A Review of Language Testing and Assessment in Online Teaching

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Abstract

In line with the increased importance of language testing and assessment in online learning, the paper sets out to present an overview of the landscape of online language testing and assessment based on available scholarship in global and Vietnamese contexts. Several benefits of online language testing and assessment are reported, including promotion of learner autonomy, evaluation of students' progress, and convenience. Methods of online language assessment encompass collecting evidences of learning and using rubrics. A number of problems with current language testing and assessment practices in an online environment are delineated, including cheating/plagiarism, preference for selected response items, lack of validity and reliability, and increased workload for teachers. Recommendations for relevant stakeholders including teachers and teacher education institutions to improve the quality of online language assessment are accordingly presented.

Keywords: language testing, language assessment, online learning, distance education

1. Introduction

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic was reported to delay in-person teaching in over 144 countries and thus affect 1.2 billion students worldwide (UNESCO, 2020). During a time of frequent social distancing and lockdowns, online learning has increasingly been regarded as a viable solution to the COVID education disruption (Dhawan, 2020). In Vietnam, with regard to the language education sector, on March 25th 2020, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) issued the Dispatch 1061/BGDĐT-GDTrH, in which several guidelines regarding online education were laid down for educational institutions, teachers, students and parents to follow at the start of a nationwide transition to online learning (MOET, 2020). Centered around the three major forms of distance education which include learning management systems (LMS), learning content management systems (LCMS) and electronic learning (e-learning) systems, these guidelines put forward a number of requirements in terms of facilities and infrastructure, teaching and learning materials, activities and assessment (MOET, 2020).

The expansion of online learning has given rise to the re-emergence of testing and assessment as a prominent concern for instructors (Akimov & Malin, 2020; Benson, 2003; Gaytan & McEwen, 2007), considering how challenging physical distance could prove to be for teachers to keep track of students' progress and offer prompt interaction (Cheng et al., 2013). Consequently, there has been a growing need to look into testing and assessment in a virtual learning context (Gaytan & McEwen, 2007).

However, despite increased attention given to online learning in general and testing and assessment in particular, there is a strong line of evidence that corroborates problematic testing and assessment practices in distance education worldwide. Specifically, academic dishonesty has often been referred to as one of the main challenges of online language testing and assessment given that online instructors may not be able to verify the identity of their students (Rovai, 2000). Over-reliance on automatic computer correction, and consequently disproportionate attention given to the use of selected response such as multiple-choice questions (MCQs), are several pertinent concerns found in teachers' assessment practices worldwide (Hunt et al., 2007). Furthermore, a shortage of necessary technological tools to fulfill the distinctive needs of online language testing and assessment was reported by Ahmad et al. (2021).

Recurring findings extracted from local publications have also shed light on issues with online language assessment in Vietnam. Following the introduction of a national project titled "Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages in the National Education System, period 2008-2020", the Decision No.1400/QD-TTg was issued,

which called for increased Information and Communications Technology (ICT) use in teaching and learning, teacher professional development and investment in technological equipment and facilities (Dang, 2013). Nevertheless, ICT use among teachers remains seriously limited. In his report, Nguyen (2016) claimed that the level of ICT application among language teachers in Vietnam was disappointingly low, and this view is also reinforced by Nguyen (2013) as well as Le and Nguyen (2017). The majority of teachers consider the Internet as a representative of ICT application, and they are ill-informed of what web-based applications to use and how to apply them into their teaching contexts (Nguyen, 2016). This lack of preparedness as ICT users has direct implications on language teachers' testing and assessment practices, since it was found that only 35% of English teachers under study could reach the stage when they were able to develop online tests for their students (Pham et al., 2018). Large-scale implementation of ICT is often restricted to trial runs, and this justifies why many language teachers do not feel the need to develop their ICT competence in conducting testing and assessment as part of their everyday teaching repertoire (Nguyen, 2016).

After having thoroughly examined relevant materials, the researcher has detected the following gaps in the literature review. First of all, while an abundance of prior studies has probed into the use of ICT in language teaching (e.g., Baleni, 2015; Ebrahimzadeh & Alavi, 2017), little is known about how technology influences language testing and assessment, or what learning outcomes can be drawn from online testing and assessment. Secondly, when it comes to the researcher's local context, there is a paucity of research into language testing and assessment in virtual learning in Vietnam, and rather the majority of existing studies have investigated the use of ICT in language learning in general with little to no reference to online testing and assessment.

