

Investigating Taiwanese Teachers' Language Testing and Assessment Needs

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Abstract

The present study was designed to investigate the testing and assessment needs of English language teachers in Taiwan. An online survey was conducted, which replicated to a large extent the instruments used in Hasselgreen et al. (2004) and Fulcher (2012). Both closed-response and constructed-response items were used to encourage teachers to articulate their training needs in testing and assessment. A total of 253 school teachers, from elementary education to post-graduate level, responded to the survey. The major areas in which teachers report needing training include the assessment of listening and speaking, item writing techniques, test validation procedures, and more advanced statistical analyses. Teachers' language testing and assessment needs seem to have been influenced by the recent widespread use of standardized testing in Taiwan (e.g., most universities require students to achieve a certain score on an English language test before graduation). The survey suggests that teachers are not immune to the increasing use of testing and assessment in our society; therefore, they need to enhance their assessment literacy to face these new challenges in developing assessment tasks or choosing an appropriate test for their students. The results have implications for developing assessment literacy in general, and they could be used to inform the development of new textbooks and the provision of more relevant training programs for language teachers in Taiwan.

Key Words: assessment literacy, language testing and assessment, teacher training