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WARM-UP ACTIVITIES AT MARITIME ENGLISH LESSONS

Summary. The article highlights the importance of using the so called warm-ups which we understand as short activities functioning as an energizer, filler, cooler, lead-in or as an initial warm-up itself in teaching maritime English. It mentions the differentiation among warm-up activities and outlines the features of a good warm-up activity and the reasons for incorporating such activities into a lesson plan and a series of lessons on a certain topic. As there is a scarcity of sources on ready-made activities of a kind for maritime English lessons, the article offers some practical suggestions of warmers, lead-ins, fillers and coolers that can be used by teachers at different stages of the lesson to serve the purpose of engaging students into work, giving them some active rest using the language, introducing the topic or bringing the lesson to the closure.

Keywords: warmer, activization, energizer, Maritime English, speech activity.

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МОВЛЕННЄВІ РОЗМИНКИ НА ЗАНЯТТЯХ З МОРСЬКОЇ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ

Анотація. Стаття наголошує важливість використання мовленнєвих розминок, які використовуються на заняттях та які функціонують в якості енергійної розрядки, тому що головним прийомом активізації навчальної діяльності студентів являється їх залучення до виконання мовленнєвої розминки (warm-up) на занятті. За допомогою мовленнєвої зарядки можна досягти багато цілей, а саме: зацікавити студентів темою заняття, привернути їх увагу до нових лексичних одиниць, запланованих для вивчення на занятті; допомогти їм подолати скутість у спілкуванні, тому що мовленнєва розминка – це не тест і не залік, і як наслідок, відсутня напруга через оцінки; є можливість повторити матеріал попередніх занять; поповнити лексичний запас новими словами; дати змогу студентам використати загальні знання; і головне – залучити до роботи всіх студентів. У статті розмежовані різні види мовленнєвих розминок, окреслюються їх особливості та причини включення такої діяльності до плану уроку та серії уроків з певної теми. Завдання для мовленнєвих розминок повинні бути нестандартними, мати творчий характер, передбачати дискусію. Оскільки існує дефіцит джерел з готовими видами діяльності для занять з морської англійської мови, стаття пропонує деякі практичні пропозиції мовленнєвих розминок, які можуть бути використані викладачами на різних етапах заняття для залучення студентів до роботи, надання їм активної розминки з використанням мови, ознайомлення їх з темою заняття або підведення підсумків навчального заняття.

Ключові слова: мовна розминка, активізація, енергійна розрядка, морська англійська мова, мовленнєва діяльність.

Problem statement. One of the problems that never loses its relevance in teaching foreign languages in higher education is improving the quality of learning. For achieving high results in learning foreign languages it is highly recommended to activate mental and linguistic activities of those who study. Using warming up activities is the best solution for motivation and activation.

Recent research and publications. According to A. Jenkins, C.F. Mulrine, and M.A. Prater sitting quietly in a chair and staying focused requires effort from all students [8, p. 18]. Students need breaks from learning to get a better focus and enhance learning whilst incorporating movement into the lesson can be achieved by the use of warm-up activities of various kinds throughout the lesson when and where most necessary [9, p. 66].

Allwright states that warm up activities are aimed at attracting students' attention, helping them put aside distracting thoughts, getting them ready to focus on whatever activities that follow: "They will cause people to stop whatever they are doing or thinking and refocus their attention" [1, p. 158].

In Dornyei's opinion teachers need to actively generate positive students' attitudes toward learning via arousing students' curiosity and creating an attractive image for the class so that they will get more involved with it and a better learning process will take place [5].

Velandia claims that warming up is an essential teaching technique that "breaks the monotony of learning, makes the teacher's tasks more interesting and increases the involvement of the students" [10, p. 12].

The purpose of the article. Researchers seem to agree that the effectiveness of learning English highly depends on students' positive attitude toward the learning process, teachers' ability to make a lesson enjoyable and stimulating by efficient planning so that monotony doesn't take over the lesson. It is also believed that the proper use of warm-up activities makes tasks more interesting, increases students' involvement, gets students' attention, creates a positive atmosphere and thus, as there is a scarcity of sources on ready-made activities of a kind for maritime English lessons, the purpose of the article is to offer some practical suggestions of warmers, lead-ins, fillers and coolers that can be used by teachers at different stages of the lesson to serve the purpose of engaging students into work, giving them some active rest using the language, introducing the topic or bringing the lesson to the closure.

