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FILOLOGICZNE NAUKI

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STRATEGIC ASPECTS OF ENHANCING STUDENTS' MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING UKRAINIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Lack of motivation is still one of the main factors complicating any foreign language learning. The complexity of motivational component in educational process organization requires detailed knowledge of key provisions of both contemporary theory of motivation in general and student learning motivation in particular.

Motivation is one of the most important and most complex psychological phenomena that determines all kinds of human activity. It is regarded as a system of internal factors that encourage and steer behavior of a human being focused on achieving specific goals.

The study of motivational factors is of paramount importance for improving teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language methods because international students' language learning motivation generally has a great impact on the level and quality of acquired knowledge.

We should distinguish two main types of motivation that international students who are enrolled in Ukrainian higher education institutions usually demonstrate: instrumental motivation – students perceive the Ukrainian language as a tool for getting a degree in specific specialty field – and integrative motivation – in one way or another, all foreigners have to adapt to life in the Ukrainian-speaking country and cultural environment.

According to psychologists, one of the factors contributing to motivation enhancement is success/high performance component. Motivation and success are the two interrelated phenomena: high motivation helps in achieving great performance results, while success ensures preservation of motivation at a decent level, which demonstrates that any student is happy doing exactly what he/she is good at.

Motivation is undoubtedly the most important factor in determining both the level of student educational performance in general and the success in learning

Ukrainian as a foreign language in particular. Any educational activity, whether it is learning, communication or cognition, is always triggered by motivation.

There are two main general types of motivation: external and internal, which consists of several sub-types. External motivation comprises the following factors: incentives and penalties, and usually encourages students to achieve the end results of their education. Therefore, motivation of educational activity may not only be related to cognitive activity, but also to satisfaction from teamwork, well-deserved praise given by teachers, encouragement expressed by fellow students or even self-approval. For instance, the findings of the poll conducted among the 4th year international students in the National Aviation University confirmed our opinion that teacher's praise/compliments of student's work is a much more effective motivational tool than teacher's judgments or disapproval.

Internal motivation has a strong stimulating effect on the very learning process. As the least stable type, academic motivation plays the most significant role in the learning process, but directly depends on organization of this process, as well as quality of teaching materials, teacher skills/qualification and many other relevant factors.

As a rule, only international students of 1-5 years of study demonstrate having particular type of language learning motivation. Pragmatic motives such as, for example, getting a university degree, are less important for this group of students. Instead, personal prestige and professional reasons are of higher priority for most of them: students undergo practical training in their specialty fields and need to use professional literature as well as communicate with native speakers who are specialists in specific areas of industry and production.

The main objective of any teacher of Ukrainian as a foreign language is not only a simple knowledge transfer but also an encouragement of students to complete assignments and exercises in their language class of their own free will, to be more independent while mastering the Ukrainian language. At the same time, selection of individual motivational components is an absolute must. Thus, specialists can stimulate instrumental motivation by mainly using the scientific style in educational materials or encourage integrative motivation by paying more attention to the cultural component.

Most international students attending pre-university courses (the preparatory department) are also lead by the particular type of motivation, which, under the influence of well-formed academic motivation, extensive familiarization with the Ukrainian culture and other similar factors, could evolve into universal motivation.

Enhancement of motivation for learning Ukrainian as a foreign language implies, first of all, creating certain conditions for students so that they could display and acknowledge own internal learning motives, as well as further improve own motivation. However, selection of proper motives is of high significance for students who are interested in actual understanding of the Ukrainian culture. The most important motives should be fully acknowledged by students themselves so that they could perform the function of actual driving force.

Teachers should start building and supporting international students' academic motivation for learning Ukrainian at the highest possible level since the first lessons at the very beginning of pre-university courses, as it is much easier to maintain and develop the existing motives than to try to restore what has been lost. Every foreign student should be confident in own success. In addition, transforming educational activity into a means of self-actualization should definitely produce great results.

Many researchers believe that motivation factor has a more significant impact on successful learning than such components as intellectual abilities, skills and capabilities. High level of positive motivation can perform a role of compensatory factor when such skills and capabilities are insufficient. However, neither excellent skills nor capabilities can compensate for the lack of academic motivation or its low manifestation, and therefore, can lead to considerable learning progress. As a rule, students who believe that Ukrainian is an important language in their lives not only master it in a classroom, but also self-study after classes.

Therefore, in order to enhance student motivation for learning Ukrainian as a foreign language, we should develop an entire system of various motivational mechanisms and ensure its proper use.