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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Organization of Students' Educational Control Activities in Ukrainian High School

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Abstract

This article deals with the organization of control procedures in Ukrainian high school to assess students' learning outcomes. This paper carefully looks at the tasks, requirements, functions, types, forms and methods of control. Important types of control for educational purposes include preliminary, current, thematic and final control activities. These can be carried out in different forms; individual, group and frontal. Oral, written and standardized tests as control methods enjoy the widest popularity among Ukrainian high school teachers. This research proves that, control activities are only efficient if they cover all the educational material and are differentiated according to the level of students' knowledge.

Keywords: Control, Educational Activity, High School, Know-How, Knowledge, Skill, Student, Ukraine.

Introduction

Control serves as one of the means to define quantitative and qualitative parameters of educational effectiveness. It is an integral part of the diagnostic process of students' learning outcomes (Weaver, 2006). The system of control organization in contemporary high school is characterized by certain deficiencies. Among these deficiencies include the application of forms and methods need for the evaluation of students' learning outcomes without taking into account pedagogical aims.

They also consist of a weak system for realizing of students' learning function when they face their mistakes alone without teachers' assistance and underestimation of students' learning achievements as the results of their diligence in educational activity. In some circumstances, these deficits entail the registration of only the lower levels of gained knowledge [recognition, reproduction, apprehension] and not paying sufficient attention to reconstructive and creative levels of learning. Others also include, the absence of orientation to in-depth knowledge, the tendency to accumulate positive marks without taking into account the cognitive abilities of students. Despite a great number of researches in this area, this problem is still topical nowadays.

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Knowledge Control as a Concept

Control involves the detection, measurement and assessment of students' educational activity outcomes. The procedure for detecting and measuring students' outcome is also called "check." Apart from check, control involves assessment [as a process] and mark [as a result] of check (Vasiuk, & Maidaniuk, 2009).

Knowledge control, as an organizational feedback scheme and the means to manage educational process occupies an important place in higher educational establishments. It helps to define the initial level of students' knowledge and provides information about their learning progress in the course of studying. Some of the forms and methods of control change in conjunction with high school requirements, however, its main essence – to know how successful the process of mastering learning materials – remains unchanged. In view of that, control is defined by the nature discipline that is studied.

The indicators of students' knowledge control serve as the only basis for judging their learning outcomes, as well as solving such important questions on transfer to the next academic year, awarding of a scholarship, graduation from a higher educational establishment and getting a diploma. Data on the results of students' knowledge control are used to assess not only the work of students and teachers, but the work of other academic groups, courses, faculties and higher educational establishments as a whole.

System of Control for Training Specialists

The system of quality control for training specialists has the following objectives;

−To define the level of formation and development of key students' proficiencies.

−To elicit, check and assess the level of acquired knowledge and skills in order to determine how well students have mastered learning materials at all stages of education.

−To compare the actual results of educational activities to expected goals.

−To evaluate correspondence among required topics in national standards for a particular area of study or specialty.

−To encourage regular students' self-work and cognitive activity.

−To detect and develop students' creative abilities.

−To increase students' interest in learning educational materials.

−To evaluate the effectiveness of students' self-work, their ability to work with educational references and other literature.

−To elicit the best experience and work out methods to increase the quality of studying by means of implementing innovative technologies (Auzina, Holub, & Vozna, 2002; Oderii, 1995; Yahodzinskyi, Muromtseva, & Ivanova, 1997).

Control in high school should be organized in accordance with a number of requirements; it has to be subordinated to a set of educational goals. It also has to show concrete and objective results for knowledge mastering [*skills, know-how, creative activity, experience, emotionally evaluative attitude etc.*] and objective methods of analysis. Certainly, control, which results in a certain mark, has to be systematic, educational, diagnostic, stimulating, developmental, manageable, evaluative, extensive, objective and open. (Kuzminskyi, 2005; Vyhovska, 2011).

Control also helps educational institutions to perform complex roles like monitoring, stimulation, diagnostic, disciplinary, and administrative functions (Vasiuk, & Maidaniuk, 2009). If teachers in higher educational establishments in Ukraine appreciate the role control performs and take them into account, they can prepare and organize control activities in a didactically grounded and methodologically appropriate methods. Every teacher should develop a system of control activities which will ensure the realization of all control functions.

Types of Control for Higher Educational Establishment

Results from studies on educational control show evidence of different types of control. Preliminary control is used as a premise for successful planning and management of educational processes. Its aim is to show the general level of students' attainment in a particular subject, in order to map out further organization of students' educational activity. Preliminary control [*check and assessment of the residual knowledge*] may also be carried out some time after a final exam in a discipline either to evaluate in-depth knowledge or to define students' general performance.

Current control of knowledge is an organic part of the whole pedagogical process; it serves to elicit the level of educational material perception [*mastering*]. It is carried out during routine educational activities and manifests itself in teachers' systematic observation on students' work in every lesson. It is aimed at getting prompt objective information about students' level of knowledge and quality of their work in class. It also helps in solving management problems regarding the educational process, which is sometimes possible only on the grounds of current control data.

