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TESTING AS A TYPE OF COMMUNICATIVE INTERACTION IN THE PROCESS OF TRAINING FUTURE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

The article is aimed at analyzing the specificity of testing assessment technique as a peculiar type of communicative interaction, which takes place in the process of professional training of future foreign language teachers. It is stressed that aspect selection of the educational content and appropriate technologies for its realization in the educational process greatly contribute to the formation of knowledge and skills required for future specialists' further effective professional activity. There have been defined the main kinds of tests that are used in the process of future foreign language teacher training in the modern Ukrainian institutions of higher education. The authors have singled out the requirements, which have to be met when compiling tests aimed at evaluation of language and speech skills. Special attention has been paid to linguo-didactic testing in the framework of the communicative approach to education, in the context of which testing is treated as a social interaction and a test task is a real situation that can happen to students in their everyday life or in the process of their professional pedagogical activity. There have been described the parameters that educational situations have to correspond to, in order to meet the communicative criterion: the place and the environment in which the interaction occurs, social background of its participants, appropriate type of speech activity and the nature of the expected behaviour. On the grounds of the scientific and pedagogical literature analysis as well as their own experience, the authors have determined the specific character of the interaction between the tester and the testees, its dependence on the conditions in which the testing is being conducted and speech activity of its participants. It is determined that the effectiveness of the interpersonal communication during the testing is influenced by the certain communicative barriers, in particular: phonetic, semantic, stylistic, logical and interlingual. The appropriate ways to overcome these barriers have been suggested so that to ensure the effectiveness of the testing as a method to check and evaluate learning outcomes of future foreign language teachers and as a particular type of communicative interaction.

Key words: *testing, interaction, communication, future teachers, foreign language.*

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ТЕСТУВАННЯ ЯК ВИД КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ ВЗАЄМОДІЇ У ПРОЦЕСІ ПІДГОТОВКИ МАЙБУТНІХ УЧИТЕЛІВ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ

Стаття присвячена аналізу специфіки тестової технології оцінювання як особливого виду комунікативної інтеракції, яка має місце у процесі професійної підготовки майбутніх учителів іноземних мов. Підкреслено необхідність добору аспектного змісту навчання і відповідних технологій його реалізації в освітньому процесі за для досягнення формування знань, умінь і навичок, необхідних для подальшої ефективної професійної діяльності

майбутніх фахівців. Виділено основні типи тестів, що застосовуються у практиці підготовки майбутніх учителів іноземних мов сучасних ЗВО України. Виокремлено вимоги, яких необхідно дотримуватися під час укладання тестів, спрямованих на перевірку мовних навичок і мовленнєвих умінь. Автори приділили особливу увагу лінгводидактичному тестуванню у рамках комунікативного підходу до освіти, в контексті якого тестування розглядається як соціальна взаємодія, а тестове завдання являє собою реальну ситуацію, у яку студент може потратити у повсякденному житті або в процесі здійснення професійної педагогічної діяльності. Охарактеризовано параметри, яким мають відповідати навчальні ситуації для задоволення критерію комунікативності: місце та обставини взаємодії, соціальний склад її учасників, відповідний вид мовленнєвої діяльності та характер очікуваних дій. На основі вивчення науково-педагогічних джерел та власного досвіду визначено специфіку взаємодії тестора та учасників тестування та її залежність від регламенту проведення тестування та мовленнєвої поведінки його учасників. Встановлено, що на ефективність міжособистісної комунікації в процесі тестування впливають певні комунікативні бар'єри, а саме: фонетичний, семантичний, стилістичний, логічний та міжмовний. Запропоновано можливі шляхи їх подолання задля забезпечення високої результативності тестування як способу перевірки навчальних досягнень майбутніх учителів іноземних мов та як окремого виду комунікативної взаємодії.

Ключові слова: тестування, взаємодія, комунікація, майбутні вчителі, іноземна мова.

Introduction. In modern society the level of education is not determined solely by the amount of knowledge and their encyclopaedic character. In the framework of the competency-based approach the level of education depends on the ability to solve problems of different levels of complexity based on the acquired knowledge. The competency approach does not deny the value of knowledge, but emphasizes the ability to use it. Within this approach the goals of education are described in terms that reflect the new abilities of future professionals, taking into account the development of their personal potential. In this regard, modern educational goals call for the formation of the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for the productive and effective professional activity of future specialists.

These goals are possible to achieve if selection of the aspect content of learning is combined with appropriate technologies of its realization in the educational process. In the process of its development and operation the structure of the learning technology involves systematic coverage of the following components: goals, content, didactic principles of learning that determine the nature of the learning process; forms, methods, means of its organization; the interaction of subjects and assessment of the learning outcomes (Bulakh, 1995).

In recent decades, with the advent of psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic approaches to learning foreign languages, the methods and means of teaching have changed, including the attitude to control, its goals and content. Language has come to be seen as a dynamic, creative, functional system (Valgina, 1998). Today, the highest criterion for language proficiency is the effectiveness of communication in accordance with the situation and environment. Thus, according to the researcher V. Avanesov, the basic principles of pedagogical measurements are as follows: the relationship between pedagogical measurements and the goals of education

and learning; objectivity of measurements; justice; scientific character and efficiency; systematicity; humanity and ethics (Avanesov, 2002: 32–46).

