*Original Research Article*

Assessment Practices, Collaborations, and Autonomy as Determinants of Language Assessment Literacy of Language Teachers

ABSTRACT

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| **Aims:** Low language assessment literacy (LAL) remains a problem for many teachers. This study explores how assessment practices, collaborations, and autonomy influence LAL of language teachers.**Study design:** Quantitative Predictive.**Place and Duration of Study:** The researcher gathered data from 103 language teachers from seven private schools in Davao Region.**Methodology:** Using a quantitative predictive approach, the researcher gathered data from 103 language teachers from seven private schools in Davao Region through a validated and pilot-tested survey questionnaire. Data were analyzed using the mean, standard deviation, correlation, and regression tests.**Results:** Findings revealed that language teachers possessed high assessment-related competencies—practices ((M = 4.32, SD = 0.38), collaborations ((M = 4.13, SD = 0.39), and autonomy (M = 4.16, SD = 0.43), and are significantly correlated to LAL (p=.000). It was also found that these predictors can significantly influence ($R^{2}$=.359, p = .000) LAL. **Conclusion:** Assessment practices significantly influence language assessment literacy. However, assessment collaborations and autonomy have an insignificant influence on LAL. Nonetheless, the combined influence of these three predictors on LAL is significant. |

*Keywords: Assessment practices, assessment collaborations, assessment autonomy, language assessment literacy*

1. INTRODUCTION

Low language assessment literacy has been repeatedly found by researchers globally (Coombe et al., 2020; DeLuca et al., 2016; Lee & Butler, 2020; Lewkowicz & Leung, 2021; Xu & Brown, 2016). Despite its importance in supporting students' language development, teachers' language assessment literacy remains poor (Xu & Brown, 2017; Weng & Shen, 2022).

A study across four European countries revealed that teachers with low language assessment literacy used traditional assessment methods (Vogt et al., 2020). Low language assessment literacy among teachers is one of the major issues identified in the field of education in Central Europe, specifically Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Hungary, and another study conducted in China (Csépes, 2021; Lam, 2015; Vogt et al., 2020).

In the Philippines, language assessment literacy remains a problem. A study in Bontoc, Northern Luzon, found that teachers exhibited poor language assessment literacy (Napanoy & Peckley, 2020). Additionally, two studies conducted in Naga City and Manila showed similar results: teachers demonstrate low language assessment literacy (Clores & Reganit, 2020; Alonzo et al., 2023).

Consequently, poor language assessment literacy often leads to poorly designed language tests, incorrect interpretation of assessment results, and misguided educational decisions, which seriously adversely affect student learning outcomes (Coombe et al., 2020; Weng & Shen, 2022). Due to these consequences, the call for further investigation into language assessment literacy of language teachers has been articulated (Csépes, 2021; DeLuca et al., 2016; Lee & Butler, 2020). However, there is very little literature discussing this topic. Hence, this study was pursued.

**1.1 Research Objectives**

To determine the levels of assessment practices in terms of assessment as learning, assessment of learning, assessment to inform, assessment for learning; assessment collaborations in terms of dialogue, decision-making, actions, and evaluations; assessment autonomy in terms of general autonomy and curriculum autonomy; and language assessment literacy in terms of knowledge, and skills.

To determine the significance of the relationships between assessment practices, collaborations, and autonomy, and the language assessment literacy.

To determine the significance of the degree of influence of assessment practices, collaborations, and autonomy on language assessment literacy.

**1.2 Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on the Professional Capital theory of Hargreaves and Fullan (2012). This theory posits that professional capital results from the dynamic interaction among three key components: human capital, social capital, and decisional capital. The theory further asserts that human capital means the specialized knowledge, skills, and practices the person carries into their respective working roles. Also, social capital is based on professionals' relationships and collaborative efforts to grow and learn together. Lastly, decisional capital is the ability, or freedom, to make reasoned professional decisions from experience and evidence. Enhancing professional capital requires investment in all three components forms of capital.

