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SZAKDOLGOZAT

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angol nyelv és kultúra tanára - német nyelv és kultúra tanára
osztatlan tanári mesterszak

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SZAKDOLGOZAT

A kötelező távoktatás hatásai a középiskolai angol nyelvtanárok IKT-eszközhasználati szokásaira a tanítás során

The effects of obligatory distance learning on secondary school EFL teachers' use of ICT tools in teaching

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Eredetiségi nyilatkozat

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a hallgató aláírása

Abstract

The global COVID-19 pandemic disrupted education in an unprecedented manner, causing extended school closures all around the world. In Hungary, students and teachers had to experience distance teaching and learning twice, first between March 16, 2020 and the end of that school year and then between November 11, 2020 and May 9, 2021. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the effects of obligatory distance teaching on secondary school EFL teachers' use of ICT tools in teaching. In order to achieve this aim, a mixed-methodology study was carried out. A questionnaire survey was conducted, by which 41 participants from across Hungary shared their experiences about changes in their use of ICT tools before, during and after obligatory distance teaching. A small-scale qualitative interview study was carried out involving three English teachers from Budapest, in which they shared their experiences and views about the changes in their use of digital tools, the advantages and disadvantages offered by online learning management systems and the future of blended learning. Finally, the author's reflective journal provided further insights into the possibilities of implementing blended learning approaches. The findings indicate that obligatory distance teaching had an amplifying effect on EFL teachers' use of ICT tools. The results also show that a great number of teachers were planning to use online learning management systems to organise learning due to the great number of possibilities they offer. The research has also shown that there is great potential in applying blended learning approaches. However, a notable number of students and teachers do not have access to necessary digital tools to participate in blended learning, so a better digital infrastructure needs to be developed in order to fully utilize the prospects of implementing blended learning approaches.

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1 Introduction

The global COVID-19 pandemic caused disruptions in the education system all around the world. Many schools had to switch to distance learning in a short stretch of time. In Hungary, students and teachers had to switch to the new education form almost overnight, under less than satisfactory conditions. The huge differences among participants' access to broadband connectivity and necessary ICT tools and their level of digital proficiency led to highly diverse distance learning experiences (Czifra et al., 2021). However, even if it was a challenging period, it still led to improvements. To mention some, teachers and students developed their digital literacy skills, the number of available digital teaching materials increased, and teachers', students' and other stakeholders' digital infrastructure has improved (Czifra et al, 2021). Globally, a number of authors (El-Azar & Tam, 2020; Harris, 2020; Kandri, 2020; Kaukko et al., 2021; Okutoro-Seck, 2021) claim that this challenging experience will reshape education. Lynch (2021) refers to the new era of education as high-tech and high-touch, implying that blended learning approaches will be implemented in many classrooms.

This thesis seeks to investigate the effects of obligatory distance teaching on Hungarian EFL teachers use of ICT tools. The exact research questions this study aims to answer are the following:

Q1: What changes has obligatory distance teaching brought concerning secondary school EFL teachers' use of ICT tools in the classroom?

Q2: Are online learning platforms (for example, Google Classroom) useful when organizing and assessing learning in a secondary school setting?

Q3: Could blended learning (combining face-to-face learning with technology-based methodologies) be a possible result of distance learning?

After reviewing relevant literature, empirical research was carried out to answer these questions. To ensure a deep understanding of the researched phenomenon, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Data were collected using a survey, interviews and the writer's reflective journal. Two methods of data analysis were used. The answers of the questionnaire survey were systemized and compared in an effort to receive an overview of the phenomenon in question. Then, the data collected with the interviews and the reflective journal were analysed with the constant comparative method so as to understand the situation in more depth (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This triangulation of methods ensured the trustworthiness of the research.

The overall structure of the study takes the form of five chapters. After introducing the thesis, the second chapter begins by laying out the theoretical background of the research, reviewing literature about ICT tools, blended learning, and obligatory distance teaching. The third chapter is concerned with the methodology used for this study along with its limitations. The fourth chapter presents the results of data collection and discusses them. Finally, conclusions will be formulated based on the findings of the previous chapters, focusing on the three research questions.

2 Theoretical background

In this section of the thesis, I review the available literature regarding the use of ICT tools in teaching, blended learning, obligatory distance teaching and why blended learning approaches should be integrated in mainstream education in the post COVID-19 era. Firstly, I will define what ICT tools are and then describe how some ICT tools can be used in the classroom, the benefits of using technology in the classroom and how technology can be

incorporated in teaching. Then, I will define and describe blended learning as a trend. Afterwards, I will give a short description of different forms of distance teaching and learning and summarise the report on distance learning in Hungary published by the State Audit Office of Hungary. Finally, I will describe why blended learning should be integrated in the post-COVID-19 era.

2.1 ICT tools

2.1.1 What are ICT tools?

Technology is improving at an exponential rate and its use is becoming more and more widespread every day. Most high school students grew up with technology around themselves and thus it became a natural part of their lives. As the use of digital tools has become so ubiquitous, it has conquered the EFL classroom as well.

The Institute for Statistics of UNESCO (2009) defined information and communication technologies (ICT) as:

a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to transmit, store, create, share or exchange information. These technological tools and resources include computers, the Internet (websites, blogs and emails), live broadcasting technologies (radio, television and webcasting), recorded broadcasting technologies (podcasting, audio and video players and storage devices) and telephony (fixed or mobile, satellite, visio/video-conferencing, etc.). (p. 120)

A trend of using computer-based materials for language teaching, often termed CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) appeared in the 1980s (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007). The terminology TELL (Technology Enhanced Language Learning) appeared a

decade later, signalling that the use of ICT tools and the internet has become more common (Dudeney & Hockly, 2007).

Several authors described the widespread use of technology in the classroom, for example, Scrivener (2011) claims that “technology is at the heart of education now” (p. 335) and Ur (2012) argues that the use of technology is not only a supplement anymore, but a fundamental component of teaching and learning.

A list of classroom technology includes interactive whiteboards (IWBs), projection, audio devices, mobile devices (mobile phones and tablet computers) (Harmer, 2015), internet websites, interactive digital tools (such as email), wikis and blogs, digital recording equipment, e-books (Ur, 2012), research tools (such as search engines, corpora, etc), shared learning and social media (such as Twitter, Facebook, etc), and Learning Management Systems (LMSs), such as *MoodleTM* (Scrivener, 2011).

In the following section I will describe some of the most common digital technologies that are used in classrooms.

2.1.2 IWBs and projection

Boards might be one of the most common features of classrooms. Blackboards and whiteboards have been used for decades and in some classrooms, interactive whiteboards (IWBs) are also available. Scrivener (2011) defines an interactive whiteboard as a “multi-purpose, touch-sensitive surface, usually attached to a computer and a set of loudspeakers.” (p. 335).

IWBs offer a number of possibilities: they can be used as a ‘regular’ board since they can be written or drawn on with special pens or simply with the fingers; they can be attached to a computer that can have internet connection and/or an embedded software; the writings

and drawings can be saved digitally; they can show pictures, photographs, videos, and other visual and audio aids imported from the attached device and these aids can be dragged around, drawn on or highlighted using the pens or the fingers (Harmer, 2015). In his book, Scrivener (2011) mentions some more possible activities on IWBs: working live with texts, sharing learners' work, integrating internet-based materials into the lesson, and running automated exercises.

Some classrooms are equipped with stand-alone projectors which are connected to a computer or another device, projecting anything seen on that device, for example, documents, photographs, pictures, videos, etc (Harmer, 2015). This solution does not allow such diverse use as IWBs, but it is cheaper and thus it is still a very common solution for projection.

According to Scrivener (2011), a number of teachers use this solution to project presentations created by a presentation software (such as PowerPoint, Keynote, Impress, Google Slides, or Prezi). These applications are very popular among teachers, because they provide an easy way of showing content in a creative way. What is more, there are teachers who use these computer programs not only to show learning content, but also as a means of organising and storing teaching and learning materials (Scrivener, 2011).

2.1.3 Using computers in the classroom

Computers can truly enrich classroom activities. However, since schools are equipped differently, teachers have different levels of access to computers (Dudeney and Hockly, 2007). It was pointed out by Dudeney and Hockly (2007) that even one computer in the classroom is enough to enrich one's teaching, for example, by using websites, projecting visual aids, printing off electronically produced materials, or using online reference tools, such as concordances, on paper.

If there are enough computers for every learner in the classroom, there is a wide range of possibilities to enrich classroom activities, for example, students can practice using different software (such as CD-ROMs and DVDs, and other computer-based programs) or go online and work on internet-based projects, talk to other people on chat programs, search for information online, read blogs and wikis, watch videos, listen to or even create podcasts (Dudeny and Hockly, 2007). If there are less computers than students, learners can still work in small groups with a minimum number of computers (Dudeny and Hockly, 2007). Besides enriching the learning experience by bringing variety in classroom activities, another huge benefit of computerised activities is that they can be used to differentiate between learners and individualize the learning experience in the regular classroom (Ur, 2012).

2.1.4 Mobile devices

Another way of implementing technology in classroom activities is to let students use their own mobile devices. These days a lot of students have a number of different mobile devices at hand: laptops, tablets, mobile phones. With internet connectivity, these appliances can be very useful in the classroom as well (Harmer, 2015).

According to Dudeny and Hockly (2012), the fact that mobile devices have become extremely ubiquitous strengthened the trend towards applying such technology in the classroom and appeared in mainstream education and teacher training. Harmer (2015), for instance, mentions the increasing popularity of BYOT/BYOD ('bring your own technology/device') activities, by which students use their own digital devices.

Somewhat parallel to Dudeny and Hockly's (2012) take on the issue, Ur (2012) pinpoints the fact that the use of mobile phones can be used to facilitate learning in the classroom, even though it is often seen as harmful and annoying.

2.1.5 Internet connectivity

One of the most powerful digital tools is internet connectivity. According to Harmer (2015), internet connectivity provides numerous possibilities in the classroom, such as the use of video communication, different apps and websites, virtual worlds, online gaming platforms, and even platforms enabling teachers to track an individual's progress and preference. Dudeney and Hockly (2012) describe the internet as a channel to web2.0 tools that enable more creative work in the classroom.

Moreover, the internet is a significant source of teaching and learning materials (Dudeney and Hockly, 2012). Ur (2012), too, points out that the internet is a tremendous source of teaching materials and ideas. It provides access to reading and listening texts, both from authentic sources and from English-teaching sites, tests, work pages, and self-access exercises for students.

Furthermore, the internet plays an important role in collaboration, since it is often used as a platform for online discussion groups where both teachers and learners can share and discuss their thoughts (Dudeney and Hockly, 2012). In the same vein, as Scrivener (2012) emphasises the importance of incorporating spoken interaction in the target language with people outside the classroom in the learning process, he also mentions that the internet enables a wider range of techniques to achieve that, for example, by having web-based contact with distant schools, setting up real projects, or using virtual environments.

2.1.6 ICT tools for interacting with students outside the classroom

The use of ICT tools also allows a possibility for communication outside the classroom. Online communication forms, such as email, online learning platforms, chats, forums, and online networking sites, support asynchronous interaction between students and

teacher (Ur, 2012). Ur (2012) provides a list of possible functions of asynchronous interaction with students as follows:

- providing explanations or other written input
- uploading learning material, such as reading texts, audio or video with instructions for students to read, listen to or view them and do tasks related to them, which the teacher can check
- starting a discussion via a ‘forum’
- setting tasks (even with a time limit for submission)
- receiving, commenting on and assessing tasks the students have done
- giving final grades for the course.

One of the advantages of being able to interact with students outside the classroom is that it can, at the same time, simplify and enrich the process of organising learning, because of the diverse functions it provides. Another benefit of online communication forms is that they allow communication and collaboration among geographically dispersed learners (Dudeny and Hockly, 2007).

2.1.7 Learning Management Systems (LMSs)

There are available platforms that support asynchronous interaction between students and teachers. These are usually referred to as learning management systems. As stated by Scrivener (2011), a Learning Management System (LMS) or Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is a website bringing together a number of resources for running a course. Such platforms can be established and maintained by governments (for example, in Korea and Malaysia), public agencies (such as the Khan Academy) or private companies (for instance, Edmodo) (Huang et al., 2020).

Online learning platforms provide a wide range of functionalities, as in lesson delivery, hosting and management of learning materials, and communication support (Huang et al. (2020). LMSs simultaneously function as: a forum or another tool for students and teachers to send and read messages; a possibility for members to upload and download text documents, videos, presentations, and so on; a platform for students to submit their assignments, have them corrected and marked and have their marks collected in a mark book; and a platform with available automated exercises, activities and tests, and other add-ons (Scrivener, 2011).

Some learning management systems help teachers monitor students' progress and activity (Huang et al., 2020). These learning platforms offer a great opportunity for formative assessment, since teachers can assess students' progress by creating assignments and online quizzes, personalise learning experiences by creating group work projects, build a professional learning community (PLC), reward positive student behaviour (for example by personalized badges), and/or use teacher dashboards to show cumulative personal and class-level data (Huang et al., 2020).

Scrivener (2011) describes online learning management platforms as “relatively simple organisational platforms, gathering together a number of useful resources into a single accessible location” (p. 344). When designing and facilitating learning with the help of an online LMS, teachers have numerous possibilities to send information, assign work, and give students opportunities to collaborate (Huang et al., 2020). Ur (2012) highlights that one of the biggest advantages of such platforms is that they help managing a course by maintaining regular interaction among teacher and students.

