

## TEACHING ADULTS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (ON EXAMPLE OF THE EXTRAMURAL DEPARTMENT OF UEPA)

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**Abstract.** *The article is devoted to the problem of teaching foreign languages to adults on the example of the extramural department of Ukrainian Engineering Pedagogics Academy (UEPA) : combining work and study, lack of sufficient time, limited amount of educational material studied, as well as the advantage of independent work. These conditions require special approaches to the foreign language teaching process to extramural students: extensive using Internet sources; distance learning course and electronic textbooks; increasing motivation and personal interest; effective students' independent work; proper organization of knowledge control. The authors emphasize that the extramural form is associated with the training of people who, as a rule, have already sufficiently developed not only personally but also professionally. The paper defines the key pedagogical principles in the process of foreign language teaching to adult students at an engineering university, emphasizes the necessary pedagogical conditions for the productive mastering of the discipline by adults.*

*The article presents an analysis of textbooks, manuals and guidelines on foreign language for extramural students of engineering specialties, which testifies to the implementation of the traditional language approach in the process of creating teaching materials. Recommendations are given on the preparation and use of teaching materials in order to achieve the goals set by the programs and syllabuses in the discipline «Foreign Language» for technical universities. The authors note that UEPA has long and successfully transferred foreign language classes for extramural students to the MOODLE platform, effectively providing a visual presentation of the material, forming a creative approach to learning and developing self-learning skills in the context of foreign language training.*

*The article concludes that it is advisable to develop a new effective model of teaching a foreign language to extramural students of technical specialties, significantly improving the quality of education and reducing the time of mastering a foreign language for special purposes.*

**Keywords:** *foreign language for special purposes, adult students, distance learning, linguistic experience, motivation, pedagogical conditions, competence-based approach, Moodle platform.*

**Problem statement.** International cooperation development of Ukraine with foreign partners in the context of technology and science; integration of Ukrainian engineering universities into the European educational space; launching and extensive support of joint projects for academic and educational exchanges development; encouragement of mutually advantageous practical projects in engineering fields of science and technology,

economic social, and cultural development sets the problem of higher engineering education system to provide professional education of specialists in the field of technology and engineering, who can speak a foreign language at a level, allowing to carry out professional and research activities, including in a foreign language environment.

In this regard, the attention to the problem of professionally oriented foreign

language teaching has been increasing.

Nowadays the on-the-job training of bachelors and masters built on engineering education is of great importance in the context of Ukrainian higher engineering education. Extramural education has a huge potential in the personnel training, as it is available to various population groups, economically profitable, characterized by individualization of training, etc.

However, in the current system of extramural teaching of professionally oriented foreign language at higher technical institutions, there are certain unsolved problems: a shortage of special educational and methodological literature, technology-oriented methods, leading to lower quality and productivity in the context of the educational process.

**Literature review.** The problem of teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to an adult audience has long occupied the minds of methodologists and teachers working on the subject of foreign language teaching to adults. When we discuss the constantly growing public need to teach a foreign language to adult audiences (here we focus on the teaching ESP to extramural students) in a short time, we automatically understand that we are dealing not only with the need to teach adult audiences to communicate in a foreign language, but, first of all, to operate all necessary professional terms, to communicate in the context of their specialty and their professional interests.

Making business nowadays also means knowing foreign languages because of the growing international business contacts, the ever-growing scientific contacts and close cooperation between engineering universities make such communication necessary and, as practice has shown, possible with short-term, but properly organized training English for Specific Purposes.

Despite the issue's high priority, it has not received much attention in the scientific-pedagogical literature so far. Although the issue of teaching students to read professional literature in a foreign language, become the topic of numerous analyses by Ukrainian and foreign researchers, the issue of working with a professionally prepared audience still remains under-researched.

Some researchers (T. Sokolova, H. Batirov, D. Manevich, S. Belyavsky, etc.) considered that the volume of educational content during extramural education should comply with the full-time education, but to be presented in a more «compressed» form. This scientific and pedagogical viewpoint could be interpreted as a communicative-functional approach in the context of foreign language teaching. Teachers-methodologist A. Varnavsky, B. Nadeinsky and some others, who supported the full development of the theoretical part of any subject and the compulsory inclusion of work situations in the course content, expressed an opposite view.

