

TEACHING DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS AS REFLECTED AND SHARED ON FACEBOOK

Mai Ngoc Khoi*, Khac Thi Anh Tuyet

*VNU University of Languages and International Studies,
Pham Van Dong, Cau Giay, Ha Noi, Vietnam*

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Abstract: As in many countries worldwide, the COVID-19 pandemic requires Vietnamese teachers to adapt to online teaching. A particular challenge has been the urgent and unexpected requests for the immediate shift from face-to-face to online teaching. This research focuses on how teachers at a university reacted and adapted to the change, as reflected and shared on their Facebook pages. 96 Facebook posts of 56 university lecturers during the online teaching phases in 2020 and early 2021 were screen-captured and then thematically analysed. Main factors causing difficulties and teacher stress and burnout were identified. The findings suggest that the toughest challenges were two aspects: the difficulties in controlling the dynamics and interactions in the class, and the difficulties in arranging workload in school curricula filled with online classes. The findings show that teachers' attitude toward this sudden change slowly improved as their efficacy for teaching online and sense of accomplishment increased. The paper also discusses the future changes relevant for sustainable online education. Finally, the paper ends with some reflection on helping teachers survive a crisis by nurturing a positive attitude and resilience.

Keywords: COVID-19, online teaching, social media

I. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented an urgent need to education systems at all levels to find alternatives to face-to-face, campus-based teaching and learning. As a result, online teaching and learning has been deployed by teachers and students worldwide on an unprecedented scale. In Vietnam, students have had their education seriously disrupted by repeated school closures and re-openings, and the transition to online learning in-between. Online teaching has been conducted as an emergency response and credible solution whenever social distancing and lockdowns

were implemented since 2020. Respectively, the first phase of online learning began on March 2, 2020, with extension of school closures until the end of April. The second phase started in early July until mid-September. The third phase of COVID-19 started on January 28, 2021 and lasted for one month. Finally, from May 2021, students started learning online during the last few weeks of the academic year. In the time of COVID-19, educators and students understand the need for remote teaching and learning to continue their education and ensure their safety, and they are motivated to adopt and adapt to online teaching-learning

* Corresponding author.

Email address: khoi.maingoc@gmail.com

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platforms in fulfilling the current educational demand (Mishra et al., 2020).

On the one hand, an advantage of the transition to online teaching and learning is that many teachers and students are already highly adept in using technological and social media apps, such as Facebook, Instagram, Skype, and Zalo, which facilitates a seemingly smooth implementation of online educational platforms such as MS Team or Google Meet. On the other hand, there are profound differences between classroom teaching and remote instruction. The lack of preparation, the discrepancies between online teaching design and delivery and face-to-face teaching and learning, and additional technological complexities have put additional stresses and workloads on teachers, who were already struggling to balance teaching, research and other service

and personal obligations (Rapanta et al., 2020).

This present study focuses on how faculty members at an English department in a university in Hanoi have reacted to the digital transformation during the COVID pandemic as reflected and shared on the social media platform Facebook. Factors that lead to their stress and burnout are identified and discussed.

