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**UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TO LEARN FOREIGN LANGUAGES:
PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS**

The article examines the theoretical foundations of motivation for learning foreign languages within the framework of modern psychological and pedagogical research. Motivation is defined as a complex system of internal and external factors that determine the activity, focus and effectiveness of students in the learning process. Various scientific approaches to the interpretation of motivation are analyzed, emphasizing its key role in the successful learning of a foreign language. The study outlines two main types of motivation: intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external). Internal motivation is defined as the most stable and effective, since it is based on personal interest, satisfaction and self-development. External motivation, although less stable, also plays an important role, in particular in achieving academic or professional goals. The influence of students' personal characteristics, their self-esteem, emotional state and learning environment on the development of motivation is highlighted. Special attention is paid to reducing language anxiety and the importance of creating a positive and favorable atmosphere in the classroom. Modern pedagogical approaches are also considered, including communicative and interactive teaching methods, individualized learning, and student autonomy. These approaches contribute to the development of communicative competence, critical thinking, and increased engagement in the learning process. The article further explores the role of digital technologies and social networks as significant motivational tools. Online



platforms, mobile applications, video games, and social networks provide access to authentic materials and real communication opportunities, increasing student interest and learning effectiveness. At the same time, the need for a balanced use of digital resources is emphasized due to potential problems such as information overload and reduced attention span. It is concluded that the formation of effective motivation in learning a foreign language requires a comprehensive approach that integrates psychological, pedagogical and digital factors aimed at promoting internal motivation.

Keywords: *digital technologies, extrinsic motivation, foreign language learning, interactive teaching methods, intrinsic motivation, learner autonomy, motivation.*

INTRODUCTION

In the modern world of globalization and international communication, knowledge of foreign languages has become an essential component of higher education and professional development because foreign languages enhance cognitive skills and contribute to the formation of both national and global values. They foster intercultural communication, support social integration, active citizenship and improve career opportunities (Zablotska et al, 2023, p. 395). Globalization and digital technologies are rapidly changing society. Because of this, people need to keep learning new skills and knowledge to stay competitive in the modern job market. Therefore, lifelong learning has become very important. This concept includes both personal growth and the development of society as a whole. Lifelong learning involves not only actions but also a person's attitude toward learning (Shevchenko et al., 2025, p. 19). The ability to communicate effectively in a foreign language serves as clear evidence of professional competence. University students increasingly recognize the importance of foreign language competence for academic mobility, career opportunities, intercultural communication and their personal growth. However, the effectiveness of language learning largely depends on students' motivation, which determines their interest, persistence and willingness to overcome learning difficulties. The relevance of this topic is conditioned by the growing need to understand the factors that influence university students' motivation to learn foreign languages. In contemporary educational environments, motivation is considered one of the key psychological conditions for successful language acquisition. Different psychological, social, and educational factors may either enhance or reduce students' desire to study foreign languages. Therefore, investigating these factors is important for improving teaching methods and increasing students' academic performance. Motivation plays a significant role in the process of learning foreign languages because it directly affects students' engagement, learning strategies and achievement. The highly motivated students usually demonstrate greater responsibility, confidence and interest in communication activities. At the same time, the low motivation may lead to poor academic results and reduced participation in educational processes.

The purpose of this article is to identify and analyze the psychological, social and educational factors influencing university the students' motivation to learn foreign languages; to examine the concept of motivation in foreign language learning; to determine the main factors that affect students' motivation; to analyze the relationship between educational conditions and learning outcomes, as well as psychological, social and educational factors that influence the students' motivation to learn foreign languages.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Theoretical principles of motivation for learning foreign languages. Motivation is one of the key concepts in psychology and pedagogy, since it determines the direction of human activity, its activity and the desire to achieve set goals. In the general sense, motivation is considered as a set of internal and external factors that encourage a person to learn a foreign language. At the same time, motivation in pedagogical and psychological sciences is considered differently, as a set of factors that support and direct human behavior, as a set of motives, as a certain intention that causes

