

ESL pre-service teachers' online information searching strategies preliminary data for TPACK development program for teacher education

ABSTRACT

The reality brought upon by the pandemic has forced educators, language instructors included, to re-evaluate their practice by ensuring that the actual learning takes place and planned objectives are met. In language education programs, equipping future teachers with appropriate knowledge and skills remains as the top priority. In fact, recent literature also highlights the need for teachers to have technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) to cope with the changing demands of online learning and learner diversity. As part of the needs analysis phase to assess students' TPACK competency, students' online information searching strategies were investigated by using Information Commitment Survey (Wu & Tsai, 2007) and content analysis of the references list of students' written coursework and guided reflection. In this case study, the participants were the ESL pre-service teachers in a teacher education program. It was found that the students used multiple web searching strategies such as matching and elaboration strategies. The students also appeared to have 'mixed' standards for judging information on the web. The results additionally revealed that students relied heavily on different web resources such as online encyclopaedia, and resources that contain grammar materials, content materials related to their writing topic, citation materials and writing samples that match their writing format. These findings strongly suggest for a more systematic training design of the online writing support should be in a form of a portal of evaluated links to useful resources for ESL writing.