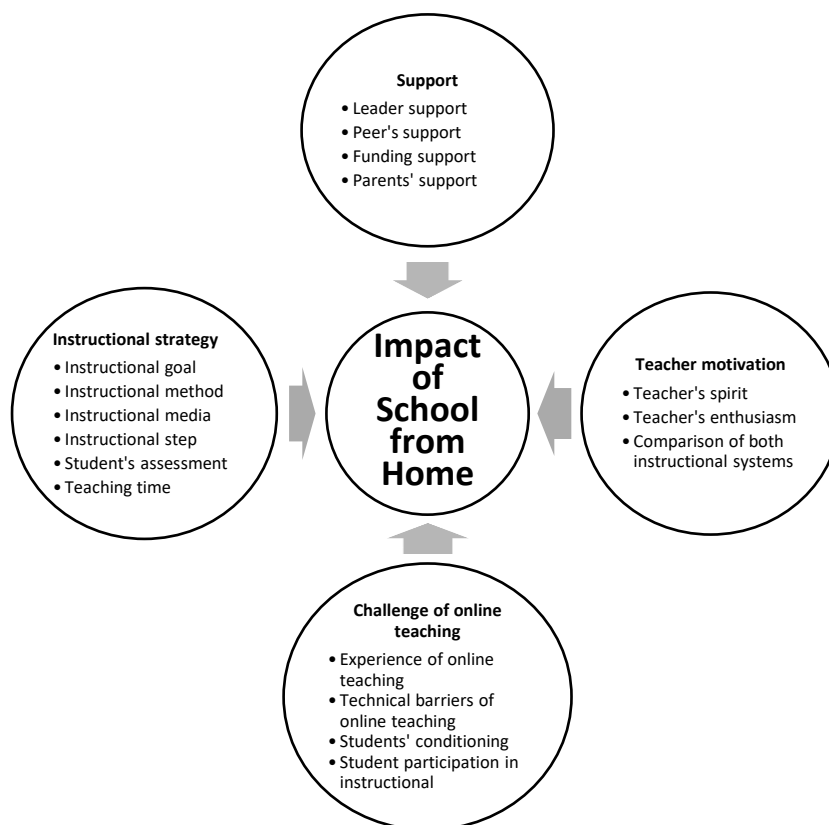
II. Literature Review

2.1. Context of Online Learning During COVID-19 Global Pandemic

The challenge of implementing online education is a topic that long preceded COVID-19 pandemic. In an Indonesian case study and quantitative research by Rasmitadila et al. (2020), the impact of online learning was conceptualized into a framework as follows:

Figure 1

Conceptualized Classroom Teachers' Perceptions of the Impact of Distance Education During the Lockdowns Due to COVID-19



As the figure illustrates, the quality of education provided when teaching-from-home as the only option is reliant on several major factors: pedagogy (instructional strategy), support for learners, educators' drive to overcome the transition difficulties, and other challenges (Rasmitadila et al., 2020). In this section, these factors will be reviewed using academic evidence worldwide related to online learning, educators' strategies and institutional or governmental approach to addressing the contemporary challenges of online teaching and learning.

2.1.1. The Challenges of Implementing Online Education

Rapanta et al. (2020) defined online learning as learning that is mediated by the Internet. It refers to a type of teaching and learning situation in which (1) the learner is at a distance from the instructor; (2) the learner uses some form of technology to access the learning materials; (3) the learner uses technology to interact with the instructor and with other learners; and (4) some kinds of support are provided to learners (Anderson, 2011, as cited in Rapanta et al., 2020). Online learning can be undertaken (1) without the presence of a teacher, where students work online at home while the teacher assigns work and checks it digitally, and (2) with the presence of a teacher. The former scenario can be referred to as "distance learning", which is the "traditional" self-study course, also known as "correspondence course", where materials and learning resources are sent to students via post or emails, and students must complete the set tasks according to the course schedule (Rapanta et al., 2020). On a distance learning course, often the only interaction with a teacher is when assignments are submitted for marking. Students can flexibly set their own pace and timetable of study, and rarely interact with fellow students. For the purposes of this

article, online learning refers to the latter one, in which students are together in the virtual classroom with a teacher who delivers their lecture online.

Online education presupposes an existing organizational infrastructure which serves the purposes of online teaching and learning. In contrast, the "emergency remote teaching" required by COVID-19 is almost merely the unplanned and sudden shift from the traditional form of education into a remote one following the state of emergency in different countries due to the outbreak of COVID-19. In this forced online learning, the course design, assessment and teaching strategies used are originally designed for face to face teaching. Indeed, both students and instructors are not well-prepared for such an unplanned and sudden shift.

Recent research on online learning mostly focuses on the perceptions of teachers and students on online teaching-learning modes (e.g., Mishra et al., 2020; Sokal et al., 2020a; Konig et al., 2020); teachers' attitudes towards change (Sokal et al., 2020a); teachers' perceptions of the differences between online and face-to-face teaching (Rapanta et al., 2020). Research findings of Mishra et al. (2020) and Konig et al. (2020) have highlighted that successful online learning involves a diverse array of tools, resources, study materials such as free access to e-books, pedagogical approaches, organizational arrangements, forms of interactions, monitoring and support, as well as other technical requirements such as stable Internet connection, Wi-Fi, access to a standard account on Zoom. The teachers in these studies perceived proficient computer knowledge and clarity of expression as crucial online teaching skills and techniques. Additional skills in order to manage online teaching process include virtual classroom experience, patience, empathy, proper handling of teaching-learning tools available with user-friendly features. Rapanta et al. (2020) also pointed out that while face to

face learning relies on direct personal interactions through discussions or presentations, online learning is more materials-based and should integrate more media such as videos or readings. As such, online instruction requires the design of learning activities with certain characteristics that are suitable for its purposes.

The forced online teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has posed huge challenges to teachers since many of them have no or limited experience with online teaching. Online courses have often been “improvised rapidly”, without a common pedagogical framework for online teaching and learning and with limited available resources (Lederman, 2020). As claimed by Mishra et al. (2020), another difficulty in the implementation of the change process is that teachers may not be technologically competent enough and many have to use tools that they have not fully mastered. As a result, teachers must prepare and train themselves to be accustomed to the online learning-teaching modes. In a way, this appears to add an unsolvable loop to the already challenging problems of the education crisis: there is already a shortage of teaching inputs and learners’ support during the pandemic and now many teachers themselves are also in need of further education and training in order to work more efficiently.

