Online Language
Teaching and Learning

Online Language Teaching and Learning
Bracing for Post-COVID-19 Challenges

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Series Preface

Contemporary Research and Practice (CRP) is a book series that focuses and reflects on research and practices that are of current interest to the educational stakeholders and community at the national and international sphere. In this ever-changing world, the need to address educational issues and matters are unavoidable since new educational trends, ideas and philosophies, and more significantly, new problems, are emerging and shaping the educational eco-system at all levels at a frightening speed. Hence, we need to comprehend and be aware of these at a fundamental level so as to be prepared in making the needed changes or adjustments to currently held ideas and thoughts, where and when necessary. Learning and understanding the severity of the above tenets are, therefore, crucial and should be adapted (or adopted) through a proper scientific investigation i.e. research and practices that are informed and supported by theoretical underpinnings and accepted models of teaching and learning.

This book series will explore, investigate, examine, and highlight contemporary research ideas and teaching and learning practices in the different and various domains of education. Each series will dissect a particular perspective, issue or trend or philosophy so that users of this book series will obtain a thorough and complete understanding, and as a result, are able to reify and construct related new knowledge. With this, it is hoped that better and relevant solutions are possible, and meaningful teaching and learning could be planned and implemented by practitioners. It is also anticipated that the current and future contributions in this series would inspire others to further and expand their own research in light of what has been done, leading to improvement of educational knowledge and ideas, and crucially, research directions.

Furthermore, through this publication series, researchers, academics, teachers, postgraduate and undergraduate students, and other stakeholders would be able to share their work and experiences that are related to pre-school, primary,

secondary, and tertiary education. Their creative and innovative practices and research published should encourage more invigorating teaching and learning practices, especially in this 21st century, or at least inspire others to think, initiate, and implement engaging teaching and learning practices.

The CRP is also attempting to provide insights into how transformation of learning could be attained. This could be, as an example, by initiating and enhancing autonomous learning, utilizing digital technologies and social networking sites, engaging in collaborative learning, and facilitating blended learning. It could also be by examining and highlighting supportive policies for teaching and learning, integrating innovative assessment tools, and supporting the teachers in a community of practice for professional development to increase the capability and capacity of teachers and learners. The concentration of practices and research in this series would be on the previously mentioned perspective, whether it is for specific subject-oriented areas such as Science and Maths education, language education, or for general educational issues such as educational leadership and management, and educational psychology.

It is the hope of the School of Educational Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia that this publication series would be the pioneering one in stirring existing research and practices and triggering innovative and integral educational achievement.

Professor Dr. Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan
General Editor

Preface

Welcome to *Online Language Teaching and Learning: Bracing for Post-COVID-19 Challenges*, a collaborative effort aimed at exploring the diverse landscape of online teaching and learning (OTL). We, the editors of this volume, are excited to present a compilation that reflects a diversity of viewpoints, academic depth, and forward-thinking strategies for tackling the unique OTL challenges of the post-COVID era.

The inception of this book can be traced back to a shared passion among Professor Kabilan and his fellow students for examining OTL from diverse viewpoints during the pandemic. Drawing on our collective expertise and experiences, we embarked on a journey to curate a comprehensive study of OTL within the language domain, particularly in non-WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) cultural contexts, with Malaysia at its forefront. Our goal was not only to contribute to existing literature but also to inspire further inquiry and discourse.

In acknowledging the invaluable contributions of our esteemed contributors, we extend heartfelt gratitude to all individuals who dedicated their time, knowledge, and expertise to this book venture. Their willingness to share their work has enriched the scope and depth of this book, allowing readers to benefit from a diverse array of perspectives and insights.

We are deeply grateful to have witnessed the completion of this book, and we owe heartfelt thanks to our colleagues, Associate Professor Dr. Manjet Kaur Mehar Singh (Universiti Sains Malaysia), Dr. Latha Ravindran (UCSI University), Dr. Paramjit Kaur Karpal Singh (Universiti Utara Malaysia), and Dr. Thivilojana Perinpasingam (Taylor's University). Their thorough chapter reviews, insightful feedback, and scholarly expertise have shaped the content and direction of this volume, enriching it with unparalleled quality and depth.

We envision Online Language Teaching and Learning: Bracing for Post-COVID Challenges as a valuable resource for scholars, researchers, and practitioners, serving as both a catalyst for continued exploration in educational practice and a hub for fostering meaningful discussions. May this book spark new ideas and inspire scholars to push the boundaries of knowledge in OTL, adapting with urgency and adaptability to meet the evolving demands of education.