According to the analysis of foreign experience, it is appropriate to mention that students can receive extramural education both in public and private educational institutions. However, the degrees of the extramural education system are valued lower than those of full-time forms of education. To receive an equivalent degree, an extramural student should study for several full-time sessions and pass qualifying examinations. Studying at extramural department abroad includes using distant technologies at all levels, it is invested in making the material as visual and accessible to students as possible through technical facilities – special programs are being written for this purpose, classrooms are being created, video and audio recordings of training programs are being made. Specially designed hand-outs are not

limited to printed manuals – students can attend webinars, laboratory works, which are always openly available in their free time. Everything that is available to full-time students can be studied by distance learners. The requirements for exams are nothing less, so the students have to study everything as it should be, otherwise there is a chance of failing the session. Therefore, foreign concepts of A. Kay, A. Villaroel, J. Boath, D. Lecure, D. Keegan, O. Peters, E. Rambler, A. France, B. Holmberg D. Sewart are aimed mainly at «reducing» the distance between a teacher and a student. The Western European extramural education system provides students with a choice of courses, starting times, and study periods. Students are taught through computer networks according to individual programs.

**The purpose** of the article to investigate the problem of teaching foreign language to extramural students, to carry out a substantive analysis of textbooks, manuals and guidelines on foreign language for extramural students of engineering specialties, to determine the key pedagogical principles in the process of teaching foreign language to adult students at engineering universities and the essential pedagogical conditions for effective mastering of the discipline.

**The statement of the main material.** Extramural education differs from other forms by a more individualized approach to the learning process, the absence of any age restrictions, the rapid implementation of gained knowledge in practical and professional activities. In addition, the educational system at the full-time course is have to be forward-looking, and students are going to apply the obtained knowledge in the future under different conditions. The extramural training is connected with the training of people who have, as a rule, already been sufficiently developed professionally. People who have definite, clearly presented

pragmatic requirements for their educational system. Higher education is considered as a way to improve personal social, professional prestige and advancement, to acquire, improve or expand the skills and knowledge necessary in work, profession, position or occupation. Therefore, a specific feature of extramural education is the opportunity to put best experience into practice already «today» rather than in the distant future. Allowing employees to improve their education, extramural education with relatively low material costs for its organization provides a high level of specialist's adaptability of professional knowledge and professional competencies; as well as his/her more psychological readiness to improve their professional activities, change their functions, content and quality of work.

According to some psychologists, logical memory strengthens over time, whereas short-term memory deteriorates. A positive moment is the interconnectedness and interaction of functions, compensating for individual disadvantages [2, p.324]. For instance, gained experience, highly developed logical thinking will assist make up for the amount of short-term memory. Language proficiency can have both negative and positive consequences on the learning effectiveness of a student. Shortage of proficiency in the native language can make it difficult to understand and absorb grammatical and lexical constructions. In contrast, a very high level of native language proficiency can inhibit the learning of a foreign language, because the adult student's need to express his or her own thoughts, rich life experience conflicts with opportunities in a foreign language, which causes numerous mistakes. Nevertheless, practice proves that linguistic experience in learning one foreign language helps in the successful learning of other foreign languages as well. Besides, motivation has an essential role to play in adult learning, motivating a person to do something, mobilizes his or her internal energy

and directs their actions and behavior. Adults are more motivated to learn than children and adolescents, so the teacher needs to support and manage it in order to achieve the intended result. For example, it is advisable to use visual images and associations to memorize new foreign words better. Moreover, when working with an adult audience, attention to the personality of each student, taking into consideration his or her social role should be required. To create a certain comfortable environment for increasing the students' speech activity, it is appropriate to strive for natural and informal communication, characterized by reactivity and direct attention to interlocutor. Additionally, to provide emotional support for students in interpersonal relations it is advisable to take into consideration not only the level of language proficiency, but also the age of the group participants. It is essential to assess students' results, correct mistakes, and reward successes and efforts instead of evaluating students' knowledge by the teacher. The most effective way is to evaluate the results first by the student and then discuss them with the teacher. So, we are talking about a «competency-based» approach, which involves forming and developing different competencies, creating opinions, attitudes, and a desire to develop [3, p.34]. All above-mentioned goals are in accordance with the expectations of the adult student.

