VIRTUALLY LEARNING: A SELF-STUDY OF EVOLVING PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

APRENDIZAGEM VIRTUAL: UM AUTOESTUDO SOBRE EVOLUÇÕES EM PRÁTICAS PEDAGÓGICAS 🔗

APPRENTISSAGE VIRTUEL: UNE AUTO-ÉTUDE DES PRATIQUES PÉDAGOGIQUES EN ÉVOLUTION 🔗

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Abstract: This paper reports on the first phase of a three-year project in which we explored ways to adapt and evolve our pedagogies in relation to the use of new and emerging digital technologies. Our aim is to develop a shared understanding and resourcefulness for teaching in an age where pedagogy in a university setting is an increasingly complex and novel problem. We focus specifically on our experiences of emergency remote teaching (ERT) where we pivoted mid semester from on-campus classroom-based teaching to exclusively online delivery and assessment. Through a dialogical approach enabled by the self-study, we support each other, describe the key challenges we have experienced, and identify the key assumptions that underpin our practices as teachers in digital learning contexts. The themes found in this dialectical relationship were named as: the visibility of students, the constraints of technology, and the fact that we are neophyte lecturers again.

Keywords: Education distance. Higher Education. covid-19. Self-study. Computer literacy.

1 INTRODUCTION

While many issues are influencing the evolving nature of pedagogy in our university setting, the biggest challenge to our teaching over the past 18 months has been the need to adapt to the public safety measures introduced by the government to mitigate the risks of the covid-19 pandemic. These have included measures such as campus closures, the need for social distancing, and/or lockdowns[1]. For the university, this has essentially meant moving between two contrasting modes of teaching; either on-campus, where courses were designed for, and teaching started in, an on-campus mode; or emergency remote teaching (ERT), where courses are forced into online formats that were not part of their original design (BOZKURT *et al*, 2020; HODGES *et al*., 2020). In 2020, Auckland city experienced two short lockdowns that resulted in moving to ERT mode, and necessitated all examinations to be conducted in an online format. We started Semester 1 of the 2021 academic year[2] with two weeks of ERT, returned to on-campus teaching. Then, following the first community case of the Delta variant being identified in August, Auckland - the city where our institution is located - went into full lockdown again for 12 weeks. At this point, all remaining teaching in Semester 2 moved back to an ERT mode. This meant that all of the courses were taught in both modes. It is the ability to contrast our experiences of the different modes that allow us, in this study, to reflect on our teaching, and reflect on how best to evolve our pedagogies to the affordances offered by digital and online technologies.

2 THE EXPEREINCE OF EMERGENCY REMOTE TEACHING

The experience of emergency remote teaching has been actively documented over the past two years (GODBER; ATKIN, 2021; O'BRIEN *et al.*, 2020; VAREA; GONZALEZ-CALVO, 2021 VAREA; GONZÁLEZ-CALVO; GARCÍA-MONGE, 2022). The key themes to emerge from this research are: the unprecedented opportunity for change presented by covid-19; the challenge to identity and beliefs when forced into emergency online teaching; the requirement to change pedagogy; the perception of loss of relationships; and the impact on wellbeing. These themes should be seen as overlapping and interconnected and highlight how emergency remote teaching causes a significant disruption to existing classroom ecosystems in higher education.

On an optimistic note, several researchers have suggested that covid-19 provides a unique catalyst for change. For instance, at an institutional level, Toquero (2020) asserted that universities can support the emergence of new pedagogies by upgrading technological infrastructure and scaling up training for educators. Emergency teaching gives lecturers permission to develop creative teaching without clear bounded expectations by taken-for-granted historical ways of operating (GODBER; ATKIN, 2021). Previous research has highlighted that online asynchronistic study offers students flexibility, opportunities to revise at their own pace, and it saves on travel time and cost (AUDYE *et al.*, 2018; HENDERSON; SELWYN; ASTON, 2015;

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1 The New Zealand Government introduced a 4-tiered Alert Level system to help combat Covid-19. Level 4 was termed "lockdown" because people were expected stay and work from home, limit all unnecessary travel, and restrict all social contact to a small family "bubble" (See NEW ZEALAND. Ministry of Health, 2022),

