

International research into teacher professional development: implications in the current context

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A comparative study of English language teacher recruitment, in-service education and retention in Latin America and the Middle East

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Free to download

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/a-comparative-study-english-language-teacher-recruitment-service-education-retention-latin>

Research questions

- Comparison of processes of recruitment, education and retention of English language teachers in the public sector in Latin American (LA) and the Middle East (ME) by means of six national case studies

What kind of English language, in-service teacher education programmes are available? How are they characterised?

How much in-service training do teachers receive?

Data collection

Method 1:

Three identical **questionnaires** were posted on SurveyMonkey in English, Portuguese and Spanish, available between December 2014 and March 2015.

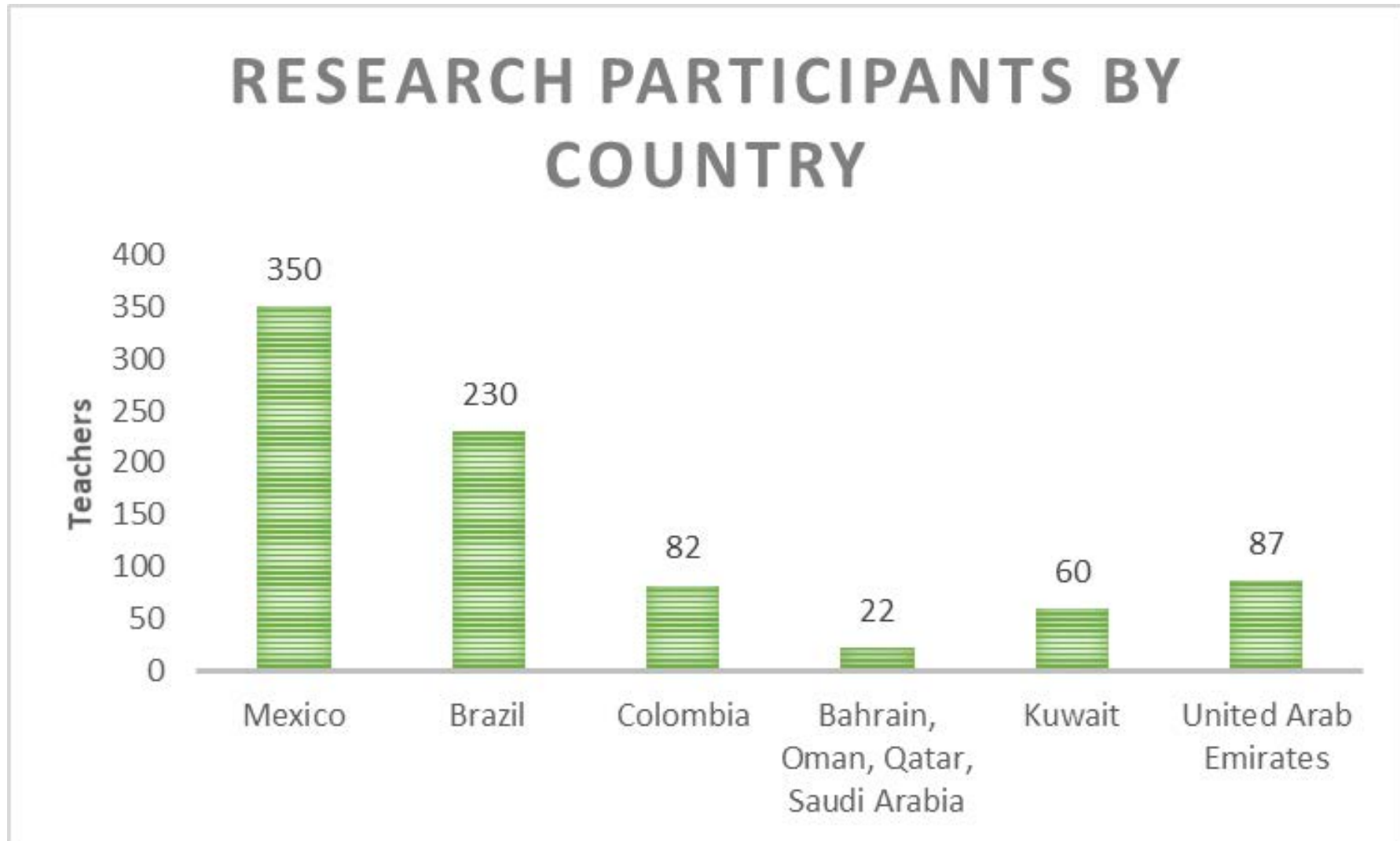
Data was collected by means of snowball and convenience sampling, which avoided demonstrating any specific allegiance.

