



CALL RESEARCH BRIEF

Spring 2023

CALICO CALL Research Briefs are short summaries of current research and scholarship in computer-assisted language learning. Research Briefs are published three times a year, and back issues are available to members at <http://calico.org/CALL-research-briefs>

Title: Summary of EFL teachers' emotions at online teaching throughout the COVID-19 pandemic: Changes and coping strategies

Contributor: Hadir Alderaan

Date: 2023-02-24

Original Text: Nguyen, H. H., & Pham, T. T. (2023). EFL teachers' emotions at online teaching throughout the COVID-19 pandemic: Changes and coping strategies. *Teaching English as a Second Language Electronic Journal (TESL-EJ)*, 26(4), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.55593/ej.26104a13>

Rationale /Overview of the study

This study investigated the emotional struggles faced by nine English as a foreign language (EFL) instructors who were compelled to convert to online instruction because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the past two years, several studies have centered on EFL teachers when researchers attempted to understand how these teachers coped with this dramatic change. However, because of the relatively short duration of these studies, a complete picture of the emotional struggle teachers have faced throughout the entire pandemic has not yet been illustrated. This study filled this gap by examining large interview datasets gathered over the whole two years of the required online teaching period.

Research methods

Approach: This study used a qualitative methodology to collect extensive data on EFL teachers' affective shifts and coping strategies during COVID-19. Furthermore, this study is one of the few that has applied existing frameworks of teachers' emotional processes as a basis for deeper exploration of EFL teachers' emotional shifts over two years, allowing it to consider a broader range of phases.

Participants: The study recruited nine EFL instructors from two universities: one state-controlled and one privately owned. The aim was to examine the experiences of EFL instructors who had been teaching online for approximately two years during the pandemic. The participants were all based in universities in Vietnam, with seven of them being Vietnamese teachers from the state-controlled university, and two being native English-speaking teachers from a private university. The levels of institutional assistance in technology and funding may have varied among the two groups, as the researchers did not measure it.

Data Collection and Analysis: Semi-structured interviews, which is open-ended interview questions, were used to gather information from the participants. Seven instructors were interviewed in Vietnamese, while two were interviewed in English. The interviews were recorded, and the participants' accounts of their feelings and techniques for dealing with the pandemic were arranged chronologically. Similarities and contrasts between individuals were noted, along with the teachers' justifications and explanations.

The research team then analyzed the dataset based on emotional frameworks provided by other researchers in order to classify the instructors' emotional changes over time and systematize their coping strategies into themes. Consequently, each phase of the instructors' emotional transformations was given a name that reflected the prevailing mood.

Results

This study provides evidence that the emotional changes of the participants can be represented by a wave curve that can be divided into five distinct phases, each of which is characterized by various emotions and experiences. The first stage, titled "The Back-up Plan," lasted an entire month and was marked by uncomfortable feelings such as confusion and being overwhelmed. The next phase, "The Sidekick Mate," extended eight months and was characterized by decreased anxiety and increased enjoyment and satisfaction. Over the period of the following five months, participants experienced "The Only Choice Left," which was connected with resignation and stress. The subsequent phase, "The Full Integration," generated emotions of familiarity, calmness, and acceptance. When face-to-face instruction started over, participants entered "The New Normal period," which was defined by a mixture of lack of enthusiasm and enlightenment. The findings also revealed that teachers' moods constantly fluctuated throughout the various stages of the pandemic and even within individual lessons. Furthermore, the results provided insight into the techniques used by participants to manage their emotions and safeguard their mental health. The teachers were able to better regulate their emotions in the following ways:

1. Increasing their mindfulness
2. Modifying or lowering their anticipation
3. Covering up their genuine emotions
4. Reaching out to others for support
5. Enhancing their emotional health in general
- 6.

Practical Implications

Based on test results, there are a number of practical implications and pedagogical suggestions made by the authors that can help teachers and other stakeholders in a future crisis:

- Due to the complex and shifting nature of teachers' emotions, it is crucial that authorities take responsibility for offering timely and appropriate support to instructors, which can assist them in maximizing their capacity to face and overcome any future obstacles.
- The best way for teachers to make the necessary changes is to recognize their own abilities and strengths.
- Teachers are also encouraged to make an effort to connect with appropriate communities and groups in search of mutual empathy, encouragement, and assistance.

cite as: Alderaan, H. (2023, March). Summary of EFL teachers' emotions at online teaching throughout the COVID-19 pandemic: Changes and coping strategies by Nguyen & Pham. *CALICO CALL Research Briefs*. Retrieved from <http://calico.org/CALL-research-briefs>.
