

UDC: 159.925:159.98:811.111

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24195/2414-4665-2017-9-15>

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## OPTIMIZATION OF TEACHING ENGLISH TO PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS BY MEANS OF EXPRESSIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL TECHNIQUE

*The article presents a developed expressive psychological technique as a means of teaching a foreign language to Psychology students. It involves a set of kinesthetic (mimic, posture, tone) reactions, paralinguistic (tempo-rhythmic and melodic-intonation peculiarities of speech), extra-linguistic (laughter, sigh, etc.), proxemic (movements) means of nonverbal pedagogical communication, which instrumentally enrich methods of organizing joint educational activities of students for mastering a foreign language. It has been proved that means of nonverbal expression optimize (facilitate, accelerate) the process of mastering a foreign language by future psychologists and gaining their professional communicative competence. In order to test the efficiency of the suggested program, 115 university students majoring in Psychology, 79 teachers of secondary school and 8 university teachers took part in the experiment (total – 202 people) were invited to take part in the experiment. According to the research outcomes, assertiveness and objectivity of both the students and the teacher-experimenter have increased; altruistic emotional orientation of the teacher has strengthened, which led to the growth of cognitive interest (gnostic emotions), pleasure from the process of mastering a foreign language (hedonistic emotions); the students' academic performance and professional motivation, as well as foreign language communicative competence have significantly improved.*

**Keywords:** *expressive psychological technique, teaching a foreign language, interactive teaching technology, non-verbal expression, optimization of teaching.*

### Introduction

The implementation of the Law of Ukraine “On Higher Education” provides the modernization of professional training of future specialists in accordance with the world standards of the quality of education relevant to the structure of key competencies of a professional in any field [9]. At the same time linguistic competence is a necessary component of professional competence of representatives of socio-humanitarian field professions.

Ukraine is now raising to a qualitatively new level in relations with other countries, forming new political, socio-economic and cultural realities, which leads to the growth of the status of a foreign language (primarily English), which serves as a universal means of international communication [1].

There are lots of ways of using various methods of teaching foreign languages: grammar-translation and context-translation, audio-linguistic and audio-visual, suggestive [5]. However, non-verbal expression as a psychodidactic means of teaching a foreign language has not been considered seriously for a long time, although facial expressions, gestures, and post-tonic reactions, according to E. Petrova, are widely used for understanding foreign speech [6]. Only in some cases we can talk about the use of kinesthetic, para and extra-linguistic methods for teaching a foreign language. Recently, the popularity of the dramatic and pedagogical organization of teaching foreign languages has been growing [2]. Nevertheless, non-verbal

means of communication [8], whose importance was emphasized by N. Rogers [7], V. Labunskaya [4], Z. Karpenko [3] are out of the attention of Ukrainian researchers. Therefore, the saturation of the current student-centered, communicative and interactive, as well as competent approaches in foreign language teaching by means of expressive psychological technique will help to optimize this process at higher educational institutions.

The paper **aims to** determine conditions, methods and organizational forms of using an expressive psychological technique as a means of optimizing the process of teaching English to Psychology students.

### Research methods

An empirical study examining the influence of the developed expressive psychological technique on the ease and efficiency of teaching English was conducted on the basis of a mixed quasi-experimental plan and an ex-post facto plan in the following three phases: 1) monitoring non-verbal expression of English school teachers (university teachers); 2) psychological and pedagogical experiment in the following sequence: summative assessment – implementation of the author's psychodidactic program into the educational process – formative assessment; 3) comparison of the results of the experimental and control groups, the reflection of post-experimental effects and the correction of the program of training future psychologists by means of expressive psychological technique.

The study of the use of an expressive psychological technique as a means of teaching English to students-psychologists was carried out at Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University. 115 university students majoring in Psychology (50 first-year students, 43 second-year students, 12 experimental psychologists and 10 control group students), 79 teachers of secondary schools and 8 university teachers took part in the experiment (total – 202 people).

In order to examine expressive and communicative indicators of pedagogical communication that occur in the process of studying a foreign language, the following methods were applied: the author's questionnaire, aimed at assessing the effectiveness of motivational-personal (value-orientation) and psychodidactic factors in teaching a foreign language; a method of determining the hierarchical construction of personality emotional orientation by B. Dodonov; Nonverbal Characteristics of Communication technique by V. Labunsky; diagnostics of obstacles in establishing emotional contacts by V. Boyko; objectivity test by R. Nemov; post-experiment interview.