Method 2:

Questionnaire respondents were asked to volunteer to take part in **research interviews**.

Approximately 10% of participants in each country were chosen to take part.

Respondents to the online questionnaire



How does the English language teaching landscape in the Middle East compare to Brazil, Colombia and Mexico?



Salaries per month in US dollars (September 2015)

Region	Country	Lowest \$	Highest \$
Latin America	Brazil	175	3750
	Colombia	400	1266
	Mexico	6 (2 hours per week, so not main income)	1235
Middle East	Kuwait	1650	8250
	United Arab Emirates	3815	9500
	GCC: Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia	240 (Oman)	7400 (Qatar)




Qualifications

Country	Primary ELT qualifications	Secondary ELT qualifications	Tertiary ELT qualifications
Brazil	Bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree	Specialisation MA/PhD
Colombia	Bachelor's degree in any subject matter	Bachelor's degree	MA/PhD
Mexico	Bachelor's degree (but not necessarily in ELT)	Bachelor's degree (but not necessarily in ELT)	BA in ELT or in EFL (a postgraduate degree is highly desired)
Kuwait	Bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree	MA/PhD (preferably not part-time)
United Arab Emirates	Bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree	MA/PhD (preferably not part-time)
The GCC	Bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree	MA/PhD (preferably not part-time)




Non-native English speakers (NNS) and native English speakers (NS)

Country	NNS English teachers (%)	NS English teachers (%)
Brazil	99	1
Colombia	100	-
Mexico	98	2
Kuwait	66	33
United Arab Emirates	38	62
The GCC	52	48

Professional development

Country	In-service education available	In-service education requested
	PD generally offered by the MoE, peers or visiting experts. Some training online.	Equal proportions of teachers would like language, pedagogic and/or literacy in-service training. A smaller percentage requested other courses.
	Courses provided by local universities or the MoE. National or international experts. Online courses provided by publishers or training agencies.	A high number of teachers (85%) reported being more interested in pedagogical training . Language skills needs for 71 %, literacy needs 56 % and other needs 49 %.
	Almost none in schools. In universities there are workshops, courses, sessions led by colleagues or visiting experts. Some online courses offered.	Additional in-service education in all four areas suggested (pedagogic, language, literacy and others), but development of communication skills in general was the most requested.

Professional development

Country	In-service education	In-service education requested
	<p>PD sessions generally led by visiting experts, peers or online. A few sessions are run by the MoE. 78 per cent of teachers find the sessions beneficial.</p>	<p>Nearly 75% of teachers would like more language training in terms of reading, writing and vocabulary. Pedagogic courses (methodology and teaching skills) are also wanted, with six per cent wanting literacy training. Behaviour and management training also feature.</p>
	<p>PD sessions usually led by staff from own school. Visiting experts. Online sessions. MoE-provided sessions.</p>	<p>Almost equal proportions of teachers would like more sessions in each of the four areas: language, pedagogic, literacy and other courses.</p>
	<p>PD sessions led by colleagues, MoE or visiting experts. Component of online learning. Teachers often belong to professional ELT organisations. 80 per cent of teachers find PD sessions beneficial.</p>	<p>Equal proportions of teachers would like more sessions in the four areas suggested: language, pedagogic, literacy and other courses</p>

To summarise the situation in 2015

Similarities:

- ✓ Similarities seem to outweigh the differences
- ✓ Qualifications
- ✓ Professional development provision and goals, although requests for more computer-based training are not evident

Differences:

- ✓ Salary
- ✓ Proportion of NS to NNs teachers



Colombia 2020

Dr Adriana Gonzalez Moncada

Professional Development (PD) in lockdown

- No significant changes in the **Bilingual Colombia** policy in terms of design and implementation

BUT

- Teachers have been working from home since mid-March, combining domestic chores and education. However, 80% of teachers report feeling exhausted as they have longer working hours
- Still very little PD for teachers
- Lower profile from foreign publishers /operators than last year, with more local involvement in PD through university initiatives
- More PD initiatives have been developed in private schools
- Still national and regional concern about teachers' language proficiency
- There is limited access to computers, internet and trained teachers in rural and poorer urban areas

Mexico 2020



Research into English Language Teaching during Covid-19 in Mexico: Teachers' Voices

- Main Question: *How are you teaching your EFL lessons during the Covid-19 time?*
 - How do you feel, in general, about this situation?
 - Do you feel you were prepared to teach under this situation/circumstances? Why?
 - Do you feel that the educational authorities had provided you with the teaching support (PDC/use of technology , etc.) to teach the way you have to do it during this Covid-19 time? How?
 - What challenges have you faced?

