

Assessing ELT Pre-Service Teachers via Web 2.0 Tools: Perceptions toward Traditional, Online and Alternative Assessment

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of the ELT pre-service teachers toward the traditional, alternative, and online assessment methods and examine whether the participants' attitudes change toward the types of assessment after the tasks via Web 2.0 tools are implemented. In the light of these aims, the study was conducted with 40 second grade ELT pre-service teachers at a state university in the fall semester of 2013-2014 academic year. The study was conducted in a fourteen week period in which 6 different tasks with 7 different Web 2.0 tools were implemented. The data for this study were collected through pre-survey before the implementation, reflection papers during the implementation, and post-survey and semi structured in-depth interviews after the implementation of the tasks. The findings of the study indicated that the perceptions of the participants toward the alternative assessment via web 2.0 tools were positive before the tasks were implemented and it got more positive after the task implementation process. In general, the participants preferred alternative assessment to online or traditional assessment since they believed alternative assessment is motivating, enhances learning, provides continuous assessment of student progress, increases interaction, gives more detailed and practical feedback, and improves critical thinking skills. The results of both qualitative and quantitative data supported each other.

Keywords: ELT pre-service teachers, alternative assessment, Web 2.0 tools

INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of technology in people's everyday life led the educators to integrate technology into education for instructional and assessment purposes. For an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching method to be successful, it needs to be learner centered, motivate and encourage the students, address the variety of students and assess all the skills of the language in balance, in which the traditional assessment methods cannot succeed. As a result of the growing increase in the dissatisfaction of the traditional assessment methods, alternative assessment methods such as portfolios, self- and peer-assessment, projects are seen as effective in accomplishing the goals of language teaching that the traditional assessment cannot. In the last few decades, language teacher education programs have started to search for a language teaching theory which is more practical based on observations, practice teaching, and curriculum and materials development to fit themselves into the appropriate place in the digital age (Crandall, 2000). However, the lack of the teacher training especially in technology integration presents the portrayal of inexperienced and unqualified teachers who do not know how to make use of technology to improve the language development of their students.

Even though the teacher education programs are facing the challenges of benefiting from web 2.0 tools, which are web applications on the internet, to enhance language learning, the number of the web 2.0 tools and the scope of its use in the world is expanding rapidly, which makes it harder for the teachers to resist its wider use in their own classes. Albion (2008) indicated that it is significant for the teacher educators to realize the educational potential of the web 2.0 and they need to benefit from it to enhance language learning and prepare their graduates so that they can apply web 2.0 in their future careers. Seeing that in the literature the studies are rare on alternative assessment related to the performance of the students but just includes the studies reflecting the perceptions of teachers or students and even less common in Turkey, the present study was seen as a necessity to enlighten what the pre-service teachers think about the integration of web 2.0 tools to their classes for the purpose of alternative assessment after they practiced the tasks via web 2.0 tools in a course that they were offered. Therefore, this study investigates the perceptions of the ELT pre-service teachers toward traditional, alternative and online assessment. In addition, this study examines how much the ELT pre-service teachers' attitudes change toward traditional, alternative and online assessments after being assessed via Web 2.0 tools.

For this reason, in this study, answers to the following questions are explored:

1. What are the perceptions of the ELT pre-service teachers toward the types of assessment: traditional, alternative and online?
2. To what extent do the ELT pre-service teachers' attitudes change toward traditional, alternative and online assessments after being assessed via Web 2.0 tools?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

With the rapid expansion of instructional technology in education, the roles of the 21st century teachers and students have differed from those of the past in having the technological literacy. For this reason, the teachers are supposed to adapt a curriculum which provides real-world technology-rich experiences and authentic assessment (Warner, Steffen, & Cope 2011). To do this, the central role of the teacher needs to be equipped with related knowledge and skills to pursue its place in today's technologically advanced language classrooms. Therefore, the more knowledgeable teachers are in the educational technology, the better they can address the challenges of the gradual increase in student knowledge and skills. In the employment process, among the conditions of the job postings, the experience with educational technology has already taken its place. However, Kessler (2006) stated that the graduates of the formal language teacher education programs do not seem like having gained the necessary knowledge and skills related to instructional technology since these programs disregarded to include the instructional technology courses to their curriculums. Crandall (2000) also mentioned that language teacher education programs have not been successful in guiding the teachers to adapt the requirements of the modern classroom environment. Since most of today's pre-service teachers are the regular users of the network-based technology and accustomed to be in a mass media-dependent environment, the goal of the teacher education programs should be to teach pre-service teachers how to use technology in their classes for teaching and assessment purposes.

