

Primary Language Teacher Development in the Aftermath of Emergency Remote Teaching

Péter Medgyes

School of English and American Studies, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

Éva Trentinné Benkő

Faculty of Primary and Preschool Education, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

Valéria Árva*

Faculty of Primary and Preschool Education, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

Abstract—During the months of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers were obliged to switch to emergency remote teaching all over the world. While this distressing experience and its after-effects have been extensively researched in the past five years, relatively scant attention has been paid to foreign language teachers, especially those working in the primary grades of public education. This study is intended to occupy this niche with data supplied by a large sample of primary language teachers in Hungary. The research questions are aimed at identifying (a) the obstacles with which the respondents were confronted, and (b) the potentially beneficial carry-over effects of their newly acquired competences upon their return to the ‘real’ classroom. On the basis of questionnaire and metaphor data analyses, it turns out that the lockdown period negatively affected the respondents’ mental and emotional well-being. On a positive note, however, emergency remote teaching enhanced their professional development in general, and their familiarity with the technological advances available to foreign language education in particular.

Index Terms—primary education, emergency remote teaching, teacher well-being, continuing professional development, metaphors

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Emergency Remote Teaching

In the recent history of education, and language teaching in particular, one of the most fundamental changes was induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Beforehand, the use of digital tools in education was essentially considered as an add-on, mostly restricted to word processing, the presentation of software programmes and playing games (Moorhouse & Yan, 2023). Although new pedagogical models that required the use of digital innovations, such as game-based learning, blended learning or flipped classrooms, had been steadily gaining ground, their application was far from being widespread.

However, emergency remote teaching (ERT) created a situation in which replanning the curriculum and introducing digital technologies were urgently required (Jimoyiannis & Koukis, 2023). While ERT affected around 1.2 billion students worldwide (UNESCO, 2022), a significant segment of them had limited or no access to the internet and digital devices. The situation was made all the more dramatic since teachers in many parts of the world lacked the digital competences suddenly needed in their work, but even the more knowledgeable were caught off-guard (Hodges et al., 2020). It may be argued with a fair degree of confidence that ERT offered a gateway to the spread of cutting-edge digital technology in education.

B. Teacher Well-Being

In their struggle to integrate new technology into their daily practice, teachers were shouldering not only professional, but also emotional and physical burdens never experienced before. They became susceptible to an increased level of job-related stress (MacIntyre et al., 2020), which often led to emotional exhaustion, burnout and a palpable sense of underachievement (Mercer, 2021). In many schools, teachers’ plight was further aggravated by an unsupportive work environment and a lack of parental cooperation (Sulis et al., 2023). In short, their sense of well-being was severely damaged during this critical period.

C. Continuing Professional Development

Against all odds, many teachers have been reported to exhibit continuing professional development during ERT (Chen, 2023a). The ability to reflect upon their emotional ups and downs helped them overcome the hurdles facing them in their daily work (Trust & Whalen, 2021). The teachers in Gregersen and MacIntyre’s (2024) study, for example, remark that

* Corresponding Author.

their positive attitude towards challenges mitigated the depressing feeling of performing below par. Furthermore, quite a few teachers were found to demonstrate their agency by using the digital affordances surfacing in the drastically new educational environment (Lee & Jeon, 2024). Some of them even suggested that this situation had offered them a golden opportunity for self-reflective professional learning through exploratory classroom practice (Hollweck & Doucet, 2020). ERT accelerated the pace of adaptation that teachers needed to go through caused by the educational reforms and the rapid development of digital technologies (de Costa & Norton, 2017; Jiang & Zhang, 2021).

In the face of the rapid progress of technology, formalised training opportunities for teachers are still few and far between (Moser et al., 2021; Wong et al., 2022). While Gkonou and Miller (2021) stress that decision makers should provide practice-oriented training with a focus on curriculum development, Keese et al. (2022) draw attention to the importance of a self-paced learning format of distance education.

By the time educators returned to face-to-face teaching, the scenario had been significantly transformed. Digital tools had become part and parcel of the daily routine as teachers had gained confidence in using them. Recent studies offer a fairly positive picture of the state of affairs, including teachers' learning curve (Chen, 2023b; Jiang & Zhang, 2021), professional development (Scully et al., 2021), attitude changes (Jimoyiannis & Koukis, 2023) and coping strategies (Gkonou & Miller, 2021; MacIntyre et al., 2020). One of the questions that calls for further investigation is the way in which teachers use technology once they are back in the 'real' classroom (Keese et al., 2022; Lee & Jeon, 2024). Exploring teachers' post-pandemic use of digital technology, Moorhouse (2023) points out that learning management systems, digital notice boards, interactive digital worksheets/quizzes and interactive presentation software have become embedded in teachers' regular classroom practice.

As shown above, the effects COVID-19 exerted on education have been the subject of intensive research activities since the outbreak of the pandemic. In the literature, while secondary education has taken the lion's share of investigations, primary has played only second fiddle (Nikolopoulou, 2022).

