The Phoenix: Teachers' Narratives of Emergency Remote Teaching and the Return to Face-to-Face Education

El Fénix: Relatos de docentes sobre la enseñanza remota de emergencia y el regreso a la educación presencial.

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Abstract

COVID-19 continues to persist among the field of education. After six years from teaching at home, it is impossible to forget all the challenges that teachers faced. However, that was the beginning of that significant journey. This article is based on a qualitative, narrative study in which three teachers participated by sharing their experiences during and after the Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT), directed by specific guiding questions. The results are displayed by doing a parallel with the Myth of Phoenix which has become a symbol of renewal, rebirth, and resilience. Conclusions are presented in terms of several disagreements in the relations among institutions, planning, and teaching practices; changes in academic and social realities among teachers' practices as they re-

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turned to face-to-face education, and teachers' perspectives on the influence of ERT compared to face-to-face education.

Keywords

COVID-19; emergency remote teaching; education; narratives.

Resumen

El Covid-19 continúa entre nosotros. Después de seis años de haber enseñado desde casa, es imposible olvidar los retos que los profesores tuvieron que enfrentar. Sin embargo, aquello solo era el comienzo de este viaje significativo. Este artículo está basado en un estudio cualitativo, de carácter narrativo, en el que tres profesoras compartieron sus experiencias durante y después de la Enseñanza Remota de Emergencia, ERM, mediante narrativas guiadas por preguntas específicas. Los resultados se muestran mediante un paralelo con el Mito del Ave Fénix, como símbolo de renovación, renacimiento y resiliencia. Las conclusiones se presentan en términos de desacuerdo entre las instituciones, el planeamiento y las prácticas de enseñanza; cambios en las realidades sociales y académicas de los docentes en el momento de regresar a clases presenciales y en las perspectivas de impacto de la ERM en la educación presencial.

Palabras clave

COVID 19; enseñanza remota de emergencia; educación; narrativas.

Introduction

March 2020 will remain in people's minds as the month that changed people's lives all around the world. Six years have expired but it is not possible to forget that once COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, most countries established contingency strategies. In terms of education, more than 1.4 billion students were not able to attend face-to-face classes because their schools had to be temporarily closed. Some educational entities in an attempt to facilitate the continuity of education decided to promote remote education. In Colombia, students were on an academic break and did not start remote teaching until April 20th (UNESCO, 2020).

The transition from face-to-face classes to remote teaching was regulated by national policies. The Colombian President determined the work at home by means of the Directive 02 of 2020. In addition, the Resolution 385 of 2020, enacted by the Health and Social Protection Ministry, declared the sanitary emergency because of the virus, and ruled other necessary actions. The same Ministry, by means of the Resolution 407 of 2020, constrained to heads, legal representatives, administrators and teachers to adopt prevention and control measures in the work places in order to prevent the COVID 19 spread. In that vein, the different departments in Colombia had to fulfill the previous regulations.

Boyacá declared the public calamity through the Decree 180 of 2020, and Tunja, Boyacá's capital, promulgated the Decree 0079 of 2020. This regulation established how the city adhered to the Presidential Directive 002 of 2020, one of whose requirements was to continue the educative process at home by using TICs. After approximately a year and three months of having been in remote teaching, the Colombian government enacted regulations like the Resolution 777 of 2021. The aforementioned regulation claimed to majors and educative secretaries to organize the educative service in order to guarantee the safe return of students to schools. Nonetheless, the same law asked for considering just biosecurity measures, without considering the effects that confinement, and that ERT could produce in students.

According to Di Pietro, et al., (2020) it has been evident a negative effect in the cognitive and non-cognitive abilities development in students because of the closure of the schools. Additionally, students had felt increased stress, reduced the time they dedicate to studying, and changed the way they interacted with their peers. The same authors assert that those students who come from lower economic and social contexts were the most affected. Those negative consequences are visible and tangible in all the educative levels. Repercussions such as sleeping issues, different food diets, and excessive screen time could affect students in short and long term (Luna et al.2023) In the same way, authors like García-Jaramillo (2020) also recognizes that schools closures affect the present and the future of children, especially those in vulnerability conditions. García-Jaramillo (2020) explains how the negative consequences include school dropouts, abuses into the family contexts and physical and emotional problems.

Several authors have studied different settings on remote teaching and strategies to implement it successfully, bearing in mind the most relevant aspects of

its application such as online resources, students' needs, mental health, and autonomous learning (Ali, 2020; Asanov, et al., 2021; Daniel, 2020; Morgan, 2020; Serhan, 2020) mainly focusing on the implications among learners and their process. In addition, some scholars have considered teachers' perspectives of online learning (Aliyyah et al., 2020) as well as teachers' views on the degree of readiness towards distance learning (Doghonadze et al., 2020). Since there have been many studies regarding remote education, some of them analyzing students and other educators, it is also appropriate to understand that each country, each city, each school, and even each teacher had their own individual experiences regarding the way they lived that situation, as well as, its consequences in the return to face-to-face education.

Even though the COVID 19 continues to spread around the world, the human being has found the way to handle it. Although, professors cannot deny that its negative effects will be surrounded the schools. Teachers must be aware of the necessity to promote actions that help students to be more sociable, resilient and open-minded to find opportunities for both learning and fun beyond the screens. That is, to know how to handle with the consequences that the virus left.

In this study, three language teachers from Colombian public-school contexts narrated their experiences about the implications, struggles, and consequences of adapting their face-to-face classes to remote ones by learning to use virtual environments and digital tools. Aditionally, they discussed the consequences and the effects that emergency remote teaching had on their teaching practices when returning to face-to-face education. For this purpose, the following research question arose: "What do public-school language teachers' narratives reveal about the return to face-to-face education after emergency remote teaching?".

Theoretical framework

Education in the Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic was a health crisis that affected the world and that started in Wuhan, China in December 2019. On January 7th 2020, the World Health Organization identified the new Coronavirus and proclaimed this outbreak as an emergency of public health of international concern. Because of the rapid spread of the virus, at a first moment, a Public Health Emergency of International Concern was declared on January 30, 2020, and then as a pandemic on March 11, 2020.

This pandemic derived not only in analyzing this novel pathogen, but also in looking for alternatives to continue living in the confinement. García-Jaramillo (2020) claimed that "The COVID-19 pandemic has led governments to make drastic decisions on the operation of various economic and social activities" (p. 4), making the educative sector one of the most affected.

After the COVID-19 was declared as a pandemic, all the countries around the world started to take social, economic and sanitary measures. In Colombia, the pandemic was declared as a sanitary emergency through the Resolution 385 of 2020, until May 30 2020. By means of the Decree 470 of 2020, the government presented the tools to continue with education in all the levels, based on the state of emergency. The Circular Letter 20 of 2020 asked to the National Education Secretaries to adjust the academic calendar to retake the activities on April 20th of 2020. Firstly, the same Circular Letter requested to the secretaries to take two weeks to plan the pedagogical actions to carry out during the sanitary emergency. The work outside the schools was prioritized, and the Educational Ministry made available the "Digital learning: Contents for everybody" platform. Secondly, the Circular Letter established a three-week vacation period for teachers and students until April 19th, when further arrangements would be made, based on the evolution of the pandemic.