So far almost every educated person was assessed by the traditional methods in his/her life a few times. As mentioned by many researchers repetitively, Balliro (1993) also indicated the dissatisfaction with the traditional assessment methods by stating that the traditional assessment methods remain incapable of sufficiently representing the learner strengths and true progress. Since the traditional assessment methods do not fit well with the current English language learning practices, searching for the alternative ways of assessing the students were imperative. With the need to support student learning by including students' voices and giving them the opportunity to share the decision making process in their own learning and assessment, the pursuit of alternative assessment methods arose. Barootchi and Keshavarz (2002) suggested that alternative assessment known also as nontraditional assessment is used like an umbrella term for the types of assessment except for anything other than standardized, traditional tests. Highlighting that the alternative assessment methods came out as a contrast to the traditional assessment methods, what Bailey (1998) mentioned is that the traditional assessment methods are one-shot, indirect and inauthentic while alternative assessment methods are continuous, longitudinal, direct and authentic assessments. Unlike the traditional assessment methods which dictated the students the existence of one right answer, the alternative methods encourage the students to explore the possibilities by drawing on their own inferences. The instructors could gather information on their students' abilities, talents, interests, potentials since alternative methods are capable of reflecting students' performance in educational settings (Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002). Among the alternative assessment procedures, checklists of student behaviors or products, journals, reading logs, videos of role plays, audiotapes of discussions, self-evaluation questionnaires, work samples, and teacher observations or anecdotal records take place. The constant changes from the traditional assessment toward alternative assessment were summarized by Herman et al. (1992) as follows:

- From behavioral to cognitive views of learning and assessment
- From paper-pencil to authentic assessment
- Portfolios: from single occasion assessment to samples over time
- From single attribute to multi-dimensional assessments
- From near exclusive emphasis on individual assessment to group assessment (p.13)

To fulfill the requirements of these procedures and gain principal skills like critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration indispensable for all types of learners, especially for language learners could be developed with the Web 2.0 practices since students are given the opportunity for active participation and multi-way communication through the authentic and meaningful materials provided by the Web 2.0 technologies. Since learning a second language requires the development of the all four skills, namely listening, reading, speaking and writing, designing assessments with the integration of technology can fulfill what the traditional assessments cannot by motivating the learners and supporting their learning with the sources reached by means of the Web 2.0 tools.

The new generation of web-based technologies, Web 2.0 was first coined as an invented term in 2005 and described by Tim O'Reilly (2007) as "a set of principles and practices that tie together a veritable solar system of sites that demonstrate some or all of those principles, at a varying distance from that core" (p.18-19). With the Web 2.0 tools, learning can be enhanced since each piece of information on the Web is connected to one another via hyperlinks, which helps students to learn something new as they keep digging (Solomon and Schrum, 2007). The instructors can even invite experts from far end of the world to their classes as a guest speaker and these experts could present a topic, attend a class discussion or just answer the questions through web conferencing

and online chat options. The need of reaching the professional sources to enhance learning and as its natural outcome to adapt online assessment trends, especially the language teachers should be guided on how to implement online assessment methods with authentic, communicative, multicultural and pedagogically appropriate materials. Therefore, as the integration of the Web 2.0 practices into education for instructional and assessment purposes has a recent history, the specific guidelines and detailed and clear pedagogical strategies are needed. Ching and Hsu (2011) also argued that the Web 2.0 practices should be purposefully designed for instruction and assessment; otherwise, the practices with Web 2.0 technologies would not fulfill their job. Since today's instructors are 'digital immigrants' and the students 'digital natives' when mentioned with Prensky (2001)'s words, the instructors had better learn how to adapt their classes what technology offers, to grab the attention of the students and make up for the generation gap. Realizing the urgent need of keeping up with the skills of the 21st century students, Gray et al. (2012) accepted the fact that there is still a lot to do before feeling confident in adapting a reliable, fair engaging and substantial assessment with the use of Web 2.0. If the research conducted so far related to the integration of Web 2.0 tools for the assessment purposes in ELT is exemplified, Cephe and Balçıklanlı (2012), in their study exploring the beliefs of the student teachers from an ELT program in Turkey, found out that web 2.0 technologies facilitate interaction and collaboration, provide chances for learning other than class hours considering that especially the language learners spend their time mostly on online language learning tasks, boost motivation, participation and student involvement in the learning process, raise the digital literacy awareness and help student teachers with their future career by expanding their professional repertoire. This study was found necessary since in the literature, even though the perceptions of the pre-service teachers on the technology integration were investigated; their perceptions when they practiced these technologies were not reflected. In another study based on the in-service teachers' practice of the web technologies, Oliver (2007) stated that the participants mentioned the practice with web technologies were useful in a way that they make students spend their time learning on the Internet, discover numerous resources while searching the topic of the assignment, connect ideas, and organize sources and strategies. Moreover, Gray et al. (2012) explored the Australian academics' assessment of students' web 2.0 activities. The results suggested that other than a few challenges and risks, the academics generally found the assessment with web 2.0 tools necessary and valuable. In another study conducted by Göktürk-Sağlam and Sert (2012), perceptions of the ELT instructors toward the use of technology in language teaching were investigated. According to the results, the participants were in favor of technology in language learning environment. The participants were inclined to consider the gap between 'the digital natives' the students and the 'digital immigrants' the teachers themselves; therefore, they approved the integration of technology as it is hard to ignore the fact that students spend most of their time outside the class on the Internet. The disadvantages of technology integration indicated by the participants were mostly related to the technical difficulties and inaccessibility of technology. Kumar and Vigil (2010); on the other hand, examined pre-service teachers' perspectives on the use of web 2.0 technologies in teacher education courses. This study is crucial in providing insight on how to prepare the pre-service teachers for the digital age where the students are all digital natives since it helps understanding the perspectives, needs and practices of pre-service teachers better. The results suggested that the participants believed these technologies can be valuable in their own courses and their professional career. In addition, Ishtaiwa and Dukmak (2013)'s study revealed that ELT pre-service teachers expressed that web 2.0 tools enhanced learning after they experienced the use of blog and wiki in the course they took. They believed web 2.0 tools help them to learn in collaboration, interact with each other, share what they know and have done together with developing reflective and critical thinking skills.