Based on the analysis of scientific and pedagogical literature the following pedagogical conditions for successful teaching of a foreign language to adult students can be distinguished as follows:

1. He or she is an independent and self-controlled individual, having his/her own life experience and learning one.

2. Each adult student is motivated to learn a foreign language for his/her own reasons, which is related to his or her professional career.

3. The adult student attempts to apply theoretical knowledge immediately into

practice in everyday and working life.

4. The students have rather strong demands on the teaching process and its outcomes.

Based on the foregoing, we can identify the following key pedagogical principles of foreign language teaching to adult students: individualized approach, building the course based on experience, cooperative learning, practical orientation of classes, important teacher's role in providing teaching process and face-to-face consultations.

Many psychologists have identified some essential peculiarities in teaching adults a foreign language.

1. Adult students must be motivated to study. The training process will be successful only if the students have a strong motivation to learn new skills and competencies. Their motivation cannot be imposed, but it may be stimulated by the teacher.

2. Adult students will only learn what they consider important and necessary for them to use in practice.

3. Adult students «learn by doing something». If they have the opportunity to put their knowledge into practice, consolidate it, and repeat it regularly, then the new knowledge will stick around longer than with «passive» learning.

4. While teaching adults it is necessary to use realistic problems from actual practical life and look for a concrete solution.

5. Previous life experiences have a great impact on the adult learner. The way a learner perceives new knowledge directly depends on his/her previous life experience.

6. Adult students need an informal environment, because many of them have unpleasant memories of school lessons.

7. When teaching an adult group of students, it is necessary to remember about using different methods of teaching. Training process of a foreign language will be more effective if new knowledge is perceived by

different sense organs, for example, eyesight and hearing. Audio recordings, visual aids, videos contribute to a better comprehension of learning material. In addition, the discussion method of learning allows for a better consolidation of foreign language knowledge, its application, and the student's attention.

8. Adult learners need to be guided, not «evaluated». Many of them are critical of themselves and their abilities, so they can be negatively affected by competition for their fear of public censure [1, p.136].

Interpersonal interaction is one of the most important conditions for effective and successful teaching of a foreign language to adults. Taking into consideration the psychological features of interpersonal interaction improve the training process and leads to the most effective teaching of grown-ups.

In the process of teaching extramural students to read foreign-language literature and to speak using the material in the context of their future specialty, students learn new facts and, accordingly, face difficulties of two kinds: linguistic and extralinguistic. Considering this circumstance, teachers and methodologists, when making up tutorials, select texts containing material that is understandable in terms of specialty and does not require profound professional knowledge. In practice, it is most often descriptive material that is understandable even to non-specialists, which is usually the teacher or methodologist.

Easy teaching material from the content aspect entails linguistic difficulties, such as heterogeneity of grammatical structures in the proposed fragment, synonyms and other features not typical for the style of academic material.

On the basis of the analysis of English textbooks and tutorials for extramural students of different specialties we have come to the conclusion that all educational and methodical tutorials are built according to

the same scheme: foreign language grammar material necessary for learning; exercises on mastering the grammar material; text (reading and translation: the whole text or the extracts); tasks after the text (exercises on grammar rules and understanding of the text; answers to questions).

The reviewed materials demonstrate the implementation of the traditional linguistic approach to the building of tutorials. The presented teaching manuals do not take into consideration the age specific features of extramural students; motivational activities for mastering a foreign language; modeling communicative tasks with the aim of forming general communicative and professional communicative competences.

To implement the goals provided by the programs and syllabuses for the discipline «Foreign language» for extramural engineering students in a short period of study, it is required that when designing teaching manuals on foreign languages for extramural students, special attention should be paid to:

1. The meticulous selection of foreign language content focused on professional activities (the material should be presented in such a way that extramural students can work both independently and at the same time have the opportunity to evaluate their work) and applied modern technologies:

- the vocabulary and proposed texts should correspond to the future specialty;
- grammatical material should be provided in an accessible volume and for more visibility is advisable to use illustrative material, charts, tables, etc. with brief explanations reflecting the specificity of the grammatical material.

2. Creating a system of exercises providing the opportunity to strengthen and revise the material learned and then gradually apply it in communicative process.