The major challenges to teaching online as perceived by the teachers in various studies (e.g., Mishra et al., 2020; Konig et al., 2020) involve unstable network connection and lack of meaningful interaction – since teachers are unable to read the face and mood of students; therefore, they have difficulties in changing the teaching pattern. There are also activities and instructions that need real face to face interaction for complete understanding. Moreover, management of students’ behavior in an online environment is

different from that in physical classrooms. For example, teachers cannot be sure whether the students are present at the moment or sitting somewhere. Some student participants in the study conducted by Mishra et al. (2020) stated that they are assigned with household chores when studying at home; thus, their study is adversely affected. There is also a consensus among the researchers that relying on online learning is not wholesome for the eyes and general body health. It appears that without the (conventional) physical segregation of educational activities, the activities of online learning can be interfered with by many sources of influence and currently there is no common framework to help either teachers or learners to make time and reserve space for online learning appropriately.

2.1.2. Teachers’ Attitudes Towards Change

Kin and Kareem (2018, as cited in Sokal et al., 2020a) discussed three dimensions of attitudes towards change in teachers. First, cognitive responses to change are defined as teachers’ beliefs about the significance and necessity for change. Second, affective responses to change refer to teachers’ feelings about the change, specifically the feelings linked to satisfaction or anxiety about the change. Third, behavioral reaction to change is viewed as the actions to support or resist change. Sokal et al. (2020a) noted that while teachers may understand the need for remote teaching at a cognitive level, they might resist it emotionally. Various reasons for the negative thoughts about the change to online learning can be stemmed from the fact that teachers are skeptical and “less convinced” about the merits of remote teaching as an alternative to face-to-face classes. Being out of the comfort zone to switch to the novel context also causes teachers to feel negative about the changes. Furthermore, an individual teacher might have high efficacy

in one teaching context but not in another (Tschannen et al., 1998, as cited in Sokal et al., 2020a). The term “technostress” coined by Al-Fudail and Mellar (2008) is used to describe the state of teachers who were required to use technology in their teaching but received neither internal (e.g. skills and experience) nor external support (e.g., training and technical support). Therefore, as claimed by Sokal et al. (2020b), when teachers do not have the resources they need and especially when job demands are high, teachers experience chronic stress – and eventually burnout.

This article supports Kim and Kareem’s (2018) model that defines teachers’ attitudes towards change and focuses on the *affective responses* to changes, i.e., the feelings about the change among the teachers surveyed, and their *behavioral reaction* to change, that is, the actions towards the change as they have adjusted and tried out different technologies to enable better interaction with students and ways to keep students engaged in online lessons. Their skepticism of change in pedagogy and other methods to connect with students is also shared by their teaching peers around the world. Henriksen, Creely, and Henderson (2020) documented the replicability of face-to-face standard methodologies in teaching and managing a classroom as a “benchmark” point of reference, then compared the same data collected on efficacy and students’ results/feedback with those of online classes. In doing so, these researchers have identified discrepancies which through further qualitative investigation were associated with the educators’ lack of familiarity with the tool set provided to them to transition towards online teaching. To put this reasoning into perspective of long-term pedagogy research, the works by Wieland and Kolias (2020), as these researchers have followed the state of the science in online learning from even before COVID-19

pandemic, have contributed tremendous help in recognizing that the difficulties of the pedagogical transition are not only due to constraints of time or resources during emergency response. The crucial distinction between efforts made to transition towards online learning pre-COVID and the same efforts during and after the pressure from the pandemic is the identification of stakeholders to this educational venture (Wieland & Kolias, 2020). Before COVID, online learning was primarily (but not exclusively) marketed to educational institutions under the investments from private sectors and innovative companies that attempt to heed the future of educational needs. On the other hand, during the outbreak of COVID-19 and even after the peak-periods of the danger from pandemic have appeared to subside, the interests and investments reserved for online learning technologies and implementation of online learning have been genuinely a large-scale social trend, in-line with the work-from-home movement (Wieland & Kolias, 2020).

