The Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic on English Language Teacher Education in Iran: Challenges and Opportunities

Vahid Hassani *

Farhangian University of Teacher Education, Tehran, Iran

Abstract

The global pandemic of COVID-19 has brought about many changes and challenges in our lives, interactions, relationships, and modes of learning and teaching and helped us learn how to adapt ourselves to unanticipated conditions to survive. It stimulated universities, schools, and institutions of higher education to rethink and restructure their policies to find solutions to the problems as well as researchers all around the world to help educational systems get out of the mess. This study aimed to contribute to the body of literature and investigated the impacts of COVID-19 on English language teacher education. Convenience sampling was employed to recruit thirty student teachers as the participants of the study. To do the study, the author used semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews ($n = 20$), student teachers' reflective journals ($n = 10$), and his own reflective journals to collect the data. Grounded theory was used for data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that there was a shift from anomaly to congruity, student teachers saw the pandemic as an opportunity, they felt the need for technology inclusion, development, and promotion in their educational contexts, there was an urgent need to train teachers and learners to use technology in their contexts to keep the education running, and teachers

had to reconstruct their identities and turn to formative assessment. The findings can contribute to the body of literature and prompt English language teacher education programs, teacher educators, administrators, teachers, and policymakers to consider the findings while they are designing, upgrading, reforming, and running their syllabi, curriculums, and programs.

Keywords: Covid-19, English Language Teacher Education, Online Teaching, Online Learning, Paradigm Shift

The global outbreak of COVID-19 has had a serious effect on the world's education system, locked down many schools and universities, created huge challenges for the world's educational systems (Carrillo & Flores, 2020; Liguori & Winkler, 2020; Wang et al., 2020), and brought about a number of changes in social and organizational interactions (Murphy, 2020). Based on the information released by UNESCO as cited in Mohammadimehr (2020), more than one and a half billion learners have been influenced by the pandemic, and the education systems have experienced serious changes. As a result, learners are undergoing a different mode of learning during the crisis.

The pandemic has affected education in general and language teacher education in particular in different ways. Institutions of any kind and teacher educators had to quickly react to an unforeseen and unwanted crisis and shift from face-to-face instruction to distance teaching. They also had to provide learning contexts for student teachers, preparing themselves according to the requirements of teacher education programs (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). As a result of this unexpected crisis, there was an urgent need for teachers, students, and teacher education authorities and institutions to learn how to adapt to online learning and teaching as an alternative mode. The need may show how institutions of teacher education and teacher educators faced and underwent the challenges and opportunities to pursue their job in such

unanticipated situations (Flores & Gago, 2020; Nasri et al., 2020; Quezada et al., 2020).

Due to the outbreak, schools, universities, and institutions of higher education are encountering unanticipated challenges. In reaction to this worldwide emergency, the institutions have resorted to virtual learning and digital means (Mohammadimehr, 2020; Sahu, 2020). Indeed, online education is the best option to teach various courses since it has been growing for years and has provided new opportunities for students, professors, and educational planners and institutes (Mayadas et al., 2009). Online education, created and evolved with the advent of the Internet and the development of technology, involves designing, compiling, presenting, and evaluating education and uses e-learning capabilities to ease learning (Moore & Kearsley, 2011). For up-to-date and effective online teaching and learning, it is necessary to transcend emergency online practices and create quality online teaching and learning that stem from meticulous instructional design and planning (Hodges et al., 2020).

The rapid, abrupt and unwanted change from face-to-face to distance teaching has necessitated a number of challenges and limitations but also opportunities that need to be investigated (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). The pandemic has shocked future teachers and, at the same time, encouraged them to look for solutions to problems they have not faced before (Flores & Swennen, 2020). According to Darling-Hammond and Hyler (2020), learning in the time of COVID has been a tremendous challenge for both students and teachers. It has its own specific challenges, such as unfamiliarity with new technology and methods of dealing with unknown challenges for many professors and universities (Maggio et al., 2018), and it is not always easy to execute (Alves et al., 2017). However, this unexpected scenario has provided the chance for reconsidering and reforming

preparation and schooling. It is a new path we should tread. "And as we walk the road, we will learn still more by committing to sharing what we invent with one another" (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020, p. 463). It presents advantages such as easy access to classes from anywhere at any time, synchronous and asynchronous dialogs with classmates, on-the-spot feedback on tests and learners' progress, and flexibility that traditional educational systems lack (Alves et al., 2017).

English language teacher education in the context of Iran has witnessed and undergone challenges and opportunities in the course of its development. From the viewpoints of scholars, it is somehow centralized, top-down, prescriptive (Jamshidi Avanaki & Sadeghi, 2014), transmissive, linguistically, and technically focused (Jadidi & Bagheri, 2014; Naseri Karimvand et al., 2014; Safari & Rashidi, 2015), theory-driven and lecture-based (Salehi, 2011; Shahmohammadi, 2012). In addition, teacher educators are usually the individuals who are not well-educated and up-to-date (Razi & Kargar, 2014; Safari & Rashidi, 2015), and the contents of teacher education programs (TEP) do not align with the reality and needs of the real classroom contexts (Mohammadi et al, 2015; Nezakat-Alhossaini & Ketabi, 2013). Moreover, the status of the current in-service TEP is not promising regarding English teachers' language proficiency level, teaching, management, and evaluation skills (Razi & Kargar, 2014), and the method of evaluation is mostly theoretical (Liyaghatdar, 2002; Shahmohammadi, 2012).

Owing to the rapid changes brought about by new technologies, there is, nowadays, an urgent need for alternative approaches to English language teacher education in Iran. These changes may prompt language teacher education programs to undergo a paradigm shift from the craft model to more reflective and modular models (Leather & Motallebzadeh, 2015). However, considering the local context, any measures adopted towards a

paradigm shift require meticulous consideration on the part of the key stakeholders (Safari & Rashidi, 2015). It is, in fact, the responsibility of policymakers, educators, and teachers to think of alternative approaches to update pre-service and in-service English language teacher education in Iran.

Since the current language teacher education program(s) in Iran are not promising anymore, and their status is getting more complicated with the outbreak of the pandemic, and they cannot meet the needs of Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) student teachers, practicing teachers, cooperating teachers, and teacher educators, it is a good idea to prepare the ground for trying and employing more recent models of language teacher education. Online education in general and online English language teacher education, in particular, can be an option.

