Research

Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) in multilingual contexts: A Mixed Methods Case Study

Christina Gkougkoura [1] **Sevasti Paida** [2] **Magdalini Vitsou** [3] **Nektaria Palaiologou** [4]

Abstract:

In recent years, a significant number of students with a multilingual background have attended Greek educational institutions, mainly because of migration and the refugee crisis. In March 2020, due to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), Greek educational institutions started organizing emergency remote teaching on online educational platforms. This paper describes a case study (through intervention) conducted in a digital multilingual elementary classroom, that aimed to explore strategies for facilitating remote lesson engagement and establishing inclusive pedagogy under emergency situations. The main aim of this study was to explore to what extent task-based language teaching (TBLT) activities grounded on the migrant students' needs analysis and supported by computer-assisted language learning (CALL) features contribute to active lesson participation during emergencies and their effect on migrant students' social inclusion in a formal educational context. Results established the most critical factors required for differentiated multilingual distance education. This is an original research work on how diversity and inclusion in emergency remote teaching may be achieved.

Citation:

Gkougkoura, C., Paida, S., Vitsou, M. & Palaiologou (2022). Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) in multilingual contexts: A Mixed Methods Case Study. *International Journal of Modern Education Studies, 6*(1), 1-20. http://dx.doi.org/10.51383/ijonmes.2022.115

1 MA, Department of Humanities Hellenic Open University, Patras, Greece. std502092@ac.eap.gr,
Orcid ID: 0000-0001-7098-8884

2 PhD, Department of Humanities Hellenic Open University, Patras, Greece. paida.sevasti@ac.eap.gr,
Orcid ID: 0000-0001-7181-072X

3 PhD. Department of Humanities Hellenic Open University, Patras, Greece vitsou.magdalini@ac.eap.gr,
Orcid ID: 0000-0002-7447-4634

4 Prof. Dr. Department of Humanities Hellenic Open University, Patras, Greece nekpalaiologou@eap.gr,
Orcid ID: 0000-0001-9647-4507

INTRODUCTION

Emergency distance learning explicitly applies to occasions when schools buildings are closed because of emergencies, and learning is conducted off-site with the help of teachers in the classroom and the cooperation of parents and students (Irvine Unified School District, 2020). On days of emergency-distance learning, learners work on line in educational experiences that reinforce and maintain current learning in the classroom. Hodges et al. (2020) provide a significant clarification about the definition and formally suggest a specific term for the instruction provided in such urgent conditions: emergency remote teaching.

In typical language classrooms, some homogeneity among learning objectives may be noticed. Classrooms consisted of refugees and migrants, though, are characterized by significant heterogeneity regarding goals and communicative needs. Several reports have shown that task-based language teaching (TBLT) provides students with sources of meaningful content, suitable for communicative practices in the second language (L2), and positive input to create even greater incentives for language usage (Jeon & Hahn, 2006). TBLT is a pedagogical strategy to language teaching aiming at preparing learners to realize real-world tasks linked to their needs (González-Lloret & Nielson, 2015). As González-Lloret and Nielson (2015) state, TBLT programs are developed according to defined methodological principles, starting with an analysis of needs, using tasks as units of study to include just-in-time grammatical guidance where it applies to the correspondence needs of learners (Doughty & Long, 2003).

A strong relationship between computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and TBLT has been reported in Greek primary education (Manousou, 2004; Pozidis et al., 2015; Psallidas & Manousou, 2016; Papanikolaou & Manousou, 2019; Papadela et al., 2020). However, very little was found in the literature on the interaction of TBLT, CALL, and second language acquisition (SLA) (e.g., Chappelle, 2001). In reviewing the Greek literature, no data was found on the association between TBLT, CALL and SLA applied remotely in Greek primary education, as in Greece, no distance education school is aimed at primary school students (Manousou, 2004; Miminou & Spanaka, 2016; Fakoulas, 2020).

The COVID-19 lockdown in Greece during the 2020-2021 school year, drove the researchers to examine the effectiveness of emergency remote teaching over migrant primary school pupils. The research questions of this study were:

(1) Do TBLT activities, grounded in the school curriculum and supported by CALL, enhance migrant students' language learning?

(2) What are the crucial factors that affect migrant students' active lesson participation remotely?

ERT in multilingual contexts

Regarding the importance of ERT due to emergencies, Di Pietro et al. (2020) claim that it plays a vital role in encouraging children to continue studying as a result of the deterioration in education institutions triggered by the closing of schools and universities. However, they noticed that physical school closing and distance education may have a detrimental impact on students' performance across four main channels: reduced time spent studying, anxiety signs, a shift in the way students communicate, and loss of enthusiasm for learning. In their report on the impact that Coronavirus and physical school closure have on education and learning, they also argue that there are significant socio-economic gaps in student exposure to new technology at home. Students with higher socioeconomic status are more likely to have a suitable device at home than students with lower socioeconomic status (Di Pietro et al., 2020). Similarly, they highlight a learning deficit between native students and migrant students, as the latter could be more likely to experience poor parental support when studying at home due to their parents' low familiarity with the digital learning world or the home-country language and to their outdoor occupations.

Yi and Jang (2020) argue that, despite the possible sustained effect of the pandemic and remote teaching on students and instructors, teachers should implement quality education (e.g., translingual and interactive pedagogies) to provide some promising benefits. Aguliera and Nightengale-Lee (2020) proposed the creation of an equity working group to explore equity concerns which may involve instructors, staff, educators, parents, and community stakeholders, working periodically to further identify the obstacles posed by ERT, the approaches used by communities to overcome these challenges, and what organizations can do to further improve these methods to make schooling sensitive, interactive and impactful.