2.2. The Importance of Cultivating Motivation in Conducting Online Teaching

The prerequisite of attention, activity and active involvement in learning is often considered as having something to do with motivation. The identification of motivation can give a rhetorical answer to why people do anything, be anywhere, and act in any manner. Motivation is also considered most influential on the intensity of people’s attention, focus, and perseverance on any activity they have participated in (Guo, Xu & Xu, 2020). In the context of learning and especially online learning, motivation is a highly important predictor of a learner’s attention on class activity and their active participation in the learning activities, such as pair or group work, and discussions in class. Dwijuliani, Rijanto, Nurlaela and Basuki (2021) suggested that motivation is directly representative of the students’ desire

to learn, and partly explaining the very reason why students are present in the classroom in the first place. However, it is not a definite conclusion that a student who was motivated enough to get to class, will be also motivated enough to actively participate and make contribution to class activities. This begs for a distinction between learning at a physical institution and learning via online media. Conventionally, the fact that a student could get up early, get to school in time, follow school rules and dress codes, and actively greet their teacher and fellow students can be considered a “buffer” that helps build up on the original motivation at every step of the way until a class begins. In contrast, the presence of a student in an online classroom speaks nothing about this development, as the student might have just woken up five minutes before and barely managed to get together the minimum requirements to “be in class”. Dwijuliani et al. (2021) suggest that teaching activities are best prepared to prime the students’ motivation by:

- Making the goals and learning objectives clear and readily understandable;
- Raising the students’ interest in the subject at hand;
- Preparing a pleasant environment that is suitable for learning;
- Giving the students instant recognition and assessment (preferably positive);
- Giving comments and linking remarks to the students’ input in class and submitted work;
- Introducing the element of competition and/or collaboration when possible.

(Dwijuliani et al., 2021)

2.3. Implementation of Online Teaching and Learning in Vietnam

In a report on the impact of the interruption of education due to Covid-19 in

Vietnam, MOET (2020) stated that there are 1.5 million of teachers, and 24 million of students across the nation suffering from the disruption in education. Teachers are in the front line of the implementation of online education, yet they often complain about the lack of sufficient guidance, training and resources. Apart from the fear of being exposed to the virus that jeopardizes teachers’ physical health, there is also a fear of losing salaries and benefits. A few countries did not pay teachers or delayed salary payments (UN, 2020), since teachers were unable to teach remotely due to the lack of ICT infrastructure and parents stopped paying fees. In addition, coping with increased workloads might lead to teacher burnout, resulting in higher rates of staff turnover in some educational institutions. These strains not only affect teachers’ livelihoods, but also the quality of education. The crisis has been a reminder of the essential role of teachers as a result, and that governments and administrators should provide support for these education stakeholders, including teacher training on online pedagogy.

Up to the present time, online learning has been applied across 240 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Vietnam (Nguyen & Pham, 2020). Nguyen and Pham (2020) categorised online learning implementation in these HEIs into two groups: those *with* a learning management system (LMS) and those *without* an LMS. Those without an LMS have only used online learning support tools such as recorded or live video communication and communication tools such as Google Hangouts, MS Teams, Zoom, Skype, emails, social media (Facebook), Zalo for communication between teachers and students. The group with an LMS can be further divided into (1) the “fully developed” group with adequate online teaching resources, fully equipped studios and

modern infrastructure, and highly capable online training staff, (2) the “developing” group which has just started to deploy an LMS, and is still developing these systems and building online learning resources, and (3) the “beginner” group which has only used online systems for class management and for uploading teaching content.

Although some recent research has been conducted over online teaching-learning and its effectiveness, or the difficulties and challenges in implementing online education, there is a lack of studies in the Vietnamese context which investigate teachers’ attitudes towards the shift to online education, especially as expressed on social media platforms. Hence, the current research investigates the following research questions:

(1) What are EFL teachers’ perceptions of online teaching-learning during COVID-19 pandemic as reflected and shared on their Facebook pages?

(2) What are the major factors that contribute to teacher stress and burnout during online teaching?

III. Research Methodology

This research employs both quantitative and qualitative methods to answer the research questions. Data collection happened during the different phases of online teaching starting in March 2020 and concluded in February 2021. 56 participants were randomly sampled for the research with the only criterion being that they are lecturers working at an EFL teacher training university in Hanoi. Demographic information regarding the participants’ age, education and teaching experience were collected from their Facebook profiles. Most of the participants (82%) were female and (78%) were under the age of 40. Among them, 71% had fewer than 10 years of teaching experience.

Data were collected from the participants’ personal facebook pages, where they are most comfortably sharing their thoughts with their chosen friends and family members. The teachers’ posts and comments were screen-captured. The number of words for each Facebook post ranges from 12 to more than 250 words, with the majority being between 20 – 250. There are 21 posts (22%) of over 250 words. Most of the Facebook posts (82%) are in Vietnamese, and the rest are in English. As the posts invited further discussions on online teaching from colleagues and the public, related comments under the posts were also collected in order to enrich and further explain the data. Unstructured interviews were conducted with the participants in the teacher common area during break-time. The interviews were informally, allowing the participants to explain more about their posts. The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data. Table 1 represents data of teacher participants with their age, gender and teaching experience while Table 2 provides details on the collected Facebook posts.

