

Theme: Digital young learner English testing

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A new generation of assessment, for a new generation of learners.

Abstract

Teachers of young learners spend a lot of time planning classes and marking assignments. This talk introduces a new tablet based test- English Benchmark, and will discuss how new technologies, specifically designed to engage and motivate young learners, on the devices they prefer, are creating a new digital classroom with more prepared young learners.

Summary

Teaching young learners and offering independently-verified assessments, especially with automated marking has been an area previously undiscovered. Currently, students only have the option of a high-stakes exam, or in-house tests. This has been the main incentive to the creation behind the English Benchmark test. The test bridges the gap between course-based assessment and formal exams, by offering an independently-verified and scored test. This talk will cover how a new generation of English language testing largely benefits teachers and learners when the testing methods include state of the art technology and the content embodies gamification in its delivery. We will discuss how Pearson's patented automated scoring technology; a combination of advanced speech recognition and exam grading technology with the insight of professional ELT exam markers, has lead the way in the field of language testing and has reduced the normal administrative burden of test delivery and marking. The talk will uncover how automated scoring provides a richer analysis of students' strengths, plus recommendations for improvements which will assist in future class planning. A number of highly specific factors were utilised when developing English Benchmark, all designed to assist the teaching of English to young learners. We will discuss how testing all four skills is imperative in language testing for assessments. How using the test, which is scored on the Global Scale of English, shows progress and also helps prepare students for their exams through content based on scenes and objects that are familiar to young learners, including a mix of accents and people.