

# A Review on Online Live Interactive Lessons Conducted for One University Semester

WANG Hui Ling

## 1. Introduction

In late December 2019, news of the Covid-19 virus infection that had spread in Wuhan, China, broke (WHO, 2020). Before long, the Covid-19 pandemic took over the world, and for the education sector, the pandemic changed the concepts about school instruction and online learning in ways we never imagined. As the world struggled to contain the pandemic, online teaching and learning became at first a desperate and unwanted solution by many educators, who were of the mentality that online learning is of lesser quality than face-to-face lessons, and then a source of challenge and pain to educators, students and parents of students alike. Now, after more than two years, the pandemic has not left, and many believe the Covid-19 virus and other variants will become part and parcel of human life.

As for online learning, it has become a necessary part of education and teaching, generating a huge area of research topics (Hayata et al, 2021 ; IEHE TOHOKU, 2021 ; NIAD-QE, 2021 ; Rapanta et al, 2020) and recognition for words that became more commonly known, like 'on-demand', 'blended', 'hybrid' and 'hyflex' lessons (Beatty, 2019 ; Columbia University in the City of New York, n.d. ; Learning Technologies, n.d. ; Ogura, 2020 ; Sugimori, 2021), among others, and becoming even a desired method of study and instruction to some. Many in fact believe that online learning, or online instruction, as will be used interchangeably in this paper, is here to stay in the new normal, and that it is crucial that tertiary institutions are prepared for the future by embracing online learning and instruction in their roadmaps and curriculum (IEHE TOHOKU ; NIAD-QE ; Sugimori).

Like many educators, the author had to give online instruction for a semester of lessons in 2020. This paper aims to give a report on the first-ever online instruction conducted by myself for the full university semester for eight courses in two universities, using an online survey conducted after the semester was over. The paper reports on the problems and positive and negative aspects of the online instruction experienced by students using data analysis taken from a feedback survey by students who attended the online lessons. The data discussion also considers improvements for future online teaching. The paper concludes that although students have a slight preference for on-demand lessons over live lessons, a mixture and balance of both types of lessons are necessary for optimal online instruction.

## 2. Background of the online live interactive courses taught

From April (start of academic year) to July 2020, I taught a total of seven courses in one university and one course in a second university for Semester 1. From the beginning of the academic year, the situation was hectic and nerve-wracking as the university administrations struggled to make decisions on the way lessons were to be conducted amidst the risk of infection and threats to health, and as educators struggled to manage the ever-changing instructions and expectations of the administrations. Here is the timeline of events for a clearer picture on the struggle to choose and manage the method of instruction amidst the pandemic :

April 3<sup>rd</sup> :The second university announced that face-to-face lessons would be postponed a week from April 13<sup>th</sup>

to April 20<sup>th</sup> (IPU, 2020, April 3).

April 4<sup>th</sup> : The first university announced that face-to-face lessons would be postponed from April 8<sup>th</sup> to April 20<sup>th</sup>.

April 17<sup>th</sup> : The first university further announced that lessons would be postponed to May 7<sup>th</sup>, right after the nation's Golden Week holidays. There was no mention of whether the lessons would be conducted in person or via remote learning.

The second university announced that lessons would be cancelled from April 20<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup> (IPU, 2020, April 17).

April 23<sup>rd</sup> : The second university informed lecturers that lessons would start on May 18<sup>th</sup> and lecturers have a choice to do either on-demand lessons or real-time interactive lessons. They conducted a survey to determine what kind of lessons lecturers would be doing for their own lessons and whether they would need equipment for their lessons if they chose to conduct these lessons on campus without students.

April 27<sup>th</sup> : The second university announced that lessons would be conducted via remote learning, and postponed the start of lessons to May 18<sup>th</sup> to allow everyone, including lecturers and students, to be able to prepare for remote learning during the period from May 7<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> (IPU, 2020, April 27).

June 1<sup>st</sup> : The second university announced that lessons would return to face-to-face mode from June 22<sup>nd</sup> (IPU, 2020, June 1).

June 11<sup>th</sup> : The first university announced that from June 29<sup>th</sup>, both face-to-face lessons and remote learning modes would be used for the university (MU, 2020, June 11).

As it slowly came to light how the structure of lessons was evolving, I quickly decided that I would conduct real-time, or live, interactive online lessons instead of on-demand lessons because it appeared to be the closest form of face-to-face instruction I could conduct. From June 22<sup>nd</sup>, lecturers were instructed to return to face-to-face mode for courses in the second university, and could choose either to conduct face-to-face or online lessons for the first university. I reverted back to face-to-face mode for the one course in the second university but kept the live online lessons for the seven courses at the first university.

There are 15 weekly lessons for one semester for each of the eight courses. Seven courses were taken by first- and second-year students. These courses are generally about English language skills related to the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing. One course was taken by a fourth-year student and focuses on the research and writing guidance of the graduation thesis. The titles of these courses are coded to protect personal information according to university publication guidelines and shown in Section 4. Lessons were conducted via both Microsoft Teams and Zoom, depending on a variety of circumstances such as university management requirements, the contents of the lessons and students' needs.

### 3. Literature review

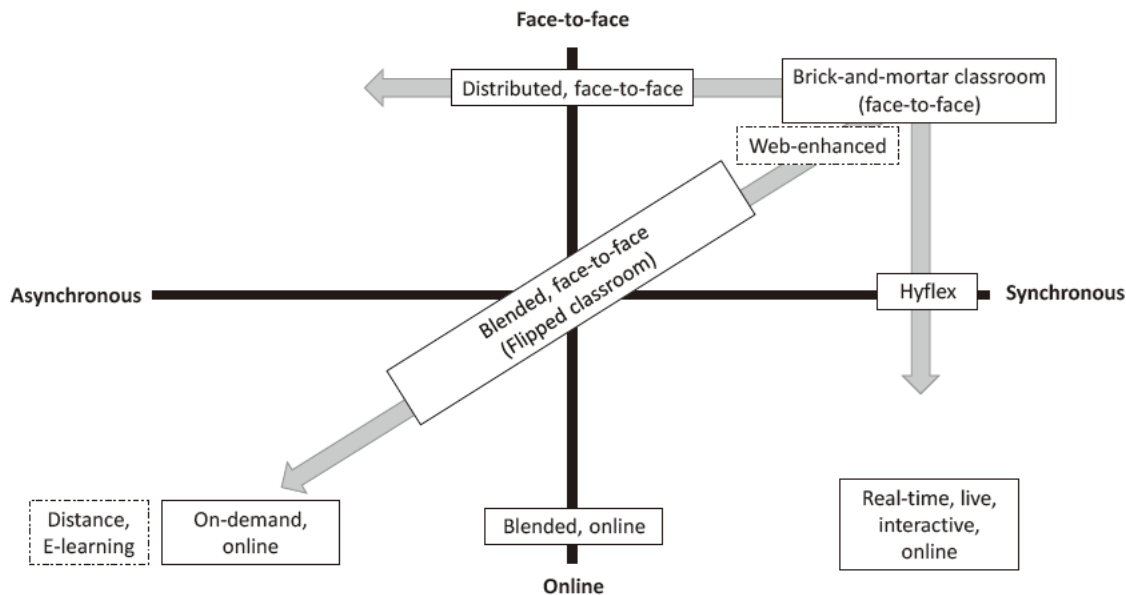
In this section, I will define some terms used for different types of online instruction and lessons in the 'new normal' of the Covid-19 aftermath. The aim is to show the complications of how these different types of online instruction are interconnected and thus lead to the difficulty of tertiary institutions and instructors like myself transiting from face-to-face to online instruction. This would provide the basis and reason of the research conducted in this paper.