2 The New Zealand academic year runs from March to November

JÄÄSKELÄ; HÄKKINEN; RASKU-PUTTONEN, 2017). A case study by O'Brien *et al.* (2020) that explored the impact on covid-19 on physical education teacher education (PETE) programmes in Europe concluded that meaningful learning experiences can be delivered through online emergency teaching.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the uptake of online teaching is not simply an outcome of the adoption of technology. Remote teaching challenges the core identity of many in higher education. Dhawan (2020) suggested that online teaching represents a paradigm shift in the way educators deliver quality education. Online teaching is not just a technical issue; it is a transformation in one's assumptions about quality education. While online teaching affords opportunities for cost effective, unlimited access to direct instruction, it presents a challenge to advocates of constructivist epistemology and student-centred learning. Godber and Atkins (2021) reported that lecturers in a sport based higher education programme who pivoted to emergency online teaching were having to 'unlearn' their previous normal and adapt, whatever the circumstances.

In addition, online learning may also impact a student's sense of individual identity, group membership and perceptions of belonging. A study of preservice PE students experiences of lockdown online learning in Spain (VAREA; GONZÁLEZ-CALVO, 2021) noted that learning together, and moving and wearing sports clothing were important characteristics of the field of PE. When they were forced into online learning the students expressed feelings of uncertainty, sadness, anger, and a loss of their identity as physical educators. Varea and Gonzalez-Calvo (2021) concluded that during online learning students had to deal with more than learning to learn online; the experience disrupted their subjectivities and their PE identity.

A third theme related to emergency online teaching is the recognition that remote teaching is not simply a case of teaching with digital tools. Rather it requires a change in pedagogical approach. Online teaching in higher education presents an opportunity for promoting learning but it is a pedagogical challenge (JÄÄSKELÄ; HÄKKINEN; RASKU-PUTTONEN, 2017). Chen (2016) suggested that a pedagogically effective instructional design model for online education is required to facilitate the development and delivery of engaging online learning environments because poorly designed online lectures lead to confusion, loss of interest, and can leave students distressed. Although digital tools are ubiquitous, Kopp, Groblinger and Adams (2019) suggest that most of higher education are only at the beginning of digital transformation.

Recent scholarship of moving into an ERT mode mid-course highlights a need to (re)build trust and (re)establish a new normal in the online environment (GODBER; ATKIN, 2021; LUGUETTI *et al.*, 2021; VAREA; GONZALES-CALVO; GARCIA-MONGE, 2022). In a study framed by participatory action research in an Australian PETE programme, Luguetti, Enright, Hynes, and Bishara, (2021) described how they negotiated with students as to what a safe online environment meant and how they could collectively create that kind of space. The classes developed a classroom etiquette specific to the synchronistic online environment that included banning individual chats during lectures, collaboration in breakout rooms, and interaction on discussion boards.

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Many scholars have noted the impact of online teaching on relationships. In the context of PETE, Murray *et al.* (2020) noted that student teachers' and teacher educators' relationships are challenged by physical distance in online spaces, often leading to feelings of isolation. Luguetti, Enright, Hynes, Bishara, (2021) stated that one of the main challenges in ERT was the development of a relationships with their sometimes 'faceless students.' Varea, Gonzales-Calvo and Garcia-Monge (2022, p. 9) described the faceless students in the online classroom as 'virtual ghosts' whereby "[…] shifting the assemblage of the PE class to one that includes encounters with virtual bodies rather than real ones."

Mindful that ERT can disrupt work-life balance and impact on the wellbeing of both the teacher and the learner(s), Lu, Barrett and Lu (2020) recommended that PETE educators remain cognisant of the pressures and stresses associated with the unprecedented challenges in the PETE online environment. Godber and Atkin (2021) reported that ERT increased workload, reduced "down-time." Additionally, the ERT experience led to an increase in anxiety and lack of confidence by students as lecturers endeavoured to ensure that authentic and appropriate learning and assessment occurred in courses of study typically delivered in kinaesthetic contexts. Collectively these factors result in uncertainty and vulnerability, ultimately impacting on the wellbeing of lecturers and learners in higher education (GODBER; ATKIN, 2021; LEE, 2020; VAREA; GONZALES-CALVO; GARCIA-MONGE, 2022).