Data Collection

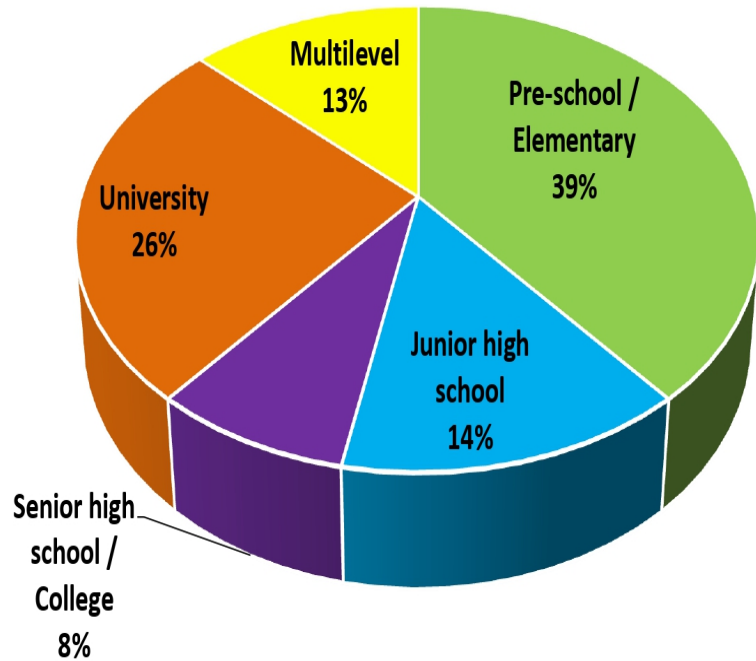
- Questionnaire (in Spanish)
 - Google Forms
 - 14 Qs
 - **Personal** Qs (name, age, where in Mexico, email, etc.);
 - **Work-related**: How long? What level of education they were teaching? How many PDC they had taken since 2014; How many groups? How many students? What tools they have been using?
 - **General feelings**: How they have felt with this situation? Thoughts about teaching/learning online; the use of technology; challenges?
- Interviews (in progress)