D. Metaphor Analysis as a Tool to Understand Teacher Attitudes

As conceptual representations of deeper thought metaphors are considered ideal vehicles for understanding the world around us (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). They are shaped by the context of lived experience, culture and communication (Gibbs; as cited in Ellis & Ibrahim, 2021). In addition, metaphors are imaginative, have generative power and are able to express the inexpressible through a process of reflection (Craig; as cited in García et al., 2022). In Cameron and Low's (1999) view, metaphors are cognitive phenomena expressing the interaction between the mental and the linguistic. Kövecses (2017) highlights the way metaphors express the abstract domain of experience in concrete terms. Craig (2017) contrasts stock metaphors (trivial, unreflexive) with novel ones (expressive, with imaginative and generative power). Forcevill (as cited in Ellis & Ibrahim, 2021) argues that metaphors can go beyond verbal expression and include visuals or multimodality.

Metaphor analysis is often used as a research tool in educational literature too by virtue of helping to understand educational phenomena and render teacher beliefs explicit (García et al., 2022). Furthermore, it strives to unearth the deeper impacts of teachers' attempts to respond, both professionally and emotionally, to the challenges faced by them (Johnston, 1992). The scope of metaphor research in language education includes research on language teaching (Oxford et al., 1998), curriculum theories and teacher beliefs (de Guerrero & Villamil, 2002; Oxford, 2001), language learning beliefs (Kramsch, 2003), public speaking anxiety (Gao & Tay, 2023) and even the language education of pre-primary children (Ellis & Ibrahim, 2021). For the reasons mentioned above, metaphor analysis has been chosen to be an important research tool for the present study, too.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Aims

In view of the dearth of relevant research on the primary school sector, the present study intends to contribute to redressing this imbalance by placing primary education in focus. More specifically, it surveys how foreign language teachers in Hungarian primary schools responded to the challenges imposed upon them by the pandemic and how their teaching attitudes and practices changed in the wake of the experiences they had acquired during the ERT period. This study is based on the hypothesis that on the whole teachers were successful in harnessing these new experiences upon their return to 'normalcy'. Forming part of a comprehensive survey, the current study presents only a small segment of the results elicited from a questionnaire and a set of follow-up interviews.

B. Research Questions

The present study seeks to answer the following questions:

What obstacles did the respondents have to overcome when they were suddenly forced to switch from face-to-face to emergency remote teaching?

What competences and skills did they carry over upon their return to face-to-face teaching?

C. Research Design

Out of the 39 items in the questionnaire, a total of six questions have been selected for discussion in this study. After

the responses given to four questions have been presented and assessed, the data derived from the other two questions pertaining to metaphor analysis are examined. The data from these different survey sources should sufficiently ensure adequate and valid answers to the research questions posed above.

D. Research Context

(a). Research Team

The three authors of the present study are members of the childhood digital language teaching research group. The group has been entrusted to manage a project within the framework of the Research Programme for Public Education Development (<https://mta.hu/kozoktatas-fejlesztési-kutatási-program>), launched and financed by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences since 2021.

(b). Participants

In 2022, the questionnaire was forwarded to all Hungarian primary schools (N=2,487). Participation was voluntary and the potential respondents were assured that their identities would not be disclosed. Responding to the appeal, 706 teachers sent back the completed questionnaires, but the sample should not be regarded as representative of the entire population of foreign language teachers in Hungarian primary schools. Around two thirds of the respondents were teachers of English (64.2%), one third taught German (34.1%) while the remaining 12 respondents (1.7%) specialised in French, Russian, Slovak or Romanian. With the exception of 22 respondents (2.8%), the overwhelming majority (97.2) were qualified language teachers. Teachers with a minimum of ten years of experience constituted around 72% of the respondents, leaving merely 28% for their less experienced colleagues.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Level of Preparedness

As shown in Figure 1, about two thirds of the respondents felt completely or rather unprepared for the challenges as they were thrown in at the deep end in March 2020. When asked to specify the problems they had had to grapple with, they complained about the shortage of digital devices, inadequate coverage and unstable access to the internet in their school. Families were often not much better off as indicated by the following quotation: ‘I had to realise that most of my students did not own the equipment needed for online learning.’ However, even where these gadgets and Wi-Fi connection were readily available, teachers had to undergo an intensive learning process to survive under the new teaching circumstances and then try to integrate the freshly acquired competences into their time-honoured methodological knowhow. A terse response by one of the respondents is indicative of the experience that many of them shared: ‘I had to start shooting indiscriminately and thus try and keep afloat’.

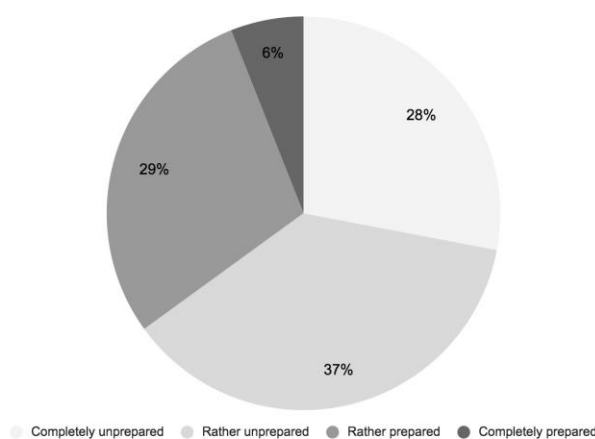


Figure 1. How Prepared for Teaching Online Were You at the Time of the School Lockdown?