With this previous research as a backdrop and the arrival of ERT as a catalyst, we embarked on self-study of our own experiences of online teaching in a three-year undergraduate sport, health and physical education programme

3 METHODOLOGY

We are researchers attempting to study the mobile and contingent nature of our own practice. In choosing to use a Self-Study methodology (OVENS; FLETCHER, 2014), we embrace what Snaza (2010) refers to as the perspective of 'dwelling' – that is, a constant questioning through dialogue as we attempt to reflect on our unfolding identities within the performances of our teaching. Core to this process is the idea that turning the critical gaze on oneself enacts a disposition of desire, particularly in the sense that it "reflects a desire to be more, to improve, to better understand" (OVENS; FLETCHER, 2014, p.7). In other words, the underlying common purpose in self-studies is to become more fully informed about our teaching practices and to explore and build on these "learnings" in public ways (LOUGHRAN, 2007). Self-study researchers primarily focus attention on their own practice and assume the position of being both the researcher and the researched.

Performing self-study is a collaborative activity in which the researchers (the three authors) acted as critical friends to each other. The aim was to create an intellectually safe and supportive community in which each researcher sought to improve their practice through critical collaborative inquiry (COSTA; KALLICK, 1993; SAMARAS, 2011). It involved a willingness to open one's practice to critique and becoming mutually vulnerable (RICHARDS; RESSLER, 2016). Rod and Alan

have worked together for more than a decade. They have taught collaboratively in courses and worked together in research projects. Blake has worked with Rod and Alan over the past four years. Collectively our interest in responding to the changing environment in tertiary education, along with exploring the affordances provided by digital technologies, has led to this self-study.

The empirical materials that were generated as data for the study included our weekly personal journals (usually written prior to or following a lesson), group meetings (held approximately every 2-3 weeks) and digital communication (e.g. email, messenger). We approached making sense of this data as a synthesising process rather than a reductive one. Our method was dialogic in the sense that we used our regular group meetings to provoke conversations that would simultaneously move between sharing experience and deepening interpretations. Meetings were recorded and began by reviewing our teaching over the past week. The aim was to identify key issues or highlights from our teaching, which generally tended towards one person tabling a key issue or event that became the main focus for that meeting. We then shared and challenged our interpretations through discussion, often providing elaboration, explanation, comparison and theorisation.

It is a method that enacts MacLure's (2013 , p.180) suggestion of viewing the data set as a 'cabinet of curiosities' in which interesting items that challenged the patterns, structures, and assumptions inherent in our teaching could be placed, but without the assumption that this would provide a coherent or total picture. Our intention was to capture and illustrate the flow of our teaching in a non-representational way (THRIFT, 2008), while also developing new understandings and ways of performing as teachers (PLACIER *et al.*, 2005).

In writing this paper, we sought to share from our 'cabinet of curiosities' by revisiting the transcripts from the group meetings, personal journals and digital communications and share three themes that had triggered our thinking around our teaching. In the writing and re-writing process, we were reflexive about not positioning change and technology as negative, since many of experiences were initiated by frustrations or concerns with the situation we were dealing with. Rather, the aim was to highlight issues that challenged our assumptions and were related to enabling good pedagogy in our situation.

4 TALES OF EXPERIENCE

The past 18 months have provided an accelerated and intense focus on pedagogy as we have swung between teaching in lockdown and non-lockdown conditions. However, the experiences reported in this paper came from the sudden enforced shift in teaching mode during the second semester of 2021 (July –November). Specifically, on Tuesday, August 17, we were teaching on-campus and about half way through the semester. Then, come Wednesday, August 18, we were teaching online. We remained online until the conclusion of exams in November 2021. An hour after the initial 6:30pm announcement by our government that we were moving to a 'Level 4' lockdown at midnight, Alan had already contacted his class and notified them that

the course would continue as planned, except the class would now be online via Zoom. He viewed his shift to online as largely unproblematic since he could upload a pre-recorded video of the lesson content to be viewed asynchronously, and then follow this up with a synchronous tutorial via Zoom. For Rod and Blake, the announcement created problems. Blake's coaching courses relied heavily on students being involved in practical work, while Rod's service learning course required students to be placed in work settings. Both needed to revise the content and assessment of their courses.

