

**TESTING AS ONE OF THE METHODS OF CONTROL AND TEACHING
STUDENTS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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The article is devoted to the need for testing as a method of measuring the amount of knowledge, skills and abilities.

Key words: education, testing, method, educational process, foreign language, knowledge, skills, abilities.

**ТЕСТИРОВАНИЕ КАК ОДИН ИЗ МЕТОДОВ КОНТРОЛЯ И ОБУЧЕНИЯ
СТУДЕНТОВ ИНОСТРАННОМУ ЯЗЫКУ**

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Статья посвящена необходимости применения тестирования в качестве метода измерения объема полученных знаний, умений и навыков.

Ключевые слова: образование, тестирование, метод, образовательный процесс, иностранный язык, знания, умения, навыки.

We often say: "Trust, but check." This approach is directly related to teaching. There is no teacher who does not understand from his own experience that even if there are equal starting conditions, the result of the educational process is not the same for everyone. Whatever the reasons for the differences (unequal abilities, disproportionate labor costs, lack of so – called "own teacher" – a specialist suitable on all parameters, including personal characteristics, etc.), there is a need to measure the amount of knowledge, skills and abilities. The common method of such measurement is testing [1], [3].

Testing has at least a twofold purpose. On the one hand, it is necessary to assess the success of the students, on the other hand – based on the analysis of the results – to adjust the work of the teacher. Testing is a written form of control, based on performing of a rather large set of tasks, covering the whole course and requiring minimum answers (usually a number, letter or word). This form of testing knowledge is conventionally called "English". In our country, traditionally was used another form of control – "German", in which priority was given to the oral work, when the student was asked to answer one or two big questions and after that the knowledge of the whole course was evaluated. It is considered that during this exam, students can show the ability to analyze, to think independently, to demonstrate their erudition. The fact is given as an argument by opponents of testing, who believe that it is reduced to banal guessing of answers and is not able to reveal the depth and quality

of knowledge. We do not agree with this position. Where do the results of "6 correct answers from 100 possible ones" come from if testing can be guessing.

Is it a reflection of real knowledge (or lack of knowledge) or some special bad luck of the applicant? In addition, a properly formulated task is able to assess the independence of thinking and analytical capabilities of the students [2].

An example is the experience of international exams-tests in English as a foreign language (FCE, TOEFL, BEC and others). That is, the question is not about the credibility of testing, but about its quality. Unfortunately, there are problems with both in our country. And there are historical reasons for that. Testing in the West, particularly in America, dates back to the 19th century. There were doubts about conducting it and evaluating students' knowledge in points. However, already in 1885 in New York began to operate the Examination Board, which purpose was to develop objective methods of assessing knowledge. Since then, the Western world (especially English-speaking countries) has been working steadily to improve testing.

What about our country? The revolution of the early twentieth century led to the abolition of point system and examinations in 1918. It was possible to enter the University without presenting a diploma, school certificate or certificate of education. The quality of education was getting worse, and again the question of methods and criteria for assessing knowledge as a means of stimulating students arose. In the 20-30s in Russia appeared the science of Pedology, which became an apologist for testing. However, this science was later repressed and forbidden. In 1936, tests were forbidden too, and since then they have not been paid attention.

In Europe and America, meanwhile, a whole testing industry was created, based on the achievements of Western science and long-term practice. One of the fundamental achievements of the "English" school of testing is the thesis proving that the test must be comprehensive for an overall and qualitative assessment of knowledge: it must contain a large number of diverse in form and content tasks. Tests check knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, as well as possession of four types of speech activities: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Oral (speaking) and written forms of questionnaires are combined. In addition to a variety of tasks to choose an answer or a variant for substitution, there are tasks for writing letters, reports, and others. To make such a test is really very difficult. Making the test you need to answer the questions " why?" and "how?". The method of testing should be carefully thought over to exclude the possibility of unfair manipulation of the results. It should be noted that the problem of intellectual property protection of testing is relevant worldwide.

The results of the examination test can be understood as the actual answer of the student and the mark that is given by the teacher. It means that the same answer can be evaluated differently by different teachers. Therefore, the question of objective assessment is becoming actual. In this regard, the priority of testing over a simple oral exam is obvious, as testing almost completely eliminates the human factor. In a traditional oral form of a questionnaire examiner can influence the students' results (mood, likes-dislikes, questions and other indirect hints). In testing, the main part of the answers is checked by keys, the assessment of the oral statement or written work is carried out in strict accordance with developed criteria [4].

Historical collisions, which were mentioned above, were the reason that testing in its modern form came to Russia from the West, where its principles and methods have long been established. There are two prerequisites. On the one hand, the need to adapt a large number of immigrants arriving in economically developed countries, on the other hand – a constant influx of foreign students coming to Europe and America to study at local universities. Therefore, a large number of works on testing is written by British and American linguists, who often devote their research to studying English as a foreign language. British scientist A. Hughes points out that teachers' distrust of testing is often groundless [5]. The author formulates the criteria for assessing the adequacy of the test: validity, reliability, usefulness and expediency [5].

D. Brown also writes about the usefulness of testing for the learning process, arguing that tests can:

1. increase motivation to study the subject, as tests work as an indicator of the student's progress;
2. encourage learners to set goals before and after testing;
3. help keep information through feedback with which they increase learners' competencies;
4. provide a feeling of completeness (assimilation) of various modules of the program;
5. encourage students to have an adequate self-assessment of their progress;
6. develop students' skills of self-management while assessing their own progress;
7. help in assessment of teaching effectiveness [4].

In our opinion, it would be wrong not to use all these positive aspects in teaching practice. The practice of global education shows that independent testing is very important in the process of controlling students' knowledge due to its processability (the ability of checking the works rapidly using computing methods) and accuracy of the results. But it would be wrong to say that testing is the only method of control and teaching. It is only one of the methods. At our university, we use testing as a control of students' knowledge studying with the help of electronic course by LMS. Along with testing, oral work is also used including the work on vocabulary, texts, monologic and dialogic speech, etc.

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