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A Linguistic Perspective on LMS-Mediated Language Testing in ELT Programs

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Abstract

The use of Learning Management Systems (LMSs) in English Language Teaching (ELT), particularly in tertiary instruction, has reconfigured assessment practices, including graduate language testing. This study examines LMS-mediated language testing through a linguistic perspective by exploring how SPADA, an institutional LMS, shapes assessment practices in a graduate Language Testing course at Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar. Grounded in language testing theory, the study investigates how LMS mediation facilitates or constrains four core assessment principles, validity, reliability, fairness, and washback, and how LMS-based tasks contribute to the development of assessment literacy among ELT graduate students. A qualitative case study design was adopted, drawing on LMS artifacts, students' reflective journals, and instructor feedback. The findings indicate that LMS-mediated assessment supports principled practice through rubric-guided task sequencing, asynchronous peer feedback, and reflective interaction, although these opportunities are conditioned by technical limitations and uneven digital competencies. The study further reframes LMS-based assessment as a language-mediated and discourse-oriented practice in which assessment meanings are co-constructed through interaction, evaluative language, and genre-specific expectations within the platform. It concludes that strengthening the linguistic design of LMS-mediated testing, by attending to discourse features, communicative purposes, and sociocultural context, can more effectively cultivate assessment literacy and meaningful learning in online ELT programs.

Key words: linguistic perspective, LMS-mediated language testing, ELT, SPADA, assessment