

THE ISSUE OF MOTIVATION IN AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

English has truly become an international language and the need to study it has become vital to every student in order to get a good job and become a valuable member of our society. That's why the issue on how to motivate students to study English represents considerable interest for teachers around the globe. The topic of human motivation is incredibly fascinating and was investigated by outstanding scientists, such as Abraham Maslow, Jere Brophy, Ken Bain, Linda Nilson, Knud Illeris and many others. This paper is aimed to analyze key approaches for motivating and encouraging university students to study English. Mainly, we focused on such motivation factors as the image of a teacher, peculiarities of motivating generation Z, the influence of learning material, appropriate learning environment and maintaining success expectations. Focusing on the mentioned topics helped us establish main motivation techniques and defines direction of further research.

Key words: motivation, learning process, learning material, learning environment, students, teacher, educator, generation Z.

Статтю подано мовою оригіналу

“To learn or not to learn?” This is the question that arises in front of every student of every university in the world. Of course, if it is their major, it is easier to stay motivated and choose “to learn” option. But what if not? What if the students are into economics, psychology, chemistry or physics and don't see the need to study a new language or to improve their foreign language skills? This is the problem we are willing to solve in order to achieve maximum effectiveness out of university teachers' work. This issue has defined the purpose of this paper. English has truly become an international language and the need to study it has become vital to every student in order to get a good job and become a valuable member of our society. So we are going to focus on various techniques and approaches to motivate learners to study English.

There is no such teacher, who hasn't ever experienced students' complete indifference towards the subject they teach. I mean when a class becomes a struggle between an educator and his or her students and every minute turns into a torture for learners and a real challenge for teachers. But there are also teachers, who don't have this problem, moreover it seems like they possess an innate ability to interest and motivate people around them. So we are going to find out what are the features of teachers, who are so good at motivating and inspiring students, and what are their strategies and techniques.

The topic of human motivation is incredibly fascinating and inexhaustible. Numerous research papers have been dedicated to this issue. Abraham Maslow, Jere Brophy, Ken Bain, Linda Nilson, Knud Illeris and many other outstanding scientists have investigated this issue. Motivation to study has occupied an important niche in the theory of motivation. American psychologist Maslow A. H. in his “Theory of Human Motivation” distinguished motivation to learn as one of human basic needs and called it “the desires to know and to understand” [5, p. 11]. He thinks that “acquiring knowledge and systematizing the universe have been considered as, in part, techniques for the achievement of basic safety in the world, or, for the intelligent man, expressions of self-actualization” [5, p. 11-12]. On the other hand, Jere Brophy, American educational psychologist, supports the idea that “motivation to learn can be conceptualized either as a general trait or as a situation-specific state” [2, p. 40]. As a trait, motivation can be viewed as an inborn disposition towards learning that makes a person strive for knowledge and want to find out more about the topic being studied. Situation-specific state is connected with the motivation emerging in the appropriate teaching environment, that is the atmosphere, activity or attitude towards the topic that inspire and encourage to learn.

Image of a teacher as a motivation factor

First of all, we would like to focus on maintaining teacher's positive image. It is essential to introduce yourself to the class as an open minded, confident and professional educator. Moreover, Brophy considers a teacher to be not only an observer of students' success or failure in the classroom but an active participant of a learning process, “capable of stimulating the general development of student motivation to learn and its activation in particular situations” [2, p. 41].

The initial task of an educator should be to get acquainted with learners. Students and a teacher are going to cooperate and interact for quite some time and, for a successful work, they need to form a unity with its own objectives and goals, which is based on respect, trust and openness. An educator should never separate him- or herself from a group, though the teacher is at the head of a class, he or she is still an integral part of this unity. Teacher can even represent him- or herself both as an instructor and a learner, since life is a process of constant enquiry and learning. Ken Bain in his book “What the best college teachers do” speaks about outstanding modern teachers who made a difference in their students' lives. He points out the importance of trust and straightforwardness with learners and how these features boost students motivations and interest towards the subject: “They (teachers) often display openness with students and may, from time to time, talk about their own intellectual journey, its ambitions, triumphs, frustrations, and failures, and encourage their students to be similarly reflective and candid. They may discuss how they developed their interests, the major obstacles they have faced in mastering the subject, or some of their secrets for learning particular material. They often discuss openly and enthusiastically their own sense of awe and curiosity about life.” [1, p. 18]. This approach towards students helps learners to view the teacher as a friend,

but much more experienced and intelligent. Viewing teacher through the perspective of friendship helps to create positive and more comfortable atmosphere in the classroom where students are eager to share, ask questions and discuss whatever they lack knowledge and experience in.

