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PROMPT ENGINEERING FOR IMPROVING FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS OF TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Annotation. The article focuses on the use of prompt engineering as an effective tool for independent work on the formation of students’ foreign language skills in the context of digitalization of education. With its help, learning a foreign language in a technical university is faster, more conscious and more enjoyable than with most standard services. A university graduate who knows the basics of interacting with generative AI will be competitive in the labor market and will be able to meet the demands of the digital economic ecosystem that is already being formed today.

Keywords: prompt, prompt engineering, foreign language skills.

***Introduction*.** The most important tasks of teaching a foreign language in the conditions of a technical university are to teach students professional foreign language communication, to gain knowledge and to develop skills that allow future specialists to use a foreign language in their professional activities adequately. The main goal of independent work in terms of practical use of a foreign language is to achieve an appropriate level of foreign language communicative competence. This goal is achieved by using various types and forms of independent students’ work in learning a foreign language in the educational process.

Students’ independent work on improving their foreign language skills is carried out using textbooks and applications with the same exercises. Systematic work with these tools yields results, but the goals, level and real situations in which the language is used are rarely taken into account, plus a lack of time and inability to manage time properly lead to the fact that students reduce the effectiveness of independent study and consolidation of foreign language material. Neural networks are changing this approach. Unlike applications with a fixed programme, artificial intelligence adapts to the level of proficiency in a foreign language, takes into account the time that will actually be spent on consolidating the material, reacts to errors and questions at the moment, and creates a live practice rather than a set of exercises. The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies into the educational process allows the use of prompt engineering in organizing regular and productive students’ independent work to improve foreign language skills [4].

Main part. Prompt is a text description of a task that needs to be completed using an AI model. This is a query that is given to the model to generate text, images, code, or other types of content. However, there is an important caveat: the quality of training directly depends on the prompt [1]. With the help of well-formulated suggestions, AI can be turned into a personal teacher – for conversational practice, grammar and vocabulary, adapted specifically to a student's level of foreign language proficiency.

Prompt engineering is a process of creating efficient and accurate tools for working with large language models (LLM). It should be noted that the effectiveness and quality of the feedback received from generative AI depends on the student's ability to formulate a prompt correctly in order to solve a specific problem.

The experience of interacting with generative AI indicates that a low-quality prompt, as a rule, leads to the generation of superficial, inaccurate, or ethically unsafe information materials, which in turn contributes to discrediting the idea of using AI technologies in the educational process. Thus, it can be said that prompt engineering is being transformed from a highly technical skill into a fundamental competence, including the formation of communication skills for interacting with AI along with the development of critical thinking aimed at assessing the quality of the information generated and the expediency of its further use [3].

A library of prompts is a set of high-quality tools that can be used for teaching or testing a language model. The prompts in the library can be grouped by theme, style, or other parameters, making them easier to find and use. Using the prompt library allows us to speed up the process of

creating content using language models, and provides a more predictable result, since all requests have already been pre-checked. It should be considered that models are regularly updated and it will be useful to test the existing prompts on new versions [2].

We have collected the main top tips for learning a foreign language. This is not just a list of queries, but also a system of formulating prompts that allows you to train foreign language skills and gradually increase the level of a foreign language proficiency.

The basic constructor of a prompt when learning a foreign language looks like this: role → task → level/goal → format → restrictions/verification [5]. “You are [the role]. I'm learning [the language], + my level is [A2/B1], the goal is [studying at BSUIR/ speaking at a conference], the format is [dialogue/exercises], correct mistakes like this: [gently/severely], at the end is a mini-test”.

A big problem with foreign language self-training is the lack of structure. Today you learn a new group of words, tomorrow you learn new grammar rules, the day after tomorrow you learn nothing. The prompt solves the problem of structure (a kind of personal plan): “Make a 7-day study plan for the B2 level to study [insert topic]. I can practice for [X] minutes a day. Include exercises for monologue speech, listening comprehension, reading and writing, suitable for my level”. That prompt provides a clear starting point in language learning, helps to build regular training sessions and distribute the load between conversational practice, listening comprehension, reading and writing evenly, so that learning is not chaotic and one-sided.

Successful assimilation of professionally oriented vocabulary can be ensured with the help of the following prompt: “Give me 20 basic words on the topic [language] for everyday use. Divide them into categories (words, basic phrases, speech cliches), specify the pronunciation and check after”. Vocabulary is presented in semantic blocks immediately, indicating pronunciation and usage examples in context, and memorizing turns into active practice with verification, rather than passive reading of lists. You can ask: “Add examples of sentences” or “Do a multiple-choice test”.

The improvement of dialogue speech can be carried out with the help of a prompt, the “mock interview simulator”: “Behave like a friendly native speaker. Start a basic conversation with me. Ask one question at a time and correct all grammar mistakes in my speech”. This approach reduces the fear of making mistakes, turns learning into a real communication instead of a set of exercises, and provides gentle corrections immediately in the context of real communication, rather than in isolation from the situation.

Conclusion. Well-formulated prompts turn AI into a universal language coach – personal, patient and accessible at any time. Ignoring the need to develop prompt engineering skills at the present stage creates risks of professional lag in the future.

A university graduate who does not know the basics of interacting with generative AI will be uncompetitive in the labor market and will not be able to meet the demands of the digital economic ecosystem fully that is already being formed today. A student, a future engineer who knows the basics of prompt engineering, will be able to develop personalized communication tasks and training exercises with the help of AI independently to improve foreign language skills, generate ideas for discussion, optimize routine workload, for example, related to the need to work with documentation and electronic business correspondence, create projects in a foreign language, as well as receive analytical support from AI. This will allow him to continue using a foreign language in his professional activities successfully.

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