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Google forms- a technical tool for conducting the English Language Assessments

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ABSTRACT

In testing English as a second language, teachers mainly rely on traditional approaches despite being aware of technical aids such as Google forms. During term tests, question papers are photocopied and distributed to the students for assessing their learning abilities. Ahead of the term tests, teachers also conduct class tests to prepare students for the upcoming term tests. While conducting class tests, questions are either dictated or written on the blackboard. This type of practice would consume a lot of time for testing, evaluation, and feedback. If Google Forms are used for testing the language skills like grammar and vocabulary the process of testing, evaluation and feedback can be instant. Students also feel a change in the testing environment since they take up the test either by using computers or by using mobile phones. This paper aims in identifying the awareness on Google forms as a tool of language testing among the language teachers, its efficacy in test constructions, and the attitude of the students towards the technical mode of language assessments.

Key words: Google forms, testing, evaluation, feedback, efficacy, etc.

I INTRODUCTION

Testing plays a vital role in the learning pursuit of every student. A student has to be assessed before he or she is promoted to the next level. For promoting a student to the next level, a common assessment pattern, essentially in a conventional mode, is being followed in Indian educational institutions. A three-hour exam is conducted and the papers are evaluated in a common evaluation board.

Traditionally, course evaluation was carried out with pencil and op-scan forms. In the last ten years or so, these evaluations have been migrating online. When employed in the usual way, at the end of a course, evaluations are essentially summative, though faculty may glean some advice about the next offering of the same course from reading the students' text comments. [1]

This type of examination is done for all subjects including English language. However, Testing the English Language shall also be done using certain technical aids like Google forms. The language components like grammar, vocabulary, which are major components in the English language learning, can be tested swiftly using Google forms. Testing those components can be done using objective type questions and so Google forms can be utilized well. Test taker's details and their marks can

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also be quickly collected and consolidated. Despite its efficacy, the majority of the language teachers are not aware of this application. This paper attempts to survey the language teachers who work in the researchers' working place to reveal the technical awareness of the language teachers. Furthermore, the paper also aims to prove the efficacy of the Google forms in the test takers' point of view.

II. GOOGLE FORMS

Google Forms was released in 2008, [2] is an online form generator offered within Google Drive which allows teachers to custom assessments for their courses distribute students, and analyze their responses. Diagnostic tests and everyday course tests can be conducted using this tool. Besides, students can use Google forms to assess their learning informally and prepare themselves well for the term tests or culmination tests.

III. INDIAN CLASSROOMS

In Indian classrooms, class tests or slip tests are very popular. Irrespective of the subjects, all the teachers conduct such tests to ensure the positive learning of the learners. Though students may not like such tests, it is quite essential in the process of preparation for the end semester examinations.

Classroom assessments serve both the interests of the teacher and the students. To be effective, teachers need to ground their course design, development, and implementation decisions in the knowledge and beliefs they have of themselves and their students. [5]

Teacher success is often associated with high test scores on standardized tests, and in many states, language arts and math test scores are the gauge by which achievement is measured, for both teachers and students. [4]

Today's young learners are indifferent to learning. Despite the availability of scholarly teachers and well-equipped libraries, only a few students are regular and academically connected. Whereas many learners stay deviated and show less attention to any kind of learning. Learners' indifference towards learning is quite apparent while reviewing the performance analysis at the college level. At the school level, the learner's motivation towards learning may be slightly better than the college level because of various reasons like active mentoring and strict parenting. But, those active mentoring and strict parenting loses its grip on the learners at the college level and so the learners get distracted more and remain less motivated towards learning. This leads to identifying the drawback in the teaching and testing methods that are quite interesting to the learners

Only with a clear understanding of their students' needs, interests, attitudes, learning styles, and abilities can educators tailor lessons to match their students. Likewise, to be successful, students need the feedback from assessments to gauge where they are in relation to the course objectives and to outline a path to close the gap [3]

IV. METHODOLOGY

The interview method was adopted to collect responses from both the teachers and the students. A class of 60 students who study First year engineering program, in the institution where the researchers work at present, was selected randomly. Students were called in groups and interviewed about the usage of Google forms in the classes. Teachers of English in the same institution were also interviewed for the same cause.