According to UNESCO (2020), by the end of March 2020, more than 1.4 billion students were not able to attend face-to-face classes. In that sense, as an attempt to facilitate the continuity of education, some educational entities decided to promote the implementation of what they called "remote education". Rozo & Ramírez (2025) stated that remote education was "the most widely used alternative to continue educational processes during the confinements of the COVID-19 pandemic" (p. 71). According to these same authors remote education is not delimited to the place where it occurs and may contribute to the hybridization of education.

The measures taken to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus COVID-19 in Colombia ensured flexible pedagogical strategies. As Hurtado (2020) claimed, the objective of the school in trying to reduce the consequences of the pandemic in the learning process, became more relevant than ever. In that vein, by means of the Resolution 1721 the Health and Social Protection Ministry (2020) provided the guidelines to continue offering the educative service under some conditions that guarantee protection to students. For the Colombian government, despite the pandemic, the education continued as a social service and as human right. The afore-

mentioned Resolution (2020) dedicates a section to understand some concepts in which distance accompaniment and academic work at home were included, but Emergency Remote Teaching does not appear. The program called "Together at home, we are going to do it very well" allowed to guarantee the continuity in the educative process to children and adolescents during the sanitary emergency However, teachers struggled with the adaptation of this new model, as stated by Allen et al. (2020). The teachers' role through these difficult and unexpected times led to intensified workloads since they were not only creating and delivering teaching content and material but also, they were becoming efficient in the development of programs to do so. Based on Temelli, et al., (2021) "...the roles of teachers working in distance education applications during the Covid-19 pandemic period came to the fore as communicator, collaborator, learner and facilitator." (p. 315). Some of the previous roles are common in teachers. Nonetheless, ERT showed those roles evidently. It is expected that any teacher continues learning, but the sanitary emergency demanded to learn about digital tools and skills quickly.

Emergency Remote Teaching

When countries had to establish contingency strategies to prevent COVID-19 from spreading, teachers were compelled to adapt their face-to -face teaching practices to remote ones to provide a temporary solution to the health emergency. This is where Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) appeared. Hodges, et al., (2020) proposed the term Emergency Remote Teaching to point out the form of instruction used because of the sanitary emergency situation. These researchers clarified that they used the term *teaching* due to the basic definitions "the act, practice, or profession of a teacher" (unpaged). The term is also defined by Ayoub (2024) as a temporary and challenging solution in the shift from face-to-face to online content delivery. In fact, Affouneh, et al. (2020) stated that ERT is "not usually planned in advance and involves a sudden shift from traditional teaching into a remote one in view of emergency situations like the outbreak of Coronavirus in different countries" (p. 1).

ERT differs from online learning since it does not require a sequence design in which the learner explores autonomously in order to access content through interaction as the way to build knowledge (Sepúlveda, 2020) as well as the fact that its designing process, due to its immediacy, was not based on a consensual structured planning from the beginning (Garavito, 2023).

Teachers' Narratives

Narratives, also known as stories or tales, are the retelling of a series of events or experiences (Spencer, 2019) which include two wide categories. The first, non-fictional narratives such as memoirs, biographies, news reports, documentaries, travelogs, and the second, fictional narratives such as fairy tales, fables, legends, thrillers, novels, among many others (Carey and Snodgrass, 1999; Harmon, 2012)

While Browning (2009) defined narrative as "the capacity to create meaning through a series of events and characters in a story" (p.673), Fisher (1989) stated that all human communication could be considered a narrative, and Bratu (2009) pointed out that narratives require an understanding of cultural knowledge in order to interpret its elements. In that sense, cultural ideologies are taught, preserved, and perpetuated through narratives as a way to provide a way for humans to make sense of the world through different means such as myths, fables, music, films, and even online sources (Rodriguez, 2016).

Along the same lines, Bamberg (2012) reflected upon the fact that when a person tells a story, he/she is giving a "narrative form" to the experience they have lived since they are positioning characters in a certain space and time as well as giving order to the situation, and making sense of what happened. Thus, through narratives, narrators are not only trying to tell a story, but are also disclosing why things are the way they are or why they have become the way they are. Thus, since a narrative is a "primary form by which human experience is made meaningful" (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 1), then teachers' narratives could tell not only the story of a collective experience but also portray a reflection of who they are as well as the sociocultural implications of the experiences they have lived.

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Methodology

Research Approach

This study was developed through a qualitative approach. For Denzin and Lincoln (2018), qualitative research is a variety of interpretive and material practices that reveal the world that surrounds us. The qualitative research was selected since it allowed to analyze the social representations, perspectives, and understandings of the role that teachers played during emergency remote teaching while providing insights about their experiences, thoughts, and opinions and how they have shaped their current, now face-to-face, teaching practices.

Type of research

The research was a narrative study. Elliott (2005) states that "...a narrative can be understood to organize a sequence of events into a whole so that the significance of each event can be understood through its relation to that whole. In this way, a narrative conveys the meaning of events" (p.3). Stories or narratives can convey the meaning of events in order to understand people, culture, society, and all of the factors that define us as social beings who live and interact with others. In McAlpine's words (2016) the narratives create the construction of the *self.* It is appropriate to elicit and analyze each teacher's experience as an individual set of beliefs, understandings, and contexts that shaped how the implementation of Emergency Remote Teaching was lived in their own words and the consequences they have experienced in their current teaching settings.

Narratives were the main source of data gathering. According to Bamberg (2012) a narrative analysis attempts to relate the meaning of stories while making sense of unique experiences. Teachers' narratives were meant to provide insights to analyze and even comprehend the implications of being a teacher in the pandemic as well as the repercussions of ERT in the return of face-to-face classes from the ones who actually lived these experiences up close while making sense of the reality of public education in Colombia. McAlpine (2016) claims that "Narratives incorporate temporality, a social context, complicating events, and an evaluative conclusion that together make a coherent story" (p. 33) features that are evident in the narratives written by the participants.

On the other hand, Adler, et al., (2017) states that "narratives are subjective constructions that have objective impacts" (p.520). That is, those stories written by the participants in this study are part of their experiences influenced by their emotions, their contexts, their personal backgrounds and the way they perceive the situations. To sum up, those narratives constitute their identity (Adler, et al., 2017), that is "by narrating lived experiences, individuals engage in a discursive practice in which their identity is configured and exhibited" (Gómez, et al., 2023 p. 4)

Research Paradigm

This study is framed under a critical paradigm. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2018), the ontology of critical theory is based on historical realism and a virtual reality shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values which crystallize over time. While talking about epistemology critical theory works as transactional and subjective along with value-mediated findings.

Therefore, the researchers believe that the reality is shaped by historical, social, and cultural aspects that address social inequities, and power differences through the stories and points of view of those involved in ideologies and oppression. In that sense, for this study, it was intended to acknowledge teachers' realities within emergency remote teaching and its consequences while returning to face-to-face education. It is relevant to highlight that each one of their experiences is directly related to specific aspects determined by context, society, politics, economy, among others.