Lemov (2020) introduced a variety of tips and examples of online lessons by other instructors on how to improve on teaching in the online classroom in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. Remote learning, according to Lemov, can be divided into asynchronous learning and synchronous learning. Asynchronous learning in this paper refers to learning done in online, on-demand lessons, where learning takes place at different times and places. Synchronous learning takes place at the same time but in different places. This is referred to in this paper as

learning done in online, live interactive lessons. Simply put, asynchronous lessons are Youtube or Netflix (Lemov) and synchronous lessons are Zoom. The traditional face-to-face lessons are also referred to by Lemov as lessons in the 'brick-and-mortar classroom'.

Ogura provided a simplified graph of the definitions of various terms for different types of online lessons. Figure 1 below is a translation of his graph with a few terms added.

Figure 1 : Classification and characteristics of online/face-to-face (hybrid) classes (Ogura, 2020) (revised)



\*Textboxes with dotted outlines are added by the author.

At the bottom of the graph are three types of online lessons. On-demand, online lessons are asynchronous; real-time, live, interactive online lessons are synchronous; and blended, online lessons are a mixture of both types (Ogura). Blended online lessons do not have face-to-face components. Students do some online activities in their own time, such as participating in online asynchronous discussions (Kurthen & Smith, 2005) or watching recordings of lessons, and some online activities with everyone live, such as lessons via Zoom.

At the top of the graph are two types of face-to-face lessons. At the right-hand corner are the brick-and-mortar classroom lessons (Lemov), which are completely face-to-face and done at the same time with everyone. At the top middle are distributed, face-to-face lessons, which refer to the brick-and-mortar class being divided up into groups to learn or work on different things at different times.

Along the horizontal line of the graph, lesson types become more complicated. At the intersection of the horizontal and vertical lines are the blended, face-to-face lessons, which are a combination of on-demand, online and face-to-face lessons in the brick-and-mortar classroom. This is also called the flipped classroom approach which was largely credited to Bergmann & Sams (2012) as the inventors of this lesson style. The flipped classroom 'flips traditional homework and teaching time activities' (Drew, 2020). It is seen as 'a type of blended learning where students are introduced to content at home and practice working through it at school' (TeachThought, n.d.). This is the opposite to the traditional structure where instructors first introduce content at school, and students complete homework at home thereafter.

On the right side of the horizontal line of the graph are hyflex lessons. Hyflex refers to hybrid-flexible, a term created by Beatty. First, I will lay out the definition of the hybrid lesson. According to Learning Technologies,

'Hybrid learning combines face-to-face and online teaching into one cohesive experience.' Columbia University defines their university's hybrid learning as 'learning that integrates complementary face-to-face (synchronous) and online learning (asynchronous) experiences'. Ogura has his summarized graph labelled as the 'Classification and characteristics of online/face-to-face (hybrid) classes', echoing this view. Kurthen and Smith explained further that there was no consensus on definitions of the terms 'web-enhanced', 'blended' and 'hybrid' for combined face-to-face and online lessons. They suggested the following definitions determined by the percentage of web-based interaction :

Web-enhanced : Predominantly face-to-face with 'a minimal number of web-based elements'

Blended : Has 'some significant online learning activities' but replaces less than 40% of face-to-face lessons

Hybrid : Online activities replace face-to-face lessons by more than 40%, but less than 80%

E-learning : Over 80% online

Learning Technologies similarly opined that hybrid lessons have a bigger online component than web-enhanced and/or blended lessons. As a result, some of these terms have been added to Ogura's summarized graph in Figure 1.

Next, I will return to the definition of the hybrid-flexible lesson. Columbia University informs that

'All students in a hybrid course are expected to undergo the same combination of online and in-person activities. In contrast, the "flexible" aspect of HyFlex is that students are given choice in how they participate in the course and engage with material in the mode that works best for them over the course and from session to session.'

This means that it is possible that the course becomes totally online or face-to-face depending on the choice of the students (Ferrero, 2020).

In the graph, three arrows show the traditional brick-and-mortar classroom lesson moving into new and different directions, mirroring current new trends in the 'new normal'. In this paper, the focus of my study are the online live interactive lessons I have conducted and the comparison of this with the online, on-demand lessons. These were the only two choices offered to instructors by the universities given the lack of time and resources to manage sudden changes in the pandemic at that time.

#### 4. Research methodology

Having summarized some terms used for different types of online instruction and lessons, this research was designed and conducted to find out the preferences of instruction methodology of the direct beneficiaries of the lessons, the students themselves.

##### Survey questions

The following are all the questions and options (where applicable) given in the survey conducted :

Q1. Which course are you taking, or have you taken? (Only 1 answer is allowed)

- S 1 Class
- S 3 Class
- RW 1 Class
- RW 3 Class
- JJE Class 4
- JJE Class 3
- SGKK Class
- EJE 1 Class

Q2. What are the problems you have faced with the online lessons ? (Multiple answers are allowed)

- No internet at home
- Limited internet at home
- Bad internet connection at home
- No webcam
- No speaker
- No computer/laptop, etc
- Noise at home
- Family members at home
- Other (please specify)

Q3. What can be done to solve the problems? (Open-Ended Response)

Q4. What are the positive points about online (live) lessons? Please say all that you have experienced. (Open-Ended Response)

Q5: What are the negative points about online (live) lessons? Please say all that you have experienced. (Open-Ended Response)

Q6: What are the positive points about online (on-demand) lessons? Please say all that you have experienced. (Open-Ended Response)

Q7: What are the negative points about online (on-demand) lessons? Please say all that you have experienced. (Open-Ended Response)

Q8: Do you prefer online lessons (live or on-demand) or face-to-face lessons? (Only 1 answer is allowed)

- Online lessons
- Face-to-face lessons
- I have no preference.