This review sets out to provide a systematic and multifaceted synthesis of online language assessment across the globe and especially in Vietnam. Moreover, the study can be of great usefulness to relevant stakeholders in foreign language education given that possible measures to fine-tune online assessment practices should aim to address the outlined issues.

2. Discussion

2.1 Language Testing and Assessment

In this section, an overview of language testing and assessment, with a focus on the two terms formative and summative assessment, is presented.

On the one hand, formative assessment is defined as "assessment for learning", meaning that its objective is to improve learning through activities that can offer feedback to teachers and students (Black & Wiliam, 2010). With formative assessment, teachers are given ongoing information about students' understanding, hence being able to make informed decisions to adjust teaching and learning activities (Black & Wiliam, 2010; Sadler, 1989).

Summative assessment, on the other hand, is defined as "assessment of learning", and aims to determine how much students have learned (Gardner, 2010). Summative assessment is often conducted at the end of a learning process via testing (e.g.: final exams, college entrance exams). The purpose of summative assessment is to pinpoint students' level of proficiency within a given time, to decide on their eligibility for special programs or advancement to the next level, as well as qualifications for awards (Harlen & Gardner, 2010).

2.2 Benefits of Online Language Testing and Assessment

Overall, the use of online platforms in language assessment has generated favorable outcomes, especially with respect to formative assessment (Yeo et al., 2014). In this section, several benefits of online language testing and assessment are elicited from the existing literature.

2.2.1 Promotion of Learner Autonomy

Online language testing and assessment, when designed properly, can be expected to foster learner engagement and participation in the sense that it allows a shift away from the teacher-centered model to one where students are empowered to regulate their learning (Carson, 2017). This view is echoed by Chang et al. (2013) who similarly acknowledged the usefulness of technology enhanced and interactive digital learning in encouraging self-directed learning. Specifically, online testing and assessment empower students to apply learned concepts in their own ways to produce artifacts such PowerPoint presentations, posters and brochures, after which they will not only be able to expand their knowledge base but also harness various competencies essential to their field of study (Buluc et al., 2013).

2.2.2 Evaluation of Students' Progress

The ability to archive evidence of students' learning, for instance audio recordings of speaking performances, can prove to be extremely useful for teachers to acquire a well-rounded picture of their students' competences (Rubio,

2015). In a similar vein, online programs are praised for their ability to allow teachers to extract information from a virtual database, with which teachers can dissect to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of their students' progress (Bulkley et al., 2010).

Discussion on the ability of online learning to trace students' performance would remain poorly substantiated if the concept of learning analytics were left out of the conversation. Learning analytics is defined as the collection, interpretation and reporting of a range of data about students for the purposes of assessment of students' progress, diagnosis of potential problems and prediction of future performances (Romero-Zaldivar et al., 2012). This is often deployed in the use of the Learning Management System (LMS) which has been gaining status across higher education institutions. Macfadyen and Dawson (2010) affirmed that meaningful information can be obtained from LMS-generated student tracking. With online education, the LMS can facilitate the collection and analysis of data used to interpret students' academic progress without requiring much time. This presents a competitive edge over physical face-to-face (F2F) education where data often has to be collected via traditional methods such as questionnaires, interviews, and on-site observations (Conijn et al., 2017).

2.2.3 Convenience

With online learning platforms, students with a hectic schedule, especially those who work while studying, are allowed to work on testing and assessment tasks at their own pace and place of convenience (Ebadi & Rahimi, 2017, 2018). Another convenience factor about the use of online language testing and assessment is its ability to provide rapid scoring and feedback, which presents a remarkable improvement over traditional paper-based tests (Rahayu & Februariyanti, 2005).

In response to the rising demand to reduce scoring time, several automated scoring applications have penetrated into the education market, one of which is called SpeechRater SM. This application was developed at the Education Testing service (ETS) and has been employed in low-stakes speaking practice tests to evaluate students' fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar (Xi et al., 2008). VersantTM English placement speaking tests, which also function on the basis of auto-marking, consist of mostly simple constrained tasks (e.g.: sentence repetition, building sentences, reading sentences aloud). These tests could be used for pre-screening purposes or as a point of reference on which more complex speaking skills are built (Bernstein et al., 2010).

In terms of feedback automated platforms, CriterionTM (developed by ETS for education contexts) and English as a Second Language (ESL) Assistant (developed by Microsoft for commercial contexts) are grammatical error feedback systems. Chodorow et al. (2010) found that the use of article error feedback available via Criterion helped reduce the number of article errors in students' writing, while with ESL Assistant, suggestions regarding article and prepositions errors along with sample structures containing suggested forms supported users to compose emails more effectively and accurately.