Khong Hou Keat
April 2024

Introduction

Why a Book on OTL in Times of COVID-19?

Online teaching and learning (OTL) has become the teaching and learning enterprise by dint of its effectiveness in providing flexible, timely and smart learning environments to facilitate meaningful learning and enrich the learning experience among students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, there have been quite a number of published books concerning OTL that encompass practical technology-mediated solutions, programme-specific designs and curriculum innovations, and educational provisions and sustainability during crisis situations both locally and internationally (e.g., Fayed & Cummings, 2021; Low et al., 2021; Pandian et al., 2021). Beside Chen (2022), there is no other book directly addressing OTL in the language domain especially in the non-WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialised, rich, and democratic) cultural contexts (Henrich et al., 2010).

Therefore, this edited volume attempts to address OTL of different languages (second language and foreign language) at different levels during the COVID-19 situation, focusing mainly on teachers' and students' experiences, emerging design, framework, and policy, and pedagogical initiatives reported from different cultural contexts. On the one hand, this volume serves as a venue for practical guide and informed adoption of OTL across distinctive conditions, domains, and levels of language instruction in response to the pandemic. On the other hand, it also serves as a platform for experience sharing and knowledge exchange among language planners, researchers, and practitioners in the era of new normal, as well as other challenges, disasters and adversities that may confront us in future. In sum, this book is a practical read for scholars and policymakers to gear up for the post-COVID-19 challenges in non-WEIRD cultural contexts primarily in Malaysia.

A quick summary of the research themes of the book is presented followed by a short description of each chapter. Themes covered in this volume include (1) sociological analyses of teachers' and students' OTL experiences, (2) emerging

OTL design, framework, and policy in non-WEIRD educational systems, and (3) potential OTL strategies and approaches across different learning domains. While individual chapters can be read independently of each other, collectively they paint a more complete picture of OTL for language educators and scholars worldwide to sustain the continuity of language learning amid the global pandemic.

Structure of the Book

This summary spotlights the essence of this volume that weaves together the 17 curated chapters into four themes. The first theme which consists of only one chapter introduces OTL through a systematic literature review where the strategies used in language learning during the COVID-19 pandemic are unravelled. The second theme elucidates the OTL experiences, motivation and satisfaction among teachers and students in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Pakistan from the sociological perspective. The third theme delves into the emerging OTL design, framework, and policy in non-WEIRD educational systems across continents. This theme covers studies from Bangladesh, China, Malaysia, and Nigeria. The fourth theme delineates the potential OTL strategies and approaches across different languages and learning domains during COVID-19. The concluding chapter brackets the studies in the book and serve as a bookend framing the discussion for future research and direction.

In Chapter 1, "A systematic literature review of online teaching and learning strategies in language learning", Zuraina Ali and Intan Syahida Zulkafa provide insights into the strategies used by teachers and learners in language learning during the pandemic through a systematic review. The authors find that identifying OTL tools to create supportive learning environment in a creative manner is prominent from 2020 to 2021. This chapter highlights the creativity of teachers in supporting OTL amidst limited resources.

The next five chapters focus on teachers' and students' OTL experiences in the time of crisis. Chapter 2, "Exploring future English teachers' reflection towards multimodal reading tasks on virtual learning platforms" by Elih Sutisna Yanto, Hikmah Pravitasari, and Junjun Muhamad Ramdani examine future English teachers' (FET) reflection towards multimodal reading tasks on virtual learning platforms. Their findings show that the virtual learning platforms not only improve reading but also support Indonesian FET's affective experiences. Nor Azikin Mohd Omar, Zailani Jusoh, and Shaidatul Akma Adi Kasuma in their Chapter 3, "University students' perceptions towards the implementation of speaking assessments on online platforms" assess Malaysian university

students' perceptions towards the implementation of speaking assessments on online platforms in an English proficiency course. The authors find that the students adapt well to the new learning environment and show moderate yet encouraging perceptions of online speaking assessments. However, the authors caution that the online platforms do not reduce students' speaking anxiety. Nur Hilyati Ramli, Safia Najwa Suhaimi, Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan, and Muhanniz Mesri in Chapter 4, "Adapting to new norm: TESOL students' online collaborative learning experiences with arts students" explore 62 TESOL students' collaborative learning experiences with arts students during the pandemic. Their qualitative findings narrate how the TESOL students learn collectively, develop knowledge, and use online technologies and platforms to restructure their formal and informal learning. This chapter witnesses how students from different disciplines complement each other during challenging times.