Threshold (thematic, module, block) control of knowledge indicates the quality of learning particular themes like chapters, topics, and students' psychological potentials. Threshold control allows teachers to check mastering of the acquired knowledge within a longer period of time and it covers a considerable scope of modules. It can be conducted in an oral or written form, individually or in groups.

Table 1. Types of Control

Type	Purpose
Preliminary	*Aimed at diagnostics before learning a new module or topic. This is done at the beginning of the semester*
Current	*Show the quality of students' learning in class*
Threshold	*Find out how well students have learnt a certain topic or unit and how effectively they have used reference literature*
Final	*Define students' level of educational attainment in specific academic disciplines*

Adapted from: Oderii (1995); Yahodzinskyi, Muromtseva, and Ivanova (1997).

Final control involves checking the level of students' knowledge and skills obtained during a semester, an academic year or the whole period of studying in a higher educational establishment. The system and the structure of students' knowledge are determined in the course of final control. It includes semester, end-of-year and state exams as well as tests before exams. The main goal of exams is to estimate the real content of students' knowledge in terms of its extent, quality and ability to apply it in practical activities. Despite the results of control procedures during a semester, exam as a final type of control should be obligatory for all students.

Forms and Systems of Control for Higher Educational Establishment

Control is carried out in different forms: individual, group and frontal. Presently, Ukrainian educational system in high school is based on the main principles of European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System [ECTS]. ECTS form of rating assessment offers a system which increases the role of current and final control and makes it systematic. Rating assessment provides integral evaluation of students' results. It combines quantitative evaluation of results and provides qualitative indexes for students. Consequently, it enables them take into account their achievements at every stage of knowledge mastering to make their self-work more interesting. It is convenient in terms of transferring national mark into ECTS scale and it encourages students' self-control development.

System approach involves complex application of the methods to check students' knowledge, skills and know-how. One of the most important control methods is observation of students' educational activity. It allows teachers to get the idea of students' cognitive abilities, their attitude to knowledge mastering, the level of their self-preparation, etc.

Oral test is widely used in the traditional system of assessing students' learning outcomes, check and assessment. It involves students' questioning on the content of educational material and assessment of their answers. According to its nature, oral test can be individual and frontal, simple and complex (Yanchenko, 2008).

Written test is one of the most important forms of students' knowledge, skills and know-how control. This form of control is believed to be time-efficient in terms of the simultaneous inclusion of all group members during one educational period, as well as from the point of view of data handling and getting the results. It is worth mentioning that the Similarity of students' works allows teachers to set identical demands to everybody, which increases the objectivity of studying

results evaluation. Using this form, we can quickly and simultaneously check the level of knowledge mastering by all students, define the areas for individual work with every student, carry out the necessary analysis of the process of knowledge mastering and then draw corresponding methodological conclusions.

The main drawback of written tests is seen in the considerably long period of educational time it requires to conduct such a check. In regards to this, written tests should be designed to be shorter. Hence, before teachers get ready to conduct control activities, they should recognize the discrepancies that may influence the quality students' expected outcome. The main prerequisite for the choice of control forms is that, they have to correspond to the knowledge, skills and know-how which are being tested. All the aforementioned methods of control have one common drawback – every person who tests and assesses students proceeds from their own subjective impressions, intuition and experience. A certain example or standard of the correct and consistent execution of actions is required. When there is a particular model, checking becomes simpler and more automated.

Some of the above mentioned problems can be solved by using standardized tests, however, it is widely accepted that they also have their shortcomings. In Ukraine, tests are used at the final stage of professional training to check and assess the level of students' mastering of chosen academic discipline. Such tests are applied to determine graduates' qualifications and qualification tests are usually complex.

Students have to not only prove that they possess some knowledge, skills and know-how, but also demonstrate that they are capable of making right decisions. Yet, testing cannot entirely substitute all forms of oral and written control. The skills in special terminology, the ability to produce logical sentences, to express ideas in a comprehensible and coherent way can only be reliably checked with the help of oral control forms (e.g. during seminars). The level of practical skills formation is assessed in practical lessons or during different kinds of educational and professional practice.

Due to rapid technical development at the beginning of the 21st century, it is becoming more and more popular to organize and control students' educational activities with the help of information technologies. Information technologies change the character of students' learning. They brisk up students' self-work through different electronic instruments which are designed for educational purposes. That is why organization and control of educational process with the help of personal computers, the Internet, electronic teaching aids and distance learning is getting more popular among Ukrainian higher educational establishments. Teachers can control students using e-mails, forums or even chats. These had made it possible to conduct control on students' activities round-the-clock.

Conclusion

Accordingly, the main requirement for the organization of effective control for students' learning outcomes in Ukrainian higher educational establishment should be systematic in character. Control activities should cover all the educational materials and should have being differentiated according to the level of students' knowledge. Students should be informed about the content, methods, forms and time of control activities. They should know the results of the test, analyze their mistake and get the proper feedback.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares the work has no conflicts of interest.

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