2.3 Methods of Online Language Assessment

In this section the researcher explores different methods of online language assessment commonly practiced in relation to formative and summative assessment, including evidence of learning and rubrics created for assessments (Pu & Xu, 2021).

2.3.1 Evidence of Learning

Consistent online language assessments processes often involve students' written works, and these could be collected from tools including but not limited to discussion boards, electronic portfolios (e-portfolios) and collaborative writing essays (e.g., Cheng et al., 2013; Gikandi et al., 2011; Robles & Braathen, 2002; Rovai, 2000).

Online discussion

Having witnessed increasing popularity in tertiary education, online discussion boards are hoped to transform the classroom dynamics using a learner-centered and socio-constructivist approach (Althaus, 1997; Turcotte & Laferriere, 2004). Specifically, online discussions are found to improve students' learning skills and quality of their learning (Wu & Hiltz, 2004) considering that they help develop students' faculties of thinking (Althaus, 1997). This is justifiable since with virtual discussions, students can interact at their own pace and reflect on their contributions before making their submissions online, as well as engaging in metacognitive processes including brainstorming ideas, reflecting, critical thinking, confronting divergent or conflicting views, problem-solving and communicating with instructors and peers (Birch & Volkov, 2007).

To add to this, a study by Birch and Volkov (2007) revealed that online discussion in ESL classrooms can give students a stronger sense of inclusion. It is further specified that in traditional F2F classrooms, it is common to

see certain students who dominate the conversations (Ortega, 1997). Online discussions allow students who may feel hesitant to raise their voice and make their share of contributions (Curtin, 2002; Ortega, 1997).

Online discussions also provide ample opportunities for students to apply learned vocabulary of their field of study and develop "linguistic flexibility" without worrying about whether their language limitations could inhibit their performance (Biesenbach-Lucas, 2003).

Another significant benefit linked to second language acquisition lies in the development of intercultural communication competence (ICC), derived from the concept of telecollaboration, which is defined as web-based exchange facilitated by an academic institution between people coming from various cultures for the purpose of developing language proficiency and ICC (Byram, 1997). With assessment components including telecollaboration, students are put in a communicative setting where meaningful interaction with foreign partners would be of immense value to helping students learn how to use contextually appropriate language, or in other words, pragmatic competence (Cunningham, 2017).

E-portfolio

E-portfolios are defined as a showcase of students' artefacts in a variety of formats enabled by educational technologies (Buluc et al., 2013). E-portfolios have the potential to paint students a clearer picture of their strengths and weaknesses than a singular test score. Besides, they are of great usefulness in promoting the habits of self-assessment given that students are expected to review their written products and analyze their language progress (Apple & Shimo, 2004). E-portfolios also encourage students to apply their target language in real-life contexts, along with developing problem-solving and creativity skills (Baturay & Daloğlu, 2010).

Essentially similar to traditional portfolios, however, e-portfolios might be preferred in the sense that they could be stored and their information could be transmitted and cross-referenced (Buluc et al., 2013). Another advantage that e-portfolios have over regular ones is that they are not time-bound, and can create scope for an engaging delivery of teacher and peer feedback through the application of technological innovations (Hung, 2008).

Collaborative writing

Collaborative writing, with Google Docs and wikis as its prime examples, leaves ample room for collaboration among peers (Finn, 2018), and its interactiveness is conducive to language development (Black, 2008; Thorne & Black, 2007). Specifically, given plenty of opportunities to work with others, students may find their language needs met in a personalized and meaningful way (Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002). This could be attributed to the power of peer feedback in drawing learners' attention to mistakes and encouraging them to make necessary changes to produce quality products (Rassaei, 2013). Besides, through collaborative learning, students take on the role of their teachers by providing peer feedback as well as monitors of their learning process, which is regarded as a stepping stone to the development of self-directed learning (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

2.3.2 Rubrics Designed for Testing and Assessment

In the context of virtual learning, rubrics are perceived to be a highly useful framework for interpretation of learning evidence, and often work as part of more complex assessment tools such as electronic portfolios and online discussion boards (Buluc et al., 2013). Quite similar to online discussion boards, rubrics are considered a democratic assessment instrument as they provide a common ground for instructors and learners to hold discussions over course contents, expected outcomes and proficiency levels to work towards (Buluc et al., 2013).