Literature Review

With the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, authorities of universities, schools, and other institutions of higher education had to look for other alternatives for face-to-face classes. They, first, opted for 'emergency remote teaching' (Bozkurt & Sharma 2020, p. i) or 'emergency e-learning' (Murphy, 2020, p. 492) and high-quality online teaching (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020) later to keep the education running. The practice of online teaching brought with it a number of challenges and opportunities (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020), which were quite new to teachers and other stakeholders. Some of the challenges were the poor online teaching infrastructure and information gap on the part of learners and the complex and strange environment at home (Zhang et al., 2020). Some teachers and faculty members were reluctant to experience the new forms of teaching at the beginning, and they did not know how to practice them because of their lack of experience (Huber & Helm, 2020; O'Brien et al.,

2020), but their reluctance faded away (Cutri et al., 2020) as the time passed by and teachers gained more experiences (van der Spoel et al., 2020). With the passage of time, teachers shifted their attitudes (Ahmady et al., 2020; Maggio et al., 2018; Mohammadimehr, 2020; Nikdel Teymori & Fardin, 2020; Ried, 2010) and adapted themselves (König et al., 2020; Liguori & Winkler, 2020; O'Brien et al., 2020; WHO, 2020) to online teaching and found it useful (Carabantes et al., 2010; Liyanagunawardena & Aboshady, 2018; Ried, 2010), and there was a significant shift in teachers' perceptions considering their plans to use technology in their lessons in post-COVID-19 era (van der Spoel et al., 2020). New platforms, software, and programs (Basilaia et al., 2020; Haghighi et al., 2020) were designed and applied, and they were in vogue after a while. To everybody's surprise, the improvement of students' learning through online education (Martin, 2020) and the development of distance learning took place during the pandemic (Liguori & Winkler, 2020; WHO, 2020).

Moreover, in the case of language teacher education, it was quite necessary to investigate COVID-19 and teacher education through a review of literature of online teaching and learning practices (Carrillo & Flores (2020). Such studies were done and their findings revealed that institutions of higher education and other key stakeholders adapted to the new complex scenario brought about by COVID-19 pandemic (Bao 2020; Flores & Gago 2020; Quezada et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2020), and they decided to use training strategies, innovative experiences (Ferdig et al., 2020), innovative teacher education (Ellis et al., 2020), good educational relationships (Murray et al., 2020), practicum online learning through 'pedagogic agility' (Kidd & Murray, 2020, p. 542), virtual teaching placement (Sepulveda-Escolar & Morrison, 2020), and mentoring and assistance (Judd et al., 2020; O'Brien et al., 2020) to bring the educational crisis to a halt and pave the way for the

	Journal of Teaching Language Skills (JTLS)	**89**
	40(3), Summer 2021, pp. 83-116	**Vahid Hassani**

THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER

continuation of education without a pause. Institutions of higher education adopted the following policies and actions to handle the crisis: rearrangement of regulations, reorganization of managerial essentials and activities, the pursuit of education amid the crisis by e-learning, coordination with authorities, publicity of decisions, enhancement of public information on e-learning, the inclusion of the policies of participation, adaptation, and tolerance, and confrontation with the challenges (Khaki Sedigh & Ahanchian, 2020).

Hadar et al. (2020) held that we should promote and prioritize social-emotional aspects in teacher education curriculum through adapting our teaching to the needs of the students, moderating VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) conditions, and incorporating mindfulness on the part of teachers. We should also emphasize the significance of making sense of the experiences of inexperienced teachers in the chaotic nature of the crisis and gaining more knowledge about professional indecisiveness and tensions, which led to various challenges and opportunities that paved the way for the development of their professional identity (Dvir & Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2020). We, as educators, should do our best to meet learners' academic and social-emotional needs, compensate for learning loss, and prepare for and put into practice a mix of distance, blended, and in-classroom learning to minimize the detrimental impacts of this complicated scenario on the part of learning and teaching through investment in the preparation of high-quality education programs, the transformation of educators' professional learning opportunities to correspond to present-day needs, provision of mentoring and (re)construction of new roles for teachers, and allocation of time for educators to cooperate and collaborate with colleagues and other stakeholders (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020).

A large number of researchers from all around the world have done researches on the issue of COVID-19 and its effects on education and language teacher education to find ways to facilitate the process of learning and teaching and find solutions to the problems. However, the number of researches done in the context of Iran is limited in number. As a result, the scarce number of researches on the issue in the context of Iran, the significance of the present issue, and the pressing need to find solutions to the problems stimulated the author to investigate how language teacher education has adapted to the limitations in interaction and shifted to new modes of teaching and learning in the preparation of prospective teachers in the context of Iran that is replete with uncertainty. Regarding these, the study aimed at finding answers to the following questions.

RQ1. How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect English language teacher education in Iran?

RQ2. What are the learning and teaching challenges and opportunities brought about by the pandemic?

Method

Participants

This qualitative study was conducted in 2020-2021 from September to January during the first semester of the academic year in the context of Tehran, the capital city of Iran. Thirty student teachers majoring in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) at the Farhangian University of Teacher Education participated in the study. All the participants were male due to segregation, aged 20 on average, undergraduates with limited teaching experience in language institutes. Some participants had the experience of teaching English either on their own ($n = 7$) or in language institutes ($n = 19$), and some of them ($n = 12$) were teaching English online

in language institutes when the pandemic broke out. The majority of the participants (n=20) had attended TTC and teacher preparation programs, and they were somehow familiar with teaching methodology, principles of learning, and teaching and class management. They all had passed Teaching Methodology, Philosophy of Education, Internet and Communication Technology (ICT), Linguistics, and some other courses related to learning and teaching at their university as well. Moreover, they could speak and communicate well in English since they had been to language institutes as language learners for a long time before they got admitted into the BA TEFL program.