B. Level of Anxiety

Not surprisingly, the data displayed in Figure 2 fit in nicely with those of Figure 1. Similarly, two thirds complained about a very high or high level of anxiety when compelled to suddenly leap from face-to-face teaching to ERT. After all, the more an individual constantly performs under par, the higher their level of anxiety is bound to rise. The following quotation was repeated almost word-for-word by several respondents: ‘I was pretty much stressed because I had no idea how to achieve my educational goals.’ Incidentally, a lack of digital skills combined with a nagging feeling of anguish is not unique to the Hungarian population; negative results during the ERT period have been reported in several other countries too, such as Austria (Kämpf–Winetzhammer, 2020), Croatia (Ivančan, 2022), Germany (Huber et al., 2020; Janßen et al., 2022), India (Hassan et al., 2020) and Italy (Ferri et al., 2020).

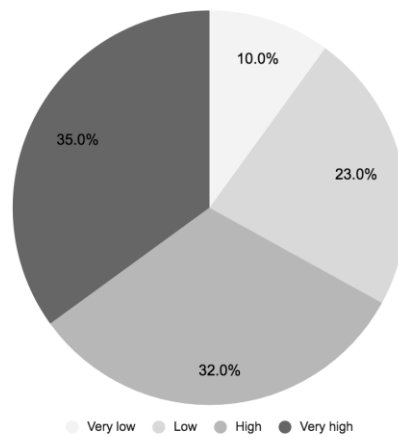


Figure 2. How High Was Your Level of Anxiety Because of the Sudden Switch to Online Education?

C. Level of Success

The answers given to this question reveal (Figure 3) that nearly two thirds of the respondents rated their work during the lockdown period as very successful or successful. One of them said that the best way to measure the outcome of her work is through the reaction of her learners: 'The children were looking forward to the German lessons and worked hard.' Another respondent admitted that 'fear from the unknown caused anxiety, but then it turned out that I was quite well-prepared.' To quote another one: 'We managed to pull out of the magic box competences that we had hardly ever used before.' In contrast, about one third of the respondents admitted that their work during the ERT period had been unsuccessful, and a small minority even viewed the online experience as an utter failure. The frustrated often attributed the fiasco to their inability to properly deliver the teaching material whilst noticing a slowdown in the children's learning progress.

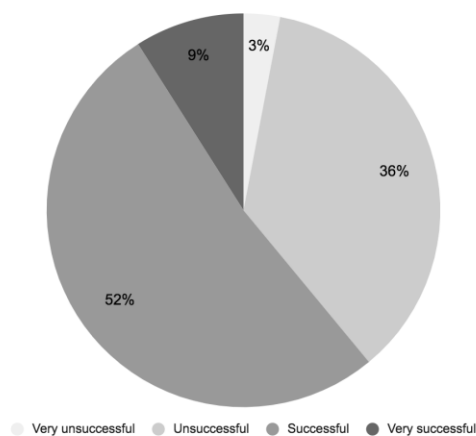


Figure 3. How Successful do You Judge Your Work During ERT?

D. Level of Professional Development

It was hypothesized that in spite of the hardships encountered, primary language teachers would regard the situation as an opportunity to revamp their methodological expertise and learn new tricks of trade. Indeed, this assumption was borne out by the data demonstrated in Figure 4: 73% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed. When asked to specify the positive professional gains produced by ERT, they claimed that parallel with the growth of their self-confidence they became less and less inhibited in trying their hand at state-of-the-art techniques. In addition to attaining digital competences, during the lockdown period they tended to resort to more authentic materials, conceive more creative tasks and give more challenging homework assignments than during the pre-Covid era. Many of them remarked that they kept using digital appliances and applications as they were back in the 'real' classroom, too. Some respondents pointed out that they had learnt how to adapt to children's dissimilar pace of progress while putting less emphasis on testing and pursuing a more learner-friendly approach. The fact that they were left on their own strengthened their belief in the need to cooperate with colleagues and learn from each other. The occasional in-service courses and webinars offered by professional organisations, publishing houses and language examination syndicates were also acknowledged.

It goes without saying that ERT imposed a heavy burden on teachers in general, but the plight of those who had to look after children with special needs or less supportive and capable families was particularly dire; this applied with particular force to teachers who were dealing with children in lower grades. In the final account, however, the overwhelming majority of the respondents reported finding large amounts of professional fulfilment once they had got accustomed to the exceptional circumstances.