The teachers’ posts were coded by the two researchers before being grouped into emerging themes. Based on the findings of previous studies, a pre-defined set of factors leading to teachers’ burnout during online teaching was developed, including categories such as technical complexities, lack of classroom dynamics, distractions, limited interaction, heavy workload, negative impact on teachers’ well-being. Other codes were flexibly added through the coding process as the researchers read and analysed the participants’ Facebook posts. Words and phrases that explicitly state or imply similar ideas and concepts were then grouped into these categories. The

connotation of the words and phrases the participants used in their Facebook posts was used to decide whether a post is negative or positive. For example, words such as “demotivating”, “boring”, “stressful”, “detrimental”, “distracted” which connote negative meanings, were grouped under the “negative perception” categories. Complaints and rants also implied “negative perceptions”. To ensure the validity of the coding process, the two researchers coded the data separately, then compared, discussed, and reached agreement on the emerged categories and themes. To calculate the frequency of a theme or concept, the researchers counted the number of times a concept appeared in the collected data.

Table 1*Demographic Information*

Number of participants	56
Number of Facebook posts	96
Age	
Under 25	6
26 – 30	12
31 – 40	26
> 40	12
Gender	
Male	10
Female	46
Teaching experience	
< 1 year	0
2 – 5 years	10
6 – 10 years	30
11 – 15 years	12
> 15 years	4
Education	
BA	6
MA	48
PhD	2

Table 2*Data on Teachers' Facebook Posts*

Number of Facebook posts	96
Number of words	
< 20	22
20 – 50	26
50 – 100	18
100 – 250	9
> 250	21
Number of comments	
0 – 20	60
21 – 50	34
> 50	2
Language	
Vietnamese	80
English	16
Posting time	
2020	70
2021	26

IV. Findings

This section highlights and discusses how teachers reacted to the changes, by presenting major factors that caused difficulties and teacher stress and burnout and categorizing them into different themes.

4.1. Teachers' Perceptions of Online Teaching and Learning

The results of data analysis show that most of the posts (79%) express a negative perception of online learning and teaching, with 82 out of 96 Facebook posts voicing teacher burnout over online teaching, while only 14 posts (13%) are positive.

The lack of classroom dynamics and limited interaction in online classes, both making up for 22%, are claimed by teachers as the main factors that lead to teacher stress. Heavy workload comes next as shared in 17% of the total Facebook posts. Some teachers also believed that online teaching

may negatively affect their physical and mental health and were irritated by certain technical problems such as slow Internet speed and software robustness, with the former found in 11% and the latter in 9% of the posts. The results also show that working from home with family responsibilities makes remote instruction a daunting task for many teachers, as revealed in 4% of the posts.

The few positive posts focus on the

Table 3

Teacher Burnout Factors During Online Teaching Period (89)

Factors	Number of FB Posts	Percentage
lack of classroom dynamics	21	22%
limited interaction	21	22%
heavy workload	16	17%
negative effects on physical & mental well-being	11	11%
technical glitches	9	9%
distractions due to family duties	4	4%

4.2. Major Factors Contributing to Teacher Stress and Burnout During Online Teaching

The most challenging factor, as emerged from the data analysis, is that there was a lack of classroom dynamics or even are devoid of classroom non-verbal and verbal communication. Lack of classroom dynamics and limited interaction in online classes were both shared by 22% of the participants’ Facebook posts. Students on Zoom often had their cameras off and microphones muted, leaving teachers to lecture to the black screen, and hence, making it hard to engage and connect with them. One teacher explained in a post comment that:

“It feels like I am talking to myself and to the computer. I want to see them [students] nodding and smiling when they understand a point or two. I miss the classroom vibe, the settings, the way we dress when we

exploration of the varied strategies for online teaching as teachers made use of new tools such as Nearpod, Padlet or Canva. The findings in this study seem to support findings of the research previously discussed in the review of literature (i.e. Rapanta et al., 2000; Sokal et al., 2020; Mishra et al., 2020), with reference to the framework on impacts of school from home (Figure 1) by Rasmitadila et al. (2020).

meet one another in person – a sense of “pure alienation” [when teaching online]”. (Translated from Vietnamese)

This finding is similar to that of Mishra et al. (2020) in a research conducted at an Indian university. The teachers in their study reported that due to unstable network connection, the videos and audios of the students were kept off. The connection would remain more stable, but that mode of teaching seems like they were teaching to a “blank wall”.

The teachers also complained that they frequently did not receive immediate responses from students, or there were long pauses. Some mentioned that they felt frustrated and tired of posing a question to “the void”. This supports the findings of the studies conducted by Mishra et al. (2020) and Konig et al. (2020) as those researchers claimed that online teaching renders interaction limited and impersonal as

teachers are unable to read the face and mood of students.

