EDUCATIONAL MOTIVATION IN TEACHING AND LEARNING
ENGLISH: WAYS AND PROBLEMS OF CREATING

Abstract. The article analyzes the ways of creating students’ educational and cognitive motivation in the English learning classes. The analysis is held on the basis of modern pedagogical and psychological researches. Introduction of pedagogical technology in learning process provides effective acquisition of knowledge and skills by students and helps in creating positive motivation. Different classifications of motives of different linguists are presented. The motives that ensure successful learning activities are characterized. Emphasis is put on the efficiency of creating foreign language learning motivation of students at schools and higher educational institutions.

Keywords: pedagogical technology, educational motivation, internal motives, external motives, levels of formed motivation.

Nowadays in modern higher education the task of improving the efficiency of learning and optimizing students’ educational and cognitive activities is still quite critical. Despite the lack of students’ abilities and gaps in knowledge, high learning motivation can play the role of a compensating factor. That’s why in modern pedagogy and psychology special attention is paid to the problem of its creation. In the context of motive formation during the course of university students’ teaching the question by all means arises what motives should be formed. It’s not just a
question of search and selection this or that single motive with the aim of its creation, but determining the optimal structure of the student’s motivational sphere.

A.K. Markova emphasizes that “educational motivation consists of a number of motivations (needs and meaning of learning, learning motives, objectives, emotions and interests) which constantly change and enter into new relationships with each other. That’s why formation of motivation is not a simple growth of positive or strengthening of negative attitude to learning but complication of the structure of the motivational sphere and the motives that are part of it, the emergence of new, more developed, sometimes contradictory relationships among them”[1]. In this regard the analysis of motivational activities requires not only determination of the dominant motive, but also taking into account the whole structure of person’s motivational sphere. Analyzing this area in the educational activity context A.K. Markova emphasizes its hierarchical structure. It should be noted that among linguists there are different opinions on priority of certain types of motives for successful learning. Some researchers consider cognitive motives (broad cognitive motives, educational cognitive motives, motives of self-education) as the most adequate ones in educational activities. These motives are aimed at mastering new ways of acting. It is the focus on mastering the methods of educational and cognitive activities that insures the formation of the subject of educational activities. But it doesn’t mean that cognitive motives are the leading ones in the structure of learning motivation. Psychological studies of learning motivation dynamics indicate important changes in their personal significance and effectiveness during ontogenesis. Thus, for example, at a young age the motives of self-affirmation, self-development and self-education play the leading role in educational activities. Despite the undeniable value of actual cognitive motives in learning, it is impossible to abandon external social motivation. Linguist Rubinstain S.L. indicates that direct and indirect interests in learning are so interconnected that the impossibility of their purely external opposition becomes obvious [2]. In N.B. Bondarenko’s research the wider list of motives of educational activity is allocated. They include broad social motives, cognitive motives generated by the educational activity itself, communicative motives, motives for
participation in the learning process, motives of social identification (with parents, peers, teachers), motives of personal development (professional self-determination, material well-being), motives of success (self-affirmation, self-determination), motives for avoiding troubles [3].

According to V.M.Tymoshenko the leading motives in the structure of educational motivation are communicative, cognitive and social motives, the most effective of which is the motive of achievement that is the desire to succeed in professional activities [4]. O.O.Leontyev emphasizes that the teacher has the right to decide what kind of motivation the students should rely first of all, on communicative, cognitive, aesthetic or game motivation [5].

Analysis of the results of psychological and pedagogical research allows to identify the structure of motives that ensure the successful learning of students. We think that such structure is hierarchical system of external and internal motives that determines the direction, intensity and personal meaning of students’ cognitive activity. Internal motives of educational activity are those, based on satisfaction from the process and results of cognitive activity. These motives include cognitive motive, motive of self-determination and motive of self-improvement.

Cognitive motive means the desire of students to acquire new knowledge and methods of cognitive activity.

Motive of self-determination is the desire to feel the real cause of the activity, an effective subject of interaction with the environment.

Motive of self-improvement is the desire to increase one’s own competence, efficiency and skill.

External motives are those that are not thematically connected with the process or results of students’ educational activity but play an important stimulating role in education. These motives include professional motive, motive for achievement, motive of duty, communicative motive, motive of self-affirmation and pragmatic motive.

Professional motive is the desire to master the future profession, to become a highly qualified specialist.

Motive for achievement means the desire to succeed in learning and to exceed
your own level of previous knowledge.

Motive of duty is the feeling of responsibility to peers for the results of your cognitive activity.

Communicative motive is the desire for partnership with participants in educational activities, establishing productive interpersonal interaction.

Motive of self-affirmation is the desire to have a prestigious status in the team, to earn the approval of teachers, parents and peers.

Pragmatic motive means focus on the practical value of learning, its importance for future life, achieving of material well-being.

Success in students’ learning activities to a great extent depends on the number and ratio of these motives. We agree with the linguist Y.P.Ilyin, that “the more components determine this activity, the greater the motivational stress of the student is” [6]. However, different motives play different motivational roles for different students and their efficiency in learning.