Remote learning, CALL, and SLA

Distance, remote or online learning is already one of the most widely recognized methods of providing a curriculum for many fields of education (Wakil et al., 2019). The literature on distance education, upon which the ERT relies, has highlighted several benefits of learning. According to Lionarakis (2011) distance education encourages and allows students to study on their own and to work individually on a heuristic learning and knowledge course. Niari et al. (2017) underline the need to implement and apply distance learning approaches and frameworks at all stages of collaborative learning because the criteria and roles of distance collaborative learning will improve learners' involvement in the learning process and will ensure good learning performance, analytical and innovative thinking, and satisfaction regarding their studies. Similarly, Pozidis et al. (2015) claim that the school implements programs in "innovative" institutions that will, to a small extent, lead to the shift of the teacher-centered, cognitive-oriented approach and serve as a tool to enhance the student-centered character and flexibility in using new teaching approaches.

Psallidas and Manousou (2016) state that students in learning communities interact with the educational material with the teacher and their co-educated classmates. Thus, learning becomes a social process in which it takes place: interaction with discussions about the subject, exchange and negotiation of ideas, attitude processing, encouraging learners to participate in the educational process, and overcoming obstacles. Sampson and Yoshida (2021) suggest that teachers could assist students in recognizing their improvement over the teleconference, possibly by urging chatters to notice their skills during the first meeting and relating them to another later in return.

As regards the technology applications in second language acquisition, Beatty (2013) argues that computer-assisted language learning (CALL) enables students, educators, and researchers to identify suitable resources and strategies and adjust them to diverse teaching and learning styles. Chappelle (2001) focuses on the interaction of CALL, task-based learning (TBL), and second language acquisition. He asserts that the study of the aspects of computer-based tasks that engage learners should be a goal of education and also for SLA researchers who try to contribute to the understanding of qualified second language acquisition. Thomas and Reinders (2010) given the high level of task-based approaches, this is an intriguing inclusion in that TBLT is focusing on enhancing real-world authentic tasks in target languages at a period when 1.5 billion people worldwide have access to international forms of technology-based interaction, from laptops to Smartphones. However, as theory has traditionally ignored CALL, the TBLT method usually focuses mainly on face-to-face classroom study (Chappelle, 2003; Thomas, & Reinders, 2010). It has to be taken into consideration that many children, especially from the non-Western world, are deprived of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Web technology (Palaiologou, 2009).

CALL and distance education in Greek Primary Education

Pozidis, Manousou, and Koutsoumpa (2015) report on cooperative learning in the framework of supplementary environmental distant learning. In their empirical research, they aimed at implementing an environmental program with activities focusing on educational material provided to schools, which formed a collaborative network of primary schools of Corfu. They concluded that the application of networks is an opportunity in education that should be further used and extended to the whole range of operation of the school since it is a perspective that is not limited to communication benefits but deepens and strengthens the achievements of collaborative learning (Pozidis et al., 2015).

Papanikolaou and Manousou (2019) discuss the potentiality of the supplementary distance education application in primary education for lessons replenishment by students occasionally absent from school. They notice that the use of such web 2.0 tools has provided the basis on which the traditional system of education can be linked to an open distance learning one. They suggest that CALL facilitates originality and creativity and supports the critical thinking of students.

To develop an assessment model for video as a means for learning in distance polymorphic primary education, Papadela et al. (2020) carried out bibliographic research which formed the foundation of the axes and criteria of the assessment framework. She concludes that video is a rich and powerful tool used over time in distance education at all levels to present, transfer, and represent educational information, but also to support teaching and learning processes as it presents the information attractively and consistently.

In the same vein, Aggeli (2017) reviews the contribution of video to the achievement of the corresponding pedagogical goals in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. She concludes that the use of video in distance learning in a second/foreign language promotes the enhancement in language teaching experience in terms of content, materials, and pedagogical approaches by enhancing interdisciplinarity, student-centeredness, and collaboration, through active student engagement, initiative, creativity, critical and creative thinking, and the connection of personal experiences with education and with real-life situations.

Collectively, these studies outline a critical role for utilizing CALL features and web 2.0 tools on cooperative learning in face-to-face education or supplementary distance education in primary institutions. However, very little is known about collaborative education in a diverse primary educational context using web 2.0 tools.

This study tried to investigate

(1) If TBLT activities, grounded in the school curriculum and supported by CALL, enhance migrant students' language learning

(2) What are the crucial factors that affect migrant students' active lesson participation remotely.

METHOD

İn order to answer these research questions, the contribution of enrichment-related activities supported by computer-assisted language learning (CALL) method, to migrant students' active Greek language learning, under emergencies, was explored. Data were collected from a multicultural classroom of a Greek public elementary school in the center of Athens. Additionally, an e-survey was designed and distributed to primary school educators working in the city centre of Athens.

### ii.   The target group The school children

Six 11-year-old pupils participated in the study. They were all attending a mainstream primary school in the city centre of Athens. They were all in the same classroom, along with 12 more native speakers. A total of eighteen children, with a mixed ethnic background attended the 5th grade of that school in downtown Athens.

All the classroom children had the same online tutoring, but the researchers followed the participation and progress of the six non native Greek speakers only. Van Geel et al.