One typical use of rubrics can be noticed in online discussion boards. Here rubric criteria may include level of participation (read others' messages and post responses) and content of responses (novelty of ideas, ability to recap and analyze peers' ideas and stimulate discussions, relevance to course contents) (Rovai, 2000).

What sets rubrics in an online context apart from its offline equivalent is that verbal exchanges that are often neglected in traditional classrooms could now be stored digitally and permanently, which could influence decisions regarding the assessment results should teachers decide to re-watch recordings for further evidence of assessment and when vocabulary use is made a marking criteria (Bauer & Anderson, 2000). It is hence suggested that rubric makers should consider when to focus on vocabulary use (e.g.: formal postings), and when to focus on content and level of participation (e.g.: online asynchronous discussions). It is implied that if students know that their use of lexis is being constantly watched in an online environment, it might compromise their level of participation (Bauer & Anderson, 2000). Currently there is a dearth of prior investigation into the relationship between assessment methods or rubrics and learning goals or objectives in online language teachers' practices (Pu & Xu, 2021).

2.4 Problems with Online Language Testing and Assessment Practices

In this section, several challenges associated with the use of online language assessment practices are presented, along with the researcher's in-depth analysis of and implications drawn from noteworthy findings.

2.4.1 Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating is cited as one of the primary concerns when language teachers conduct testing and assessments online. In an age of burgeoning technological support in academics, Watson and Sottile (2010) pointed out students' inclination to violate academic integrity via looking up answers online and chatting with friends.

While cheating is an ongoing issue in both online and offline education, it is exacerbated in online testing as the instructor may not have a clue about the identity of the student interacting with him (Benson, 2003). One workable solution to addressing identity verification concerns has been proctored testing. Proctored tests are conducted at designated locations such as schools, libraries and testing centers, with invigilators or proctors controlling students' access and verifying their identity (Benson, 2003). The use of randomized tests is also a viable course of action, which means students are given different sets of questions so the possibility of cheating among peers could be minimized, although this would require an additional step of test personalization (Buluc et al., 2013).

Another issue that falls into academic dishonesty is plagiarism (Rovai, 2000). Online learning has certainly made it easier for learners to search for information, copy and paste into their own works. In an attempt to alleviate this problem, teachers should inform students of what constitutes academic dishonesty and in particular plagiarism, and the consequences of such actions (Benson, 2003). Students and teachers can also deploy web-based applications to detect plagiarism, the most popular of which has been Turnitin - a detection software commonly used in academia by identifying text similarities across an enormous database of students' works, journals, reports, websites, articles and so on (Halgamuge, 2017).

It is also recommended that online instructors use a variety of assessments. Giving students varied assessments would enable teachers to identify anomalous patterns in students' works and thus notify them of the possibility of cheating or plagiarism (Shuey, 2002).

2.4.2 Preference for Selected Response Items

Construct of online tests is currently overemphasizing selected response items (e.g.: MCQs, matching, true/false questions) (Buluc et al., 2013), and rather they are "old tests in new technology" (Hunt et al., 2007). The reason for selected response being particularly favored in online education is attributable to the fact that the majority of course management systems contain available tools and functions to design tests with selected response formats, which allow automatic scoring after each question or after the whole test has been completed (Benson, 2003). Thus, for expediency reasons, it is conceivable why selected response has been dominating test specifications. Concern over the prioritization of MCQs which feature automatic correction is that this kind of language tests may reduce assessments to an overly simplified version (Carson, 2017).

In Vietnam, the majority of existing studies on MCQs have been mostly limited to those used in offline tests, but certain implications can be drawn from their findings. Most apparently, disproportionate attention given to selected response, especially MCQs, is largely derived from a test-driven education system, particularly in reflection of the National High School Graduation Examination, which comprises only MCQs (Hoang, 2017). As a consequence, teachers often find themselves placed under constant pressure to engage in "test-like" materials in the format of MCQs in order to prepare their students for the National High School Graduation Examination. Thus, it is left to be investigated whether selected response may also dominate online tests, which might serve to exacerbate the negative washback effects of testing on classroom teaching and learning. In this way, selected response in online tests presents a promising area of study for future contextualized research in Vietnam.