Instruments

Four instruments, including semi-structured interview, focus group interview, participants' reflective journals, and researcher's reflective journal, were used in the study. The researcher read extensively on e-learning, virtual learning, foreign/second language teacher education, and the studies which link these two issues to design and prepare interview protocol and interview questions (Appendix 1). Later on, he consulted a panel of experts, including five experts on teacher education, language teacher education, and applied linguistics to check the face and content validity of the interview questions. The feedback received from the panel of experts ensured the face and content validity of the interview questions. The focus group interview included the same interview questions, and the student teachers were granted the right to raise their own questions in case there were any to make the focus group interview as challenging and controversial as possible.

Procedures

The researcher used convenience sampling to choose the participants. The participants had writing and discussion courses with the researcher, and there was enough time to engage them in the discussion, focus group interviews, and reflective journal writing. The classes met once a week and lasted for three to three and a half hours with a short break in between, and almost in every session (10 sessions) a portion of the class time (half of the class time) was allocated to this research.

The researcher briefed the participants on the purpose of the study and looked for consent from the student teachers before starting the research. He used four instruments, including semi-structured interview, focus group interview, participants' reflective journals, and researcher's reflective journal, to gather data. He notified the students of the interviews, focus group interviews, and reflective journals they were supposed to have and write and introduced the issue that was relevant to the challenges they were facing and dealing with during the pandemic. He interviewed student teachers (n=15) and engaged the others to express their voices through focus group interviews. The interviews were mostly done in English, but in rare cases where the participants were incapable of expressing their thorough ideas and comments, they had the opportunity to use their mother tongue. The interviews in Persian were transcribed and translated into English by the researcher. There were also focus group interviews during which the participants were supposed to discuss the issues to reach a state of agreement over the learning, teaching, communication problems and/or challenges they faced during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. There was a sense of ownership among the participants through which the researcher involved them in the discussions, and the participants were not supposed to merely conform to the researcher's predetermined style of managing the process.

The participants had the voice and were involved in decision-making over group discussions and the procedure. In fact, there was a state of power-sharing in this regard. The researcher, posing problems, participated in the process as a participant among student teachers. Later on, the student teachers/participants were asked to write critically on discussions they had in their classes. The researcher asked them to write, with a critical look, on different dimensions of class discussions and bring to the class any topics and/or issues that were interesting and relevant to class discussions. In addition, the researcher kept his own reflective journal during the study to keep track of classroom events and discussions.

The researcher used Grounded theory (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to analyze the data gathered. To do so, he made use of open, axial, and selective coding procedures to break the participants' meaningful units of analysis into codes, themes, and later to categories. Open coding was used to break and change the collected data into meaningful units of analysis (Mavetera & Kroeze, 2009). The meaningful units of analysis included words, phrases, and sentences. The researcher used axial coding to find meaningful connections between the codes obtained in open coding. The obtained themes underwent selective conceptual analysis in selective coding and were changed into categories.

Trustworthiness of the data was gained through corrective listening, within-method triangulation, and investigator triangulation (Mertens, 2005). Corrective listening was used to find out any defects in the process of interview transcription. For within-method triangulation, a number of questions with similar foci were raised. The intention was to make the participants approach and deal with issues from different perspectives and provide answers which complement each other. For investigator triangulation, another researcher was asked to read and check 25% of the

codes obtained in the open coding phase and decide how close our interpretations were.

Memo writing and constant comparison of the data were made to increase its confirmability (Mertens, 2005). Memo writing was done through writing down and keeping track of class events and occasions, the participants' exchanges of ideas, their controversial discussions, agreements and disagreements, and the sense of congruence they reached. The participants' ideas were constantly compared from the very first sessions up to the end of the research to see how they considered the crisis and its effects on language teacher education during the research.

Results

The findings of the study fell into six major categories. Shift from anomaly to congruity, the inevitability of technology inclusion, development, and promotion as new alternatives in the educational contexts, the need to train teachers and learners to use technology, the necessity to construct and reconstruct identity, the call for formative assessment, and the pandemic as an opportunity make the major findings of the study.

Based upon the findings attained from the prospective teachers' feedback, there was a movement from anomaly to congruity. When COVID-19 hit different cities in Iran, there was an intolerable state of uncertainty and/or chaos for teachers, students, parents, educational systems, administrators, and other stakeholders. Nobody believed that it would result in the lockdown of universities and schools and change our lives, interactions, work, teaching, and learning. People were in a dilemma and did not know what to do and what not to do.

How was the gap between anomaly and congruity bridged and/or filled? The educational system saw the crisis as an opportunity. As a result of the

unexpected closure of schools and universities, there was an urgent need for teachers, students, and teacher education authorities and institutions to learn how to adapt to online learning and teaching as an alternative mode. This needed training on the part of teachers, administrators, and learners. The teachers constructed and reconstructed their identities to survive the crisis and decided to assess their learners formatively. Finally, they made it. There was a state of congruity. Is not it a big shift in the (re)construction of English language teachers' identity?!

The findings are presented and elaborated upon one by one in the following sections.

Undergo Anomaly (Uncertainties)

With the outbreak of Covid-19, some challenges were evident in the educational systems in the context of Iran in general and the Farhangian University of Teacher Education in particular. It was a disorder. Student teachers and their professors were both afraid and confused at the beginning. They were worried about the available platforms, their inappropriacy and their own digital illiteracy, lack of access to high-speed internet and poor connection, high prices and internet disconnections, the low purchasing power of some parents, learners' and teachers' demotivation, and unwillingness to attend online classes, learners' poor and reduced interaction and participation in online classes, and teachers' poor class management.

Lack of satisfaction with available educational platforms was evident everywhere since the platforms were inappropriate and the users were digitally illiterate. Participants 2, 5, and 12, for instance, maintained:

> We do not have well-developed platforms and feel terrible. The platforms are terribly weak, and many teachers and learners are not familiar with this new type of teaching, online teaching. They do not

know how to use platforms and virtual teaching, and this brings about lots of problems.

The shortage of appropriate systems for this type of teaching was a major challenge. Participants 10 and 21 added, "We need different approaches and platforms for distance learning that aren't yet properly designed, developed, and implemented in our country."

Lack of access to high-speed internet and poor connection was another problem. It was a tragedy for the users. Also, the high prices of internet packages and gadgets prevented some learners from purchasing the devices that were vital for learning. There were often occasions of internet disconnections at the time of teaching due to the low speed of the internet. Technical issues abound. Participant 10 ironically said:

> According to breaking news available on social media, a top student from a distant village who ranked among the best in the university entrance examination and studied at the Sharif University of Technology, a well-known university in Tehran, Iran, did not have access to the internet. As a result, he climbed a tree, was in a tree, to have the opportunity of receiving signals not to miss his classes."