(2019) claim that educators should not use a unique common basis but might intentionally differentiate teaching activities so that learners receive instruction that meets their needs. The teacher of the classroom initially conducted an interview with the receiving class's teacher regarding her students' educational needs and the reception class curriculum. To further specify their academic level in Greek, students were assigned a self-assessment table on the first lesson of our online intervention, based on the European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, n.d.).

According to the records, and a several-month interaction with the students in the class, three out of six students with a migrant background are of level A1-A2 in Greek language proficiency (Council of Europe, n.d.). Thus, the separated Greek language virtual class aimed at them, considering their needs analysis and their mutual proficiency in Greek. They would be instructed on the same activities as the rest of their classmates. However, the lessons' learning objectives would be differentiated as their language learning needs are. The rest of the six students with a migrant background would also be assigned the same tasks concerning their acquired discrete language skills (Cummins, 2001), and their estimated B1-B2 proficiency in the Greek language.

As this study realized online, a research diary is grounded on the web platforms' archives. All the assignments, the students' deliverables, their posts, and peer- and self-evaluations, and their evaluation of the remote teaching procedure constitute the main data collected for the case study.
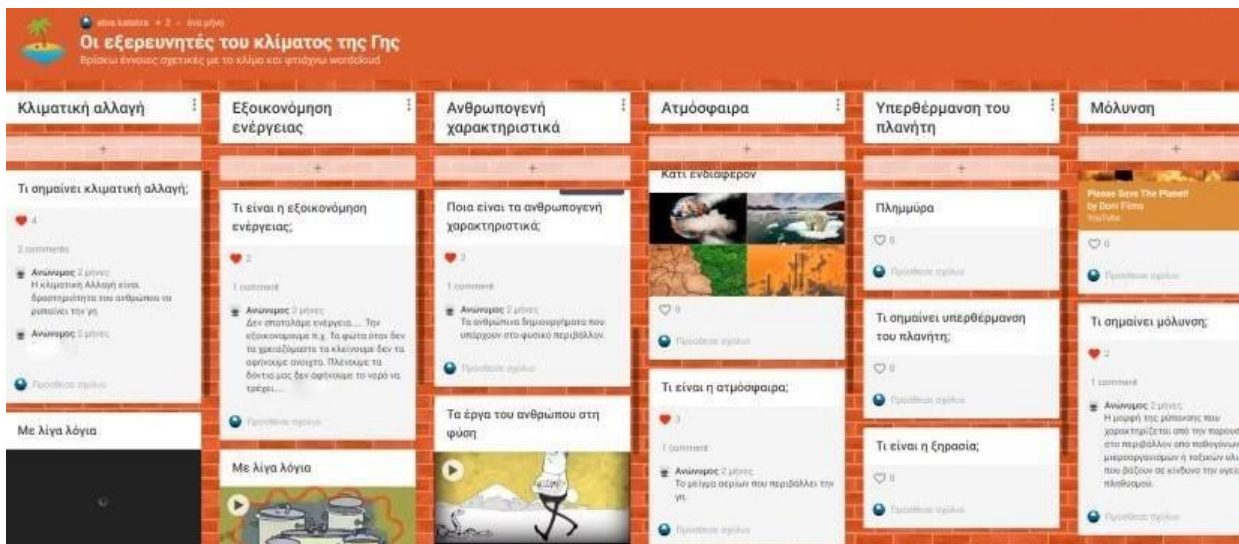
Picture 1. Texts produced by a students' team on Padlet.

i.   Working with teachers

This study aimed at exploring:

(1) If TBLT activities, grounded on the school curriculum and supported by CALL features, enhance migrant students' language learning.

(2) What are the crucial factors that affect migrant students' active lesson participation remotely.

To examine the second research question, an e-survey was designed. The e-survey was targeted to teachers and can be found in the link https://forms.gle/uAmPhVCN7UZfXs4y7. İt was send to all teachers working in the neighbourhood, where the children attended. All the schools in the area resemble demografically, in the sence that the majority of the children are of working class background and there is also a significant number of migrant and refugee background children among thw school population. 57 educators participated in the research, by filling in the questionaire.

Ethical considerations

In this study, all rules stated to be followed within the scope of "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive" were followed. None of the actions stated under the title "Actions Against Scientific Research and Publication Ethics", which is the second part of the directive, were not taken.

Ethical review board name: Sevasti Paida, Magda Vitsou, Nektaria Palaiologou

Date of ethics review decision: 2020-09-05

Ethics assessment document issue number: registered at apothesis portal at HOU

RESULTS

The case study results

i.   *Students' attendance and accessibility*

The goal of the TBLT intervention was to improve students' reading and speaking skills to expand their awareness, encourage them to navigate the web for valuable data to make them more responsible as their virtual wall would become public. However, this part was covered with many practical issues. The project was inextricably linked with the teleconferences. Via Webex, the researcher, who was also the teacher of the classroom, shared her screen to show students how they could use the suggested web 2.0 tools (Padlet and Canva) to complete their group's assigned tasks, along with further clarification for the

task-based procedure. Regarding the students' attendance on the remote courses, many problems emerged sporadically due to the Covid-19 situation and the students' first acquaintance with distance learning methods.

To overcome these issues, the teacher addressed the school's director to determine whether the Ministry of Education had already sent any tablets or personal computers to improve students' accessibility during our lessons [1]. His answer was negative. The next step was attempting to guide the students on the telephone. The researcher decided then to create four (4) asynchronous videos with step-by-step instructions.

i. The students' evaluation of the ERT procedure

According to the last evaluation of the course, the students commented they did not expect the distance learning to be that way because they believed we would keep following the book material. However, they liked the task-based project concerning the climate, feeling proud of their effort, without providing the researcher with any proposal for changes.