In Chapter 5, "Exploring student satisfaction and perceived learning in online learning environment", Umi Kalsom Masrom and Nik Aloesnita Nik Mohd Alwi investigate Malaysian student satisfaction and perceived learning in an online learning environment. Their structual equation model-partial least square findings help inform the university students' preparation and satisfaction in online education during the early stage of COVID-19 pandemic. They find that the most important performing factors that determine student satisfaction and perceived learning are learner-content interaction and online learning self-efficacy while the constructs that require more attention are learner-learner interaction and learner-instructor interaction. Lastly, in Chapter 6, "COVID-19 milieu and learners' demotivation in online classes", Sahib Khatoon, Mohammad Jafre Zainol Abidin, Zahid H. Pathan and Muhammad Usman Thaheem investigate Pakistani learner motivation in COVID-19 milieu. Their mixed methods results show that students are generally demotivated toward OTL during lockdowns. This urges policymakers to consider the demotivation factors to increase the effectiveness of the technology-integrated courses.

The volume also features five chapters that propose various OTL design, framework, and policy to cope with the pandemic in non-WEIRD educational systems. Through a qualitative approach, Nur Farhana Abdul Aziz, Nooraida Yakob and Nor Asniza Ishak in Chapter 7, "Challenges and strategies in teaching and learning Arabic as a second language" investigate the challenges faced by the Arabic language lecturers in a Malaysian college and systematically document the strategies employed to cope with the dire situations. These initiatives reported constitute some practical OTL solutions as well as implications for future adaptation. Reuben Benson and Muhammad

Kamarul Kabilan in their Chapter 8, "Effects of online teaching and learning in English language: A case study of Adamawa State tertiary institutions in Nigeria" take a different approach and conduct a case study of OTL in Nigeria. The authors acknowledge that the availability of ICT tools and teacher's competency in exploiting the technology remain prominent challenges in Adamawa state tertiary institutions. Drawing on the findings, the authors foreground some context-specific designs and curriculum innovations in OTL that address the needs of African English language teachers especially during crisis situations like COVID-19.

In Chapter 9, "Shifting higher education to e-education", Sayeedur Rahman, Touhida Easmin, and Paren Chandra Barman look at the adoption of OTL by Bangladeshi private universities in the ESL/EFL domain. The authors find that the effectiveness of OTL adopted is debatable in the existing language learning ecosystem and hence advocate a proper adoption framework in embracing the online education during the pandemic. Another unique framework is proposed in Chapter 10, "A framework for the co-design of an integrated mobile-assisted learning environment for ESL learners" by Chuah Kee Man and Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan to design an integrated mobile-assisted learning environment involving learners, teachers, and designers. The authors not only walk us through the entire design flow, but also present practical insights and potential uses of the framework in developing mobile applications for ESL learners to cope meaningfully with the mandatory OTL. The last chapter of this theme unfolds a comparative investigation between two language massive open online courses (MOOCs) in a context where learners naturally favour face-to-face interactions and mentoring. In Chapter 11, "MOOCs for second and foreign language learners: Unpacking critical success factors from the pedagogical perspective", Chuah Kee Man, Xijing Wang, and Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan identify five key success factors (pedagogy, cognition, instructional interaction, supporting mechanism, and assessment strategies) that could enhance the success rate of MOOC implementation without compromising quality of OTL.

The final batch of five chapters explore the potential OTL strategies and approaches across different languages and learning domains during the restricted COVID-19 situation. Nur Yasmin Khairani Zakaria, Amelia Abdullah, and Siti Nazleen Abdul Rabu in Chapter 12, "The potentials of gamification in online learning: Insights from ESL undergraduates" examine the expanding possibilities of gamifying online classrooms to refine the current conduct of OTL practices. Their results showed that the engaging elements of game-based learning, such as points and rewards, could increase student motivation in OTL in the new norms. In Chapter 13, "Breaking into

new norms: Synchronous collaborative language teaching and learning via breakout sessions in video conferencing tools", Ezleena Mustafa Kamal and Debbita Tan Ai Lin investigate the effects of breakout sessions in video conferencing tools such as Zoom and Webex. The authors support that the fundamental issues like peer interaction in virtual language classrooms could be alleviated with using the breakout session feature as a synchronous collaboration tool to provide students with meaningful language learning opportunities.

