TESTS AS ONE OF THE CONTROL FORMS
OF STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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The problem of knowledge control has arisen practically simultaneously with the appearance of the training process. The control is «the complex dialectical phenomenon covering a number of opposite functions, such as control and training» [1, p. 18]. In teaching a foreign language attempts to emanate the control function from other functions is hardly possible, as results of training are shown in all kinds of the activity. Therefore all kinds of training patterns and speech peculiarity give us the bases to assess the quality of the implementations.

The testing method allows consolidating the acquired knowledge and skills as well as identifying gaps in students' knowledge and skills. It allows the teacher to adjust the further curriculum in accordance with the results of the tests. When composing tests in foreign languages, you must select tasks that cover all grammatical, lexical, and phonetic tasks aspects that involve students to perform multiple exercises on the same theme, to minimize the randomness of the students' choice of any answers. Test tasks activate mental activity, teach students to self-study work [2, p. 45]. Despite some disadvantages of this method, as the probability of guessing the correct answer, getting used to working with ready-made language patterns and the lack of opportunity to reveal the identity, it is the most promising form of knowledge control that improves the quality and understanding of the taught material necessary for a qualified specialist.

Let us consider tests as the control forms of students' reading comprehension. Tests are supposed to be one of the most effective means of the control. «The test is regarded as the form of the control-training task intended to define the standard of training and

is characterized by the following outlines: simple procedure of the fulfillment, standardized structure, a small dosage of teaching material, simple procedure of its implementation, convenience of quantitative expression of quality of the fulfillment of the task» [2, p. 45]. The characteristic outlines of tests listed above make them especially suitable for carrying out both current and final control eliminating subjectivity and reducing the time spent by the teacher to check up tasks.

Tests, as well as other exercises (tasks), differ on their dominant purposes. The purpose of the control tests is to establish the fact of knowledge/ignorance of material by students and the ability to estimate it. The purpose of training texts is to provide the students with learning material. The control of its fulfillment is a means of this process [3, p. 56].

Specific characteristics of the text reading comprehension are as follows: 1) it helps to concentrate on the extraction of the information with the necessary degree of understanding, 2) it demands the minimum application of productive forms, therefore, it stimulates the intellectual activity of students, 3) it is a good means of adaptation as testing material serves as an auxiliary means, 4) it gives the chance to present demands to reading volume, facilitating and accelerating the understanding.

There is a number of testing materials available to control reading Some of them are: 1) the right choice to answer a question, 2) the completion of the starting statement on the bases of themes offered, 3) the arrangement of material in the right order, grouping the facts, 4) a cross choice, matching the material, 5) a deletion of specially inserted unnecessary words, 6) filling the blanks with specially gapped words.

In our opinion the main requirement of drawing up the tests is «the observance of principles of adequacy of the test to the character of the tested speech activity» [4, p. 20] While making up the test it is necessary to take into consideration the following: 1) its general character (we use the narrative texts rich with an actual material and details), 2) test tasks should be stated clearly, providing unequivocal answers, and also be feasible for students, 3) the volume of the test basis should be so that learners could keep in memory what they had read, 4) the completeness of the contents of the test, 5) questions should contain the studied lexical and grammatical material, 6) the autonomy of each test task.

In our opinion, the test stimulates the intellectual activity of students who choose the correct alternative, and they (the students) should: 1) read the text with the general coverage of the contents,

2) comprehend the offered variants of answers, 3) match each of them with the contents of the text, 4) accept the necessary alternative.

While training the students of non-language specialties to read we use: 1) exercises (tasks) in which the students should identify one statement with the other, 2) exercises of substantial search, such as: a) to find the sentences confirming..., b) to find the fact that characterizes..., c) to find the reasons for..., d) to find those problems which..., 3) exercises of a semantic choice, such as: a) to choose the suitable title from the given ones, b) to choose the correct answer from the offered ones, c) to choose the sentences transferring their sense from the text paragraphs.

The basic problems of the given exercises are the perfection of techniques of reading, the development of a semantic guess. The advantage of these exercises is that the direct control is hidden, and the teacher can judge the success of reading on the fact of their fulfillment. The success in tests depends on the quality of knowledge of students which is in the field of vision of the teacher and what attention is given to prevent their mistakes. The experience confirms that the examination of the students' knowledge in the form of small volume control tasks, conditionally named tests, brings benefit.

Let us introduce some recommendations for making tests in foreign languages, for university students. 1. All the variant answers need to be believable, forcing students to analyse each answer option and identify inaccuracies or errors. 2. It is desirable that the answers to the tests questions are not random, but those, which take into account the knowledge gained and the most common mistakes during studies. This minimizes randomness when students choose any of the answer options. 3. Tasks for tests should be formulated so that they cover all grammatical, lexical, phonetic aspects of the language and allowed you to control not only the skills, but also the students' theoretical knowledge. 4. In the process of creating test variants, it is desirable to selectively offer students to perform several exercises on this topic [5, p. 27]. This method identifies any errors in the preparation of the test. Such a measure is also necessary because the teacher may not see a double interpretation and ambiguities in the proposed options, because what is obvious for a specialist, the student may have found questions.

In conclusion we can say that it is possible to use testing material for creating positive effect of testing on teaching a foreign language. Tests are not only the most economical form of the control, but also more objective index of mastering the teaching material. Regular testing stimulates the activity and attention of students, raises their responsibility at the fulfillment of educational tasks. Results of the fulfillment of tests are analyzed by teachers and serve, on the one hand, as an indicator of students' knowledge, and on the other hand, is a self-appreciation of teachers' work that allows them to introduce the necessary corrections in the course of training and to prevent mistakes of students. Tests are applied to develop the basic language skills as well as thinking skills, communicative competence. In other words, reading control becomes an educational, curriculum-oriented process.

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