The image of a foreign language teacher during COVID-19 pandemic (based on FulbrightTEA experience)

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The arrival of Covid-19 in our lives profoundly changed education. Very little time ago there was a widespread belief about education as a phenomenon that occurred only in traditional classrooms, however, the current pandemic has forced several sectors, including education, to develop their activities with the use of digital technologies.

In this context, from one day to another, classrooms, dining rooms, bedrooms and even playgrounds became improvised school environments, and thus, parents became facilitators of learning and students had to self-train about the new digital platforms to continue with their studies. This led to an individual and collective effort of teachers, students, parents and educational authorities to ensure education in the country.

The coronavirus disease pandemic (COVID-19) pandemic has caused the greatest disruption to education systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion students in more than 190 countries on all continents.

The closures of schools and other educational facilities have affected 94 % of students worldwide, a figure that rises to 99% in low- and lower-middle-income countries.

The crisis is exacerbating pre-existing educational disparities by reducing the opportunities available to many of the world's children, youth and adults (those living in poor or rural areas, girls, refugees, people with disabilities, and the forcibly displaced) to continue their education.

The Covid-19 virus has burst into our lives like Attila's horse; that is to say, this pandemic is affecting and transforming many sectors of society. The decision of confinement has had a remarkable impact on various areas of our lives. People and human reality are one, however, their division into different branches of knowledge facilitates their analysis. For this reason, our reflections on Covid-19 will focus on the following areas: the challenges, as well as mental health traumatic experiences that everyone faced, and solutions, including students'-teachers'-parents' +engagement and involvement in the process, as well as differentiation awareness. The objective is to reflect on the impact that Covid-19 is having on the social and educational spheres in order to understand the transformations that we are observing. Reflections that are born from the inquiry of our environment that are different from those that other people can make, because neither the points of view, nor the circumstances are the same. As we come from 15 countries (FulbrightTEA Cohort, fall 2021, CSU, Chico), plurality enriches us.

Teachers
The need for using technology has made most of the teachers call on their skills of technology and how confident they are when they use technology. Most of us took part in professional training to learn how to use technology or how to implement it in our classes. For the ones who

didn't have such an opportunity, self-learning through youtube videos or online guidelines was another option to fix these shortcomings.

In other parts of the world where teachers and students have almost no access to neither technology, nor internet, teachers have shifted their focus to other channels to enhance their teaching such as TVs and radios rather than computers and internet.

Students

The students who face challenges when it comes to technology during this pandemic will find it a big hindrance to follow all the lessons by the teachers as most of the learning is carried out remotely. The closing of schools forces the students to use any access they have from home to allow the learning process to take place. To avoid these students being left out completely until the whole pandemic ends, they should be trained to know how to utilize the technology that is used. There are many tools that can be used to prepare students to use the technology better. For example, there are instructions students can refer to through videos on Youtube on how certain websites and apps are used in class for the online learning process. Other than that, teachers can also make self-study guides available for the students for every lesson to promote autonomy.

Government

Government also plays an important role in technology solutions during the pandemic in our countries by providing free learning resources that all teachers and students are able to access such as government websites, free education channels on TV, and radio. Furthermore, the learning resources provided by the government are not only free, but also relevant to the curriculum; therefore, the teachers can use them to teach the students during the pandemic as well. These resources are very helpful especially in the areas where there is a lack of technology or low technology. For example, in Bangladesh, UNICEF is helping the government share learning content over TV, radio, mobile phone and internet platforms. (https://www.unicefusa.org)

More than the free learning resources, most of our governments have shortened the teaching and learning period in order to prevent mental and physical health issues caused by spending too much time with gadgets, such as mobile phone screens and computer screens.

1. Professional development/training on technology (Teacher)
2. Self-Learning (Teacher)
3. Students are trained to use technology (Student)
4. Self-study guide to promote autonomy (Student)
5. Free accessibility to school resources (Teacher/Student)
6. Government / School provide relevant resources (Teacher/Student)
7. Shorten the teaching period in order to prevent mental and physical health issues (Teacher/Student)
8. Provide various options on technology use for students in terms of availability (Teacher)

The overarching challenges we face after the first waves are short-term recovery and building resilient and equitable education systems for the future.