The e-survey results

The major problems the educators dealt with concerned the poor or no internet connection in their students' houses, the lack of a suitable device, and the knowledge on handling the required online platforms. The educators claimed at a rate of 31,6% that they overcame these problems, while 61,2% did not overcome them on their entity or a part of them. Most of them who overcame the emerged issues did it on their own (66.7%) or with the assistance of their director (47,4%) or/and their colleagues (35.1%) (table 1).

Table 1

Problems encountered by educators

Connecting issues	31,6% overcame the problems	61,2% did not overcome them	
Ability to overcome the emerged issues	on their own (66.7%)	with the assistance of their director (47,4%)	with the assistance of their colleagues (35.1%)

Concerning the problems their students with refugee or migrant backgrounds encountered on the ERT procedure, these extend to a great range, with most popular among

them linguistic barriers (75.4%) and inability in understanding the instructions on the platform tasks (63.2%). Other issues concern the psychological situation of these students during curfew, such as lack of interest in the lessons and assignments (31.6%), refusing to take part in the remote assignments (22.8%), and/or even expressing signs of sadness and grief (21.1%) (table 2).

Table 2

Participants' Judgements of the Order of Fear-type Emotion Verbs on the Scale

Problems encountered by students	%
Linguistic barriers	75.4
Inability on understanding the instructions⊞	63.2
Lack of interest for the lessons and assignments⊞	31.6
Refusing to take part in the remote assignments	22.8
Expressing signs of sadness and grief⊞	21.1

Data from the section concerned with the synchronous remote teaching procedure shows great declination on the bilingual students' participation rate in asynchronous against the synchronous form of distance education. The non-participation of students with a refugee or migrant background in the synchronous teleconferences was noted at a total rate of 45.8% compared to their 8.8% absence of the asynchronous teaching procedure. No significant increase was noted in the bilingual students' participation rate in the remote teaching procedure (15.4%). Contrariwise, it either marked a decrease of 40.4% or remained stable at a rate of 42.1%. The referred problems emerged in connecting the students with refugee or migrant backgrounds on the scheduled teleconferences. Most of the responses concerned connection disabilities, while a smaller rate refers to psychological issues.

As regards the educators' efforts on providing interesting lessons that correspond to their students with migrant and refugee background needs, most of those who responded to this item (26 respondents) stated that they used a variety of multimedia (images, videos, presentations, etc.). As they note, their lessons were created in a playful manner and they were adjusted to their language proficiency levels or their assignments were even applied personalized. These educators stated they managed overcame, to a great extent, the problems that emerged in their communication with their bilingual students.

In the last part of the survey, respondents were asked to evaluate the emergency remote teaching procedure as it applied in the school year 2019-2020 due to the COVID-19 quarantine. The respondents stated that the migrant and refugee students' lesson participation was much limited (42.1%), non-existent (19.3%), or the same (29.8%) as their monolingual students' attendance rate. Only 3.5% mentioned that it was larger. No significant differences were found in the effectiveness between the asynchronous or synchronous distance education concerning the specific vulnerable student population which, according to the respondents, was limited. The most striking result to emerge from the data is that most educators (61.4%) believe that the students with refugee or migrant backgrounds are excluded from the ERT procedure, as it has been applied during the particular period in Greece. They also believe at a great rate (64.9%) that the migrant and refugee children lack equal opportunities compared with their native schoolmates (table 3).

Table 3

Evaluation of the emergency remote teaching procedure as it applied in the school year 2019-2020 due to the Covid-19 quarantine

the migrant/refugee students' lesson participation	the migrant/refugee students' exclusion from the ERT	the migrant/refugee children's lack of equal opportunities
was much limited (42.1%)	61.4%	64.9%
non-existent (19.3%)		
the same (29.8%)		

DISCUSSION

The remote TBLT intervention of our case study focused on improving students' L2 skills grounded in their educational needs and linked to real-life tasks. The students became researchers and journalists while they acquired knowledge in an autonomous and captivating way. As Macalister and Nation (2010) highlight, encouraging learner autonomy is a particularly important goal in curriculum design. Nevertheless, since the beginning of the first lesson interventions in the TBLT procedure, the bilingual students' attendance was limited. The researcher organized quantitative research to check these findings with educators' similar situations. It was designed to further determine the crucial factors that affect migrant students' active lesson participation remotely.

Consistent with the quantitative results, the bilingual students' attendance on the synchronous forms of the emergency remote teaching was greatly reduced compared to the asynchronous methods. Only two of the six (2/6) students with migrant backgrounds took part in the scheduled classroom teleconferences via the Webex platform. There are, however, other explanations for the inconsistency in their participation. For instance, the second part coincided with the lifting of the curfew, and the weather improved following the Easter period in Greece. The students also stated at the teleconferences that they had lost their prior excitement about distance learning because they had many tasks in different fields and separate platforms according to their teachers' preferences. While learners were aware of the digital dimension of their studying in the project, it appeared to some that communicating with the online tool solely was not the desired option (Guo et al., 2020). All these factors, along with the non-obligatory nature of ERT during this period, substantially affected their participation rate. These results corroborate the findings of the quantitative research where the educators stated that as time passed by, their students' attendance was decreasing.

