

Issues in developing the learning motivation of adult learners for studying foreign languages

Abstract. *This article highlights issues of formation a motivation to learn foreign languages in adult students. The teaching practice shows that working with students of different ages has its own distinctive features, and teaching adults has its own specifics. This article considers such element of educational activity as motivation, and particularities of its formation namely in adults. It presents the basic learning needs of adults, their requirements for the pedagogical process, as well as possible difficulties in teaching them. It provides the list of conditions and principles necessary for successful development and maintenance of adult students' motivation. The article suggests such method as correspondence with native speakers of a foreign language. It describes the conduct of experimental training using the proposed method, which is supported by the results of a survey to identify the level of adult students' motivation.*

Key words: *motivation, adult students, andragogy, foreign languages, communication with native speakers.*

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Introduction. Learning a language in the modern world is becoming increasingly relevant. In this regard, teachers face the most important task - to create an atmosphere of foreign language communication in the process of learning a language as close to natural conditions as possible. The main factor in teaching speech communication in English is the motivation for mastering a foreign language.

Aim: to identify the effectiveness of correspondence with native speakers of a foreign language in the formation of adult students' motivation in the process of teaching them a foreign language.

History: Motivation is the main element of the educational activity structure. V.G. Aseyev claims that the motivational structure of a person is "a complex, multi-level system of motivators, including needs, motives, interests, ideals, aspirations, attitudes, emotions, norms,

values, etc. This structure of the motivated sphere determines the orientation of a human's personality, which has a different character depending on what motives have become dominant in its content and structure." Thus, motivation should be understood as the organization of educational activities aimed at a deeper study of English language, its improvement and desire to develop the needs for mastering a foreign language. On this basis, it is necessary to create conditions in educational activities that contribute to development of the highest possible level of cognitive interest in learning English language. [1]

Active development of additional professional education implies addressing the problem of adults' motivation who have successfully completed their studies at the university. In general, the problems of adult education are

successfully developing in a relatively new branch of education called andragogy.

Trying to clarify the status of andragogy A.I. Kukuev in 2009 analyzed twenty-six definitions. Since then attempts to specify and substantiate the problems in relation to a new field of knowledge have only multiplied. One of the most correct definitions belongs to T. A. Vasilkova who sees a scientific and practical field in andragogy; within its framework are the patterns of adult educational activity studied and determined [2]. It should be noted that the basic principles of andragogy are developed and are actively introduced into the practice of additional professional education (postgraduate) and occupational studying.

M.V. Klarin combines and characterizes some of the learning needs of adults:

- in the justification manifested in two main areas: in solving practical, production problems and in personal and professional development;
- in independence including the choice of several alternatives;
- in the implementation of life experience as a pillar in any activity including educational;
- the urgent need to change something in life;
- the need for a practical focus: orientation to real tasks in a real context.

According to psychologists, with age, indicators of logical memory improve compared to mechanical, but indicators of short-term memory become worse. A positive factor is the interconnectedness and coordination of functions, which can compensate for individual shortcomings. For example, developed logical thinking, accumulated experience, and the ability to draw conclusions from the sum of knowledge presented will help make up for the amount of short-term memory. Linguistic experience is a set of accumulated knowledge, skills, abilities in both native and foreign languages. Experience can have both positive and negative impacts on the effectiveness of learning. Insufficient vocabulary in the native language, especially in the professional field, will complicate the understanding and successful assimilation of lexical as well as grammatical constructions. [3]

On the other hand, a high level of proficiency in the mother tongue with the limited possibilities

in a foreign language can become an obstacle, as the adults need in speaking creatively and their rich life experience come into sharp conflict with possibilities in a foreign language and leads to numerous errors.

However, practice shows that linguistic experience in learning one foreign language contributes to the successful mastery of another foreign language.

A particular importance in teaching adults belongs to motivation, which finds expression in the person's impulse for action, in the mobilization of his internal energy, in the direction of his actions and behavior.

There is no doubt that training adults requires a specific organization of educational process and special forms of pedagogical communication.

