

Poster 2: Results From an Initial Practicality Survey Designed to Inform Development of Online Reading Comprehension Assessments

W. Ian O'Byrne, University of Connecticut
and Sally Drew, University of Connecticut

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Developing and Evaluating Three Formats for Assessing Online Reading Comprehension

Objectives. This descriptive poster presentation will present: (1) the set of principles that informed construction of items included in this practicality survey; (2) the results obtained from administrators and school leaders on the practicality of online reading comprehension assessments in their schools; and (3) a discussion of the survey's effectiveness with respect to informing the development of our assessment measures.

Perspectives. There is a history of resistance to educational innovation with technology (Cuban, Kirkpatrick, & Peck, 2001). Assessments of online reading comprehension will not be used and adopted by unless they are found to be practical by school systems. To address these concerns, the ORCA project has paid particular attention to issues of practicality when developing assessments. This poster presents survey data about how school leaders evaluate issues of practicality when considering an assessment of online reading comprehension. We designed and validated survey items based on previous instruments of practicality (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2008; Irving, 2001; Swiezbern, Anderson, Spicuzza, Walz, & Thurlow, 1999; Shepard, 1977, Stufflebaum, 1974). The results from the practicality survey have been integrated into in our research plan, especially in relation to issues such as the amount of time schools would devote to online reading comprehension assessment, the types of information that would be most valuable to school leaders and teachers, and the types of technology available for an administration.

Methods and Data Sources. The final instrument was administered to a set of diverse and highly knowledgeable school leaders from New England, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands who serve on the Governing Board of the Regional Educational Lab – Northeast and Islands (REL-NEI). The 16 individuals surveyed represent the following agencies: State Commissioners, superintendents of schools, directors of educational consortiums, and educational consultants. The participants represent educational bodies that represent elementary, secondary and higher educational organizations.

Results and Significance. Results indicate that 100% of respondents believe that the assessment of online reading comprehension is important enough to assess regularly in schools. All participants also wanted information on specific areas of online reading comprehension, in addition to an overall level of performance for each student. 82% of respondents indicated that administration time was not an important element in consideration of the practicality of the instrument. Only 50% of respondents identified the ease of administration to be an important element when considering the practicality of an assessment. Complete data from this initial survey will be presented. They are being used to inform the development and implementation of our assessment instruments. The poster will provide participants with the final practicality instrument and an item response summary chart that summarizes scores and frequencies. The

survey provides an example of how the needs of school leaders can be included in the design and development of assessments of online reading comprehension.

References

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