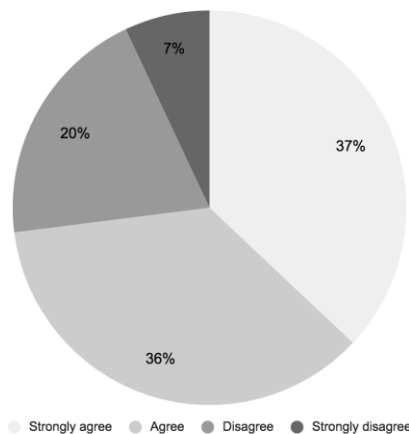


Figure 4. Did You Regard ERT as an Opportunity for Professional Development?

E. Metaphor Analysis

In the last two questions of the survey, the respondents were requested to supply metaphors to describe their experiences in the two periods under investigation. For the sake of clarification, they were also invited to add comments on their choice of metaphors. The ulterior motive for triggering metaphor use was to uncover their views that lay beneath their conscious zone.

The first item elicited metaphors to characterise the respondents’ behaviour during the first wave of school closures in 2020 whereas the second one was aimed at inquiring about their impressions once they returned to ‘normalcy’ in 2022. The two triggers were formulated like this:

‘At the beginning, online teaching was like a ..., because’

‘By now, online teaching is like a ..., because’

For the two items respectively 499 and 478 metaphors were provided.

A combination of two research methods was applied to categorise the metaphors: ‘Metaphor checking’ (Armstrong et al., 2011) and ‘Generalizing from the collected metaphors’ (Cameron & Low, 1999). Metaphor checking was realised by dint of the respondents’ explanations that generated emerging categories. This was followed by sorting the metaphors into ten labelled categories, which were further split into two subcategories: one that carried negative whilst the other positive connotations. In view of the large number of metaphors supplied, categorisation proved to be a useful method to enhance the process of analysis. Table 1 features the metaphor categories and the frequency of occurrences during ERT versus after ERT. In assessing the results, only the most frequently mentioned metaphors are scrutinised below.

TABLE I
METAPHOR CATEGORIES

| Metaphor categories | During ERT | Frequency | After ERT | Frequency |
|------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| A. Autonomy | | | | |
| Pressure, punishment, survival | 45 | 50 | 20 | 28 |
| Freedom, break, holiday | 5 | | 8 | |
| B. Task or experience | | | | |
| Work-related daunting task | 32 | 59 | 29 | 63 |
| Positive experience: adventure, fun, joy | 27 | | 34 | |
| C. Novelty, professional development | | | | |
| Negative attitude, rejection | 4 | 20 | 6 | 102 |
| Acceptance, alternative, new opportunity | 16 | | 96 | |
| D. Upward and downward movement | | | | |
| Depth, downward movement | 40 | 46 | 2 | 15 |
| Surface, height, upward movement | 6 | | 13 | |
| E. System of colours | | | | |
| Dark, black, misty | 55 | 57 | 2 | 15 |
| Light, colourful and transparent | 2 | | 13 | |
| F. Unknown acquaintance | | | | |
| Unknown, distant, frightful | 57 | 57 | 5 | 34 |
| Familiar, close, safe | 0 | | 29 | |
| G. System, organisation | | | | |
| Chaos | 55 | 55 | 5 | 34 |
| Order | 0 | | 29 | |
| H. Feasibility: | | | | |
| Mission impossible, unsolvable | 31 | 31 | 8 | 125 |
| Routine, natural | 0 | | 117 | |
| I. Dream, story | | | | |
| Nightmare, monster-like | 98 | 102 | 27 | 36 |
| Dream, memory | 4 | | 9 | |
| J. Emotional impression | | | | |
| Negative | 22 | 22 | 6 | 26 |
| Positive | 0 | | 20 | |
| Total number of metaphors | 499 | 499 | 478 | 478 |
| Positive/negative distribution | | | | |
| Number of negatives | 439 | | 110 | |
| Number of positives | 60 | | 368 | |
| Negatives in percentages | 88 | | 23 | |
| Positives in percentages | 12 | | 77 | |

(Adapted From Arva et al., 2024)

In characterising the respondents' well-being during the ERT phase, Category I garnered the highest number of metaphors with a considerable preponderance of negative images. The frequent mention of 'nightmare' depicted the respondents' professional and emotional anguish caused by unfamiliarity with the methodology of online teaching, lack of digital appliances, inadequate support secured by the educational authorities, time pressure and their inability to deliver guidance to parents about how to cope with a situation wherein the teachers themselves would have needed guidance. On the other hand, negligible is the number of those who enjoyed having to work in an ERT mode in 2020; they appreciated that they did not 'need to travel to school and then back home' and the luxury of an effective way to discipline unruly kids: 'When someone misbehaved, I simply turned off their microphone and we carried on with the lesson'.

The runner-up in the frequency rank order is Category B that contains a roughly equal number of negative and positive metaphors. Those who felt that ERT was sheer suffering likened the experience to 'a hard nut to crack', 'a terrifying exam', 'an overloaded fast train' or 'a pain in the neck'. Those, on the other hand, who enjoyed teaching online came up with metaphors such as 'an adventure', 'a rollercoaster', 'smorgasbord', 'cakes on a bakery shelf', 'a beehive'. Perhaps the most visual metaphor refers to ERT as 'a cold shower which freshened me up from professional boredom'.