Researchers of the process of teaching adults suggest taking into account precisely the age differences of a mature person, which carry certain contradictions. On the one hand, in the period of maturity, a person aims at achieving goals, expanding the sphere of needs, the sphere of motivation, there are more opportunities for personal development, on the other hand, a crisis of discrepancy between the "real-self" and "ideal-self", losing a sense of new, lagging behind life, lowering of self-esteem, fatigue. According to scientists, there are some traits that make an adult student differ:

1. An adult learner is aware of himself as an independent, self-governing personality and has extensive life experience, including educational.
2. An adult learner has a high initial and specific motivation for learning, which is due to the ability to solve his professional problems with the help of educational activity.
3. An adult learner is committed to the immediate practical application of knowledge and skills acquired in everyday and professional life.
4. An adult learner places high demands on education quality and results.

Andragogy studies the features of perception and mastery of knowledge, the formation of skills by adult students. It also reveals the features of the organization of educational process by teacher. The main principle of andragogy is the practical orientation of training, the priority of

student's independent work, his leading role in the learning process aimed at realizing a specific goal.

The basic framework of andragogy was developed in 1970 by M.S. Knowles in the book "The Modern Practice of Adult Education." The most general principles for organizing an educational process for adults are the following:

- The main type of work of adult students is independent activity.
- Learning activities are carried out jointly with other students. Students together plan, implement and evaluate their work.
- Students in their activities rely on their professional experience and use the skills they have acquired in the field of their professional activity.
- The training program is focused on the implementation of students' specific goals and objectives.
- The program is built with account taken of students' level of training, their psycho-physiological and cognitive characteristics, as well as their professional experience.
- The content, forms, methods and means of education, as well as methods for assessing results, are consistent with goals and objectives of education.
- Education is built taking into account social, temporal, domestic and spatial factors and is focused on students fulfilling their social role.
- Knowledge, skills and abilities acquired as a result of training can be immediately put into practice.
- A student is given a certain degree of freedom in choosing goals, content, forms, methods and teaching aids.
- Formation of students' new educational needs and their specification.
- Students learn consciously and understand the need for their actions.

Psychologists identify eight significant features of teaching adults.

1. Adults should themselves get the desire to learn. They will resist external pressure. Their studies will be effective only when they have a strong intrinsic motivation for mastering new skills or acquiring certain new knowledge. The desire to learn can be awakened or stimulated by

external influence, but it is impossible to impose it.

2. Adults will study only what they consider necessary to study. Adults show a practical interest in learning and will study what is directly useful to them in their professional activities.

3. Adults learn at work. In a year, an adult will forget about 50% of what has been studied "passively", in two years - 80%. But if he will have the opportunity immediately after studying to consolidate in practice the knowledge he gained, and then periodically repeat these practical exercises, the new knowledge will last much longer.

4. Adults' education should focus on realistic issues. It is better to take a problem from practical life and search for its specific solution.

5. Adults' education is greatly influenced by previous experience. The perception of new knowledge by adults is inextricably linked with accumulated life experience. If new knowledge is not consistent with what the learner already knows, he subconsciously sets his mind on rejecting such knowledge.

6. Adults learn better in informal settings. Many have unpleasant memories associated with schoolwork. It is necessary to try to create an informal atmosphere in the classroom.

7. When teaching adults, it is necessary to use a variety of teaching methods. The learning process is faster if the information is perceived by several senses at once. Video films, audio recordings, visual aids can significantly enhance the impression of classes. In order to cause changes in the course of actions, relationships or thoughts of an adult learner, it is necessary to involve the listener into active participation in the educational process, i.e., to use also a discussion method of teaching.

8. Adults do not need to be «evaluated», they need to be guided. Competition negatively affects adults' learning. Most of them are critical of their ability to learn something. If they are confronted with the need to take tests, write testing works or participate in other training events designed to assess their academic success, they can quit classes for fear of public condemnation [4].