In this study, the first predictive variable includes assessment practices, which are indicated by assessment as learning, assessment of learning, assessment to inform, and assessment for learning (Gonzales & Callueng, 2014; Navalta, 2024). This variable reflects the human capital identified in the theory. Secondly, assessment collaborations are also considered a predictive variable, as reflected in dialogue, decision-making, actions, and evaluations (Woodland & Randall, 2013; Johari et al., 2021). This variable is categorized under social capital, which the theory mentions. Lastly, assessment autonomy is another predictive variable indicated by general autonomy and curriculum autonomy (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005; Fadaee et al., 2021). This predictive factor represents the decisional capital from the theory.

On the other hand, the criterion variable language assessment literacy refers to knowledge and skills (Kremmel & Harding, 2020). This variable connects with the idea of professional capital. Thus, promoting language assessment literacy or professional capital involves investment in assessment practices or human capital, assessment collaborations or social capital, and assessment autonomy or decisional capital.

2. methodology

**2.1 Research Design**

This study employed the predictive correlational approach. This design means that the research looked at how well certain factors—like assessment practices, collaboration, and autonomy—can predict language assessment literacy without manipulating any of these variables (Chiang et al., 2020). The correlational approach examines the connections between these factors to see how one might predict another (Bordens & Abbot, 2022; Hassan, 2024; Imai, 2021).

**2.2 Locale of the Study**

The researcher conducted this study among the language teachers of seven private educational institutions run by a religious congregation in the Davao region.

**2.3 Sample and Sampling Technique**

The respondents of this study included 103 language teachers from the seven private institutions run by a religious congregation in the Davao region. Also, the researcher identified the respondents through census sampling. All members of the identified population were involved in the data gathering (Hayes, 2023); furthermore, the selection criteria for respondents should require a minimum of six months of experience as a language teacher and have independently designed at least two language assessments.

**2.4 Research Instrument**

The researcher utilized an adapted survey questionnaire with four parts. The first part was adapted from the Classroom Assessment Practices Survey Questionnaire (Gonzales & Callueng, 2014, used by Navalta, 2024); The second part was adapted from the Teacher Collaboration Assessment Survey (Woodland & Randall, 2013, used by Johari et al., 2021); The third part was adapted from the Survey Questionnaire on Teaching Autonomy Scale (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005, used by Fadaee et al., 2021); Lastly, the fourth part was adapted from Kremmel and Harding's (2020) Language Assessment Literacy Survey. It went through validation and garnered an average rating of 4.55 from the validators. The reliability of the survey instrument on assessment practices (α = 0.927, 16 items), collaborations (α = 0.927, 27 items), autonomy (α = 0.858, 14 items), and language assessment literacy (α = 0.916, 56 items) as defined by Cronbach's Alpha test results showed excellent to good reliability.

**2.5 Data Gathering Procedure**

The researcher followed proper protocols by securing approval from the graduate school dean and obtaining an ethics certificate after a thorough review. With school heads' consent, identified language teachers were oriented and given informed consent forms, assuring voluntary participation. Only those who gave full consent received the survey, which was then administered. Finally, the researcher encoded, organized, and analyzed the collected data.

**2.6 Data Analysis**

For the first research objective, the mean was used to measure the level of assessment practices, collaborations, autonomy, and language assessment literacy. Secondly, to find the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable the Pearson-R formula was used. Lastly, the multiple regression analysis was utilized to examine the predictive variables on language assessment literacy and the degree to which the variables contributed.

3. results and discussion

**3.1 Descriptive Analysis**

Table 1 is a descriptive table that shows the variables involved in the study, namely assessment practices, collaborations, autonomy, and language assessment literacy. It also contains the number of samples, standard deviation, mean, and their corresponding descriptive interpretation.