Occupying the third place in the during-ERT column, Category E comprises only negative metaphors with two exceptions. Needless to say, 'black' was the most frequently mentioned colour although 'misty purple' also expressed a gloomy state of mind. The comments to explain metaphor use are full of vivid descriptions of the respondents' hopeless attempts to deal with their difficulties during ERT. To quote a few instances:

'It was like wandering in a thick forest or jungle.'

'I felt like being locked in a hole with no exit in sight.'

'I walked down a dark corridor unable to find the light switch.'

'It was dark because I forgot to ask the children to turn on the light on their phones.'

This last quotation is suggestive of the missed opportunity to collaborate with the learners. On the other hand, the following remark hints at the potential of learning under pressure: 'This experience was like a discovery trip through the night.' There is only one reference to a light colour: 'In my wandering I saw a white board which was gradually filled up with content as a result of learning and routine'.

Speaking of the remaining seven categories, the negative-positive balance definitely tilts towards the negative. A short list of metaphors seems to verify this statement: 'leap into the unknown', 'dance with your legs tied', 'lack of order', 'jars knocked over', 'mixed salad', 'confusion of Babel', 'loss of autonomy', 'slavery'. A respondent likened the online classroom to 'an injured bird unable to fly', as opposed to the 'real' one where both teachers and learners could soar freely. Another respondent mentioned C-3PO and R2D2 from Star Wars as though the two characters were moulded together. Major concerns were voiced in the comments referring to 'lack of direction', 'no constructive feedback on our work', 'uncertain future', 'exhaustion', 'inadequate amount of non-verbal communication' and 'severe criticism from parents'.

Turning now to the after-ERT results, Category H takes the lead with a vast majority for positively charged metaphors. Even though online teaching was said to be a 'feasible alternative', most respondents found it easy to take up the daily routine once back in the 'real' classroom. Their relief was well reflected by the metaphors they created: 'a multiplication table', 'cycling', 'cooking', 'a comfortable dress', 'a spacious car', 'a cosy armchair', 'a well-oiled machine', 'a locomotive engine' and, perhaps most expressively, 'a cup of morning coffee'.

A similar dominance of positive metaphors is witnessed in silver medalist Category C. Except for one teacher, who said that online teaching looked like 'a deserted park better to be avoided', most respondents agreed that ERT had helped them acquire transferable skills, a view well represented by the metaphors they employed: 'a path waiting to be explored', 'a rucksack', 'a bottomless bag', 'a gold mine', 'a well-equipped kitchen', 'a huge building' and 'a secret lake'.

In third-placed Category B, the positive and negative metaphors are evenly distributed with the positive images slightly ahead, such as 'cakes', 'Paradise', 'games', 'rainbow', 'pyjama party', 'Netflix series' and 'marshmallow'. The adjectives 'sweet', 'colourful' and 'enjoyable' recall pleasant memories and reflect regained self-confidence. While quite a few respondents still considered online teaching 'a necessary evil', others preferred calling it a difficulty that could be transformed into an asset, such as the hardship of how to hold one's own in 'a sailing boat', 'an adventure park' or 'the gym' – once these skills have been learnt, they may offer sources of genuine pleasure.

To sum up the results shown in Table 1, during ERT negative connotations are in vast majority (88% versus 12%), whereas in the after-ERT phase a complete about-face in the respondents' metaphor use can be recorded (25% versus 75%). It cannot be stressed strongly enough that after the shock suffered in 2020 most of the respondents were gradually coming into their own by 2022, successfully integrating the newly acquired digital competences into their methodological knowhow.

IV. CONCLUSION

In order to be able to answer the two research questions, it is necessary to establish the extent to which the results of the four plus two survey questions (Questions 1–4 and Questions 5–6) interrelate and thus reinforce or weaken the validity of the survey results.

As pointed out in the previous sections, the ERT situation caught most of the respondents off guard. While online teaching before COVID-19 may well have been practised in the private and adult sectors, it was not at all common in the system of Hungarian public education. Since prior to the epidemic school teachers were not in a pressing need to harness digital elements in their classroom practice, their competence in this area was underdeveloped or even non-existent. Primary school teachers felt particularly vulnerable and because the switch to ERT was unexpected and rapid, many of them found themselves in a state of shock. As opportunities for professional training and support were slow in coming, the respondents reported suffering from a heightened sense of anxiety for months. The comments posted for the first four survey questions to describe the professional and emotional obstacles neatly overlap with the metaphors the respondents came up with during the ERT period.

On the credit side, both data sources indicate that the majority rose to the challenge and succeeded in adapting to the emergency situation, albeit with a bit of delay. Those who had a positive mindset not only recognised the opportunities that the digital world offered, but they were also willing to apply the newly acquired knowledge and skills with growing confidence. It is no exaggeration to assert that ERT effectively fostered the process of professional development.