2.1.8 Benefits of using technology in the classroom

As it has been declared by several authors (Harmer, 2015; Ur, 2012; Scrivener, 2011), the use of digital technology can enrich the teaching and learning experience if the tools are used correctly. Harmer (2015) lists areas where the use of technology is beneficial as follows: showing things (in the form of presentations, pictures, etc.), sharing things and collaborating (the beneficial impact of digital tools on student collaboration is noticeable), watching and listening to things (such as videos, online radio streams, podcasts, etc.), practising things (for example, by using electronic versions of workbooks or doing online exercises on websites), authoring things (for instance, writing and commenting on blogs, or sharing stories), and researching things (for example, the internet is a considerable language resource, as it has available information about various subjects).

In addition, according to Dudeney and Hockly (2007), the use of different ICT tools can provide teachers with a variety of ways to help learners develop all of the four basic language skills: listening, speaking, writing and reading. In his book, Scrivener (2011) refers to some digital tools for improving language skills, such as podcasts, video-conferencing, and instant language labs for improving listening and speaking skills and emails, text and voice messaging, word processors, Wikis, blogs, social networks, forums, and other websites for improving reading and writing skills. Besides developing language skills, technology can also be used to promote higher-order and critical thinking, which are essential in the 21st century (Huang et al., 2020). There are various online activities to achieve that, such as looking for information online, comparing different sources, or presenting information using a digital tool (Huang et al., 2020).

Finally, Ur (2012) and Huang et al. (2020) suggest that the use of ICT-tools generates possibilities to carry out differentiated learning, thus it promotes individualised learning experiences and increases students' motivation and engagement.

2.1.9 Incorporating technology in the classroom

The benefits of using technology mentioned previously can only be achieved if it is used wisely. It has been declared by several authors (Harmer, 2015; Scrivener, 2011; Ur, 2012) that making decisions about what type of technology, or whether any sort of technology should be used in different classroom situations is a complex issue and a key element of a teacher's job. Ur (2012) argues that teachers must always be aware of when computers are useful or counterproductive. She also draws readers' attention to the fact that the use of digital tools should not replace direct interaction between teacher and student, but should be used in a way that it enriches learning and makes it more efficient.

There are several factors to be considered when deciding whether to incorporate digital tools in one's teaching or not, such as available technology, and teachers' and students' digital literacy. These factors will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

To begin with, Harmer (2015) draws attention to the differences among available technology in different schools. The contexts in which teachers have to work with technology can differ to a great extent, since they have access to computers in various degrees. Dudeney and Hockly (2007) refers to this phenomenon as a "digital divide". Some schools operate with a wide range of applicable technology (for instance, there are interactive whiteboards, language laboratories, computers, projectors, CD players, etc), while there are other schools where little or no educational technology is accessible (Harmer, 2015). He also argues that teaching does not and should not rely only on technology, in fact, "there is a lot you can do with minimal or no resources" and teachers should be able to work without technology (Hadfield & Hadfield, 2003 as cited in Harmer, 2015, p. 192).

In addition, a lot depends on both teachers' and students' digital literacy (Harmer, 2015). According to Dudeney and Hockly (2007), it is crucial to realise that different people

work with different levels of digital proficiency and have different attitudes towards technology: people with lower levels of digital proficiency also feel less comfortable using digital tools. Naturally, a negative attitude resulting from not being comfortable and confident using technology could result in neglecting the use of digital tools and therefore missing out on their advantages. Scrivener (2011) highlights that it is essential for both learners and teachers to work on their digital skills. Unfortunately, no matter how adept someone is, one must always keep up with new technological advancements. According to Scrivener (2011), it is important for teachers to work on their digital skills for two reasons. Firstly, they have to be comfortable using digital tools enough so that they can really exploit them rather than just use them. They should be able to create suitable and useful content for their students. Secondly, teachers should be able to improve students' digital skills, of which they are only capable if they have mastered their digital skills as well. Nowadays a great number of students start high school with a decent set of digital skills. However, teachers should still make sure that their students are properly prepared before using technology in the classroom (Scrivener, 2011). For example, if students were to research online, the teacher has to make sure that they have had some training in basic digital skills, for instance, effective ways of searching (Scrivener, 2011).

2.2 Blended learning

2.2.1 What is blended learning?

Since technology appeared in the EFL classroom, there is an ever-growing trend of mixing technology-based and not technology-based activities in the classroom. This mixing of different technologies is usually referred to as “blended learning” (Harmer, 2015).

According to Sharma (2010), the term “blended learning” (BL) originates from the corporate world, where it had been used to describe a course allowing workers to study in

the workplace via self-study manuals, videos and the internet rather than taking part in a residential course. Whittaker (2013) suggests that the term was first used in corporate training, then in higher education, and only became prevalent in ELT after Sharma and Barret's publication, *Blended Learning*, in 2007. Hockly (2018) claims that "blended learning" is a challenging term to define due to the great diversity of interpretations and terminology introduced by researchers. In the following section, some of these interpretations will be described.

To begin with, Sharma (2010) explains that in the realm of education there are three definitions of the term "blended learning": (1) BL refers to combining traditional, face-to-face learning with on-line teaching; (2) BL is a combination of technologies, in other words, the mixing of media and tools in an e-learning environment; and (3) BL is the combination of different pedagogical methodologies, disregarding the technology applied.

A broader perspective has been adopted by Harmer (2015) who argues that we talk about BL when "the teacher (and students) work with an interconnected mix of books, classroom presentation and activities, and digital resources (whether in the form of online material or embedded in apps)" (p. 204).

Ur (2012) discusses the concept of BL from a different approach, considering it a type of classroom interaction that combines traditional interactions among teacher and students in a conventional face-to-face situation with computer-mediated interactions.

Whittaker (2013) claims that the numerous interpretations of the term are in fact synonymous and as consensus, she defines BL in ELT as "the term most commonly used to refer to any combination of face-to-face teaching with computer technology (online and offline activities/materials)" (p. 12).

Sharma (2010) argues that BL is a constantly developing term since developing technology has a direct impact on what can be blended into ELT. He argues that because of this, the term might become redundant, but he believes that it will always be a significant concept in ELT, considering that its main focus is searching for “*best practice*, i.e., the attempt to identify the optimum mix of course delivery in order to provide the most effective language learning experience” (Sharma, 2010, p. 457). This view will be further elucidated in the following section.

2.2.2 Implementing blended learning approaches

This section will be about how and why BL approaches should be implemented in practice. First, I will describe how some BL approaches are incorporated in teaching and then review the findings of Whittaker (2013) about why BL models should be implemented.

Sharma (2010) classified two approaches of practicing BL, (1) a “dual track” approach, which refers to a teacher allowing students 24/7 access to digital materials on an online platform, and (2) an “integrated” approach, which refers to a teacher assigning students homework that can only be done using a digital tool.

As mentioned earlier, Ur (2012) approached BL from a different point of view, suggesting that it is rather the mixing of conventional classroom interactions with computer-mediated interactions. Based on this proposition, she describes the blending of digital tools in its three different implementations: (1) within the lesson, (2) outside the lesson and (3) instead of the lesson. Ur (2012) argues that the use of ICT tools within the lesson changes traditional classroom interactions. For example, while the use of IWBs can limit interaction inasmuch as it directs learners’ attention towards the teacher and thus enhances teacher-led interactions, computers, especially individual computers, cater for more personalized learning and therefore reduce cooperative and teacher-led classroom processes. According

to Ur (2012), in a BL model, the use of digital tools that allow for communication outside the classroom supplements classroom interaction by enabling asynchronous interaction among teacher and students, making the management of a course and the monitoring of students' performance easier. The most common of such tools are emails, wikis, blogs and LMSs. These tools have different functions and different impacts on asynchronous interaction. Whereas email facilitates individual communication among teacher and students, wikis and blogs enable collaborative work between students. As a final point, Ur (2012) suggests that some of these tools, such as *Elluminate Live!*, even allow online synchronous teaching, enabling students to take part in classes even when they are spatially separated. However, she also suggests that substituting face-to-face interactions with online interactions will not be as effective and therefore should only be used to supplement traditional lessons.

According to Sharma (2010), one of the most important factors to consider when running a BL course is the appropriateness of each medium. By "appropriateness" he means that the delivery mode (face-to-face or online) has to match the objective of the learning activity. To illustrate this, he gives the following example: the face-to-face component of the course might aim at developing students' fluency via in-class discussion, while the online component focuses on developing learners' critical thinking skills.

As to why BL solutions were introduced, Whittaker (2013) provides in-depth analysis of findings regarding the reasons. In her analysis, she reviewed several authors' work on the topic and came to the conclusion that besides cost effectiveness, increased access and flexibility, *pedagogical richness* or *improved pedagogy* is often mentioned as an argument for incorporating a BL approach. Even though it is often mentioned, she notes that not much literature is available on the issue, except for general statements, such as "blended learning seeks to combine the best of the taught element of a course with the benefits of

technology, so that, the argument goes, better learning outcomes can be achieved” (Sharma, 2007 as quoted by Whittaker, 2013, p. 14). Based on this quote, one may suppose that the main driver for employing BL methods is achieving better learning outcomes. This concept is also present in Sharma’s (2010) aforementioned argument that the main focus of blended learning is searching for the *best practice* in order to provide effective language learning. In another publication, Hockly (2018) refers to this concept as “the pedagogical *best of both world view*” (p. 98) and calls it an important factor that affected the spread of blended learning in ELT. Whittaker (2013) provides readers with three more reasons for teachers to implement BL options: (1) learners’ expectation to have technology into their language classes, (2) learners expectation of flexibility, to be capable of fitting their language classes into their busy schedule, (3) and policy makers’ expectation of teachers to offer BL options (p. 15).

2.3 Obligatory distance teaching

Distance learning was not a completely new phenomenon in 2020. People around the world have already known and taken part in different forms of education that can be synonymous with distance learning, such as online learning, e-learning, correspondence education, remote studies, flexible learning, and massive open online courses (MOOCs) to mention a few (Huang et al., 2020). A list of the main features of distance learning includes spatial and/or temporal separation, and media and technology as means of communication during the learning process (Huang et al., 2020).

The data collected by the UNESCO-UNICEF-World Bank Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School closures shows that various solutions were adopted worldwide to provide education in the midst of the emergency, such as online, TV-based, radio-based and print-based learning (Huang et al., 2020).

2.3.1 Forms of distance teaching and learning

According to Huang et al. (2020), there are three main forms of distance teaching and learning: online platform-based teaching and learning, teacher-directed live streaming, and asynchronous video-based flipped learning.

Using an online learning management platform has many advantages and provides a wide range of functionalities regarding the management of learning materials, delivering lessons and organising learning (Huang et al., 2020). The overall functions and benefits of learning management systems have been described previously in section 2.1.7. An additional advantage of using such platforms in times of school closures is that even parents and caregivers, whose roles in maintaining the essential environment for learning became crucial in distance learning models, can join and use them following their children's performance (Huang et al., 2020).

Some teachers organised live streaming sessions using the video-conferencing tool within the LMS they used (such as Teams) or with the help of different video-conferencing applications, such as Zoom, or Google Meet (Huang et al., 2020). An argument in favour of live-streaming sessions is that it offers more flexibility when it comes to adjusting learning objectives and content, adapting teaching sequences and mixing teaching methods (Huang et al., 2020). Having synchronous online video sessions also helps to maintain meaningful, positive, and compassionate relationships with students, not to mention that being able to speak with classmates is extremely important when teaching a foreign language.

According to Huang et al. (2020), video-based flipped learning is the practice of having students watch pre-recorded videos and later having discussions about them in live-streaming sessions. It might also involve providing students with guiding questions to focus on while watching the video and organising the discussion based on those questions during

the synchronous session. Flipped learning could be another way to cater for different students' needs, for example, if students work in smaller groups based on their abilities or other needs.

2.3.2 What happened in Hungary?

Between March 2020 and May 2021, the state ordered secondary school closures twice. First, the government ordered home based learning in secondary schools according to Government Decree no. 1102/2020. (III. 14.), which was put in force on March 16, 2020 and was in force until the end of the school year. The following academic year started under normal conditions, but digital education was ordered by the government corresponding to the requirements laid down in Government Decree no. 484/2020. (XI. 10.). It was in effect from November 11, 2020 until May 9, 2021, when Government Decree no. 177/2021. (IV. 15.) allowed the return to in-person teaching in secondary schools.

In August 2021, the State Audit Office of Hungary published its report on distance learning in Hungary. Czifra et al. (2021) collected and analysed data in regard to the conditions under which distance learning started off and the effectiveness of distance learning. Regarding the conditions under which students and teachers had to face obligatory distance learning, they found the following:

- (1) Only 90% of Hungarian households had access to broadband connectivity, meaning that there were students and teachers at risk of being in the remaining 10%, compromising their access to digital education (Czifra et al., 2021).
- (2) Schools could only provide a small number of students with computers, meaning that both students and teachers had to rely on their own digital tools and infrastructure to take part in digital learning and teaching, which resulted in significant differences in students' and teachers' access to necessary digital tools (Czifra et al., 2021).

- (3) Distance learning posed a great threat to students' and teachers' data security and protection, for example, by uploading, sharing and storing students' pictures, videos and other documents used as proof that they accomplished their tasks themselves, or by teachers streaming during online lessons. The Hungarian school system was not prepared for sustaining data security and protection under such circumstances, since not even *e-Kréta* was fully developed (Czifra et al., 2021). *E-Kréta* was the official online platform during distance learning, which is an administrative registry platform, introduced in public schools in 2016 and then in all schools in 2018 on a mandatory basis (Rado, 2021). Czifra et al. (2021) states the developments only started after the introduction of distance learning, in the second half of 2020.
- (4) Digital learning materials were not generally used in education, even though the development of *Nemzeti Köznevelési Portál (NKP)*, an online platform where digital learning materials (digitalised versions of books with additional multimedia materials, for example, pictures, videos, animations, audio materials and interactive activities) are available, started in 2014, (Czifra et al., 2021). This means that not every teacher had previous experience using digital materials.
- (5) Teachers were prepared to deal with administrative tasks, such as recording attendance, submitting grades, messaging parents, assigning homework, or announcing tests, on an online platform, since the use of the *e-Kréta* system had been mandatory since the 2018-2019 academic year (Czifra et al., 2021).
- (6) Even though digital literacy is a key factor in distance teaching and learning, many teachers lacked the necessary digital skills for organising distance learning and conducting online classes. According to Czifra et al. (2021), only 72% of high school teachers used a computer for educational purposes in the 2018-2019 academic year and 80 % of them also indicated their needs to improve their digital skills.