**Table 1. Descriptive Table**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variables | N | SD | Mean | Descriptive Level |
| Assessment Practices | **103** |  **0.38** | **4.32** | **Very High** |
| Assessment as Learning |  | 0.50 | 4.32 | Very High |
| Assessment of Learning |  | 0.51 | 4.29 | Very High |
| Assessment to Inform |  | 0.50 | 4.26 | Very High |
| Assessment for Learning |  | 0.48 | 4.40 | Very High |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment Collaborations | **103** | **0.39** | **4.13** | **High** |
| Dialogue |  | 0.41 | 4.18 | High |
| Decision - Making |  | 0.48 | 4.15 | High |
| Actions |  | 0.49 | 4.06 | High |
| Evaluations |  | 0.46 | 4.14 | High |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment Autonomy | **103** | **0.43** | **4.16** | **High** |
| General Autonomy |  | 0.48 | 4.20 | Very High |
| Curriculum Autonomy |  | 0.47 | 4.12 | High |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Language Assessment Literacy | **103** | **0.47** | **4.07** | **High** |
| Knowledge |  | 0.46 | 4.08 | High |
| Skills |  | 0.51 | 4.06 | High |

Table 1 shows that the assessment practices variable obtained a mean of 4.32 (SD = 0.38), which is very high. It indicates that language teachers' self-perceived assessment practices were excellent. A low Standard Deviation (SD) suggests that the respondents gave similar answers or that the responses were close to the mean, with a high level of consensus among respondents concerning their assessment practices.

The results show that language teachers excel in their assessment practices. Such results affirm the assertion of Dunn and Thompson (2023), which explains that if language teachers practice valid and effective assessment practices, give corrective instruction, and allow students to retake assessments, the quality of teaching and students' learning is positively impacted. Similarly, the study's results echo Nishizuka's (2020) findings, showing how strong language assessment practices of teachers can improve learning and promote a learner-centered environment.

Furthermore, the assessment collaboration variable resulted in an overall mean of 4.13 (SD = 0.39), which is high. It denotes that language teachers perceived their assessment collaborations as very good. The relatively low SD suggests a consistent perception among respondents.

The data on assessment collaborations show teachers engaging in high levels of assessment collaboration. This discovery aligns with the collaborative assessment framework identified by Sims et al. (2021), where professional dialogue or collaboration enhances the meaning of language assessment literacy by stimulating the construction of principles that contribute to a common understanding among practitioners. They also explained that quality discourse allows teachers to share perceptions, see whether they match, and look at the fidelity with which assessment is used. Similarly, Schaffalitzky (2024) emphasized the significance of professional cooperation, enabling teachers to agree on shared  expectations about the standard of assessment and for teachers to plan and provide engaging learning experiences. Furthermore, Correia and Harriston (2020) suggested that the meanings and experiences of the teacher and the student can be connected through dialogue in formative assessment, yielding more effective learning that comes from formative assessment.

Moreover, the assessment autonomy obtained a mean of 4.16 (SD = 0.43), which is described as high. This level indicates that language teachers' self-perceived assessment autonomy was excellent. The SD shows moderately consistent responses across participants.

Moving on, the results on assessment autonomy of language teachers suggest that teachers perceive themselves to have a good level of assessment autonomy. This discovery affirms the contention of Guo and Wang (2021) that teachers feel confident in making independent decisions in their teaching and assessment practices, including the varying designs and implementing the assessment practices. This finding was also in line with the theory of teacher autonomy in assessment proposed by Xu et al. (2024), which emphasized the empowerment of teachers' content in making the right decisions in performance assessment, aligning with the needs of their students and their instructional context. In addition, as explained by Salokangas et al. (2020), the high assessment autonomy is linked to the trust their schools have given them to apply professional judgment in their modes of assessment without so much external control.

Finally, the language assessment literacy, as shown in Table 1, obtained a mean of 4.07 (SD = 0.47), which is described as high. This level means language teachers' self-perceived language assessment literacy is very good. The SD shows a moderate range of variability in responses.

