

активности в научно-исследовательской деятельности // Современные наукоемкие технологии. 2020. № 9. С. 215–219.

9. Kremsner G., Proyer M. Doing inclusive research: Möglichkeiten und Begrenzungen gemeinsamer Forschungspraxis // Österreich Z Soziol. Suppl. 3. 2019. № 44. S. 61–81.

10. Bas T. Agricola, Frans J. Prins, Marieke F. van der Schaaf, Jan van Tartwijk. Teachers' diagnosis of students' research skills during the mentoring of the undergraduate thesis [Электронный ресурс] // Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning. 2018. № 26(5). P. 542–562. URL: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13611-267.2018.1561015> (дата обращения: 28.03.2022).

11. Weinrich H. Wissenschaftssprache, Sprachkultur und die Einheit der Wissenschaft // Kretzenbacher H. L., Weinrich H. Linguistik der Wissenschaftssprache. Berlin, 1995. S. 3–13.

УДК 372.881.111.1

*K. S. Potovskaya (Sevastopol, Russia)
Sevastopol State University*

Types and forms of tests in the system of foreign language teaching

Статья посвящена изучению основных видов и форм тестов, используемых для организации процесса обучения иностранному языку, а также для контроля сформированных иноязычных навыков и умений. Рассматриваются разные классификации тестов, а также существенные характеристики основных видов тестовых заданий.

Ключевые слова: обучение иностранному языку, английский язык, тестирование, тестовый контроль, оценивание

The article is devoted to the study of the main types and forms of tests used to organize the process of foreign language teaching as well as to control the acquired foreign language skills and abilities. The article considers different classifications of tests as well as essential characteristics of the main types of test tasks.

Keywords: foreign language teaching, English, testing, test control, assessment

The natural outcome of a foreign language learning process is assessment of the acquired knowledge about the language, usually in the form of testing knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. The ultimate objective of language teaching is effective language learning, and testing is an adequate way to assess whether this objective is achieved. For the assessment of language learning progress, special tests are designed to measure learners' productive language skills through tasks that allow candidates to demonstrate language skills which may be required in a real world context.

In the scientific literature there is a diversity of opinions on the concept of “test” and “testing”. In some works these concepts are clearly separated, in others the concept of “testing” is not introduced at all since both concepts are deemed to be practically the same thing. So, for example, V. S. Avanesov believes that a test is a scientifically based method for measuring the person’s qualities and skills. [1, p. 58] Depending on the subject of measurement, pedagogical, psychological, cultural and other tests are distinguished.

In encyclopedias and explanatory dictionaries a test in psychology and pedagogy is understood as a set of standardized tasks, the results of which can be used to assess the psychophysiological and personal characteristics as well as the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a person.

In addition to the generalized concept of a test, the concept of a pedagogical test is often introduced. In particular, Avanesov believes that the pedagogical test is a set of interrelated tasks of increasing difficulty and of various forms, which make it possible to qualitatively assess the structure and measure the level of knowledge.

A. Davies proposed a more specific definition that is related specifically to pedagogical diagnostics. In his view, testing is a method of pedagogical diagnostics, with the help of which the results of the educational process should correspond to the principles of comparability, objectivity, reliability and validity of measurement. They should also undergo processing and interpretation and be ready for use in pedagogical practice [4, p. 145].

Each of the above definitions has its own advantages and disadvantages and serves to solve specific scientific problems.

There could be different reasons why teachers test in the language classroom. We would like to point out the most significant reasons for testing. Firstly, tests give the teacher information about the students’ progress and help decide what to teach next. Secondly, tests give the students information about what they know so that they have the awareness of what they need to learn or review. Testing can even motivate students to learn or review specific material. Thirdly, tests can provide a clear indication that the class has reached a station in learning, such as the end of the unit, thus contributing to a sense of structure in the course as a whole. Apart from this, tests make students apply some effort which is likely to lead to better results and a feeling of satisfaction. Tests can provide students with a sense of achievement and progress in their learning.

Considering the existing diversity of tests, there is an obvious need to systematize them. Classifications allow using one of the criteria to select the test type that best suits the teacher’s purpose and conditions of the test.

Russian researcher E. A. Shtulman classifies language tests into 3 categories [3, p. 402]:

- The first category includes general skill tests which allow assessing the level of language proficiency.

- The second category includes achievement tests. These tests allow the teacher to assess the success of mastering specific skills and even individual sections of academic disciplines.

- The third category includes diagnostic tests that allow to determine not only the level of knowledge, skills and abilities, but also to identify the reasons for their shortage.

Another classification is proposed by A. Davies [4] who distinguishes four types of language tests:

- General Proficiency tests (opportunity tests) - tests to determine the level of knowledge of foreign languages. In this category, the scientist identifies several types of tests, depending on their purpose. If the purpose is to test the knowledge of applicants in order to determine the level of proficiency in a foreign language, then such tests are called selection tests. If the purpose is to distribute students into groups depending on their knowledge, then such tests are called placement tests.

- Aptitude tests – a category of tests to assess the abilities of a learner in a foreign language as well as the time it takes them to master the language. This category of tests is often called prognostic tests, i.e. tests that predict a student's possible success in learning a foreign language, which depends on their abilities.