Such occasions abound. High prices and internet disconnections that point to poor infrastructure complicated the crisis. Participants 12, 22, and 26 maintained:

> We did not enjoy the classes, especially at the very beginning, since it got disconnected again and again. As a result, we lost the chain of thought. We could not hear each other well since our classmates' voices were not clear. We repeatedly asked each other whether we

could hear each other or not. Can we learn too much this way? Won't you get disappointed and distracted?

Another challenge concerned parents who had to purchase technological gadgets for their children to get connected to online classes. Some of them did not afford them. Participants 16 and 23 held:

> People are not economically rich enough now due to the crisis. It is terribly hard for them to make ends meet. How can parents buy technological gadgets for their children in such a situation? What should parents with two or three kids do? Have the systems thought about these issues? Do these issues matter to the people in charge?

Some students and teachers were not motivated and willing to attend online classes since they did not find them attractive, easy to use, user-friendly, and compatible. They did not take them seriously and believed that they are optional. Participants 25 and 29 posited:

> Students are not motivated and willing to learn and attend online classes these days since they do not like online classes and cannot get along with them now. They say that online classes are boring, not user-friendly. They are not compatible with the mobile systems of some students. Students believe that the classes are not interactive; we prefer to have classes in which there is face-to-face interaction. We mean student-teacher, student-student, and teacher-student interaction.

There was poor and reduced interaction and participation in online classes since there were not face-to-face interactions and teachers/professors could not engage student teachers/students. There were cases of distractions while dealing with challenging tasks since some learners were surfing the net and checking social media at the time of teaching. Learners had blank

excuses not to participate in-class activities. "I do not have a microphone, and the voice is not clear" are two examples.

The class management was poor since teachers/professors were not capable of monitoring all of their learners. Participants 15 and 29 said:

> Some learners got connected to online classes while, in fact, they were doing something else, and they did not take their classes seriously. They were not listening to their teachers and classmates at all. They cheated the teachers since they knew that teachers do not have enough time to monitor everybody in the class, or even they do not care.

Seize the Opportunity

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed that our educational system is not strong enough, and it needs to adapt itself to new conditions and consider the pandemic as an opportunity.

The crises revealed the weaknesses of our educational system according to the ideas put forth by the participants. Participants 12 and 20, for example, said:

> We can look at the crisis from two different angles. We can look at it as a threat, do not do anything, do not take it seriously, and let go of it. This will deteriorate everything. The second option is to look at it as an opportunity and learn from it. From their point of view, it is an overwhelming shock to all of us, we learn too much from it, and we can even learn more. We should look at the crisis as a threat and change it to an opportunity.

The feedback received from the participants implied that they believed in a 'new normal', the term coined and used by Flores and Swennen (2020). They meant there was no way out, and we should tolerate and wisely accept

the conditions brought about by Covid-19 and do our best to adapt ourselves to it to change the threats and challenges to opportunities.

The participants unanimously believed that it was an opportunity to look at our educational systems critically to find out their weaknesses and strengths and reform them if they are not functioning well.

Participants 3, 11, and 23, for instance, posited that it could be an opportunity for innovation and creativity. They added that the crisis turned some teachers into more cognizant and intelligent teachers since they innovated and created something new that facilitated teaching and learning.

Include, Develop, Customize, and Promote Technology

Inclusion, development, customization, and promotion of technology may help us narrow down the existing gap between anomaly and congruity as far as the viewpoints of participants are concerned.

The participants unanimously posited that teachers were not very much familiar with technology and its application in classes before Corona hit our country. They added that the significance and application of technology is more touchable now. So, we should learn how technology works and how to use it. We should improve our awareness of technology in online teaching. They added that developing online teaching through technology will bring with it educational justice since it will be available to everyone everywhere.

The participants emphasized the significance and value of technology and added that educational systems must provide efficient online and electronic platforms to ease the process of learning and teaching.

They were pleased to announce that our educational system and program developers have developed hardware and software for our electronic and online systems in order to run classes over the internet. Some of them called it a masterpiece. They said we should design and develop new

platforms based on the needs of learners. We should develop appropriate infrastructure to practice online teaching.

Participants 24 and 28 said:

> We should upgrade our technological competence and learn how to use online education wisely. We should also upgrade the existing systems to receive better services, and programmers should develop easy-to-use, harmless, user friendly, free, safer and more compatible platforms based on the needs of learners.

Train Teachers to Use Technology in Their Contexts

Educational systems should be open to new crises and train their staff for the occurrence of imminent crises.

Our educational systems should have prepared themselves to deal with imminent crises before they emerge, according to ideas put forth by some participants.

Participants 10 and 14 put forth:

> Teachers and students did not have enough information about virtual or online education before Covid-19 broke out. At the very beginning, they were terribly confused since they were not technologically literate. The majority of teachers had a smattering of technological competence and did not know the simplest things. Some of them did not know what options the systems they were using had. When technical issues occurred, they felt hopeless because they did not know how to tackle the problem. Sometimes, they got help from their learners. So, this illiteracy necessitated the urgent need to train teachers and students.

Institutions of higher education used different approaches and/or policies to train teachers. The main strategy was the provision of video clips, PDFs, and online briefing sessions to familiarize students and teachers with online classes and the application of technology in those classes.

Participants 19 and 29 believed:

Teachers should update their skills through papers and journals and learn how to use and run online classes. They should not patiently wait for help from others. They themselves should do something. They added that teachers should learn how to monitor the students while they are teaching online since some do not take the new version of teaching seriously.

Construct and Reconstruct your Identities to Survive

The participants' feedback showed that teachers should change their beliefs, values, and roles if they want to survive in their job. It implicitly pointed to identity (re)construction and the fact that teachers should have dynamic, fluid, and multiple identities (Kumaravadivelu, 2012) to deliver their teaching practice in the best possible way and keep themselves flexible and adaptable.