This was our fourth pivot to online-only teaching in two years, so in many ways we were ready. What we did not anticipate was that we were going to be locked down and teaching online for the remaining seven weeks until the end of the academic year. Despite 'being ready', the analysis of our journals and fortnightly meetings have highlighted a series of concerns related to shifting to teach in an ERT mode. In this paper we report on the following three themes that were orienting our experience of ERT. Firstly, the lack of visibility of our students in an online mode often left us unable to manage and adjust the learning activity of the lesson. Secondly, we felt constrained by the limitations in the online environment which often forced us into transmission styles of teaching. Thirdly, the plethora of online tools available to us necessitated both the time to learn, and a design sensibility in order to be effective. We expand on these below.

4.1 STUDENT VISABILITY

The concept of 'student visibility' was a strong theme in our discussions about moving to online teaching. This challenged us to reflect on issues such as student presence, attendance, and engagement, particularly in respect to how it relates to learning. We are using 'visibility' here to refer broadly to students' cognitive, social, and emotional presence in various course spaces. We often highlighted the fact that during on-campus teaching in a classroom we can see students- we see them attend class and engage with the learning activities, we see what their attention level is, and we see if they are confused, distracted or bored. This visibility is core to how we sense, respond, and manage student learning in the lesson. Moving online fundamentally interrupts and transforms the nature of student visibility. Student presence now becomes meditated via online video or LMS metrics. The following excerpts from our journals represent some of our experiences with using Zoom and the preference students had for turning their cameras off during the lesson:

> When their cameras are off, it's like talking to yourself. Without a nodding head, you have no idea if you are saying something stupid or nonsensical! … who am I actually talking to when there a bunch of black squares that only *suggest* someone is present? (Blake, Journal, 11/08/21)

> The attendance was 16/26. Quite good I thought considering the disappointment of being locked down and the fact that there is no quiz attached to this lecture. Of the 16 students only two had their cameras on. I find it hard to engage with cameras off. For me, it is hard enough with cameras on as I don't feel as confident reading the room, but with cameras off there is little to read. (Rod, 302 Journal, 23/8/21)

> I place them into random breakout rooms….I 'suggest' that the rooms will give them a chance to develop a strategy for the game ahead. While there

is some truth in that, this may occupy the first 15 seconds….One team appears after the three minutes. The rest come back only when the room closes. I have no idea what went on in the rooms. (Rod, Journal, 13/9/21)

During and after an in-person/face to face class, I get a sense on whether or not I had done a good job – I could just tell through the feeling in the room, through the flow of questions I would ask, and the resulting answers or (on task) chatter at each table. And, of course, after running a practical session and listening to students reflect on their 'a-ha' moments – these were 'validators' for me, these were the moments that suggested that I had done a good job today. Even if I hadn't, a casual conversation with a student on the way to the next appointment would assure me that I was contributing in a small way to their overall experience. Now, though, clicking Zoom's 'End Meeting For All' button means I don't hear that upbeat chatter or get comments such as 'thanks Blake!' as students pack up and leave the classroom. Class is just over. (Blake, Journal, 11/09/21)

It is important to state that we were highly aware that the students' choice to turn their cameras off may be linked to their desire to keep their home life private. We understood how the lockdown had changed the life situation for many of the students. While some could continue largely unaffected, we also had students who now needed to care for children full time, squeeze in additional employment, attempt to study in crowded homes, share their technology with siblings, and/or cope with poor internet connectivity. We understood that this changed situation limited the ability of students to engage with each course, and our desire to respect their right to privacy was behind not insisting that the students turn their cameras on.