The studies cited above on the integration of Web 2.0 technologies into the classrooms mostly focus on revealing the perspectives of either the students or the pre-service teachers. Even though finding out the perspectives of the pre-service teachers and students are significant, it is important to discover the opinions after practicing the web 2.0 technologies in the classroom with participants and observing their reactions and finding out their ideas afterwards since the literature misses the relevant research conducted with real classroom practice. Hence, the present study investigates the perceptions of the participants by comparing their opinions before and after the implementation of tasks through web 2.0 tools.

METHODOLOGY

Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at the English Language Teaching (ELT) department of Istanbul University because of its convenience for the researcher. The data for this study was obtained from the undergraduate students who take the must course "ELT Methods I" offered during the first semester of the second year. From the 115 students who were taking the course "ELT Methods I" in the fall semester of 2013-2014 academic year, the data collected from 40 students were used for this study since these 40 students have fulfilled almost all the requirements of the study. While the 35 of the students have done all the requirements, 5 of them completed all five tasks except one task. The participants were numbered from 1 to 40 (e.g. P1 for Participant 1). The reason

for including only the students who have attempted almost all the requirements is that the post-survey used for this study were asking for comparison among the tasks after they had been implemented in the course “ELT Methods I” and if the students did not do all of the tasks, they wouldn’t be in a position to compare the tasks with one another. Therefore, the researcher needed to exclude the 75 students from the study who did not attempt more than four of the tasks.

Data Collection Instruments

For the present study, four data collection instruments were used: a pre-survey, reflection papers, a post-survey, and a semi-structured in-depth interview. The pre-survey designed for revealing the attitudes of the participants toward assessment and technology was conducted at the beginning of the term before the researcher started to assign the tasks. The reflection papers were collected from the participants right after each task. The post survey was implemented after the participants had submitted all the tasks. The in-depth interviews were conducted one week after the post-survey was conducted which was the end of the term.

Data Collection Procedures

The study was conducted in the course “ELT Methods I” which is offered during the first term of the second year of the ELT Department. After the pre-survey was given at the beginning of the term to the participants, 6 different tasks via 7 different web 2.0 tools designed for the study were implemented in the 14 week period of the term. Before the tasks were implemented, the pre-service teachers taking the course “ELT Methods I” were clearly informed that the data gathered from the tasks would be used for the study that the researcher conducted. Additively, the researcher stated that although not completing the tasks and reflection papers would impact their overall grade, the participants neither have to fill in the pre- and post-survey nor participate in the interviews. By this way, the students were given chance to fulfill their responsibilities just for the course but not participate in the study. The number of the tasks was arranged considering the weeks that the course instructor is planning to integrate a task.

After the data was collected through pre-survey, the researcher started to assign the tasks. Among the materials designed for each task, a guideline, rubric, sample task, reflection paper has been introduced in class and uploaded to “Edmodo” after the class hour (see sample student copy of a task with a Web 2.0 tool “Glogster” in Appendix A and see a sample rubric in Appendix B). All the materials used for the tasks and the tasks themselves were designed by the researcher. Edmodo which is an educational platform, was used for uploading and downloading task materials and contacting the course instructor or the other pre-service teachers. The tasks and the web 2.0 tools used in each task were displayed in the table below:

Table 1: The tasks and the web 2.0 tools used in each task

Task	Web 2.0 tool
Task 1 – Answering the reflective question by recording your voice for the avatar you designed	Voki
Task 2 – Preparing a quiz	Testmoz
Task 3 – Preparing a mindmap	Mindomo
Task 4 – Designing a classroom activity	Facebook
Task 5 – Designing a poster	Glogster
Task 6 – Preparing a presentation and video	Prezi & Screencast-O-Matic

The pre-service teachers were clearly stated what was expected of them in each task, how they would be assessed, what attainments they would have at the end of each task. Right after each task, the participants were supposed to submit a reflection paper which is one of the data collection instruments designed for the present study. When the task implementation process was over, the participants were given the post-surveys. As the last data collection instrument, the semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the participants who volunteered. In brief, the data for this study were collected through pre-survey before the implementation, reflection papers during the implementation, and post-survey and semi structured in-depth interviews after the implementation of the tasks.

Data Analysis Methods

In this study both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered and analyzed; therefore, the results of a mixed method research is presented. The qualitative data was collected via open-ended questions in the pre- and post-surveys, reflection papers and semi structured in-depth interviews. To analyze the qualitative data, a qualitative data analysis method, constant comparative method was used. The responses of the participants to the open-ended questions in the pre-surveys, post-surveys and reflection papers were translated into English and categorized. The data collected via the interviews were first transcribed, translated into English and categorized.

The quantitative data collected from the pre-surveys, post-surveys and reflection papers were statistically analyzed using the program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20.0. The analysis of the data gathered from the reflection papers were made by running an ANOVA test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study revealed that almost all the participants (between 82,5% and 92,5%) had never used the web 2.0 tools, which were planned to be used for the tasks of the study, to get grades in a course. Most of the participants (87,50%) did not take any courses in instructional technology before and only 10% of the participants took part in online assessment before. This shows that most of the participants were neither experienced in instructional technology nor being assessed online.

According to the results obtained from the pre-survey, even though almost all the participants are not experienced in instructional technology or familiar with online assessment, the general attitude of the participants toward the integration of technology into education is positive with the mean of 3,103. The majority of the participants stated that the use of technology in their courses motivates them (n=32); therefore, technology should be integrated to their lessons more (n=38). Except for only one participant, all the participants (n=39) believe that they learn better if they can practice what they have learned in class with the help of multimedia. Additively, most of the participants (n=32) believe that sharing materials online is fun, they (n=36) prefer seeing more examples of the use of technology in their English classes, and the use of technology improves their success (n=36). Most importantly, since the participants are ELT students, they (n=37) stated that they would like to use technology to teach English when they become full-time English teachers.

In the pre-survey, when the participants were asked whether they had written a reflection paper before which was planned to be used to collect data for the present study as part of the alternative assessment of the participants, almost half of the participants indicated that they had written reflection papers before. In the post-survey, a sub-section was spared to reveal the participants' perceptions toward the reflection papers after they wrote reflection papers for each task during the data collection process. The findings indicated that most of the participants (n=32) believed in the effectiveness of the reflection papers by stating that reflection paper is a nice way of having their voice heard by the instructors when they need, helped them to improve their critical thinking skills, and made them realize what they had done so far. However, the number of the participants (n=17) who did not believe in the usefulness of the reflection papers is high enough to take into consideration. Therefore, the number of the participants who supported the use of reflection papers in their courses outnumber that of the participants who did not want the reflection papers to be used in their other courses; it is possible to deduce that most of the participants reflected a positive attitude toward the use of reflection papers for educational purposes as the mean of general attitude, 2,972 indicates. Since the reflection papers are part of the alternative assessment, it is understood that the participants support the use of alternative ways of assessment by their instructors.

In pre-survey, the participants were asked to state their perceptions toward technology in education before they were assigned to the tasks. In almost all the questions, the participants showed a highly positive attitude toward the use of technology in education with the mean of general attitude, 3,103. The majority of the participants stated that the use of technology in their courses motivates them (n=32); therefore, technology should be integrated to their lessons more (n=38). Except for only one participant, all the participants (n=39) believe that they learn better if they can practice what they have learned in class with the help of multimedia. Additively, most of the participants (n=32) believe that sharing materials online is fun, they (n=36) prefer seeing more examples of the use of technology in their English classes, and the use of technology improves their success (n=36). Most importantly, since the participants are ELT students, they (n=37) stated that they would like to use technology to teach English when they become full-time English teachers. The results indicate that the idea of involving technology in education was favored by the participants before the tasks with Web 2.0 tools were implemented. The same part asking for the perceptions of the participants toward technology in education was included in the post-survey as well to compare whether any attitude differences occur after the tasks with web 2.0 tools were implemented. The analysis of the participants' responses showed that the mean of the general attitude is 3,150 which is a bit higher than that of the pre-survey. Specifically, the analysis of one of the items show that the mean value of the post-survey (m=2,950) was higher than the pre-survey (m=2,675), which means the participants now use the Web 2.0 tools (wikis, blogs, social networking sites etc.) more actively in their daily activities after the task implementation process. Overall, it is seen that even if in both of the surveys the participants had a positive attitude toward technology, in the post-survey the participants had a more positive attitude toward the use of technology after the task implementation.