Therefore, teaching and learning manuals of English for specific purposes should

contain the main theoretical concepts and the most illustrative examples. Teaching material should be systematized, for this purpose, summarizing schemes, supporting generalizing tables, specifying and clarifying topics have to be modeled. It is important that teaching and learning resources are based on authentic text material. The system of exercises should involve both exercises on mastering the content and communicative and creative exercises. But taking into consideration the specifics of extramural education, the emphasis should still be on the development of students' independent work skills using authentic sources and reference books.

The authenticity of the training material, first and foremost its scientific authenticity, without any attempt at profane or deliberately simplified presentation, is a basic requirement for the selection of teaching material. Attempts to «popularize» the content, based on the idea of its «understandability» for the teacher, can cause a negative response from the student, an overly critical attitude to the training content being studied, which, in our opinion, has a negative impact on the learning success. And vice versa, approval of the work material choice is the moment determining the student's high motivation in its mastering.

It is also essential, in our opinion, when selecting foreign language teaching material for specific purposes, that it be subordinated to one linguistic topic: grammatical, lexical or phonetic, and within one of any more specific topics: a certain structure or model, one or another grammatical form, word and form formation, etc.

At Ukrainian Engineering-Pedagogics Academy (UEPA), foreign language classes for extramural students have long been successfully implemented on the MOODLE platform, which effectively provides a visual presentation of the material, develops a creative approach to learning and self-learning skills.

The main components of the MOODLE

platform are: reference and information databases; practical classes; visual support; exercise system; control system. This platform has the following functionalities of the program: digital preservation of unlimited amount of authentic information; redistribution of classroom and extracurricular activities within the foreign language course; building modular training, each module is a complete block of information; use of various monitoring techniques; increasing students' interest and motivation to learn foreign language for specific purposes through various, different from traditional, teaching materials; creating individual sets of teaching and learning materials; the possibility of interactive cooperation between the teacher and the extramural students (forums, chats, etc.) [3, p.33].

The application of Moodle platform in the context of blended and distance extra-mural education allows students to develop skills of independent search for foreign language knowledge through working with additional information resources, working offline, effective planning and time management, as well as all kinds of communicative skills, which are professionally important for their future professional activity.

Despite the constant changes in the market of educational services and the certain problems and difficulties, associated with this process, the prospects for further development of extramural foreign language education for specific purposes are generally favorable, but much depends on how to successfully combine training process together with practical activities.

Consequently, it is advisable to use the following methodological principles for successful teaching of a foreign language at an extramural department:

- communicative principle, implying students' work in groups; application of various problem tasks; development of joint

projects; processing of information obtained by students from various sources (Internet databases and regional networks, libraries and scientific, cultural centers of the world);

- the principle of conscientiousness, providing for a certain system of rules, giving an idea of a foreign language system (vocabulary, grammar, phonetics);

- the principle of reliance on the students' native language, which is reflected in the organization of getting acquainted with the new foreign language material, in the development of an orienting basis of the action;

- the principle of visualization, including different types and forms of visualization: linguistic visualization (selection of authentic texts, speech samples demonstrating functional features of the language material studied in a certain cultural environment of English-speaking countries, etc.); visual clarity (use of various multimedia, organization of video conferences; auditory visualization (use of certain software tools – soundblasters, and organization of audio conferences);

- the principle of accessibility (development of training material of different levels of complexity, interactive mode of operation);

- principle of positive emotional background (a system of established relations between a teacher and students in the learning process). If in the full-time educational system creating an atmosphere of goodwill, mutual understanding and trust is of great importance for the training success, in extramural education it is one of the decisive conditions for success, namely, learning in cooperation, project methods, allowing to establish an atmosphere of mutual assistance and goodwill, guaranteeing success in the training process of foreign language.

Conclusion and further research prospects. Foreign language is included in the compulsory

program of all Ukrainian engineering universities and under current conditions its functions associated with the development of professional orientation, the tendency to acquire knowledge necessary for getting to know foreign achievements in the professional field is becoming a priority. Nowadays it assumes a combination of acquisition of the foreign language for specific purposes to development of the personal qualities which are trained by knowledge of culture of the country of the learned language and acquisition of the special skills based on professional and linguistic knowledge.