In Chapter 14, "The effectiveness of using Telegram Messenger to promote motivation amongst ESL students in online classroom", Nazirah Md Yusof, Amelia Abdullah, and Mohammad Jafre Zainol Abidin investigate a different approach, the Telegram Messenger, in promoting ESL student motivation during COVID-19. As motivation is an important mediator of learning, the authors find that Telegram Messenger could enhance private university students' motivation in learning ESL. In Chapter 15, "Digital storytelling as an innovative assessment: From the undergraduates' point of view in the English language classroom", Agelyia Murugan, Selvamalar Selvarajan, and Selvakumar Selvarajan provide us some insights into digital storytelling as an innovative assessment for online ESL courses. The authors suggest that digital storytelling could promote active and collaborative learning among students which in turn allows them to actively contribute ideas, showcase their hidden talents and think out of the box. In Chapter 16, "Does micro-learning make a difference in vocabulary acquisition?", Khong Hou Keat and Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan examine the influence of micro-learning (ML) in Spanish vocabulary acquisition in a Malaysian technical university. Their quasi-experimental study supports that ML could serve as a reliable word-focused instruction particularly for two vocabulary knowledge aspects, form and meaning, and associations. Their results support previous findings that suggest ML is a promising learning approach in different learning domains.

Chapter 17, "Online language teaching and learning: Current trajectory and future potentials" by Chuah Kee Man and Khong Hou Keat, elucidates prospective innovative pedagogies that could influence online language teaching and learning across diverse conditions, domains, and levels, but challenges remain. In this regard, four areas of improvement are highlighted to foster a more engaging and effective design of OTL in SLL environments.

Final Remark

This edited volume presents exemplary research complementing the initiatives taken by other language scholars worldwide especially in non-WEIRD teaching associated contexts in order to gear up for a promising post COVID recovery. Focusing on Asian countries which comprise a range of cultural and educational backgrounds, adopting different research methods and resulting in, at times, diverging yet complementing outcomes in pedagogical, emotional and socioeconomical perspectives, this volume enables readers to capitalise on various themes and approaches to language related OTL during crisis moments. Hence, readers are encouraged to discover for themselves how the chapters play out, how they balance between research and practice to render a greater sense of what it means to teach and learn a language in the devastating era of COVID-19.

Having said that, this book is not only relevant to practitioners, teachers, and researchers during the pandemic but also, very much meaningful and useful when the COVID-19 pandemic turns into an endemic. Many countries (such as Malaysia, Spain, Germany, France, and Singapore) are already approaching or at least discussing the possibilities of ushering COVID-19 into an endemic. What this means is that 'normality', in terms of teaching and learning at various levels of education, is on the horizon. However, this normality does not mean the dangers of COVID-19 were totally disregarded and return to the practices of 'old days' of pre-COVID-19, but rather, it means that normality is framed by what we have learned from our practices and experiences during the pandemic. In term of OTL of natural languages, this means that the new ideas experimented, the practices solidified, and the experiences gained during the pandemic, could now be implemented and applied to further improve OTL in the foreseen endemic. As suggested by Charumilind et al. (2021) that managing of an endemic requires an integrated and interwoven elements and strategies that are adapted and adopted by the entire society, it is also believed that the chapters in this volume would give us such a hint of approaching OTL of natural languages in the endemic phase. Hence, by closely examining the chapters, a framework can be formulated, which will surely be reified in the concluding chapter.

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1

A Systematic Literature Review of Online Teaching and Learning Strategies in Language Learning

Zuraina Ali & Intan Syahida Zulkafa

Introduction

While the world is gradually recovering from the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers and learners are still coping with the impact of online teaching and learning (OTL). Within the brief period of a year (2020–2021), numerous studies were conducted across the globe in examining distinct factors and effects of OTL. This chapter aims to provide an overview of pertinent issues discussed in the previous literature particularly with regards to OTL strategies. Hence, a systematic review was conducted to synthesize key empirical findings from selected studies.

