Test Automation: Reliability Issues – A Review Study

S Umashankar

Eastern University, Sri Lanka

<umashankars@esn.ac.lk>

Abstract – In this review paper, reliability of online and remote modes of testing refers to the consistency of students' performance over time. The review of relevant research articles suggests that reliability is determined by several factors including test security - the process of proctoring tests so that the results from those tests can be trusted and used to make important decisions about test takers' competence - which is at stake because of cheating by the test takers. This paper looks at only one aspect of reliability of online testing: test security and particularly focuses on testing English as a second language. In this regard, the critics who belong to the traditional school of thought in testing have been arguing over the reliability of types of testing. However, at present, in the wake of the COVID 19 pandemic, the argument has taken another turn from the types of testing to the modes of testing and how reliable they are. Now, the main concern is based on how well the available self-proctoring software can minimize dishonesty and maximize the reliability of online tests. When the test security and some other technical constraints are sorted out, then online testing will address the reliability issues and the issues related to onsite testing in terms of the time of human proctors, care of control of test materials, space, grading effort and many other.

Department of English Language Teaching
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Rajarata University 0f Sri Lanka

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