Language Assessment Literacy (LAL), as revealed by the results on language assessment literacy, shows that teachers are highly skilled in Language Assessment Literacy (LAL). This finding resonates with that of Kusmawan (2023), who reported that language teachers with good basic assessment knowledge can design valid, reliable, and fair assessments. In addition, teachers with good language assessment knowledge make sound judgments about suitable and effective assessment instruments for students' performance measurement (Byrd & Alexander, 2020).

**3.2 Correlation Analysis**

Table 2 is a correlational table. It contains the independent variables, namely assessment practices, collaborations, and autonomy, and the dependent variable, specifically language assessment literacy (LAL). It also shows the r-value and p-value, the decision of the null hypotheses, and the corresponding interpretation.

**Table 2. Test of Significant Relationship**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Language Assessment Literacy |
| $$r-Value$$ | $$p-Value$$ | **Decision on** $Ho$ | **Interpretation** |
| Assessment Practices | .506 | .000 | Reject | Significant |
| Assessment Collaborations | .540 | .000 | Reject | Significant |
| Assessment Autonomy | .535 | .000 | Reject | Significant |

Specifically, the table shows that the correlation between assessment practices and LAL obtained a p-value of 0.000, less than the 0.05 degree of confidence. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, which indicates that the correlation between assessment practices and LAL is significant. Similarly, the correlation between the two variables resulted in an r-value of 0.506, indicating a moderately high and positive

 correlation.

In addition, the correlation analysis between assessment collaborations and LAL obtained a p-value of 0.000, less than the 0.05 confidence level. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This decision implies that the relationship between assessment collaborations and LAL is statistically significant. Similarly, the computed r-value of 0.540 indicates a moderately high positive correlation between the two variables.

In addition, the correlation between assessment autonomy and LAL showed a p-value of 0.000, less than the 0.05 degree of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, which indicates that the correlation between assessment autonomy and LAL is significant. Likewise, the correlation between the two obtained an r-value of 0.535, indicating that these two variables are moderately highly positive correlated.

The correlational test results indicate a significant positive relationship between assessment practices, collaborations, and autonomy with language assessment literacy (LAL). Of the independent variables, assessment collaboration had the highest correlation; this corresponds to Pastore’s (2023) claim that teachers who participate in collaborative discussions, collective decision-making, and collaborative assessment processes are relatively assessment literate. This result is consistent with the recent study by Iraola et al. (2024), which points to in-depth professional dialogue enabling better understanding and implementation of assessment principles. They further pointed out that collaborative practices allow teachers to share ideas; these collaborative practices can result in the refinement of assessment methods and better and more consistent ways of evaluating a student more validly.

Furthermore, the result, which posits that assessment practices, collaborations, and autonomy are correlated to language assessment literacy, aligns with Professional Capital Theory, which emphasizes the dynamic relationship between human, social, and decisional capital in influencing teachers' language assessment literacy (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). The direct relationship between assessment collaboration and LAL emphasizes how valuable social interaction, such as professional networks, shared knowledge, and mentoring, enhances teachers' assessment skills (Wu & Chen, 2023). Also, language assessment literacy, as correlated to assessment autonomy, represents decisional capital, where teachers feel better able to make choices about assessments, adding to their professional capital as effective teachers. These results supported Xu and Brown (2016), who stated that language assessment literate teachers can design and administer practical testing activities. Similarly, the importance of assessment practices in developing language assessment literacy supports the concept of human capital, wherein teachers engage in various assessment practices, mining opportunities to continuously develop skills and knowledge (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2022).

**3.3 Regression Analysis**

Table 3 is a regression table. It includes the predictor variables: assessment practices, assessment collaborations, and assessment autonomy, as well as the criterion variable, language assessment literacy (LAL). The table also displays standardized coefficients (Beta), t-values, and p-values (Sig.), the decision on the null hypotheses, and their corresponding interpretation.