Data Collection Instruments

For this study, the elicitation technique was used in order to collect data. According to Cooke (1994), this technique consists on any number of data collection used to gather knowledge or information from people with the objective of looking for data directly from participants' lives, point of views, and behaviors. Therefore, written narratives were implemented since they allowed to explore an in-depth view of the most representative teachers' experiences through their own words.

Teachers' narratives were meant to provide insights to analyze and even comprehend the implications of being a teacher in the pandemic as well as the repercussions of ERT in the return of face-to-face classes from the ones who actually lived these experiences up close. For that reason, three written narratives were

carried out. First, teaching in the pandemic while being involved in emergency remote teaching, second, going back to face-to-face classes after emergency remote teaching, and third, the adaptation and influence of emergency remote teaching into face-to-face education. Each one of the already mentioned narratives were accompanied by the following guiding questions presented in Table1.

Table N° 1.
Written Narratives During the Study

	Narrative Category	Guiding Questions
1	Teaching in the pandemic while being involved in emergency remote teaching.	Tell me a story about a difficult time during your teaching experience during the pandemic. Was it related to the use of digital/virtual tools? How did you feel? Did you question your job as a teacher? What would you change?
2	Going back to face-to-face classes after ERT.	Tell me a story about the first time you returned to face-to-face classes. How did it feel? What was different? What was the same? How was the reunion with your students and your peers?
3	The adaptation and influence of ERT into face-to-face education.	Tell me a story about a challenging time in your teaching experience going from emergency remote learning to face-to-face education. Did your teaching methodology change? Did the pandemic influence your current teaching practices? Did your students' attitudes toward learning change? What about your own teacher's identity?

Source: Own work

Participants

The participants of this study were three women between the ages of 50-60, who had been public school teachers for over 21 years. Each one of the teachers who work at these schools has specific particularities. They are full-time teachers in different areas, including language teaching, who live in Boyacá, Colombia. Moreover, they had to teach under the emergency remote teaching (ERT) model for almost two years and they are still facing the implications of going back to face-to-face classes. Each one of them chose a pseudonym: Coqui, Rosyco and Tati.

Results and discussion

A narrative analysis was used to approach the stories gathered. According to Stokes (2021), narrative analysis is a useful method for underlying ideologies with-

in stories as well as the larger culture that creates those stories; while Bamberg (2012) described it as the attempt of laying out and making sense of unique experiences. Researchers took into account the following five steps in the inductive coding process proposed by Thomas (2003) in order to develop categories into a model or framework that summarized the raw data and conveyed key themes:

1. Preparation of raw data files (data cleaning).
2. Close reading of the text.
3. Creation of categories: Creating both upper-level categories (from research aims) and lower-level categories (from multiple readings of the raw data).
4. Overlapping coding and uncoded text: Analyzing if a) one segment of the text belongs to more than one category and b) a considerable amount of text is not assigned to any category since it is not relevant to the research.
5. Continuing revision and refinement of category system: Searching for subcategories within each category. Selecting appropriate quotes that convey the core theme of a category.

Categories of Analysis

Table N° 2.
Written Narratives During the Study

Narrative Category	Finding Category	Subcategories
1. Teaching in the pandemic while being involved in emergency remote teaching.	The burning phoenix	Teachers' concerns
		The fallacy of technology
2. Going back to face-to-face classes after ERT.	Building the nest	Broken children
		Academic realities
3. The adaptation and influence of ERT into face-to-face education.	A rebirth from the ashes	Language priorities
		Teachers' resilience

Each narrative category corresponds to a finding category based on the Myth of the Phoenix, which researchers chose as a metaphor to unravel the stories that emerged from teachers' narratives. The phoenix has become a symbol of renewal, rebirth, and resilience.

The first finding category is called "The burning phoenix" and it symbolizes the beginning of the end of the phoenix's life. In this case, the burning phoenix metaphor sets up a connection to the time in which teachers were in possession of years of face-to-face teaching practices' experience and knowledge but no preparation for the ERT.

Within the first narrative, teachers were asked about their experiences while being involved in emergency remote teaching due to the pandemic. This led to the discussion of two main aspects to be considered: Teachers' Concerns and The Fallacy of Technology. The aforementioned categories emerged around teachers' reflections regarding the characteristics that influenced and shaped their teaching dynamics in which they used to feel in control of their classrooms and their students' learning needs as well as the process in which education had to be adapted towards new educational goals and unknown educational practices.

Teachers' concerns. Most teachers, who were trained to only teach face-to-face classes with little or no experience in the 100% virtual modality, had to develop technological teaching support strategies. Hence, one of the concerns shared by teachers and teaching administrators was to generate virtual classrooms with suitable conditions for the understanding and appropriation of knowledge. From this perspective, the task of finding new languages and formats made possible a greater rapprochement among teachers, students, and teaching content.

As Trust and Whalen (2020) pointed out, teachers faced numerous challenges during the adaptation to ERT, mostly related to feelings such as being overwhelmed and feeling underprepared towards the use of remote teaching strategies and tools, as well as the struggles in terms of pedagogical adaptation due to factors such as students' unreliable internet access, changing personal needs, and unclear educational directives. In accordance with this, Taty's testimony is presented as follows:

> *On several occasions, because I work at a public school where not all students have sufficient technological resources or financial means, not even a computer at home, let alone a smartphone capable of accessing the learning materials, I received phone calls from deeply concerned parents who borrowed electronic devices, took out loans, and went into debt just to obtain a mobile phone with WhatsApp access. We found WhatsApp to be the most practical communication tool because it required*

> *relatively little internet access for sharing information and sending learning materials* (Taty, Narrative 1).
>
> *[Original in Spanish: En varias ocasiones, debido a que trabajo en una institución oficial donde no todos los estudiantes tienen suficientes herramientas ni recursos económicos, ni siquiera para un computador en casa ni mucho menos para un celular de alta gama capaz de recibir las guías, tuve que recibir llamadas de padres muy preocupados consiguiendo aparatos electrónicos, sacando préstamos, endeudándose para poder conseguir al menos un celular con acceso a WhatsApp, ya que encontramos que este era el medio más práctico y que no requería tanto internet para comunicarnos y hacer envío de las guías.]*

In Taty's narrative, researchers noticed the way she expressed her concerns regarding access to technological tools and economic resources to maintain active communication with her students. Mostly, she shared families' realities in front of technological devices by stating that they did not even have a computer at home or a cellphone with access to WhatsApp which became the main source of communication among teachers, students, and parents.