V. EXPERIMENT

V. a. TECH SAVY TEACHERS
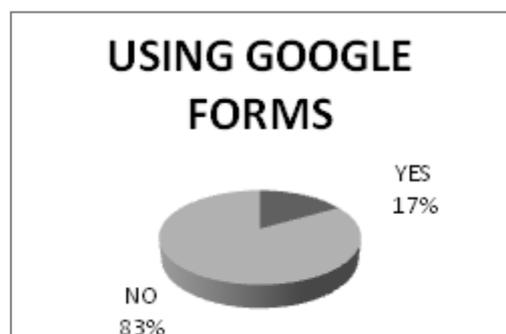
The Department of English, where the researchers work currently, has the staff strength of 12 language teachers with an average experience of 5 to 6 years. They were interviewed regarding the usage of Google forms in the classes. 10 members of

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the staff responded negatively and also added that they were not aware of such assessment tools. They also admitted that they were not technically stronger. Only 2 members of the staff responded positively. They said that they used Google forms for conducting class tests. B.T. Kerimbaeva and the team of researchers stressed the importance of technology in teaching language

The informational technology in the educational environment of English language lesson allows you to enhance and to stimulate the interest of students, activate their thinking, the effectiveness of learning, individualize instruction, increase speed of presentation and assimilation of information and rapid adjustments knowledge if necessary [8]

It is clueless to find that the teachers of technical institutions are not comfortable with the availability of technical resources instead they are convenient with the conventional practices.

V. b. STUDENTS' ATTITUDE

The students of the classes of those ten teachers who don't use Google forms and the students of the classes where the teachers use Google forms were interviewed regarding the efficacy of using the technical resource in the process of assessments.

The students who are not exposed to Google forms reported that they were still taking the classroom assessments only using the traditional mode of pen and paper. They also added that the method was mundane since all teachers followed the same method of assessment. It was not very encouraging.

However, the students who were exposed to Google forms were happy in taking the assessment since it was of only objective type questions and they could answer using their mobile phones. They did have any pain of writing for hours.

Taking a multiple-choice test shortly after study appears to have some particularly positive consequences for learning. Doing so not only increases retention of both tested and non-tested related information [7]

Students' Performance

Without Google forms 37%

With Google forms 63%
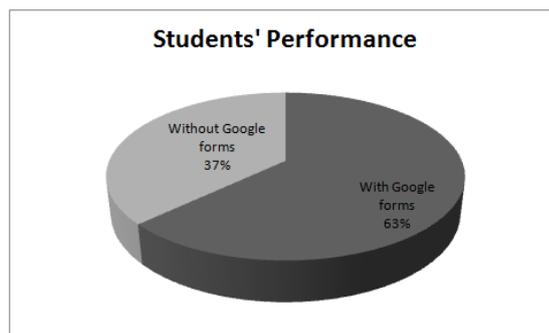
Furthermore, the teachers who used Google forms in their classes found positive growth in the performance of the students in the cycle tests. The class that secured only 37% as the pass percentage in the first cycle test improved to 67% in the next cycle test. The teachers admitted that they had not used Google forms for classroom assessments during the preparation tests of the first cycle test but they used it for the second cycle preparation tests. They added that every day they would conduct one model objective type assessment and allow the students to use their smartphones to do the assessment. The students were found to be excited about this pattern and actively took up the test. They were also able to receive immediate feedback on their answers. They were able to learn from the assessment without having inhibition towards the presence of the teacher

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VI. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This short study disclosed the importance of using Google forms for regular classroom assessments ahead of semester exams or cycle tests. The result of the study reflected the current scenario. However, the analysis is done only with the minimum numbers and members of the staff and so the results may not be highly authentic. The students and the staff of other colleges could be included in the study for a better output. However, the attitude of the students may not be the same. Blue are the hills that are far away. Similarly, the students who are eager in taking quizzes using Google forms may find the same technology boring since Google forms do not have many colourful features except for having options for conducting the online quiz. Hence, Google forms may be an obsolete source in the future.

VII. RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

Thus Google Forms allows the learners to take type online objective type quizzes in English. The responses submitted through Google Forms are automatically gathered in a web-based spreadsheet which helps the teachers to analyze the performance of the students quickly.

There are teachers of the English language still are not aware of this positive technical resource that would help them positively in their academic practices.
They facilitate active testing by distributing and invigilate them. When this becomes routine the students may not be oriented towards any kind of testing as the method of testing gives them enormous physical and psychological pain.

It was found from this research that the students were happy with this type of online assessment. They found it be a clutch free exercise they had taken the test using their smartphones. The performance of the class also found to be increased after the introduction of Google forms.

Despite being a good tool for assessment, Google forms may not work positively in the teaching-learning process if students don't take it up seriously. Any form of assessment is meaningful only if the participants use it positively. But, Google forms may provide a small respite to the learners from tedious academic assessment practices.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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