The key point here is the importance of student visibility to how we each foster and focus the learning activity in each class and get a sense of achievement from our teaching. Not being able to see students limited our ability to 'read the lesson' and make informed decisions about adjusting delivery style, using collaboration and group work, choosing where to provide support and encouragement, and use humour to suit the mood in the classroom. We felt as though we had little sense of what is taking place, or pleasure from, interacting with the students. Our well-honed instincts based on years of classroom practice, our ability to 'hover', interject, challenge, and respond are no longer possible to do in the same way. Without the ability to observe students' expressions, body language, and other cues that might suggest issues related to boredom, not understanding content, etcetera, that are normally available in the on-campus classroom environment, we each became challenged as to how best to adjust our pedagogy accordingly.

Student visibility is a concern for two reasons. Firstly, our lived experiences in face-to-face teaching have made us attuned to student engagement. We can read the classroom and recognise who is uncertain, who is off task, who is struggling. Our desire to encourage engagement through *not* requiring students to display their faces and perhaps reveal broader circumstances at home including lack of effective WiFi connectivity may have enabled *more* students to engage – but we do not fully understand what level of engagement we actually achieved. In addition to not understanding their experiences, our own reflections suggest that we did not feel connected. We felt isolated (MURRAY *et al.*, 2020) as we were not consistently able to replicate the reciprocal nature of our everyday face-to-face teaching online. Teaching

online was mood altering (VAREA; GUSTAVO-CALVO, 2021) as it did not provide us with the same pleasure as face-to-face instruction.

4.2 CONSTRAINED BY TECHNOLOGY

A second theme in our discussions related to our struggles to engage students in an effective pedagogy. One of the features of our on-campus teaching is the ability for students to be working collaboratively and in practical activities that provide fully embodied experiences. Our courses were designed to utilise classroom and gymnasium settings, and having students work in groups or experience a particular activity. For instance, Blake's coaching course was designed so students worked with pupils from a local school, while Rod's Service-learning course was designed to give students experience in a professional work setting. Practical work, service learning and practicum situations each situate and contextualise learning in authentic problems and settings. We not only found it difficult to replicate these experiences in lockdown conditions, but found that the technology constrained us to teach in a particular way. The tools that we had most readily available to us were well suited to transmission and distribution of information. This means that the initial tendency was to adjust courses to become oriented around simple transactional exchanges of information. The following snippets from our journals demonstrate our concerns:

> We can do breakout rooms/think/pair/shares. We have access to digital tools that enable students to contribute ideas collectively from their small groups….but how do we do a 60 hour service learning course online? (Rod, journal, 17/8/21)

> I just don't think presenting information online is an effective way of learning this information. I can sense that I am not challenging their prior conceptions and giving them a chance to see what this content looks like in a real setting. I really wish that I could be in the gym … this just feels like such superficial learning going on at the moment. (Alan, journal, 6/10/21)

> It's clear that a number of them aren't engaging in the [digital/pre-recorded] content on Canvas …What does this mean about online course content? The content I have made encourages them (I thought) to dig deeper, but how can they if they don't even access it!? (Blake, Journal, 24/4/21)

We have struggled to find ways to engage students in meaningful and deep learning. The challenge has been to utilise tools and pedagogical designs that foster higher-order learning, especially in courses focussed on developing the dispositions and decision-making skills involved in complex teaching and coaching situations. We found that synchronistic, collaborative activities maintain student connectivity, enable problem posing and voicing of students' perspective. However these activities are difficult to access for students who are also parents, essential workers and who have limited access to computers and high quality WiFi.

The constraints of online teaching need to be considered within the broader context of the nature of the courses we teach. Blake was endeavouring to replicate a course that involved embodied experiences of coaching and reflection. Rod was teaching a course that involved reflection on industry and school-based service-learning experiences. Alan was teaching about learning and pedagogy. In addition, we are cognisant of the inequities that are reified by online teaching. Our students do not

enjoy equitable access to digital learning. As Jowsey *et al.* (2020) state, while digital teaching abounds with new innovative teaching resources, most require strong stable internet connections and digital competence by both the lecturer and the students.