The need for a systematic review

Methodological rigour is the main reason why researchers/ authors conduct systematic reviews. Systematic reviews are commonly used by health care researchers as it is the reference standard to synthesise evidence in the clinical area (Moher et al., 2015). In social sciences, however, systematic review is a process that uses vigorous and systematic methods to minimise bias in identifying relevant articles, and thus produce more reliable findings of which conclusions and decisions can be made – and finally able to answer formulated research questions (Higgins et al., 2021). Systematic literature review has become a common type of

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Exploring Future English Teachers' Reflection towards Multimodal Reading Tasks on Virtual Learning Platforms

Elih Sutisna Yanto, Hikmah Pravitasari &
Junjun Muhamad Ramdani

Introduction

Globally the pandemic of COVID-19 affected by the new virus SARS-CoV-2 has changed social interaction and organisation in the education sectors, such as universities, and the initial teacher education (ITE) programme has not been excepted. Across the world, educational institutions have transformed their learning platform from face-to-face classes to virtual classrooms to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and slow the spread of the virus. As a result, in Indonesia, for example, the policymaker, i.e., Ministry of Education and Culture, was to close schools as early as mid-March 2020. To prevent learning loss during the period of this pandemic, ITE programme should introduce a new educational framework, i.e., a virtual digital learning platform that can contribute to students learning continuity even as they faced with the uncertainties of the new normal and the escalating pandemic.

On the one hand, online learning may have advantages, including better accessibility, higher quality of learning, better preparing students for a knowledge-based society, an opportunities for lifelong learning, and many more (Appana, 2008). For example, through these learning platforms, students can access the lectures anytime and anywhere. In contrast, many online learning platforms reveal their

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University Students' Perceptions towards the Implementation of Speaking Assessments on Online Platforms

Nor Azikin Mohd Omar, Zailani Jusoh & Shaidatul Akma Adi Kasuma

Introduction

Oral or speaking ability has always been important in the English learning sphere; as the level of mastery directly influences students' future undertakings (Jalleh et al., 2021). A good command of the English language prepares students to keep pace with the rapid growth of global knowledge and compete in the labour market (Selvaratnam, 2019). Granted, the mastery of the oral skills is not easily achieved and may take years of formal and informal instructions for one to qualify as a proficient speaker; hence, reports on graduates' poor command of English are not unheard of. Some of the most common problems faced by students in the non-English speaking countries are insufficient authentic opportunities to practice skills, language learning anxiety, and oral communication apprehension (Jalleh et al., 2021; Martin & Alvarez Valdivia, 2017; Sun et al., 2017); which makes it difficult for them to even "string a sentence together in English" (Selvaratnam, 2019, p. 17).

As difficult it is to master the skill, the assessment of the oral communicative ability is equally hard, intricate, and challenging (Namaziandost & Ahmadi, 2019). The evaluation of speaking skills is subjective, involving many components of oral ability, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, interactional competence, descriptive

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Adapting to New Norm: TESOL Students' Online Collaborative Learning Experiences with Arts Students

Nur Hilyati Ramli, Safia Najwa Suhaimi, Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan & Muhanniz Mesri

Introduction

The COVID-19 virus hit the world unexpectedly and explosively in 2020, causing disruption to people's normal work and life including the education sector. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) report, about 158 countries throughout the world had closed their educational institutions as of 15 May 2020, affecting about 70% of the world's student population due to the rapid spread of COVID-19 (UNESCO, 2020). Malaysia's cancellation of all face-to-face classes starting 18 March 2020, was due to the implementation of the national total lock down aimed to halt the pandemic's spread. As a result, educators and learners alike were instructed to mandate all the teaching and learning activities remotely, and rapidly switch their teaching and learning methods virtually (Saif et al., 2020).

The unplanned or forced shift of teaching and learning methods has created a litany of challenges and restrictions for English language learning. It is proposed that although the "negative effect of transitioning" to a digital learning environment "is nearly negligible for TESOL teachers", it hinders and undermines students' English language development (Hartshorn & McMurry, 2020, p. 151). When collaborative group projects are involved, students are

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Exploring Student Satisfaction and Perceived Learning in Online Learning Environment

Umi Kalsom Masrom & Nik Aloesnita Nik Mohd Alwi

Introduction

The unpredictable conditions caused by COVID-19 have pushed online teaching and learning (OTL) to become an essential teaching and learning medium. COVID-19 have greatly influenced the education system and teaching-learning activities. Delivering online lessons has become an essential and integral element for teaching and learning at various levels, from preschools to tertiary levels. The shift from a traditional teaching approach to online delivery has affected many higher education institutions during the pandemic. Many educational institutions are still struggling to cope with the new norms (Johnson et al., 2020; Mukhtar et al., 2020). In coping with the new norms, higher education institutions have made tremendous efforts to guarantee the effectiveness of online learning programmes. Access, cost and learning effectiveness, and student satisfaction are the essential elements to ensure the quality of online learning programmes (Wang, 2006).

During the conception of this study, researchers in other countries have examined student satisfaction in online learning at the tertiary level. Some studies showed positive perceptions of online learning (Agarwal & Kaushik, 2020; Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020), while other studies demonstrated students' dissatisfaction with online learning

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COVID-19 Milieu and Learners' Demotivation in Online Classes

Sahib Khatoon, Mohammad Jafre Zainol Abidin, Zahid H. Pathan & Muhammad Usman Thaheem

Introduction

A novel coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak extensively affected worldwide thus, numerous countries closed their educational institutes, with the functional standstill of institutions students took their classes sitting at homes since the beginning of February 2020 (Muthuprasad et al., 2021; Mirza et al., 2021). Similarly, countries like Pakistan were also met with the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown circumstances, because of such circumstances Pakistani educational institutions also shifted their education from face-to-face classes to online classes. This shift suggested positive as well as negative effects on students and teachers (Thaheem et al., 2021). Nonetheless, the COVID-19 milieu has become the trigger for all educational institutions globally to hunt the creative methods in a short period. In such conditions, almost all higher educational institutes have shifted their teaching from face-to-face classes to online by using, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or other online mediums (Muthuprasad et al., 2021).

As face-to-face classes was shifted in the COVID-19 milieu to the online classes so it was noticed, the online education milieu differed intensely from the face to face classroom context vis-a-vis to learner's motivation, gratification, and communication (Bignoux & Sund, 2018). Thus, it

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Challenges and Strategies in Teaching and Learning Arabic as a Second Language

Nur Farhana Abdul Aziz, Nooraida Yakob & Nor Asniza Ishak

Introduction

The world is witnessing the presence of the COVID-19 virus which has crippled the progress of many countries. The virus was initially known as coronavirus which was identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019 (Sajed & Amgain, 2020). Malaysia is also not spared the presence of this virus and has threatened the lives and harmony of society. The year 2019 is also history for the country in the face of the COVID-19 situation which has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). The report updated by the National Crisis Preparedness and Response Center and WHO on 30 December 2020 involved a total of 216 countries including Malaysia which has recorded a total of 880,782 cases as of 15 July 2021 (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption in education systems until it has forced countries in all the world to make a sudden transition to online teaching and learning (OTL). The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the closure of the educational institution and teachers are required to teach through online learning platforms. This situation also led to a digital revolution in the higher education system through online lectures, teleconferences, online examination, and interaction in

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Effects of Online Teaching and Learning in English Language: A Case Study of Adamawa State Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Reuben Benson & Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan

Introduction

The sudden pivot from traditional classroom teaching to virtual learning spaces was a compelling transition propelled by the rapid changes in global circumstances (Subekti 2021; Zhang et al., 2022). During this changing time, the question is not whether digital education can meet the standards of traditional pedagogy (Hodges et al., 2020). Rather, it is about how swiftly, and effectively academic institutions can adopt this massive digital shift (Carey, 2020). Resistance to change will not serve the educational systems across the globe. As highlighted by Rapanta (2021), the ability of these institutions to adapt rapidly and maintain educational quality will be under scrutiny, posing a significant challenge to their reputations. Likewise, their responsiveness and their capability to uphold their educational standards in the face of crisis will be a testament to their adaptability.

In responding to the demands brought about by various circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for a flexible and accessible educational system has become increasingly apparent. As a result, the transition from traditional face-to-face learning to online learning has emerged as a viable solution (Ribeiro, 2020; Singh et al., 2021). Online teaching and learning (OTL), which is defined as the utilisation of internet and other relevant

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Shifting Higher Education to E-education

Sayeedur Rahman, Touhida Easmin & Paren Chandra Barman

Introduction

Bangladesh, like many developing nations, has been seriously affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The one area, possibly next to the health sector, that has been hit really hard in the pandemic is the education sector. Because of the pandemic and the sporadic lockdown across the country, the education system had to be switched overnight from physical classrooms to online classrooms within a very short space of time, regardless of the unavailability of the required infrastructure to run the online education system. Bangladesh, which is often considered as the new face of emergent economy in South Asia, has been badly affected by the pandemic because of its unpreparedness to handle the crisis, exacerbated by still unsettled economic conditions.

As part of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Bangladesh has been working on achieving high-quality and sustainable quality education since 2015 (UNDP, 2021). Being a developing country, quality and inclusive education have been the topmost priority for the present government, as education is a prerequisite for the successful transformation of the country to a developing one. The government has always been aware of the importance of the

A Framework for the Co-Design of an Integrated Mobile-Assisted Learning Environment for ESL Learners

Chuah Kee Man & Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan

Introduction

For more than a decade after the smartphone revolution achieved its global prominence, the use of mobile applications in language learning has almost become second nature to educators and learners. From e-dictionary to social network inspired language learning applications, it is safe to assume that mobile technology is impacting the way traditional language teaching is conducted in classrooms. Studies have reported various advantages of using mobile applications to support language teaching and learning, particularly in the context of English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL). These advantages can be grouped broadly into three scopes, that is, increasing authentic language learning opportunities (Chaya & Inpin, 2020; Godwin-Jones, 2011; Petersen & Markiewicz, 2008; Shadiev et al., 2020), supporting task-based language learning activities (Kukulska-Hulme & Viberg, 2018; Ma, 2017; Sweeney & Moore, 2012; Xue, 2020), and monitoring progress through formative assessments (Cabrera-Solano et al., 2020; Hwang & Chang, 2011).

During the Movement Control Order or more commonly known as the lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the closure of learning institutions has resulted in an unprecedented use of online and mobile solutions to

MOOCs for Second and Foreign Language Learners: Unpacking Critical Success Factors from the Pedagogical Perspective

Chuah Kee Man, Xijing Wang & Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan

Introduction

The rise of massive open online courses (MOOCs) in the last decade has indeed offered a renewed interest in distance education. The flexibility of MOOC delivery has opened up opportunities for learners to learn any subject without being restricted to geographical or economic factors (Pappano, 2012; Baggaley, 2013). As compared to the traditional implementation of distance education, MOOCs capitalise on the advancement of internet and web technologies by creating a learning environment that is more user-friendly and offers greater access to global communication. Learners from various countries are able to enrol in the same course offered through a specific platform and engage in a learning experience that mimics a global classroom (Ruipérez-Valiente et al., 2020; Yeager et al., 2013). Moreover, the sudden closure of campuses due to the COVID-19 pandemic has provided a renewed drive for MOOCs to serve as a lifeline for learners around the world. As emphasised by Reyes-Lillo and Hernandez-Garrido (2020), the pandemic has necessitated universities to continue their education via the online mode and MOOCs serve as a viable alternative due to their existing features that are meant for self-directed learning with minimal instructors' intervention. Closer to home, Safri et al. (2020) also highlighted the mitigation

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The Potentials of Gamification in Online Learning: Insights from ESL Undergraduates

Nur Yasmin Khairani Zakaria, Amelia Abdullah &
Siti Nazleen Abdul Rabu

Introduction

The recent outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic at the end of 2019 has predominantly shifted a new paradigm to the education landscape in Malaysia. The shift of paradigm in education sector has brought in multiple challenges for both educators and learners. Teaching and learning process during pandemic appeared to be highly correlated with VUCA dimension – volatile (turbulent), uncertain (uncertain), complex (complex), and ambiguity (unclear) (Sia & Adamu, 2020). Despite of a solid year of learning in a new norm, challenges, and struggles in for both educators and learners are still prominent. At university level, the focus of attention lies on possible solutions and suggestions to be taken into consideration to make sure that learners are able to survive in this challenging times. Complexities in online learning context becomes the main concern for both educators and learners especially during a Movement Control Order due to the restriction in physical contact and meetings. Challenges in conducting effective learning experience become twice as hard for the learning designers due to uncertainties lies in a pandemic (Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020; Wijaya et al., 2020). Despite of the on-going challenges, execution of learning activities should be carried out to ensure the continuation of nation's aspiration to produce human capitals.

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Breaking into New Norms: Synchronous Collaborative Language Teaching and Learning via Breakout Sessions in Video Conferencing Tools

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Introduction

The severity of the COVID-19 crisis has forced educators to make an unprecedented shift towards online teaching and learning (OTL). Events caused by the pandemic have necessitated the full – and somewhat unready – adoption of online instruction by language teachers and learners in efforts to not only maintain continuity in learning, but to also maintain some semblance of normalcy in a very uncertain time.