For teachers, the biggest challenge was to find an accessible tool of communication with not only students but also their parents and caretakers. Nonetheless, and bearing in mind students' socioeconomic conditions, ERT as an alternative would support students and their families as well as strengthen the teaching-learning process was definitely a concern as Coqui pointed out in her first narrative:

> *Now teachers' minds resemble a roller coaster, with thoughts racing like runaway cars. Worries spiral out of control, ideas collide, and fear overshadows years of teaching experience. Questions begin to pile up: What should we do? How should we teach? How can we bring learning to every student? How can we support them when they have questions or difficulties? What kind of support can they receive at home when, in many cases, their parents have not completed upper secondary education? What can we do when their primary caregivers are their grandparents, as is often the case in rural communities?* (Coqui, Narrative 1).
>
> *[Original in Spanish: Ahora el cerebro de los docentes es una montaña rusa donde sus pensamientos son los carritos sin control, se desbocan*

las preocupaciones, se estrellan las ideas y el temor supera todas las experiencias de enseñanza; se agolpan las preguntas: ¿Qué hacer?, ¿Cómo enseñar?, ¿Cómo llevar los aprendizajes a cada estudiante?, ¿Cómo ayudarles en caso de alguna inquietud?, ¿Qué apoyo podrían tener en casa si el nivel educativo de sus padres, en un alto porcentaje, ni siquiera supera la media? ¿Qué decir si sus cuidadores son sus abuelos, como suele ocurrir en las zonas rurales?]

Within Coqui's narrative, uncertainty, worry, and fear are present. She expressed how teachers' brains felt like "roller coasters' carts out of control" with doubts overcoming all those years of teaching experience. Teachers struggled not only with academic deficiencies due to the lack of technological resources and internet access but also with families' social inequality. Beyond not having a cell phone to communicate with teachers and overall, to be able to engage with the new academic setting, parents' unemployment and children's hunger led to a different set of concerns such as frustration and the inability to help as Taty stated below:

Many of them would tell me, "Teacher, if I cannot afford 2,000 pesos for bread, I certainly cannot afford 2,000 pesos to top up my mobile phone." All I could think about was my students going hungry at home, unable to access education or even the daily school meal they had relied on. Some had parents who had lost their jobs because of the pandemic, while others had two or three siblings who were also unable to continue their studies. Frustration and the feeling of being unable to do more for my students became a constant throughout the entire period of remote education (Taty, Narrative 1).

[Original in Spanish: *Muchos me decían: "Profe, si no tengo para 2 mil de pan, mucho menos 2 mil para la recarga del celular", y yo sólo pensaba en mis estudiantes pasando hambre en sus hogares y sin poder acceder tampoco a la educación ni mucho menos al refrigerio de todos los días, algunos con padres desempleados a causa de la pandemia y con otros dos o tres hermanos que tampoco tenían cómo poder estudiar. La frustración y la sensación de no poder hacer más por mis estudiantes fue una constante durante todo el tiempo de la educación remota.*]

The fallacy of technology. The pandemic moved the school to home and turned

teachers into virtual apprentices who tried to appropriate methodological, technical, and didactic strategies to transmit knowledge and topics to students.

Colombian Ministry of Education defined guidelines for institutions, in order to guarantee the right to education and provide care for children, through the strategy "home education service" which consisted of ministerial directives issued in accordance with the needs and behavior of the virus. The MEN promoted digital platforms that teachers must manage, with the purpose of making curricula more flexible. (Circular Letter 2020 from MEN). Some of these platforms were Colombia Learns, and Digital Learning: Contents for everybody.

In addition, the role of the teacher changed since he/she had to make pedagogical adaptations that were fundamental in teaching practices. Nevertheless, living in a globalized world is not the same for everyone since the pandemic put millions of students from the most marginalized countries on edge due to the lack of connectivity, computers, cell phones, or any other technological device to continue their studies (Lizabe, 2021). Therefore, low-tech countries presented an absence of technological means which made communication and effectiveness almost impossible (Hazaea et al., 2021). Definitely, the gap between technologically advanced countries and the rest of the world has become wider thus, the fallacy of technology is a factor that includes or excludes students from the system as expressed by Coqui:

> *The government encouraged teachers with the illusion that technology could solve everything. But what technology? Most families had only one mobile phone at home, and it certainly did not have the capabilities needed for remote learning. It was common to hear comments such as: "Teacher, we only have one mobile phone at home, and it's an old basic phone"; "Where I live, there is no mobile signal. We have to walk some distance from our house to find a place with reception"; and "How are we supposed to attend classes when there are several siblings sharing the same phone?"* (Coqui, Narrative 1).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *El gobierno anima al magisterio con la falacia de la tecnología. ¿Cuál tecnología? Si la mayoría de los padres apenas tiene un celular en casa y no precisamente con las especificaciones requeridas. Era común escucharlos: "Profe, en mi casa sólo hay un celular y es una flecha"; "Donde vivo, el celular no coge señal. Tenemos que salir*

un punto x lejitos de la casa"; "¿Cómo vamos a hacer si somos varios hermanos para recibir las clases?"]

In her narrative, Coqui explained how parents and students struggled with technological access since they did not have smartphones, they were not in a place with an effective signal or there were several children all trying to receive their classes through the ERT model. In that sense, ERT opened debates about the multiple social, political, and economic aspects that did not allow public schools to take technological measures such as the ones that other private institutions set up to deal with their students' and teachers' inability to attend a face-to-face classroom as pointed out by Taty in her narrative:

> *Despite some students had access to an electronic device, they lived in areas with no mobile signal or could not afford mobile data, let alone a Wi-Fi connection. At first, we tried holding video classes, just as private schools were doing. However, out of 30 students, only five were able to join. We soon realized that not everyone could access this mode of instruction and that the best option was to send learning materials through a more accessible means of communication* (Taty, Narrative 1).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *Algunos, a pesar de tener algún aparato electrónico, se encontraban en lugares donde no había señal o no tenían para pagar los datos del celular, ni mucho menos conexión a wifi. Al principio se intentaron las videollamadas (así como lo hacían en los colegios privados), pero de 30 estudiantes solo se conectaban 5. Entonces nos dimos cuenta de que no todos podían acceder a esta modalidad y que lo mejor que podíamos hacer era enviarles la información a través de un medio más accesible.*]

As Taty told, public schools tried to implement video calls, as the main source of connection and communication with students. Nevertheless, they soon realized that most students did not have technological tools nor WIFI connection to connect in a synchronous way. Then it became more evident the reality among Latin American teachers and their ERT practices in which they expressed not having appropriate resources to carry out this new teaching methodology properly due to inefficient internet access and lack of teachers' training (Cortés, 2021; Álvarez et al., 2020; Toro, 2020).

Technology as a tool that sought to counteract the isolation to which many rural schools are subjected, enabling common projects between schools in the same municipality or village, share resources, promote the development of technological thinking, and strengthen the community-school relationship through agricultural, agro-industrial, or ecological projects (Arango & Rodríguez, 2016) seemed impossible, as Rosyco shared in her narrative:

> *Another challenge during the period of remote teaching was monitoring my students' learning. Most of them lived in remote rural communities within the municipality, where internet connectivity was unavailable, and in some cases, students did not even have a mobile phone. This situation created significant difficulties because I had to prepare the learning materials and send them by email to the school. There, the academic coordinator printed and distributed them to students in each rural community. Many students did not return the learning materials by the established deadlines, while others returned them incomplete or entirely blank. As a result, monitoring students' learning and recording the grades of the 150 students under my responsibility became an enormous challenge* (Rosyco, Narrative 1).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *Otra dificultad presentada durante este tiempo de trabajo virtual fue el seguimiento de los aprendizajes de mis estudiantes, puesto que la mayoría de ellos pertenecían a veredas lejanas del sector rural del municipio. Por tal razón, no contaban con conectividad y, en algunos casos, había estudiantes que no tenían celular. La dificultad era evidente, pues tenía que planear las guías para ser enviadas a la Institución Educativa vía email; allí eran impresas y distribuidas por la coordinadora académica a los estudiantes en cada una de las veredas. Además, muchos de los estudiantes no devolvían las guías en las fechas indicadas y otras las devolvían sin ser desarrolladas, generando una dificultad para el seguimiento y el registro de las calificaciones de los 150 estudiantes que tenía que atender.*]

As stated by Rosyco, connection difficulties were evident, especially in rural contexts where families did not have technological devices nor any kind of connectivity thus, ERT took place through guides which were printed and distributed. Given the need for online education to be the only path, narratives showed that teachers' search for new solutions was urgent. Consequently, the context of confinement

made visible the multiple economic, social, cultural, emotional, and digital gaps that cross the educational system and that constantly place some contexts at a more significant disadvantage than others.