As regards the issues that the educators faced in communicating with their students and their families, the charts indicated they confronted many problems to stay in touch with their non-native students compared to their native ones. The educators mentioned as major problems the lack of accessibility on the internet or on a suitable electronic device, linguistic barriers, and inability in understanding the instructions on the platform tasks. Other issues concern the psychological situation of these students during the lockdown, such as lack of interest in the lessons and assignments, refusing to take part in the remote assignments, and/or expressing signs of sadness and grief. As Di Pietro et al. (2020) notice, physical school closing, and distance education have a detrimental impact on students' performance across four main channels: reduced time spent studying, anxiety signs, a shift in the way students communicate, and loss of enthusiasm for learning. Interestingly, the respondents also noticed the absence of the interaction that makes the lesson comprehensible and motivates the children, making them feel more confident. Guo et al. (2020) assert that, for the support teachers, the lack of educator awareness of students and their contexts is a matter of concern with the application of technology. All these issues also accord with our earlier qualitative observations, which showed that the lack of the appropriate device on the scheduled time of the teleconferences, students' psychological statements during the quarantine, and the absence of face-to-face teacher-student interaction led to reduced rates of students' attendance remotely.

Concerning the educators' efforts on overcoming the above issues, these reflect our earlier observations, which first showed that the accessibility of the students finally did not solve with the promising devices donated by the Ministry of Education. They also showed that the written instructions (even the translated ones) could not efficiently help the bilingual students to fulfill the assigned tasks asynchronously. Unfortunately, the written instructions aiming at asynchronous remote methods are possibly too difficult for students

of level A in Greek. On the other hand, the educators who stated that adjusted their lessons' content according to their students' language proficiency level claimed that they somewhat dealt with such issues. Teachers are not only key players in the distribution of life opportunities to their students, but they are also themselves engaged in these challenges, with their personal stories, their encounters with the complexities of social borders, and their need for acknowledgment and inclusion (Helsper et al. 2001; Helsper 2002; Mantel, 2020).

Despite the initial observations on the limited attendance rate of the bilingual students in our case study, the researcher insisted on providing alternative ways of integrating these four students into the environmental project. The results showed that there was not just one method applied to all the students effectively. One way that assisted one girl to fulfill the tasks was the instructor-made step-by-step videos uploaded on the Edmodo platform. This girl has advanced her writing; however, her emotional condition and her shy profile are affecting her oral progress. For her, observing her teacher sharing her screen and giving instructions in simple Greek language worked effectively. This finding corroborates the idea of Aggeli (2017) and Papadela et al. (2020) who suggest that a video is a powerful tool used in distance education at all levels to support teaching and learning processes in second language acquisition as it presents the information attractively and consistently.
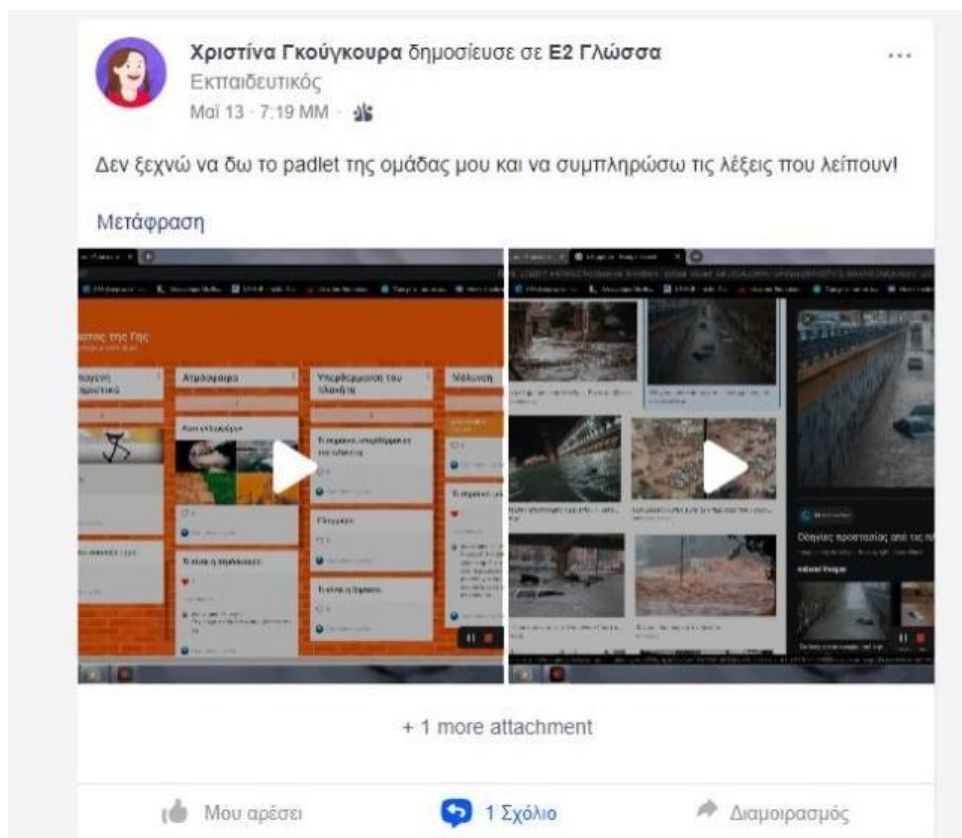
Picture 2. Video with step-by-step instructions on how to create a post on Padlet.

