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ELECTRONIC TESTING AS AN EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT TOOL IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, assessment is the systematic process of gathering, interpreting, and acting upon information about a learner's language proficiency and communicative competence. Rather than being a single event (like a final exam), it is an ongoing pedagogical tool used to measure how well a student can use English in specific contexts.

Modern foreign language teaching methods distinguish between various types of assessment, one of the most effective of which is testing.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the characteristics of testing in EFL teaching, specifically its electronic form.

Modern EFL teaching methodology defines language testing as a formalised procedure for measuring a learner's linguistic competence or language skills using specially designed tasks (tests) that are administered under standardised conditions and assessed against objective criteria [1, p. 98].

The current stage of educational development, based on a computer-technology platform, has radically transformed the architecture of testing, which has become computerised (Computer-Adaptive Testing, CAT). There has been an evolution in testing tools, namely the transition from paper-based testing (PBT) to computer-based testing (CBT).

In the context of EFL (English as a Foreign Language), the concept of e-assessment emerges as a digital format for assessment that encompasses the entire cycle of learning outcomes management.

Hughes, A., & Hughes, J. define e-assessment as the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to create, distribute, administer, assess and analyze tasks designed to measure students' learning outcomes, knowledge or skills [3, p. 34].

According to O.P. Petraschuk, e-testing primarily involves a technological aspect, namely the use of devices (computers, smartphones) and software (LMS, web applications). This phenomenon signifies a transformation in assessment methods – a shift away from static tests towards interactive and adaptive assessment models. At the same time, it involves the automation of data collection, instant processing of results and the creation of electronic portfolios of achievements [2, p. 17].

At the same time, the digitalization of society has accelerated a methodological shift in testing. The transition to a computer-based platform has fundamentally changed the architecture of assessment. One of the key features in the context of education and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching methodology has been gamification. This involves the strategic use of game mechanics, elements and design principles in non-gaming learning scenarios to enhance student engagement, motivation and performance.

In testing methodology, gamification transforms the assessment process from 'testing knowledge' to 'achieving game objectives'. Digital tools (LMS, gamified platforms) help reduce 'test anxiety' and provide instant feedback.

In the digital age, EFL assessment is shifting from a focus on 'error detection' to one of simulating a real-life foreign language environment. It is becoming more personalized, faster and integrated into the learning process (Assessment as Learning).

The digital platform allows real-life contexts to be integrated into the test through interactive audio and video, enabling language comprehension to be assessed in real-world conditions (street noise, distractions, non-verbal communication). Digitalization introduces automated analysis of productive skills (speaking and writing). Modern systems use artificial neural networks to assess pronunciation and intonation (Speech-to-Text and acoustic analysis), as well as the coherence and lexical richness of written work (Automated Writing Evaluation) [3, p. 67].

Thanks to platforms such as Kahoot, Quizizz or specialised LMSs, testing is losing its status as a 'stressful event', transforming into an interactive process (low-stakes testing) that stimulates learners' intrinsic motivation.

The EFL teacher uses digital tools such as LMS platforms (Moodle, Google Classroom, Canvas) to create closed-book tests, collect essays and automate the recording of academic performance. Kahoot, Quizizz and Mentimeter have become

tools for formative assessment, utilizing game mechanics for instant checking vocabulary and grammar.

Let us share modern online tools that we are trying to integrate into our work with students as part of the implementation of the digital education platform.

The Testportal platform offers professional, comprehensive testing. Key advantages of this type of testing include a high level of security (control over browser tabs), detailed analytics, and the ability to set a time limit for each question.

We use Quizizz mode for formative assessment incorporating gamification. This mode features a 'Self-paced' setting (where students work at their own pace) and integration with memes, which helps reduce test anxiety.

The Flip platform enables asynchronous assessment of speaking skills. Students are required to record video responses, and their answers are then assessed not only for grammar but also for paralinguistic factors (gestures, facial expressions, and confidence).

Thanks to Google Forms, teachers can create tests quickly and easily, enabling them to assess students' knowledge effectively, and students receive their marks instantly, as the platform automatically calculates the grades.

Ultimately, electronic testing is an effective means of assessment in foreign language teaching. First and foremost, it changes the teacher's role in assessment, freeing them from the routine checking of technical errors so they can focus on content and style (high-level feedback). The validity of speaking test results is enhanced, as students are in a comfortable environment. Digital platforms make the test an integral part of the learning process, enhancing the washback effect of assessment: as students receive their results instantly, the testing process becomes a moment of realization for learners regarding their own gaps, which contributes to the development of their communicative competence.

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