

ON THE PROBLEM OF MONITORING AUDITIVE EXERCISES

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Abstract. This article analyzes the functions of control in terms of its appropriateness for teaching a foreign language, particularly for training perception and understanding of foreign speech. The authors consider its types for effective use in the practice of teaching foreign languages. The article also raises the problem of the choice of rational forms of control. They should be relevant for the assessed kinds of speech activities. The authors assert that control should be effective in optimizing the process of foreign language teaching for the purpose of its analysis, introspection and reflection. The system of research strategies proposed by the authors is aimed at the rational organization of technology of work with a foreign authentic audiotext. Their goal is to develop students' own speech experience. The authors propose an integrated approach to the problem of control of foreign speech semantic perception; identify core conditions for its implementation, and provide examples of tasks on the perception and understanding of foreign language audio information.

Keywords: control; auditing; auditory competence; perception; understanding; strategy; authenticity; exercise.

The search for rational forms of control and optimal organization is one of the major problems of foreign language teaching. Control as the ratio of the results achieved with the planned learning objectives performs the following functions: controlling, instructional (educational), diagnostic, prognostic, developing, orienting, pedagogic, corrective and generalizing. In teaching practice, the following types of control are in use: a) running check (tracking), b) thematic, c) periodic, d) final, d) peer control. The main requirement for the selection of the types of control is that they should be adequate to the kinds of speech activity which are checked. In methodological literature, the following forms of control are known: a) individual, front and combined, b) oral and written, c) monolingual and bilingual; d) verifying, training, simulative; e) with the use of technical equipment or without it [1-4].

We adhere to the opinion that control in the teaching of foreign languages can't be an end in itself. It should: a) promote the optimization and activation of foreign language learning; b) replace the ineffective teaching and learning strategies on the part of the teacher and student by more effective ones; c) create more favorable conditions for the correction, improvement, enhancement of the process of mastering a foreign language for practical purposes, in accordance with modern requirements.

In our opinion, the traditional assessment of knowledge, skills, and abilities in the field of foreign language auditing can only give information about the rightness or wrongness of the final result of a speech activity, but not about all components of this competence. Meanwhile, both the teacher and the student need to observe and analyze the whole process of learning activities from the beginning to the net result in order to improve it.

In the context of the chosen problem correctly organized control should create favorable conditions for the formation, development and improvement of auditory competence in general and promotion of independent (autonomous) work of the students in this kind of speech activity. The choice of form of auditory control, in our opinion, depends on the purpose of control, volume, informative and cultural value of the perceived text, the individual characteristics of students, their language and cognitive abilities, conditions and stage of learning.

Foreign language auditory competence involves the students' ability to quickly extract the necessary linguistic means from long-term memory, to use them in different types of speech activity. That requires not only the preservation of lexical and grammatical standards, background knowledge, but also willingness to apply them consciously, adequately and in accordance with the new speech situation and purposes of communication.

Therefore, the main object of control of foreign language auditing should be not only knowledge but acquired on its basis students' ability to make appropriate decisions in specific situations on their own [5: 85]. Hence it appears that "the postulate that the mastery of a foreign language in the educational environment is a process of development and interaction of certain strategies of language acquisition in terms of specific training and communication strategies" [3: 63].

Thus, when teaching listening comprehension one should monitor not only understanding of the linguistic material and content of the audio information, but current actions, operations with this material. The object of control in this case is learning strategies used by students in the process of semantic perception of foreign speech in order to achieve the desired result. The purpose in this case is to: a) prevent their de-automatization, forgetting; b) summarize, organize them; c) consolidate and extend the experience of their use in connection with the new speech material and thereby improve the level of development of the communicative competence of foreign language and its components, including the auditory one; d) reduce the number of possible minor (not leading to serious failures in understanding) mistakes, and the effort required to perform the job of cognition.

The system of strategies should be aimed at the rational organization of technology of work with audiotext in order to develop students' own experience of learning a foreign language, including foreign language audio material. The use of such systems of strategic actions in the auditing allows

teachers: a) to teach students more effective, skillful, competent and economical mastering of a foreign language in the process of listening; b) show the full range of opportunities for students to learn a language by means of listening; c) choose a method or way of mastering educational audio material, based on the individual cognitive features of students; d) strengthen mastering techniques and the use of a foreign language through the implementation of autonomous planning and control of listening activities; e) to develop students' ability to monitor and regulate the use of certain auditive strategies of language acquisition, as well as the ability to reflect on how one carries out his training activities and how he learns. This process naturally stimulates intrinsic motivation.