Presentation of the main material. Warmers, lead-ins, fillers and coolers are extremely useful tools in the classroom and any good English teacher should know how to use them. They all have a different function in the lesson, but there are 3 basic common features that should be kept in

mind for all of them: they need to be quick (ideally 5-10 minutes); they need to be topical and they need to be fun. Getting the student relaxed and thinking in English is the key issue here. Nothing can be learned if students are tense and unwilling to speak, therefore warming up will allow the wheels in their heads to start turning and open up the gateway to knowledge.

For the first year students, in the module 'Maritime Geography Basics' (in the course-book "Welcome Aboard"), it is recommended to conduct the warmer 'Moving true or false'. This warmer checks what your students know about a topic with true or false questions asked really quickly. However, a teacher can make it more exciting. All students stand up. If they think the answer is true, they stand on the left side of the classroom. If it's false, they stand on the right one. If they get it wrong, they are out (they return to their seats). A teacher continues until one student remains. The group then rewards the winner with a round of applause.

When it comes to students' attitudes and motivation levels, having pictures can really make all the difference, especially with young learners of beginner level of English language proficiency. Otherwise unenthusiastic students or beginner learners intimidated by yet new need to use only English to express themselves in the English language classroom might get excited when they see new visual materials enter the classroom. A fun activity which we might call 'Ambiguous pictures exhibition' used as a warmer at the beginning of the lesson might facilitate a collective sigh of relief involving students in an usual activity and setting their minds off stressing over forming sentences properly in their own minds. To conduct this activity when learning the module "Types of Cargoes" in "Welcome Aboard" course-book (at the beginning of any lesson on any topic of the module) find and print pictures of what can be a type of cargo, but taken a photo of in such a way that it becomes hardly recognizable. It can be a sunflower seed or a sand particle (dry bulk cargo) taken a photo of when under the microscope, wine concentrate viewed through the bottom of a glass bottle (liquid bulk cargo) or oil particles caught a shot of when aiming to the water surface (also liquid bulk cargo). The more unusual and unrecognizable the commodity looks, the more association provoking it can prove to be. Place the pictures around the classroom and ask your students to walk around the classroom in pairs pausing at each picture for half a minute to discuss what it shows and what thoughts, associations or feelings it awakes in them. When 'the exhibition is closed' (ideally in 4-6 minutes) and students return to their seats, conduct a brief feedback session by asking students to share with the class what they think about 'the exhibition'.

"Fly Swatter" is a lively and distinctive activity to practise vocabulary not only with kids on everyday topics with the names of objects that surround us, but also with maritime English learners. It can be played at the beginning of the lesson within almost any topic once students have learnt about 15-20 active vocabulary words. When first introducing the activity elicit from students their attitude to flies and their ways of dealing with them, as well as what they use as a fly swatter when not

in possession of this useful tool for the task. This will set the mood for the activity. Let's say you are playing this game with first year maritime English learners after having learnt the names for internal or external ship parts, or both. In the course-book "Welcome Aboard" that would be in the middle of the first topic of the module "Types of Ships". To prepare for the activity find, print and place the pictures of ship parts or of ships with ship parts circled in them onto the board. Draw or print flies of various sized over these pictures. Divide the students into teams. Give each team an improvised (an old newspaper) or a real fly swatter. Draw a start line students must not cross until the signal is given. Explain that once given a signal after your or another student's description (a bell ringing, hands clapping, a word 'go' or 'now') a student from each of competing teams has to run to the board, shout out the name of the ship part described and 'kill the fly' printed in the picture with the corresponding ship part using his fly swatter. The first student to do so correctly wins his team a point. The descriptions of ship parts can be detailed and presuppose one correct answer and one winner only, for example "kill a fly on a flat steering device used to change the direction the ship is following" or be more general and allow for several correct answers to let each team win a point, for example "kill a fly on a ship part located below the waterline".