At the same time, the goals and content of training process are focused on the profile of the specialty. As a result of learning foreign languages, a graduate of a non-linguistic university should master the necessary knowledge in the field of phonetics, grammar and vocabulary; learn to read the literature on the specialty (ability to work independently with authentic professional texts is compulsory); to develop communicative skills in the sphere of professional communication (to make messages and reports on professional topics, take part in business communication situations); to form skills of work with documentation (conducting business correspondence, working on documents, communicating with foreign partners); and also he/she should know a definite set of lexical units of general and professional character.

Apparently, it is quite difficult to achieve the goals provided by the syllabus for the discipline «Foreign language» at the engineering universities in the context of extramural education, but at the same time it is rather essential, as the above-mentioned form of training in modern conditions is becoming more and more relevant and in demand. The efficiency of extramural foreign language training is a particular challenge for today's Ukrainian academic community.

**Conclusions.** According to practice, there are a number of problems and contradictions

in extramural learning of foreign languages in the context of higher engineering education:

1) insufficient number of academic hours;

2) high standards established in the State Educational Standard of Higher Professional Education;

3) outdated methods for organizing face-to-face classes;

4) lack of foreign language teaching manuals for extramural students;

5) insufficient and different level of students' knowledge of foreign language discipline at extramural departments of non-linguistic higher educational institutions;

6) lack of proficiency in self-education technology among extramural students, which is necessary in the conditions of a long intersession period;

7) insufficient motivation of students in the learning process of a foreign language, considering the main profile disciplines.

Under the conditions of Ukrainian higher engineering education modernization and taking into consideration international trends, the competence-based approach serves as a methodological basis for extramural foreign language education upgrading. The competence approach implies problematization of learning content, reorganization of the whole educational process, and, above all, the use of innovative (computer-based) technologies. The introduction of computer tools into the educational process updates the principle of foreign language teaching didactics in the system of extramural education, improves traditional teaching methods, combining them with new technologies.

Ukrainian universities have a unique experience in the establishment and development of extramural education, having subdivisions and departments using extramural education. Considering the current demand for extramural education, it is advisable to develop

a new effective model for teaching a foreign language for specific purposes to extramural students, which will contribute to a significant increase in the quality of foreign language learning and reduce the time of its study.

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## НАВЧАННЯ ДОРΟΣЛИХ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ (НА ПРИКЛАДІ ЗАОЧНОГО ВІДДІЛЕННЯ УІПА)

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**Анотація.** Стаття присвячена дослідженню проблеми навчання іноземної мови дорослих на прикладі заочного відділення Української інженерно-педагогічної академії (УІПА); представлені особливості навчання на заочному відділенні ЗВО, які потребують спеціальних підходів до процесу викладання іноземної мови студентам заочного відділення: широке використання можливостей Інтернету; дистанційного навчання та електронних підручників; підвищення мотивації та особистої зацікавленості; ефективна самостійна робота студентів, ретельна організація контролю знань. Автори підкреслюють, що заочна форма пов'язана з навчанням людей, які, як правило, вже достатньою мірою сформувалися не тільки в особистісному плані, а й у професії. у роботі визначаються ключові педагогічні принципи у процесі навчання дорослої групи студентів іноземній мові в інженерному ЗВО, підкреслюються необхідні педагогічні умови для продуктивного опанування дисципліною дорослими. В рамках статті представлено аналіз підручників, методичних посібників та методичних вказівок з іноземної мови для студентів заочного відділення інженерних спеціальностей, який свідчить про реалізацію традиційного мовленнєвого підходу у процесі створення навчально-методичних матеріалів. Надаються рекомендації щодо складання та використання навчально-методичних матеріалів для реалізації цілей, передбачених програмами з дисципліни «Іноземна мова» для технічних ЗВО. Автори зазначають, що в УІПА досить давно й успішно заняття з іноземної мови для студентів заочного відділення перенесено на платформу MOODLE, яка ефективно забезпечує наочне представлення матеріалу, формує творчий підхід до навчання та розвиває навички самонавчання у контексті ініціативного навчання.

**Ключові слова:** іноземна мова для спеціальних цілей, дорослі студенти, заочне відділення, лінгвістичний досвід, мотивація, педагогічні умови, компетентнісний підхід, платформа Moodle.)