All strategies are considered by us as a set of organized metacognitive and cognitive techniques, methods, activities, providing activation, accumulation, improvement and automation of knowledge, skills and abilities and their actualization in different types of speech activity, in this case - listening. Strategies which help us to obtain information in the process of listening include the strategies of perceiving audio information, remembering and keeping in mind the perceived information, comprehending information through transcoding, extracting informative pieces, establishing logical-semantic relations, the correct prediction of the audiotext content.

In view of the aforesaid, it is necessary to build auditive tasks so that they could teach: 1) to predict the content (beginning, middle, end) of the audiotext by title, keywords, semantic fragments, fragments of the discourse, plan, abstracts, that is, to restore the contents of the missing parts, using experience and context; 2) to memorize and keep in mind the perceived information, and then reproduce the comprehended information in other types of speech activity; 3) to select the most informative part of the audio messages; 4) identify the topic, main idea and meaning of the audiotext; 5) establish the relationship between the facts, causes, events and logical sequence of the audiotext; 6) encode the perceived information into larger or smaller units of speech; 7) to make a judgment, opinion about this statement on the basis of past experience, knowledge and context; 8) use the information in different types of speech activity and new speech situations [6].

Hence, it is required to stimulate learners by monitoring auditive exercises to use individual strategies and techniques of language learning, different strategies of mediated and direct communication [3: 65] to teach them to use and vary the selection and combination of these strategies, depending on the goals and situation of verbal communication [7].

The aim of the monitoring auditive exercises may be connected with: a) the semantic or structural analysis of the text; b) its transcoding; c) prediction of the story line; d) identification of meaningful points; e) the recognition of the basic and additional semantic relationships; f) the formulation of the basic idea of the audiotext; g) replacing the content using one's own

words; h) the classification of the situation based on various criteria (eg, listen to a number of similar situations and select analogous with each other, choose the illogical, not modern, not suitable for other topics, and others.); i) the assumptions on the possible content of the text by the title based on the exposition or its possible outcome (with the choice / without any choice of the proposed options).

Exercises aimed at control can include tests with sample answers and self-generated answers (matching tests, multiple-choice tests; completion, replacement, substitution tasks, answer to the question, cross-language paraphrasing, corrections), but they should have authenticity, which is understood as “the extent to which the task corresponds with the real life situation” [8: 10]. Assignments in these exercises should be formulated in such a way as to show the “student’s involvement in a real life situation” [Ibid: 19].

Here are some examples of monitoring auditive exercises.

a) training: listen to the text information and 1) set (in)consistency between the statements you’ve heard with the ones given on the list; 2) answer the questions; 3) select from a list the questions that match / do not match the content of the text; 4) establish a chronological sequence of statements given on the list; 5) correct the suggested plan of the text; 6) determine which of the proposed annotations (does not refer) refers to the text; 7) compare it with the text in a foreign language (with translation in their native language, assessing the quality of translation, indicating the lexical and grammatical errors in the translation).

b) communicative: listen to the text information and 1) define the main problem, the idea of the text, tell whether or not it is relevant for you and why?; 2) define its main idea in one sentence (a few sentences) and explain its (ir)relevance, (un)importance, (not) up-to-dateness; 3) establish cause-effect relations, define the logic of presentation of information (arguments), offer your own arguments on this issue; 4) predict the course of events; 5) from the given list select the sentences which explain, detail, reveal the preceding sentence, explain your choice; 6) determine which parts of the statements on the list can be omitted, preserving the basic meaning and explain your choice; 7) make a list of the main problems / issues raised in the text; tell (write) in detail (briefly) about one / one of them, the most interesting for you personally; 8) analyze the content of the text, define the main thought / idea of the text, with a discussion of the facts contained in it: whether they are well-known or new; what was proved by the author and what is still debatable; what facts should be additionally used depending on the degree of reliability of the facts; 9) make your conclusion (resume).

c) creative, with the use of the Internet: save an audio / video podcast on a particular topic according to students’ interests and desires, (individually, in groups) on your computer (can be found by the student himself, with or without the teacher’s help), listen (view) and make a similar situation in

the new environment, with new characters, in a dialogue, monologue form, either orally, or in writing, on behalf of one of the characters, on their own behalf with their own impression, in the form of a presentation, project; WebQuest.

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