a person's activity and determines its orientation, and as a process of mental regulation of certain activities (Oryshchyn, 2020, p. 171). The success of learning foreign languages has always been viewed as reliant on students' motivation and ability, as well as on the professional and personal characteristics of teachers. Educational psychologists and researchers highlight the significance of learners' personal traits and attitudes toward language learning, their self-perceptions regarding educational pursuits, as well as their resilience and motivation, which affect their achievements (Hromova, 2019, p. 76). Moreover, motivation is widely recognized as a key factor influencing success in language learning, emphasizing that a learner's motivation can encourage continuous effort and commitment. Highly motivated learners tend to be more resilient and attain higher levels of language proficiency (Fathi, & Aghamirzaei, 2026, p. 1).

Learning a new language can be challenging and scary for numerous learners, especially for individuals with minimal motivation. Motivation is essential in foreign language learning, significantly influencing students' engagement, perseverance and overall achievement in acquiring the language. Motivation is a complex concept influenced by various elements, such as personality characteristics, cultural heritage, social environment and personal experiences. For a second language to be effectively taught in an educational setting, students must possess both the desire and motivation to learn the language (Lapadat, Laviniu Costinel & Lapadat, Maria-Magdalena, 2023, p. 142). However, in psychology, motivation is viewed as a system of motives, needs, interests and values that shape human actions. It influences the degree of engagement, persistence and emotional disposition toward the task. Motivation serves as the catalyst for the educational process, as effective knowledge acquisition cannot occur without an intrinsic desire to learn. In pedagogy, motivation is viewed as a crucial element of educational activity that fosters students' interest in learning and encourages them to engage actively in the learning process. Educational motivation plays a role in developing responsibility, independence and a constructive attitude toward learning. Motivation plays a crucial role in learning foreign languages, as this endeavor demands considerable time, consistent practice and a significant degree of communicative engagement (Hromova, 2019; Oryshchyn, 2020; Lapadat, Laviniu Costinel & Lapadat, Maria-Magdalena, 2023).

Thus, motivation is a necessary condition for successful learning and professional development of students. Motivation to learn foreign languages can be of different nature, depending on the goals, needs and personal characteristics of students. Traditionally, motivation has been divided into two major types: intrinsic and extrinsic.

Intrinsic motivation relates to the learner's personal interest in the educational process. A student learns a foreign language due to the pleasure of the learning experience, the joy of communication, or the appreciation for the culture of a different nation. This type of motivation is considered the most efficient, as it fosters a consistent interest in education and leads to excellent outcomes (Vysotska et al., 2025). Intrinsic motivation "is fueled by personal interest, enjoyment, and satisfaction gained from the learning process itself" (Harmer, 2008). On the other hand, external incentives, such as passing examinations, receiving rewards, or improving career opportunities, influence extrinsic motivation. While intrinsic motivation usually proves to be more enduring and advantageous for learning from a long-term perspective (Brown, 2007), both forms of motivation are closely related and play an important role in mastering a foreign language (Vysotska et al., 2025, p. 48). Overall, students with intrinsic motivation usually show initiative, actively participate in classes, independently search for additional materials and strive to improve their language skills outside the classroom. It should be noted that extrinsic motivation arises under the influence of external factors, such as grades, university requirements, the desire to get a prestigious job or approval from the environment. In this case, learning acts as a means to achieve a certain goal. Although extrinsic motivation can also be effective, its impact is often less lasting compared to intrinsic motivation. If external stimuli disappear, interest in learning can decrease significantly. That is, intrinsic motivation refers to an individual's internal desire to engage in an activity for personal satisfaction, enjoyment, or the sense of achievement derived from completing or

participating in a task. In contrast, extrinsic motivation is driven by external factors that influence a person's behaviour (Zablotska et al, 2023, p. 400).