Q9: Why? (to Q8) (Open-Ended Response)

Q10: Which do you prefer, live lessons or on-demand lessons? (Only 1 answer is allowed)

- Live lessons
- On-demand lessons
- I have no preference.

Q11: Why? (to Q10) (Open-Ended Response)

Q12: How can the online (live or on-demand) lessons be improved? (Open-Ended Response)

Q13: Any other comments? (Open-Ended Response)

Q14: Can I use your answers for research and publication purposes? (Only 1 answer is allowed)

- Yes
- No

Q15: Would you like to leave your name? (It will not be used, and will be confidential.) (Open-Ended Response)

#### Aims of the survey

The main aim of the survey was to find out whether students preferred the new educational trend in the new normal in the pandemic, which is having online lessons, or would rather return to pre-pandemic times, which is to have face-to-face lessons. This was designed into Questions 8 and 9.

Where there is no choice in the switch to online lessons, the next aim was to find out which type of online lessons students preferred, on-demand or live interactive lessons. This was designed into Questions 10 and 11.

At the same time, I wanted to check if the problems students faced were similar to the ones I had faced as an instructor. Because there were many positive and negative aspects observed as well as issues discovered, I also wanted to investigate if there were similar issues of these types faced by the students. This secondary aim was designed into Questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Question 2 was designed to confirm anticipated initial difficulties many instructors and university administration staff believe the students might face. By putting these questions before Questions 8, 9, 10 and 11, I wanted students to go through the motions of evaluating both types of online lessons before letting them come to their own conclusions on which one they preferred. Tada (2021) had also conducted a survey to high school students on the merits and demerits of 'web lessons'. However, it was not clear which type of 'web lessons' were conducted.

Finally, the survey acted as lesson feedback to the instructor to improve on the quality of instruction. This was

designed into Questions 12, 13 and 15.

Question 14 serves to preserve the ethical conduct of the research.

#### Data collection

The survey was conducted using a professional survey platform and sent out to all students using Microsoft Teams, the platform for the online lessons, from July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, when the last two lessons for the semester were held. Students were encouraged both live in the online lessons and via Teams portal announcements to complete the survey in their free time by accessing the link given. The last response was received on September 28<sup>th</sup>. The survey questions were all in English and were not explained to the students. This may have caused some misunderstandings in the questions which could be seen in the responses received. This will be explained in the next section on results analysis. The survey was also intended to be in part an English language practice activity, thus it was preferred that responses would be taken at face value or put into context when being analyzed, and that questions not be explained to students before they completed the survey. Since the survey was completely voluntary and done outside of lesson time, it was also one of the secondary aims of the research to consider the response rate as a reflection of how keen the students were in providing feedback to orchestrate change in future online lessons that they might have to attend. Yet another secondary aim was to enable students to reflect on their involvement in making the online learning experience better for themselves and to spur them to think of ways they can improve the online learning experience on their own.

#### Participants

Table 1 shows a list of the eight courses taught and the percentage of respondents of the survey, using data from Question 1. If students who replied 'No' to Question 14, which disallows the researcher to use their answers for research and publication purposes, were included for the calculation of response rate only, the response rate of the survey would be 51% (69/136). Keller (2014) reported that Biersdorff (2009) found that some expert opinions as to what is considered a good or adequate mail survey response rate ranged from 25% to 75%, and that Visser et al (1996) discovered that surveys with lower response rates (around 20%) yielded more accurate measurements than surveys with higher response rates (around 60%).

Table 1 : List of Courses Taught and Percentage of Respondents

Course name	*Number of students	**Number of respondents	Response rate(%)
S 1 Class	17	9	53
S 3 Class	11	3	27
RW 1 Class	38	20	53
RW 3 Class	19	7	37
JJE Class 4	17	6	35
JJE Class 3	14	11	79
SGKK Class	1	1	100
EJE 1 Class	19	7	37
Total	136	64	47

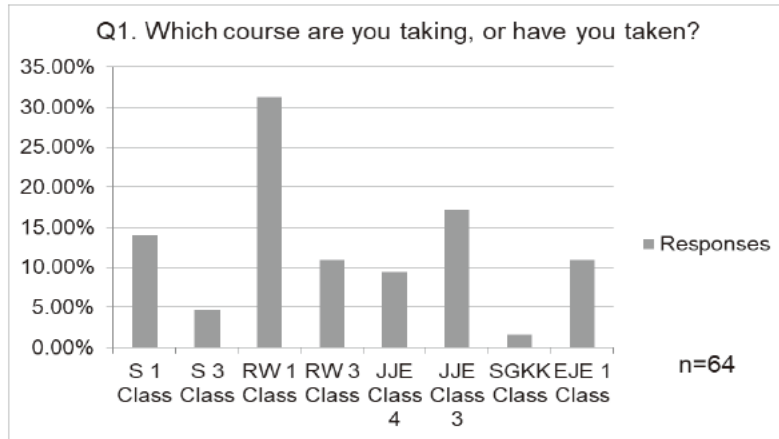
\*This refers to the number of students who have completed attendance of the course, with no consideration to whether they have passed the course. It does not include students who dropped out of the course midway.

\*\*This excludes students who replied 'No' to Question 14, which disallows the researcher to use their answers for research and publication purposes.

### 5. Results and Discussion

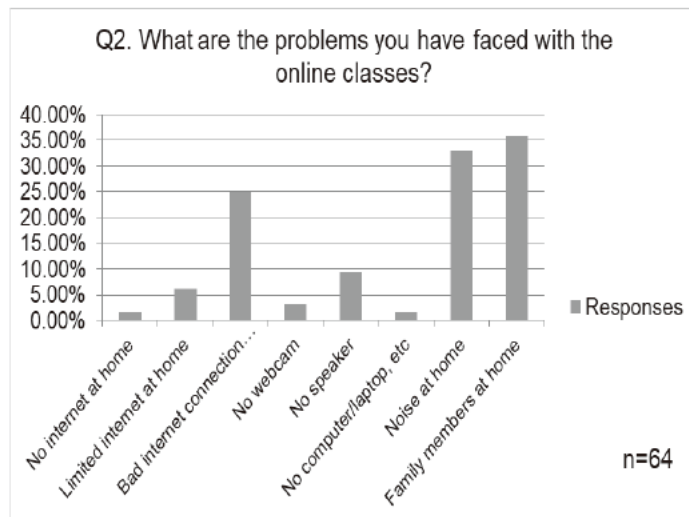
Here are the results and analysis of the responses of each question in the survey except Questions 14 and 15 which do not contribute to the research goals. Figure 2 shows the breakdown of students in the eight courses.