The following statistical methods were applied in the research: Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Mann-Whitney U test, Wilcoxon signed-rank test, F-test, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient; Microsoft Excel programs and the SPSS 21.0 statistical software package for Windows.

#### **The suggested psychological technique for optimizing the process of teaching English to Psychology students**

The leading emotional modalities accompanying the process of teaching a foreign language are practical, altruistic and communicative emotions, which, together with a sufficiently high level of emotional and volitional self-regulation of teachers' behavior, constitute a positive personal resource for optimizing the process of learning a foreign language at a university. An additional argument for this conclusion is the significant advantage of foreign language university teachers over school ones according to the criterion of the ratio of positive (didactically expedient) and negative (didactically unwanted) connotations of expressive indicators of non-verbal communication.

The examination of subjective obstacles in establishing emotional contacts outlined the direction of psychocorrection of future psychologists, especially in the field of achieving congruence and adequate emotional expression, development of the ability to make objective judgments and assessments.

The experimental program of using the expressive psychological technique as a psychodidactic means of optimizing the process of teaching English to Psychology students is the enrichment of the interactive technology with non-verbal communicative signs, including "body language" ones, demonstrative exercises, role-playing games, etc. in order to enhance cognitive activity of students by attractive emotional context of joint educational activities. The expressive amplification of the interactive technology of teaching a foreign language to future psychologists was carried out by means of such methodologi-

cal techniques as 'moderation', 'imagination tree', 'facilitation', 'emotional recovery', 'case method', etc., which combined the achievement of purely didactic goals in the subject with the tasks of professional training.

Thus, a motional exercise "Emotional Recharge" was aimed at strengthening the energy potential of the team, feeling and awareness of the influence of non-verbal components (movements, gestures, facial expressions, intonation, etc.) on the emotional state. After all, when a person expresses his/her success, pleasure, joy with facial expressions, movements of his/her hands, feet, even with singing, he/she is filled with positive emotions and inspired to good deeds.

Students are invited to form a circle and recall how they express (what motions, sounds they use) positive emotions (passion, joy, success). Then each participant of the circle performs the movement, and other students repeat it and name the emotion they are showing.

The discussion of the expressive motions is guided by the following questions:

- How do you feel now?
- Has your emotional state changed? What happened in the process of doing this exercise?
- In what situations and how can you use the experience gained in this exercise?

It is known that role-playing games are used to work on communication skills. In the process of playing students discuss a certain situation or search for the way of solving a problem (for example, dramatizing a dialogue on the topic "A parent and a naughty child"). The aim of the game is to explain a child that he/she cannot behave in such a way and teach him/her how to behave in a proper way). At the beginning of the role-playing game, the teacher describes the general situation and unites students in pairs, and everyone is given a certain role. The duration of the role-playing game is determined by the teacher (usually it takes 3 minutes for each participant). After that, the participants change their roles. At the end of the role-playing game, the teacher makes a general analysis, summing up.

The training method "Imagination Tree" is a method of 'moving' a situation that needs to be solved, from a mental to a figurative plane. It allows one to analyze the situation in details, identify its essential features, distinguish components and relationships between them. Against this background, new ideas and solutions become more expressive. The effectiveness of this method is due to the fact that a person thinks by means of images. The thinking of a situation in the form of a certain image substantially expands the possibilities of finding a solution.

Students are suggested to draw a schema of associations to the key word of the theme (for instance, conflict) in the form of a tree (clusters). This method helps to move from one association to another, from concept to concept. Since the tree structure is not closed, one can always add new ideas anywhere by expanding the crown. The central concept forms a trunk, around which the thoughts are concentrated, and the branch structure allows them to

spread freely. As a result, we get well-defined concepts, ideas - the components that are simultaneously interconnected, and their links are clearly fixed.

The technique has the following stages:

1) one writes down a key word in the middle of the blackboard, circling;

2) a teacher invites students to express ideas (words, concepts, images, associations) related to the keyword. They write down them around the central word, placing similar ideas and concepts next to it;

3) when nobody has any other ideas anymore, the teacher suggests to establish connections between the concepts. The obtained 'clusters' should be named, and links established between them should be substantiated.