Participants 13 and 22 said:

Teachers, during the crisis, should be more responsible towards their learners, learning and teaching process and play new roles. They should empathize with their learners and encourage and motivate students to engage them in-class activities. They should also lower their expectations and pay attention to the new social-emotional needs of their learners. Teachers should use more videos and podcasts to engage students. Teachers should upgrade their technological competence and learn how to use online education wisely. They should

change their mindset towards online learning/teaching and the application of technology in their classes and try to be more flexible. They should do their best to adapt themselves. They should take and play some roles which are different from the previous ones they take since they are working in a totally new context in which they should experience new changes to survive.

Assess Formatively

The participants implicitly and unanimously pointed to formative assessment and the necessity of its practice in classes since they believed that the evaluation carried out by teachers was poor. They believed that students should be assessed continuously, and assessment should not be limited to a summative one, a one-shot exam, in which a single final exam determines everything. They posited that teachers should apply different techniques and strategies as their assessment tools and added, "That is not just and fair to run a final exam to make decisions on students' learning and progress through the semester." Participants16 and 28 added:

> Teachers should lower their expectations when they are evaluating their learners. Some teachers have great expectations, and they do not know that this is a critical period, very much different from the past. How can we handle projects and exams? We need mutual respect and understanding.

They said, as an example, we asked one of our professors to lower his expectations and the amount of the assignments given. To our surprise, he said that you had too much free time to do it!

Reach a Sense of Congruence

As the research was coming to its close, there were some signs of agreement among the participants. The participants unanimously expressed:

It was a great shock and uncertainty to us at the very beginning. As a result, we were terribly perplexed. We really did not know what to do and what not to do. We were in a terrible dilemma. As time passed by, everything was getting better and better day after day, and we got used to it. We learned how to adapt ourselves to the new conditions. We looked at it as an opportunity and felt the need to train teachers, include technology, reconstruct identity, and assess learners formatively to survive the crisis. We reached points of agreement and called it congruity. Are not these the opportunities brought about by the pandemic?

All the findings can be summarized in Figure 1.

Figure 1.
Summary of the Findings
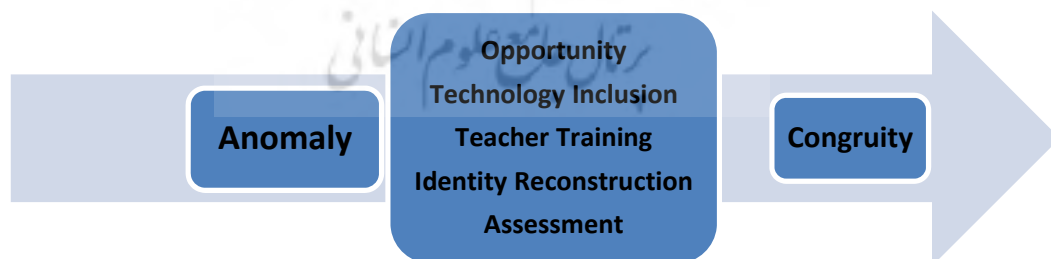
Discussion

The COVID-19 outbreak was, in fact, a crisis for the wellbeing of the communities, but it should be considered as an opportunity (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020; Naser Moghadasi, 2020) for educational and academic settings. As the findings revealed, there was a shift from anomaly to congruity that was filled with technology inclusion, teacher training, identity (re)construction, and formative assessment. We can consider and term the filler an opportunity since it let us narrow down the gap and reach points of agreement, i.e., congruence and/or congruity. According to Darling-Hammond and Hyler (2020), COVID-19 has given us the chance to reconsider and reform preparation and schooling. It is a new path we should tread. "And as we walk the road, we will learn still more by committing to sharing what we invent with one another" (p. 463).

At the onset, as mentioned earlier, there was too much anomaly and/or uncertainty everywhere, and the people involved did not know what to do. The inappropriacy and inadequacy of the available online teaching platforms, digital illiteracy of both learners and teachers, lack of access to high-speed internet and poor connection, high prices and internet disconnections, the low purchasing power of some parents, learners' and teachers' demotivation and unwillingness to attend online classes, learners' poor and reduced interaction and participation in online classes, and teachers' poor class management were some of the factors that brought about the uncertainties. Some of these factors are mentioned in earlier studies. For instance, the poor online teaching infrastructure and information gap on the part of learners (and teachers) (Zhang et al., 2020), the reluctance of some teachers and faculty members to experience the new forms of teaching, and their lack of experience in applying technology (Huber & Helm, 2020; O'Brien et al., 2020; Maggio et al., 2018) were highlighted earlier.

According to Floden and Clark (1988), uncertainty can be subdivided into the uncertainty of knowledge (what is true?) and uncertainty of action (what should teachers, teacher educators, and educational systems do?). Dvir and Schatz-Oppenheimer (2020), Floden and Clark (1988), and Hadar et al. (2020) maintain that uncertainty is quite inevitable, natural, and essential in nature. It is an opportunity for growth (Murray et al., 2020), a stimulus that cannot and should not be removed (McDonald, 1986). So, the anomaly brought about by the outbreak of the crisis was quite inevitable, and educational systems can put an end to it, as they did it through the efforts they made and the policies they adopted.

There are some approaches to reduce the uncertainty of pre-service and/or student teachers (Dvir & Schatz-Oppenheimer; 2020; Floden & Bauchmann, 1993; Floden & Clark, 1988; Gordon, 2006; Hadar et al., 2020). According to Floden and Clark (1988), the reduction of uncertainty can be made moderately by the provision of further knowledge, skills, routines (certainty-raising tools) at the beginning. In addition, teacher educators and teacher education programs can decrease the uncertainty of in-service teachers by introducing them to other important or noticeable uncertainties in in-service programs and helping them recognize the sources of uncertainties.

One approach to decrease uncertainty is to train teachers and familiarize them with technology and its application in their classes and to develop, customize, and promote it according to the findings of this study. This finding was put forth and highlighted earlier by Basilaia et al. (2020), Haghighi et al. (2020), Mohammadimehr (2020), Sahu (2020), and WHO (2020). Using and arming teachers with training strategies was recommended and underscored by Ferdig et al. (2020).

Another approach is to improve teachers' technological literacy and encourage them to use it in their classes. Improving teachers' technological knowledge and encouraging them to use technology in their classes were previously advocated by WHO (2020), Basilaia et al. (2020), Haghighi et al. (2020), and van der Spoel et al. (2020).