According to N. Hromova (2019), there exist the following factors of motivation in learning a foreign language: "self-development, opportunities, necessity" (p. 79). The researcher admits that learners associate self-development with acquiring a bigger amount of knowledge and skills (Hromova, 2019, p. 79). Moreover, university students may consider their personal development as the way to join a larger community, get integrated into the international society, join the culture of the country of the origin. Learners also stress on better opportunities that language learning can provide, such as a career and professional growth. Learning a foreign language is also associated with fostering a learner's chance of being competitive in a job market. At the same time, students may regard learning languages as an unavoidable and, consequently, forced way to achieve success, when their goal is, for instance, passing a foreign language exam to moving abroad to continue studying there (Hromova, 2019, p. 79).

In contrast, researches of the motivational aspects of learning a foreign language distinguish the diversity of a person's motivational sphere and stress on its complex structure. Firstly, motivation can be influenced by social factors resulting from the needs of society. These factors "form external motivation, which exists in two varieties: as broad social motivation and as narrowly personal one" (Oryshchyn, 2020, p. 171).

It is necessary to note that the motivating and encouraging aspect of an individual can be affected by the nature and progress of the educational experience. This type of motivation is referred to as intrinsic motivation, and "its subspecies is the motivation for success" (Oryshchyn, 2020, p. 171). The external and internal motivations can be both beneficial and detrimental; hence, it's common to refer to them as positive and negative motivation. There are different kinds of motivation, such as remote (delayed) and close (relevant). External motivation is often distant and aimed at accomplishing the final outcome of education. It strives for the achievement of a type of super-task. External motivation shapes views on learning a foreign language as a means of self-assertion, and at times as a route to personal fulfillment. These two types of motivation may have a lot of stimulating incentives (Oryshchyn, 2020, p. 171).

Psychological factors of students' motivation. Personal characteristics of students strongly influence motivation to learn foreign languages. These characteristics include interests, needs, responsibility, sociability and willingness to improve themselves. Students who are curious and open to new experiences are usually more interested in learning languages. Self-discipline and persistence are also important because language learning requires regular practice. The students who are organized are more likely to succeed. In addition, a positive attitude toward foreign cultures helps develop strong motivation and interest in improving language skills. Self-esteem is another important factor that affects students' motivation. Confidence in one's abilities encourages active participation in learning, increases willingness to communicate in a foreign language and helps students overcome difficulties. Students with high self-esteem are less afraid of making mistakes and see them as a normal part of learning. In contrast, low self-esteem can cause insecurity, fear of speaking and avoidance of communication activities. As a result, motivation and learning effectiveness may decrease. Positive self-esteem is often developed through teacher's support, successful learning experiences and a friendly classroom atmosphere.

At the same time, I. Oryshchyn (2020) distinguishes the following components of motivation for students to learn a foreign language: "awareness of the need to master a foreign language for a future professional activity; desire to communicate with native speakers on everyday topics; desire to broaden a mental outlook, watch movies in a foreign language, use the Internet as many sites are in English" (Oryshchyn, 2020, p. 173).

The researcher suggests the ways to create the necessary motivation: to give examples of specific life situations; to consider problematic situations; to select training materials skillfully; to offer interesting tasks aimed at pair or group communication; – to apply innovative types of tasks; to be positive about students; to infuse faith into students in the end result of study. The purpose of these ways of creating motivation is to help foreign language teachers bring to their students the full

breadth of possible use of foreign language knowledge in the professional activities of future specialists (Oryshchyn, 2020, p. 173).

Thus, in practice, teachers can create classroom activities that reflect students' interests and needs, thereby increasing engagement and strengthening intrinsic motivation. For example, the use of interactive and varied teaching approaches, including project-based learning, music and educational games, can make lessons more attractive and enjoyable. It is also important for teachers to foster a supportive learning environment in which students feel comfortable taking risks and learning from mistakes without fear of criticism. Furthermore, constructive feedback and acknowledgment of students' accomplishments can significantly improve both their motivation and self-confidence (Vysotska, 2025, p. 55).

