

PREPARATORY EXERCISES AIMED TO BUILD MONOLOGICAL SPEECH SKILLS

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The serious challenge that any teacher of foreign languages in an engineering university faces is how to meet crucial demands of our society aimed at training engineers with a good command of a foreign language while having the insufficient number of hours in an academic curriculum. The modern society and labor market influenced by global trends of different nature require great modernization of educational process, which implies finding new and more original approaches, guidelines, ways and techniques. Achieving this goal seems impossible without using innovative technologies in teaching foreign languages, combination of traditional and intensive techniques, and making an emphasis on a communicative principle.

In the course of training students in various types of communication activities, teachers must be guided by principles of communicative teaching methods. To our regret, very often groups of students are quite different in their composition. They are not homogeneous from the perspective of their level of foreign language competence. Besides, for various reasons, they may be under-motivated to study foreign languages. While in relatively ideal classroom environments teachers can achieve better results, they must not lose heart working in worse conditions and must still widely introduce such types of work as brainstorming, role plays, simulations, case studies and projects, presenting scientific ideas and delivering speeches at conferences.

Guided by English teachers and teachers of engineering professions, our students make speeches at annual scientific conferences held at our and other

universities. Students present their projects covering the subject of their professional interest, devoted to solving scientific problems. We believe that only the willful participation of students in learning process and using a foreign language as an instrument for advanced professional study can ensure gaining successful theoretical knowledge and necessary language skills.

This work is focused on the preliminary stage of building monological speech competence in classes of foreign languages with students who major in energy management. Special attention is devoted to preparatory exercises aimed to develop the basis for specific abilities and skills to express thoughts and ideas producing correct, logically related, informative utterances, mini monologues, etc.

Monological speech is defined differently by different sources; however, all definitions can more or less be reduced to the following: monologue is a long utterance or a speech delivered by one person, sometimes preventing other people from participating in the conversation. [1]

Some scientists define it as a speech of a person who expresses his/her thoughts, ideas, intentions, and emotions, evaluates some results of action developments in a detailed form, independently building the structure, content, composition and language tools of his/her speech while addressing one or several listeners, interlocutors. [1]

Three recognized stages of building monological speech competence are respectively presented by three groups of exercises. Prior to moving on to combining sentences into supra-phrasal unities, making mini monologues, etc., let us pay our attention to the first stage and preparatory (reproductive) exercises, with the aim to develop skills on a sentence level, i.e. to make sentences on a suggested topic. These skills can be developed through the following activities. [1, p. 352]

1. There are various exercises on finding the analogy and building sentences. One of the examples focuses the attention of students on finding relationships between two words in an original pair. Such relationships as: *tool and object, tool and action, cause and effect, part to whole, class and its member*. Students have to

analyze all pairs of words and recognize similar or parallel relationship in one of the pairs. [2, p. 63]

For example: Lignite:Fossil fuel (The relationship of lignite to fossil fuel is similar to the relationship of ...)

- a) *transmission network : distribution network*
- b) *supplier: consumer*
- c) *uranium : wind power*
- d) *biomass : renewable sources*

2. Another kind of exercises is aimed at inspiring students to produce the idea opposite to the given one. There may be exercises expressing *True/False* statements. Students have to respond to a false statement with a true one. Also, it may be a statement stimulating comparison of different objects, processes, phenomena, etc. Let us consider the following example.

In case with the phenomenon of nuclear fusion no greenhouse gases are released, almost no radioactive waste is produced and, to crown it all, the primary fuel is abundantly available on earth, whereas, in case with nuclear fission process...

3. Exercises on completing a sentence with an appropriate word present another kind of training tasks. These words may be given after exercises or be omitted. For example:

A coal-fired power plant uses traditional sources of energy, such as solid black fossil ... (fuel).

The system of district heating, responsible for heat distribution in one centralized location, is connected to a power ... (plant).

4. The next type of preparatory exercises gives students the task to compose a sentence using the given words, for instance: *event, unexpected, an, force major, uncontrollable, is*. [2, p. 65]

Force major is an unexpected uncontrollable event.

5. Students may be asked to extend a sentence, giving their variants of answers. For example: *A wind farm is a power station using the natural flow of air in order to ...*

These preparatory exercises on a sentence level may be considered as part of the whole process developing monological speech competence; or they may also be regarded separately. Nevertheless, this stage is very important, and it must always precede the stage of combining sentences into larger structural frames.

References:

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2. How to prepare for the scholastic aptitude test / Samuel C. Brownstein, Mitchel Weiner, Sharon Weiner Green – 18th edition: Barrons Educational Series Inc., 1994. – 630 p.