Dhawan (2020) deemed the pandemic a tragedy that has shaken up the education sector, and is likely to force many educational institutions to remain closed. This does not bode well for all academic subjects in general, but especially so for skill-based ones like language courses. This is because language learners require a great extent of interaction and communicative opportunities in order to develop their proficiency in the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Since lockdowns were imposed, educators have had to cope with drastic changes as well as the burden of finding alternative methods that can perpetuate the teaching-learning process (Maican & Cocorada, 2021),

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The Effectiveness of Using Telegram Messenger to Promote Motivation amongst ESL Students in Online Classroom

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Introduction

The COVID-19 spread has impacted the whole academic community. Malaysia is not excluded since it has been declared a global pandemic by World Health Organization (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020). The outbreak has resulted in approximately 549,514 COVID-19 cases in Malaysia, with 2,552 deaths, and the number continues to rise (COVID-19 MALAYSIA, 2021). Significant intervention is required in terms of policies around classes, and this outburst represents a considerable challenge for the educational organisation (Ali & Kaur, 2020). The unprecedented crisis has cost all academic institutions to move their classes online, and tertiary institutions are not excluded. This condition necessitates that everyone acts to prevent the spread of COVID-19. As a result, most Malaysian tertiary institutions have moved to online teaching and learning (OTL) and learning management systems adhering to the government's instructions. However, Stark (2019) found that OTL has caused the students to have lower levels of motivation than face-to-face learning. According to Adnan and Anwar (2020), the importance of motivation for OTL is one of the less recognised aspects of online education. Besides, due to their face-to-face interaction with the lecturer and classmates, students in traditional classes are more likely to participate in academic activities actively. Their

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Digital Storytelling as an Innovative Assessment: From the Undergraduates' Point of View in the English Language Classroom

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Selvakumar Selvarajan

Introduction

Digital storytelling (DST) is one of the educational tools that promote creative and critical thinking in the classroom. Several studies on DST have proved that many students and educators worldwide have embraced this method to support the educational process. DST means using computer software to tell a story (Robin, 2016; Simsek, 2020) and integrates traditional and emerging literacies, and facilitates the understanding of content areas (Robin, 2009; Ohler, 2013).

Apart from being one of the classroom teaching methods, DST also plays an important role in students' engagement, achievement, motivation, and critical thinking, leading to deep and meaningful learning. Hardy and Sumner (2014, as cited in Yocom et al., 2020) defined DST as "the art and craft of using media and software programs to communicate stories in innovative and powerful ways" (p. 164). On another note, Robin (2009, p. 19) defined DST as a "process of creating short stories that allow students and educators to enhance their information gathering and problem-solving skills and to facilitate the ability to work in a collaborative team". Although many studies have suggested that DST is popular among 21st century language skills learning, other

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Does Micro-Learning Make a Difference in Vocabulary Acquisition?

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Introduction

In recent years, the notion of micro-learning (ML) has been repeatedly accented as a successful learning approach in different learning phenomena including the language domain (Jahnke et al., 2019). ML is a technology-mediated learning approach whereby learners are directly exposed to short-term learning activities formally or informally. These activities are created based on well-planned microcontent by means of real-time micromedia environments to construct microknowledge whereby the 3Ms (microcontent, micromedia, and microknowledge) embody the uniqueness of ML (Hug et al., 2006a, 2006b; Lindner & Bruck, 2007). According to Lindner (2007), micromedia refers to digital atomised media including mobile networked devices that delivers reusable small and self-contained pieces of digital microcontent to facilitate the construction of single focus microknowledge. At this juncture, it is important to note that ML is chosen among other technology-mediated learning approaches because the conceptual characteristics and empirical observations of ML are found to correspond well with second language (L2) or foreign language (FL) vocabulary acquisition and this learning approach is also consistent with the contextual problems identified in the technical setting under study, for instance, the poor performance in Spanish language learning.

Online Language Teaching and Learning: Current Trajectory and Future Potentials

Chuah Kee Man & Khong Hou Keat

Online Teaching and Learning, and Innovative Pedagogies

Our initial impetus for this book was to gather innovative pedagogies in relation to online language teaching and learning across different conditions, domains, and levels of instruction in times of COVID-19. The 16 chapters have provided insights into the efforts from diverse cultural contexts and offered practical innovations that helped alleviate problems and challenges in response to the emergency global crisis. Among other innovative pedagogies, gamification, breakout sessions, digital storytelling, and micro-learning stood out in this book.

The adoption of gamification (Chapter 12) is widely perceived to enhance motivation, engagement, and user experience not only in the language domain (e.g., de La Cruz et al., 2022; Tan et al., 2018), but also across other educational contexts (Bai et al., 2020; Zainuddin et al., 2020). It is believed that a principled way to gamify online teaching and learning (OTL), for instance, by adopting an established framework (Chapter 10), not only could elicit maximum interest and excitement from students towards language learning, but also may reduce possible anxiety (Chapter 3) and demotivation (Chapter 6) that continue to plague the online language classrooms. To improve interaction and