(7) In addition, in Hungary, less than half of the population have at least basic digital skills. The following data was provided by DESI (Digital Economy and Society Index) 2020:

At least basic digital skills remained well below the EU average (49% compared to 58% in the EU) and at least basic software skills are also modest. Only a quarter of the population aged between 16 and 74 has above basic digital skills, below the EU average of 33%. (p. 7)

Based on this data, it can be presumed that there were significant differences among students' digital skills. Czifra et al. (2021) states that the differences among digital skills of students made it impossible for students to take part in distance learning procedures with the same efficiency.

Czifra et al. (2021) found that in the analysis of the effectiveness of distance learning it is most reasonable to focus on students' access to distance education and whether distance education ensured their academic progress. In their research, they found the following data:

- (1) 5% of public-school students could not participate in any form of distance learning during school closures (Czifra et al., 2021).
- (2) The available data on families' access to ICT tools necessary for distance learning shows that 93% of families had access to such tools, however, in case there were more than one child made subject to distance education in a family, the number of tools was not always enough, so parents had to purchase the needed equipment (Czifra et al, 2021). This data was collected from families with higher incomes and educational attainment, so it can be assumed that the situation among families with lower social status was less benign and not every child had access to necessary tools.
- (3) Regarding the digital skills of teachers, they found that 20% of teachers did not create or use, and 12% of teachers used, but did not create digital materials before school

closures, meaning that they did not acquire the necessary skills for producing and/or using digital materials (Czifra et al., 2021).

- (4) As for students' digital skills, Czifra et al. (2021) found that nearly half of the students, 45.7%, had the necessary level of proficiency in digital literacy skills to efficiently participate in distance learning and 5.1% of students had highly mastered digital skills. The remaining 49.2 % of students had trouble participating in distance education due to their lower level of digital proficiency.
- (5) With regards to online platforms used to supplement distance learning procedures, Czifra et al. (2021) found that most students were exposed to a great variety of online platforms simultaneously. There were schools (62%) that managed to use 3 or less platforms, but some schools (6%) used more than 6 platforms to manage online learning. The most popular online platform was e-Kréta, followed by Facebook, email systems, Zoom, Messenger, and Teams (Czifra et al, 2021).
- (6) According to Czifra et al. (2021), online learning turned out to be more time-consuming both for students and teachers. In a study conducted by ADOM, 70% of students stated that they spent more time preparing for classes and learning during online learning (Czifra et al., 2021). Another study conducted by Századvég revealed that the number of teachers who spent more than 26 hours preparing for classes sextupled during distance teaching, increasing from 5% to 30.4% of teachers.

In conclusion, the conditions under which teachers and students had to face the sudden switch to online learning were less than satisfactory. There were huge differences among participants' access to broadband connectivity and necessary ICT tools, and their level of digital proficiency, resulting in highly diverse distance learning experiences. The evidence presented in this section suggests that even though obligatory distance learning meant a huge challenge for many teachers and students, it still shed light on numerous

possibilities. For example, it enhanced the development of teachers' and students' digital literacy skills, and the production and publication of digital learning materials. These findings show that studies regarding the effects of obligatory distance teaching would be worthwhile and hence support the relevance of this research.

2.4 Integrating blended learning in the post-COVID-19 era

Online distance learning exposed stakeholders (educators, learners, and, after all, society at large) to unprecedented challenges. In his article, Kandri (2020) claims that however painful and stressful this period was, it prompted a change in education, challenging deep-rooted notions of how, when, and where education should be delivered. As an answer to these changes, Huang et al. (2020) suggests the incorporation of BL approaches in the post-COVID-19 era. The following section will look at some arguments supporting this proposition.

First of all, obligatory distance learning facilitated an immense improvement in education technology. More (n.d.) refers to this period as the most creative time in education, which triggered educators around the globe to cooperate and promoted education technology improvements. In addition, Czifra et al. (2021) reported an increase in the production and publication of digital learning materials. Secondly, to be able to participate in distance teaching and learning, teachers and learners had to invest in and upgrade their digital devices. Even if not every child had access to necessary tools, in Hungary, learners and teachers access to digital devices increased during this period (Czifra et al., 2021). Thirdly, as stated by Czifra et al. (2021), switching to distance teaching in a short period of time was an especially demanding task for teachers, but in the end, it enhanced an exceptional development of teachers' and learners' digital literacy skills. Finally, as Whittaker (2013) mentioned, the expectations of learners to have digital technology in their education has

increased in recent years. This expectation could be fulfilled with the implementation of a BL approach.

According to Huang et al. (2020), teachers improved their skills to be able to use online teaching and learning resources, conduct online lessons, and communicate with students and parents with various tools. Teachers could make use of all the skills they have mastered by implementing BL approaches upon returning to in-person teaching in schools. In order to achieve that, there are two requirements to be met. First, Singh et al. (2021) suggest that schools need to build appropriate infrastructure in schools to support BL methods. Secondly, Huang et al. (2020) believes that teachers will need to be continuously supported to be able to preserve a positive mindset towards using ICT tools and retain their improved digital competencies to be able to exploit the aforementioned benefits of integrating elements of BL models.

In a previous section it was declared that BL is a difficult term to define, because it has several interpretations and implementations (Whittaker, 2013). This assumption calls for asking which interpretation of BL should be incorporated in schools upon returning to in-person teaching. Reimers (2021) suggests that before being able to develop an effective blended education strategy, educators and other policy-makers should assess how the context for students, families, teachers, communities, and the education delivery system has changed. After developing a strategy, it is also important to increase schools', school leaders', students', families' and the education system's capacity. Reimers (2021) summarised these steps as the "three pillars of an education strategy" (p. 23) as follows: "(1) Assess changes in context. (2) Develop a blended education strategy. (3) Increase capacity." (p. 22-23)

The main objective of this thesis is to examine the effects of obligatory distance teaching by investigating the changes in EFL teachers' use of ICT tools and exploring the possibilities of applying elements of BL approaches in teaching. To provide a theoretical background for the empirical part of this research, literature on the use of classroom technology and BL approaches was reviewed. To ensure the understanding of the social context of the research, a report on the circumstances of distance teaching in Hungary made by the State Audit Office of Hungary was also reviewed. In the empirical part of the study, to examine the changes in EFL teachers' use of digital tools and BL methods, data was drawn from three main sources: (1) a survey, (2) semi-structured interviews, (3) and a reflective journal.

3 Research design and method

The following part of the study is devoted to the design and method of the research. First, I will list the research questions and describe the method of data collection, including the procedures and the instruments used in the study, followed by its setting and participants. Afterwards, the methods of data analysis will be explained. Finally, the limitations of the research will be discussed.

3.1 Research Questions

During the second period of obligatory distance teaching due to COVID-19 disruptions, I had the chance to experience online teaching at first hand. During this period, I realised, how much there is for teachers to learn about incorporating digital tools in their teaching. I had to learn a lot about using technology to be able to maintain learning during distance teaching and found that some features of this education form could be useful upon returning to classrooms. After reading extensively about the issue, I found that a number of authors (El-Azar & Tam, 2020; Harris, 2020; Kaukko et al., 2021; Okutoro-Seck, 2021) find

it possible that COVID-19 will ultimately reshape education. It raised my interest and I wanted to find out more about the changes obligatory distance teaching would bring. Thus, I formulated the following research questions:

Q1: What changes has obligatory distance teaching brought concerning secondary school EFL teachers' use of ICT tools in the classroom?

Q2: Are online learning platforms (for example, Google Classroom) useful when organizing and assessing learning in a secondary school setting?

Q3: Could blended learning (combining face-to-face learning with technology-based methodologies) be a possible result of distance learning?

3.2 Methods of data collection

To find out about changes in the use of ICT tools in EFL classrooms in Hungary, I needed to collect information on teachers' use of ICT tools before, during and after the period of obligatory distance teaching due to COVID-19 disruptions. Being interested in a rather complex issue, it seemed to be ideal to use a mixed methodology approach for data collection. According to Dörnyei (2007), mixing qualitative and quantitative research methods can be very fruitful in social sciences and educational research. He claims that by combining different methods, researchers can expand their understanding of a complex issue.

After formulating the research questions, my plan was to collect information on a national level to get a general impression of changes in teachers' use of ICT tools by conducting a questionnaire survey. However, after conducting the survey, I realised that I could not reach an audience wide enough to collect information for a representative study. Also, I realised that a quantitative approach is not suitable for this research. According to

Maykut & Morehouse (1994), qualitative research is designed to find out about what is to be learned about a social phenomenon of interest, “investigating and responding to exploratory and descriptive questions” (p.40). Considering their suggestion, applying a qualitative research approach seemed to be more practical, since the main focus of this study is a social phenomenon and the research questions are exploratory and descriptive. This is why I decided to apply a qualitative approach and conduct interviews. The results of the survey were used to help me get “a good enough overview of the phenomenon [...] in question” and construct an interview schedule for semi-structured interviews (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 136).

According to Dörnyei (2007), since the main objective of qualitative research is to describe social phenomena in their natural setting, such research is usually “conducted through an intense and prolonged contact with, or immersion in, the research setting” (p.38). To be able to properly describe the effects of obligatory distance teaching on teachers’ use of ICT tools, I wanted to examine the phenomenon in its natural setting. Thus, I decided to implement elements of blended learning approaches in my teaching and keep a systematic research journal about my experiences. After evaluating the methods and techniques I learned about in the interviews, I implemented some of them in my own teaching and wrote about my experiences.

3.3 Instruments and procedures

3.3.1 Survey

As mentioned above, I wanted to collect information about teachers’ use of ICT tools before, during and after the period of obligatory distance teaching to see what changes distance teaching has brought. To find out more about this, I asked participants about their use of ICT tools during lessons, their use of digital platforms for organising learning and

their use of video-conferencing tools before, during and after obligatory distance teaching. I decided to apply these three aspects of using digital tools, because I knew that the participants will be familiar with them, since during obligatory distance teaching, teachers had to report on what digital tools, online platforms and video-conferencing tools they used in every lesson when administering their lessons in *Kréta*, the obligatory administrative registry platform. I also wanted to see if there is a correlation between teacher collaboration and the extent of changes happening in one's teaching. To explore this domain, participants were asked questions about whether and what kind of guidance they received from their schools, if they sought help from other teachers, if they helped other teachers or if they were a member of any groups that intended to enhance teacher collaboration (e.g., Facebook groups). The questions divided into the following four categories mirroring the needs of the research:

1. The use of ICT tools before obligatory distance teaching
2. The use of ICT tools during obligatory distance teaching
3. Teacher collaboration during obligatory distance teaching
4. The use of ICT tools after returning to teaching in person

For the whole questionnaire see **Appendix A** and for the English translation see **Appendix B**.

The questionnaire was posted on a social networking site and participants could fill it in via a link to an online survey platform. The online software used to create the questionnaire allows its users to create, spread and analyse surveys. This solution provided the benefits of collecting data via the internet mentioned by Dörnyei (2007): (1) it reduced research costs, (2) after making the recruitment posting, its administration was self-running,

(3) the high-level of anonymity was likely to enhance participants' honesty, and (4) it provided access to populations that otherwise would have been inaccessible.

Before making a recruitment post, the sample size had to be determined. According to Dörnyei (2007), one to ten percent of the population is a good sampling fraction, with a minimum of about 100 participants. As for the population size, since there is no available data about the number of English teachers in Hungary, I had to calculate it. After collecting and comparing data in 16 different secondary schools, I found that on average, 9.9% of them are English teachers. Taking 9.9% of 40,184 (the number of teachers working in the 2020-2021 academic year according to KSH, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office), the estimated number of English teachers is 3993 and the minimum sampling size (one percent of a population) would be 40. 41 teachers filled in my questionnaire. Despite having approximately 1% of the population, I still did not get enough responses for a valid sample for a representative study and thus the results cannot be generalized to the whole population.

3.3.2 Interviews

As the main research instrument of the semi-structured interview, I prepared an interview schedule with guiding questions and prompts. I decided to work with an interview schedule, because it provides guidance and direction and at the same time, its open-ended format encourages the interviewer and the interviewee to elaborate on certain issues and follow up on interesting developments (Dörnyei, 2007). According to Dörnyei (2007), a semi-structured interview is suitable for researchers who have a “good enough overview of the phenomenon [...] in question” (p.136). Designing the survey and looking at its results gave me an overview of the researched phenomenon that helped me design an interview schedule for my research.

When designing the interview schedule, the structure of the survey questionnaire was taken into consideration and participants answered questions about the following five topics: (1) questions about using ICT tools before obligatory distance teaching, (2) questions about using ICT tools during obligatory distance teaching, (3) questions regarding collaboration among teachers during obligatory distance teaching, (4) questions about using ICT tools after obligatory distance teaching, and (5) questions regarding the possibilities of incorporating elements of a blended learning approach in the future, particularly, whether they would implement a blended learning approach and if this trend could become widespread in Hungary. During the interview, besides answering the open-ended questions of the interview schedule, participants were also asked follow-up questions and were encouraged to discuss any upcoming issues. The use of an interview schedule allowed enough flexibility and freedom to learn more about the questions at hand from different aspects. The interviews were conducted in Hungarian, the mother-tongue of the participants. The interviews were recorded using a mobile phone application and were later transcribed. For the whole interview schedule see **Appendix C** and for the English translation see **Appendix D**.

3.3.3 Journal

For easier analysis, the journal focuses on a shorter time period starting on February 14, 2022 and lasting until March 29, 2022. During this time period, students were guided through Unit 10 of a coursebook called *Life* (Dummett, 2019). Based on Dörnyei's (2007) suggestion, a standardised format was used to allow easier analysis and the journal entries focused on the following three aspects: (1) what happened in class, (2) what ICT tools had been used, and (3) what elements of blended learning I implemented. Every journal log was structured the following way: a reflective analysis about what happened in class with special regard to the previously mentioned three aspects was followed by a detailed list of which

ICT tools and blended learning solutions were used in class. For an excerpt of the reflective journal, see **Appendix E**.

3.4 Setting and participants

3.4.1 Survey

The recruitment for the survey was posted on a social networking site, Facebook, in June 2021. Altogether 41 secondary school EFL teachers filled in the questionnaire. Fortunately, there is a great variety regarding participants' ages and places of residence, meaning that I could report on the circumstances of a broader population. Figure 1 shows the age distribution of the participants. Figure 2 shows their places of residence.

Figure 1

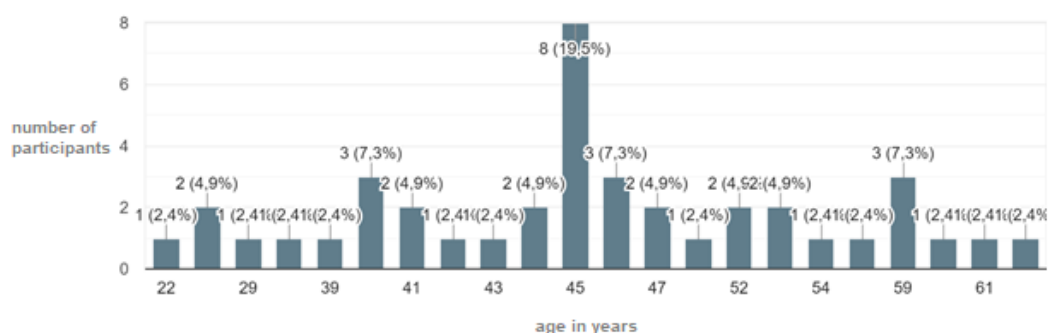
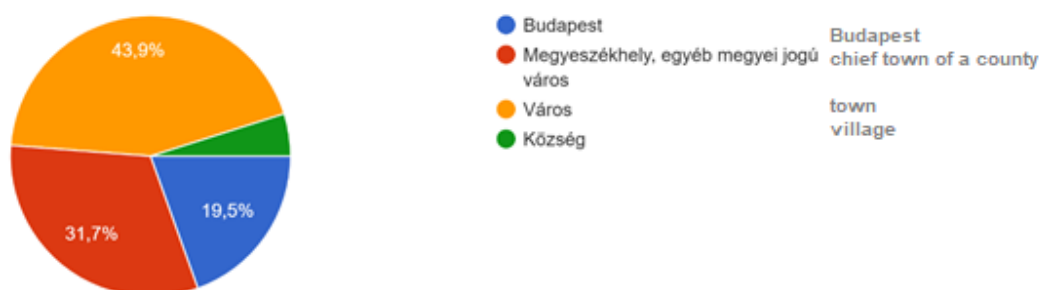


Figure 2



3.4.2 Interviews

According to the underpinnings of purposive sampling explained by Maykut & Morehouse (1994), the participants for the interviews were carefully selected based on the belief that they would expand the variability of the sample. All three of the interviewees were teaching in Budapest. Two of the teachers interviewed had been working at one of the practice schools of ELTE, where I did my teaching practice, meaning that they have been working in an environment where teachers are generally open to discovering and implementing new methods to improve the learning experience of students. Their immense experience provided a great source of information for the research. In order to get a more detailed picture about the phenomenon in question, a third teacher with a different background was interviewed. The third teacher was teaching in a secondary technical, vocational and grammar school of catering, tourism and hairdressing in the seventh district of Budapest, where I worked besides doing my teaching practice. Table 1 summarizes the data about the participants of the interview.

Table 1 *Data about the participants of the interview*

Pseudonym	Gender	Type of school	Years of teaching experience	Date of conducting the interview
Dia	female	practice school	19 years	09.06.2021
Imre	male	practice school	24 years	18.06.2021
Edit	female	secondary technical, vocational and grammar school	2 years	24.11.2021

All of the teachers, interviewed or surveyed, started teaching before the period of obligatory distance teaching, have first-hand experiences with online teaching and continued teaching upon returning to teaching in person.

3.4.3 Journal

I wrote journal entries about my experiences gathered while teaching in one of the practice schools of ELTE where I was doing my teaching practice. During my teaching practice, I worked with a group of 15 students around the age of 16-17. There were 7 female and 8 male students. It was a mixed group of students on a relatively high level of proficiency, from B2 to C1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001).

3.5 Methods of data analysis

The process of data analysis had three main stages. First, the answers of the questionnaire survey had to be systemized. The online tool used to create and conduct the survey automatically entered the data into spreadsheets, making it easier to analyse them. When comparing the results of the questionnaire, the answers given in the four parts of the survey were compared. First, I analysed the answers of each participant individually. To see if obligatory distance teaching had an impact on their use of ICT tools, I compared their answers given for the questions regarding their use of ICT tools before, during and after obligatory distance teaching to see if they were planning to use more ICT tools than previously or not. Then, to see if there was a correlation between teacher collaboration and an increased use of ICT tools, I compared their answers given regarding these questions.

Secondly, after conducting the interviews, the recordings were transcribed. To analyse the data, I used the constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). First, I analysed the interviews one by one, looking for recurring concepts and themes and categorising them. Next, I refined the categories by comparing and combining ideas overlapping with each other in all three interviews. Then, I compared the notions of the

interviews to the literature. Thirdly, I analysed the content of the reflective journal using the constant comparative method and compared the data to the findings of the interviews.

3.6 Strengths and limitations of the study

Before drawing attention to the limitations of the study, I will describe how the trustworthiness of this study was established. According to Guba (1981), trustworthiness can be established by ensuring credibility, objectivity, transferability, and reliability. The following paragraph will summarize the measures that had been taken to ensure all of these features.

Several steps had been taken to ensure the credibility of the study. Firstly, by teaching during obligatory distance learning I developed an early familiarity with the investigated phenomenon (Shenton, 2004). Secondly, the study involved triangulation, that is, three different methods were used to compensate “for their individual limitations” and exploit their benefits (Shenton, 2004, p. 65). Triangulation ensured the objectivity of the study as well (Shenton, 2004). Thirdly, the survey was anonymous and the interviewees were given the opportunity to refuse to participate in data collection to guarantee the honesty of the informants (Shenton, 2004). To ensure transferability, a detailed description of the researched phenomenon and methods of data collection and analysis was provided to let readers properly understand and therefore be able to compare the instances of this research to that of their situations (Shenton, 2004). According to Shenton (2004), the measures taken to ensure credibility and transferability also assure reliability, that is, these measures ensure that if the study was to be repeated, similar instances would emerge.

As it was mentioned before, there are limitations to this study that need to be taken into consideration when assessing the results. Firstly, this is a small-scale study. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to provide a comprehensive review of the effects of obligatory distance

teaching of all EFL teachers in Hungary. The results of the questionnaire cannot be generalized to the whole population, because its sample size was too small. Also, only three teachers were interviewed and the reflective journal deals with experience gathered while working with one group only. For further research, it would be profitable to carry out more interviews, conduct more surveys, and make observations in different groups and different settings to get data that can be generalised to the whole population.

4 Results and discussion

The following section will present the findings of the research. This study has a layered nature in a sense that the results of the survey informed the interview schedule and the results of the interviews informed my observations for the journal. This layered nature of the study characterizes the presentation of the results too. First, the results of the survey will be presented and discussed. Then, the results of the interviews and finally, the results of the journal will be analysed in the same way.

4.1 Survey

A questionnaire survey was conducted to collect data about teachers' use of ICT tools before, during and after the period of obligatory distance teaching. Participants were recruited via Facebook in June 2021. Altogether 41 participants filled in the questionnaire from different parts of Hungary. The following section will summarise and discuss the results of the survey.

Regarding the use of ICT tools before obligatory distance learning, teachers reported the use of 19 different ICT tools. As background information, a list of all the online applications mentioned in the results and discussion section of the thesis along with a short description of them can be found under **Appendix F**. The majority of participants used

YouTube (92.7% of them), *Microsoft Word* (82.9%), *Microsoft PowerPoint* (58.5%), and *Quizlet* (53.7%). There were less popular tools as well, such as using *personal pictures and videos* (29.3%), *LearningApps* (26.8%), *Kahoot* (26.8%), *Google Forms* (26.8%), *Wordwall* (24.4%), *Google Docs* (22%), *Redmenta* (19.5%), *Prezi* (7.3%), *Mentimeter* (4.9%), and *Padlet* (4.9%). Only a minority preferred a tool other than these. One participant (2.4%) mentioned using *Quizizz*, two participants (4.8%) mentioned using *islCollective*, and another two participants (4.8%) mentioned using different *web-based interactive materials*. There was only one participant who did not use any ICT tools. Approximately a third of the participants (34.1%) used activities in class that involved the use of ICT tools in every lesson, more than half of the teachers (56.1%) used such activities on a weekly basis, three participants (7.3%) used these on a monthly basis, one participant (2.4%) only used such activities one or two times during a semester and one participant (2.4%) did not use such activities at all.

When asked about the use of digital tools during obligatory distance teaching, participants reported the use of 20 digital tools. The tools in addition to those that were already mentioned were *Google Jamboard* (used by 4.9% of participants), *Microsoft Whiteboard* (used by 2.4% of participants), and *Microsoft Forms* (used by 2.4% of participants). There was a notable growth in use in the case of six digital tools. *Redmenta* was used by 43.9% (24.4% growth), *LearningApps* was used by 41.5% (14.7% growth), *Google Forms* was used by 39% (12.2% growth), *Wordwall* was used by 34.1% (9.7% growth), *Google Docs* was used by 29.3% (7.3% growth), and *Mentimeter* was used by 12.2% (7.3% growth) of participants. There was a less significant growth in use in case of five tools. *YouTube videos* were used by 95.1% (2.4% growth), *personal photos and videos* were used by 34.1% (4.8% growth), *Google Slides* were used by 4.9% (2.4% growth), and *Quizizz* was also used by 4.9% (2.4% growth). The number of *Kahoot* users did not change.

Surprisingly, there is a decline in the number of users in case of six ICT tools. *Microsoft Word* was used by 80.5% (2.4% decline), *Microsoft PowerPoint* was used by 56.1% (2.4% decline), *Quizlet* was used by 46.3% (7.4% decline), *other web-based interactive materials* were used by 7.3% (2.5% decline), *Prezi* was used by 4.9% (2.4% decline) and *Padlet* was used by 2.4% (2.5% decline) of participants. Overall, the use of ICT tools increased during obligatory distance learning.

Altogether, the number of ICT tools used in teaching grew from 202 to 236 which is a 16.8% increase. This number grew even further when participants were asked about their plans about which ICT tools they were going to implement in their teaching. Altogether, participants were going to use 247 digital tools after returning to teaching in person, which is a 22.3% growth compared to how many digital tools they used before obligatory distance teaching.

Even prior to distance learning, the participants of the survey used a number of online platforms as a tool for organizing teaching and learning processes, for example, to publish learning content, or assign homework. In total, they used 9 different platforms. 34.1% of participants used *email account services*, 20.5% used *Google Classroom*, 18.2% used *Google Drive*, 9.1% used *Microsoft Teams*, 9.1% used *Facebook*, 9.1% used *Facebook Messenger*, 4.5% used *Moodle*, 2.3% used *Edmodo*, and 2.3% used *Liveworksheets*. Almost half of the teachers (41.5%) did not use any online platforms. However, all of the participants started using an online platform during distance teaching. 56.1% of participants used *Google Classroom*, 48.8% used *Facebook*, 36.6% used *Kréta DKT*, 36.6% used *Google Drive*, 36.6% used *Microsoft Teams*, 26.8% used *email services*, 7.3% used *Moodle*, 2.4% used *Liveworksheets*. Also, the majority of teachers (95.5%) reported that they were planning to incorporate the use of an online platform after returning to teaching in person. Regarding which online platform they were planning to use, 51.2% of participants voted for *Google*

Classroom, 46.3% voted for *Google Drive*, 31.7% voted for *Microsoft Teams*, 31.7% voted for *using an email service*, 22% voted for *Kréta DKT*, 2.4% voted for *Moodle*, 2.4% voted for *Canvas*, and 2.4% voted for *Class Dojo*.

All of the participants held live streaming sessions during distance learning. They used eight different platforms. 63.4% of participants used *Facebook Messenger*, 48.8% used *Google Meet*, 41.5% used *Microsoft Teams*, 29.3% used *Zoom*, 22% used *Kréta DKT*, 19.5% used *Discord*, 4.9% used *Skype* and 2.4% used *Viber*. Only a minority of teachers, 4.9%, reported that they were not planning to use these tools after returning to schools. In response to which platforms they were going to use for live streaming after returning to school, 68.3% of participants voted for *Facebook Messenger*, 31.7% voted for *Microsoft Teams*, 31.7% voted for *Google Meet*, 19.5% voted for *Kréta DKT*, 14.6% voted for *Zoom*, 14.6% voted for *Discord*, 7.3% voted for *Skype*, and 2.4% voted for *Viber*.

82.9% of participants received guidance from their schools regarding the tools used for live streaming sessions and 70.7% of participants received guidance regarding digital platforms that could be useful for organising learning. 34% (14) of participants reported that the teachers at their school received a briefing about a video-conferencing tool and/or an online platform (*Discord*, *Microsoft Teams*, *Google Classroom*, or *Kréta DKT*) organized and hosted by the school directory or other teachers. 22% (9) of the participants revealed that they only received instructions about which online platforms and tools they should use. 15% (6) of the participants said that they received guidance from their colleagues. 10% (4) of the participants received guidance through videos, and emails. 5% (2) of the participants had to follow school regulations. The rest of the teachers did not give any details about what sort of guidance they received.

More than half of the teachers participated in some form of collaboration among teachers. 58.5% of participants reported that they sought help from other teachers, 85.4% of participants helped other teachers regarding the use of tools that can be used for live-streaming sessions or organising learning, and 75.6% of participants joined groups that intended to enhance teacher collaboration (e.g. Facebook groups). To see if teacher collaboration had an effect on participants' use of ICT tools data collected from each participant has been compared regarding the following questions: (1) Did the number of used ICT tools increase? (2) Did their school provide any form of guidance? (3) Did they collaborate with other teachers? Based on the data, the following assumptions can be made about the effects of collaboration among teachers on teachers' use of ICT tools:

1. All of the participants who decided to implement more ICT tools in their teaching (22 participants) collaborated with other teachers.
2. Those participants who did not collaborate with other teachers (3 participants) were not planning to use more ICT tools than they used before distance teaching.
3. Many of those participants who did not get any form of guidance from their schools during school closures still planned to use more digital tools if they collaborated with other teachers. There was only one participant who received no guidance from their school, collaborated with other teachers and did not plan to use more ICT tools.
4. 14 participants received guidance from their schools and collaborated with other teachers, but still did not plan to use more ICT tools than before.
5. Since the majority (57.9%) of those participants who collaborated with someone decided to use more ICT tools, collaboration among teachers seems to have an amplifying effect on teachers' use of ICT tools.

To sum up, the results of the survey show notable changes in participants' use of ICT tools. The changes showed by the results can be summarised as follows:

1. Even though the number of different digital tools used did not increase significantly (it grew from 19 to 20), participants use of ICT tools rose by 16.8% during obligatory distance teaching. Moreover, participants were planning to use 22.3% more ICT tools after returning to teaching in person.
2. The number of teachers using *Microsoft Word*, *Microsoft PowerPoint* and *Prezi* decreased, while the number of teachers using *Google Docs*, and *Google Slides* rose. This signals a growing popularity of online presentation software and word processors.
3. The popularity of online platforms for organising learning processes grew enormously. Before obligatory distance teaching, almost half of the teachers (41.5%) did not use any online platforms for such purposes. During obligatory distance teaching, teachers were inclined to use online platforms. All of the participants reported to have used such platforms and 95.5% of them revealed that they were also going to use one after returning to classroom teaching.
4. The popularity of video-conferencing tools also grew. The majority of participants (95.1%) revealed that they were planning to use such tools after going back to schools.
5. Collaborating with other teachers had an amplifying effect on participants' use of ICT tools.

As mentioned previously, the results of the survey informed the interview schedule I used later. In this paragraph, I will summarise how these findings were used as a basis for the interview schedule. Firstly, the results showed that teachers were planning to use more ICT tools after going back to schools. To learn more about how these tools are used in the classroom, I decided to ask interviewees to describe some classroom activities that involve the use of ICT tools and talk about the benefits and drawbacks of implementing digital tools

in teaching. Secondly, one of the most prominent changes that occurred during online teaching is that teachers started to use learning management systems to solve classroom management issues (for example, assigning and grading homework). Since the majority of teachers decided to continue using these systems, I wanted to find out more about the advantages and disadvantages of such systems. Thirdly, there were also some teachers who reported that they were planning to use video-conferencing tools that they used for online live streaming sessions. I became curious to find out why and how these tools could be useful under traditional circumstances. Also, some of the participants seemed to have trouble differentiating between tools used for live streaming sessions and online platforms used for organising learning. This is why I decided to make the distinction between these two categories clearer. Finally, I intended to find out more about the effects of teacher collaboration.

4.2 Interviews

Altogether three interviews were conducted between June and November 2021. Two of the interviews were conducted with teachers working at one of the practice schools of ELTE and a third interview was conducted with a teacher working at a secondary technical, vocational and grammar school. All of them started teaching before the period of obligatory distance teaching, have first-hand experiences with online teaching and continued teaching upon returning to teaching in person.

4.2.1 Emerging themes

After transcribing the interviews, the collected data was analysed with the constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). After coding the text, 198 units of meaning were identified. While categorising these units of meaning, five main themes emerged. The categories and their definitions are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 *The emerging themes of the interview study*

Emerging themes	Definitions	Number of coded segments
Use of ICT tools	The participants' use of ICT tools before, during and after obligatory distance teaching.	45
Use of online platforms	The participants' use of online platforms as a tool for organizing teaching and learning processes before, during and after obligatory distance teaching.	46
Use of digital tools used for live streaming sessions	The participants' use of digital tools used for live streaming sessions before, during and after obligatory distance teaching.	22
Teacher collaboration	The participants' experiences and views on collaboration among teachers during the period of distance teaching.	46
Future of <i>blended learning</i>	The participants' perceptions about the future of implementing blended learning approaches in Hungarian EFL classrooms in secondary schools.	39

In the following part of this section, the results of the interviews will be presented and discussed according to the aforementioned five main themes.

4.2.2 Use of ICT tools

All three teachers reported to have used ICT tools, such as projectors in the classroom, computers, and the learners' own mobile devices, prior to obligatory distance teaching. They also revealed that they were going to keep using these tools in the future as

well. In the following paragraphs, I will describe some of the ways they use these tools and the changes in their use of ICT tools.

Dia and Imre said that they use the learners' own devices to share pictures, texts and other realia in their chat groups during or after a lesson, or have students use their phones to look up different pieces of information, such as definitions for words or additional facts about the reading text in the coursebook. Edit revealed that she mainly uses students' own devices to play with *Kahoot*, *Memrise* or another application while revising for a test. Their example is consistent with the suggestions of a number of authors (Dudeney and Hockly (2012), Harmer (2015), Scrivener (2011), and Ur (2012)) regarding the growing popularity of using students' own devices in the classroom. There are several reasons why activities involving the use of learners' own devices are popular. For example, with internet connectivity, they are very useful in a sense that they can be used in a number of ways (Harmer, 2015). Furthermore, such devices are more and more widespread nowadays so many students have access to them (Dudeney and Hockly, 2012). In addition to that, Imre highlighted the fact that mobile devices with internet connection allow quick access to a number of authentic materials and therefore can enrich the learning experience of learners.

Besides mobile phones, computers are also widely used tools. Dudeney and Hockly (2007) suggest that any number of computers can enrich the learning experience of students and it seems that the way Dia incorporated using computer(s) in her teaching is the perfect example illustrating this. Depending on how many computers she had at her disposal, she found a way to supplement her teaching with technology. Dia shared that she used computers on a daily basis, in almost every lesson even before digital teaching. She usually used the teacher's computer and a projector to show pictures, videos and other visual aids. She also revealed that there is one classroom in her school equipped with laptops for students and sometimes she had the chance to work in this room. At these times she had students work

individually or in small groups, surfing the internet for information or playing with an online application, for example, *Quizlet Live*.

The interactive whiteboard (IWB) is another popular digital tool in teaching. However, the participants of this interview study had mostly negative experiences using the IWB. Dia and Imre said that they tried to use the IWB, but they have encountered several obstacles. Edit did not even mention using it. Both Imre and Dia were aware of the many functions offered by IWBs. As explained by Harmer (2015), you can use it as a regular board and write or draw on it with a special pen, or you can attach it to a computer that has an embedded software on it and use it for interactive activities.

Although IWBs offer great possibilities for teaching, as it is exemplified by the interviewees, they are not popular with every teacher for different reasons. Imre revealed that he stopped using the IWB altogether after it failed to function appropriately and thus prevented him from executing his plans several times. Dia rarely used the IWB, only if the coursebook had an IWB application and it was installed on the computer. She found these applications useful, because they helped her to customize the coursebook to her own objectives and needs. However, not every coursebook came with such applications, the majority of classrooms were not equipped with an IWB and even if they were, the application did not always work or was installed on the computer. Kan (2021) explained that to fully utilize the capabilities of IWBs, they need to be continuously maintained by the IT team of the school, for example, they need to install, delete, and update different apps; they have to apply and update security settings; and they need to showcase the latest features of the device for teachers. If these needs are not met, it could result in a situation illustrated by Imre and Dia. Furthermore, they did not use the IWB during distance teaching and did not plan to use it after returning to teaching in person, which could be due to the aforementioned difficulties.

During obligatory distance teaching, Edit seemed to have learned about the most ICT tools. While Imre and Dia mostly learned about different online platforms and video-conferencing tools, Edit also learned about a number of online applications and websites that can be used in the EFL classroom:

I got to learn about a lot of useful websites and applications on the internet. We often used Redmenta, Socrative, Wordwall, Kahoot, Quizlet and Mentimeter. Now they are a vital part of my lessons, I use them almost every day (Interview with Edit, November 24, 2021).

As illustrated by Edit's example, the internet is no longer only a source of teaching and learning materials as Dudeney and Hockly (2012) suggests. There are online applications available that can supplement lessons by enabling interactive activities organised by the teacher. Edit's case is an example of how obligatory distance teaching further strengthened the trend of using online applications in the classroom.

Dia reported that she started using *Google Slides* to create presentations for lessons during distance teaching and she went on to talk about the advantages of this application:

I started using Google Slides via Google Classroom to create presentations for lessons. I still use it; I create slides for every lesson. I did not do this before the pandemic, I used to write down my lesson plans on paper. Now I use the slides for this purpose and I think it is more effective. I feel like I am more effective as a teacher when preparing for lessons (Interview with Dia, June 9, 2021).

Dia's words are in line with what Scrivener (2011) said about using presentation software. He claimed that these applications are not only used to show learning content anymore, but many teachers use it as a means of organising and storing teaching materials. Dia, too, used slideshows to organise and store learning content, in addition, she even

replaced traditional paper-based lesson planning by relying on slides when planning and executing lessons, making the process of lesson planning faster and more efficient. The fact that she created the slides via Google Classroom (GC) offers even more benefits. Firstly, since the application she uses is embedded in GC, the slides can be created with a few clicks and easily stored under the tab called “*Classwork*” in GC and categorized in different topics in each group. Moreover, this way the slideshows are also available for students, meaning that they can revisit the slides whenever they want to, thus making revising and preparing for each lesson easier for them.

Imre said that he rather focused on learning about using different online LMSs and video-conferencing tools, because he already found the amount and kinds of technology that he feels comfortable to incorporate in his lessons. While highlighting the benefits of using ICT tools, he also drew attention to the importance of considering when the implementation of these tools is actually useful:

Using ICT tools offer great possibilities, for instance, it can supplement traditional lessons by expanding the limited time of classroom interactions and bringing the world into the classroom by using the internet. I am old-fashioned in a sense that I am usually sceptical about using new digital tools and I like to use traditional teaching forms, but even I admit that the use of these tools enrich education. It is important, however, to pay attention to how we combine these tools with traditional teaching methods, to ensure that they really add something to the lesson and are not just there for the sake of using them. Another issue is that, sometimes, preparing such activities requires way too much time to be worth using them (Interview with Imre, June 18, 2021).

This sentiment resonates with the suggestion of a number of authors (Harmer, 2015; Scrivener, 2011; Ur, 2012), that is, making decisions about what type of technology, or if any kind of technology should be implemented in a lesson is a complex and crucial part of a teacher's job.

Another important piece of data is that two out of the three teachers (Imre and Dia) indicated that they had to purchase new devices, phones and laptops, to be able to participate in distance teaching effectively. This data is consistent with Czifra et al.'s (2021) findings about the conditions under which distance learning started off and the effectiveness of distance learning. They claimed that a significant number of learners and teachers did not have the necessary infrastructure for remote learning and this encouraged stakeholders to purchase devices, so now more learners and teachers have access to digital devices than before distant teaching. However, Edit and Dia expressed their concerns about learners' lack of access to essential digital tools several times during the interviews, so even if the circumstances improved, learners' access to devices is still not sufficient.

4.2.3 Use of digital platforms

The participants had different levels of experience using digital platforms to organise learning prior to distance teaching. Edit claimed that she did not use any online platforms before online teaching. Another participant, Dia, was an enthusiastic user of an online Learning Management System (LMS). She used *Edmodo* to post materials and assign homework for students. Other than using this platform as a means of organising learning, her aim was to foster relationships in the group by letting students communicate in the target language outside the classroom as well. To achieve this, she assigned homework in a way that students had to contact each other, for example, by writing letters to each other. Besides using *Edmodo*, she also used group chats in *Messenger* in case she wanted to share something

urgent with students. Even though Imre did not use an online LMS, he, too, used Messenger group and private chats to send homework and extra materials to students. Both of these teachers emphasized the practicality of asynchronous interaction among students and learners.

While distance teaching, all three participants worked with *Google Classroom* (GC) and had mostly positive experiences using this LMS. Before returning to teaching in person, all of them planned to keep using it. In the following section, I will describe the most interesting aspects of the participants' experiences on GC.