Teachers' narratives portray how they perceived parents' accompaniment even though they did not have enough experience to direct academic activities, access to technology was fundamental to assessing and continuing the educational process with them. Notwithstanding, the effort to adapt to the new conditions proved that human capacities are useful more when it comes to the learning of children since this atypical experience reflected upon the fact that education has specific roles, but not exclusive to make a "significant participation" (Díaz, 2020, p.9), especially when parents were the main source of communication with most students.

The second finding category, "Building the nest: Going back to face-to-face classes after ERT", marks the time in which the phoenix gathers aromatic boughs, and spices and builds a nest in which due to its connection with the sun it dies in flames. In that sense, building the nest is an allegory to the return of teachers, students, and education staff to the classrooms after spending several months at home while being involved in ERT practices. Then, teachers gathered all their previous teaching experiences to build the school again only to find burned out children and burned down academic foundations.

When teachers were asked about their return to face-to-face classes there were two main aspects to be considered: Broken children and Academic realities. The aforementioned categories are based on teachers' own findings while going back to their classrooms and their reflections upon facing these new unknown characteristics in their teaching practices.

Broken children. Educational institutions can be considered as much more than simply learning environments since personal relationships play an important role in daily activity as well as in the lives of the people who participate in it. The influence of those relationships established in the classrooms have direct effects on different areas such as academic, social, psychological, and emotional. In this sense, emotions are a determining element, not only in student learning but also in the relationships that are established among students and teachers

Subsequently, the return to face-to-face education led to an unenthusiastic view of teachers who observed the need for more than just resuming content teaching,

the importance of schools providing emotional support, receiving boys and girls who for almost two years went through educational processes that left aside affectivity and the relationship with their peers as Coqui shared in her second narrative:

> *How beneficial it would have been for everyone to return, not only for academic reasons, but also to restore students' psychological and emotional well-being. We would have found children who were sad and emotionally withdrawn. The pandemic would return to us children whose lives had been shattered, like María and her siblings, who lost their mother after her alleged suicide, reportedly linked to a severe mental health condition. During her illness, she unintentionally caused them physical harm while struggling with her own suffering. This story remains an indescribable source of pain. I was part of that process, and even though I have the peace of mind of knowing that I did not remain indifferent, I still wonder what more could have been done to convince that mother to keep fighting for her own life, for her children, and for her family* (Coqui, Narrative 2).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *Cuánto bien nos haría a todos regresar y no tanto por la academia sino por restaurar su dimensión psicológica, emocional; veríamos niños tristes, apagados. La pandemia nos devolvería a niños y niñas rotos como María y sus hermanos que perdieron a la mamá tras un presunto suicidio dado por su insuperable enfermedad psicológica y quien involuntariamente los lastimaba físicamente al sentirse sometida para su seguridad. Esta historia, en verdad es innegable, un dolor indescriptible, proceso del cual formé parte y con la tranquilidad de no haber pecado de omisión, aunque no sé qué faltó para convencer a esa madre de luchar por su vida, por sus hijos y por su familia.*]

As told by Coqui, when going back to teaching in academic normality, she discovered the need to restore her students' psychological and emotional dimension since she found "sad" students who were deeply affected by the experiences they had lived during the pandemic at home. This situation affected her personally not only as a teacher but also as a member of the community she belongs to.

As education in the classroom changed its dynamics and methodologies of acquiring content and knowledge, bearing in mind the differences from that teaching methodology previously established in the curriculum which was designed for face-to-face education and redesigned for ERT, teachers' narratives highlighted

changes imposed by the socio-emotional reality they faced when engaging with students in their classrooms again as described in Taty's narrative:

> *One story I will always remember is that of a student who became extremely shy after returning to face-to-face classes. At first, I assumed it was due to the lack of social interaction children had experienced during the pandemic. Unfortunately, the reality he faced at home was one of severe domestic violence. His mother took out her frustration on him because his father physically abused her, and during the pandemic, when the entire family was confined at home, the violence escalated, forcing him to witness and experience it more directly. With the support of the school counseling service, his mother was informed that the child was experiencing not only behavioral difficulties but also learning difficulties. Upset by this information, she transferred him to a different classroom. This experience highlighted the importance of understanding students' lived realities and providing emotional support both at home and at school* (Taty, Narrative 2).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *Una historia que recuerdo siempre es la de un estudiante que venía muy tímido desde el regreso a la presencialidad. Inicialmente pensé que se debía a la falta de interacción que sufrieron los niños en la pandemia. Lastimosamente, la realidad que él vivía en su hogar era una de violencia intrafamiliar bastante fuerte, donde su mamá se desquitaba con él porque su papá la golpeaba a ella y, durante la pandemia, como se encontraban todos en casa, esa violencia incrementó y él tuvo que vivirla más de cerca. Con el acompañamiento de psicorientación se le informó que el niño no solo tenía problemas de comportamiento sino también problemas de aprendizaje. Ella, bastante molesta, lo cambió de salón. Esto nos demostró la necesidad de acompañar las realidades de los estudiantes y el manejo de emociones en el hogar y en el colegio.*]

Taty's experience when returning to face-to-face classes displayed the detection of a domestic violence situation in which dysregulated emotions were inhibiting healthy relationships and leading to the development of learning difficulties in the student. Unfortunately, the pandemic and mandatory isolation promoted unsafe spaces for families. Furthermore, Taty reflected upon the need to accompany students' realities and the management of emotions in both settings, at home, and at school.