New views are reflected in the evaluation of the test validity. In accordance with the new approach testologists, measuring the level of language proficiency, pay attention primarily to the testee's ability to apply language and speech skills in an effective and variable way while taking part in social interaction (Avanesov, 2002: 32–46). Consequently, the problem of testing as a type of communicative interaction is urgent and topical at the modern stage of science development.

Analysis of the recent researches. The analysis of the pedagogical literature and scientific researches by S. Bondar, O. Horbatiuk, L. Kalinina, M. Krylovets, V. Meleshko, N. Muranova, O. Nadтока, N. Nazarenko, T. Polianska, O. Pometun, T. Remekh, L. Rybalko, V. Skulska, O. Topuzov, N. Ushakova, H. Shelekhova and others allows for stating, that scholars focus their attention on the problems of pedagogical testing, monitoring, diagnostics of the learning process and its outcomes, management of education quality, determining the role and place of testing in the educational process, in particular – tests and testing tasks in the content of modern educational books (Barna, 2008; Maiorov, 2000; Fedorenko, Kovalenko, 2007; Chelyshkova 2002). However, despite the relevance of testing, practical experience proves that developing and applying tests in the educational process is mostly of spontaneous character and depends on the subjective vision of educational goals, the level of teachers' competence in testology, pedagogy, psychology, as well as on their proficiency in applying appropriate teaching techniques. Moreover, the problem of testing as a type of communicative interaction in the process of training future foreign language teachers has not been the object of a special research so far.

The **purpose** of the article is to identify the specifics of the testing procedure as a type of

communicative interaction, to single out the main difficulties of testing in the process of training future foreign language teachers and the ways to overcome them.

Presenting the main material. In the context of the modern educational system, the role of control has increased significantly, with subsequent correction of knowledge and skills, the quality of mastering each specific module and course in general. A wide application of tests has become an effective and rational complement to the traditional control methods of foreign language knowledge and skills that existed in the practice of training future foreign language teachers. Testing greatly facilitates the process of knowledge control, makes it more operational. The research has revealed the following types of tests used in the training of future foreign language teachers in modern higher educational institutions: a text comprehension test, which is effective for checking the correctness of structures or graphs making, etc. For example, the task “Build a diagram or graph” is followed by the text consisting of a set of definite concepts that the student should put in a logical sequence; a completion test assignment supplement (the test text is presented in the form of a sentence in which a word or a number is missing, they must be inserted or added); a situational test. This type of tests gives an opportunity to thoroughly evaluate the students’ work on the topics of the course, to check the independence of their thinking when making decisions; peer testing that allows students to evaluate their own work and the work of their classmates to ensure the development of a range of skills and abilities (critical thinking, ability to analyze and synthesize information, solve problems, evaluate and give feedback, make value judgments and reflections) required by a foreign language teacher in future professional activity (Panchenko, 2019: 158). It is found out that tests are actively used at all control stages: as a method of preliminary control to determine the degree of attention, the level of knowledge mastery; as a method of current and final control in order to check to which extent students have acquired the presented material, as a method of evaluating students’ self-work with the reference literature. The selection of appropriate tasks for the practical classes and seminars facilitates the individualization of the educational process in future foreign language teachers training. It is established that test application in the process of training future foreign language teachers requires meeting certain standards: the content of the test should be consistent with the content and volume of the material; simplicity, unambiguity of the test; test compliance

with the level of acquired knowledge that is tested; systematic and consistent character of tests; variety of tests (Vasiuk, Kustov, 2009: 24–25).

The study of the experience of Ukrainian higher pedagogical educational institutions gives grounds to claim that open or closed (alternative) tests are widely used in the process of training future foreign language teachers. Open tests provide only the beginning of the utterance, the rest is to be completed by students. Closed tests include several answers, among which students chose the correct one. These test methods are used by teachers to control the foreign language listening comprehension. The tests may consist of such tasks as finding the correct answer among the four given options, schematically displaying the information perceived, filling in the gaps in the text, establishing a link between the audiotrack and suggested alternatives, etc. (Panchenko, 2019: 160).

In the course of the scientific research it is determined that a communicative approach to teaching directly influences the linguo-didactic testing of future foreign language teachers, since within its framework testing is treated as a communicative, social interaction. Tasks in communicative tests are real-world tasks in which students find themselves in life situations or situations that reflect their future professional and pedagogical activity, and correspond to the natural use of language when complex communication skills are required.

In this regard, the view of American testologists (L. Bachman, A. Palmer) on the test within the communicative paradigm is worth mentioning. They write that the test should be interactive in nature with tasks reflecting real discourse; texts and tasks should be correlated with situations that are real for this group of testees; skills should be presented in communicatively meaningful contexts (Bachman, Palmer, 1998).