Reflexively we are aware that our concerns with the move to online delivery may reflect our subjectivities and identities as teachers in and about movement (LU; BARRETT; LU, 2020; VAREA; GONZALES-CALVO, 2021). We are also mindful of our own sense of nostalgia and desire to return to how education has traditionally been in the past before the pandemic (VAREA; GONZALES-CALVO; GARCIA-MONGE, 2022). Nevertheless, we resist accepting that an online environment can adequately replace embodied experiences when learning. Without reducing our teaching to the development of technical expertise, we question how students can learn to coach, teach, and lead without embodying these experiences and reflecting on them. We agree with O'Brien *et al.* (2020) assertion made from the context of PETE that for some courses, face-to-face experiences of PE are essential.

4.3 ONLINE TEACHING – I HAVE BECOME A NEOPHYTE (AGAIN)

A further theme entangled within our discussions was the competency needed to design effective online resources and lessons. While the ability to present information as text, images, video, music, and interactive elements holds out the promise for enhancing learning for our students, it also requires competencies to produce and consume that content. As other self-studies have highlighted (e.g., TOLOSA *et al.*, 2017), becoming proficient with new technologies is both time consuming and requires a design sense to ensure teaching resources are interesting and engaging. We have found this unsettling because time is such a valuable commodity, particularly in university contexts where research productivity is a high priority. In this sense, and to varying degrees, the change in context (to online delivery) and the inclusion of digital technologies has made us neophyte lecturers.

In response to being forced online during the previous year of lockdowns (2020), and in anticipation of possible, future lockdowns (in 2021), Blake also spent a number of hours navigating video editing software (i.e. Adobe Premier Pro). Recorded lectures were accompanied by scripts, quality audio clips, and attention to details such as fonts used, animations, superimposed images, background music, sound effects, and 'B-roll' footage. Blake intended to create a (sport coaching) course that included both theoretical and practical elements; the former supported by videos, and the latter a chance to 'unpack' (both face to face, and via Zoom) the ideas covered therein. Blake's experience as a neophyte working in a new space involved managing time efficiently while attempting to produce a 'professional' lecture for use in future course iterations. While this process of creating, exploring, and developing new skills, as a neophyte, was an enjoyable experience for Blake, his attempts to produce engaging content led Blake to contemplate whether his pedagogical efforts were working as intended:

> My expectations have been that students would read through the Canvas site and watch the video content before coming to class – perhaps I need to let this go. As Rod said, it should be seen as a social contract: "I won't re-teach this in class, so it's your choice whether you engage with content

beforehand"…I guess I have been caught up in the emotions (?) associated with the time and effort I put into the videos. Now that this is a distant memory, I am slightly less concerned…but it is frustrating when they don't seem to appreciate the effort! (Blake, Journal, 12/5/21)

In some sense, Blake had become a competent producer of digital content, yet his reflections suggest that he feels like he is still finding his way in the online space – particularly with regard to his expectations and assumptions of learners in this new/different (online) setting.

The following journal entry from Rod also captures some of frustrations he experienced as a neophyte creator of online content for his students:

The lecture is my 'sweet spot' in regard to research, [and] teaching for social justice. …how will I record it?...I elect to record on Zoom. I carefully record one slide at a time and 'pause record' between slides. This gives me time to set up the next slide and prepare my thoughts. I wonder why I need to do this. I don't do this in a normal face-to-face lecture. However, 30 seconds of reviewing the slide and tweaking notes gives me confidence and each slide slides off my tongue with increasing clarity. This lecture aligns beautifully with my research, so I feel there is a richness that I add to each slide which I have tried to keep to minimal amount of text.

