

МЕТОДИ И ВЪЗПРИЕМАНЕ КОНТРОЛИРАТ НА НИВО НА ОБЛАСТ ЧУЖД ЕЗИК

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THE USE OF VARIOUS TEST FORMATS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

There are the various elements or formats of tests that could be applied for testing of four language skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking.

At first, I propose to look at multiple-choice tests, after that to cloze tests and gap filling, then to dictations and so on. We should try to draw a parallel between them and the skills they could be used for.

I start with multiple choice tests. They are widely used by teachers in their teaching practice, and are favoured by the students. The multiple choice tests could be successfully used for testing grammar, as well as for testing listening or reading skills.

A task basically is represented by a number of sentences, which should be provided with the right variant, that is usually given below. Apart from the right variant the students are offered a set of distractors, which are normally introduced in order to «deceive» the learner. If the student knows the material that is being tested, he will spot the right variant, supply it and successfully accomplish the task.

The distractors usually slightly differ from the correct variant and sometimes are funny. Very often they could be represented by the synonyms of the correct answer.

A further format that is worth mentioning is short answer test format. Short answer tests could be substitutes to multiple-choice tests. The only difference is that apart from the optional answers the students will have to provide short answers.

Short answer tests will contribute to the students' results, for they will be able to support their answers and clarify why they responded in that way but not the other. It could be explained that the students will have an opportunity to prove their answers and support them if necessary.

This type of testing differs from multiple-choice questions by the absence of the answers. The students have to provide the answer themselves. That will give the marker the clear idea whether the students know what they write about or not. Short answer test could make the students apply their various language skills techniques they use while dealing with any reading, listening or speaking activity.

There are two cloze test techniques: pseudo-random and rational cloze technique. In the pseudo-random test the test designer deletes words at a definite rate, or systematically.

Moreover, having discussed the following test format the teacher has revealed that the students like it and receive a real pleasure if they are able to confirm their guess and find the right variant.

The rational cloze technique, or gap-filling, is based on the deletion of words connected with the topic the teacher wants or intends to check. At this time the teacher controls the procedure more than it is in the pseudo-random test discussed above.

True/False items. This test format is familiar for all the teachers and students. Each reading task will always be followed with true/false activities that will intend to check the students' comprehension of a text. The students will be offered a set of statements some of which are true and some are wrong.

They usually should be ticked, and in order to tick the correct variants the students have to be able to employ various guessing strategies.

Another test format that could be applied in the language classroom is dictation. We use dictations to check spelling; to test listening comprehension, as well. It is obvious that to dictate something we have either to speak or read. It means that while writing a dictation the student has to be able to perceive the spoken language efficiently enough to produce in on paper. Dictation helps the students to develop their abilities to distinguish between phonemes, separate words and intonation. Dictations will force the students to use the variety of skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing skills.

Listening recall is specifically applied to testing listening skills. It differs from a dictation that it supplies the students with a printed text. However, the text is given not as the complete script of the tape. Certain words that carry the meaning load are deleted from a passage, and the students after listening to the tape are supposed to insert them. It could be related to a gap-filling test.

One of the advantages of listening recall is uncomplicated construction, administration and marking.

One of the test formats for testing grammar is error-recognition items. Here the teacher writes sentences underlining various words. One of the words is obligatory wrong, and the students have to identify what word is wrong and should be corrected.

For testing grammar and language structures we often use word-formation tasks.

In order to check the students grammar and writing ability the teacher can use different test formats: transformation, broken sentences, sentence and paragraph completion, form filling, notes and diaries.

Free writing. The most suitable way to check the students' writing skills is asking them to write a composition. The teacher can include a variety of testing criteria there depending on what is really being tested. The topics for a composition should be appropriate to the age of the students and respond to their interest. However, the teacher has to establish clearly what he is going to check and what could be neglected. The students have to know whether the teacher is interested in the context or may be he is concerned with grammar and spelling, as well.

In conclusion I want to say that the teacher can use a variety of test formats, such as multiple-choice questions, transfer of information; reordering the words, describe a picture, listening to the instructions to check the language skills of his students. Every teacher should choose himself the tasks that will be appropriate to their way of teaching and the needs of the students.