Participants: 193



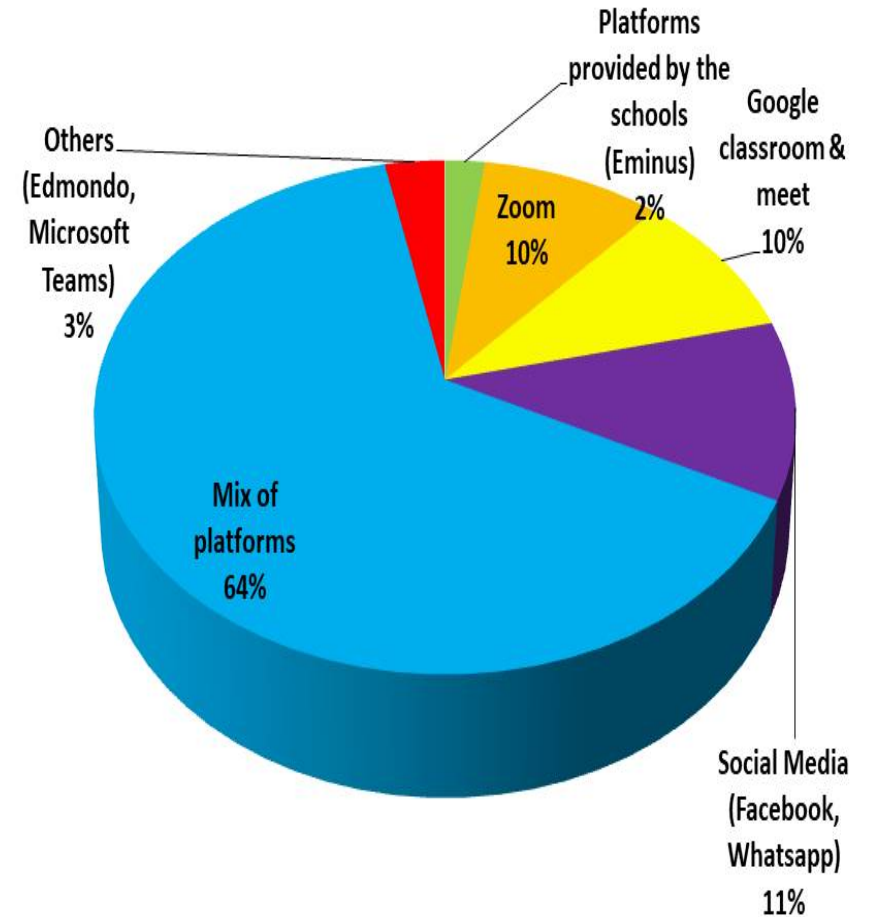
61+ % in Basic Education

Level of education where they teach EFL lessons



Tools Used to teach EFL in 2020

Tools used by most/fewest participants



Teachers' Voices

Challenges:

- ❖ Not all students have **access to internet**; group management is more difficult and there is **very little support** from parents (**Patricia***).
- ❖ Teaching English to 6 groups using a platform that I consider it 's not appropriate (Facebook). (**Marco**).
- ❖ The use of technology and the workload which is even more now. (**Beatriz**)
- ❖ The lack of decision of the university and lack of clarity as to the measures that would be taken during this contingency. The professors had to start giving virtual classes to help/for the sake of the students, and the university issued its official statement 3 weeks later. (**Paola**)
- ❖ Designing and sending activities that I don't know whether they are "working" or if they are what my students need at this moment (**Bere**).
- ❖ The simple fact of being the EFL teacher here. Most dads or moms have no knowledge of the language and they can't help their children if they have some doubts (**Lucía**).
- ❖ To motivate my students so that they do not drop out. Also, to serve as a teacher who provides certainty in times of vulnerability. Those have been complicated challenges. **In terms of technology and innovative pedagogical implementation I have felt prepared** (**Juan**).
- ❖ It seems to me that it is a very good tool for learning (technology). However, not all teachers have received training to make use of these tools, likewise, not all students, especially those in public education, have the socioeconomic level to get electronic devices to receive online education at home (**Pedro**).

Teachers' Voices

Lessons learnt:

- ✓ It's challenging, not impossible. Using digital media has been problematic because of the **lack of training** (Laura).
- ✓ A situation that I found surprising is that, in theory, **we are dealing with digital natives but most have no idea of many basic things** such as create emails, enter virtual classrooms, use passwords, attach files, etc. (Carlos).
- ✓ Now it's **much more practical** because I have **more resources** with which I can help my students practise and they receive it immediately. But face-to-face interaction is what I longed for the most (Gaby).

A close-up photograph of a parrot's head, showing its eye, beak, and colorful feathers in shades of green, yellow, and blue. The text "Brazil 2020" is overlaid in white on the parrot's face.

Brazil 2020

2019 Updated research on ELT in Brazil




Survey with 27 state secretariats

All of them reported offering face to face CPD, in or outside of schools. However, 17 states reported offering continuing distance education and 16 states have external partners responsible for CPD (Pibid, PDPI, Residência pedagógica)

- Average: 40 hours (between 20 and 80 hours)
- No systematic offer
- Training offered mostly by the technical and pedagogical teams of the secretariats.
- Participation depends on permission to be away from classes, not always granted
- **Teachers familiar with distance education as learners, but NOT as teachers.**

Remote teaching

- 45 million students, 2 million teachers
- Public schools shut down in 27 states
- States report average 30% of students without access to remote classes
- Lack of central coordination – but with different solutions to deal with remote learning
- Consed survey – 10 states offering online platforms and 3 use online platforms and open TV channels + Apps on mobile phones (e.g. Google classroom)
- No teacher preparation to support learners and families
- Different solutions for different levels of schooling (e.g. infant, upper secondary, tertiary)



The screenshot shows a news article from G1 on the website globo.com. The article is titled "Estados adotam plataformas online e aulas na TV aberta para levar conteúdo a estudantes em meio à pandemia de coronavírus" (States adopt online platforms and open TV classes to bring content to students in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic). The author is Elida Oliveira, G1, and the article was updated 3 weeks ago. The article text states: "Avanço nas ferramentas de educação deverá permanecer e complementar a aprendizagem após o fim do isolamento social." (Advancement in education tools should remain and complement learning after the end of social isolation). The article includes social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and Pinterest. At the bottom, there is a cookie consent banner with a "PROSSEGUIR" button and a loading indicator "Aguardando pixel.claro.com.br...".