Figure 2 : Results of Question 1



Question 2, as presented in Figure 3, offers some choices of basic hardware problems to understand if there were students who were unable to attend online lessons due to a lack of basic equipment and a conducive environment. Respondents can choose multiple problems and/or the last option, 'Other (please specify)'.

Figure 3 : Results of Question 2



It can be seen that the students have more problems with attending lessons at home rather than internet connection problems. The lack of equipment was the least of all the problems. This is a reminder that educators have to consider the personal learning space and environment in which students are in on top of ensuring that technological equipment are available.

There were 11 respondents who chose 'Other (please specify)'. Of these, nine stated that there were no problems, one stated 'It is hard to ask the teacher what I don't understand.' and one stated 'My eyesight has been getting worse.' These are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 : Results of Question 3

Q2 Answer Choices	Responses	Q3. What can be done to solve the problems?
No internet at home	1	<i>Turn on Wi-Fi.</i>
Limited internet at home	4	1 <i>Discuss with family</i> 1 <i>nothing</i> 1 <i>turn on Wi-Fi</i> 1 <i>online class change face-to-face class or ondemand class</i>
Bad internet connection at home	16	4 Tried to manage internet connections and used what they had. 4 Nothing was done to solve the problems. 4 Did not know what to do. 2 Wanted lessons to go back to face-to-face mode. 2 Responses were not understandable in relation to the question or showed a misunderstanding of the question. 1 <i>I tried to take classes in the computer room of the school as much as possible.</i> 1 <i>Solved using a smartphone</i> 1 <i>I want you to write anything important things(for example, class code) in the class somewhere.</i>
No webcam	2	1 <i>カメラとマイクを貸し出す (rental of camera and microphone)</i> 1 <i>Solved using a smartphone</i>
No speaker	6	1 <i>カメラとマイクを貸し出す (rental of camera and microphone)</i> 1 <i>I used function of chat.</i> 1 Tried to manage the settings on the computer. 1 Nothing was done to solve the problems. 1 Had no solutions or did not know what to do. Responses were not understandable in relation to the question or showed a misunderstanding of the question.
No computer/laptop, etc	1	1 <i>I bought it.</i>
Noise at home	21	5 Closed the windows or doors in their rooms. 5 Had no solutions or did not know what to do. 3 Put on earphones or headsets. 3 Told their families to be quiet during lessons. 3 Responses were not understandable in relation to the question or showed a misunderstanding of the question. 1 Wanted on-demand lessons. 1 Moved to the quietest place in the house. 1 Attended the lesson on campus.
Family members at home	23	7 Told their families to be quiet during lessons. 6 Had no solutions or did not know what to do. 5 Took classes alone in a room at home. 2 Wanted to return to normal classes. 1 Took classes outside of their homes. 1 Closed the windows or doors in their rooms. 1 <i>Move to the quietest place.</i> Responses were not understandable in relation to the question or showed a misunderstanding of the question.
Other (please specify)	11	
9 Had no problems.		8 Had no problems.
1 <i>It is hard to ask the teacher what I don't understand.</i>		1 <i>Self study</i>
1 <i>My eyesight has been getting worse</i>		1 <i>I bought glasses which cut blue light.</i> 1 <i>close the door</i>
<b>Answered</b>	<b>64</b>	

Responses to Question 3 are shown on the right of the table below in relation to responses to Question 2. Responses in italics are the exact responses received and will be shown in this same manner from this question onwards. The total number of collated responses in each question from here on may be more than the total N=64, as some students have given two or more different answers under one response. This question and most of the other questions from here on required open-ended responses as I did not want to lead the students into certain choices, especially regarding solutions to problems of taking online lessons, positive and negative points of online lessons and reasons for their choices in their answers. I wanted them to think of solutions and responses on their own, if they had not done so throughout the semester of online lessons.

It can be seen that responses that claimed to have no solution or 'did not know what to do' had the highest frequency under almost all of the problems. Nevertheless, many responses showed efforts to manage the problems with their own solutions. 6 responses requested for lessons to either return to what it was before the pandemic or to switch to on-demand lessons, showing that the problems students faced affected live lessons the most, since live



lessons were the closest form of face-to-face lessons, requiring their complete attention and presence but in the comfort of home.

Questions 4 and 5 asked about the positive and negative points of online (live) lessons respectively. Not surprisingly, most students said that accessibility of lessons from anywhere is the most obvious positive point. What is interesting to note is that the second largest number of students thought that live lessons make them more relaxed and less nervous compared to face-to-face lessons, and as a result, communication and participation in lessons were better. This was also opined by Virgil-Uchida (2020) that her students were less worried about making mistakes and developed confidence via lessons on Zoom. The third highest number of responses opined that a different reason, that of the nature of online live lessons, contributed to the same positive effect of better communication and participation. It could be seen from Table 3 that many of the positive points mentioned were related to the enhanced quality of general education in secondary skills like communication, time management, computer and listening skills.

Table 3: Results of Question 4

	Q4. What are the positive points about online (live) lessons? Please say all that you have experienced.	Responses	Percentage
a	Accessibility of lessons from anywhere	20	29%
b	Relaxed communication and participation in class due to relaxed mood and loss of nervousness	14	21%
c	Better interaction among students and instructor due to nature of lessons (facial expressions seen, chat used, etc.)	9	13%
d	Better understanding of class due to ease of looking at instructor's writing on screen, etc.	5	7%
e	Ease of asking questions	5	7%
f	Effective use of time	3	4%
g	Better computer skills acquired	3	4%
h	Comfort and ease of home	2	3%
i	Nothing	2	3%
j	No lateness for class	1	1%
k	Less tiredness	1	1%
l	Easy access and printing of materials	1	1%
m	Better English listening skills acquired	1	1%
n	Do not know	1	1%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100%</b>

The most common negative points of online (live) lessons are as accurately reflected in Table 4 below as had been depicted in Question 2. Online live lessons seemed to have exposed the weaknesses of computer skills even more starkly and showed the crucial need of stable internet connection. What was puzzling here was that although the ease of communication was a good point featured in Question 4, the difficulty in communication due to the live online nature of the lessons was a common negative point. There were also other similar problems like difficulty in asking questions and more nervousness felt talking to course mates online. The way I had interpreted these contrasting findings was that some students were more at ease communicating via the screen rather than in person, whereas some preferred to communicate in person. Also, it also depended on what aspects of online live lessons were being considered. Being able to send messages and files instantly across the internet would be seen as an ease of communication, as would hiding embarrassment behind the computer. However, being unable to look at facial expressions and body language would be an obstacle to communication (Nobuoka, 2020), as would not getting a physical sense of one's turn to talk. This gets worse when many students are too shy to turn on their web cameras.