Disaster strikes on the second to last slide. I press 'Record Stop' instead of 'Record Pause.' My recording is over even though my lecture isn't. What do I do? Can I press 'Start Record'? If I do, will it wipe out the 90% of the lecture I have completed? Do I save the 90% of a lecture and add a second lecture with the final few slides? I can't do that - it is embarrassing to tell the students that I can't record a lecture. I do the 'right' thing. I start again. The wind has gone out of my sail this time. The lecture is recorded with only one long pause (human error) but perhaps lacking the enthusiasm and depth of the previous recording. I am done. It has taken 4 hours to record a 22minute lecture on my sweet spot of lecturing (Rod, Journal, 26/9/21)

This entry highlights how an experienced lecturer, teaching content they know well, can become a neophyte in the online context. Arguably, the desire to make a lecture interesting is less related to the online context, and perhaps represents a disposition toward wanting to engage. Equally, though, the nature of online teaching removes some possibilities while presenting others. Although Zoom has been a well-used tool by all three lecturers for meetings, its use as a presentation tool has only come to fruition since our first covid-19 enforced lockdown. Our ability to show slides, show video, enhance sound quality, draw, and highlight have been learned over the last 24 months. This learning has been time consuming and because of mistakes that we continue to make - it is very common to have at least two attempts at recording a lecture.

Simply, this theme highlights the realisation that our status as experienced lecturers and teacher-educators is challenged in an online environment. While online teaching is teaching, the online space where students cannot be seen (LUGUETTI *et al.*, 2021; VAREA; GONZALES-CALVO; GARCIA-MONGE, 2022), where some students work on phones while others use dual monitors and headsets, where we have limited skill in reading the classroom represents a new field where we lack the cultural capital. That is, the skills, knowledge, experience, and confidence to be what Bourdieu (1990) described as a 'fish in water.' As many studies have reported, learning

to use digital technologies is time consuming (BURNE; OVENS; PHILPOT, 2018; JÄÄSKELÄ; HÄKKINEN; RASKU-PUTTONEN, 2017; LU; BARRETT; LU, 2020). Although digital technologies abound and, as Toquero (2020) recently asserted, the potential exists for universities to scale up training for educators and upgrading emerging technologies to enable innovative teaching that moves beyond transmission pedagogies, the demand on academics to return to the neophyte stage and relearn what we already felt confident doing – alongside the everyday demand of broader role as an academic – is at best daunting, and at worst compromising. In noting Calderon *et al.* (2020), who cautioned that student-centred digital technology approaches may have the most positive response from students when they are new, we are aware that the most effective use of novel digital tools may therefore be the domain of the early adopters, with a never-ending cycle of the learning of new technologies needed to motivate students. However, while this may serve the needs of students, it is likely to be untenable for research active academics.

5 FURTHER DISCUSSION

Moving to an on-online mode of delivery for courses represents a paradigm shift in course pedagogy, especially under emergency conditions (GODBER; ATKINS, 2021). The integration of new and emerging technologies into tertiary education has been an incremental phenomenon over a number of years, which allows for anticipated, planned for, and supported changes to pedagogy (ADEDOYIN; SOYKAN, 2020; KOPP; GROBLINGER; ADAMS, 2019). However, the forced transition to virtual platforms in response to covid-19 has been rapid, reactive, and has created a number of challenges for education systems as a whole, and for individuals situated within these systems in particular. It would be a mistake to see these challenges as simply ensuring teachers and students have the technology, connectivity, study space and support to continue with their teaching and learning. Moving to online teaching changes the very nature of teaching and learning in a course as well as the forms of learning culture and outcomes that result.

One way to think about the impact of rapidly moving to online teaching is to conceptualise pedagogy as being enabled in two key ways. Firstly, the teacher plays a role in designing a course ecosystem that enables students to achieve the course aims and purpose. This involves decisions about course mode (face-to-face, online, blended, synchronous, etc), learning content and activities, workloads for faculty and students, use of media and technology, and assessment strongly tied to desired learning outcomes. Such decisions occur within the institutional and programme constraints. However, in the case of ERT, the move to online teaching was not planned as a part of the course design.

Secondly, pedagogy involves the teacher actively participating in the course ecosystem, orchestrating lesson activity and skilfully shifting between different teacherly roles as appropriate. In the on-campus mode, we acknowledge that we are all skilful in managing the learning environment of the classroom or gymnasium. We feel confident and competent interacting with students in this mode. However, the move to ERT highlighted the need for a different set of competencies.

