Rethinking Teacher Proficiency in the Classroom Post Pandemic

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Decoding and understanding the positives and negatives of the education experience will prove to be crucial in creating strategies for more efficient delivery of the lessons and ensuring an uninterrupted learning journey for the students. More than 200 million students worldwide had their education disrupted by the spread of Coronavirus.

One of the most oft-used terms after the pandemic is the term "new normal." The pandemic transformed concept of education with online learning. In decoding the impact of the thrust means of online teaching to the entire community of teachers we need to reflect upon a few vibrant facts.

As Lederman (2020) has stated rightly that owing to the COVID-19 crisis teachers and students both found themselves in the situation where they felt compelled to embrace the digital academic experience . Transitioning from in person to online required unprecedented outlook and lot of work, all of which was compounded by the stress of the pandemic. The teaching fraternity by and large from across the globe was certainly not prepared and trained for the online teaching. The second point is a fact that the syllabus and courses were not drafted keeping virtual teaching means in mind. The generation of young and higher education too were caught in the mire of the global crisis. Both the facilitator and stake holder were thrown into an entirely new way of education that they have had to adopt. Technological innovations are a part of education in this century. Only the innovations which have concrete teachings will stand with time. As nowadays, teachers combine digital media with more forms of teaching it needs to be studied and moulded with real time research outcomes.

It became imperative to latch on the online education ways almost overnight. It needs to go down in the pages of history the contribution made by the teaching community. They pitched in tracking and unspooling thread of lockdown as every teacher joined in to renew the education flow. Stepping about the dizzying, rapidly escalating viral crisis that had schools closed across the country there were many fantastic, highly creative teachers providing strategies as fast as the obstacles appeared.

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In previewing our months of teaching rather making an effort towards aligning the mental abilities of youngsters stuck at homes the teachers became the most adaptive living beings. The conversation during the entire phase of indoor life during the pandemic was curated by mankind's technology oriented devices. Technology certainly was the crucial lifeline in almost many aspects it was education which evolved drastically. Researchers and academicians have accounted many advantages and disadvantages of learning virtually. Some writers maintain that while man has a herd-instinct, he also enjoys the power to adapt himself to his social environment.

According to Yong Hua Ying[1,2*], Winson Eng Wei Siang[2,3], Maslawati Mohamad[2] (2021) there are several ways that have been demonstrated to be beneficial in overcoming the problems faced by ESL students and improving their speaking abilities.

From overcoming Covid -19 crisis indoor to exposing oneself to the virtual world has been a huge leap. While many teachers found positive elements in the transitioning to online teaching, almost all confronted many challenges as well. The near impossible shift to distance learning overnight came with lots of trials frustrations rejections outcry and of course errors. But teachers redefined their approached accepted the unprecedented need of the hour planned for it, and did their best to make peace with it. Renewing their own lives and operating in the shadow of a global pandemic, for the unrewarded and unclaimed silent heroes the teachers initially it was daunting task, disorienting and limiting. The nation should remember that on short notice with limited online teaching experience or no experience in utilizing these tools the teaching fraternity took on the mammoth effort of education. The moment was extraordinarily hard working from home, or worse, from quarantine, in isolation was often depressing for both teachers and students.

Some in the teaching community noted that it was draining to teach online, while many didn't find it a gratifying compared to in person teaching. On the positive peripheral some were excited about the opportunities that teaching online could bring, such as allowing for guest lecturers to join the class from anywhere, or to create mixed group assignments and give students an opportunity to work without pressure. Faculty members expressed significant interest in making classes more interactive.

The system of assessment surely rattled the valuation systems stagnant for decades now. The focus on meaningful learning and its impactful application shot into limelight without much ado. Assignments and discussions led the teaching methodology unlike lecturing and memory-based evaluation dominated teaching learning defined ways.

In teaching the second language English for Technical students the faculty members of the language department could explore technology extensively. The initiation could not have been better as communication will forever remain important for all humanity. The dynamic trait of language teachers could summon both motivation and innovation to induce healthy

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learning and social buffering during the pandemic situation for their students. English language teaching has undergone a lot of changes over the past three years. A visible change in the trends of the teaching-learning process should be introduced for its betterment. With the inevitable usage of technology, learning and teaching in tandem has to become efficient and motivating.

CLT approach to teaching and mixed group of students has been already initiated and it has enabled language teachers to be innovative and adaptive. In using quizzes and MCQ based assessments the English teachers' language prowess certainly improved during the virtual learning situation. The peer pressure and classroom stress which invariably hampers the slow and rural students in interactive learning approaches at colleges saw a positive light during the online learning process. They showed more inclination in the activities via virtual classrooms. By going beyond the lesson plan and away from customary mode of blackboards and books in including online resources, teachers are able to become more resourceful educators.

However, as language teachers dealing with the communication skills component and grammar teaching as well were not comfortable and successful in this endeavour. In bringing technological aids to the teaching sessions required a lot of learning and work for the teaching fraternity of Humanities departments. The support and training in this area was null and raw. Therefore, in researching these experiences one needs to realize the ground realities in-depth.