However, it is necessary to note that students' emotional state strongly affects foreign language learning. Positive emotions and interest increase motivation and learning activity. A lot of students' experience language anxiety and fear making mistakes, especially during speaking activities. High anxiety reduces confidence and negatively affects learning. Therefore, teachers should create a comfortable and supportive learning environment where students feel safe and confident. A positive atmosphere increases students' confidence and reduces anxiety during speaking practice. Competition between students can also stimulate motivation, but excessive competitive pressure can sometimes cause stress and emotional exhaustion.

In this context, the notion of the learning environment becomes particularly important. According to the Polish researcher A. Szplit (2021), the learning environment refers to the conditions in which learning takes place, as it organizes the condition in which humans learn. Academic life provides a variety of learning experiences, from structured, formal courses and scholarships to less structured, peer-to-peer, informal or self-directed learning (Szplit, 2021, p. 110). The author further highlights that learning environments can take multiple forms, ranging from formal settings such as academic conferences and university lectures to more informal contexts, including collegial discussions about recent research findings and academic developments (Szplit, 2021, p. 110).

Digital environment and tools as a motivational factor in learning a foreign language.

Digital technologies and social networks have become an important part of modern education. Online platforms, video lessons, language apps, and communication services provide more opportunities to learn foreign languages. Today, technology is more accessible and affordable for students because of competition among technology companies. Students can easily access information through phones, tablets, and computers. Wireless technologies and mobile devices also allow them to learn and improve their skills anytime and anywhere (Sidig, 2020, p.460).

At the same time, the issue of improving foreign language learning through video games remains controversial. Video games have been applied in different approaches to language education. While playing games, students tend to become more enthusiastic and motivated to participate in the learning process. Nowadays, many engaging games, such as PUBG, provide opportunities for communication, encouraging players to interact and speak with one another in real time. As a result, this game has gained significant popularity among students worldwide (Sidig, 2020, p. 465). Nevertheless, the use of games enhances students' motivation to learn a foreign language in a practical way. The application of video games in different language-learning approaches has demonstrated positive effects on language acquisition. While playing video games, students tend to become more enthusiastic and actively involved in the learning process. Overall, gamification makes language learning more motivating and enjoyable for learners. Language apps use funny characters, scores and levels to create engagement and interaction. Language apps quickly attract learners who enjoy game-like activities. They also use visual methods, such as matching pictures with words, to teach vocabulary. Learners stay active because they must complete tasks on their own. In traditional classrooms, some students may participate less and only copy answers from others (Drobot, 2022).

As for movies and film-based techniques, they can significantly improve students' ability to learn a foreign language. Furthermore, communication technologies such as WhatsApp have also

shown positive results in motivating students and supporting language learning. Mobile technologies, in particular, have become essential tools for improving students' foreign language skills and encouraging them to exchange knowledge through various educational applications (Sidig, 2020, p. 472).

As for social media, they allow students to connect with native speakers, view authentic content, and participate in international online communities. This increases interest in learning and helps make the language learning process more practical and modern. Teachers can use social media as effective teaching tools to enhance learners' communication competence and increase their participation in in-class activities (Shamsi, & Bozorgian, 2022).

Social networks are considered particularly effective in supporting incidental vocabulary learning. Incidental learning refers to the unconscious acquisition of new words while learners are engaged in activities that are not directly related to language study (Hwang et al., 2017; Al Arif, 2019; Nuri, 2024). Through social media, learners are exposed to idiomatic expressions, informal language, and context-specific vocabulary that are rarely encountered in textbooks. In addition, the interactive nature of social networking platforms provides opportunities for practicing grammatical structures in meaningful and authentic contexts. However, this trend has also raised concerns, as learners may quickly adopt non-standard language forms that could conflict with formal language instruction (Nuri, 2024, p. 67).