In both pre- and post-survey, a section was designed to reveal the participants' attitudes toward the assessment types. Below, the results of the analysis were summarized under separate headlines according to each assessment type:

Traditional assessment:

The analysis shows that in pre-survey the mean value was 2,223 while in post-survey the mean was 2,123, which clarifies that the participants had a negative attitude toward the use of traditional assessment in both pre- and post-surveys. In post survey, since the mean value is lower than that of pre-survey, it can be said that in post-survey, the participants' attitude got more negative after the tasks were implemented. Therefore, according to the items in the surveys, it can be said that the participants feel under pressure when they have to take the midterms and the finals in class, they believe traditional assessment methods cannot assess practical skills or application of knowledge, the traditional assessment methods are not enough to assess team or collaborative learning, and the traditional assessment methods do not pay attention to the individual needs and interests of the students.

Alternative assessment:

The participants' responses indicate that the general mean was 3,083 in the pre-survey while it was 3,212 in the post-survey. This makes it clear that the participants took a positive attitude toward the use of alternative assessment in both pre- and post-surveys. Considering the items in the surveys, the participants believe alternative assessment methods helped them to become a more autonomous learner after the tasks were implemented, they think self-assessment through reflecting on their work and peer-assessment is useful in their courses, they prefer to be assessed by a series of tasks throughout the semester instead of being assessed by just a midterm and a final, they believe they are more motivated by the alternative assessment methods, they support the idea that alternative assessment methods provide authentic and continuous assessment of students' progress, they think in alternative assessment methods students get more detailed and practical feedback compared to traditional assessment methods, they agree that alternative assessment methods provide students the opportunity to interact with their teachers and classmates during the teaching/learning process and they indicate that alternative assessment methods improve their critical thinking skills more than traditional assessment methods. Since the mean value of the post-survey came out higher than the pre-survey, it can be said the participants support the idea more than they supported in the pre-survey that alternative assessment methods helped them to improve themselves more than traditional assessment methods did. However, there is still a point which needs to be highlighted that among the items in the surveys, the item which has the highest mean reveals that the participants believed both traditional and alternative assessment methods should be used in combination in a course (mean in pre-survey: 3,425 and in post survey: 3,375), which shows us that even though the participants are criticizing the traditional assessment methods in some negative aspects, the participants think that using both traditional and assessment methods together would better assess a students' performance since both methods have their own strengths and weaknesses.

Online assessment:

The analysis reveals that the general mean of pre-survey is 2,762 while the general mean of the post-survey is 2,983, which shows that the participants had a positive attitude toward the use of online assessment in both pre- and post-surveys. Nevertheless, since the general mean of post-survey is higher than the pre-survey, it can be said that after the task implementation, the participants showed a more positive attitude toward the use online assessment methods. Still, one of the items to which the participants' attitude differs in pre-and post-survey reveal that while the participants did not take a positive attitude toward being assessed by the use of technology instead of paper-based tests in the pre-survey, they supported being assessed via technology in the post-survey. Comparing the mean values, it is also possible to say that in post-survey the mean value is higher than that of pre-survey, which means in post-survey, the participants prefer to receive private online feedback instead of getting it in front of their classmates much more than they did in the pre-survey. Also, the participants supported the statement in the post-survey that online assessment methods can assess specific skills in English through computer-based testing better than other assessment methods even though they did not believe in this idea in the pre-survey. In addition, the participants agreed much more than they did in the pre-survey that it is better to be assessed online because the teachers can appeal to different types of learners. The participants also supported the statement in both pre- and post-surveys that online assessment is helpful because teachers and learners do not have to be in the same physical place. Especially in the post-survey, the participants showed a highly positive attitude toward the statements that online assessment is more suitable to assess English language and teaching skills and online assessment can provide authentic tools that other assessment methods cannot provide in English methodology courses. Most importantly, the participants agreed to the item that they would like to use online assessment methods in their English courses when they graduate and become a teacher.

In both pre- and post-surveys, an open ended question ‘Which one of the following assessments do you prefer as a student in your methodology courses? Why?’ was asked. To give an answer to this open-ended question, the participants needed to choose the assessment method they prefer among the given three types of assessment methods presented in figure 1 below. Then, they explained their reasons for their choice. The comparison of the participants’ answers to this open ended question before and after the task implementation process was made.