Research conducted in the USA in the 1980s (National Training Laboratories in Bethel,

Maine) made it possible to generalize data on the effectiveness (average percentage of knowledge acquisition) of various methods for educating adults. These results are presented in 'the Pyramid of Learning' chart. They confirm the ancient wisdom formulated in the Chinese proverb: "Tell me, and I will forget. Show me and I will remember. Let me do it and it will be mine forever.» [5] According to this pyramid, those methods that were so popular some time ago, namely lectures and reading of literature, should take only 5-10% in the practice of learning a foreign language, the most effective methods are the immediate application of knowledge or teaching others, and should account for up to 90% of the entire educational process.

Nevertheless, the teacher has to face a number of difficulties that an adult learner experiences:

- Cognitive features of adults' perception, memorization and thinking;
- Life and professional experience;
- Stereotypes of thinking in the native language;
- Workload of adult students;
- Attitude to study;
- Authority among colleagues.

These problems place special demands on the teacher working with an adult audience. According to the well-known American psychologist Carl Rogers, teaching adults is successful if the following conditions are true:

- subject of learning is relevant;
- the student's personality (his self) is not in danger;
- the whole personality is involved in training;
- most of the training is implemented as a result of practical actions;
- self-criticism and self-esteem are encouraged, which helps to strengthen the student's sense of independence and self-confidence.

The requirements of adult students for effectiveness of educational process are very high, and they are caused not only by the closest personal and professional motives, interests and needs, but also by the fact that specialist is inclined to compare the effectiveness of his

professional activity with the effectiveness of educational process.

There are a number of communication rules for educating adults:

- Rule number 1.

Do not impose your opinion! The teacher should be the last to speak. First, listen, discuss, analyze, if necessary, conduct a "brainstorming", ask the audience to draw their conclusions, and only then express an opinion, if appropriate.

- Rule number 2.

Learn to listen! Anyone who gives advice needs to learn to listen. For the teacher it is especially important (and at the same time quite difficult) to be able to listen carefully during group classes.

- Rule number 3.

Help students to open up! The human mind is like a parachute: it does not work if it is not opened. The teacher must carefully consider his actions and ensure that the minds of his students are open to new knowledge.

Adults seek active participation in educational process. We believe that the greatest efficiency is achieved with the joint activities of teacher and adult student at all stages of educational process: from its planning and preparation to analysis of results. For example, it's good to practice tasks which have many right solutions. The main goal of such exercises is to develop language skills based on the existing individual experience of the listener. Adults have a need for urgent application of acquired knowledge, skills and abilities. For its implementation, it is better to use role-playing games in the classroom, imitation of real life situations. This significantly speeds up the application of language in practice.

Methods of research: In order to develop adult students' motivation to learn foreign languages, students in the amount of 60 people were offered the possibility of realizing real life situations instead of imitating them; to be specific, they were to correspond with native speakers in their free time.

Correspondence with native English speakers has several advantages. They are the following:

- Training with a native speaker helps to overcome the language barrier. As we know, the so-called "language barrier" is a complex

of linguistic and psychological factors. A native speaker helps to overcome both: students simultaneously expand and deepen their knowledge of the language and at the same time get rid of tentativeness and fear of communication with native speaker.

- Students begin to think in English faster. They are not tempted to use their native language. After all, the English speaker simply does not understand it! Therefore, when learning with a native speaker, a habit is formed to express thoughts only in English. In order to convey a thought, one needs to think and find means: to rephrase, select synonyms, explain, use facial expressions, gestures. When a student knows that the only communication language is English, he begins to think differently.

- Training with a native speaker, pronunciation improves. Studying with native speaker, the student adopts his way of speaking, pronouncing sounds, placing stresses, using intonations.

- Lessons with a native speaker are a kind of cultural environment. A person from an English-speaking country is not only a native speaker, but also a native speaker of the culture of his country. Therefore, he, like no one, can clarify the subtleties of the culture of his native country, talk about life peculiarities, traditions that cannot be learned from television programs or textbooks.

To get acquainted with native English speakers, they could use well-known

web-sites, for example: livemocha.com, sharedtalk.com, mylanguageexchange.com, conversationexchange.com, speaking24.com.