The entire exercise of virtual teaching for Communiqué mainly depending on voice of the instructor is a handicapped effort. In drawing learners to be interactive is a challenging aspect for the teachers through virtual platforms. The utility of features and tools available on the virtual platforms to conduct classes had to be learnt pretty fast and adapted innovatively for the mixed range of students at the higher education level. Technology issues ran rampantly making it more difficult not only for teachers but also the learners. Regular breaks in internet connectivity played a villain in the picture. It is notable that students have been vocal in voicing their concerns of online learning. Their core grievance being the struggle to focus on screens for long time. This difficulty of focussing was a critical issue for the faculty who were not used to teaching to the monitors as well. Simultaneously, teaching in isolation was overwhelming most of the times.

The students also had to face more severe challenges. Students with no internet or no computer needed support, as well as those with learning differences and other circumstances made distance learning especially difficult. Supporting these students was on almost everyone's mind. It was hard and exhausting for all. But then due credit to the students who kept the momentum did their best and gave the strength to go on through the tribulations of the online *juggad*.

In pouring into the experiences of Covid19 learning phase, it was visibly discernible that students need to be safeguarded from isolation and be made aware of the aspect that they

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are not operating in a vacuum. It is this central responsibility of education sector and more specifically the teachers of the need to individually connect with every student.

Some of the outcome factors are as follows:

1. **Blended Learning way ahead**
   Online teaching is mostly insulated with technical aids, and we claim it has an outcome with blended approach to learning teaching process. The necessity of teaching and learning with asynchronous (Canvas, Blackboard, D2L) and synchronous (e.g. Zoom) platforms yield significant benefits when these methods are layered into face-to-face instruction. The effort to design curricular experiences that can apply authentic and deeper learning experiences to engage students has to be tracked. In blending the traditional approach, the call for providing opportunities for students to meet the criteria in non-traditional ways, can be positively executed through student-driven projects that honour student identity and context.

2. **Assess what students need**
   The academic fraternity has to pay focussed attention to the component of assessment knowledge and developing teacher practice within an enigmatic and formative assessment setup. There is a limit to how much new assessments and tools can impact learning—and indeed, they may actually undermine the meaningful learning**.** The outlook to narrow the gap between general language proficiency and classroom language proficiency mandates the provision of skills training such as managing the classroom, lecturing, giving feedback, and assessing students' performance (Freeman et al., 2015).

   Formative and summative assessments should be coherently linked through a well-articulated model of learning that incorporates learning progresses indicating the determined learning goals, along with transitional stages and instructional means for reaching those goals. Both formative and summative assessments should represent the kind of instruction that will lead to transfer of knowledge in new situations. At the centre should be the ability to continue the process of learning and make provision for an opportunity to create new ground rules that will allow assessment to become a more useful tool for learning. We should use assessments to gauge and help accelerate students' learning and provide means to improve the level of insights.

3. **Implement a comprehensive system of support**
    It is imperative now more than ever before to a provide a systematic approach in promoting the student's social, emotional, and academic well-being and stay in relevant connections with the community. Students' personal responses to the pandemic and subsequent economic crisis may vary widely. Few students may need directed or intensive supports. The need to offer space and activities for students to regulate their

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emotions thereby help in building relationships through team-building exercises and collaborative academic work becomes imperative. The group entity allows students to put into practice social and emotional competencies such as active listening, understanding others' perspectives, and resolving disagreements.

4. **Provide funding and support for curriculum resources and professional development**
   To usher in developed curriculum resources for educators to infuse newly oriented skills into classrooms online or offline need to be funded. The course developers need support to enable children to cope with the many challenges they are experiencing. As it is evident the online advantage is in for good as hybrid learning schedules allow for a transition between cohorts to dedicate more time to for professional development and collaboration.

5. **Cohorting -** In moving to board online toolkits for learning the viability to form groups of students to the greatest extent possible with the same teachers or staff, allows for new designs that can enable stronger teacher–student relationships and time together. A staff and student-centred deeper learning models devised by rethinking the structures governing now to how teachers can be organized to work with students enhance the support learning window lies at the centre of the dynamic zone. This includes creating flexible schedules that provide ample time for teachers and students to engage in collaborative and applied learning. The human link to virtual mode learning approach has to be earnestly ensured.

Certainly, many systems of human society have had to evolve rapidly in wake of the Covid19 pandemic without any choice. The impact on Education has indeed brought in changes quite radically, with the distinctive rise of e-learning, whereby teaching has moved to remote regions on digital platforms. Some students without reliable internet access and/or technology have however, struggled to participate in this digital learning. This gap has to be addressed across the country and between income brackets.

In the current context, ELT is particularly important for learners and teachers. Innovations have to be made now which will have lasting benefits. The English teachers must be creative, sensitive, and adaptable to the emotional economical mental and cultural differences while teaching the students. The differences and issues have radically changed and it is challenging to integrate all the aspects in the future classrooms. These breaks should ensure focus on acceleration rather than remediation only. The integral part of the teaching profession in the current situation is innovation and modification. Disruptions can be used to regenerate better modes of learning. The consequence is to make meaning of new ideas and need to apply them to the new contexts.

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An experimental and practical approach to help students understand and engage better is imperative as a response to the complexities in the society due to Covid19 pandemic. The paradigm shifts with online teaching and their gaining eminence could be a permanent component even after COVID-19 pandemic leading to a new way ahead in educating the post Covid19 generations.

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