The special emphasis is put on the starting point in the test creation within the communicative approach, which is the specification of parameters of real situations. Situations should be described in the context of the place where these situations occur; social groups (family, company staff, etc.); the main characters and the situation; actions performed (professional duties, training activities, etc.); types of texts typical for the situation (a personal letter, a newspaper article, etc.). Thus, at the stage of collecting empirical information, it is necessary to identify the tasks that testees should be able to solve when being engaged in communication; conditions of communication – the physical and socio-psychological context of events; the set of roles and social relations of communicators; skills required for discourse.

Researching testing in the context of educational communication calls for critical discourse analysis. Having studied and generalized the scientific and pedagogical literature on the topic of the research (Mayorov, Chelyshkova, Bachman, Palmer, etc.) we defined the specific nature of testing as an interaction within the educational discourse. The conducted micro-research helped to determine the specificity of the relationship between the tester and the testee in the testing environment. Thus, on the basis of our own experience of training future foreign language teachers (Osova, 2017; Panchenko, 2019) and the experience described by foreign and domestic scholars (Avanesov, Mayorov, Chelyshkova, Bachman, Palmer), we identified the special role of the tester (recipient) and the testee (communicator) in the testing process as compared to other communicative situations. Communication features directly depend on both the “external” rules, that is the rules of the testing process, and the “internal” rules concerning the speech behaviour of the communication participants, as well as the communication barriers that arise in the analyzed process and that must also be studied to represent the full scientifically substantiated characteristics of testing as a special kind of communicative interaction.

A comparative analysis of the English and German test tasks confirms the national-specific nature of the subtests and helps the testers understand that testing is communication, despite the form and purpose of the test. Moreover, this is a special interaction, which reflects the whole range of cultural specific features of the language. The effectiveness of the testing process is directly related to its effectiveness, since the peculiarities of communicative interaction in a foreign language consist in the ability to fulfill the goals and objectives of educational communication in the regulated conditions of the midterm knowledge control.

While studying testing as a specific type of communicative interaction particular attention should be paid to communicative barriers and measures to overcome them, since they act as a kind of obstacle to the information transfer from the communicant to the recipient and negatively influence the quality of future foreign language teachers training. In the process of studying pedagogical literature (Mayorov, 2000; Chelyshkova, 2002; Fedorenko, 2007) and also analyzing the practice of training future teachers of foreign languages in Ukraine (Vasyuk, 2009; Osova, 2017; Panchenko, 2019), it was determined that the information recipient and sender, being in the process of interpersonal communication, face such types of communicative barriers:

- phonetic misunderstanding (expressionless speech, fluent speech, fillers, speech defects). To ensure the appropriate perception of the physical characteristics of speech (timbre, articulation quality, pronunciation), communication participants and, above all, the tester have to choose the necessary communication speed and take into account the individual characteristics of the communicant (age, education, nationality);

- semantic barriers in intercultural communication involve not only differences in meaning systems (thesauri), dependent on age, profession, education of communicative act participants, but also variation in the reflection of the national worldviews in the minds of communication participants. In the process of testing students language teachers should take into account and realize the entire character of possible semantic barriers and avoid distorting the information received by simplifying the lexical or grammatical parts of their statements at the initial levels of testing or by using vocabulary corresponding to subsequent levels of language proficiency testing;

- stylistic barriers also occur in the testing process due to the above-mentioned reasons of intercultural nature. They can be eliminated by well-formed and structured speech according to the testing level of language proficiency and it is the task of the tester;

- logical barriers in testing arise due to differences in existing logics (female, male, childish, national). Additional comments that could eliminate such barriers are impossible due to the strict regulations of this type of educational communication. The only possible way to remove the barrier is studying the written version of the communication, where the rules of the forthcoming communication are stated;

- interlingual barriers are the key ones in the framework of the interpersonal communication interaction under research. This type of educational communication does not provide for overcoming this barrier. Moreover, even those linguistic differences that are known beforehand are not taken into account by the communication participants due to the requirement to use one language of communication – the language of the tester.

Testing, as a type of educational communication, is characterized by a significantly different attitude to communication barriers as compared to other types of educational communication or communication in general. The communicatively dominating role of the tester (teacher) due to the peculiarities of the monitoring process of the educational activities of future foreign language teachers allows him/her to manage the communication process, taking into

account the inevitable character of the communicative barriers and the regulated activity limitedness in the way of the communicative process realization.

Conclusions. Thus, it is obvious that testing, as one of the types of communicative interaction, requires establishing the validity of test tasks at the test development stage, as well as the subsequent validity of test results. Content validity is of particular interest. The organization of the test and its format have a significant impact on the measurement of the testees' traits, therefore, modern linguo-didactic tests include various test methods for assessing competences in various types of speech activity. Communicative tests

should reflect the real discourse as much as possible, and test tasks should cover a wide range of speech activities that testees should be able to carry out and which they will need in their future professional and pedagogical activities. We should strive to create communicative tests consisting of a great number of tasks, which recreate a communicative context, including relevant and authentic texts. The specificity of communicative interaction during testing directly depends on communication barriers (phonetic, semantic, stylistic, logical, interlingual) that arise in the process under research. Their prevention is possibly by applying an appropriate set of measures.

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