This study also shows that the crisis is a forced opportunity for teachers to accept, practice, and adapt to the current status of education in general and language teacher education, in particular, that is online, and their acceptance, practice, and adaptation may point to construction and reconstruction of their identities. Put it differently, teachers invented and reinvented their identities during the crisis (as well as in this study). That is the thing that is put forth and underlined by Darling-Hammond and Hyler (2020), Dvir and Schatz-Oppenheimer (2020), and Kumaravadivelu (2012). They believe that teachers should recognize their beliefs, values, and dispositions to transform and interrogate their teaching self. In addition, change in attitudes and adaptation to online teaching and its usefulness are put forth and accentuated by Ahmady et al. (2020), König et al. (2020), Liguori & Winkler (2020), Liyanagunawardena and Aboshady (2018), Maggio et al. (2018), and WHO (2020) to name a few.

Teachers should also pay attention to formative assessment and avoid using one-shot exams at the time of COVID-19 since summative assessment will not work as a logical tool now. It does not make sense to evaluate learners by a single final exam. It is not just and fair, and it is far better to evaluate them in the course of time through ongoing assessment.

In addition, the findings of the study may be considered as a semi small-scale paradigm shift, my own coined term, since they point to a constellation of ideas that are accepted by a small non-scientific community. This finding supports the ideas put forth by Kuhn (1974), who coined the term paradigm

shift in normal sciences. Later on, the concept was accepted and used by psychologists, sociologists, and applied linguists. As mentioned earlier, the pandemic forced universities and schools to change their educational approaches to online education (Liguori & Winkler, 2020); that is the point of the agreement reached by beneficiaries all around the world and the participants of this study. Since online education in general and online language teacher education, in particular, are accepted and applied by scientific communities and put into practice by practitioners throughout the world, we can call it a paradigm shift, a shift from face-to-face and/or in-person education to online and/or virtual education.

COVID-19 presents some other advantages too. Easy access to classes from anywhere at any time, synchronous and asynchronous dialogs with classmates, immediate feedback on learners' progress, and flexibility of online classes and/or education are some of its merits. These strengths were underscored by Alves et al. (2017).

Conclusion and Implication

Shift from anomaly to congruity, the inevitability of technology inclusion, development, and promotion as new alternatives in the educational contexts, the need to train teachers and learners to use technology, the necessity to construct and reconstruct identity, the call for formative assessment, and the pandemic as an opportunity are the major findings of the study. Based upon the findings, it can be concluded that, as a calculated suggestion, we should move from anomaly to congruity through training, identity (re)construction, formative assessment, and technology inclusion to change the emergent challenges to opportunities to keep the education running.

The findings of this research may contribute to the body of literature and stimulate educational systems, teacher education programs, teacher educators, administrators, policymakers, and other key stakeholders to consider and incorporate the findings while designing, upgrading, reforming, and running their syllabi, curriculums, and programs. Educational systems, their top administrators, and policymakers in the English language teaching (ELT) industry should be open to and consider these and similar findings as some of their (non)official guidelines, macro-strategies and/or micro-strategies and encourage middle managers, teacher educators, the bodies in charge of teacher preparation programs and teacher education programs to put them into practice to develop the growth mindsets of teachers.

This research may pave the way for further researches in this area which is unexplored in EFL/ESL (English as a second language) context. Further research should investigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on English language teacher education in other contexts such as high schools, language institutes, and any other institutions of higher education. Moreover, further investigation can be done in contexts in which English is neither the medium of instruction nor the subject matter. In addition, the study can be replicated.

References

Ahmady, S., Shahbazi, S., & Heidari, M. (2020). Letter to the editor: Transition to virtual learning during the Coronavirus disease–2019 crisis in Iran: Opportunity or challenge? *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness, 14*(3), 1-2

Alves, P., Miranda, L., & Morais, C. (2017). The influence of virtual learning environments in students' performance. *Universal Journal of Educational Research, 5*(3), 517-527. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2017.050325

Anderson, T., Rourke, L., Garrison, R., & Archer, W. (2001). Assessing teaching presence in a computer conferencing context. *Journal of*

Asynchronous Learning, 5(2), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v5i2.1875.

Bao, W. (2020). COVID-19 and online teaching in higher education: A case study of Peking University human. *Behavior and Emerging Technologies, 2*, 113–115. https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.191

Basilaia, G., Dgebuadze, M., Kantaria, M., & Chokhonelidze, G. (2020). Replacing the classic learning form at universities as an immediate response to the COVID-19 virus infection in Georgia. *International Journal for Research in Applied Science Engineering Technol*ogy, *8*(3), 101-8. https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2020.3021

Basilaia, G., & Kvavadze, D. (2020). Transition to online education in schools during a SARS-Cov-2 Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Georgia. *Pedagogic Research, 5*(4), 1-9.

Bozkurt, A., & Sharma, R. C. (2020). Emergency remote teaching in a time of global crisis due to Coronavirus pandemic. *Asian Journal of Distance Education, 15*(1), i–vi. Retrieved July 24, 2020, from http://asianjde.org/ojs/index.php/AsianJDE/article/view/447

Carabantes, C. J., Guerra, U. M., & Guillou, M. (2010). Development of a distance education program in the public health system in Chile, 2004-2009. *Review of Medical Children, 138*(9), 1148-56.

Carrillo, C., & Flores, M. A. (2020). COVID-19 and teacher education: A literature review of online teaching and learning practices. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 466-487. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1821184

Chatpakkarattana, T., & Khlaisang, J. (2012). The learner support system for distance education. *Creative Education, 3*(8), 47-51. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2012.38B011

Cutri, R. M., Mena, J., & Whiting, E. F. (2020). Faculty readiness for online crisis teaching: Transitioning to online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 523-541. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1815702

Darling-Hammond, L., & Hyler, M. E. (2020). Preparing educators for the time of COVID … and beyond. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 457-465. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1816961

Dvir, N., & Schatz-Oppenheimer, O. (2020). Novice teachers in a changing reality. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 639-656. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1821360

Ellis, V., Steadman, S., & Mao, Q. (2020)**.** Come to a screeching halt: Can change in teacher education during the COVID-19 pandemic be seen as innovation? *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 559-572. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1821186

Fardin, M. A. (In Press). COVID-19 and anxiety: A review of psychological impacts of infectious disease outbreaks. *Archive of Clinical Infectious Dis*eases, *15*. https://doi.org/10.5812/archcid.102779

Ferdig, R. E., Baumgartner, E., Hartshorne, R., Kaplan-Rakowski, R., & Mouza, C. (Eds). (2020). *Teaching, technology, and teacher education during the COVID-19 pandemic: Stories from the field*. Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE). Retrieved June 15, 2020, from https://www.learntechlib.org/p/216903/

Floden, R. E., & Bauchmann, M. (1993). Between routines and anarchy: Preparing teachers for uncertainty. *Oxford Review of Education, 19*(3), 373-382.