For further communication, students could use these sites and communicate verbally, or switch to programs and applications convenient for them, such as Skype, WhatsApp, VKontakte, etc. and start a written communication. The format of communication varied. These could be specific topics for discussion, questionnaires, interviews, or the topics they liked. In the classroom, students had to talk about their experience in communication, what new they learned (lexical units, grammatical patterns, facts about culture, new opinions about any phenomena or events).

To study the motivation of adult students, they had to answer a questionnaire developed by I.S. Dombrovskaya, which consisted of 30 statements. Students were asked to rate how regularly they correspond to them on the following scale: 4 - always, 3 - usually, 2 - sometimes, 1 - very rarely, 0 - never. The questionnaire determined the levels of three types of cognitive motivation, and three types of social motivation for education.

Results: If the obtained indicators are from 3 to 4 points, we can speak of a high manifestation degree of the level or type, from 2 to 3 points – of the moderate degree, from 0 to 2 points, we can assume that an individual student or group has a low level of motivation for education in generally, of a type or level. Questionnaire was



Diagram 1. Comparative analysis of the results of the questionnaire on identification of the level of adult students' motivation before and after training

carried out before the experiment and after. The results obtained are presented in diagram 1.

Conclusion. Thus, in our group of adult students, both kinds of motivation in three types increased. This indicates the increase in the level

of motives aimed both at the content of education and the process of its implementation, and at interacting with other people. Therefore, we can conclude that the correspondence of students with native speakers is effective.

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Ересек студенттерде шет тілдерін үйренуге деген қызығушылықты қалыптастыру мәселелері

Аңдатпа. Бұл мақалада ересек студенттерде шет тілдерін үйренуге деген қызығушылықты қалыптастыру мәселелері баяндалады. Оқыту тәжірибесі әртүрлі жастағы студенттермен жұмыс жасаудың өзіндік ерекшеліктерінің болуын, ал ересектерді оқытудың өзіндік ерекшеліктері бар екенін көрсетеді. Бұл мақалада оқу іс-әрекетінің мотивация, әсіресе, оның ересектерде қалыптасуы сияқты элемент қарастырылады. Ересектердің негізгі оқу қажеттіліктері, олардың педагогикалық үдеріске қойылатын талаптары, сондай-ақ, оларды оқытудағы мүмкін қиындықтар келтірілген. Ересек студенттердің ойлауын сәтті дамыту және қолдау үшін қажет шарттар мен қағидалардың тізімі келтірілген. Мақалада шет тілінің ана тілінде сөйлесу әдісі ұсынылған. Ересек студенттердің мотивациялық деңгейін анықтау үшін сауалнаманың нәтижелерімен расталған ұсынылған әдісті қолдана отырып, эксперименттік сабақтарды өткізу сипаттамасы берілген.

Түйін сөздер: мотивация, ересек студенттер, андрагогия, шет тілдері, ана тілдерімен байланыс.

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Вопросы формирования учебной мотивации к изучению иностранному языку у взрослых учащихся

Аннотация. Настоящая статья освещает вопросы формирования мотивации к изучению иностранным языкам у взрослых учащихся. Практика преподавания показывает, что работа с учащимися разных возрастов имеет свои отличительные особенности, и обучение взрослых имеет свою специфику. В работе рассматривается такой элемент учебной деятельности, как мотивация и особенности ее формирования именно у взрослых. Представлены основные потребности взрослых в обучении, их требования к педагогическому процессу, а также возможные трудности в обучении их. Дается перечень условий и принципов, соблюдение которых необходимо для успешного развития и поддержания мотивации взрослых учащихся. Предлагается такой метод, как переписка с носителями иностранного языка. Приводится описание проведенного экспериментального обучения с применением предложенного метода, подтвержденного результатами анкетирования на выявление уровня мотивации взрослых учащихся.

Ключевые слова: мотивация, взрослые учащиеся, андрогогика, иностранные языки, общение с носителями языка.

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