One girl could not connect on the Webex platform via her smartphone, so we arranged two (2) weekly afternoon meetings on Viber that she found much easier to handle. Via screen sharing and instructions on using the suggested web 2.0 tools, she completed some tasks. As she was facing personal and family health problems, she could rather not be consistent with the tasks in their entirety. However, she did her best according to her efforts. One boy cooperated with the educator via telephone calls. He did not take part in the group work on Padlet, but he completed efficiently the relative assignments on Edmodo and the article for our environmentally friendly magazine.

The above differences in the tasks can be explained in part by students' individual preferences on the way of learning. Mantel (2020) states that all students should be regarded as equal in the perspective of equal access to education, regardless of their ethnic or socioeconomic status, gender, or religion. However, as she notices, securing equal opportunities does not always mean equal treatment, since differentiated treatment can be essential to establish equal rights. Contrary to expectations, five of the six (5/6) students with migrant backgrounds finally took part in this TBL as they provided their effort on the plenary's outcome, the common magazine. It could be argued that the positive results are in agreement with those of the quantitative research indicating that the educators, who mentioned that they struggled to keep their students' interest in the emergency remote teaching procedure, considering their linguistic needs and trying multiple methods for communicate with them, finally overcame the initial obstacles at a great rate. Our TBLT magazine was finally published on the website issue and in a collective action organized by the Heads of Environmental Education and School Activities with the theme "No plastics in my sea" in the context of the Environment Day on June 5 and the Day of the Oceans on June 8. This outcome further supports the idea that the use of web 2.0 tools can contribute to the reorientation of education with the possibilities it provides for the opening of the school to society and the world, with the first step being the organization of models of cooperation between schools and classes (Pozidis et al., 2015).

Regarding the students' remote teaching experience and evaluation, some children seemed to struggle with distance learning, whereas, for others, it was a highly suitable educational path. Interestingly, the girl from Moldavia seemed to be more actively learning online than when in class because her inability to speak was no longer an obstacle to creating artful posts, signaling likes, and commenting on tasks by typing. Such an outcome demonstrates the well-known assumption that each child acquires knowledge individually according to his/her abilities and interests.

Turning once again on the quantitative results, on the last part of the research, the respondents generally believe that, either asynchronous or synchronous, distance education is not as effective to a socioeconomically vulnerable student population. Their majority also believe that the students with refugee or migrant backgrounds are excluded from the

emergency remote teaching procedure, as it has been applied during the particular period in Greece. This inconsistency to the above results may be because just 24% answered the question of providing us with information regarding their efforts on communicating effectively with their students. A probable explanation might be that all these educators could not struggle on discovering the most efficient ways of distance learning without adequate guidance and training from the Ministry of Education in such a sudden emergency condition. Another explanation for this is that the accessibility issues concerning the internet connection and the lack of proper devices of such an economically vulnerable population, as the migrant and refugee students and their families are, remained unsolved until the lockdown ended. These results, therefore, need to be interpreted with caution.

Most educators seemed discouraged and afraid of the distance education implications drought that it could empower migrant and refugee students' learning if used in conjunction with face-to-face education. These findings are rather disappointing and are far below those observed by Papanikolaou and Manousou (2019) who suggest that supplementary distance education may be efficiently applied in primary education for lessons replenishment by students occasionally absent from school.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMONDATIONS

The present research has been one of the first attempts to examine thoroughly the interaction of TBLT, CALL, and second language acquisition in primary education. However, being limited to bilingual students' attendance and inclusion on the ERT, this paper lacks a thorough report on migrant students' performance in the Greek language, as the case study does not focus on their rate of grammatical or syntactical error occurrence. Despite its limitations, this study certainly adds to our understanding of students' capacity for detecting their errors and shortcomings and to evaluating themselves, a process that increases their autonomous and critical learning ability.

Further studies regarding the role of the interaction of basic linguistic errors with other variables linked to the remote TBLT procedure would be worthwhile. Continued efforts are needed to make distance education more accessible to every student in need. A key policy priority should also be to plan for comprehensive training of the educators regarding second language acquisition on distance education to prevent the vulnerable student population from the exclusion of such a crucial educational procedure.

CONCLUSION

This research has identified many issues on the connection and attendance asynchronously but mainly synchronously of elementary students with migrant and refugee background comparison with the native students. The results show that the emergency remote teaching, as it was applied in March 2020 lockdown because of COVID-19, excluded at a great rate the participation of this vulnerable student population. The

condition of emergency in such a sudden situation left the Greek Ministry of Education with limited available time to organize adequate training on distance education for the teachers and to offer efficient solutions on the accessibility issues that emerged. Initial observations suggest that emergency remote teaching also contributes to the reproduction of social inequalities in education (Di Pietro et al., 2020). However, another major finding was that the educators who were more flexible on the communication methods applied and those who were taken into consideration their students' linguistic needs and interests finally managed to overcome many of the emerged issues. As Tour et al. (2021) argue, though experiential digital projects were beneficial in their research, their effectiveness primarily depends on educators.

As Lee et al. (2019) assert, L2 teachers' motivational techniques are the guiding principle that triggers, leads, and empowers goal-oriented learners' behavior either in or out of the classroom.