**Table 3. Regression Table**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Language Assessment Literacy |
|  | **Standardized Coefficients** |  |  |
| Independent Variables | **Beta** | **t** | **Sig.** | **Decision on H0** | **Interpretation** |
| (Constant) | .708 | 1.527 | .130 |  |  |
| Assessment Practices  | .217 | 2.008 | .047 | Reject | Significant |
| Assessment Collaborations | .237 | 1.885 | .062 | Failed to Reject | Not Significant |
| Assessment Autonomy | .227 | 1.833 | .070 | Failed to Reject | Not Significant |

$R$=.599; $R^{2}$=.359$; F-value $= 18.495$;$  $p-value $=.000

Table 3 shows that the assessment practices variable obtained a beta coefficient 0.217. It indicates that the assessment practices of language teachers have a 21.7% degree of influence on language assessment literacy. Such degree of influence is significant, as indicated by the p-value of 0.047, which is less than the 0.05 degree of significance. It further indicates that the 21.7% degree of influence of assessment practices on language assessment literacy is significant. This implies that for every 0.217 increase in assessment practices, there is a corresponding unit increase in language assessment literacy.

On the other hand, the assessment collaborations obtained a beta coefficient of 0.237. This denotes that they have a 23.7% degree of influence on language assessment literacy. It also resulted in a p-value of 0.62, greater than the 0.05 alpha. Therefore, it failed to reject the null hypothesis. This signifies that the 23.7% degree of influence of assessment collaborations on language assessment literacy is insignificant. This implies that for every 0.237 increase in assessment practices, there is a corresponding unit increase in language assessment literacy.

Likewise, assessment autonomy attained a beta coefficient of 0.227. It insinuates that assessment autonomy has a 22.7% degree of influence on language assessment literacy. Furthermore, the p-value is 0.070, greater than 0.05 degrees of confidence. Hence, it failed to reject the null hypothesis. It purports that 22.7% of the degree of influence of assessment autonomy on language assessment literacy is insignificant. This implies that for every 0.227 increase in assessment practices, there is a corresponding unit increase in language assessment literacy.

Nonetheless, the combined predictive variables obtained an r-squared value of 0.359, meaning they had a 35.9% combined degree of influence on language assessment literacy. Also, since the p-value of 0.000 was obtained, which is less than 0.05 degrees of confidence, it indicates that their combined influence is significant. Finally, based on the statistical result of the regression, the regression formula for language assessment literacy is LAL= 0.217 AP + 0.237 AC + 0.227 AA + 0.708.

As provided by the test of significant influence, only one out of the three independent variables significantly influences language assessment literacy, as evidenced by its p-value. The results showed that assessment practices significantly influence language assessment literacy. Such a finding agrees with Ismail et al. (2022), arguing that when teachers are allowed to participate in a range of assessments—formative, summative, and diagnostic—they can learn more about the key principles of assessment, thereby making more informed choices regarding assessments. The fact that the impact of assessment practices is statistically significant could suggest that teachers' practice of using assessments in their teaching is an important part of their language assessment literacy, which could be consistent with (Tajeddin et al., 2022), who argued that teaching teachers effective assessment practices will increase their knowledge and help them in making informed decisions. Similarly, Yan and Pastore (2022) developed the Teacher Formative Assessment Literacy Scale (TFALS) to evaluate teachers' competencies in formative assessment and highlight the importance of educators understanding various assessment types to promote student learning better.

4. Conclusion

The study concludes that assessment practices significantly influence language assessment literacy (LAL). However, assessment collaborations and autonomy have an insignificant influence on LAL. Nonetheless, the combined influence of these three predictors on LAL is significant. Therefore, the professional capital theory, which states that professional capital results from the dynamic interaction among three key components: human capital, social capital, and decisional capital, was partially affirmed.

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