2.4.3 Lack of Validity and Reliability of Assessments

One serious challenge in language testing and assessment in both face-to-face and virtual learning concerns the issue of validity and reliability (Gikandi et al., 2011). Gikandi et al. (2011) proposed three characteristics of reliability in online testing and assessment, including (1) opportunities for collecting evidence of learning with which teachers and students could use to determine their strengths as well as weaknesses to devise plans for improvement, (2) variety of sources for evidence of learning, (3) clear learning targets and collective understanding of rubrics which encourage students to take on an active role and make informed decisions about their learning.

According to Gikandi et al. (2011), validity consists of the three following characteristics: (1) whether testing

and assessment relates to real life use (Crisp & Ward, 2008; Lin, 2008), (2) effective formative feedback which is defined as whether feedback is provided in a prompt and continuous fashion, and feedback along with well-curated rubrics is specific enough to help learners identify ways to improve (Wang et al., 2008), and (3) a variety of approaches and tasks through which students feel motivated to display their competences and manage their learning (Crisp & Ward, 2008).

2.4.4 Teachers' Increasing Amounts of Work

Online testing and assessment as part of virtual learning would demand teachers to cope with a heavier workload, including preparing classroom materials, organizing interactive tasks, managing classroom discipline and offering specific feedback to students (Pratawati et al., 2021). In Vietnam, problems with lack of time to use ICT were echoed by Dang (2011), who claimed that teachers' reluctance to apply ICT in their teaching could be attributed to a fear of more work needed to be done for lesson preparation, which would be exacerbated by their already low levels of familiarity with ICT. Although little was mentioned about testing and assessment, the given findings could draw valuable implications for the insufficient adoption of ICT in testing and assessment as well.

Fears of additional volumes of work could also lead to fragmented use of alternative assessments in online settings. Duong (2016) stated that one of the issues that surfaced when alternative assessment was introduced to the new curriculum stipulated by the MOET was the increasing burden of assessment responsibilities on teachers, and that implementing the existing curriculum was already a lot of work for them. While it offered an insightful review of the current landscape of language assessment in Vietnam, Duong's (2016) study could leave grounds for future studies to determine whether a lack of practice of alternative assessment methods due to teachers' constrained time and energy could be generalized to distance learning.

2.4.5 Lack of National Policies or Guidelines

Generally speaking, macro policies at the national level remain general and insufficient for higher education institutions and teachers to execute online learning (Ahmad et al., 2021). In Vietnam particularly, regulations relevant to teacher and staff training teachers on language testing and assessment are lacking at primary and lower secondary levels, whereas at the upper secondary level, only regulations regarding placement and ranking are available (Duong, 2016).

During COVID-19 pandemic, the MOET has issued several decrees, yet most of which have touched upon teachers' responsibility for strictly complying with testing and assessment plans and their use of online assessment results in place of in-person ones (MOET, 2020). Specific guidelines including different strategies and techniques to execute testing and assessment in a virtual learning mode, toolkits for online teachers and teacher training sessions on online testing and assessment, have largely been overlooked.

On a similar note, Dang (2011) found that an ICT plan was never administered to language teachers, which would result in their lack of understanding with regard to the 'how' and 'why' of incorporation of ICT into teaching practices in general and assessment in particular. While this finding has successfully pointed to the need for clearer guidelines to bridge the gap between theory in all MOET guidelines and educational practice, considering that his study dated back to 2011, there is a call for further empirical research into current macro policies regarding assessments and their impacts on actual testing and assessment practices.

2.4.6 Teachers' Low Levels of ICT Literacy and Lack of ICT Equipment

Generally speaking, teachers' poor ICT competency is one of the principal challenges associated with online language assessment (Ahmad et al., 2021). As Davies (2002, p. 2) pointed out "It is not the hardware that is at fault, nor the software that runs on it; it is the failure to train teachers to make the best use of the hardware and software", the underuse of ICT results from teachers' low levels of digital literacy, which is caused by infrequent and heavily theory-based training on the matter.

In Vietnam, a pre-service teacher can graduate without demonstrating familiarity with the use of ICT as well as media skills (Pham & Nguyen, 2020). This unstressed need to normalize ICT competency might provide justification for teachers' limited use of ICT in planning in-class activities, which then leads to their lack of confidence in applying ICT into their teaching in general and assessment in particular (Pham et al., 2018). Specifically, teachers' ICT use is mainly restricted to a rigid pattern of looking up relevant materials online, using word processing softwares to design practice activities and presenting knowledge through Microsoft PowerPoint slides (Dang, 2011). Again, since this study was conducted in 2011, there remains a demand for further investigation into teachers' current digital competence in language teaching in general and language assessment in particular.