Table 4 : Results of Question 5

	<b>Q5. What are the negative points about online (live) lessons? Please say all that you have experienced.</b>	Responses	Percentage
a	Internet connection problems, time lag, lack of computer skills, equipment, etc.	17	26%
b	Worse interaction among students and instructor due to nature of lesson, time lag, etc.	11	17%
c	Lack of social time with people, unable to meet friends	10	15%
d	Difficulty in understanding the lessons	6	9%
e	Difficulty in asking questions	4	6%
f	Boring, lack of activities or games or group work	3	5%
g	Nothing	3	5%
h	Not conducive for studying	2	3%
i	More difficult communication and participation in class due to nervousness, lack of courage, etc.	2	3%
j	Family members or noise at home	2	3%
k	Difficulty in taking notes because of the many materials being online	2	3%
l	Tiredness	2	3%
m	Tendency to be late for class	1	2%
n	<i>There are many troubles.</i>	1	2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>66</b>	<b>100%</b>

Questions 6 and 7 asked about the positive and negative points of online (on-demand) lessons respectively. Looking at Table 5, most students agreed that the convenience of taking the lessons at any time and being able to review the recorded lessons many times are the positive points of on-demand lessons. Another positive effect of these is that personal time can be more effectively managed. Three respondents seemed to suggest that on-demand lessons were easier to take and understand. This is interpreted to be due to the fact that recorded lessons can be slowly studied countless times. It should be noted here that compared to the positive points stated for on-line live lessons, there was no mention here of the quality of lessons being enhanced.

Table 5 : Results of Question 6

	<b>Q6. What are the positive points about online (on-demand) lessons? Please say all that you have experienced.</b>	Responses	Percentage
a	Convenience of taking the lessons at any time	33	45%
b	Able to review the lessons many times by watching the video repeatedly	15	21%
c	No worries about time constraints	4	5%
d	Nothing or not applicable because of no on-demand lessons	4	5%
e	Responses were not understandable or showed a misunderstanding of the question.	4	5%
f	Effective use of time at one's own pace	3	4%
g	Accessibility of lessons from anywhere	2	3%
h	Easiness of the lessons	2	3%
i	Loss of nervousness that comes with taking lessons with others	2	3%
j	Better understanding of the lessons	1	1%
k	No lateness for class or forgetting to attend class	1	1%
l	Do not know	1	1%
m	Nothing	1	1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>73</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 6 shows the negative points experienced about online (on-demand) lessons. With on-demand lessons being a one-way form of instruction, it is expected that the most common negative points stated would be that there is a tendency to forget to watch the lessons or to do the assignments, or to procrastinate in watching the lessons, or to feel lazy, troublesome, bored or unable to concentrate while doing so. As much as a few respondents in the earlier question have felt it was easy to watch the lessons, a number of respondents on the contrary felt that lessons were difficult to understand or inadequate in quality, and that asking questions were also difficult. The lack of social time with others was also one of the common negative points experienced. This result is similar to the study conducted by Reupert et al (2009), where the majority of students in distance programs in their study reported the need for personal presence of their instructors.

Table 6 : Results of Question 7

	Q7. What are the negative points about online (on-demand) lessons? Please say all that you have experienced.	Responses	Percentage
a	Nothing or not applicable because of no on-demand lessons	10	16%
b	Forgetting often about deadlines or watching the recording	9	14%
c	Tendency to be lazy, tendency to put off watching the recording, lack of motivation	7	11%
d	Difficulty in asking questions	7	11%
e	Lack of social time with people, unable to meet friends	6	9%
f	Difficulty in understanding the lessons	5	8%
g	Inadequate quality of lesson, contents forgotten immediately	4	6%
h	Responses were not understandable or showed a misunderstanding of the question.	3	5%
i	Troublesomeness in watching the recording	3	5%
j	Not conducive for studying, unable to concentrate	3	5%
k	Boring, lack of activities or games or group work	2	3%
l	Family members or noise at home	1	2%
m	Internet connection problems, time lag, lack of computer skills, equipment, etc.	1	2%
n	Difficulty in taking notes or preparing materials because of the many materials being online	1	2%
o	Had no solutions or did not know what to do.	1	2%
p	There are many issues	1	2%
	Total	64	100%

Question 8 asked if students preferred the traditional form of face-to-face lessons or online lessons in the new normal. About 6% more of students preferred face-to-face lessons to online lessons, as shown in Figure 4. Interestingly, 12.5% of students do have no preference. This might be taken to mean that there was no difference between the two types of lessons felt strongly enough to warrant a preference. Considering that students have only taken one semester of online lessons and were still adjusting with various problems, the preference toward online lessons appeared to swing fast and strong.

Figure 4: Results of Question 8

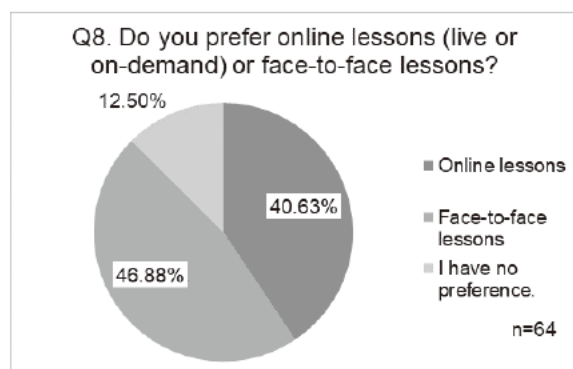


Table 7 shows the corresponding reasons answered in Question 9 for the respondents' choices of preference. The overwhelming reasons for preferring to have the traditional face-to-face lessons were better understanding and learning of class, availability of social time with fellow students and teachers, and better communication with classmates. Better communication with classmates would mean better interaction for the purpose of learning and following the class, and social time with others would mean interaction not necessarily related to class content.

