

A Web-based Tool to Assess Language Learning

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Abstract

Given the rapid development of Information and Communication Technologies and the increasing number of students, many higher education institutions are moving towards the use of the Internet for the delivery of their courses both on campus and at a distance. This has prompted educators, testing experts and test developers to look at ways of applying Information Technology to the assessment of students' learning.

In this respect, our objective in this paper is to present a web-based tool for the assessment of English learning. This internet-based assessment system, which is based on multiple choice questions, gives students an opportunity to assess their English grammar skills. In fact, once logged in, each learner is given a random selection of questions covering English grammar. At the end of the quiz, the student gets his score as well as the list of questions he has been asked together with feedback information as to whether his answers are true or false. More importantly, the learner gets an idea about the grammatical areas that he masters and those that need improvement.

An analysis of this assessment tool, so far tested by more than 4000 English learners worldwide, has revealed that this web-based application is an efficient and powerful means to measure students' performance and enhance their learning. In actual fact, this tool enables students to have an idea about their strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in knowledge and, thus, provides them with the information needed to improve their learning. Similarly, the tool gives teachers the feedback necessary to detect students who need help and to identify which parts of the curriculum have to be modified or improved. In this way, the proposed testing system serves two assessment functions: summative and formative.