For classes to be interactive and engaging, teachers need to rely on diverse interaction, group discussions, class presentations, debates, pair or teamwork, role-play, pronunciation practice, etc. Similar to Mishra et al. (2020) and Konig et al. (2020), we found that our participants stated that there are activities and instructions that need real face to face interaction for complete understanding. One teacher explained that:

“Online learning is dispiriting and demotivating; my students deserve a “proper classroom experience” with diverse interaction. [...] I cannot constantly ask my students to work in pairs or groups, discuss questions or compare answers as I do in face-to-face classes”. (English)

Secondly, there were technical difficulties, as many teachers reported that they had trouble focusing. Bad Internet connection, power blackouts, and technical glitches such as faulty microphones or cameras, are among factors that impede enjoyable online teaching and learning. In addition, while working from home, teachers are surrounded by many distractions including home comforts, noises, and other administrative tasks. One teacher shared that:

“There are chat pop-ups from my students, asking to leave class early, reporting their technical problems, or asking me to speak louder, which keeps me switching my attention on something else, rather than totally focusing on the lecture”. (Translated from Vietnamese)

The third major challenge is the additional workload of adopting a new delivery mode. Many teachers had to do long class sessions (3.5-4 hours) or taught

different classes on the same day. One teacher wrote about added workloads that:

“At the initial stage of the epidemic, I kept reassuring my students that online classes are only temporary, partly because online learning was not formalized at my university at that time, and we thought that the pandemic would be over soon. It clearly took a lot of work and time to adjust my PowerPoint slides so students could follow, upload more teaching materials, contact students through various platforms: Facebook or Zalo group chats, Google Classroom, Google Drive, emails, and try out different e-learning and teaching methods, as well as technologies to keep students engaged.” (Translated from Vietnamese)

The challenges were greater for mothers when their kids were also at home due to school closure. Female teachers claimed that they had to juggle between teaching their own students, doing housework, and looking after their small children, or watching those who need adult supervision for their own virtual schooling.

In addition, the increasing workload negatively affects teachers’ well-being. Sitting for hours in front of the computer is detrimental to the eyes and back, and general body health. One teacher claimed that online teaching is “*not good for [his] mental well-being*” and further explained:

“At school, teachers can rely on their colleagues for professional and emotional support, spontaneously though, during some quick break-time chats”. (Translated from Vietnamese)

This finding reconfirms the assertion of previous authors (e.g. Rapanta et al.,

2020) that teaching and learning are social, so being isolated may worsen both teachers' and students' mental well-being. The teachers in the study of Mishra et al. (2020) advocated proper counselling services provided by their university in order to maintain the mental health of teachers and students during the isolation period in this pandemic, as they face several challenges such as socio-emotional imbalance, personal adjustment to daily life activities at home, financial burden and others.

Lastly, another conundrum is that exams and course assessments are hard to be implemented online, especially closed book tests and interviews. Following is a quote of one of the participants:

"We had to stay up late (even to 2 a.m.) for several teachers' meetings on Zoom to discuss possible techniques for conducting online tests. We had all the sophomore students in the department join the pilot test. It took a lot of work to adjust test design to suit the online format and much time to try out different options. I did find the transition extremely stressful." (Translated from Vietnamese)

This finding is in line with the results of previous studies (e.g. Rapanta et al., 2020; Konig et al., 2020). These authors pointed out that continuous formative assessment, rather than "traditional" or standardised exams and tests, is a key factor ensuring success in online education.

Overall, on the one hand, the teachers raised concerns about online education and the potential negative impact on the overall education quality, as put forward by a teacher that [online learning] is "*not beneficial for students' learning process*". They prefer traditional classes to which they are accustomed. Many blatantly opined that they "*do not wish to go back to*

online teaching". On the other hand, the picture of online teaching is not always disheartening. As online education has admittedly become "a new normal" for the time being, the teachers have gradually worked out ways to adapt to the new context. A positive finding is that as the teachers gradually adapted to the changes by exploring different strategies to teach online, they also shared and made them accessible to colleagues and the public on their Facebook pages. For example, the following quote reveals the teacher's excitement about the use of whiteboard in his online class:

"Whenever a whiteboard is required in an online class, a number of items/platforms can be utilized. This certainly is the most interesting and thought-provoking dimension of online teaching. Teaching that actively employs computers in innovative and fruitful ways makes us engrossed in the lessons. Furthermore, there seems to be a discernible influence on how we teach and study later." (English)

One teacher believed that the "*most appealing dimension of online teaching*" is the utilization of a number of platforms; and teaching that "*actively employs computers in innovative and fruitful ways*" makes lessons more engaging. Another teacher compares the online learning and teaching system in Vietnam and those in other countries as follows.