ELT Challenges: teachers

- New roles for teachers: producers of digital content
- Not familiar with asynchronous remote teaching (not just transposing face-to-face lesson)
- Student disengagement on virtual environments (motivation)
- Reduced opportunities for oral practice, focus on grammar teaching
- Difficulty of assessing remotely
- Lack of connectivity
- Lack of support for online teaching

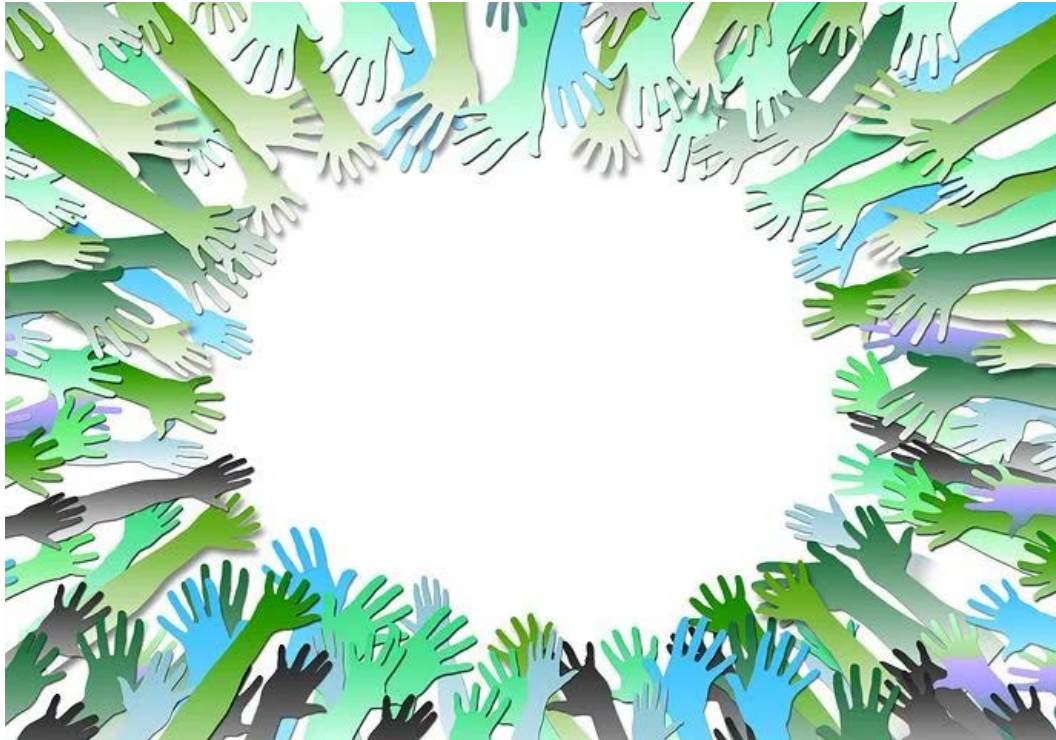


ELT Challenges: learners



- Lack of support at home (self-study)
- Lack of familiarity with digital tools for learning purposes
- Difficult access to technology and immediate feedback
- Short attention span (distractions)
- Disengagement on virtual environments
- Technical problems (connectivity)
- Impact on motivation

CPD in lockdown



- ❑ Mostly dependent on teachers' individual initiative and previous experience/knowledge/availability, leading to sense of isolation **but** interest in communities of practice
- ❑ Abundant sources of webinars, lives, talks and resources, **but** no guidance on what to choose
- ❑ Emotional burden not addressed (concerns over deepening inequality, fear of redundancy) **but** hope that solidarity will help minimize negative impact of covid19.