In the course-book "Seven Seas Ahead" there is a module "First Aid on Board", which includes topic 'External parts of the body'. Cadets should be able to name body parts and state which of them are at greater risk in seafaring profession. To facilitate learning of body parts names, 'Simon says' warmer is suggested. Teacher or one of the students should give the students a series of simple commands to perform: "Touch your face! Touch your left ear! Hold your partner's elbow!" Then tell them that only commands prefixed by the words 'Simon says' are to be carried out. Anyone who makes a mistake and obeys other commands loses a 'life'.

Lead-in activities, as well as performing a similar function to warmers, are at the same time designed to introduce a topic, generate interest and whet the appetite. They focus minds on the topic and activate schema. At the first lesson of the module "Maritime Security" (course-book "Seven Seas Ahead"), the teacher can introduce the topic using the following activity: divide the class into two and tell students to stand as 2 lines. Tell them line 1 will form a circle and that will be the inner one, line 2 will form another circle around the inner circle. Set the time limit. Ask students to come face to face and tell what they know about the topic "Maritime Security" you are going to work on, for example 'What is dangerous for the ship and crew in ports? How can you protect your ship in a port? What do you know about security levels? Why do you need them?' When the time is up, tell the outer circle to move until you stop them and the inner circle to wait for a new partner. You can play music while they are moving. When they stop, they can talk on the same topic with their new partners. You can finish the activity after a few rounds.

The teacher also can introduce the topic, using the activity "Associations". For example, the first lesson of the topic "Solid Bulk Cargo" ("Sail

Safe”), can be started by suggesting an evocative word, for example, ‘bulk’. A student says what his association with the word is. It might be ‘grains’. The next student suggests an association with the word ‘grains’, and so round the class. Here are some other words you may start with: solid cargo, dry cargo, grains, bulker. You might want to use any item of vocabulary the class has recently learnt.

To get your students interested in the topic and stimulate their learning motivation for the lesson you might cut out differently shaped holes in pieces of paper to be attached over a topical text. Make sure that some of the words revealed through holes in the paper placed over the text have some connection with the topic of the lesson (ideally these might be active vocabulary items in the topic learnt) and some, on the contrary, might be misleading to provide opportunity for differences in opinions and some discussion. Say you are conducting “Guess the topic” lead-in with stencils when learning Colregs, in particular Rule 6 Safe Speed. That would be when learning the module “Underway” in “Lucky Voyage” course-book with KSMA cadets. You might want to use the text of the rule itself for this lead-in activity with words ‘current’, ‘wind’, ‘traffic density’, ‘operational radar’, ‘lights’, ‘stopping distance’, etc. ‘peeping’ through the holes. Make sure the words revealed are different for each student so that there is a wider pull for attempts at guessing the topic and their justification.

Unlike warmers and coolers, lesson fillers are often not going to be required at every lesson. If the lesson plan is timed out well and all activities go according to the plan you won’t need to use a filler. However, a teacher should always include a couple of filler activities in every lesson plan as contingencies to ensure some cover for every eventuality. No matter how well a teacher can plan lessons he can never be 100% certain that everything will go according to the plan, particularly in terms of timing.

Fillers at the lessons can serve a similar purpose to warmers. They can be used to change the pace, energy levels and dynamics between activities whenever needed during the class. They can both help students to relax and give a boost when things are perhaps flagging a little. They can allow a bit of ‘timeout’ between more conventional classroom activities. They are flexible and can be used at almost any time. They are also especially useful for filling time at the end of the lesson.

For example, at the lesson devoted to “Life Saving Appliances” (course-book “Seven Seas Ahead”), students can have such activity as “Interruptions”. During this activity cadets can forget about accuracy for this lively filler. It’s fluency they need if they’re going to do well at this activity. Tell one of the students to speak about LSA. You should use something to keep the track of time. If he manages to finish his summary before his two minutes are up, he wins. For other students’ part, they have to prevent him from finishing by interrupting him with questions about the thing he is speaking about. And he must answer these questions before resuming his speech. For example ‘What types of LSA do you know? What personal LSA do you know? What group LSA do you know? How can you launch a lifeboat?’ When he has finished, arrange your students into groups and have them play against each other.

