%
- Advanced C1 and above - 10%
Table 2: Respondents identified themselves as working in the following roles and/or institutions

It should be noted that respondents were allowed to choose more than one option, as many teachers and teacher educators have more than one role and may work in more than one institution. These figures include the results from all three surveys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Public schools</th>
<th>Private schools</th>
<th>Higher education</th>
<th>English Medium Instruction</th>
<th>Teacher educators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wider Europe</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENA</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americas</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Main findings: **How** are teachers teaching?

**Figure 4: Remote teaching tools used**

- 59% of respondents say they are teaching synchronously.
- 75% of respondents say they are teaching asynchronously.
4. Main findings: What are the challenges? Concerns expressed by teachers and teacher educators

- Keeping up student motivation
- Class management
- Assessing remotely
- Including disadvantaged individuals
- Catering for mixed abilities
- Student and teacher well-being
- Poor internet connection/no access to the internet
- Preparing learners for exams
- Fears about cheating
- Developing learner autonomy
- Lack of proper equipment for teachers and/or learners
- Advice on planning online lessons
- Advice on task design for distance learning
- Longer preparation time
Resources to support Ministries of Education, teachers & teacher educators

Amy Lightfoot

www.britishcouncil.org
Approach to resource development

• Be as inclusive as possible while responding as quickly as possible (high / low resource and synchronous / asynchronous)
• Connect up country-based initiatives
• Recognise the different needs and contexts both between and within countries
• Provide support for Ministries of Education as well as for teachers and teacher educators
• Provide guidance – ‘how’ – as well as content – ‘what’
• Use data from global survey and gathered from internal team to inform focus
Resource development and deployment

Guidance for MoEs
- Two sets of guidance released in May and July 2020

Remote Teaching Tips
- 25 guidance two-page guidance documents covering wide range of topics

Broadcast
- Supported 18 countries with TV or radio broadcast aimed at school-age learners
Resource development and deployment

Lesson plans for online teaching
• 32 lesson plans developed / adapted to support synchronous and asynchronous learning online

Professional Practice Pathways for Remote Teaching
• Brand new resource launching this week

30 days of English for teachers: WhatsApp challenge
• Currently being piloted in four countries
Online professional development

Liana Hyde

www.britishcouncil.org
Online professional development

• Webinars

• Facebook Live events

• Videos – tips from teachers

www.britishcouncil.org
Webinars

• Webinar topics - teacher research, webinar feedback.

• Topics have evolved to suit needs of teachers

• All recordings and slides available on TeachingEnglish website.

• [https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/support-teachers-teacher-educators](https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/support-teachers-teacher-educators)

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**Webinar topics – most recent first**

- The challenges of remote learning and safeguarding
- The challenges of remote learning and teacher resilience
- Global North-South project-based learning: Student to student telecollaboration for language learning
- Online workshop for teacher educators
- ELT Research across fracture lines: Themes and methods for difficult times and under travel constraints
- Teaching live English lessons online
- The challenges of remote learning through online classrooms and resource hubs
- Creative activities for Language Learners at home
- Simple Teaching Ideas for Online Classes with Primary Children
- Online Teaching and Young Learners - making the most of the situation
- Teaching online - supporting and mentoring teachers remotely
- Teaching online - tech tools and the tutor's role
- Teaching online - using your coursebook and ideas for breakout rooms
- Teaching online - if the tech fails and structuring lessons

www.britishcouncil.org
Facebook Live – Q and A sessions

Different from webinars
- sense of community
- ability to interact, lots of comments
- teachers answer each other’s questions and sharing ideas
- all questions are answered
- content driven by audience

Diverse ‘expert’ voices

Captions and questions highlighted to make it accessible.
Facebook Live topics

- Focusing on skills work in remote teaching
- Planning effective lessons for synchronous remote teaching
- Assessment in remote teaching contexts
- Managing interaction and motivation in remote teaching
- Teacher wellbeing
- Teaching remotely with limited connectivity
- Creating your own content for remote teaching
- Returning to school - new ways of teaching.
- Keeping your learners safe online
- The role of parents in supporting remote learning
- Learner autonomy
- The flipped classroom

Topics based on teacher survey feedback

Range of contexts and teaching situations

Recordings available on TeachingEnglish Facebook page
Video content

- Tips from teachers and instructional videos
- Agency and voice to teachers from a range of contexts.
- Power of sharing experience and advice with other colleagues.
- Developing video content as an alternative to reading docs/especially popular on social media platforms.
Use of the resources

- Remote Teaching Tips downloads – 58,000
- Lesson plans – 52,000

- Webinars – 5,000 attendees and 579,000 views

- MOOCs – 115,000 enrolments

- Facebook Live events – 344,000 views and 7,000 live viewers
Coming soon!!

MOOCs
Teaching Young Learners online – join now!
https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/teaching-young-learners-online

Facebook Live
Every Tuesday at 13.00pm UK time on the TeachingEnglish Facebook page
21 July - Student well-being
28 July - Making time for CPD
Links

• Covid-19 insight reports: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/covid-19-insight-reports

• Overview of resources and events available: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/support-teachers-teacher-educators

• Remote Teaching Tips documents: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers/integrating-ict/guidance

• Guidance for ministries of education:
  https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/Supporting_transition_back_to_school_guidelines.pdf and
Thank you