### Research Results

The use of these and other methodical techniques under conditions of positive emotional atmosphere of pedagogical communication, meaningful body expression of the participants of the training on the formation of foreign language communication skills, has shown that the level of students' appraisal of the teacher-experimenter as self-assured and objective increased. Besides, the technique has also shown positive effect on the respondents' self-esteem.

The experimental effect of the implementation of this program was aimed at increasing teacher-experimenter's altruistic emotional orientation. In particular, according to Mann-Whitney U test, altruistic emotions of the teacher-experimenter ( $\bar{x}=7.3$ ) are significantly greater as compared to the teacher of the control group ( $\bar{x}=4.1$ ) ( $p=0.021$ ). This led to a number of other professional and personality transformations, for example, the growth of cognitive interest (gnostic emotions), the enjoyment of the process of mastering a foreign language (hedonistic emotions), etc.

The application of the experimental program has resulted in a significant increase of didactically relevant non-verbal indicators in the teaching of the foreign language and a significant 'progress' of 18.51% (a decrease of negative (by 9.30%) and an increase of positive (by 9.21%) non-verbal connotations of the teacher-experimenter) as compared to the teacher of the control group, whose 'progress' was only 0.82%. The comparison of the percentage of 'progress' of both teachers is as follows:  $\varphi^*_{emp}=1.65 > \varphi^*_{crit}=1.64$  at the level of  $p \leq 0.05$ .

Thus, the assessment and reflection of non-verbal factors of pedagogical communication by the teacher-experimenter made it possible to intensify the manifestations of positive, didactically expedient parameters and substantially minimize (or even exclude) the manifestations of negative, as well as improve the proportion of the application of relatively neutral (polysemantic) compo-

nents of nonverbal communicative expression that contributed to the optimization of the teaching process of English in the experimental group.

However, statistically significant increase in the academic success of the students of the experimental group as compared to the students of the control one is considered to be the most convincing effect of the implementation of the pilot program. At the stage of summative assessment both groups of students were tested in to determine the quality of residual knowledge. The tests contained lexical and grammatical components. 7 persons out of 12 (58.3%) of the experimental group and 6 of 10 (or 60%) of the control group showed good and excellent testing results (I section).  $\varphi^*_{emp}=0.077 < \varphi^*_{crit}=1.64$ , that is, the groups were equivalent.

At the final stage of the experiment, the students of both groups were suggested the following assignments: 1) speak on your research work; 2) read and translate the psychology article; 3) give a brief summary of the article expressing your attitude towards the problems highlighted in it. At this stage of the experiment, all participants of the experimental group (100%) have successfully performed all the tasks and got 'good' and 'excellent' grades, while in the control group only one participant improved the academic performance (the quality of knowledge in this group is 70%). According to F-test results,  $\varphi^*_{emp}=2.70 > \varphi^*_{crit}=2.31$  ( $p \leq 0.01$ ). This proves the effectiveness of the implementation of the experimental program (Fig. 1).

The questionnaire results on the factors of the effective teaching of the English language have made it possible to find statistically significant changes in the experimental group regarding the awareness of the role of foreign language proficiency and the high evaluation of the use of methods of expressive psychological technique at the individual, as well as organizational and methodological levels of its application.

There is certain decrease of the indicators of subjective difficulties in communicating in the experimental group as compared to the initial level and the control group. Significant improvement in the field of communicative competence of future psychologists is possible upon condition of coordinated and systematic work of various departments in cooperation with student self-government bodies and expanding the possibilities of non-university (first of all, psychotherapeutic) education.

The post-experiment interviewing has shown that the participants of the experimental group highly appreciated the suggested program due to the positive results of the training.