"Students in Vietnam do not realize the benefits they are enjoying. Online courses in other countries rarely require the teachers to be online with students in all lessons. Students are required to watch recorded videos and participate in forum discussions instead. I have studied in some courses like that, and I felt so bored. So the current form of

online courses we are providing with Zoom conversation and meaningful exercises is one of the highest levels of online education available." (Translated from Vietnamese)

Above all, the most positive signal from the finding is the function of Facebook as a platform for professional development and a safe environment for teachers to share and voice their opinion while seeking emotional support or showing empathy toward colleagues during the pandemic. In this way, Facebook functions as a community of practice, nurturing teachers' resilience during the transition to online teaching and learning.

V. Discussion and Conclusion

The transformation of the education system that we are witnessing has come in a rather forced manner: many institutions and teachers did not wish for this transition to online teaching and learning, but there was currently no better alternative during the lockdowns necessitated by the deadly pandemic in the country. Online classes, online examination and online small group or even 1-on-1 tutoring have been adopted as an urgent solution to make up for the inability to continue conventional education as it was before COVID-19. This forced nature of the transition has certainly caught many off-guard, because not all institutions and teachers had the same level of preparedness or mastery of modern technologies used to assist education activities. The literature we have reviewed on the topics of online learning and the findings of this study confirm that the key problems for education during the social distancing period mandated due to COVID-19 include the factors of:

- Barrier of distance
- Technology and complexity of tools
- Active, individual support

(emotionally and technically)

- Interactions and social activities
(Konig et al., 2020; Mishra et al., 2020; Rapanta et al., 2020)

The disruption caused by COVID-19 was disastrous, but since the damage has been done and education has already embarked on the migration to online learning, there is opportunity for institutions and teachers to complete this transition with a growth mindset and more professionalism. Policy makers and teachers must approach the situation with a more holistic approach, acknowledging that the new situation requires both new knowledge about and skills to conduct online teaching as well as a new mindset to online education. Teachers should strive to embrace technology and the benefits that it has to offer so that they can meet the needs of their "tech-savvy" students while being lifelong learners, especially in developing skills to use technology in teaching. We believe teacher's eLearning pedagogy must include this flexible and growth mindset.

What we have seen, in research from even before COVID-19 and during the social-distancing periods, is that teachers have not invested much in honing their skills in teaching online classes. The immediate switch to online learning has come from the necessity of our time and a logical progression made possible by a myriad of educational technologies that date back decades. The occasion may not be optimal, but said necessities can also be considered opportunities for a large-scale advance in general pedagogy and applications of technologies in education. Platforms such as Canvas, Moodle, Microsoft Team, or Google Classroom, have improved significantly and while many teachers have found difficulties adapting their existing skill set to the new technological platforms, the transition is still methodologically possible.

Our findings suggest that the toughest challenges most surveyed teachers have perceived can be narrowed down to two aspects: the inability to control the dynamics and interactions in the class; and the inability to arrange workload in school curricula filled with online classes. Theoretically speaking, the second problem can be more readily alleviated with support from school administrators, as this is more of a time and workload management than teaching methodology. A small number of online classes during COVID-19 in Vietnam have the presence of teaching assistants (e.g., in expat EFL classes at primary and secondary levels) whose main tasks are to coordinate and manage students' participation and to solve technology-related problems. Online classes at tertiary level do not have this luxury in human resources as institutions tend to try to pack schedule and workload to maximize work capacity to make up for any delay in curricula due to the ongoing pandemic. This means the teacher might be the sole person responsible for all of the roles expected of the education institution: managing and coordinating the class, solving IT-related issues, while at the same time imparting knowledge and expertise to students via a new mode of teaching. This might be the reason why many teachers in our study have perceived a drastic increase in workload which some of them feel overwhelming.

Solutions for this situation of mixed-up roles for teachers in online classrooms can surely be addressed. The easier approach would be to relieve the teacher of unrelated roles by employing more online class "admins" who will assist teachers and students alike on any issue outside of the academic matter, including technical issues (related to computers, Internet connection, audio/visual features, and software features). Another approach is to have teachers adopt new skills while relearning or developing new teaching pedagogy suitable for an online environment.

Concerns over the design and content of learning activities that are suitable for online teaching have attracted wide-ranging discussions. They include the use of flipped classroom teaching, inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, etc.

