

# China, Covid

AND THE UNINTENDED  
CONSEQUENCES OF  
LOCKDOWN TEACHING



# Attendance does not equal engagement

- Like in most of their daily life Chinese students do what they are told and turn up to class in the right place at the right time.
- An instruction to turn on cameras and microphones to confirm attendance at the start was dutifully followed, but when the screen went dark there was no guarantee anyone was home.
- Quick unannounced questions using the Zoom chat facility seemed to keep everyone on their toes.

# Not everyone has a space to work

- Many of the Chinese students live in small homes with lots of other people.
- One student even took to riding on the bus, as she claimed it was the only place she could find some privacy.
- Interruptions were frequent and I had some sympathy for the student whose mum insisted on joining the class too.

# Social interaction needs work too

- Getting Chinese students to engage with each other, let alone the teacher, is a daily struggle in the classroom.
- The random nature of the Zoom breakout groups offers an opportunity to mix it up and get students talking.
- In a 10-minute group session devoted to discussing a topic and coming up with an outcome (ie You are covering a story about driverless taxis: Who will you talk to?) the first few minutes are given over to idle chit-chat about life, love and everything.
- For students cooped up at home many miles from friends and familiarity this offers a lifeline of normality.



## The challenge

- Trying to give Chinese 18 and 19-year-olds an appreciation of plurality of the media when all they have ever known is state-controlled output is a conjuring trick that has exercised many journalism lecturers in my position

# 促英国尽快批准 执行“脱欧”协议 合双方的 可不多

欧盟峰会13日在布鲁塞尔落下帷幕。领导人集中讨论了“脱欧”和“欧洲绿色协议”等议题,敦促英国尽快批准并有效执行“脱欧”协议。



新就任的英国首相鲍里斯·约翰逊在布鲁塞尔发表演讲。

举行了“脱欧”峰会。峰会将继续以“脱欧”为主题。英国首相约翰逊13日在布鲁塞尔正式就任英国首相。约翰逊13日在布鲁塞尔正式就任英国首相。约翰逊13日在布鲁塞尔正式就任英国首相。

“脱欧”后,英国将进入“脱欧”过渡期,其间需要与欧盟谈妥新贸易协议。

“脱欧”过渡期期限截止至2020年底,可在英国要求下延长,英国最迟明年6月底提出延期要求。不过,保守党竞选时承诺,“脱欧”过渡期将在2020年底如期结束。

贸易谈判将涉及环境、劳工、补贴、农产品和食品标准、渔业配额、产品原产地标注等多方面问题。路透社报道,欧盟类似谈判通常耗时数年,英国想在2020年底前与欧盟达成新贸易协议并不现实。

“脱欧”后,英国将进入“脱欧”过渡期,其间需要与欧盟谈妥新贸易协议。如果双方未能在2020年6月30日前达成协议,英国将拒绝延长过渡期,就只规定与欧盟开展贸易活动。

路透社援引分析人士的一状况,英国将在2020年离开单一市场和关税同盟,英国经济将陷入衰退。

加拿大皇家银行资本市场分析师表示,如果一届英国政府可能只是把单一市场和关税同盟用作与欧盟谈判的筹码,请“一定程度上”延长过渡期。

## Available news...

- China Central Television, China News Service, the People's Daily and The Global Times, are under the control of the Chinese Communist Party.
- Complemented only by social media and unregulated blogs and websites whose veracity does not bear close scrutiny.



## Unavailable news...

- Obvious way to open eyes and minds is 'show and tell', bringing diverse voices from around the world into the classroom via video, online and in print. But that option is simply not available in China. The authorities block foreign media, search engines like **Google** and sharing platforms such as **YouTube**.

# The responsibilities

## TO USE A VPN...

- The only possibilities for a media-hungry Chinese student are to go looking for it, via a Virtual Private Network (VPN) that can bypass the state internet controls, or have material sent in by a willing third party from outside the country..

## ...OR NOT

- Neither option is very appealing, carrying the threat – either real or imagined – of repercussions for stretching the rules



China Daily @ChinaDaily · 6h

China state-affiliated media

#OneMoment Come on! Once we finish drinking the water in the tank, we can eat the fish!



## The compromise..

- Do not use anything that is overtly 'anti-China'
- Use 'trusted sources' like BBC, CNN, Reuters, New York Times etc
- Explain the context of the international media approach

The image shows a Zoom meeting interface with a poll overlay. The poll is titled "Writing about numbers - Q3 in Progress" and has a timer of 1:54. It shows that 22 of 23 attendees (95%) have voted. The poll question is: "1. You are reporting on a demonstration. Suddenly, a group of police officers confront a group of young protesters. Things escalate, and five protesters are handcuffed and removed. Which is the most accurate description:". The poll results are as follows:

Description	Count	Percentage
Police arrested a group of protesters.	1	5%
Several people were arrested when protests turned confrontational.	6	27%
After a confrontation, five protesters were led away in handcuffs.	13	59%
About four to six protesters were arrested.	2	9%

The poll interface also includes an "End Polling" button. The meeting grid shows several participants: Alan Geere, Elena, 江逸Alton, Sarah任萌, Zax, Kyle, Jerry-, and Amos. There is also a video thumbnail of a cat and a cartoon character (Jerry the mouse).

## Last word...

- An in-class survey of attitudes to lockdown teaching drew a range of responses, with students evenly divided between largely 'good' or 'bad'.
- Last word with journalism student George Chen, 18, who said: *"I love the online classes. But the quality of teaching is really not as good as the real classroom teaching. I hope the outbreak will end soon."*
- So that's me told...



## Alan Geere

- *Lecturer in International Journalism at **Guangdong University of Foreign Studies** in Guangzhou, southern China, on a programme run by **UCLan** from Preston.*
- ***Newspaper editor** (UK, US, Canada, Caribbean), **media development practitioner** (Romania, Afghanistan, Vietnam), educator (City, Westminster, Worcester, Solent unis). **Young journalist of the year, 1976***