A foreign language as a subject radically differs from other subjects. It includes not only the variety of terms, notions, grammar rules etc. but also practical skills and ability to apply the acquired knowledge in practice during oral or written communications. Besides, for correct understanding and using some lexical units and grammar rules one should possess a socio-cultural competence, that is, the idea of the culture of the country the language of which is being studied.

Nowadays the task of mastering foreign languages using the latest teaching methods (first of all, a communicative one) is extremely important. It is connected with gradual integration of countries into European and world community, with the necessity to communicate in foreign languages in different areas. That’s why great attention is paid to improving methods of teaching foreign languages at all levels – from primary school to philological and non-philological higher educational establishments. Increasing students’ motivation in practical classes is of great importance.

While teaching foreign languages there are certain problems caused by the following factors:

1) When learning a foreign language many students have only external
motivation. They learn it to get a better mark at the exam, not because they are interested in the subject.

2) Students with different levels of foreign language proficiency study in one group. They have different abilities to the subject, which also affects their motivation. It is difficult for a teacher to choose the optimal material on each topic at each class to make all students be interested in the subject.

Internal motivation is aimed at giving students satisfaction from learning process itself (doing certain work, learning certain material), not for the sake of getting an award or a positive mark at the exam. In this case external factors draw back into the background. If students don’t get satisfaction from learning they don’t acquire appropriate knowledge.

Among the main ways of increasing internal motivation at the foreign language classes the following ones should be mentioned:

1) Explaining to students the importance of mastering a foreign language at the appropriate level for future careers.

2) Constant encouragement of students’ active work in foreign language classes. It is especially relevant when teaching weak students or those for whom learning a foreign language is difficult.

3) The use of means of activating student’ speech activity, the purpose of which is not only to teach students foreign language grammar, vocabulary, speaking skills, but also to interest them.

The main means of activating the communicative activity of students in foreign language classes include video, visual aids, educational games, multimedia technologies, project technologies, interactive methods of teaching, IT technologies and others. The main requirements for teaching aids are that their complexity should correspond to the level of students’ knowledge of a foreign language as well as to their specialty.

Educational games are most widely used in foreign language classes. This is due to a number of reasons. At first, they increase students’ motivation to study, help them remember language material and learn to speak a foreign language. Obviously, everyone will agree that to guess the meaning of the words or act out
the scene of the performance is much more interesting than to read, translate or listen to monotonous texts or to do monotonous exercises. Secondly, for the teacher to prepare the game is much easier and faster than to find a necessary picture or a video with the right equipment.

The most frequently games used in foreign language classes are the following:

1) Language games – games for learning lexical units and grammar structures and games for practicing pronunciation.

2) Communicative games – games for developing listening and speaking skills.

According to another classification games are divided into:

1) Games to use the information gap;
2) Games to exchange information;
3) Games to combine the constituent elements into one whole (a sentence or a text);
4) Business and role-playing games.

It is known that project training shapes a pedagogical style of every educational institution, prepares young people for independent mature life, teaches to think critically and to make decisions in unusual life situations. Thus, we want to emphasize the relevance of pedagogical project activities, its importance as a form of organization of students’ scientific knowledge. Using the project method students understand all the technology of problem solving, from problem statement to presentation of the result. Projects can be related to different areas of human activity, thanks to which students get acquainted with “adult problems”, acquire skill of solving current issues, connected with ecology, economy, social responsibility and people care. Through this acquired experience there is acquaintance with production, marketing, the enterprise and the world of various trades. The connection of theoretical knowledge with practical skills is achieved.

The essence of interactive teaching methods is that learning takes place through the interaction of all those who learn and teach. It is co-learning (learning in interaction and cooperation), in which both a teacher and students are subjects
of study. The main principle of interaction means constant communication of students with each other and their teacher, their collaboration in contrast to active and passive methods of teaching. The teacher in this learning model is only an organizer and coordinator of interaction. Active methods are based on one-way interaction which is organized and constantly stimulated by a teacher. Interactive methods fundamentally change the scheme of interaction of participants in the learning process.

They give the greatest opportunities for students’ self-realization and are most consistent with a person-centered approach, because they are focused on the realization of cognitive interests and needs of the individual. This is why special attention is paid to the organization of the process of multilateral communication, which characterized by a lack of polarity and minimal concentration on the teacher’s point of view.

Powerful flow of new information, advertising, using computer technologies, spread of game consoles and electronic devices affect the students’ perception of the world around them. Before, the students got information from textbooks, reference books, lecture notes or lesson outlines. But today due to modern realities the teacher must introduce new methods of presenting information into the educational process. Human brain perceives and remembers information with the help of media means much easier. Using computer networks and online tools, schools are able to provide information to meet the individual needs of each student. Combination of traditional teaching methods and modern information technologies, including computer ones can the teacher in solving educational problems. The use of computers in classes allows to make the learning process mobile, strictly differentiated and individual.

So, there is no single recipe for increasing motivation for all students of all levels and professions.

References:


