
Emergency Remote English Language Teaching amid Covid - 19 in Sri Lanka: Perspectives and Experiences of Teachers

SAHM Sandarapperuma and KPMP Senarathne

Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya

University of Sabaragamuwa, Sri Lanka

<sandarapperuma071@gmail.com>

Abstract – Sri Lanka is now among the leading Asian countries with the highest confirmed cases of Covid – 19. This pandemic has brought a challenging and distinctive situation in its educational system since all the academic institutions have been enforced to entirely cancel the face-to-face teaching and other learning experiences as a step to prevent the spread of Coronavirus. Therefore this outbreak of Covid – 19, has transformed the traditional teaching into Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) at all levels of education. This study synthesized Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) with English Language Teaching (ELT) creating Emergency Remote English Language Teaching (ERELT) to get the perspectives and experiences of the English teachers. Their views on students' experiences of ERT, the virtual classroom experiences, beliefs, perspectives, challenges and the remedies implemented by English teachers while delivering their lectures through on-line platforms were investigated and analysed. A qualitative research design was followed in which online discussions were conducted using 15 English teachers. The results suggested that ERELT process has been challenging for both students and teachers but has a positive outlook. The analysis revealed that students have been changed with extrinsic and intrinsic goal orientation which differs from their face-to-face learning experience. ERELT has granted teachers more opportunities for interaction with their students, while collaboration among students were limited. Further, remote teaching has placed a heavy burden on teachers due to many reasons such as absence of technological infrastructure, learning differences of the students, inability to deliver the present curriculum via ERELT...etc. The study concludes that syllabus designers and English teachers need to incorporate virtual teaching and learning as a part and parcel of traditional teaching and learning practices. Recommendations were forwarded to serve an input for future strategies and policies to improve ERELT.

Keywords: Emergency Remote English Language Teaching, Covid-19, teachers