Social networks provide unique opportunities that support language learning in ways that differ from traditional classroom environments. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter allow users to consume and create content in various formats, including text, images, audio and video (Lomicka & Lord, 2016). This multimodal interaction is particularly beneficial for developing both receptive and productive language skills. In addition, language-focused social networking applications such as HelloTalk and Tandem enable real-time communication between native and non-native speakers, giving learners the chance to practice conversational skills in authentic situations (Godwin-Jones, 2018). These platforms also include features for language correction and feedback, which help learners improve self-regulation and develop greater metalinguistic awareness.

Overall, nowadays mobile and internet technologies have become important tools for enhancing students' foreign language learning abilities and motivating them to exchange knowledge through various educational applications. These technologies allow students to study anytime and anywhere. As a result, learners have both the flexibility and the opportunity to study a foreign language, whenever they feel motivated and ready to learn (Sidig, 2020, p. 469).

Thus, using digital tools and learning online helps make lessons more interesting and up to date; innovative and digital teaching methods determine language learning motivation, making the process of learning foreign languages more interesting (Kurinyi et al., 2024, p. 174). Teachers are also encouraged to try blended learning and check the efficiency of the available tools. It is important to include real cultural materials, meet the needs of different students and teach about other cultures (Durdas et al, 2025, p. 127). Modern platforms also create opportunities for independent learning, which contributes to the development of student autonomy and the formation of internal motivation. Nevertheless, the digital environment can create certain difficulties associated with information overload or reduced attention span. Therefore, it is important to use digital resources rationally in the learning process. In conclusion, balancing informal and formal learning is essential when using social networks for language education. Although social media platforms provide valuable opportunities for informal learning, they should be complemented with formal instruction that focuses on explicit grammar rules, academic vocabulary, and other aspects of language that are less likely to appear in casual online communication. In addition, social networks can encourage the intercultural dialogue by connecting learners with people from different cultural backgrounds. Teachers can support this process by introducing students to language partners from various countries and promoting discussions that compare cultural norms and values. Such interactions may take place through collaborative classroom projects or partnerships with

educational institutions, helping learners develop both linguistic and intercultural competence (Nuri, 2024, p. 70).

Educational aspects of motivation formation. Teaching methods have a significant impact on students' motivation to learn foreign languages. Traditional methods, based mainly on memorizing grammar rules, often do not provide a sufficient level of student interest. To address this challenge, foreign language teachers are searching for untapped resources and experimenting with different methods and techniques to make teaching – and consequently learning – more effective. One important approach is strengthening students' motivation to learn languages, since neither teaching nor learning can be successful without learners' motivation (Vysotska et al., 2025, p. 47).

Modern teaching focuses on communication and active language use in real situations. Interactive methods such as discussions, role plays, projects, and group work help develop language skills and increase motivation. An individual approach and attention to students' interests also improve learning effectiveness. The teacher plays a key role in motivating students. Professional skills, support and a friendly atmosphere help students feel confident and overcome fear of mistakes. Teachers also show the practical value of foreign languages. Motivated and creative teachers can greatly increase students' interest in learning.

There can be distinguished several ways to increase students' motivation to learn foreign languages; *creating a positive learning environment; use of communicative and interactive methods; individualization of learning; support for autonomous learning of students.*

A positive learning environment greatly increases students' motivation to learn foreign languages. A friendly classroom atmosphere helps students feel confident and reduces fear of making mistakes. When students feel supported by teachers and classmates, they participate more actively and show greater interest in learning. Psychological comfort is also important. Respect for students' opinions, support, and a positive attitude toward their achievements create better conditions for learning. Teachers should encourage open communication and create situations that help students feel successful and motivated. Thus, in today's digital age, foreign language teachers should strive to create a classroom environment that is relaxed, respectful, and open, in order to make teaching more effective and enable students to learn more successfully as a result (Liu, & Ni, 2021). In addition, a modern learning environment should allow students to communicate freely, work in groups, and take part in joint projects. This approach helps develop communication skills and creates a positive attitude toward learning foreign languages.