One of the biggest advantages of using this platform was illustrated by Dia's description as follows:

It is easier for me to correct their works, because I do not have to bother with collecting the papers, carrying them around, and making sure I do not lose any of them. With Google Classroom, I can easily access them whenever and wherever it suits me and I can give more feedback on their homework. Sometimes I ask students to record themselves speaking during lessons and upload it to Google Classroom. I listen to these later and give feedback via Google Classroom. It is great, because now I can give more comprehensive feedback to their oral performance as well, since it does not have to happen in the course of a lesson. I enjoy using this platform, I think it lets teachers work more efficiently (Interview with Dia, June 9, 2021).

The fact that this easy-to-use platform made the procedure of assigning, collecting and checking homework simpler is one of the biggest advantages of what this platform has to offer. This way students can upload their work anytime of the day and teachers can give feedback whenever it suits them. Also, they do not have to carry and take care of a huge

stack of paper. It simplifies the procedure and therefore, even if only to a limited extent, reduces teachers' immense workload.

Echoing Dia's idea, Imre praised the functions of GC, especially that the teacher can set the deadline of the assignments and see when students uploaded their work. Imre described his view on GC the following way:

I think it is great that it helps to keep account of which homework was assigned when, what the deadlines are, which students submitted their assignments and when they did it. It is also easier to give feedback and the best is that students cannot lose these assignments. If they hand it in on paper, they will most likely lose it once they have looked at the feedback. This way the assignments and the feedbacks are stored and both the teacher and the students can revisit them anytime. I think I will keep using it for administrative purposes (Interview with Imre, June 18, 2021).

Edit also enjoyed using all of the functions that GC provides. She also added that students took messages and assignments given via GC more seriously than those assigned via other platforms, such as Messenger or Facebook. She was the only participant who mentioned that she missed something in GC:

It would have been great if Google Classroom had an embedded application for assessment, like Socrative or Redmenta. It would have been easier to coordinate, because we would not have had to switch to another platform. Also, it would have been great if it stored their tests, because students would have had the chance to look at their work later and learn from it (Interview with Edit, November 24, 2021).

There is indeed great potential in computer-based assessment and GC lacks this feature. However, according to Huang et al. (2020), there are LMSs that enable different forms of assessment, for example, Teams and Moodle allow systematic assessment. Edit's

observation raises intriguing questions regarding the possibilities provided by a LMS that allows different forms of assessment, but exploring that goes beyond the scope of my investigation. It is also important to point out that different LMSs have different strengths and weaknesses and a given system might suit some teachers more than others.

4.2.4 Use of digital tools used for live streaming sessions

All three participants held live streaming sessions in the course of online teaching. Edit indicated that her school ordered its teachers to use *Google Meet* for live streaming sessions. She found this practical and enjoyed using it. However, Dia and Imre used other tools, because they were not completely satisfied with *Google Meet*. The most important reason for that was that it does not allow work in smaller groups. They preferred to use video-conferencing tools that allow small group activities, such as *Zoom* or *Discord*. Imre also mentioned that he liked to use *Messenger* for one-on-one consultations with students, because it was more easily manageable. Since speaking is a key element of foreign language teaching, the use of these tools was self-explanatory during obligatory distance teaching. However, their usefulness after returning to in-person teaching is more questionable. As to whether they will use these tools in the future, both Dia and Imre declared that they will use video-conferencing tools for one-on-one consultations. As Imre put it:

I see great potential in these tools. I think they are great for one-on-one consultations and I will definitely use them. Sometimes it is so complicated to schedule a meeting in the afternoon with students, because they have a lot of private lessons and training sessions. It is a lot easier with one of these tools, because we can meet in the comfort of our homes. And why would we not use them if we finally learned how to do it? (Interview with Imre, June 18, 2021).

Edit revealed that she does not plan to use video-conferencing tools in the future, but she will use emails and chats more often to communicate with students outside the classroom. It seems that online learning shed light on the possibilities of communication outside the classroom which, interestingly, became more significant.

4.2.5 Teacher collaboration

Since Dia and Imre worked in the same school, they had very similar experiences regarding teacher collaboration during distance teaching. At first, their school did not order them to use any specific platforms or video-conferencing tools. During the first school closure (beginning on March 16, 2020 and lasting until the end of the school year), they had the chance to use platforms and tools that best suited them. Dia mentioned that she asked learners about which platforms and tools they would prefer and made a decision accordingly. Before the second time secondary schools closed (November 11, 2020), the faculty decided that every teacher should use *Google Classroom*, because it seemed to be the best option based on their previous experiences. Both Dia and Imre mentioned that teachers at their school liked to experiment with different tools at first, because while they were looking for the best tool, they learned a lot about the use of these tools and thus became more conscious and effective in their teaching.

Regarding the use of digital tools, they received guidance and help mostly from their colleagues. Some of the more experienced teachers in their school offered training sessions about different platforms and applications, such as *Google Classroom*, *Zoom* and *Discord*, for the whole faculty. Moreover, both of them reported about effective collaboration among colleagues. They were continuously in connection with other English teachers at their school asking about and sharing effective ways of teaching online. However, they did not cooperate with teachers outside their schools. That was also true of Edit. Her school organised two

training sessions, one about *Google Classroom* and *Google Meet*, the approved digital tools in their school, and one by which teachers could ask any questions. Besides these trainings, she relied on her colleagues for advice and help. She, too, said that she was actively cooperating with her colleagues, but not with other teachers. All three participants revealed that if they could not get the necessary help from their colleagues, they used the internet to look for possible solutions. This finding is in accord with that of Dudeney and Hockly (2012), that is, since the internet is a platform for a number of online discussion groups where teachers can exchange information and discuss their thoughts, it plays a significant role in teacher collaboration and thus teacher education as well.

4.2.6 The future of blended learning

The participants shared different views about the future of blended learning (BL). For example, Imre said that “it is not the future, but the present”. He himself saw many possibilities in blending technology-based techniques with traditional ones and implemented this approach in his teaching. According to him, the majority of language teachers already practise BL and distance teaching only enhanced this trend, since it shed light on numerous possibilities offered by technology. Dia was also positive about the future of BL. “I believe it is the future. In fact, I have been using this approach for a long time” (Interview with Dia, June 9, 2021). However, when asked about how widespread she believes BL will be, she was less optimistic: “The problem is that many teachers do not have the necessary equipment. They would need a good computer and a good smart phone to implement this approach” (Interview with Dia, June 9, 2021).

Dia and Edit emphasized several times that a significant number of teachers and students do not have access to the necessary equipment to be able to take part in a blended learning education. When asked about the future of BL, Edit said the following:

I think it is a great idea, but I do not see it working out. I think it would work in a school in which all of the students have access to the necessary tools, for example, mobile phones with reliable mobile internet, but that is not true about most schools. For example, in our school, not every classroom has a Wi-Fi connection and not every child has mobile internet. In addition, I think the situation is even worse in smaller villages in the country (Interview with Edit, November 24, 2021).

Their remarks reflect what Czifra et al. (2021) said about the significant differences among teachers' and learners' access to necessary ICT tools. Their report showed that a significant number of stakeholders did not have necessary devices at their disposal. It is a significant problem considering that having access to necessary tools is a prerequisite of implementing blended learning approaches.

Edit also pointed out another crucial aspect, namely the importance of applying blended learning approaches to develop learners' digital literacy skills:

I believe it is very important to develop learners' digital literacy skills, because their skills are not good enough. They should learn how to use different word processors, create presentations or podcasts, film and edit videos, write emails in an appropriate manner, because they do not know how to do these things, but we cannot teach them as long as they do not have access to essential tools (Interview with Edit, November 24, 2021).

In conclusion, the potential in applying blended learning approaches in teaching is acknowledged by all of the participants, but it is clear that before being able to fully utilize its prospects, a better digital infrastructure needs to be developed.

4.3 Journal

I implemented blended learning elements in my own teaching and kept a systematic journal about my experiences between February 14, 2022 and April 1, 2022. I wrote about my experiences while teaching a group of 15 advanced students, aged 15-16 at one of the practice schools of ELTE where I did my long-term teaching practice.

4.3.1 Emerging themes

As it was mentioned earlier, the results of the interviews informed my observations in the classroom and how I planned my lessons. After analysing the results of the interviews, I decided to incorporate the following elements in my teaching: (1) I used Google Classroom to assign homework, share learning content and communicate with students (2) I used Facebook Messenger for more urgent messages (3) I created a slideshow for almost every lesson (4) I used the internet as a source of teaching materials to prepare for lessons (5) and I used BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) activities in the classroom. I wrote reflective journal entries about 18 lessons between February 14, 2022 and April 1, 2022. The journal entries were analysed with the constant comparative method. After coding the text, 158 units of meaning were identified. While categorising these units of meaning, five main themes emerged. The categories and their definitions are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 *The emerging themes of the journal entries*

Emerging themes	Definitions	Number of coded segments
Using Google Classroom	My observations regarding the use of Google Classroom to assign homework, share learning content and communicate with students.	41

Creating slideshows	My observations about the advantages of creating slideshows for each lesson.	73
Using BYOD activities	My observations about activities by which students use their own digital devices.	29
Using the internet	My observations concerning using the internet as a source of teaching and learning materials.	6
Communicating with students via Facebook Messenger	My observations about the times I used Facebook Messenger instead of Google Classroom to communicate with students.	9

In the following part of this section, the main findings of the journal entries will be presented and discussed according to the aforementioned five main themes.

4.3.2 Using Google Classroom

First, I will describe how I designed our course in Google Classroom (GC). GC allows teachers to create assignments, question-driven discussions, and post materials and then organize them in different topics. First, I created a topic called *Unit 10*, the number of the unit of the book we dealt with at that time. Students could find all of the materials and assignments under this topic. I posted materials about each lesson, naming each unit with the number of the given lesson, for example, *Lesson 62*. I found this organisation very useful, because the students could easily find any document or link that I instructed them to open. Another advantage of this is that students could easily prepare for each lesson, even if they were absent, because they could revise the previous lesson's materials after a few clicks.

Besides posting materials, I assigned homework using this platform. The advantages of assigning homework on GC have been described previously in section 4.2.3. My experiences were very similar to that of the interviewees. Besides the advantages described

earlier, one of the features I found most useful was that GC allowed me to assign a number of different kinds of homework. Sometimes, students had to write an essay in a Google Document, write short texts in a shared document and react to each other's works, edit a slide in a slideshow or take part in question-driven discussions. This observation is in line with Huang et al.'s (2020) proposal, that is, platforms such as GC can contribute to a more diverse learning experience. Another advantage I noticed was that students took homework assigned on GC more seriously. I noticed that if the homework was not assigned on GC with a set deadline, students tended to forget it, but they always submitted homework that was assigned on GC.

4.3.3 Creating slideshows

I prepared slideshows for 17 lessons. Besides all the advantages that were described previously in connection with Dia's experiences, I have noticed further benefits of creating slideshows for lessons. Firstly, as a novice teacher, creating the slides helped a lot when preparing for the lessons. It helped me imagine how my lesson will go. It was easier to plan instructions and explanations and it also helped me to think of possible questions students might have. In addition, using the slides made it easier to follow my lesson plan, since I simply could not forget any steps, because everything was projected on the wall. Moreover, sometimes a part of my instructions was also projected, which helped maintain learners' attention and supplemented my instructions in a way that students had no repetitive questions about what was going on and what they should be doing. Finally, if I planned to listen to an audio file or watch a video, I always embedded them in the slides, which made the flow of the lessons smoother. I did not have to spend time on looking for the right audio file and playing it using another program. A great benefit of using Google Slides was that I could open it with my mobile phone as well, since GC works across a range of devices. This way

I could play the embedded audio files with my portable speaker from my mobile phone, thus the failure of classroom equipment did not prevent me from executing my plans.

These findings suggest that creating slideshows has more potential than was described by Scrivener (2011). Just as Dia mentioned, besides using the slideshow to create teaching content in a creative way and storing it, I used them to be more effective while planning my lessons. As a novice teacher, I found them to be especially useful when planning instructions and explanations.

4.3.4 Using BYOD activities

The findings of the journal entries are in line with Harmer's (2015) suggestions about using learners' own devices in the classroom. Echoing Harmer's (2015) statements, the majority of students had mobile devices at hand and these tools proved to be very useful. In the course of 18 lessons, students used their own devices in six activities. They used their phones to read online articles, search the internet for information, or to edit a shared Google Document or slideshow created by Google Slides. However, sometimes it happened that some students had to work with a partner, because they did not have a mobile phone with them or did not have internet connection on their phone. This supports my suggestion based on Czifra et al.'s (2021) findings, that is, teachers' and learners' digital infrastructure needs further improving to be able to fully exploit the possibilities of implementing a blended learning approach.

4.3.5 Using the internet

I used the internet to look for inspiration and teaching materials before lessons, to search for activities and authentic material about Valentine's Day, and to provide students with authentic materials on other issues, for example, articles or videos. As it was declared by Ur (2012), the internet is a significant source for teachers. It provides easy access to

authentic materials, which are proven to be more engaging and motivating than materials adapted for use in the classroom (Arianie, 2017). The following excerpt from the journal entries properly exemplifies the way I used the internet as a source of teaching materials:

16.03.2022

Today's lesson was very unusual. I prepared for this lesson just as I prepare for every lesson. Then, it turned out that most of the students won't be there in class, because they wanted to show their solidarity towards teachers by not showing up in school while they were on a strike. Since less than half of the students were going to show up, I quickly changed my plans. First, I tried to find some inspiration for a lesson about student strikes, because I knew that all of the students attended a student strike two days prior to our class. I wanted to talk about this and I checked some online resources to see if any EFL teachers dealt with this topic earlier and if they offered some advice, maybe even materials about the issue at hand. I found a lesson plan based on a video about 2018 student walkouts in the USA. This lesson plan inspired the lesson I conducted.