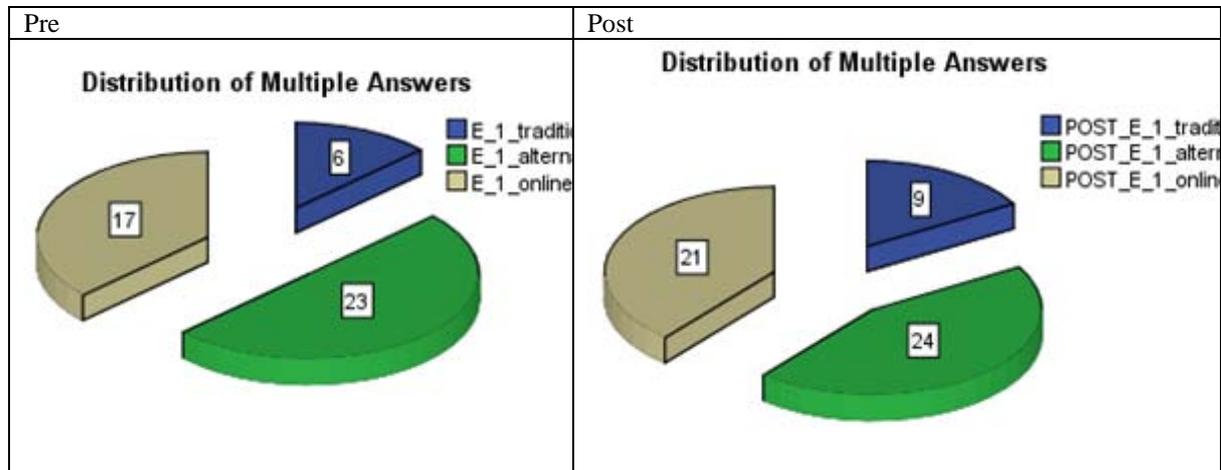


Figure 1: Comparison of participants’ assessment type choice in pre- and post-survey

The analysis shows that since there are 40 participants in the present study, it is understood that some of the participants made more than one choice in both of the surveys. As a result, it can be said that the responses of the participants did not present much difference after the task implementation process. Still, most of the people preferred to be assessed by the alternative assessment methods in both pre- and post-surveys while the number of people supporting the traditional assessment methods is the lowest in the post-survey just like it was in the pre-survey. Therefore, the reason why the comparison in this section was made is to see how many people there are who support the use of more than one assessment type among all the responses and what choices they made. In the end, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the four participants who fulfilled all the requirements of the data collection process including the pre-survey, tasks, reflection papers and post-survey. The interview was composed of 5 main categories and in one of them the participants were asked questions which requires the participants to compare traditional and online assessment methods. The responses of the participants show that they believe they cannot reflect their performance very well in the traditional exams since they feel stressed. Therefore, they get low grades from the exams even if they know the answers of the questions. However, while doing the online tasks, they feel comfortable so they can express themselves better or they can go back and fix their mistakes before they submit their tasks to the instructor. That’s why, the participants believed online assessment is fairer. The participants also added that integrating technology increased the quality of the lessons, online assessment provided opportunities to both the students and the teachers, Edmodo and the reflection papers improved the communication between the teachers and students. The representative responses of the participants are given below:

Thanks to the tasks, we could express our knowledge without being under the pressure of the time. In addition, knowing these tasks is like an investment for the future since we are going to be teachers. As students, we had chance to be assessed fairly, we could make up for a mistake. The tasks also provided us a more flexible and comfortable environment (P4, 07/01/2014).

Since we had the chance to see our classmates’ tasks by just clicking on their tasks’ links, we can compare theirs with our own tasks and we can improve our task. By this way, we can learn from each other and improve ourselves (P3, 30/12/2013).

Using a social platform for our own class is definitely necessary since it gives us chance to follow the course even if we were absent during the class hours. We can see the materials and learn our assignments. It is an advantage to be able to submit the assignment even if you did not attend the lesson. Also, it is sometimes difficult to find the teacher in his/her office. Instead, we can communicate with our teacher via Edmodo much faster. Besides, when a student asks a question, everybody can see the teacher’ answer (P4, 07/01/2014).

Reflection papers were helpful for both the teachers and the students. They helped us to express our ideas about the tasks and realize the tasks' positive and negative sides which will be helpful for us in the future. In addition, you had ideas on how to fix the tasks and improve them since you learned how we felt about the tasks (P2, 31/12/2013).