A successful online course must adopt a student-centred approach in which the teacher role is shifting from a lecturer to a facilitator (Rapanta et al., 2020). Students are the owners of their learning process and must be autonomous. What makes online learning successful relies heavily on students' ability to set goals and avoid distractions. Teachers therefore should promote peer interaction among students, facilitate online discussions focusing on problem-solving in case studies or group projects. Teachers can assign students to post and share ideas, papers and assignments on collaborative platforms (e.g. Miro, Padlet, Jamboard, etc.), which otherwise cannot be directly used in offline classes). Teachers must also listen to what students say about their experiences, regarding what is working well for them and what is not. Encouraging students to co-design learning activities and facilitating discussions are among ways that get students engaged and simultaneously, help reduce the burden of teacher workload. This development of new pedagogy and change of mindset is investment-intensive, time consuming, and a challenging approach to take, but it can yield a long-term solution and help advance our education system.

In the final analysis, the digital transformation created by this pandemic presents an opportunity to imagine a different future for our education. Online teaching should not be taken as an emergency remedy but as a way of enriching and extending the educational possibilities open to all universities. To ensure that our students get the best education possible both during online learning and when returning to classrooms, supporting teachers and

listening to their voices is important to nurture their positive attitudes and resilience. The findings have showed that while the switchover to online classes is perhaps temporary and physical classrooms will remain valuable and irreplaceable once the pandemic is over, online education can be made more useful if fully exploited and integrated to facilitate effective teaching and learning.

Facebook has created a great platform for social interaction where people can keep up with friends, document events and most of all, express themselves and their opinions. With social media providing a new channel to express public opinions, on the one hand, policy makers will now need to involve the public and consider their ideas expressed via social media in the policy making process. On the other hand, the public can also participate in the decision-making process by providing information to the authorities via social networking sites. In the same vein, teachers also use Facebook as the tool for academic communication with their colleagues and students by uploading videos, sharing teaching materials, voicing about their teaching job, building online communities and supporting each other. In the context of social sciences research, the employment of data from social media enriches and diversifies research data that are conventionally collected.

Notwithstanding the merits of collecting data from social media, there are some caveats for improving the current study. First, this study only investigates the ways EFL teachers at a university reacted and adapted to online teaching. Future studies of this type might involve members of various Facebook groups and communities not only at higher education institutions, but also at other levels of the education system. Second, while this study focuses on major factors that cause teacher burnout during the COVID-19 outbreak, it overlooks the differences among the

participants as to how their age and teaching experience may affect their perceptions of online teaching. Future attempts on this topic might investigate the perceptions towards online teaching of different groups of teachers coming from different backgrounds and at different stages of their professional career.

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CHIÊM NGHIỆM VÀ CHIA SẺ CỦA GIÁO VIÊN VỀ DẠY HỌC TRỰC TUYẾN TRONG ĐẠI DỊCH COVID-19

Mai Ngọc Khôi, Khắc Thị Ánh Tuyết

*Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ, Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội
Phạm Văn Đồng, Cầu Giấy, Hà Nội, Việt Nam*

Tóm tắt: Cũng như nhiều quốc gia trên thế giới, đại dịch COVID-19 đòi hỏi giáo viên Việt Nam phải thích ứng với việc dạy học trực tuyến. Thách thức chính đối với giáo viên là những yêu cầu cấp bách của việc chuyển đổi từ giảng dạy trực tiếp sang trực tuyến. Nghiên cứu này tìm hiểu và phân tích việc các giáo viên tại một trường đại học phản ứng và thích nghi với việc chuyển đổi sang hình thức dạy học trực tuyến, thể hiện qua các chiêm nghiệm và chia sẻ của họ trên mạng xã hội Facebook. Các bài chia sẻ trên Facebook thể hiện quan điểm của giáo viên về giảng dạy trực tuyến tương ứng với các giai đoạn thực hiện giãn cách xã hội do đại dịch COVID-19 của năm 2020 và đầu năm 2021 ở Việt Nam được thu thập, sau đó được mã hoá và phân tích để xác định những khó khăn và thách thức mà giáo viên gặp phải trong quá trình dạy học trực tuyến. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy, dù gặp nhiều bất cập khi giảng dạy trực tuyến, thái độ của giáo viên về dạy học trực tuyến đã được cải thiện khi họ có nhiều nỗ lực đổi mới sáng tạo để phù hợp với tình hình thực tế. Nghiên cứu này cũng thảo luận về những thích ứng của việc giảng dạy trong tương lai nhằm hướng tới một mô hình giáo dục trực tuyến bền vững. Các tác giả cũng đưa ra một vài chiêm nghiệm và gợi ý về việc giúp giáo viên vượt qua khó khăn trong đại dịch bằng cách giúp họ nuôi dưỡng và duy trì một thái độ tích cực và kiên cường.

Từ khoá: COVID-19, dạy học trực tuyến, mạng xã hội