Academic realities. Education does not function in isolation, in fact, it is inexorably linked to human nature, institutions, politics, the economy, and above all, the social field (Casanova, 2021). In this way, it is observed and shared through teachers' narratives that education is intrinsically a social area in which, and due to the influence of the ERT, new academic realities arose when returning to education as it was known before the pandemic. ERT generated positive dynamics such as individual accompaniment of students, incorporation of innovative tools, flexibility in the amount of content and the management of some virtual platforms which were focused on educational continuity and family emotional support, but when teachers returned to their classrooms and engaged with their students as they used to, the consequences of ERT, and the pandemic were evident as it is remarked by Taty's testimony:

> *During remote education, I supposedly made considerable progress in covering the curriculum. However, when we returned to face-to-face classes, I realized that many children were barely able to write within the lines of a notebook. In fact, the first students to return to school were those who had understood the learning materials the least, received the least support at home, and needed the most assistance. Looking back, it felt as though all the work carried out during remote education had amounted to little more than an investment of time, energy, and resources, as students received little support or guidance at home. Although many of them had earned grades of 4.5, 4.7, or even higher during remote education, those grades quickly dropped to 1.5, 1.7, or even lower because some of them had not yet mastered even the basic vowel sounds* (Taty, Narrative 2).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *Durante la educación remota, yo supuestamente había avanzado bastante en varias temáticas, pero cuando llegamos a la presencialidad, me di cuenta que los niños escasamente manejaban el renglón. De hecho, los primeros que enviaron a presencialidad fueron los que menos habían entendido las guías, los que menos acompañamiento en casa habían tenido y los que más ayuda necesitaban. Todo el trabajo que se hizo virtualmente solamente sirvió para gastar tiempo, vida y herramientas porque no fue bien recibido ni acompañado desde sus casas; a pesar de que traían notas de 4.5, 4.7 o más, para los siguientes periodos rápidamente se convirtieron en 1.5, 1.7 o menos porque no sabían ni siquiera las vocales.*]

Then, the previous fragment portrayed the academic realities Taty faced once she evidenced a lack of skills in her students which she believed they had developed while being involved in ERT. For her, realizing those academic realities was frustrating in terms of stating that all the work that was carried out virtually had the only purpose of spending time, life, and resources since it was not accompanied at home. As Díaz (2020) revealed, the pandemic and the implementation of ERT showed "the loss of school space and the classroom" (p.20) which also implied the transformation of each student's home into a suitable learning environment.

Consequently, it was clear the demand to focus the return to face-to-face education on the management of new ways of interacting with all the actors of education and especially with strict curricula in structure, contents, model of pedagogies, projects, and integration of ICTs. Corresponding to the above, Cárdenas, et al. (2021) place the experience of educators in times of pandemic in legitimizing "decision-making beyond the centralized normativity of school systems" (p.36) as Rosyco established in her narrative.

> *Moreover, the experience of returning to face-to-face teaching and the joy of being reunited with my students strengthened my commitment to carrying out classroom activities in the best possible way and to teaching through innovative strategies supported by digital technologies. I believe that this is one of the most effective ways to motivate students to engage in their learning with dedication and responsibility while helping them overcome the learning gaps that emerged during remote education. After administering a diagnostic assessment, I devoted time to prioritizing key learning objectives and designing appropriate learning activities to address the difficulties that had been identified* (Rosyco, Narrative 2).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *Además, la experiencia de trabajo presencial y la alegría de reencuentro despertó aún más ese deseo de realizar las actividades de la mejor manera y de orientar las temáticas usando estrategias diferentes y mediadas por el uso de las herramientas tecnológicas; pues considero que es una de las mejores formas de motivar a mis estudiantes para trabajar con dedicación y responsabilidad y así superar las debilidades que tuvieron durante el trabajo virtual. Así pues, luego de aplicar una prueba diagnóstica, dediqué tiempo a priorizar temáticas y a crear actividades apropiadas para superar las falencias encontradas.*]

In correspondence with the above, Rosyco shared the changes in her own teaching practices based on her decision to prioritize topics and activities using ICTS which she considered the most appropriate way to promote responsibility and to overcome the weaknesses found in her students' learning process when returning to the classroom after experiencing ERT. Then, Santos (2020) stated that teaching-learning in a time of crisis such as COVID-19 allowed questioning the socioeconomic difficulties, and educational and health processes that characterized the lived experiences of inequality and shortages in order to reflect upon the necessary transformation of educational public policies to adjust changes towards curricular transformation, adaptation of infrastructure, teachers' training, technological integration, among others.

Since educational conditions of children for learning at home were marked by socioeconomic inequalities, mental health issues, geographical location and lack of technological skills, it is essential to create equitable, inclusive education strategies capable of adapting to unexpected shifts in educational settings and teaching-learning conditions while accompanying teachers, students, and parents in different training processes along with psychological assessments in social and health risk times thus, guaranteeing proper adjustments in curriculum towards up-to-date inclusive quality education that will transform current and future pedagogical practices.

The third finding category named "A rebirth from the ashes", refers to the moment in which finally, the phoenix dies in a burst of flames only to be reborn from its own ashes. After adapting their teaching practices to the ERT model along with pedagogical concerns, communicative challenges, and technological struggles, then returning to the school to deal with students' emotional and academic consequences and finally, gather their experiences and reflections toward the improvement of education as well as their new teaching practices, teachers embraced their ability to rise up from the ashes, as the phoenix, in search for new beginnings and changes in the teaching-learning process as we have known it.

As Santos (2020) stated, the new articulation after the pandemic presupposes an epistemological, cultural, and ideological shift that supports political, economic, and social solutions that guarantee the continuity of a dignified human life on the planet. Undoubtedly, education is one of the most significant fields for all knowledge, especially for the social sciences (Casanova, 2021). In that sense, there are factors that have influenced the transformation of methods, the adaptation of ac-

tivities, the use of available resources, the ability of parents to guide school activities, and the flexibility of curricular content. Likewise, the transformation of accompaniment made possible the adaptation of channels that enabled interaction and attention to diversity in most cases. Although, as it was pointed out, the already observed needs during the implementation of ERT differed from the ones considered when returning to face-to-face education since ERT did not allow teachers to observe and evaluate students' learning processes effectively.

Bearing this in mind, when teachers were asked about the influence of ERT on face-to-face education, there were two main aspects to reflect upon in the following categories: Language priorities and Teachers' resilience. The aforementioned categories are based on what teachers believed were the main features of ERT portrayed in face-to-face education going from its consequences in language teaching to its impact on teachers' ability to adapt and overcome challenges.

The ERT practices have set several concerns as well as the need to reflect upon educational models and how they should evolve not just in times of health crisis but also in different educative settings such as virtual education. For those who had not included technological tools within their teaching-learning methodological proposals, there was a sense of urgency and immediacy that forced them to engage with digitalization and therefore, digital literacy. As González (2021) explained, the analysis of ERT in the pandemic does not imply sacrificing teaching in face-to-face environments, although it does present a deep consideration of what is the value of face-to-face teaching and how it should evolve in a world that seems to be moving faster and faster every day.

Language priorities. Hodges et. al (2020) mentioned certain concerns about the end of ERT based on the possibility that returning to the classrooms could mean collective oblivion instead of the proper evaluation of efforts and strengths as well as the identification of weaknesses to be better prepared for the future need to implement ERT. Lizabe (2021) explained how the pandemic has given prominence to digital environments as the main tool for new ways of teaching and learning which has shown that some institutions and subjects were prepared for the change, while others were not.