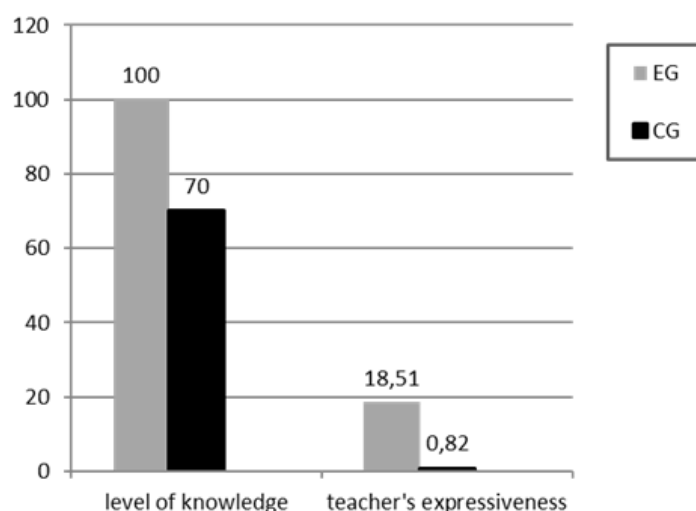


Fig.1. Distribution of students of the experimental and control groups according to the criteria of their academic performance and the increase of the didactically appropriate non-verbal expression of the English teachers

### Conclusion

The psycho-pedagogical (ontological and axiogenetic, cross-cultural and psychotherapeutic) substantiation of non-verbal expression as a means of optimizing the teaching of a foreign language gives grounds to determine expressive psychological technique as a set of kinesthetic (mimic, posture and tone) reactions, paralinguistic (tempo-rhythmic and melodic-intonation peculiarities of speech), extra-linguistic (laughter, sigh, etc.), proxemic (movements) means of non-verbal pedagogical communication, which instrumentally enrich methods of organizing joint educational activities of students for mastering the foreign language.

The experimental program for optimizing the teaching of the foreign (English) language of future psychologists by means of expressive psycho-technique is a methodical amplification of interactive pedagogical technology, based on student-centered, communication and competent approaches. At the same time, such methodical techniques as moderation, imagination tree method, facilitation, emotional recovery, and case methods included nonverbal communicative signs of 'body language', supplemented by demonstrative exercises, dramatizing games according to the major of students.

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The experimental effect of the implemented program implies the increase of assertiveness and objectivity of both the students and the teacher-experimenter in their perception; strengthening of the altruistic emotional orientation of the teacher, which led to the growth of cognitive interest (gnostic emotions), pleasure from the process of mastering a foreign language (hedonistic emotions); increase of the responsibility of students for the results of their studying, their training and professional motivation and foreign language communicative competence.

The synergetic effect of the expressive psychological technique on the ease, positive emotional atmosphere, the speed and strength of the assimilated linguistic material provided a significant increase in the frequency of the use of positive non-verbal connotations by the teacher-experimenter and minimization of negative ones.

Further research studies in this area are planned to cover the development of a comprehensive expressive psychodiactic technology of teaching a foreign language to Psychology students with the consistent elaboration of each level of the personal structure in the context of the principle of integral subjectivity, which significantly extends the horizons of expressive psycho-techniques in the system of higher education.

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## ОПТИМІЗАЦІЯ НАВЧАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ СТУДЕНТІВ-ПСИХОЛОГІВ ЗАСОБАМИ ЕКСПРЕСІВНОЇ ПСИХОТЕХНІКИ

У статті подано психолого-педагогічне обґрунтування експресивної психотехніки як засобу навчання іноземної мови, що включає в себе сукупність кінестетичних (мімічних і позно-тонічних) реакцій, пара- й екстралінгвістичних, проксемічних засобів невербального педагогічного спілкування, за допомогою яких відбувається фасилітація спільної навчально-професійної діяльності студентів-психологів. Доведено, що засоби невербальної експресії оптимізують (полегшують, прискорюють) процес опанування іноземної мови майбутніми психологами і набуття ними професійної комунікативної компетентності. Наведено результати експертної оцінки ефективності психодидактичних і комунікативно-експресивних чинників навчання іноземної мови; аргументовано уявлення про інтерактивні педагогічні технології, що включають як психодидактичний інструментарій (наочні та практичні методи навчання, організацію спільної проблемно-пошукової діяльності та ін.), так і засоби персональної комунікативної експресії педагога. Експериментальним шляхом доведено ефективність рекомендованої програми оптимізації навчання іноземної мови майбутніх психологів засобами експресивної психотехніки.

**Ключові слова:** експресивна психотехніка, вивчення іноземної мови, інтерактивні технології, невербальна експресія, оптимізація навчання.

*Submitted on July, 25, 2017*