Another noteworthy issue is lack of ICT equipment to support teaching and learning foreign languages (Edmett

et al., 2020). Limited availability of ICT hardwares, softwares and connectivity is most evident in rural and mountainous areas that are mainly populated by minority families. These families often struggle financially to afford their children computers as well as Internet access to study online (Minh, 2021).

3. Conclusion

This paper gives a holistic view of language testing and assessment in distance learning derived from existing literature globally and locally. Specifically, a number of benefits of online language testing and assessment include promotion of learner autonomy, evaluation of students' progress, and convenience. Methods of online language assessment entail collecting evidence of learning and using rubrics. Several problems with current language testing and assessment practices in online learning are explained, including cheating/plagiarism, preference for selected response items, lack of validity and reliability, and teachers' increased workload.

Several recommendations for relevant stakeholders including teachers and teacher education institutions are thus presented. Different proposals would be subject to careful scrutiny and evaluation, with the researcher's intent on localizing the suggestions in mind.

3.1 Teachers

Acknowledging the critical role that formative assessment plays in improving learning during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic (Rahim, 2020) and the central part teachers play in implementing online formative assessment (Mimirinis, 2019), teachers are highly recommended to apply online formative assessment which can cover the following aspects: (1) offering prompt and constructive feedback, and (2) engaging students with critical thinking via collaboration or self-regulation (Gikandi et al., 2011). Specifically, with a due emphasis on feedback giving, a number of suggestions have been put forward. First of all, teachers are advised to make use of computer-assisted feedback systems such as "track changes" where learners can view the comments along their written texts (Cope et al., 2011) without the necessity of a time-consuming feedback process. It is also crucial that the online feedback provided be personalized rather than generic (Lew et al., 2010). Additionally, peer feedback should be frequently utilized, and ongoing opportunities to work collaboratively in a virtual environment should be presented to students so that they can develop a sense of community instead of feeling isolated (Kang & Duong, 2021).

Besides formative peer feedback, as in distance education where learner autonomy is increasingly important, teachers should instruct students to conduct self-assessments by providing them with examples of such practices and delineating criteria for them to assess their own performance (Pratawati et al., 2021). Also, it is important to note that online teachers should make conscious efforts to explore new methods of assessment rather than replicating assessments often used in the F2F classroom, given the distinctive functionality of the Web in providing amplified communication and interaction to optimize teaching and learning (Rubio, 2015). Finally, it is essential that both pre-service and in-service teachers seek continuous training opportunities themselves to hone their ICT competencies in language teaching in general and in assessment in particular (Zou et al., 2021).

3.2 Teacher Education Institutions

Teacher education institutions are responsible for designing pre-service and in-service training programs that enable teachers to challenge their preconceived beliefs about ICT and share their assessment practices in distance education (Williams & Beam, 2019). It is suggested that the more training teachers receive, the more skillful and comfortable they are with using ICT, and this is hoped to lead to more technology being embedded in teaching in general and assessment in particular (Dang, 2013).

Regarding the contents of training, it is advisable that training duration be increased and sufficient content of training be made readily available. It was reported that during annual training provided by Hanoi University—one of the most well-known universities for language learning in Vietnam—teachers were taught to use a limited set of digital features such as Microsoft Office, Internet search and download (Dang, 2013). In other words, discrete technical skills were emphasized instead of how they could be utilized to teach (Dang, 2013). Given that "while computers will not replace teachers, teachers who use computers will eventually replace teachers who don't" (Clifford, 1987), teachers need to be equipped with a set of ICT skills applicable to language teaching. Specifically, they should be trained to use Web 2.0 to conduct relevant testing and assessment tasks such as giving constructive and specific feedback, using learning analytics in the LMS and using alternative assessments (e.g.: e-portfolios, discussion boards, collaborative writing).

In addition, it should be noted that teachers, just like their students, learn in different ways (Leach et al., 2005), thus it is important that ICT training be to cater to such differences, including online training, face-to-face training, use of printed materials and e-learning resources, and that training should be stored in a repository for

full-time access so that those with conflicting schedules can engage in self-paced learning to revisit or participate in ICT training (Dang, 2013). Also, similar to the need to foster a collaborative attitude among students, educational institutions should organize regular peer support groups for teachers, considering that colleagues' professional advice constitutes a major part of language teachers' assessment practices, and that teachers often compensate for the inadequacy of their pre-service training by learning through staffroom knowledge sharing (Vogt & Tsagari, 2014; Sultana, 2019).

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