Another good idea for maintaining friendly and trustful teacher-student relationship will be to get to know them better. At least, you should find out about their hometowns, families and friends, interests or hobbies, or generally where they want to head in life if this is something they already know about. Of course it may be a lot for one teacher to memorize and there's no need for that. Just try to make notes about something unique about each student that you can later refer to or ask about in order to develop some communicative skills, use as an opening topic for some discussions during the class or just prepare teaching materials according to your students' interests. At first sight it doesn't seem to be important but it is. With the help of this little trick students feel they are being listened to and that the teacher took interest in them and their story. Admit that it's always much more pleasant to have a conversation with the person who really listens and reacts to the things you say rather than talking for the sake of talking, which is what actually happens at most English classes. This approach is also supported by Linda Nilson, American educator and keynote speaker. She calls it "undergraduate student body profile" [6, p. 3]. While getting to know your students, don't forget to share some information about yourself too, nothing "too" personal of course but something to interest them or just let them feel it's an equal conversation and not only a teacher can ask questions.

Teaching generation Z

Linda Nilson also emphasizes the importance of being aware of teaching the generation Z also known as millennial generation. We are talking about young people born in the mid 1990s and early 2000s who are characterized as "self-confident, extremely social, technologically sophisticated, action bent, goal oriented, service or civic minded, and accustomed to functioning as part of a team. On the flip side, they are also impatient, demanding, stressed out, sheltered, brand oriented, materialistic, and self-centered." [6, p. 11]. But if we take into consideration that some millennials have already stepped in as experienced teachers, the gap between millennial teachers and students of generation Z doesn't seem so huge. In fact, the key for overcoming that gap is simple – just keep yourself in the loop. The world is developing and changing every single day. New technologies, devices and services emerge on the world market and they are all created to make our lives better, easier and more comfortable. So if something is new for you don't treat it as a menace (talking about new device, computer program or mobile app), try to learn, to find out more and to master it because this is what every teacher wants his or her students to do. This way you not only improve your skills or knowledge but also fit your students' shoes, finding how hard it is sometime to be in a new, unknown environment and to "face a horror" of making mistakes on a way to learning. And if that gap is the shortest you could possibly make, the atmosphere becomes more relaxed and trustful and that itself stimulates students' desire to learn.

The influence of learning material and appropriate learning environment

Of course, every teacher has a syllabus, teaching programs and demands. But in fact the one thing that really matters in learning process is what students learned, what skills they improved and the value of knowledge they received. The issue of what teaching materials to use is up to the teacher. Of course, it is much easier to work if there is a program and a course and you just have to follow it. Every group of students is a unique "organism" that has to be nourished according to its capacities and inclinations. And the learning process will become much more productive if teachers tune up to their students' abilities, needs or interests. Of course, teacher should base classes upon the teaching program but also shouldn't be afraid to step aside when it feels right, I mean when the topic causes huge interest and should be studied more profoundly or if the topic, on the contrary, is not stimulating and needs to be changed. An educator has also to pay extra attention to the learner's major and the specifics of their future profession. To study English in student's professional content may help boost their interest towards learning a foreign language and also give some extra knowledge in the sphere of their specialty. This could be another motivation factor. If students want to be good at their jobs they have always to be aware of any news in their profession sphere. Most of up-to-date scientific achievements and discoveries in various scientific fields are described in English. Various online journals and magazines offer the latest news and debatable articles on different topics.

Usually teachers are those in the center of attention during a class and students, depending on the level of their interest and motivation, may be as active as they want. But what if we try to shift attention from a teacher to students? Kaylene C. Williams notes that "the role of teachers seems to be shifting from preprogrammed knowledge dispensers to instead managers of student learning and the learning environment" [7, p. 6]. We are not talking about eliminating teachers but transforming a teacher-centered class, where all the talking is done by a teacher, into student-centered. The aim of this method is to give an opportunity to students to demonstrate their interests, knowledge, their way of thinking and attitude. These types of activities show that teacher believes in his students' abilities and skills and is eager to know them better and to listen to what the learners want to say, to share and to discuss. For example, the teacher can ask students to prepare their own 5-minute presentation about their hobbies or talents and either just to share and tell the most exciting things about it with their groupmates or to show them how to do something new, organizing a small workshop. In this situation students are motivated to show their talents, they feel confident because this is what they are good at and it encourages them to speak English on the topic they are really interested in. It gives them an additional sense of responsibility but also stimulates their creativity. Students also are experiencing how it feels to be a teacher and then are more respectful towards their educators in future.