In analysing the respondents' behaviour and well-being in 2022, a similar congruence between the two sets of questions may be observed. The survey data indicate that in a matter of two years attitudes towards the digital world underwent some kind of metamorphosis – a long overdue development. Thanks to the ERT experience, the respondents became better informed about the difference between going fully online and fitting certain digital elements into their daily routine. Perhaps even more importantly, alongside their teachers, the students also grew accustomed to the presence of digital tools in the classroom – and beyond. Even though a few respondents gave voice to their reservations about the suitability of digital tools in primary education and alerted to the dangers that their overuse might present, ERT pushed everyone to leave their comfort zone and revise their stock of outdated techniques. In sum, the aggregate data produced by the comparative analysis appears to be sufficient to give reliable and valid answers to the two research questions.

However, there are two issues that this study decided not to address. The first one is whether primary schools in Hungary – or anywhere else, for that matter – have become better equipped with all the paraphernalia demanded in the post-Covid age. The other concern has to do with teacher preparation. Have teacher training institutions at both pre-service and in-service levels built into their curriculum what the rapid advancement of technology requires from both teachers and learners? These are questions waiting to be answered by future research.

To conclude, the findings of the present study essentially coincide with those of the research conducted in several other countries. However, an area in which this survey may be considered unique is that it targeted foreign language teachers in primary schools, a segment of the educational hierarchy in which ERT and its after-effects had hardly ever been investigated before the pandemic. It goes without saying that COVID-19 had catastrophic consequences for millions of people all over the world – it is small comfort that, paradoxically, it helped teachers to catch up with the rapid progress of technology and thereby to upgrade and enrich their professional expertise.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported by the Research Programme for Public Education Development of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest. <https://mta.hu/kozoktatas-fejlesztési-kutatási-program>

REFERENCES

- [1] Armstrong, S. L., Davis, H. S., & Paulson. (2011). The subjectivity problem: Improving triangulation approaches in metaphor analysis studies. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 10(2), 151–163. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691101000204>
- [2] Árva, V., Medgyes, P., & Trentinné Benkő, É. (2024). A silver lining: Metaphors suggesting professional development through emergency online teaching in primary education. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, 40, 80–93. <https://doi.org/10.32038/ltrq.2024.40.05>
- [3] Cameron, L. (1999). Operationalising “metaphor” for applied linguistics research. In L. Cameron & G. Low (Eds.), *Researching and Applying Metaphor* (pp. 3-28). Cambridge University Press.
- [4] Chen, M. (2023a). Leveraging affordances in an ecological stance: Reflective language teaching for professional development during COVID-19. *Heliyon*, 9(5), e15981. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e15981>
- [5] Chen, M. (2023b). Teaching in emergency remote classrooms: Reflections for professional learning. *Educational Research*, 65(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131881.2023.2167729>
- [6] Craig, C. J. (2017). Metaphors of knowing, doing and being: Capturing experience in teaching and teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 69, 300–311. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.09.011>
- [7] de Costa, P. I., & Norton, B. (2017). Introduction: Identity, transdisciplinarity, and the good language teacher. *Modern Language Journal*, 101(S1), 3–14. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12368>
- [8] de Guerrero, M. C. M., & Villamil, O. S. (2002). Metaphorical conceptualizations of ESL teaching and learning. *Language Teaching Research*, 6(2), 95–120. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1362168802lr101oa>
- [9] Ellis, G., & Ibrahim, N. (2021). Using metaphor elicitation with pre-primary children learning English. *ELT Journal*, 75(3), 256–266. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccab014>
- [10] Ferri, F., Grifoni, P., & Guzzo, T. (2020). Online learning and emergency remote teaching: Opportunities and challenges in emergency situations. *Societies*, 10(4), 86. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc10040086>
- [11] Forceville, C. (2016). ‘Pictorial and multimodal metaphor.’ In N. M. Klug & and H. Stöckl (Eds.), *Handbuch Sprache im multimodalen Kontext* [The language in multimodal contexts handbook] (pp. 241–260). Mouton de Gruyter.
- [12] Gao, F., & Tay, D. (2023). Metaphor use in describing English public speaking anxiety by Chinese university EFL learners. *System*, 118(103091). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2023.103091>
- [13] García, M. J. M., Mendez, A. L., & Kirsch, W. (2022). Novel metaphors for a novel school: Narratives, voices and experiences from pre-service teachers engaged in service-learning in Spain. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 119(103840). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103840>
- [14] Gibbs, R. (2008). Metaphor and thought. The state of the art. In R. Gibbs (Ed.), *The Cambridge handbook of metaphor and thought* (pp. 17–38). Cambridge University Press.
- [15] Gkonou, C., & Miller, E. R. (2021). An exploration of language teacher reflection, emotion labor, and emotional capital. *TESOL Quarterly*, 55(1), 134–155. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.580>
- [16] Gregersen, T., & MacIntyre, P. (2024). Language teacher wellbeing: An individual–institutional pact. *ELT Journal*, 78(2), 179–188. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccad053>
- [17] Hassan, M. M., Mirza, T., & Hussain, M. W. (2020). A critical review by teachers on the online teaching-learning during the COVID-19. *International Journal of Education and Management Engineering (IJEME)*, 10(5), 17–27. <https://doi.org/10.5815/ijeme.2020.05.03>
- [18] Hodges, C., Moore, S., Lockee, B., Trust, T., & Bond, A. (2020). The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning. *Educause Review*, 27. Retrieved March 26, 2025, from <https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergency-remote-teaching-and-online-learning>
- [19] Hollweck, T., & Doucet, A. (2020). Pracademics in the pandemic: Pedagogies and professionalism. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, 5(3/4), 295–305. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPC-06-2020-0038>
- [20] Huber, S. G., Günter, P. S., Schneider, N., Helm, C., Schwander, M., Scheider, J., & Pruitt, J. (2020). *COVID – 19 – aktuelle Herausforderungen in Schule und Bildung. Erste Befunde des Schul-Barometers in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz* [COVID-19 and current challenges in school and education. Initial findings of the School Barometer in Germany, Austria and Switzerland]. Waxmann Verlag. Gmbh. <https://doi.org/10.31244/9783830942160>
- [21] Ivančan, M. (2022). *Fremdsprachenunterricht an kroatischen Grundschulen in Zeiten von COVID-19 - Perspektive der Deutsch- und Englischlehrkräfte* [Foreign language teaching in Croatian primary schools in times of COVID-19 – Perspective of German and English teachers]. [Master's thesis. University of Zagreb Faculty of Teacher Education]. Retrieved March 26, 2025, from urn:nbn:hr:147:994637
- [22] Janßen, N., Kuhl, P., & Süßenbach, J. (2022). Schulische Inklusion in Zeiten von Corona: Unterrichtsgestaltung, multiprofessionelle Kooperation und die Rolle digitaler Medien an Grundschulen [Inclusion at schools in times of Corona: Lesson

