

Designing a collaborative Malaysian-Vietnamese online writing project: a design-based research

Abstract

In Vietnam, academic writing is often developed through a formal instructional setting. Teaching ESL writing to undergraduates in Vietnamese universities is not always easy as instructors are often overloaded with multiple classes of mixed-ability learners. Thus in most cases, students are often left on their own to fend for themselves. Thrown into an era of information overload, students are often overwhelmed with what to look for to support their learning. In this study, a web-based Writing Portal (TWP), made possible by the advent of a Malaysian-Vietnamese collaborative partnership is developed to address these problems. TWP enables collaborative, yet self-regulated learning amongst two groups of Vietnamese Undergraduates (N = 78) undergoing a semester of English Writing class, designed and managed by a team of researchers from Universiti Malaysia Sabah and University of Da Nang, Vietnam. A Design-based research (DBR) approach was adopted to provide solutions to a practical problem that faces the Vietnamese educational context through a process of iterative analysis, design, development, and implementation. The paper highlights the experiences gained throughout the three main phases of DBR exploration, i.e., (1) analysis/exploration, (2) design/construction, and (3) evaluation/reflection with the ongoing practices as the intervention is adopted, enacted, and sustained in a Vietnamese educational setting.