The results of the pre-survey reveal that almost all the participants did not benefit from the web 2.0 tools that were used in the present study to get grades in a course before. Let alone these web 2.0 tools, one out of ten students took part in the online assessment before the present study which is clearly very low. Considering this background of the students in relation to assessment via technology, naturally they were not aware of the merits and demerits of the online assessment. However, they were obviously aware of the disadvantages of the traditional assessment since they had been tested by the traditional methods for years. Related to the traditional methods, in the pre-survey, the participants complained about feeling under pressure during the midterm and final weeks. In addition, they indicated that the traditional assessment methods do not allow students to present their real performance and give importance to the needs and interests of the students. However, there were still almost half of the participants who preferred traditional assessment methods to projects or take-home exams in the pre-survey. The results of the post-survey were in the same direction with the pre-survey except that the attitudes of the participants revealed a more negative attitude in the post-survey toward the traditional methods (General attitude: pre-survey, 2,223; post-survey, 2,123). As pre-service teachers, majority of the participants indicated in the post-survey that they would not assess their students in traditional ways when they become a full-time EFL teacher even though there were still 15 participants who would. This shows that even though the participants disapprove the traditional assessment more than before, there are still some participants who did not change their ideas and kept supporting the traditional assessment methods even after they did the tasks.

In relation to the alternative assessment methods, in the pre-survey, the participants supported each and every statement that encourages the use of alternative assessment. Almost all the participants believed that self and peer assessment contributed to their learning and alternative assessment methods made them feel more competent and autonomous. However, in the pre-survey, almost all the participants made it clear that the traditional methods should not be completely abolished but combined with the alternative methods. In the post-survey, the participants' attitudes got more positive but still even much more participants were willing to see the implementation of alternative assessment together with traditional assessment. This clearly proves that the participants benefited from the tasks but they still believe in the necessity of the traditional assessment methods; therefore, it can be said that they may be using the alternative and traditional assessment in combination in their own classrooms when they become full-time EFL teachers.

In addition to the positive perceptions of the participants toward the alternative assessment methods, in the pre-survey, the majority of the students showed a positive attitude toward the use of online assessment methods as well by saying that the immediate feedback is provided, practicality and sharing are enhanced by the online methods even though almost half of the participants were not in agreement with the participants who had sympathy for the idea that the English language learning and teaching skills could be assessed through online methods. In the post survey, on the other hand, the participants' general attitudes were more positive but for some items the number of the participants who agreed and disagreed was almost the same. In these items, almost half of the participants believed that traditional assessment should not be replaced with technology based assessment, the exams should not be integrated with the technology, and online assessment is not more suitable to assess English language and teaching skills. Even though the participants who believed vice versa are more than half of the participants, there is still significant number of people who showed negative attitude toward online assessment methods. But still, the general attitude of the participants toward the use of online assessment came out positive in the post-survey just like it was in the pre-survey (General attitude: pre-survey, 2,762; post-survey, 2,983). As the attitude of the participants was more positive toward the online assessment after the tasks were implemented, it can be said that the participants had pleasant impression about the tasks.

When all three assessment types were compared, the order from the most preferred assessment type to least preferred assessment type was the same in both the pre- and post- surveys. While the most preferred assessment type was alternative assessment, the least preferred one was the traditional assessment. Even if the order of the participants' preference did not change, the general means of each assessment type changed. After the tasks were implemented, while the attitudes toward the alternative and online assessment methods got more positive, the attitudes toward traditional assessment methods got more negative, which makes it clear that the tasks had a positive effect on the participants.

Since assessment and technology is now an indispensable part of teaching and learning, as traditional assessment kept losing its popularity, alternative assessment via technology gained importance than ever. For the alternative assessment to be as successful as aimed, the factors to be implemented should be well-planned during design and

administration phases. To obtain fertile outcomes from the alternative assessment, the language skills to be addressed, the technological level of the target learner profile, the schedule of the tasks should be specified carefully. In the present study, the participants were not content when the two of the tasks clashed with their midterm and final exams, which affected their performance in a negative way as seen in their reflection papers and interviews. In addition, since the tools were all new to them and they were not given any training before the task implementation process except for the guidelines given before each task, they complained about spending too much time figuring out the tool than the task itself. For all these reasons, the instructors should take very purposeful steps while planning the alternative assessment process.

As for the limitations of the study, the data could have been gathered from the other grades of the same department and other ELT departments of the universities in Turkey. Therefore, it would have been much easier to generalize the results for the teachers who are interested in integrating web 2.0 tools to their classes for the purpose of assessment. A further research could be done with many more participants at different grades and universities to find out the perceptions of the students toward the technology integration to their courses. Additively, the period in which the study took place was for one semester – fourteen weeks; therefore, to monitor the long-term effects of the participants' perceptions toward being assessed via the web 2.0 tools, this period may not be adequate since the participants of the current study did not have the experience in web 2.0 tools and they were just getting used to them in this one semester. Hence, to reach more comprehensive results, longitudinal studies which last for one year or more can be carried out on the web 2.0 integration to courses for the purpose of alternative assessment.

IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This study is crucial in providing insight on how to prepare the pre-service teachers for the digital age where the students are all digital natives since it helps understanding the perspectives, needs and practices of pre-service teachers better. As also supported by the results of the study that almost all the pre-service teachers who participated in this study displayed positive perceptions toward adapting web 2.0 tools for assessment purposes, the instructors and administrators should start concentrating on how to integrate web-based technologies to their assessment system. The technology integration should start at schools as from the primary schools and even so before the task implementation, the process and how to use web 2.0 tools should be introduced to the students. In addition, motivating the students and having their attention has always been an issue for the teachers. During the present study, at every chance they got, the participants mentioned that web 2.0 tools made the course content more interesting, colorful, and enjoyable. Since the teachers have to make extra effort to keep the students motivated and focused especially while teaching English, they need to integrate web 2.0 tools to their curriculum. The challenges which prevent language teachers from technology integration for assessment purposes originate from lack of guidelines for planning, technological training, practice and technological equipment of schools and students. Language teachers who plan to adapt alternative assessment with the use of web-based technologies should be provided sources with guidelines and trained beforehand either during ELT pre-service teacher education or in-service training. The language teachers, who possess the necessary knowledge on technology and the guidelines from the related sources, should be given the opportunity to practice their knowledge, observed by the teacher educators and given feedback related to their improvement. The last but not the least, the language teachers should be provided with the necessary technological equipment by the administration of their schools and take into consideration whether their learners have their own personal computer or device to connect to the internet. If not, the possible solutions should be discussed at the planning phase and the tasks should be designed accordingly.

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CONCLUSION

The present study investigates the perceptions of ELT pre-service teachers on the use of web 2.0 tools for the purpose of alternative assessment. The study aims to find out the perceptions of the ELT pre-service teachers

toward the types of assessment and whether the ELT pre-service teachers' attitudes change toward traditional, alternative and online assessments after being assessed via Web 2.0 tools. The data was gathered through pre- and post-surveys, reflection papers, and a semi-structured in-depth interview from 40 second grade students who took the must course "ELT Methods I" at the ELT department of a state university. The results indicated that the participants showed a positive attitude toward the alternative assessment via web 2.0 tools more than they did to traditional or online assessment even though most of the participants believed in the necessity of the use of both the alternative and traditional assessment methods in combination.

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APPENDIX A: A sample student copy of a task with a Web 2.0 tool “Glogster”



APPENDIX B: A sample rubric copy

TASK 5 Rubric					
Assignment: Designing a poster on the Total Physical Response Method.		Name and Surname of the Learner: _____			
	0 point	1 point	2 points	3 points	4 points
Content and Method	Method is not clearly mentioned. Content and method do not match at all.	Insufficient touch upon the method. Content and method minimally match in the activity with almost no creativity.	Somewhat covers the method. Content and method moderately match in the activity with one or two creative ideas.	Covers the method with few missing points. Content and method adequately match in the activity supported by some creative ideas.	Covers the method very comprehensively and clearly. Content and method perfectly match in the activity and reflected with creative ideas.
Meeting the Submission Requirements of the Task (Deadlines, use of Technology, Reflection Report)	Did not complete almost all of the requirements of the task and could not handle the technical features of the tool.	Completed the requirements of the task insufficiently and had a lot of technical problems managing the tool.	Completed some of the requirements of the task and had a few technical problems managing the tool.	Completed most of the requirements of the task and had few or no technical problems managing the tool.	Completed the requirements (4 steps) of the task perfectly and didn't have any technical problems managing the tool.
Layout of the poster	No or very little effort on the poster design. Readers would not prefer to learn from this poster.	Insufficient effort on the poster design. It looks boring and complicated.	Made use of some utilities the tool provides for the design. The poster looks okay.	Although the poster doesn't possess all the utilities the tool provides, it still has an attractive design.	Has a very attractive, colorful and creative design with graphics, colors etc. Readers would definitely enjoy it.
Variety of the sources	Did not support the content with any related sources to the content.	Supported the content with one or two sources (links, videos, images, audios and notes) not matching the content so much.	Supported the content with some sources (links, videos, images, audios and notes) sort of fits the content.	Reinforced the content with a few sources (links, videos, images, audios and notes) adequately matching the content.	Reinforced the content with various sources (links, videos, images, audios and notes) totally matching the content.
Pair evaluation	Did not fill in the evaluation form except for few insincere comments.	Did not pay attention to the evaluation form so much. The parts filled in are not so sincere.	Filled in the evaluation form with not so much sincerity and added few or almost no useful ideas.	Filled in almost all the evaluation form fairly and added some useful ideas.	Filled in the evaluation form completely and added very useful ideas with all sincerity.
TOTAL: _____					/20