Floden, R. E., & Clark, C. M. (1988). Preparing teachers for uncertainty. *Teachers College Record, 89*(4), 505-524.

Flores, M. A., & Gago, M. (2020). Teacher education in times of COVID-19 pandemic in Portugal: National, institutional and pedagogical responses. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 46*(4), 507-516. https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2020.1799709

Flores, M. A., & Swennen, A. (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on teacher education. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 453-456. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1824253

Gazza, E. A. (2017). The experience of teaching online in nursing education. *Journal of Nursing Educ*ation, *56*(6), 343-9. https://doi.org/10.3928/01484834-20170518-05

Glaser, B. G. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity*. Sociology Press.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Aldine de Gruyter.

Gordon, M. (2006). Welcoming confusion, embracing uncertainty: Educating teacher candidates in an age of certitude. *Paideusis, 15*(2), 15-25.

Hadar, L. L., Ergas, O., Alpert, B., & Ariav, T. (2020). Rethinking teacher education in a VUCA world: Student teachers' social-emotional competencies during the Covid-19 crisis. *European Journal of*

Teacher Education, 43(4), 573-586. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1807513

Haghighi, M., Salehi, SH., Ghasemian, M., & Nouraei, M. (2020). Online Education Strategies Used in Imam Hossein Hospital in Tehran during the COVID-19 Outbreak. *Strides in Development of Medical Education*, 1-5. https://doi.org/22062/sdme.2020.91450

Hodges, C., Moore, S., Lockee, B., Trust, T., & Bond, A. (2020). The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning. *EDUCAUSE Review*. Retrieved 29 August 2020, from https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergency-remote-teaching-and-onlinelearning

Huber, S. G., & Helm. C. (2020). COVID-19 and schooling: Evaluation, assessment, and accountability in times of crises—reacting quickly to explore key issues for policy, practice, and research with the school barometer. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Accountability, 32*, 237–270. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-020-09322-y

Jadidi, E., & Bagheri, M. S. (2014). ELT pre-service teacher education: Major trends and shifts. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World, 7*(4), 181-190.

Jamshidi Avanaki, H., & Sadeghi, B. (2014). A comparative study of teacher education in Iran and the UK. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 5*(5), 1153-1159. https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.5.5.1153-1159

Judd, J., Rember, B. A., Pellegrini, T., Ludlow, B., & Meisner, J. (2020). *This is Not Teaching: The effects of COVID-19 on teachers*. Retrieved July 25, 2020, from https://www.socialpublishersfoundation.org/knowledge_base/this-is-not-teaching-the effects-of-covid-19-on-teachers/

Khaki Sedigh, A, & Ahanchian, M. R. (2020). Leading higher education in Iran during COVID-19 Pandemic: Reporting the policies and processes. *Strides in Development of Medical Education*, *17*, 1-4. Supplement 91344. https://doi.org/10.22062/sdme.2020.91344

Kidd, W., & Murray, J. (2020). The Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on teacher education in England: How teacher educators moved practicum learning online. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 542-558. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1820480

König, J., Jäger-Biela, D. J., & Glutsch, N. (2020). Adapting to online teaching during COVID-19 school closure: Teacher education and

teacher competence effects among early career teachers in Germany. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 608-622. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1809650

Kuhn, T. S. (1996). *The structure of scientific revolutions* (3rd ed.). The University of Chicago Press.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2012). *Language teacher education for a global society*. Taylor & Francis.

Leather, S., & Motallebzadeh, K. (2015). Effecting methodological change through a trainer-training project: A tale of insider-outsider collaboration. In Ch. Kennedy (Ed.), *English language teaching in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Innovations, trends and challenges* (pp. 161-169). British Council.

Liguori, E., & Winkler, C. (2020). From offline to online: Challenges and opportunities for entrepreneurship education following the COVID-19 pandemic. *Entrepreneurship Education and Pedagogy*, *3*(4), 346-51. https://doi.org/10.1177/2515127420916738.

Liyanagunawardena, T. R., & Aboshady, O. A. (2018). Massive open online courses: A resource for health education in developing countries. *Global Health Promotion, 25*(3), 74-76. https://doi.org/10.1177/1757975916680970

Liyaghatdar, M. J. (2002). The situation of practical training in Iran. *Research Quarterly, 13*, 40-53.

Maggio, L. A., Daley, B. J., Pratt, D. D., & Torre, D. M. (2018). Honoring thyself in the transition to online teaching. *Academic Medicine*, *93*(8), 1129-1134. https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.0000000000002285

Martin, A. J. (2020). *How to optimize online learning in the age of coronavirus (COVID-19): A 5-point guide for educators*.

Mavetera, N., & Kroeze, J. H. (2009). Practical considerations in grounded theory research. *Sprouts: Working Papers on Information Systems, 9*(32), 9-32. Retrieved September 18, 2020, from http://sprouts.aisnet.org/9-32

Mayadas, A. F., Bourne, J., & Bacsich, P. (2009). Online education today. *Science*, *323*, 85-9. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1168874

McDonald, J. P. (1986). Raising the teacher's voice and the ironic role of theory. *Harvard Educational Review, 56*, 355-378.

Mertens, D. M. (2005). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods* (2nd ed). SAGE Publications.

Mohammadi, Sh., Karimian, K., & Talebinejad, M. R. (2015). Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes towards in-service professional development programs. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research, 2*(3), 48-60.

Mohammadimehr, M. (2020). Letter to the editor: E-learning as an educational response to COVID-19 epidemic in Iran: The role of the learner support system. *Future of Medical Education Journal, 10*(3), 64-65.