- planning, multiprofessional cooperation and the role of digital media in primary schools]. *Empirische Pädagogik*, 36(2), 241–257. Retrieved 26 March, 2025, from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362390641>
- [23] Jiang, A. L., & Zhang, L. J. (2021). Teacher learning as identity change: The case of EFL teachers in the context of curriculum reform. *TESOL Quarterly*, 55(1), 271–284. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.3017>
- [24] Jimoyiannis, A., & Koukis, N. (2023). Exploring teachers' readiness and beliefs about emergency remote teaching in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 32(2), 205–222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1475939X.2022.2163421>
- [25] Johnston, S. (1992). Images: A way of understanding the practical knowledge of student teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 8(2), 123–136.
- [26] Kämpf, P., & Winetzhammer, A. (2020). Distance Learning während der Corona-Krise an Österreichs Volksschulen [Distance learning during the Corona crisis at Austrian primary schools.] In: *Medienimpulse*, 58(2). Retrieved March 26, 2025, from <https://journals.univie.ac.at/index.php/mp/article/view/3795/3543>
- [27] Keese, J., McIntush, K., & Waxman, H. (2022). Teaching through crisis: The remote education experiences of PK–12 teachers during COVID-19 campus closures. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 31(3), 313–329. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1475939X.2022.2067589>
- [28] Kövecses, Z. (2017). Conceptual metaphor theory. In E. Semino & Zs. Demjén (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of metaphor and language* (pp. 31–45). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315672953>
- [29] Kramsch, C. (2003). Metaphor and the subjective construction of beliefs. In P. Kalaja & A. M. F. Barcelos (Eds.), *Beliefs about SLA* (vol. 2, pp. 109–128). Springer Netherlands. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-4751-0_5
- [30] Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. The University of Chicago Press.
- [31] Lee, S., & Jeon, J. (2024). Teacher agency and ICT affordances in classroom-based language assessment: The return to face-to-face classes after online teaching. *System*, 121(103218), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2023.103218>
- [32] MacIntyre, P. D., Gregersen, T., & Mercer, S. (2020). Language teachers' coping strategies during the Covid-19 conversion to online teaching: Correlations with stress, wellbeing and negative emotions. *System*, 94(102352). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102352>
- [33] Mercer, S. (2021). An agenda for well-being in ELT: An ecological perspective. *ELT Journal*, 75(1), 14–21. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccaa062>
- [34] Moorhouse, B. L. (2023). Teachers' digital technology use after a period of online teaching. *ELT Journal*, 77(4), 445–447. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccac050>
- [35] Moorhouse, B. L., & Yan, L. (2023). Use of digital tools by English language schoolteachers. *Education Sciences*, 13(3), 226. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13030226>
- [36] Moser, K. M., Wei, T., & Brenner, T. (2021). Remote teaching during COVID-19: Implications from a national survey of language educators. *System*, 97(102431). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102431>
- [37] Nikolopoulou, K. (2022). Online education in early primary years: Teachers' practices and experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Education Sciences*, 12(2), 76. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12020076>
- [38] Oxford, R., Tomlinson, S., Barcelos, A., Harrington, C., Lavine, R. Z., Saleh, A., & Longhini, A. (1998). Clashing metaphors about classroom teachers. *System*, 26(1), 3–50. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X\(97\)00071-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X(97)00071-7)
- [39] Oxford, R. L. (2001). The bleached bone of a story: Learners' construction of language teachers. In M. Breen (Ed.), *Learner constructions to language learning: New directions in research* (pp. 86–111). Longman.
- [40] Scully, D., Lehane, P., & Scully, C. (2021). 'It is no longer scary': Digital learning before and during the COVID-19 pandemic in Irish secondary schools. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 30(1), 159–181. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1475939X.2020.1854844>
- [41] Sulis, G., Mairitsch, A., Babic, S., Mercer, S., & Resnik, P. (2023). ELT teachers' agency for wellbeing. *ELT Journal*, 78(2), 198–206. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccad050>
- [42] Trust, T., & Whalen, J. (2021). Emergency remote teaching with technology during the COVID-19 pandemic: Using the whole teacher lens to examine educators' experiences and insights. *Educational Media International*, 58(2), 145–160. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523987.2021.1930479>
- [43] UNESCO. (2022). *Education: From disruption to recovery*. Retrieved March 26, 2025, from <https://www.unesco.org/en/covid-19/education-disruption-recovery> Accessed January 25, 2025.
- [44] Wong C-Y., Pompeo-Fargnoli, A., & Harriott, W. (2022). Focusing on ESOL teachers' well-being during COVID-19 and beyond. *ELT Journal*, 76(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccab069>