Having sets of pictures to illustrate vocabulary learnt stored in the classroom can come in handy for a number of filler activities whenever the need arises. For example you notice your third year students tired with attempts to comprehend a lot of new difficult information during the lesson within the module “Meteorology for Safe Navigation” (“Across the Ocean” course-book), so you can let them play “Taboo Words” with the pictures illustrating weather phenomena and symbols used to indicate these weather phenomena on meteorological charts. It will help students practice with synonyms and descriptions as well as give a much needed 5-7 minute break in studying activities which require a high degree of concentration. To conduct the activity split the group into teams and have the teams sit on opposite sides of the room, facing each other. Each team will choose a person to sit in front of their team, facing them in the ‘hot seat’. You or a student appointed for this task will stand behind the students in the ‘hot seat’ and hold up a piece of paper with a picture, a symbol or a word in it. The students in the ‘hot seats’ will not be able to see these papers. Teams have a limited amount of time set by you to get their hot seat member to say the word the picture or symbol illustrates without saying the word itself under any circumstances.

When in the same situation during a lesson on ship dimensions (topic 4 in the module “Types of Ships” in “Welcome Aboard” course-book) which can prove to be tiring due to its complicated nature for first year students, when having a set of pictures with ship dimensions at hand, suggest students to stand up and start walking around the classroom (can be to the music playing) while paying attention to what ship dimensions are there in the pictures scattered around the classroom on desks, floor, windowsills, attached to magnet or cork boards. Tell students that they are going to play a ‘Grab it’ game. To win the game a student needs to have the largest amount of pictures with ship dimensions in his possession by the end of the game and be able to explain the reasons for grabbing them. You can ask your students to grab a picture with something which is a longitudinal ship dimension, a transverse ship dimension, a vertical ship dimension, an imaginary line, the most significant ship dimension, etc. Remember to conduct a feedback session asking students to name the ship dimensions they have managed to take a hold of before others and justify their choice of each picture.

Cooler ends a lesson creating a lasting impression, and can be used to check for understanding and inform subsequent instruction, emphasize key information, tie up loose ends, correct misunderstandings; it is helpful for summarizing, reviewing, and demonstrating students’ understanding of major points, consolidating and internalizing key information, linking lesson ideas to a conceptual framework and/or previously-learned knowledge, transferring ideas to new situations. A teacher can end a lesson with the help of ‘60 seconds’ activity. To do this choose a few students and give each 60 seconds to speak about something you’ve covered that day: for example, students can speak about security at sea, security levels they know, activities to be performed at each level. They may also summarize a story they heard about pirates or stowaways.

To motivate students to speak, a teacher may choose to reward the student who says the most or includes the most information, with a 'reward' sticker.

To give your students closure on what they have learned at the lesson and effectively wrap things up in a way that will benefit your students after having learnt topics with a lot of active vocabulary items, technical descriptions, specific terminology, lengthy texts to comprehend (for example when learning modules "Anchor work" or "Berthing" in "Lucky Voyage") organize with your students "An Alien" activity as a cooler at the end of the lesson. Appoint a student who will act as an 'Alien', say a 'Martian' or whatever planet he prefers to 'come from'. Ask him to close his eyes while you project on the board a large detailed scheme of anchor gear,

fore or aft mooring station. When he opens his eyes he should act as if he sees the things in the scheme, photo or picture projected for the very first time in his life and wants to come to know everything about them. For this he should ask other students all kinds of questions until not a single detail is left without attention.

Conclusion. So, warm-up activities are essential at the English lessons. Students may be tired or have other things on their minds and diving straight into a textbook or grammar explanation can be quite jarring. With the help of good warm-up activities you can put your students into English mode, attentive, interested and ready to participate. They can serve to review language from a previous lesson or prime the class for a new topic.

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