In this case, the internet was not only a source of authentic materials but provided suggestions for a novice teacher about how a sensitive topic could be handled. I believe that the internet is especially useful for beginner teachers.

4.3.6 Communicating with students via Facebook Messenger

Online communication forms, such as email and chats allow easy communication between teacher and learners (Ur, 2012). Ur (2012) listed a number of functions of online communication forms, such as providing explanations or other written input, setting tasks, or receiving, commenting on and assessing tasks the students had done. I used Facebook Messenger during lessons to send students links to online articles. Outside the classroom, I

used it to send urgent messages or to remind learners to check my latest post on GC. Direct messaging supplemented the use of GC very well. GC is a great tool to post learning content in an organised way and follow students' progress regarding their homework assignments, but it fails to provide learners with a chat function where they can communicate with each other in a simple way. What underpins the idea of learners' need for a function like this is that students started using our Facebook Messenger group as a forum to communicate with each other, for example, by sending jokes in English.

5 Conclusion

The aim of the present research was to investigate the effects of obligatory distance teaching on secondary school EFL teachers' use of ICT tools in teaching with the help of a mixed-methodology approach. 41 teacher participants filled in a questionnaire about their use of ICT tools before, during and after the period of obligatory distance teaching from all over Hungary. Afterwards, three teachers from two different schools in Budapest shared their experiences and views about the phenomenon in question during semi-structured interviews. Finally, I implemented some blended learning elements in my teaching and kept a reflective journal about my experiences while teaching a group of 15 advanced students at a practice school of ELTE from 14 February, 2022 until April 1, 2022 during which time we had 18 lessons.

The research has a layered nature in a sense that the results of the questionnaire informed the interview schedule used during the interviews and the results of that informed my own teaching and observations on it for the journal. The use of different research methodologies ensured the trustworthiness of the research. In addition, the thick description of the research context and procedures enhanced the transferability of the study.

Based on the data drawn from the survey and the interviews, the answer to the first research question (What changes has obligatory distance teaching brought concerning secondary school EFL teachers' use of ICT tools in the classroom?) is that obligatory distance teaching had an amplifying effect on EFL teachers' use of ICT tools. The results of the survey showed that participants' use of ICT tools rose by 16.8% during obligatory distance teaching. Moreover, they were planning to use 22.3% more ICT tools after returning to schools. In addition, it was also shown that the popularity of online platforms for organising learning processes and video-conferencing tools grew considerably, 95.5% of participants said that they were planning to use online platforms (that means a 37% growth) and 95.1% of participants were planning to use video-conferencing tools they did not use before after going back to school. The data drawn from the interviews supported the results of the survey and showed that video-conferencing tools will likely be used after returning to schools, for example, to conduct one-on-one or small group consultations. Furthermore, the results also revealed that collaboration among teachers also had an amplifying effect on teachers' use of ICT tools. These findings were supported by the results of the interviews. All three interviewees said that they learnt about a number of digital tools during distance teaching and that they were going to use more ICT tools than prior to digital learning.

Answering the second research question (Are online learning platforms (for example, Google Classroom) useful when organizing and assessing learning in a secondary school setting?) based on the results of the interviews and the reflective journal, it can be concluded that learning management systems (LMSs), such as Google Classroom (GC), proved to be useful tools when organising and assessing learning for a number of reasons. Based on the experiences of the interviewees and my own observations, the following advantages of using GC as a LMS emerged: (1) It provides an easy way to share and store learning content, (2) it makes the process of assigning, collecting and checking homework simpler, (3) since it

simplifies the procedure, it reduces teachers' immense workload, (4) it allows teachers to give more comprehensive feedback on learners' performances, because it does not have to happen in the course of a lesson, (5) and it makes it easier to follow students' progress and activity because it shows when they submitted their homework and it stores their work and the feedback they received. There was only one feature that one of the interviewees missed in GC, that is, an embedded application for assessment. However, there are other available LMSs that allow different forms of assessment. It is important to mention that every LMS has different features, strengths, and weaknesses, and a particular LMS might suit one teacher better than others.

As for the third research question (Could blended learning (combining face-to-face learning with technology-based methodologies) be a possible result of distance learning?), the research has shown that there is great potential in applying blended learning (BL) approaches. The participants of the interviews agreed that there are numerous possibilities in blending technology-based techniques with traditional ones. One of the interviewees even claimed that BL is not the future, but the present. In addition, the findings of the reflective journal showed that BL can be especially useful for novice teachers. However, the interviews also shed light on the fact that not every teacher and student have the necessary equipment to take part in BL. The report of Czifra et al. (2021) revealed that there were significant differences among teachers' and learners' access to necessary ICT tools and even though the situation has improved in the period of distance teaching, a better digital infrastructure needs to be developed to be able to fully utilize the prospects of BL.

The present study appears to be one of the first investigations into the impact of obligatory distance teaching on EFL teachers' use of ICT tools. It provides important insights into the changes in EFL teachers' use of digital tools, the advantages of employing a LMS, and the possibilities and future of BL. The findings reported here shed light on the

possibilities and importance of blending technology-based methods with traditional ones, which is why I believe that the most important pedagogical implication of this research is that more emphasis should be put on BL approaches in teacher education.

Moreover, this research has thrown up many questions in need of further investigation. Firstly, cross-national studies should be carried out to provide a more accurate illustration of the long-term effects of distance teaching. Secondly, further research should be undertaken to explore how different LMSs can supplement a teacher's work. Thirdly, further investigations could shed new light on the possibilities of applying BL approaches in the classroom.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Kérdőív

IKT-eszközhasználati szokások a kötelező távoktatás előtt

1. Használt digitális eszközöket az angol órák során a kötelező távoktatás bevezetése előtt?
Ha igen, milyen IKT-eszközöket használt?
 - saját fényképek, videók készítése és megosztása
 - Microsoft Word
 - Microsoft PowerPoint
 - Prezi
 - YouTube videók
 - Mentimeter
 - Kahoot
 - Wordwall
 - Quizlet
 - Redmenta
 - Socrative
 - Padlet
 - Google Forms
 - Google Docs
 - Google Slides
 - Google Jamboard
 - LearningApps
 - Nem használtam IKT-eszközöket.
 - Egyéb...
2. Milyen gyakran alkalmazott olyan tevékenységeket tanítás során, melyek elvégzéséhez szükség volt valamilyen digitális eszköz használatára?
 - minden órán
 - kb hetente
 - kb havonta
 - félévente 1-2 alkalommal
 - egy tanévben 1-2 alkalommal
 - Sosem alkalmaztam ilyen tevékenységeket tanítás során.
3. A kötelező távoktatás bevezetése előtt használt bármilyen digitális platformot óraszervezéssel kapcsolatos feladatok ellátásához (pl. órai ill. házi feladatok szervezéséhez)? Ha igen, milyen platformokat használt?
 - Google Classroom
 - Google drive
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Moodle
 - Canvas
 - e-mail
 - Facebook
 - Nem használtam digitális platformokat.
 - Egyéb...

IKT-eszközhasználati szokások a kötelező távoktatás alatt

4. A kötelező távoktatás alatt milyen eszközöket használt az órakon a diákokkal történő online kapcsolattartásra élő közvetítéses alkalmazások során?
 - Kréta DKT
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Zoom
 - Google Meet
 - Discord
 - Skype
 - Viber
 - WhatsApp
 - Facebook Messenger
 - A távoktatás során nem tartottam élő közvetítéses órákat.
 - Egyéb...
5. A kötelező távoktatás alatt használt digitális platformokat óraszervezéssel kapcsolatos feladatok ellátásához (pl. órai ill. házi feladatok szervezéséhez)? Ha igen, milyen platformokat használt?
 - Kréta DKT
 - Google Classroom
 - Google drive
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Moodle
 - Canvas
 - e-mail
 - Facebook
 - Nem használtam digitális platformokat.
 - Egyéb...
6. Milyen egyéb digitális eszközöket használt az órakon a kötelező távoktatás alatt?
 - saját fényképek, videók készítése és megosztása
 - Word
 - PowerPoint
 - Prezi
 - YouTube videók
 - Mentimeter
 - Kahoot
 - Wordwall
 - Quizlet
 - Redmenta
 - Socrative
 - Padlet
 - Google Forms
 - Google Docs
 - Google Slides
 - Google Jamboard
 - LearningApps
 - Nem használtam IKT-eszközöket.
 - Egyéb...

Tanárok közti kollaboráció

7. A kötelező távoktatás során kapott az iskolájától bármilyen útmutatást, segítséget a diákokkal történő online kapcsolattartás lehetőségeit illetően?
8. A kötelező távoktatás során kapott az iskolájától bármilyen útmutatást, segítséget a digitális óraszervezési lehetőségekkel kapcsolatban?
9. Ajánlott az iskolája olyan továbbképzési programokat, melyek elősegítették a hatékonyságát tanárként a távoktatás során? Ha igen, megnevezné, hogy milyen készségeket érintett a program?
10. Kérte más tanárok segítségét a diákokkal történő online kapcsolattartás vagy a digitális óraszervezés lehetőségeit illetően?
11. Ön segített más tanároknak a diákokkal történő online kapcsolattartás vagy a digitális óraszervezés lehetőségeivel kapcsolatban?
12. Tagja volt olyan csoportnak, amely a tanárok közti kollaboráció elősegítéséért jött létre (pl. különböző Facebook csoportok)?

IKT-eszközhasználat a személyes oktatásra való visszatérés után

13. Elképzelhetőnek tartja, hogy bizonyos esetekben a kötelező távoktatás során a diákokkal történő online kapcsolattartásra használt digitális eszközöket személyes oktatás során is használja fogja? Ha igen, mely eszközöket tartja elképzelhetőnek?
 - Kréta DKT
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Zoom
 - Google Meet
 - Discord
 - Skype
 - Viber
 - WhatsApp
 - Facebook Messenger
 - A távoktatás során nem tartottam élő közvetítéses órákat.
 - Egyéb...
14. Elképzelhetőnek tartja, hogy a kötelező távoktatás során óraszervezéshez használt online platformokat a személyes oktatás során is használni fogja? Ha igen, mely platformokat fogja használni?
 - Kréta DKT
 - Google Classroom
 - Google drive
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Moodle
 - Canvas
 - e-mail
 - Facebook
 - Nem használtam digitális platformokat.
 - Egyéb...
15. Elképzelhetőnek tartja, hogy a kötelező távoktatás során megismert és használt digitális eszközöket a személyes oktatás során is használni fogja? Ha igen, melyek ezek az eszközök?
 - saját fényképek, videók készítése és megosztása
 - Word
 - PowerPoint

- Prezi
- YouTube videók
- Mentimeter
- Kahoot
- Wordwall
- Quizlet
- Redmenta
- Socrative
- Padlet
- Google Forms
- Google Docs
- Google Slides
- Google Jamboard
- LearningApps
- Nem használtam IKT-eszközöket.
- Egyéb...

Appendix B

Questionnaire

Use of ICT tools before the obligatory distance teaching

1. Did you use ICT tools before the obligatory distance teaching? If yes, what ICT tools did you use?
 - taking and sharing photos and videos
 - Microsoft Word
 - Microsoft PowerPoint
 - Prezi
 - YouTube videos
 - Mentimeter
 - Kahoot
 - Wordwall
 - Quizlet
 - Redmenta
 - Socrative
 - Padlet
 - Google Forms
 - Google Docs
 - Google Slides
 - Google Jamboard
 - LearningApps
 - I did not use ICT tools.
 - Other...
2. How often did you do activities in the classroom that required the use of ICT tools?
 - every lesson
 - weekly
 - monthly
 - once or twice a semester
 - once or twice a year
 - I never used them in the classroom.
3. Did you use an online platform for organizing learning (activities in the classroom and/or homework)? If yes, what platforms did you use?
 - Google Classroom
 - Google drive
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Moodle
 - Canvas
 - email
 - Facebook
 - I did not use any platforms.
 - Other...

Use of ICT tools during the obligatory distance teaching

4. What tools did you use for live streaming sessions during the obligatory distance teaching?
 - Kréta DKT
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Zoom
 - Google Meet
 - Discord
 - Skype
 - Viber
 - WhatsApp
 - Facebook Messenger
 - There were no live-streaming sessions in my class.
 - Other...
5. Did you use digital platforms for organizing learning (e.g., organizing classroom activities or homework) during the obligatory distance teaching? If yes, what platforms did you use?
 - Kréta DKT
 - Google Classroom
 - Google drive
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Moodle
 - Canvas
 - e-mail
 - Facebook
 - I did not use digital platforms.
 - Other...
6. What other digital tools did you use for teaching?
 - taking and sharing photos and videos
 - Microsoft Word
 - Microsoft PowerPoint
 - Prezi
 - YouTube videos
 - Mentimeter
 - Kahoot
 - Wordwall
 - Quizlet
 - Redmenta
 - Socrative
 - Padlet
 - Google Forms
 - Google Docs
 - Google Slides

- Google Jamboard
- LearningApps
- I did not use ICT tools .
- Other...

Teacher collaboration

7. Did your school provide you with any form of guidance regarding the tools used for live-streaming sessions during the obligatory distance learning?
8. Did your school provide you with any form of guidance regarding digital platforms that could be useful for organising learning?
9. Did your school offer training programs to enhance your effectiveness as a teacher teaching online?
10. If yes, can you name the skills the program intended to develop?
11. Did you seek help from other teachers regarding the use of tools that can be used for live-streaming sessions or organising learning?
12. Did you help other teachers regarding the use of tools that can be used for live-streaming sessions or organising learning?
13. Did you join any groups that intended to enhance teacher collaboration (e.g. Facebook groups)?