Kuwait 2020

Michael F McMurray

PD in lockdown

- PD is mandatory
- A lot of PD is textbook based i.e. provided by publishers
- Lot of provision about 'tricks' and Apps – engaging students (Jack Richards)
- Big names presenting at conferences
- Critical thinking encouraged
- A large number of ongoing surveys which teachers should complete
- Teachers are getting used to this on an institutional level

BUT

- Seems to be aimed at teachers for beginner levels
- Presenters seem to have little knowledge of context – need to think of the audience!!
- Experienced ELT professionals have heard it all before!
- Teachers made to attend conferences
- Little assistance with online teaching – students are not required to produce
- Lack of standardisation for the technology used



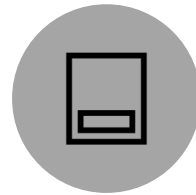
United Arab Emirates 2020

Dr Amira Traish

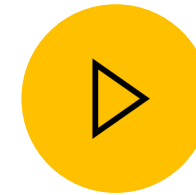
PD in lockdown



PD is all online, as is the teaching



BUT THERE ARE THINGS TEACHERS NEED HELP WITH:



Sink or swim!



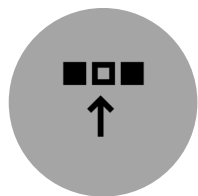
Not all schools are ready for online PD as IT departments need to be prepared



Online teaching can be frustrating and labour intensive



Problematic for children in large families



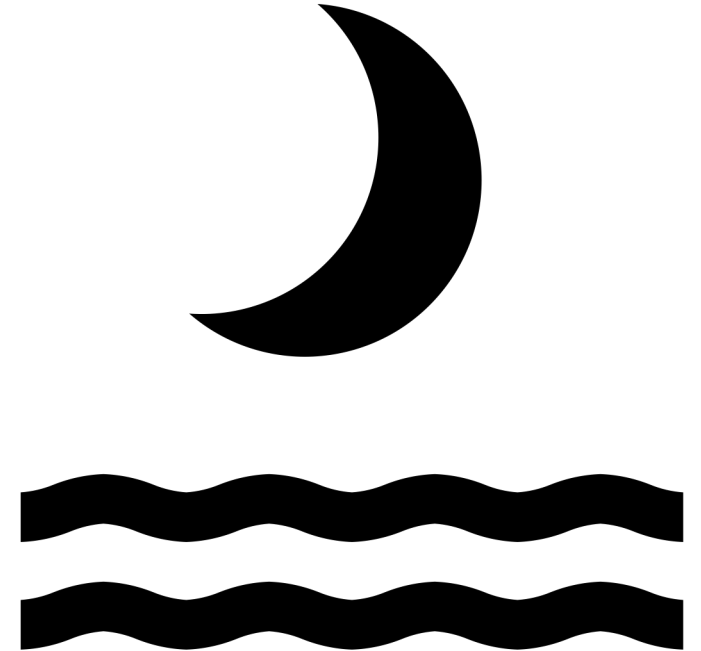
Dependent on platforms that work with existing technology



Over-compensation in terms of teachers writing reports of sessions and providing attendance records

Therefore, to summarize:

- In our original survey, teachers neither requested, or were offered, online teaching support
- However, current support for online teaching is also online and assumes that practitioners have online skills
- Basically it is a system of *learning by doing* – a lengthy process full of potential pitfalls for the unwary
- For many it seems that there is too much information available, both in terms of available teaching platforms and instructions for how to teach effectively
- Support is top-down



The implications are:



Local PD is needed to assist teachers



Courses should be tailor-made for context, addressing specific needs



Teachers need to know how to choose the methods that work best for them



There is so much happening at the same time and tools are being developed on a daily basis



Enthusiasm and ability can depend on career stages



The impact of time zones also needs to be considered!

Thank you
very much
for your
attention!



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Q&A



Online Teaching Resources

- <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/training> – British Council
- <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/globalcoalition-UNESCO>
- <https://www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn/online-courses-seminars> - TESOL
- <https://itsig.iatefl.org/itsig-fridays/> - IATEFL Learning Technologies Special Interest Group

Online Teaching Resources

- <https://m.busyteacher.org/7054-top-10-websites-esl-teacher.html>
- <https://quizlet.com/es>
- <https://www.screencastify.com>
- <https://www.genial.ly>
- <https://kahoot.com>
- <https://info.flipgrid.com>
- <https://padlet.com/>