Subsequently, it was clear that the return to face-to-face education could not mean going back to traditional teaching methods but instead to bring the learned teaching strategies into the classroom to promote digital competences. In fact,

Mena & Terán (2023) research proved that combining the strategies used in virtual education with the face-to-face methods is the way to take advantage of teachers' technological skills in order to achieve a quality hybrid EFL teaching. Thus, keep promoting ICTS, focus on specific language skills and taking advantage of the few resources available became fundamental as explained in Taty's third narrative:

> *Returning to face-to-face teaching was truly a demanding process that required patience, time, and the understanding that there was no alternative but to start over. In English language instruction, the focus shifted once again to speaking and listening, the language skills that had received the least attention during the pandemic. Exposing younger learners to songs, videos, and classroom activities supported by online resources, this time using a television and an internet connection in the classroom, proved essential. It was also necessary to send learning materials and supplementary activities home and rely on parents' support to help children develop the language skills they had not been able to acquire during remote education* (Taty, Narrative 3).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *El retorno fue realmente una labor que requirió mucha paciencia, mucho tiempo y entender que no había otra solución más que empezar de cero. En cuanto al idioma, se volvió a dar un enfoque al habla y a la escucha, que eran las habilidades menos trabajadas en la pandemia. Exponer a los estudiantes más pequeños a canciones, videos y actividades que continuaban siendo apoyadas por páginas web, esta vez desde el salón con un televisor y conexión a internet, fue fundamental. También mandar guías y material de refuerzo a casa y esperar colaboración por parte de los padres de familia para poder nivelar a los niños con las habilidades del idioma que les hacían falta.*]

Within Taty's experience, she explained the relevance of starting over and approaching speaking and listening since they were the less worked skills during the pandemic. Then, she discussed the way in which songs, videos, and online activities were supported through the available resources inside the classroom in addition to parents' accompaniment at home to balance students' lack of skills which were not a priority during ERT. As established by Hidalgo (2020) digital language teaching is still a challenge for teachers, no matter if it is based on face-to-face, virtual or distance learning. Nonetheless, the use of ICTS is essential in terms of students' participation, interest, and motivation, guaranteeing a positive impact on

their school performance, promoting interaction, and reducing the risk of school dropout. In accordance with the above, Coqui reflected upon the new language teaching practices as follows:

> *Our new goal was to bring the English language back to life, a language that had been at risk of becoming lifeless during the pandemic due to the overwhelming emphasis on content coverage. As a result, we spent less time copying and more time speaking. Students recorded voice messages, played language games, and gradually became more actively engaged in learning. Time was no longer our greatest concern. We incorporated YouTube videos into our lessons, even when they had to be downloaded in advance, because unreliable internet connectivity continued to be one of our greatest challenges. We practiced the alphabet and spelling, although using words in meaningful communication remained much more difficult. We returned with renewed strategies to improve students' pronunciation, allowing oral language to gradually come back to life and reclaim its place in the classroom as we sought to foster students' communicative competence in both spoken and written English* (Coqui, Narrative 3).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *Ahora la propuesta era dinamizar el idioma, ese que amenazó ser una lengua muerta en la pandemia y esto por la saturación de contenidos. Es así que copiamos menos y pronunciamos más, se graban voces, se juega escalera; en fin, el tiempo ya no es presión, acercamos YouTube así sea un video descargado previamente pues aún nuestro enemigo más cercano es la constante falla de conectividad. Pronunciamos el alfabeto y practicamos el deletreo, pero ya en las palabras es otro cuento. Volvimos inventando estrategias para mejorar pronunciación; así la parte oral va cobrando vida, dándose su espacio intentando cumplir con la competencia comunicativa (oral y escrita).*]

Along with Rosyco, Taty and Coqui's testimonies, the concern and need to improve communicative competences was evident since listening and speaking skills using ICTS were the main language priorities for teachers. Therefore, foreign language teachers' role within ICT-supported instruction is fundamental, if not essential, since they are considered facilitators, mentors, guides, lecturers, assistants, motivators, planners, monitors, technical supporters, evaluators, resources developers, creators of a friendly social environments, and language role models (Podgoršek et al., 2019).

Teachers' resilience. After being exposed to a challenging situation that affected their teaching practices and led to implications in both their personal and professional lives while facing ERT, teachers' return to face-to-face education included intense feelings which were built up through days, weeks, and months of uncertainty and stress. As stated by Brackett and Cipriano (2020) chronic stress is linked to teacher discouragement and lack of engagement which could eventually lead to burnout and the development of teachers who are less likely to be positive role models for students and families.

One of ERT's challenges was that most teachers did not receive formal education in emotional skills, including the role of resilience in their teaching practices. According to Gu and Day (2007) the nature of resilience is determined by the interaction between individual assets and external environments in which the person lives and grows which revealed that resilience can vary in each person and also, how it fluctuates over time taking into account scenarios and the capacities to manage them as it is evidenced in Coqui's narrative:

> *How outdated and disconnected from reality dictionaries can be when defining certain words. Take the word teacher, for example: "a person whose occupation is to teach a subject, an art, a skill, or a profession." New expressions have also emerged, such as reinvent oneself and the new normal, rather impersonal terms that attempt to describe our work. Yet perhaps a better description would be to borrow the word magician. That is exactly what teachers are: professionals who reinvent themselves every day in response to new realities shaped by their educational contexts, drawing on their knowledge and creativity to accomplish what often seems extraordinary* (Coqui, Narrative 3).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *Cuán desactualizados y descontextualizados están los diccionarios para definir ciertas palabras, por ejemplo: Profesor: "persona que tiene por oficio enseñar una ciencia, un arte, una técnica, etc."; así también, han aparecido nuevos términos como "reinventarse" y "nueva realidad", palabras muy frías que intentan dar significado a nuestra labor cuando bien puede hacerse un préstamo semántico de mago para complementarlo. Sí, así es. Eso somos los docentes, personas que se reinventan a diario frente a nuevas realidades según sea su contexto laboral empleando ciertos conocimientos con los que pretende conseguir cosas extraordinarias.*]

Coqui's testimony and final reflection described the decontextualization of dictionaries in front of their definition of what a teacher is since it does not go beyond "the person who teachers a science, art or technique" when for her, being a teacher includes the ability to reinvent daily teaching practices bearing in mind new realities and achieving amazing results. Thus, it is fair to state that resilience as the ability to thrive and not just survive, is mainly related with the way we deal with adversity by using inner resources to not only overcome difficult times but also to experience and reflect upon our emotions and its actions (Aguilar, 2021). In that sense, teachers' resilience, as the ability to adapt to stressful situations and recover from challenging experiences, was fundamental in order to be emotionally equipped to deal with the changes, challenges and consequences of ERT within the current face-to-face teaching practices as shared in Taty's testimony:

> *We faced new challenges every day. Many of them found us unprepared, not only as teachers, but also as an educational institution and even as a country. Nevertheless, I believe we confronted those challenges and, in one way or another, learned from them as well. Over the years, I have come to realize that this is the essence of teaching: embracing constant change and adapting to it. If we ever face a similar situation again, I hope we will be better prepared, have the necessary resources, and be able to guarantee an education that truly reaches every child. Ultimately, that is what education is about: ensuring every child has an equal right to a high-quality education* (Taty, Narrative 3).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *Vivimos nuevos retos todos los días, para muchos de ellos no estábamos preparados como docentes ni como institución educativa y ni siquiera como país, pero siento que los logramos enfrentar y que de una manera u otra aprendimos de ellos también. Algo que he pensado a través de los años es que de eso se trata la labor docente, del cambio constante y de la adaptación a ese cambio. Espero si llega a haber una próxima situación como esta, podamos estar más preparados, podamos tener los recursos necesarios y podamos garantizar una educación que de verdad pueda llegar a todos los niños porque al final de eso se trata, de que a todos se les garantice el derecho a una educación de calidad por igual.*]

As told by Taty, this experience portrayed the way in which teachers, institutions or the country per se were not prepared to support challenging times such as the

pandemic. In addition, she provided her perspective on teaching work as the ability to deal with constant changes and the adaptation of such changes while expecting that the next time we encounter ourselves in a difficult educational setting we can be able to guarantee that no one is excluded from his/her right to education. In fact, Yáñez and Cerpa (2021) verified that in times of pandemic the greatest difficulty for teachers was to guarantee access and participation of all, a challenge that allowed them to benefit from its pedagogical practice under the adoption of new methodologies that contributed to improve learning for all.