Modern foreign language teaching focuses on communication. Interactive methods such as role plays, discussions, group work, and projects help students practice language, improve communication skills, and increase motivation. They also make learning more interesting and practical. Individual learning is important because students have different levels, interests, and needs. In particular, Ukrainian researchers O. Beresten, K. Yurchenko and P. Saveliev (2022), regard the introduction of game elements in the lesson as the first method of increasing motivation (p. 162). By this we mean the game not for the sake of entertainment, but for the purpose of diversifying the educational process and activating the skills of independent performance of certain tasks. Teachers should use different tasks and materials and allow students to choose topics and learning methods. This makes learning more effective and increases confidence. Autonomous learning means students manage their own learning process. It develops independence, responsibility, and motivation. When students have more control, they learn more actively. Digital technologies support learning through online platforms, apps, videos, and tests. They allow students to study anytime and use real materials like films and articles, which improves language skills and motivation.

CONCLUSIONS

Motivation to learn foreign languages is a key factor in successful learning, and it is a complex system of internal and external factors that influence students' activity and results. The

most effective is internal motivation, which is based on interest and self-development, but external motivation also plays an important role. The level of motivation is significantly influenced by the psychological characteristics of students, self-esteem, emotional state and learning environment. The importance of modern communicative and interactive teaching methods, individualization and development of student autonomy is emphasized. Digital technologies increase motivation by providing access to authentic materials and opportunities for independent learning. Therefore, effective formation of motivation is possible if modern pedagogical approaches, psychological support and rational use of digital resources are combined.

Further research could be aimed at studying the influence of different types of motivation on the success of learning foreign languages. It is also advisable to analyze the effectiveness of interactive teaching methods and the role of digital technologies in the formation of motivation.

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МОТИВАЦІЯ СТУДЕНТІВ УНІВЕРСИТЕТУ ДО ВИВЧЕННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ: ПСИХОЛОГІЧНІ, СОЦІАЛЬНІ ТА ОСВІТНІ ЧИННИКИ

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У статті розглядаються теоретичні засади мотивації до вивчення іноземних мов у контексті сучасної психолого-педагогічної науки. Мотивація визначається як складна система внутрішніх і зовнішніх чинників, що зумовлюють активність, спрямованість та результативність навчальної діяльності студентів. Проаналізовано підходи до трактування мотивації у психології та педагогіці, а також її значення для успішного оволодіння іноземною мовою. Окреслено основні види мотивації – внутрішню та зовнішню, при цьому доведено перевагу внутрішньої мотивації як більш стійкої та ефективної. Розкрито роль особистісних характеристик студентів, їхньої самооцінки, емоційного стану та освітнього середовища у формуванні мотивації. Підкреслено значення зниження мовної тривожності та створення позитивного психологічного клімату в процесі навчання. Особливу увагу приділено сучасним педагогічним подходам, зокрема комунікативним та інтерактивним методам навчання, індивідуалізації та автономії студентів. Визначено, що такі методи сприяють розвитку мовленнєвих навичок, критичного мислення та підвищенню інтересу до навчання. У статті також проаналізовано роль цифрових технологій і соціальних мереж як важливого мотиваційного ресурсу. Зазначено, що онлайн-платформи, мобільні застосунки, відеоігри та соціальні мережі забезпечують доступ до автентичних матеріалів і можливостей реальної комунікації, що підвищує ефективність навчання. Водночас підкреслено необхідність їх збалансованого використання через ризики інформаційного перевантаження. Зроблено висновок, що ефективне формування мотивації до вивчення іноземних мов можливе за умови комплексного поєднання педагогічних, психологічних і цифрових факторів, спрямованих на розвиток внутрішньої мотивації та активної навчальної позиції студентів.

Ключові слова: автономія здобувача освіти, вивчення іноземних мов, внутрішня мотивація, зовнішня мотивація, інтерактивні методи навчання, мотивація, цифрові технології.