- Achievement tests (tests of progress and achievements) – tests to determine the achievements of knowledge, skills and abilities acquired in the learning process for a certain period.

- Diagnostic tests – tests to identify weaknesses in students' language skills and knowledge as well as the reasons for their lagging behind. Due to these tests the teacher is given the opportunity to take appropriate measures to eliminate the backlog.

S. K. Folomkina suggests a classification based on the frequency of tests [2, p. 289]. According to her, the following types of tests can be distinguished:

- Current tests are carried out as a certain topic or section is studied;
- Periodic tests are used at a certain stage of the educational process and usually coinciding with the moment of completion of work on a particular section or topic;

- Global tests sum up results for a longer period of study.

A well-known methodologist Jeremy Harmer claims that measuring potential of tests is determined by the item types that tests contain [5, p. 322]. He distinguishes direct and indirect test items. Direct items check communicative skills whereas indirect items try to measure a student's knowledge and ability by checking receptive and productive skills. So, direct item tests focus on real-life language use while indirect item tests measure a student's language knowledge through more controlled items, such as multiple choice questions or grammar transformation items.

Harmer points out the following indirect test item types:

- Multiple choice questions. For example:

The journalist was _____ by enemy fire.

a. wronged b. wounded c. injured d. damaged

These tests are widely used because of their practicality, but reliability of such tests is undermined. They often test how trained a testee in technique rather than check the language knowledge and ability.

- Cloze procedures. For example:

They sat on a bench attached 1. _____ a picnic table. They could hear the call of 2. _____ and the buzzing on insects.

Cloze tests seem to be a perfect test instrument as they can cover many linguistic issues due to the randomness of the deleted words. However, there is assessed knowledge of particular words that are deleted, rather than general English knowledge. Moreover, in some cases there are several possible answers, which undermines reliability of such tests.

- Transformation and paraphrase. For example:

I'm sorry that I didn't get her an anniversary present.

I wish _____.

These tests ask students to rewrite sentences in a different form, retaining the meaning of the original. The main advantage of this type of tests is that they thoroughly check the knowledge of the language system.

- Sentence re-ordering, that is urging students to put words in the right order to make appropriate sentences. For example:

Called / I / I'm / in / sorry / wasn't / when / you

These tests check the knowledge of syntax and lexico-grammatical elements. Re-ordering exercises are easy to write but it is not always possible to ensure only one correct order.

Modern tests are multi-level and do not depend on teaching methods or the teacher. Due to these tests all four types of student activity are assessed, that is, reading, listening, speaking and writing.

As a separate group, lexical and grammar tests can be distinguished. These tests assess the skills of mastering vocabulary and grammar. Lexical tests check the skills of spelling, word formation, distinguishing between words that are close in meaning or spelling, that is, synonyms and homonyms. Grammar tests assess the skills of mastering various grammatical phenomena, namely: the use of English tenses in active and passive voice; time coordination; the use of impersonal forms of the verb, gerund, infinitive and infinitive constructions and participial phrases.

A specific category of tests is used for checking written speech. Writing tests assess the skills of conveying ideas and thoughts in a foreign language, the ability to extract information from tables, graphs, etc. and convey it in writing. Among the

written tests, the following can be distinguished: filling out forms; description of tables and graphs; writing personal and business letters and so on.

The next group is constituted by reading tests. These tests check the level of understanding and extraction of information presented in writing. The most common types of tests are texts with gaps (close tests) and texts with various tasks.

There are also listening tests. Listening is considered a rather complex type of work that requires a lot of attention and concentration. Listening tests check the level of understanding and extracting information from an oral message, and also help the teacher to control the ability of students to extract specific and factual information from what they have heard. Let us consider the following examples of tasks in listening tests: to identify speakers, their names, dates and times; to establish a connection between the ideas of cause and effect, the order of events, comparisons. Listening tests also show the ability to follow oral instructions as well as to draw conclusions.

Speaking tests check the communication skills of students as well as their vocabulary; assess the ability of students to express their opinion, to evaluate, to summarize, to answer questions and to ask them, to respond to remarks and comments with the correct intonation. It is worth noting that these tests allow the teacher to check the students' pronunciation skills and their ability to correctly formulate their speech.

So, considering all the variety of test tasks, the teacher needs to be able to navigate them. A detailed classification of tests gives teachers an opportunity to plan their work with tests, and, consequently, to predict the results of their work. Classifications of tests allow teachers to correctly allocate their working time and concentrate on practical work with students.

In conclusion it should be noted that testing is essential method in teaching English language. It helps evaluate students' knowledge, motivate them to study English language and consolidate acquired skills and knowledge.

References

1. Аванесов В. С. Композиция тестовых заданий: учеб. книга. 3-е изд., доп. М.: Центр тестирования, 2002.
2. Фоломкина С. К. Тестирование в обучении иностранному языку // Иностранные языки в школе. 1986. № 2.
3. Штульман Э. А. Тестирование при обучении английскому языку в неязыковых вузах. Воронеж, 1972.
4. Davies A. Language Testing. Introduction. Department of Applied Linguistics. Edinburgh, 1968.
5. Harmer J. The Practice of English Language Teaching. Longman, Pearson Education Limited, 2005.