Hence, teachers' resilience is considered a multi-faceted and unstable construct in which its nature and sustainability can be determined by the interaction between the strength of the vocation of individual teachers, the role of those who are involved in their daily work and the collective sense of resilience provided by institutions which can be portrayed in the effective management of unanticipated events (Day et al., 2011) as established by Rosyco as follows:

> *The effects of the pandemic were not limited to the past. As a result of this experience, some aspects of my current classroom methodology continue to evolve in ways that I believe can enhance the teaching and learning process* (Rosyco, Narrative 3).
>
> **[Original in Spanish:** *Los efectos de pandemia no fueron solo pasados, ya que debido a esta situación algunos aspectos de mi actual metodología en el aula se están transformando, que considero, pueden mejorar el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.*]

Then, Rosyco shared through her final narrative that due to the influence of the pandemic, her current teaching methodology is transforming positively towards the improvement of teaching-learning processes thus exemplifying the relevance of teachers' resilience, an area of research which provides a way to understand what allows teachers to persist and continue teaching when being exposed to adversities, stress, burnout, and exhaustion.

Bearing the aforementioned, it is clear that the implementation of ERT had a meaningful impact in current face-to-face education practices since it influenced both teachers' and students' current teaching-learning practices, not only in academic aspects such as the relevance ICTS and specific language features but also in personal characteristics such as the role that resilience played in self-profes-

sional assessments. Therefore, acknowledging that teaching is a profession based on constant change and driven by modifications in the face of the different challenging situations that the world and society will continue to face, is mandatory to support teachers' development and well-being thus, ensuring significant education for everyone.

Conclusions

When describing and acknowledging teachers' experiences during ERT, several disagreements in the relations among institutions, planning, and teaching practices were shown (Trust & Whalen, 2020). Thus, such distancing and lack of preparation towards education in times of crisis was also visible in the ways in which diversity was managed during this time, especially when discussing political, social, and economic dimensions to the approach to information that failed to address institutional gaps in students' access and educational development (Lloyd, 2020; Lizabe, 2021, Hazaea et al.,2021). Nevertheless, ERT also enhanced teachers' resourcefulness and resilience in front of an unexpectedly challenging educational setting to prevent school dropout (Hodges et al., 2020).

When characterizing academic and social realities among teachers' practices in their return to face-to-face education, it was evident that pedagogical practices during and after the pandemic changed the ways in which teachers and students relate with each other since work strategies, information transmission, and teaching-learning methodologies were highly impacted. In this context, this research aimed to offer reflections on the challenges the world presented in education. Among the results there were a great number of challenges and possibilities presented throughout teaching practices in ERT and back to face-to-face education such as the need to promote virtual and distance educational spaces in an exercise of curricular preparation and educational quality (Santos, 2020).

The socioeconomic reality is that many students still do not have the technological means to be part of an efficient distance education and teachers need to be closer to institutional approaches to offer an optimal educational environment to their students. Therefore, the pandemic and the urgency of ERT, in a globalized world, made visible the importance of public policies of educational equality while guiding actions to preserve dignity, cultural identity, differences in capacities, and respectful coexistence in each student's life context. In this way, significant changes in the curriculum and its articulation must be mediated with professional

training for the use of technological tools as well as the promotion of both face-to-face classrooms and virtual or distance ones where students are recognized and supported in their diversities, whether they are socio-economic, cultural, physical, or mental (Hamilton & Gross, 2021).

In the same way, upon acknowledging teachers' perspectives on the influence of ERT in front of face-to-face education, the world went through complicated times in which it became necessary to rethink their strategies of operation, especially the ones related to contingency measures in times of public health risks, including education. These changes in education policies and everything that went into teaching through a historical moment such as the pandemic, implied that teachers were not only expected to adapt, implement, and evaluate students' learning without technological training nor well-being support systems (Lizabe, 2021), but also, when returning to the classrooms, to deal with students' emotional and academic consequences while including the use of ICTS in face-to-face teaching practices (González, 2021).

In terms of language teaching, ERT evidenced that in order to achieve a high-quality hybrid English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching approach, it is essential to leverage the technological skills of English teachers by integrating virtual education strategies with traditional face-to-face methods (Mena & Terán, 2023). Notwithstanding, teaching digitally remains a difficult task for educators, whether conducted in-person, virtually, or through distance learning. Nonetheless, incorporating ICTS is crucial in terms of promoting student engagement, interest, motivation, interaction among students, peers, and teachers, and even reducing school dropout (Hidalgo, 2020). This portrays the need to use ICTs while focusing on specific language skills, making the most of the limited resources available and thriving, not just surviving as it was revealed by teachers' way to deal with adversity (Aguilar, 2021). In this regard, the capacity of teachers to be resilient, which refers to their ability to adjust to stressful circumstances and bounce back from difficult experiences, proved to be crucial in ensuring that they are emotionally equipped to confront the transformations, challenges, and consequences associated with emergency remote teaching in the current context of face-to-face educational practices.

Six years have passed since the pandemic showed social and economic inequalities, as well as the lack of preparation among teachers, educative institutions, and governments to face uncertain situations, like the one provoked by the virus. Notwithstanding, considering the negative situations, it is necessary to learn from and

reflect on the lessons they provided. This study allowed the researchers to examine part of a group of teachers' educational backgrounds and professional experiences. As presented in the first category, teachers were in possession of years of face-to- face teaching, but they were not prepared for an unprecedented situation such as the COVID-!9 pandemic, which pushed them to plan, deliver, and assess their classes in totally different ways they were accustomed to. This finding is a call to attention not only for teacher education programs, but also for Secretaries of Education promoting the need to keep teachers up to date and open-minded.

When people move from one place to another and return to the same place suddenly and in a short period of time, they cannot remain the same; they can find broken people. So, the academic community must admit the relevance of practicing empathy and taking actions while considering the new realities. Teachers are more than transmitters of knowledge; they play a fundamental role in student's education as human beings.

Finally, when teachers rise from the ashes, it is because they are capable of being reborn, adapting to novel contexts and sharing these abilities with their students and the people around them. At this point, teachers become aware that they don't have to work alone and that they possess the tools to help to the development of better individuals, societies and a better world.

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