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DESIGNING SPOKEN PRESENTATIONS FOR ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL NEEDS

This paper argues in favour of the high importance of designing spoken presentations with a specific professional profile. Teaching principles of spoken presentations is an especially relevant curriculum segment and is done with the ultimate purpose of better communicating professional knowledge to other professionals. By making students aware of basic points, types, characteristics and styles of scientific and technical communication, the paper is to serve as a starting point in an attempt to make them expand and perfect their communication skills.

Key words: spoken presentations, academic purposes, professional purposes.

Introduction. We have entered a new global period in which communication presents a major part of our daily lives. Proficiency in spoken communication skills is highly important in order to function effectively in academic and professional settings. Mastering these skills in today's highly competitive world is more important than ever. A professional presentation requires ability to convey the right image that you want your audience to see. Teaching principles of spoken presentations at faculties is an especially relevant curriculum segment and is done with the ultimate purpose of better communicating professional knowledge to other professionals.

Many professionals need to create spoken presentations «in one capacity or another over the course of their careers. Sometimes they will have to present new ideas or progress reports to their colleagues and bosses, or sometimes they will share the findings of their latest scientific inquiries with their peers» [10].

So, teaching students to design effective presentations implies training them insightful and well-trained thinking strategies that can produce clarity in communication without oversimplifying scientific or vocational issues. Improving the quality of presentation actually improves the quality of thought and vice versa. This is the ultimate result of a successful presentation.

Bridging the gap between language study and language use. «New work skills are emerging as crucial for success in the 21st century. These include skills of critical analysis, evaluation, experimentation, collaboration, communication, abstraction, system thinking, and persuasion» [11; 13]. Every professional is involved in some aspect of communications which usually involve gathering, analyzing, and distributing of scientific and/or technical information efficiently and accurately for specific audiences. Among the many advantages of oral presentations are: «bridging the gap between language study and language use; using the four

language skills in a naturally integrated way; helping students to collect, inquire, organize and construct information; enhancing teamwork; helping students become active and autonomous learners» [7]. If properly guided and organized, spoken presentations provide a learning experience and teach lifelong skills that will be beneficial to students in all school subjects, and later in their careers [8].

So, the aim is for the students to learn the structure of various kinds of communications and the appropriate style of speech. First, they are explained that learning the principles of spoken presentations in English is done with the ultimate purpose of better communicating scientific and professional knowledge to other professionals. Special attention is paid for the students to understand that scientific and professional presentation communicates specific information about a specific subject to a specific audience for a specific purpose. Generally speaking, scientific and technical presentation often focuses on resolving some problem or delivery of information. The audience element is crucial for successful presentation. The speaker needs to make a precise judgment about who they write for or talk to, and according to that adapt their presentation to the audience's needs, expectations, levels of understanding, background. The purpose of a professional presentation may be to inform and/or persuade the audience that the speaker's method of resolving a problem is effective and efficient. The achievement of the preset purpose proves the validity of the presentation.

Understanding the basics of spoken presentations. Speaking is the mode of communication most often used to express opinions, make arguments, offer explanations, transmit information, and make impressions upon others. Graduates need to speak well in their personal lives, future workplaces, social interactions. They will have meetings to attend, presentations to make, discussions and arguments to participate in, and groups to work with. If basic instructions and opportunities to practice speaking are available, graduates position themselves to accomplish a wide range of goals. As [4] explains, «communication creates, maintains and modifies social reality through the exchange of meanings and understandings in the process of communication». It is a dynamic interactive process that involves the effective transmission of facts, ideas, thoughts, feelings and values. It is tailored according to the needs of specific professions and allows students to present the acquired academic knowledge in both academic and professional environment. According to [9] «knowing the content of the functional areas of business is important, but to give life to those ideas – in meetings or in solo presentations – demands an effective oral presentation». An oral presentation is a type of face-to-face communication where you inform, guide, inspire the audience to think about your topic, and convince them to agree with the idea that you put forth. The success largely depends on judging all the specifics of the situation and responding to those properly, and the impression one gives as a person.

Spoken presentations are an integral part of almost every professional environment, as professionals may need to communicate with other professionals, management, laymen, press, students. They demonstrate one of the most successful way “to get the student's attention, encourage curiosity, create challenges» [6] and master the situation.

One especially relevant part of foreign language instruction curriculum at faculties are the principles of spoken presentations for academic and professional needs [14]. The importance of these skills lies in the fact that they have a completely practical purpose and, are directly related with the real future needs of the students. All decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning [2; 6].

It is important to note that the study of presentation techniques is a chance for students to gain insight into knowledge and skills that make a good lecturer which often turns to become their vocation [12].

The mastery of the subject topic and the good will to interact with others will allow them to actually enjoy sharing their knowledge in a constructive way both for their audience and themselves with structured planning and organization.