After returning to teaching in person

14. Do you think that in certain cases you will use any of the tools you have used for live streaming sessions after returning to teaching in person? If yes, which tools will you use?
 - Kréta DKT
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Zoom
 - Google Meet
 - Discord
 - Skype
 - Viber
 - WhatsApp
 - Facebook Messenger
 - There were no live-streaming sessions in my class.
 - Other...
15. Do you think that you will use any of the platforms you used for organizing learning (e.g. classroom activities or homework) after returning to teaching in person? If yes, which platforms will you use?
 - Kréta DKT
 - Google Classroom
 - Google drive
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Moodle
 - Canvas

- e-mail
 - Facebook
 - I did not use digital platforms.
 - Other...
16. Do you think you will use any of the digital tools you learned about and used during the obligatory distance teaching after returning to teaching in person? If yes, which digital tools will you use?
- taking and sharing photos and videos
 - Microsoft Word
 - Microsoft PowerPoint
 - Prezi
 - YouTube videos
 - Mentimeter
 - Kahoot
 - Wordwall
 - Quizlet
 - Redmenta
 - Socrative
 - Padlet
 - Google Forms
 - Google Docs
 - Google Slides
 - Google Jamboard
 - LearningApps
 - I did not use ICT tools .
 - Other...

Appendix C

Interjúvázlat

A szakdolgozatomban a kötelező távoktatás hatásait vizsgálom a középiskolai angol nyelvtanárok IKT-eszközhasználati szokásaira a tanítás során. Az interjúban ehhez gyűjtök adatokat. Mielőtt elkezdjük az interjút, szeretném pontosítani, hogy mit értek IKT-eszközök alatt.

IKT-eszközök:

- Az IKT az információs és kommunikációs technológiákat jelöli.
- Minden digitális eszköz használatát magába foglalja, például a számítógépek, laptopok, mobil telefonok, projektorok, számítógépes programok, nyomtatók, szkennelők használatát, akár a tanár, akár a diákok részéről.

Az interjú **4 főbb részből** fog állni: IKT eszközhasználati szokások a kötelező távoktatás előtt, IKT-eszközhasználati szokások a kötelező távoktatás alatt, tanárok közti kollaboráció a kötelező távoktatás alatt, és IKT-eszközhasználat a személyes oktatásra való visszatérés után.

IKT-eszközhasználati szokások a kötelező távoktatás előtt

Q1: A kötelező távoktatás bevezetése előtt milyen digitális eszközöket használt?

Q2: A kötelező távoktatás bevezetése előtt milyen tevékenységeket használt az órán, ami magába foglalta IKT eszközök használatát? Le tudná írni pár mondatban?

Q3: Milyen gyakran végeztek ilyen tevékenységeket?

Q4: Használt bármilyen online platformot óraszervezéssel kapcsolatos feladatok ellátásához (pl. órai ill. házi feladatok szervezéséhez)? Ha igen, melyet?

IKT-eszközhasználati szokások a kötelező távoktatás alatt

Q5: A kötelező távoktatás alatt milyen eszközöket használt az órán a diákokkal történő online kapcsolattartásra élő közvetítéses alkalmak során?

Q5.1: Mit gondol, mik voltak az online kapcsolattartás előnyei a kötelező távoktatás alatt?

Q5.2: Mit gondol, mik voltak online kapcsolattartás hátrányai a kötelező távoktatás alatt?

Q6: A kötelező távoktatás alatt használt digitális platformokat óraszervezéssel kapcsolatos feladatok ellátásához (pl. órai ill. házi feladatok szervezéséhez)? Ha igen, milyen digitális platformokat használt?

Q6.1: Mit gondol, milyen előnyei voltak az óraszervezéshez használt digitális platformoknak a kötelező távoktatás alatt?

Q6.2: Mit gondol, milyen hátrányai voltak az óraszervezéshez használt digitális platformoknak a kötelező távoktatás alatt?

Q7: Milyen egyéb digitális tanulástámogató eszközöket használt az órán?

Q7.1: Mit gondol, milyen előnyei voltak a tanulástámogató digitális eszközöknek a kötelező távoktatás alatt?

Q7.2: Mit gondol milyen hátrányai voltak a tanulástámogató digitális eszközöknek a kötelező távoktatás alatt?

Tanárok közti kollaboráció

Q8: Milyen segítséget, útmutatást nyújtott az iskola, ahol dolgozik? Ajánlottak például továbbképzési lehetőségeket? Ha igen, milyen készségeket fejlesztett a program?

Q9: Kérte más tanárok segítségét a digitális eszközök vagy platformok használatát illetően? Használt esetleg más tanárok által előkészített tananyagokat?

Q10: Ön segített más tanároknak a digitális eszközök vagy platformok használatát illetően?

Q11: Csatlakozott bármilyen csoporthoz, ami a tanárok közti kollaborációt segítette (pl. Facebook csoportokhoz)? Mennyire voltak segítségére ezek a csoportok?

IKT-eszközhasználat a személyes oktatásra való visszatérés után

Q12: Elképzelhetőnek tartja, hogy a kötelező távoktatás során megismert és használt digitális eszközöket a személyes oktatás során is használni fogja? Ha igen, melyek ezek az eszközök?

Q12.1: Mit gondol, milyen előnyei lehetnek az angol óra során használt digitális tanulástámogató eszközöknek?

Q12.2: Mit gondol, milyen hátrányai lehetnek az angol óra során használt digitális tanulástámogató eszközöknek?

Q13: Elképzelhetőnek tartja, hogy a kötelező távoktatás során óraszervezéshez használt online platformokat a személyes oktatás során is használni fogja? Ha igen, mely platformok használatát tartja elképzelhetőnek?

Q13.1: Mit gondol, milyen előnyei lehetnek annak, ha az óraszervezéshez online platformokat is használnak?

Q13.2: Mit gondol, milyen hátrányai lehetnek annak, ha az óraszervezéshez online platformokat is használnak?

Q14: Az UNESCO egyik cikkében egy új oktatási forma, a *vegyes tanulás* bevezetését támogatták az iskolákba való visszatérés után. *Vegyes tanulás* alatt egy olyan oktatási formát értenek, amelyben a digitális eszközök és a hagyományos tantermi oktatás módszereit együttesen használják. Ebben a modellben személyes kontaktusnak, az órák megadott helyén és idején való személyes részvételnek továbbra is fontos szerepe marad, de mindez kiegészülne az online tér tanulástámogató felületeinek használatával, például a diákok a tananyaghoz kötődően készíthetnek projekteket, podcasteket, szócikkeket és blogokat, valamint a határidős beadandóikat is erre a felületre tölthetik fel.

Erről mit gondol? Valóban ez a jövő? Ön szívesen váltana erre az oktatási formára? Milyen előnyei és hátrányai lehetnek?

Appendix D

Interview Schedule

In my thesis I am researching the effects of obligatory distance teaching on EFL teachers' use of ICT tools. Before we start the interview I would like to clarify what I mean when I use the term ICT tools.

ICT tools:

- ICT stands for Information Communication Technology.
- The term refers to digital tools, e.g.: digital devices such as computers, laptops, mobile phones, projectors, software programs, printers, scanners, etc. that are used in the classroom either by the teacher or the students to enrich students' learning experience.

The interview will consist of four main parts: the use of ICT tools before the obligatory distance teaching, the use of ICT tools during the mandatory distance teaching, teacher collaboration during obligatory distance teaching, and the use of ICT tools upon returning to teaching in person.

Use of ICT tools before the obligatory distance teaching

Q1: What ICT tools did you use before the obligatory distance teaching?

Q2: Before the obligatory distance teaching, what sort of activities did you use that involved the use of ICT tools?

Q3: How often did you use such activities?

Q4: Did you use an online platform for organizing learning (activities in the classroom and/or homework) before the obligatory distance teaching? If yes, what platform did you use?

Use of ICT tools during the mandatory distance teaching

Q5: What digital tools did you use for live-streaming sessions during the obligatory distance teaching?

Q5.1: What do you think were the advantages of live-streaming sessions during the obligatory distance teaching?

Q5.2: What do you think were the disadvantages of live-streaming sessions during the obligatory distance teaching?

Q6: What digital platforms did you use for organizing learning (e.g., organizing classroom activities or homework) during the obligatory distance teaching?

Q6.1 What do you think were the advantages of using digital platforms for organizing learning during the obligatory distance teaching?

Q6.2 What do you think were the disadvantages of using digital platforms for organizing learning during the obligatory distance teaching?

Q7: What other digital tools did you use for teaching during the obligatory distance teaching?

Q7.1 What do you think were the advantages of using digital tools learning during the obligatory distance teaching?

Q7.2 What do you think were the disadvantages of using digital tools during the obligatory distance teaching?

Teacher collaboration

Q8: What help were you given by your school during obligatory distance teaching? (e.g.: Did your school offer training programs? If yes, can you name the skills the program intended to develop?)

Q9: Did you seek help from other teachers? Why? How?

Q10: Did you help other teachers? How?

Q11: Did you join any groups that intended to enhance teacher collaboration (e.g. Facebook groups)? How helpful were these groups?

Use of ICT tools upon returning to teaching in person

Q12: What digital tools are you going to use in the future?

Q12.1: What do you think are the advantages of using digital tools in the classroom?

Q12.2: What do you think are the disadvantages of using digital tools in the classroom?

Q13: What if any of the online platforms are you going to use in the future?

Q13.1: What do you think are the advantages of using an online platform for organising learning?

Q13.2: What do you think are the disadvantages of using an online platform for organising learning?

Q14: In one of their articles, UNESCO suggested the integration of blended learning in teaching upon returning to schools. By blended learning they meant the use of digital tools and online resources in the teaching/learning process and/or when organizing learning. What do you think about that? Would you consider switching to blended learning?

Appendix E

21.02.2022

Reflexion:

Today we had another joyful lesson. First, students had to describe a talented person based on the notes other students prepared in the previous lesson. The rest of the group had to listen carefully and complete or correct the descriptions. I think the students enjoyed this activity and it really set a positive tone for the rest of the class. After revising some vocabulary used to describe job requirements, students had the chance to be creative. They worked in pairs and created job descriptions using the vocabulary we revised about uncommon jobs of their choice. I prepared slides for this lesson as well and I set it to be editable by students. This way each pair could edit a slide. All of the groups created very detailed descriptions and they even inserted photos in the slides. There were two pairs who had technical problems, I let them use the teacher's computer in the classroom. Since both of the pairs wanted to do a great job, it took more time for them to finish. Those students who finished earlier got an extra question they had to answer in their presentations. At the end of the lesson each group presented their description, so they also practiced speaking in front of the whole group. Again, the lack of necessary equipment caused some trouble. It is something I'll have to be more considerate about and find alternative ways to do activities with technology.

Blended learning elements:

- I prepared a slideshow for the lesson.
- I created the slideshow on Google Classroom, where I could also store it.
- I shared an article with students via a link on Google Classroom. They used their own gadgets to read the article.
- Students used their own devices to search for information on the internet, create presentations and edit a shared slideshow.

Appendix F

A list of online applications mentioned in the results and discussion section

Name	Short description
Canvas	It is a web-based learning management system allowing institutions, educators, and learners to retrieve and manage learning materials and communicate about learning procedures.
Class Dojo	It is a communication platform created for primary school teachers, students and their families. It allows teachers to give feedback on students' skills, create portfolios for students, share pictures and videos about the school day and send messages to parents.
Discord	It is a communication platform allowing its users to communicate via instant messages, voice or video calls and share files.
Edmodo	It is a web-based learning management system allowing educators and learners to retrieve and manage learning materials, distribute quizzes and assignments, and communicate about learning procedures.
Facebook	It is a social networking site used by a great number of people all around the globe.
Facebook Messenger	It is a communication platform allowing its users to communicate via instant messages, voice or video calls and share files.
Google Classroom	It is a web-based learning management system allowing institutions, educators, and learners to retrieve and manage learning materials and communicate about learning procedures.
Google Jamboard	It is a digital interactive whiteboard.
Google Docs	It is an online document editor.
Google Forms	It is an online survey administration software.
Google Slides	It is an online presentation program.

islCollective	It is an online platform where teachers from around the world can share self-made worksheets.
Kréta DKT	It is a web-based learning management system allowing institutions, educators, and learners to retrieve and manage learning materials and communicate about learning procedures.
LearningApps	It is a website where teachers can create or use other teachers' different activities to practice language skills.
Liveworksheets	It is a website allowing teachers to transform traditional printable worksheets into interactive online exercises.
Mentimeter	It is an online interactive presentation software.
Microsoft Forms	It is an online software allowing teachers to create surveys, quizzes, and polls.
Microsoft PowerPoint	It is an offline presentation software.
Microsoft Teams	It is an online collaboration platform allowing its users to communicate via instant messages, have online meetings and share files.
Microsoft Whiteboard	It is an online collaborative whiteboard application used to quickly share ideas by drawing or writing as if it was used as a regular board.
Microsoft Word	It is an offline document editor.
Moodle	It is an online learning management system allowing institutions, educators, and learners to retrieve and manage learning materials and communicate about learning procedures.
Padlet	It is an online collaborative whiteboard application used to post text, videos and pictures.
Prezi	It is an online presentation application.
Quizlet	It is a website providing learning tools (such as flashcards, and game-based quizzes) that can be used by teachers and learners.

Quizzizz	It is a web-based quiz tool that works like a gameshow.
Redmenta	It is an online worksheet creator tool and library allowing teachers to assess learners' knowledge by sharing self-grading worksheets.
Skype	It is an online a communication software allowing its users to communicate via instant messages, voice or video calls and share files.
Socrative	It is an online formative assessment tool.
Viber	It is a communication platform allowing its users to communicate via instant messages, voice or video calls and share files.
YouTube	It is a video sharing website.
Zoom	It is an online video communications app allowing its users to set up and participate in video- and audio-conferencing.