Table 7 : Results of Question 8 and Question 9

Q8 Answer Choices	Responses	Q9. Why?
Face-to-face lessons	30	9 Better understanding and learning of class
		7 Availability of social time with everyone
		6 Better communication with classmates
		3 Discomfort of online classes
		1 No dependence on the computer
		1 Ease of asking questions
		1 Fewer assignments
		1 Better concentration
		1 Preference of going to school
		1 No worries about classes going overtime
		1 No on-demand classes available
		1 Desire to meet the teacher who would evaluate one's performance
		Online lessons
6 No need to go to school		
5 Effective use of time at one's own pace		
3 No risk of Covid-19 infection		
2 Ease of asking questions		
2 Accessibility of lessons from home		
2 Better concentration		
1 Relaxed communication and participation in class		
1 On-demand lessons can be reviewed.		
1 Responses were not understandable or showed a misunderstanding of the question.		
I have no preference.	8	4 Classes can be taken either way.
		3 Both have pros and cons.
		1 Both have good points.
<b>Answered</b>	<b>64</b>	

For students who chose face-to-face lessons, it can be seen that social interaction time is deemed to be of high importance and indeed one of the important reasons for going to school.

Students who chose online lessons appeared to be more individualistic, as they felt that it was easier to take on-line lessons than meeting others face-to-face. Other positive points mentioned earlier for both live and on-demand lessons were also repeated here, such as the effective use of one's time and being able to remain at home.

Question 10 asked if students preferred live or on-demand lessons. The preference for on-demand lessons was only slightly lower than the preference for live lessons, but almost 10% of the respondents had no preference. This can be seen in Figure 5. Table 8 shows the corresponding reasons answered in Question 11 for the respondents' choices of preference.

Figure 5: Results of Question 10

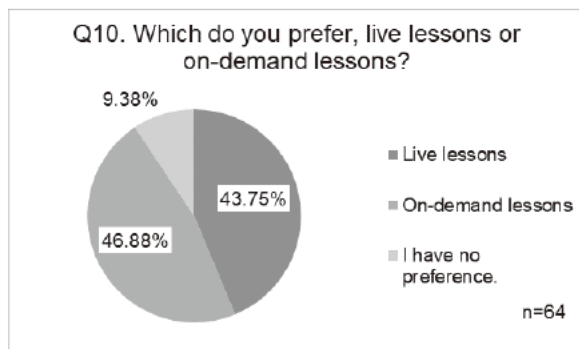


Table 8: Results of Question 10 and Question 11

Q10 Answer Choices	Responses	Q11. Why?
On-demand lessons	30	15 Convenience of taking the lessons at any time
		6 Able to review the lessons many times by watching the video repeatedly
		3 Responses were not understandable or showed a misunderstanding of the question.
		2 Easiness of the lessons
		1 Effective use of time at one's own pace
		1 Affordability of the lessons
		1 Loss of nervousness that comes with taking lessons with others
		1 Accessibility of lessons without internet connection
		1 Accessibility of lessons from home
Live lessons	28	7 Ease of asking questions
		6 Prevents procrastination and laziness of doing on-demand lessons
		3 Better communication with classmates
		3 Ease of understanding and learning of class
		2 Ability to have concentration
		2 Better quality lesson with practical learning and speaking practice
		2 Closer to the original face-to-face lessons
		1 Relaxed communication and participation in class
		1 Issues with on-demand lessons
		1 No need to go to school
I have no preference.	6	1 No on-demand classes available
		1 Preference for face-to-face lessons
		1 No preference
		1 No difference felt
		1 Depends on the course taught
		1 Responses were not understandable or showed a misunderstanding of the question.
<b>Answered</b>	<b>64</b>	

The reasons for preferring on-demand lessons centered around two key positive points, convenience of taking the lessons and the availability of the lessons for review. The reasons for preferring live lessons were more varied. These reasons were not different from the positive points of live lessons that were previously asked, except for one. About a quarter of respondents who preferred live lessons opined that live lessons prevented them from procrastinating and being lazy. Live lessons made students get to the front of the screen and attend lessons much like the traditional style of face-to-face lessons, thus it was clear that the students recognized the need for the push to make them work.

Question 12 seeks to gather feedback for future improvements of the online lessons conducted. Table 9 shows that there are many different types of suggestions for improvement, but they could be first grouped into four broad types of responses. The first type of responses had no ideas, solutions or suggestions for improvement. This was the largest group of responses. The second type of responses also came from the second largest group and they wanted better internet connection. This was likely a lament on the unstable internet connection that happened from time to time at various places and the dependent nature that online lessons have on internet connection that is inevitable.

The third was the suggestions students have for the instructor, and the fourth was the suggestions students have for themselves, akin to their personal reflections to do better. There were many practical and viable suggestions that students have for the instructor, such as increasing discussion activities, improving lesson quality in various ways, announcing group arrangements in advance, reducing lesson lengths and conducting reviews after lessons. Some of these suggestions were also discussed in detail by Lemov, such as how to 'dissolve the screen' and use 'screen time antidotes', 'pause points' and 'assessment loops' to relieve fatigue and build cognitive engagement. There was also a lot of constructive self-reflection done, and it was heartening to know that students agreed that they would have done better if they worked in areas such as improving their listening, communication and

computer skills, creating their own conducive study environment, and doing more planning and reviewing on their part.

Table 9: Results of Question 12

<b>Q12. How can the online (live or on-demand) lessons be improved?</b>		Responses	Percentage
a	Had no solutions, did not think anything had to be improved, or did not know what to do.	16	25%
b	Have better internet connection	8	13%
c	Increase discussions and group work, allow students to be more active	7	11%
d	Improve lesson quality (give better lesson explanations, more Japanese explanations, outlines, more time to solve problems, breaks in lessons, etc.)	7	11%
e	Responses were not understandable or showed a misunderstanding of the question.	6	9%
f	Improve personal listening skills, communication skills, etc.	3	5%
g	Create an atmosphere that makes it easy for everyone to speak, ask questions, etc.	3	5%
h	Reflect students' demands or feedback	2	3%
i	Improve one's personal environment for lessons	2	3%
j	Have better communication equipment (personally)	2	3%
k	Have both live and on-demand lessons	2	3%
l	Have shorter class times	1	2%
m	Do many personal reviews of recorded videos of lessons	1	2%
n	Let group arrangements be announced in advance	1	2%
o	Learn to operate the computer (personally)	1	2%
p	Prepare a personal schedule of one's online lessons	1	2%
q	Conduct review of lessons	1	2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>64</b>	<b>100%</b>

Last but not least, Question 13 was a wrap-up to the survey. There were many varied responses, so they were shown in Table 10 in italics exactly the way they were written. A few responses expressed the difficulty of the lessons, but it was not clear whether they were about lesson content or the nature of the online lessons. There was also general appreciation shown for the online lessons.