The main steps in preparing, organizing and delivering a spoken presentation. Since oral presentations involve multi-skills, a carefully planned and constructed guideline will help develop students' receptiveness to oral presentations. Listing instructional objectives and explaining reasons for this activity can increase student participation and may always result in a heightening of satisfaction and achievement.

The fundamental purpose of scientific discourse is not the mere presentation of information and thought, but rather its actual communication [3]. The fact is that spoken presentations are much more than a simple delivery of one's scientific or professional knowledge. The preconditions of an effective, but most importantly good spoken presentations are many. Sole mastery of the required knowledge is insufficient in this case. The success largely depends on judging all the specifics of the situation and responding to those properly, and the impression one gives as a person. A spoken presentation should never be a monologue, but an active dialogue in which verbal communication is not the only constituent. The facts that need close attention are the following [12]:

1. Identify the audience

The first thing to be done when preparing a spoken presentation is to identify the audience as precisely as possible (experts, technicians, executives, nonspecialists). Different audiences require and are prepared for different amount and depths of information.

2. Determine the main purpose of the talk

The presentation can have one of these aims: to inform, to persuade, to teach. Depending on these, the structure and the shape of the presentation will vary significantly.

3. Shape the presentation

The organization will depend on the overall purpose of the talk, but basically it may be of the following kinds [12]:

- classifications – organizing information into groups that share common characteristics;
- partition – organizing information into components and sub-components;
- cause and effect – describing and persuading by means of identifying casual relationships;
- problem and solution – organizing material in response to a dilemma;
- experimentation – organizing the information given, the purpose, aim, materials, procedures, results and discussion.

4. Introduce appropriate visual aids

To help the audience follow the presentation, it is a good idea to use some of the visual aids. They function as «cue cards» clarifying the message and allowing the audience to remember the main points. They can be: slides, handouts, flipcharts, overhead projector, whiteboards.

5. Prepare a suitable introduction and establish contact with the audience

The introduction must draw the audience's attention, identify the topic, and create expectations in the audience that the presenter will satisfy in the course of the presentation. Gain the audience's attention by connecting their needs/values/knowledge to the topic of the speech.

6. Familiarize the audience with the aim, content, and the structure of presentation

The audience should know what to expect and should be immediately persuaded that these expectations will be fulfilled. This requires clear statement of the content organization at the very beginning.

7. Prepare a closing summary

An effective conclusion develops naturally from the structure and content of the preceding material. It reaffirms the connection between the audience and the material presented.

8. Delivery

During the presentation the presenter need to:

- face the audience – maintain eye contact with the audience as much as possible;
- use natural hand gestures;
- speak in a clear and audible voice;
- be aware that nervousness is to be expected, just should be turned into enthusiasm;
- give the talk a clear, logical structure with an introduction, the main body and a conclusion;
- make the visual aids clear and easy to understand;
- invite questions from the audience at the conclusion of your presentation;
- respond to questions politely, good-humoredly, and briefly;
- summarize your main points and give a strong concluding remark that reinforces why your information is of value.

As a **summary** to everything mentioned above, it is important to point out that spoken presentations for academic and professional purposes need to occupy a significant part of language teaching classes. By their nature they can be taught only as an interactive kind of lecturing. Through practice work students reproduce the knowledge lectured through their own

examples. The aim of such classes is practical and concrete. It is tailored according to the needs of specific professions and allows students to present the acquired academic knowledge in both academic and professional environment.

Concluding Remarks. The aim of this report is to present wider audience with the specifics of designing spoken presentations for academic and professional purposes. To give a successful presentation, and at the same time a good image of yourself (or your company), careful preparations and organization are required.

Improving the quality of presentation actually improves the quality of thought and vice versa. The success largely depends on judging all the specifics of the situation and responding to those properly, and the impression one gives as a person. The purpose of a professional presentation may be to inform and/or persuade the audience that the speaker's method of resolving a problem is effective and efficient. The achievement of the preset purpose proves the validity of the presentation.

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У статті розглядається значущість розробки усних презентацій із специфічним професійним профілем. Підкреслюється важливість навчання студентів таким презентаціям для кращого передавання професійних знань іншим фахівцям. Пропонується методика ознайомлення студентів з основними типами, характеристиками та стилями науково-технічної комунікації для удосконалення їх умінь професійного спілкування.

Ключові слова: усні презентації, академічні цілі, професійні цілі.

В статье рассматривается значимость разработки устных презентаций со специфическим профессиональным профилем. Подчеркивается важность обучения студентов таким презентациям для лучшей передачи профессиональных знаний другим специалистам. Предлагается методика ознакомления студентов с основными типами, характеристиками и стилями научно-технической коммуникации для совершенствования умений профессионального общения.

Ключевые слова: устные презентации, академические цели, профессиональные цели.

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