

Giving Instructions about an Assignment

Task 1

Listen to the excerpt taken from a Hydraulics Problem-Solving Lab in the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE). The Lab is conducted by a GSI from Turkey.

TRANSCRIPT FROM LAB205SU045

S1: so everybody, everybody got a handout? (xx) no. you didn't get one? okay, so today we'll be talking about, uh flows and plant lines. and vent losses and exit losses and entrance losses and valve losses and this and that, and, it's going to be an individual assignment, so you'll have to do it, all by yourselves of course you are allowed to discuss with partners how to do it, but i would like to see your own work, i'd like to see, uh, your own set-up, and your own solution and your own discussions. and um, couple other things as well, that i would like to see in the assignments that you hand in. and let me just quickly, tell you what those are going to be. <FLIPPING PAPERS> well first of all, all of us are familiar now, i really don't want us to, uh, i don't want you to give me, Excel spreadsheet formulas. i don't want to see any of that you can give me an Excel output with the numbers in there, but i would like you in your, with your own handwriting, write down what equations you used what coefficients you use in those equations and how you came about with the solution that's really, uh the main part that i want to see, so don't refer me to again, Excel formula sheets. are we all_ makes sense right? okay, now, the other thing, since this is an involved assignment, there are little, things that you need to pay attention to, and, when you look at it the first time it may be a little, it may look like you have to, go through a lot of work but i strongly suggest that once you set up, some sort of a formulation sheet or an Excel sheet if you want to for, the first problem you can modify it for the rest of the problems. so the first work is going to be probably a little cumbersome but then, it'll, pay off later. yes?

S2: you'd say that we should set up a, Excel sheet, for all of these problems, or?

S1: no no just for one of 'em. i mean i'm suggesting that you do that you can do it in multiple ways but what i would suggest is, set up an Excel sheet, cuz for instance if you look at the first problem which we'll be doing, the the way it usually do i let you read the quest- question and you ask me a question about the question. so i would like you to, well i would suggest that you set up a, some sort of a Excel workbook for this. okay you have this, Fs you have your Ds you have your discharge you have this and that, and once you have that set up you can just goal-see for the variable that you're looking for, and then for the rest of the problems you just have this spreadsheet, everything is set up the Fs is set up the Qs the, head loss coefficients, formulas everything is set up, you just change numbers, in individual cells and you modify a little bit and do another goal-see... makes sense doesn't it? yes?

SU-F: mhm

S1: and that's what i would suggest but if you don't wanna go through that you can just use your calculator and, go about doing it this way too. so. now, a couple things, once you do your assignment for each problem set, for each single one of 'em, those are the things i'd like to see. <WRITING ON BOARD> your energy equations, right? energy A minus energy B is equal to, H-A minus H-B minus local losses minus friction losses minus this minus that. how do you calculate these local losses these friction losses? what coefficients do you use? right i would like to see all that. what i would like to see as well is_ and in these coefficients i haven't elaborated but it's like, exit coefficients entrance coefficients valve coefficients and this and that, and, i would like to see, <WRITING ON BOARD> your F values i wanna make sure that you do it_ that you just didn't use like a zero-point-zero-two and give me an answer, so i want to make sure that hey, you used this zero-point-zero-two as an initial guess and then you went back and did, this one interpretory. so i like to see that. it'll help me see your way of approaching the problem as well and, it'll make grading a little easier too i guess. and um so these i would like to see for each, each problem that you solve. and um, in addition to that you can assume, for the rest of the problems, cuz that's not given there, that the water temperature is this. so this you will need, for, what do you need this for?

Question: Are the GSI's instructions clear? If you were a student in this Lab, would you know what to do? Why or why not?

Task 2

Listen to the excerpt again, and make brief notes on what the GSI wants his students to do. What is his first instruction?

First instruction : _____

Notes: _____

Task 3

In pairs or small groups, try to find the following in the transcript.

Main instruction : _____

Supporting details : 1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Negative instruction : _____

Supporting details : 1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Repeated instruction : _____

Helpful hint to save time : _____

Supporting details : 1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Instruction on an alternative way of doing the problems : _____

Important details to be included in this assignment :

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

In sum : _____

- How does the GSI emphasize what he wants his students to do?

- What phrases does he use in this beginning section of the Lab to signal/indicate an instruction to his students? Write down as many as you can find.

- What checking questions does this GSI use to make sure his students understand his instructions? Write down as many as you can find.

Note:

Usually when giving instructions we use imperative verbs like “Write”, “Draw” or “Go”. However, when instructors give students detailed instructions in the classroom, you will notice that the communicative language they use is quite different.

For more examples of authentic language used for different purposes in academic speech contexts at the University of Michigan, you can look up MICASE at <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/micase>

Giving Instructions about an Assignment (Teacher's Guide)

Task 1

Listen to the excerpt taken from a Hydraulics Problem-Solving Lab in the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE). The Lab is conducted by a GSI from Turkey.

Question: Are the GSI's instructions clear? If you were a student in this Lab, would you know what to do? Why or why not?

The GSI's instructions are clear. They are organized, and in sequence. He emphasizes important instructions by repeating them, he asks checking questions, and he remembers to tell his students what he does NOT want them to do.

Task 2

Listen to the excerpt again, and make brief notes on what the GSI wants his students to do. What is his first instruction?

First instruction : **you'll have to do it all by yourselves**

Notes: _____

Task 3

In pairs or small groups, try to find the following in the transcript.

Main instruction : you'll have to do it all by yourselves

Supporting details :

1. **allowed to discuss assignment with partners**
2. **your own words**
3. **your own solution**
4. **your own discussions** etc.

Negative instruction : **I don't want you to give me Excel spreadsheet formulas**

Supporting details :

1. you can give me an Excel output with the numbers
2. **what equations you used**
3. **what coefficients you used**
4. **how you came about with the solution**

Repeated instruction : **Don't refer me again, to Excel formula sheets**

Helpful hint to save time : **I strongly suggest that once you set up, some sort of a formulation sheet or an Excel sheet for the first problem you can modify it for the rest of the problems.**

- Supporting details :
1. **you have this, F's you have your Ds**
 2. **you can just goal-see for the variable you're looking for**
 3. **for the rest of the problems you have this spreadsheet**

Instruction on an alternative way of doing the problems : **If you don't wanna go through that you can just use your calculator and go about doing it this way too**

Important details to be included in this assignment :

1. **your energy equations**
 2. **calculation of local losses and friction losses**
 3. **coefficients used – exit, entrance, value etc.**
- In sum : **your way of approaching the problem**

- How does the GSI emphasize what he wants his students to do?

By saying : **I wanna make sure that you do it**

By repeating: **so these I would like to see for each problem that you solve**

- What phrases does he use in this beginning section of the Lab to signal/indicate an instruction to his students? Write down as many as you can find.

I would like to see / first of all / I don't want you to give me / what I would suggest is / little things that you need to pay attention to etc.

- What checking questions does this GSI use to make sure his students understand his instructions? Write down as many as you can find.

Makes sense right? / Yes? / Makes sense, doesn't it? / Right?

Hint: Having a transparency of the transcript will make it easier to go through the worksheet when discussing student responses.