As regards the TBLT method applied, the most obvious finding to emerge here is that this process is linked to the bilingual students' needs and interests and connected to real-life activities. Its remote application also increases their autonomous and critical learning ability, enhancing their computer skills while practicing their second language. For Guo et al. (2020) the scope for effectiveness is only increased when inter-elementary interventions are implemented, accompanied by productive collaborations and a strong engagement from the group. However, being limited to bilingual students' attendance and inclusion on the emergency remote teaching, this research lacks a thorough report on migrant students' performance in the Greek language, as the case study does not focus on their rate of grammatical or syntactical error occurrence. Despite its limitations, this study certainly adds to our understanding of students' capacity for detecting their errors and shortcomings and to evaluating themselves, a process that increases their autonomous and critical learning ability.

Overall, this mixed-methods case study strengthens the idea that the public school may operate as a mechanism for empowering the socioeconomically vulnerable population of society. Schools are crucial sites for these challenges, as in schools, life chances for acknowledgment and interaction are being spread and supported (Mantel, 2020). As Portera (2020) argues, education should treat difference and change as a universal axiom in all places around the world and in every context. The exchange of cultural information online becomes a meaningful and authentic activity for communication in a second language (Okumura, 2020). The learners showed the capacity to maintain cross - cultural interactions and collaborative work outside of the real classroom, which is a critical contribution of emergency remote teaching to language education (Ruan, & Medwell, 2019). Further studies regarding the role of the interaction of basic linguistic errors with other variables linked to the remote TBLT procedure would be worthwhile. Continued efforts are needed to make distance education more accessible to every student in need. A key policy priority should also be to plan for comprehensive training of the educators regarding second language

acquisition on distance education to prevent the vulnerable student population from the exclusion of such a crucial educational procedure.

REFERENCES

Aggeli, A. L. (2017). Distance teaching / learning Greek as a second / foreign language: the contribution of video. *International Conference on Open & Distance Education, 9*(3A), 120-128.

Aguliera, E., & Nightengale-Lee, B. (2020). Emergency remote teaching across urban and rural contexts: perspectives on educational equity. *Information and Learning Sciences.* 10.1108/ILS-04-2020-0100.

Aukerman, M. (2007). A culpable CALP: Rethinking the conversational/academic language proficiency distinction in early literacy instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 60*(7), 626-635.

Beatty, K. (2013). *Teaching & researching: Computer-assisted language learning*. Routledge.

Chapelle, C. A. (2003). *English language learning and technology: Lectures on applied linguistics in the age of information and communication technology* (Vol. 7). John Benjamins Publishing.

Chappelle, C. A. (2001). Computer applications in second language acquisition. *Cambridge Applied linguistics. New York.–2001.*

Collier, V. P. (1987). Age and rate of acquisition of second language for academic purposes. *TESOL Quarterly, 21*(4), 617-641.

Council of Europe (n.d.). The CEFR Levels. COUNCIL OF EUROPE. https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.

Cummins, J. (2001*). Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society* (2nd ed.). California Association for Bilingual Education.

DEPPS—APS (2003). Government Newspaper. INTERACTIVE TEXTBOOKS. http://ebooks.edu.gr/new/ps.php

Di Pietro, G., Biagi, F., Costa, P., Karpiński, Z., & Mazza, J. (2020). *The likely impact of COVID-19 on education: Reflections based on the existing literature and recent international datasets* (No. JRC121071). Joint Research Centre (Seville site).

Doughty, C. J., & Long, M. H. (2003). Optimal psycholinguistic environments for distance foreign language learning. *Language Learning & Technology, 7*(3), 50-80.

Ellis, R. (2005). Principles of instructed language learning. *System, 33*(2), 209–224.

Ethnos (Apr 23, 2020). *Donation of 8,400 tablets and laptops to students and teachers.* ETHNOS. https://www.ethnos.gr/ellada/101713_dorea-8400-tamplet-kai-laptop-se-mathites-kai-ekpaideytikoys

Fakoulas, S. (2020). *Learning Management Systems: The case of utilization of four Learning Management Systems in primary educations* [Master's thesis, Aegean University]. HELLANICUS http://hdl.handle.net/11610/20971.

González-Lloret, M., & Nielson, K. B. (2015). *Evaluating TBLT: The case of a task-based Spanish program. Language Teaching Research, 19*(5), 525-549.

González-Lloret, M., & Ortega, L. (2014). Towards technology-mediated TBLT. *Technology-Mediated TBLT: Researching Technology and Tasks, 6*, 1–22.

Guo, K., Bussey, F., & Adachi, C. (2020). Digital learning across cultures: an account of activity theory. *Intercultural Education,* 1-15.

Helsper, W. (2002). Teacher professionalism as an antinomic structure of action. *Biographie und Profession, 1*, 64-85.

Helsper, W., Böhme, J., Kramer, R. T., & Lingkost, A. (2013). School culture and school myth: grammar schools between elitist education and higher elementary schools in the process of transformation. *Rekonstruktionen zur Schulkultur I* (Vol. 13). Springer-Verlag.

Hodges, C., Moore, S., Lockee, B., Trust, T., & Bond, A. (2020). The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning. *EDUCAUSEReview.* https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergency-remote-teaching-and-online-learning?fbclid=IwAR06enKBAIRpgkNA62QEEnOmjNztxrxdrjvuLD5pMzIUi8iBkAYhOMDABOM.

Irvine Unified School District (2020). *Emergency distance learning plan.* IUSD https://iusd.org/emergency-distance-learning-plan.

Jeon, I. J., & Hahn, J. W. (2006). Exploring EFL teachers' perceptions of task-based language teaching: A case study of Korean secondary school classroom practice. *Asian EFL Journal, 8*(1), 123-143.