Understanding ERT, and learning, from a complexivist perspective offers a number of insights. Firstly, ERT is enacted in conditions in which it was not conceived. The first response of lecturers to ERT might be to establish conditions with students under which online learning and assessment can take place (LUGUETTI *et al.*, 2021), rather than assuming the courses are continuing as 'business as usual'. Secondly, ERT often offers unprecedented agency for lecturers to explore both new directions and old assumptions embedded in their pedagogical work. Although the online context may be easiest to negotiate through asynchronistic recorded lectures, increasingly there are examples of synchronistic collaborative learning experiences that foster student interaction and align with principles of constructivist learning, and that do not require a high level of pre-lecture production skills. Indeed, higher educators will need to consider the resources of their own student cohort to find equitable solutions that meet the needs of their students and preserve their own wellbeing.

6 CONCLUSION

At this point in the research project, we remain committed to developing further blended learning opportunities in our courses. In this paper, we have reported on our experiences using online teaching in ERT only, where we were not able to blend them in any meaningful way with other face-to-face pedagogical approaches. Secondly, we have reflected on own lived experiences as lecturers. Our concerns about not seeing students and being constrained by both the pedagogical choices available online and our own skills may not be shared by students. There remains a lack of research on the relationship between the use of digital technology, engagement, and subsequent learning (CALDERON; MERON; MACPHAIL, 2020).

In most places in the world, ERT has expedited a 'trial' of a 'virtual' university experience for students. In line with a post-qualitative perspective, establishing a generalizable truth about the benefits and limitations of online teaching from these experiences is a perilous endeavour. ERT needs to be evaluated in relation to the context in which it occurred, and with caution as it represents a 'pivot-to' rather than a 'plan-for' approach to achieve coherent online teaching.

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Resumo: Este artigo relata a primeira fase de um projeto de três anos em que exploramos formas de adaptar e desenvolver nossas práticas pedagógicas em relação ao uso de novas e emergentes tecnologias digitais. Neste artigo, nos concentramos em nossas experiências de ensino remoto de emergência (ERT). Essa experiência aconteceu no meio do semestre, onde tivemos que migrar do ensino presencial, em sala de aula, para o ensino remoto. Através de uma abordagem dialética, possibilitada pelo autoestudo, tivemos a oportunidade de apoiar uns aos outros, descrever os principais desafios que enfrentamos e identificar os principais pressupostos que sustentam nossas práticas como professores em contextos de aprendizagem a distância, ensino digital. Os temas encontrados nessa relação dialética foram nomeados como: a visibilidade dos alunos, as restrições da tecnologia e o fato de voltarmos a ser professores universitários novatos novamente.

Palavras-chave: Educação a distância. Educação superior. covid-19. Autoestudo. Alfabetização digital.

Résumé: Cet article rend compte de la première phase d'un projet de trois ans dans lequel nous explorons les moyens d'adapter et de développer nos pratiques pédagogiques par rapport à l'utilisation des technologies numériques nouvelles et émergentes. Dans cet article, nous nous concentrons sur nos expériences d'enseignement à distance d'urgence (ERT). Cette expérience s'est déroulée en milieu de semestre, où nous avons dû migrer d'un enseignement en présentiel, en classe, vers un enseignement à distance. Grâce à une approche dialectique, permise par l'auto-apprentissage, nous avons eu l'occasion de nous soutenir mutuellement, de décrire les principaux défis auxquels nous sommes confrontés et d'identifier les principales hypothèses qui soutiennent nos pratiques d'enseignants dans des contextes d'apprentissage à distance, l'enseignement numérique. Les thèmes trouvés dans cette relation dialectique ont été nommés comme suit: la visibilité des étudiants, les restrictions de la technologie et le fait que nous redevenons des professeurs d'université novices.

Mots clés: Enseignement.à distance. L'enseignement supérieur. covid-19. Auto-apprentissage Compétence informatique.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have declared that this work involves no conflict of interest.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Alan Patrick Ovens: Conceptualization, Data curation, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Rod Philpot: Conceptualization, Data curation, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Blake Bennett: Project administration, Conceptualization, Data curation, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

RESEARCH ETHICS

The research project was submitted and approved by the The Research Ethics Committee University of Auckland Human Participant Ethics Committee (UAHPEC), Protocol Number UAHPEC3373.

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