According to Ken Bain, “while methods vary, the best teachers often try to create what we have come to call a “natural critical learning environment”. These are challenging yet supportive conditions in which learners feel a sense of control over their education; work collaboratively with others; believe that their work will be considered fairly and honestly; and try, fail, and receive feedback from expert learners in advance of and separate from any summative judgment of their effort.” [1, p. 18]. The importance of an appropriate though friendly environment is very critical. Very often it is much easier for people to learn through asking questions, having discussions or organizing debates, especially when we’re talking about studying foreign languages. If you feel that learners are interested in the topic, that is not on your syllabus, let them still have it. If they are passionate about something there is no better encouragement than genuine interest. During discussions, the teacher has to step aside and just to instruct or to lead the group if they are having any troubles in their discussion. An educator has no need to interfere even if he or she wants to correct mistakes, it will be more appropriate to use delayed error correction when you make notes about most common mistakes and correct them at the end of your class.

Maintaining success expectations

Both Linda Nilson and Jere Brophy emphasize the importance of maintaining success expectations that are vital for student's motivation level [6, 2]. In other words, the teacher is giving a course and providing students with some amount and quality of knowledge, so he or she has to notify learners what they will be able to do after the course finishes. According to David Cook and Anthony Artino “expectancy of success is more than a perception of general competence; it represents a future-oriented conviction that one can accomplish the anticipated task” [3, p. 1000]. This strategy already creates the feeling of success and encourages anyone, who finds the final destination worth, work harder than the student initially intended. Also in order to appeal to students’ career awareness, the teacher can highlight the skills that crucial for their professional development, such as development of effective e-correspondence skills, telephoning, public speaking, presentation or translation skills. Everyone wants to be successful and knowing that during the course they will learn something they will actually need and use in their professional life will make students do their best at your course. One of crucial points for maintaining success expectations would be also teachers’ praise and objective evaluation. Be attentive towards your students’ achievements and always try to point them out since if they feel they have done a good job it means they are capable of more and are willing to be more diligent and work harder. Even if your students make mistakes, let them know it is a good thing since we all become better learners thanks to such experience. If students are not afraid to make a mistake, they are making it and learning which is our objective.

Conclusions. In conclusion, in order to achieve maximum effectiveness and increase the level to university education, teachers have to pay special attention to motivation techniques and approaches to encourage their students not only to be present at the classes but also to actively participate and study harder. Maintaining a positive teacher’s image is proven to facilitate learning process and boost students’ motivation and eagerness to study English. They key to the teaching generation Z is to stay connected to the modern trends and not to be afraid to learn yourself. Ability to adjust learning material to the needs of the students will also lead a teacher to his or her students’ success, since there’s no better motivation than to study something you are really interested in.

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Місюра Я. Ю. Проблема мотивації студентів у процесі вивчення англійської мови

Протягом багатьох років англійська володіє статусом мови міжнародного спілкування, і необхідність в її вивченні дійсно зростає. Ось чому питання про те, як мотивувати студентів вивчати англійську, становить значний інтерес для вчителів по всьому світу. Тема мотивації людини неймовірно цікава і досліджувалась такими вченими, як Абрахам Маслоу, Джер Бروفі, Кен Бейн, Лінда Нілсон, Кнуд Іллеріс і багатьма іншими. Метою нашого дослідження є аналіз основних підходів до мотивації і заохочення студентів університетів до вивчення англійської мови. Стаття зосереджує увагу на наступних мотиваційних факторах: образ викладача, особливості мотивації покоління Z, вплив навчального матеріалу, відповідне середовище навчання і очікування успіху. Аналіз згаданих тем допоміг нам встановити основні методи мотивації і визначити напрямки подальших досліджень.

Ключові слова: мотивація, навчальний процес, навчальні матеріали, навчальне середовище, студенти, викладач, покоління Z.

Мисюра Я. Ю. Проблема мотивации студентов в процессе изучения английского языка

В течении многих лет английский обладает статусом языка международного общения, и необходимость в его изучении действительно возросла. Вот почему вопрос о том, как мотивировать студентов изучать английский, представляет значительный интерес для учителей по всему миру. Тема мотивации человека невероятно увлекательна и исследована выдающимися учеными, такими как Абрахам Маслоу, Джерр Брофи, Кен Бэйн, Линда Нилсон, Кнуд Иллерис и многими другими. Целью нашего исследования является анализ основных подходов к мотивации и поощрению студентов университетов к изучению английского языка. Статья сосредотачивает внимание на таких мотивационных факторах, как образ преподавателя, особенности мотивации поколения Z, влияние учебного материала, соответствующая среда обучения и ожидание успеха. Анализ упомянутых тем помог нам установить основные методы мотивации и определить направление дальнейших исследований.

Ключевые слова: мотивация, учебный процесс, учебные материалы, учебная среда, студенты, преподаватель, поколение Z.