Péter Medgyes worked as a school teacher and teacher trainer for 15 years after graduating from Eötvös Loránd University Budapest (ELTE). He earned his doctorate in Applied Linguistics and Language Pedagogy and DSC in Education from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

He was the founding director of the Centre for English Teacher Training and the vice rector of ELTE. He has been a plenary speaker in over 50 countries, author of around 200 papers/book chapters and over 40 books, including *The Non-native Teacher* (Macmillan, 1994, winner of the Duke of Edinburgh Book Competition), *Changing Perspectives in Teacher Education* (with Angi Malderez, Heinemann, 1996), and *Laughing Matters* (Cambridge University Press, 2002). His main professional interests lie in teacher education, language policy and humour research. References to his works registered in Google Scholar amount to 7,600.

Professor Medgyes has participated in several fellowship programmes, done consultancy work for UNESCO and the Council of Europe, and been on the editorial board of several reputable journals. In 2016 he was elected president of IATEFL International. His accolades include the Gold Medal of the President of Hungary, Honorary Doctorate of the State University of New York, Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE), and Laureatus Academiae of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Apart from his academic

career, he was deputy state secretary for international relations in the Hungarian Ministry of Education and ambassador of Hungary. Professor Medgyes can be reached at pmedgy@gmail.com, and his ORCID iD is <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5536-8855>



Éva Trentinné Benkő earned a BA in Teaching English and Russian from Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Faculty of Primary Teacher Training, Budapest, Hungary, in 1991. She obtained an EFL Mentor Teacher Certificate from ELTE Faculty of Humanities in 1995. She completed an MEd in Primary Teacher Training with a focus on TESOL at the University of Leeds, UK, in 1999, and earned a doctoral degree in Education from ELTE Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology in 2013.

She worked as a primary EFL teacher and school-based mentor for almost a decade. In 1999, she became a full-time teacher trainer at the Budapest Primary Teacher Training College, the legal predecessor of the ELTE Faculty of Primary and Preschool Education, Budapest, where she has been continuously employed. She is currently an associate professor in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature. She is the co-author of EFL coursebooks *Magicland* (2002) and *Magic Friends* (2008) with Károlyné Ábrahám and Andrea Poros (Holnap Publishing), and *The World at Their Feet: Children's Early Competence in Two Languages Through Education* with Judit Kovács (József Eötvös Publishing, 2016). Her research interests include CLIL, teacher development, metaphors in education, and digital storytelling.

Dr. Trentinné Benkő is a member of the research group 'Digital Primary Language Teaching' sponsored by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. She can be reached at trentinne.benko.eva@tok.elte.hu, and her ORCID iD is <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0525-7361>



Valéria Árva earned her PhD in Applied Linguistics and Language Pedagogy at Eötvös Loránd University Budapest (ELTE) in 2007. She was a lecturer at the Centre for English Teacher Training of ELTE and a pre-kindergarten teacher at an American school in the Middle East. Currently she is associate professor and head of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at the Faculty of Primary and Preschool Education of ELTE. Her most recent publication, which was co-authored with Péter Medgyes and Éva Trentinné Benkő is 'A Silver Lining: Opportunities for professional development in emergency online language teaching in primary education' (*Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, 40, 80-93. <https://doi.org/10.32038/ltrq.2024.40.05>).

Her research interests include children's literature, bilingualism, digital storytelling and digitalization in primary foreign language teaching. She is a member of the research group 'Digital Primary Language Teaching' sponsored by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. She can be reached at arva.valeria@tok.elte.hu and her ORCID iD is <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6346-6241>