Moore, M. G., & Kearsley, G. (2011). *Distance education: A systems view of online learning (What's new in education?)* (3rd ed.). Cengage Learning.

Murphy, M. P. A. (2020). COVID-19 and emergency eLearning: Consequences of the securitization of higher education for post-pandemic pedagogy. *Contemporary Security Policy 41*(3), 492–505. https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2020.1761749

Murray, C., Heinz, M., Munday, I., Keane, E., Flynn, N., Connolly, C., Hall, T., & MacRuairc, G. (2020). Reconceptualizing relatedness in education in 'Distanced' Times. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 488-502. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1806820

Naser Moghadasi, A. (2020). Opportunities and threats: The necessity of research in dealing with the rapid spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Iran. *Archives of Clinical Infectious Diseases*, *15* (COVID-19). https://doi.org/10.5812/archcid.102809

Naseri Karimvand, P., Hessamy, G., & Hemmati, F. (2014). The place of postmethod pedagogy in teacher education programs in EFL language centers of Iran. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 17*(2), 59-91.

Nasri, N. M., Husnin, H., S., Mahmud, N. D., & Halim, L. (2020). Mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic: A snapshot from Malaysia into the coping strategies for pre-service teachers' education. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, *46*(4), 546-553. https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2020.1802582

Nezakat-Alhossaini, M., & Ketabi, S. (2013). Teacher training system and EFL classes in Iran. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 70*, 526-536. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.01.090

Nikdel Teymori, A., & Fardin, M. A. (2020). COVID-19 and educational challenges: A review of the benefits of online education. *Annals of*

Military and Health Sciences Research, 18(3). https://doi.org/10.5812/amh.105778

O'Brien, W., Adamakis, M., O' Brien, N., Onofre, M., Martins, J., Dania, A., Makopoulou, K., Herold, F., Ng, K., & Costa, J. (2020). Implications for European physical education teacher education during the COVID-19 pandemic: A cross-institutional SWOT analysis. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 503-522. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1823963

Quezada, R. L., Talbot, C., & Quezada-Parker, K. B. (2020). From bricks and mortar to remote teaching: A teacher education programme's response to COVID-19. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, *46*(4), 472-483.
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi.citedby/10.1080/02607476.2020.18 01330 needAccess=true

Razi, N., & Kargar, A. A. (2014). Evaluation on in-service foreign language teacher education program in Iran. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World, 5*(1), 221-236.

Ried, L. D. (2010). A distance education course in statistics. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education, 74*(9), 172. https://doi.org/10.5688/aj7409172

Safari, P., & Rashidi, N. (2015). Teacher education beyond transmission: Challenges and opportunities for Iranian teachers of English. *Issues in Educational Research, 25*(2), 187-203.

Sahu, P. (2020). Closure of universities due to Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): Impact on education and mental health of students and academic staff. *Cureus, 12*(4), 1-6. https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.7541

Salehi, N. (2011). *Adaptation of the EFL method course in the classroom: A case study*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Malaya, Kualalumpur. Retrieved January 15, 2020, from http://studentsrepo.um.edu.my/3538/

Sepulveda-Escobar, P., & Morrison, A. (2020). Online teaching placement during the COVID-19 pandemic in Chile: Challenges and opportunities. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 587-607. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1820981

Shahmohammadi, N. (2012). Evaluation of teacher education programs in Iran: A case study. *Journal of Educational and Social Research, 2*(2), 127-135.

Simpson, O. (2018). *Supporting students in online, open, and distance learning*. Kogan.

Sintema, E. J. (2020). Effect of Covid-19 on the performance of grade 12 students: Implications for STEM education. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education, 16*(7), 1-6. https://doi.org/10.29333/ejmste/7893

Van der Spoel, I., Noroozi, O., Schuurink, E., & van Ginkel, S. (2020). Teachers' online teaching expectations and experiences during the Covid19- pandemic in the Netherlands. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 623-638. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1821185

Wang, G., Zhang, Y., Zhao, J., Zhang, J., & Jiang, F. (2020). Mitigate the effects of home confinement on children during the COVID-19 outbreak. *Lancet, 395*(10228), 945-7. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30547-X

WHO. (2020). *Key messages and actions for COVID-19 prevention and control in schools*. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/key-messages-and-actions-for-covid-19-prevention-and-control-in-schools-march2020.pdf?sfvrsn=baf81d52_4

Zhang, W., Wang, Y., Yang, L., & Wang, C. H. (2020). Suspending classes without stopping learning: China's education emergency management policy in the COVID-10 outbreak. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management, 13*(58), 1–6. https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm13030055

Zhuang, Z., Zhao, S., Lin, Q., Cao, P., Lou, Y., Yang, L., & He, D. (2020). Preliminary estimation of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases in Iran: A modeling analysis based on overseas cases and air travel data. *International Journal of Infectious Diseases, 94,* 29-31. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijid.2020.03.019

Appendix 1: Interview Questions

How did the outbreak of Covid-19 change the educational system of your own university?

How did it affect your learning in your own context?

How did it affect the teaching you receive?

What learning/teaching challenges did it bring about?

Was it a threat in your context?

What learning/teaching opportunities did it offer?

What are the learning/teaching merits of Covid-19?

What are the learning/teaching demerits of Covid-19?

What was teacher-student interaction like in your educational context?

What was student-teacher interaction like in your context?

What was student-student interaction like in your English classes/university?

How did your English teachers/professors evaluate their learners at the time of Covid-19?

How did the educational system of your university react to and deal with the crisis?

How did your English teachers/professors see technology and its application in teaching and learning before Covid-19 hits?

How do they see technology and its application in teaching and learning now?

How did your English teachers see online teaching before Covid-19? How did they react?

How do they see online learning/teaching now? How do you react now?

How did you, as a student teacher, feel about technology and online classes at the beginning?

How do you feel now?

How did your English professors feel about technology and online classes at the beginning?

How do they feel now?

Did technology and online classes bring about creativity and innovation on the part of teachers and students?

How did your parents react to online classes?

What educational consequences will technology and online classes have if the crisis continues?

What do you, as a student teacher, suggest to deal with the Covid-19 crisis?