Table 10: Results of Question 13

<b>Q13. Any other comments?</b>		Responses	Percentage
a	Nothing in particular	47	73%
b	Thank you	5	8%
c	<i>Prefer face-to-face lessons</i>	3	5%
d	<i>I think it is good to have on-demand lessons and to sometimes make face-to-face time.</i>	1	2%
e	<i>There were challenges every week and it was tough. I thought the evaluation was tough.</i>	1	2%
f	<i>I hope there is no defect in attendance registration in online classes.</i>	1	2%
g	<i>Online class was a good experience for me.</i>	1	2%
h	<i>The corona is worst!</i>	1	2%
i	<i>It is difficult for me to tell things which I don't understand exactly.</i>	1	2%
j	<i>I feel so difficult your lesson, but I was enjoyed it. Thank you so much.</i>	1	2%
k	<i>I don't want to be infected with coronavirus, so I want the latter class to be an online class and mixing face-to-face classes and online classes was very difficult.</i>	1	2%
l	<i>Thank you for the 15 lectures. It was especially good that I learned about the relationship with ALT.</i>	1	2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>64</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 6. Conclusion

This paper sets out to reflect on one semester of online live interactive instruction that the author has conducted for the very first time. Regardless of whether online lessons would be here to stay in the universities the author teaches in, this would serve as a reference for improvements in future online teaching methodology and research. In doing this, there was a need for a literature review to capture some definitions of trending terms in studies on online teaching, to provide some background on complications in the different combinations of online teaching methodology available.

Next, the paper presented the results and discussion of the online survey conducted which also served as course feedback for the instructor as well as an additional language learning and self-reflection opportunity for the students. In this survey research, a good number of open-ended responses that provided a rounded sense of what students were thinking about was analyzed. These responses allowed the researcher to create categories for data analysis, and provided a direction for more specialized research in the future by giving guided options instead of free-style responses for survey questions. I also found responses that were difficult to categorize, so I did it based on my understanding of the students and the way they write and express themselves in English. There were other details learned regarding how to improve on the survey research, such as giving definitions to terms like 'on-demand' and 'live' in the survey.

The research allowed me to answer the various aims I set out to achieve. It was shown that students did not prefer the new educational trend in the new normal. In fact, the majority of respondents expressed a desire for things to go back to normal, that being the brick-and-mortar classroom. If there was no choice but to attend lessons online, there was a slight preference for on-demand lessons over live lessons. However, looking closely at the data, I would conclude that a mixture of both types of lessons is necessary and the strive for balance would inevitably be the ultimate challenge. Reviewing other literature also proved that a combination of both types of lessons is the ultimate goal (Lemov ; Rapanta et al ; Sugimori). This paper presented many pros and cons of each type of online lesson from the students' reflection via the survey which enabled future instruction to highlight the positive areas and address the negative parts. There is, last but not least, many suggestions churned out that would be worked on for the planning of future online lessons.

Finally, the research served its purpose as an English language practice activity that aimed to check the students' enthusiasm and motivation in completing the survey as well as the students' language ability in understanding and answering the questions. In the data presentation, it can be seen that in almost every question, there were responses which were not understandable or showed a misunderstanding of the question. On the other hand, these responses were some of the least common ones. It could be said that half of the students I had were motivated and competent enough to complete a foreign language survey, in their personal time and after the courses were completed, no less, and provide their feedback to a topic that directly affects their learning goals and outcomes. These students could be said to have undergone an autonomous learning via self-reflection of their online learning experience, something I have also achieved via this paper of my online instructional experience.

## References

- Agency for Cultural Affairs [文化庁], Government of Japan. (n.d.). 授業の過程における利用行為と授業目的公衆送信補償金制度 (著作権法第 35 条) [Acts of use in the course of teaching and the compensation system for public transmission for teaching purposes (Copyright Act, Article 35)].
- Beatty, B. J. (2019). *Hybrid-Flexible Course Design* (1st ed.). EdTech Books. <https://edtechbooks.org/hyflex>
- Bergmann, J., & Sams, A. (2012). *Flip your classroom: Reach every student in every class every day*. Eugene, OR: International Society for Technology in Education.

