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**HOW WE UNDERSTAND THE PROFESSIONAL STUDIES OF PHD STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE, PUBLISHED IN ALFA**

***The opportunity to communicate professional topics on an academic level and in a foreign language is considered to be an inevitable part of professional activities of each architect, in particular a doctoral study graduate.***

It has been a tradition of this magazine, to publish articles and studies by Faculty of Architecture PhD students in the English language. The teachers of foreign languages also traditionally review these writings, and give their opinion on topics concerning PhD language training.

In the previous ALFA edition (3/2004, p. 59), the author of this article outlined a few topics on the foreign language training of PhD students. Stressed were particular problems of writings by PhD students in the English language.

In this article, I would like to outline some of the required aspects of professional studies written in the English language.

Some of the problems that frequently appear in professional writings were stated in the above-mentioned article. One of the many reasons for their appearance, in my opinion, is insufficiently developed skills in written communication of any sort in the students' mother tongue. This may be the consequence of a low percentage of instruction in humanities in architectural study. It can be identified already in the second and third year of the bachelor degree study when students often show problems with text building (even in short texts, describing or justifying their architectural solutions). This is not even speaking about techniques like argumentation, explanation, or justification that are considered to be the techniques of a higher level of language mastering. However, these language techniques are often part of an architect's everyday communication. Written works by our students using such language forms are often a mass of sentences that have no specific aim or concept. In written works by PhD students, writers fight with problems of insufficient writing practice in general, and writing practice of professional papers in particular. The student's preparation of study is insufficient: the gathering of information, classifying of gathered information, their analysis and confrontation with their own concepts. Then, when the information should be used in a written form of a particular format, text-building problems are added. We can see the problems of sequencing of arguments, problems of distinguishing between general and concrete arguments, etc. Finally, the problems of foreign language

proficiency are added. As a result, substitution of a student's text for compiled text parts from different resources, and without quoting (plagiarism), is the frequent practice.

It should be stressed, that academic language – used in the professional communication of architects at international conferences, meetings, negotiations with foreign partners, at different spoken presentations, in professional writings, or at lectures – has its specific features both in Slovak and English languages. They are not only represented by professional vocabulary. They are also represented by specific text composition aspects, specific style aspects or language functions. Such skills in academic English require much training and practice. These skills are not trained in any of the previous English language courses of our students.

At our Faculty, these skills are trained within the PhD curriculum only under very restricted time conditions. In spite of this, five initial attempts at PhD thesis papers by our PhD students are being introduced in this edition. They are studies that are based on PhD topics of each student. The authors try to work out one or a few aspects of their studied topics, usually on the background of foreign resources on their specific topics. These papers are a great challenge for their authors because they have to overcome numerous obstacles on their way to a proper and English written paper. Many of them even don't reach this objective.

I hope, that the presented papers will be of interest for the ALFA readers not only by their content. In this case the readers might assess their format and language as well.

Five papers on different topics are being presented. Three of them write on historical heritage in architecture, its presentation, protection and new functional use (papers by Norbert Dvorčák, Pavol Paulíny, and Martin Vaščák). Two other papers on design underline the recently vast progress in this field, outreaching to such areas as business and social life. One paper is on corporate marketing (paper by Branislav Jelenčík), and the other on graphic design in new media (Anton Stolár).