Lionarakis, A. (2011). Distance and conventional training: convergent or divergent forces?. In *PARALLEL TEXTS for the Thematic Unit "Open and Distance Education"*, EKP65. HOU.

Lee, T. S., Gardner, D., & Lau, K. (2020). The effects of L2 motivational strategies: within and beyond the L2 classroom. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 14*(5), 451-465.

Macalister, J., & Nation, I. S. P. (2010). *Language curriculum design*. Routledge.

Manousou, E. (2004). Distance education applications in primary education. In *1st Panhellenic Two-Day Conference with International Participation on: Lifelong and Distance Education in the Information Society*. University of Crete.

Mantel, C. (2020). Being a teacher with a so-called 'immigrant background': challenges of dealing with social boundaries. *Intercultural Education, 31*(2), 173-189.

Miminou, A., & Spanaka, A. (2016). Distance education primary and secondary schools and programs: A literature review. *International Conference on Open & Distance Education, 7* (2A).

Niari, M., Samaras, C., Koutsoukos, V., Lionarakis, A., & Verikios, V. (2017). Distance collaborative learning in technical vocational education. The case of vehicle control remotely. *Open Education: the magazine for Open and Distance Education and Educational Technology, 13*(1), 54-64.

Okumura, S. (2020). Design and implementation of a telecollaboration project for primary school students to trigger intercultural understanding. *Intercultural Education, 31*(4), 377-389, DOI: 10.1080/14675986.2020.17525

Palaiologou, N. (2009). Needs for developing culturally oriented supportive learning with the aid of information and communication technologies, *Pedagogy, culture and society. (1468-1366), 17*(2), p.189.

Papadela, C. V., Koutsoumba, M., & Mavroidis, H. (2020). Video as a mean for learning in distance pre-school polymorphic education: a proposed model for its assessment. *International Conference on Open & Distance Education, 10* (1A), 62-75.

Papanikolaou, K., & Manousou, E. (2019). Complementary distance education for Primary School Students. An Action Research on lesson compensation occasionally absent from the school class students. *International Conference on Open & Distance Education, 8*(1), 184-201.

Portera, A. (2020). Has multiculturalism failed? Let's start the era of interculturalism for facing diversity issues. *Intercultural Education, 31*(4), 390-406.

Pozidis, P., Manousou, E., & Koutsoumpa, M. (2015). Cooperative learning in the framework of supplementary environmental distant learning in the network of primary schools of Corfu. *International Conference on Open & Distance Education, 8*(1A).

Psallidas, V., & Manousou, E. (2016). The utilization of web 2.0 tools in the supplementary distance learning in Secondary Education. Case study: The design and organization course of Biology in the third class of High School in Sustainable Development Education program. *International Conference on Open & Distance Education, 6*(1A).

Ruan, J., & Medwell, J. (2020). Using social networking technology to develop intercultural communicative competence: a case of GCSE Mandarin. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 14*(4), 362-392.

Sampson, R. J., & Yoshida, R. (2021). L2 feelings through interaction in a Japanese-English online chat exchange. *Innovation in language learning and teaching, 15*(2), 131-142.

Snow, C. E., & Uccelli, P. (2009). The challenge of academic language. In D. R. Olson & N. Torrance (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of literacy* (p. 112–133). Cambridge University Press. 10.1017/CBO9780511609664.008

Sobre, M. S. (2017). Developing the critical intercultural classspace: theoretical implications and pragmatic applications of critical intercultural communication pedagogy. *Intercultural Education, 28*(1), 39-59. 10.1080/14675986.2017.1288984

Thomas, M., & Reinders, H. (2010). Deconstructing tasks and technology. *Task-based language learning and teaching with technology,* 1-16.

Tour, E., Gindidis, M., & Newton, A. (2021). Learning digital literacies through experiential digital storytelling in an EAL context: an exploratory study. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 15*(1), 26-41.

Van Geel, M., Keuning, T., Frèrejean, J., Dolmans, D., van Merriënboer, J., & Visscher, A. J. (2019). *Capturing the complexity of differentiated instruction. School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 30*(1), 51-67.

Wakil, K., Abdulfaraj, A., Sadula, A., Tofiq, D., & Nawzad, L. (2019). Performance of distance learning compared with face to face learning. *Journal of Educational Science and Technology (EST), 5*(1), 1-8.

Yi, Y., & Jang, J. (2020). Envisioning possibilities amid the COVID-19 pandemic: Implications from English language teaching in South Korea. *TESOL Journal, 11*(3).

Biographical notes:

Christina Gkougkoura: holds an MA on Multicultural Education from the School of Humanities at Hellenic Open University and she teaches at the Elementary School of Logga in Messinia.

Dr Sevie Paida: is a PhD holder of Educational Studies, from the University of York, in United Kingdom. Her specialisation lays in the field of intercultural education, migrant and refugee education, second language acquisition. She is a tutor in Hellenic Open University.

Dr Magda Vitsou: holds a Phd in Theater in Education. She is Laboratory Teaching Staff in the Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Thessaly. She has majored in "Puppetry in education and art therapy", in London School of Puppetry and she has been certified in the development of levels of certification of the knowledge of Greek language as foreign / second.

Nektaria Palaiologou: is Associate Professor at the School of Humanities at Hellenic Open University (HOU), former Assoc. Professor at the School of Education at the University of Western Macedonia (UoWM) until 2020. Since 2001 until today she has taught

Intercultural Education, Migration and Refugee Education courses at six Greek and at two European Universities.