- Biersdorff, K. (2009). How many is enough? The quest for an acceptable survey response rate.  
<https://kkbiersdorff.wordpress.com/2009/09/16/how-many-is-enough/>.
- Columbia University in the City of New York. (n.d.). Hybrid/HyFlex Teaching & Learning. Centre for Teaching and Learning. <https://ctl.columbia.edu/resources-and-technology/teaching-with-technology/teaching-online/hyflex/>.
- Drew, C. (2020, February 10). Flipped Classroom Learning, Explained! (Pros & Cons). Helpful Professor.  
<https://helpfulprofessor.com/flipped-classroom/>.
- Ferrero, M.A. (2020, August 24). Hybrid and Flexible: A Professor's Guide to Hyflex Teaching.  
<https://mariangelf.com/a-professors-guide-to-hyflex-teaching/>.
- Hayata, N. [隼田尚彦], Harada, H. [原田寛之], Matsuzawa, M. [松澤衛], Yoshino, Y. [吉野宣彦] & Fujimoto, N. [藤本直樹]. (2021, March 17). 江別市内4大学における遠隔授業の現状と課題. [Current status and issues of distance learning at four universities in Ebetsu City]. [Webinar]. 北海道江別4大学合同FD・SDフォーラム. [Seminar presented at the Hokkaido Ebetsu 4 Universities Joint FD/SD Forum]. Hokkaido, Japan.  
[https://www.sgu.ac.jp/renkei\\_c/j09tjo00000ghk68.html](https://www.sgu.ac.jp/renkei_c/j09tjo00000ghk68.html).
- Institute for Excellence in Higher Education, Tohoku University (IEHE TOHOKU). (2021). 第34回東北大学高等教育フォーラム 新時代の大学教育を考える [18] 報告書「検証 コロナ禍の下での大学入試」[The 34th Tohoku University Higher Education Forum: Thinking about University Education in the New Era [18]. Report: Verification: University Entrance Examinations in the Covid-19 Era]. IEHE TOHOKU Report 85.
- Iwate Prefectural University (IPU). (2020, April 3). 令和2年度授業開始日の変更について. [Change in the Class Schedule for the 2020 Academic Year]. <https://www.iwate-pu.ac.jp/whatsnew/2020/04/post-449.html>.
- Iwate Prefectural University (IPU). (2020, April 17). 緊急事態宣言の対象地域が全国に拡大されたことに伴う大学の対応について. [Regarding the University's response to the declaration of a state of emergency to the entire country]. <https://www.iwate-pu.ac.jp/whatsnew/2020/04/post-454.html>.
- Iwate Prefectural University (IPU). (2020, April 27). 令和2年度前期の授業開始について. [Start of Lessons for the First Semester of 2020]. <https://www.iwate-pu.ac.jp/whatsnew/2020/04/2-25.html>.
- Iwate Prefectural University (IPU). (2020, June 1). 対面授業への移行等について. [Transition to face-to-face lessons]. <https://www.iwate-pu.ac.jp/whatsnew/2020/06/mensetsu.html>.
- Jones, C. (2020, November 17). How school discipline — and student misbehavior — has changed during the pandemic. EdSource. <https://edsources.org/2020/how-school-discipline-and-student-misbehavior-has-changed-during-the-pandemic/643758>
- Keller, A. (2014). What is an acceptable survey response rate? National Social Norms Center, Michigan State University. <http://socialnorms.org/what-is-an-acceptable-survey-response-rate/>.
- Kimura, T. [木村友久]. (2021, June 9). 授業に伴う著作権等の処理 (令和3年度版ガイドラインを検討する). [Enforcement of Article 35 of the revised Copyright Act and online classes, etc.]. [Webinar]. Seminar presented by Center for Teaching and Learning, Teikyo University, Japan.
- Kurthen, H. & Smith, G. (2005). Hybrid Online face-to-face teaching - When is it an efficient learning tool? International Journal Of Learning, Volume 12, Number 5, 2005/2006.
- Learning Technologies. (n.d.). An Introduction to Hybrid Teaching.  
<https://www.codlearningtech.org/PDF/hybridteachingworkbook.pdf>.
- Lemov, D. (2020). *Teaching in the Online Classroom: Surviving and Thriving in the New Normal*. Jossey-Bass. A Wiley Brand.
- Morioka University (MU). (2020, June 11). 令和2年6月29日以降の本学の授業形態等について. [Class Structure of the University after June 29, 2020]. <https://www.morioka-u.ac.jp/misc/reiwa26.12-1.pdf>.



- National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education (NIAD-QE). (2021). Event : NIAD-QE University Quality Assurance Forum 2021. <https://www.niad.ac.jp/english/news/en2021/uqaf2021.html>
- Nobuoka, M. (2020). Zooming Around Japan for Online Learning. *The Language Teacher*, Volume 44, Number 5, September/October 2020, 28. Japan Association for Language Teaching.
- Ogura, K. (2020). オンライン・対面の併用（ハイブリッド）型授業の分類と特徴. [Classification and characteristics of online/face-to-face (hybrid) classes]. [https://note.com/kenji\\_ogura/n/ne52d88668505](https://note.com/kenji_ogura/n/ne52d88668505).
- Rapanta, C., Botturi, L., Goodyear, P. et al. (2020). Online University Teaching During and After the Covid-19 Crisis : Refocusing Teacher Presence and Learning Activity. *Postdigit Sci Educ* 2, 923-945. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42438-020-00155-y>.
- Reupert, A., Maybery, D., Patrick, K., & Chittleborough, P. (2009). The Importance of Being Human : Instructors' Personal Presence in Distance Programs. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 21(1), 47-56.
- Salmi, J. (2021, September 13). New Challenges for Higher Education and Quality Assurance in the Post-Pandemic. [Webinar]. NIAD-QE University Quality Assurance Forum 2021. Supporting Online Higher Education : The Role of Quality Assurance in Times of Pandemic and Beyond. National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education (NIAD-QE). <https://www.niad.ac.jp/english/news/en2021/uqaf2021.html>.
- Sanderson, C. (2020). *The Bystander Effect : Understanding the Psychology of Courage and Inaction*. United Kingdom : HarperCollins Publishers Limited.
- Sugimori, K. (2021, August 26). ハイフレックス型授業の可能性－授業設計・教育学習方法の革新と包摂. [The Potential of Hyflex Lessons : Innovation and Inclusion in Class Design and Teaching and Learning Methods]. [Webinar]. 名古屋大学高等教育研究センター 第104回客員教授セミナー. [The 104th Visiting Professor Seminar, Center for the Studies of Higher Education, Nagoya University]. [https://www.cshe.nagoya-u.ac.jp/seminar/210826\\_sugimori/](https://www.cshe.nagoya-u.ac.jp/seminar/210826_sugimori/).
- Tada, T. [多田鉄人]. (2021). 現状報告2 : オンラインの現場から——Web 授業のメリット・デメリット——. [Current Status Report 2 : From the Online Field - Advantages and Disadvantages of Web-based Classes] . 第34回東北大学高等教育フォーラム 新時代の大学教育を考える [18] 報告書「検証 コロナ禍の下での大学入試」[The 34th Tohoku University Higher Education Forum : Thinking about University Education in the New Era [18]. Report : Verification : University Entrance Examinations in the Covid-19 Era] . IEHE TOHOKU Report 85, 52-64.
- TeachThought. (n.d.). The definition of the flipped classroom. <https://www.teachthought.com/learning/the-definition-of-the-flipped-classroom/>.
- Valentine, D. (2002). Distance Learning : Promises, Problems, and Possibilities. State University of West Georgia, Distance Education Center. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, Volume V, Number III, Fall 2002.
- Virgil-Uchida, M. (2020). Zooming Around Japan for Online Learning. *The Language Teacher*, Volume 44, Number 5, September/October 2020, 32. Japan Association for Language Teaching.
- Visser, P.S., Krosnick, J.A., Marquette, J., Curtin, M. (1996). Mail surveys for election forecasting ? An evaluation of the Columbus Dispatch poll. *Public Opinion Quarterly*. Q. 60:181-227.
- World Health Organization (WHO). (2020). Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) SITUATION REPORT - 1. <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200121-sitrep-1-2019-ncov.pdf>