

THE DIDACTIC POTENTIAL OF POSITIVE PEDAGOGY IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING: THE EMOTIONAL AND MOTIVATIONAL DIMENSION OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

ДИДАКТИЧНИЙ ПОТЕНЦІАЛ ПОЗИТИВНОЇ ПЕДАГОГІКИ У ВИКЛАДАННІ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ: ЕМОЦІЙНО-МОТИВАЦІЙНИЙ ВИМІР УНІВЕРСИТЕТСЬКОЇ ОСВІТИ

The article explores how the principles of positive pedagogy, can enhance motivation, emotional well-being, and learning outcomes in foreign language education at Ukrainian universities. The authors argue that in the context of Ukraine's post-war reconstruction, developing students' linguistic competence and psychological resilience is crucial. Traditional teaching at the university level is often emotionally restrained and lacks individualized approaches, leading to reduced engagement. Positive pedagogy offers an effective framework for addressing these challenges. The study highlights research by Mandić (2025), who applied positive pedagogy in EFL classrooms across three student groups. These interventions promoted emotional awareness, empathy, and motivation through activities such as emotional reflection, vocabulary for emotional expression, and empathy workshops. Results indicated increased emotional intelligence, sustained motivation, and a supportive classroom atmosphere. In the Ukrainian context implementing positive pedagogy is viewed as essential for restoring motivation and engagement in higher education. The article synthesizes principles proposed by CAVILAM – Alliance Française, which include fostering belonging, confidence, emotional awareness, error acceptance, motivation, and learner autonomy. These are operationalized through practical classroom strategies such as emotional check-ins, group reflection, gamification, and formative feedback.

A comparative analysis (Table 3) demonstrates that the core principles of positive pedagogy are universal, though their implementation differs between offline and online settings. The conclusions underline that positive pedagogy fosters empathy, resilience, and a sense of belonging, while also maintaining academic rigor. Its integration into English language instruction contributes to a safer and more encouraging educational environment, essential in times of crisis. The authors call for the development of new textbooks and teaching materials grounded in the principles of positive pedagogy to institutionalize these practices within Ukrainian higher education.

Key words: positive pedagogy; foreign language teaching; motivation; emotional well-being; university education.

У статті розкрито можливості впровадження позитивної педагогіки, заснованої

на засадах позитивної психології, у процес навчання англійської мови у закладах вищої освіти України. Традиційна модель викладання часто позбавлена індивідуального підходу та емоційного залучення, що призводить до зниження мотивації. Вихід із цієї ситуації автори вбачають у впровадженні позитивної педагогіки, теоретичним підґрунтям якої є модель PERMA Мартіна Селігмана – позитивні емоції, звязаність, взаємовідносини, сенс, досягнення).

На основі дослідження М. Мандич (2025) описано експериментальні заняття, спрямовані на розвиток емоційної обізнаності, емпатії та мотивації студентів засобами позитивної педагогіки. Особливу увагу приділено сучасним методичним рекомендаціям CAVILAM – Alliance Française, які визначають основні принципи позитивної педагогіки: реалізацію потреби у приналежності, розвиток упевненості, врахування емоційного стану, право на помилку, стимулювання мотивації, розвиток автономії. У статті подано приклади навчальної діяльності, що забезпечують реалізацію цих принципів – емоційні чек-іни, групові обговорення, формативне оцінювання, використання гейміфікації та цифрових інструментів.

Автори здійснили порівняльний аналіз реалізації принципів позитивної педагогіки в умовах онлайн та офлайн навчання. Показано, що офлайн-формат забезпечує безпосередню емоційну взаємодію, підтримку та невербальну комунікацію, тоді як онлайн-середовище сприяє розвитку автономії, персоналізації темпу та доступу до навчальних ресурсів. Проте ефективність досягається лише за умов комбінованого підходу, що поєднує обидва формати.

У висновках наголошено, що позитивна педагогіка створює передумови для формування емпатії, внутрішньої мотивації та психологічної безпеки студентів. Її впровадження сприяє побудові комфортного та підтримувального освітнього середовища без порушення традиційного навчального процесу. Автори пропонують розробити нові навчально-методичні матеріали на засадах позитивної педагогіки, що сприятиме якісній трансформації університетської освіти в Україні.

Ключові слова: позитивна педагогіка; викладання іноземної мови; мотивація; емоційне благополуччя; університетська освіта.

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Problem Statement. Solving the global problems faced by higher education in Ukraine is undoubtedly linked to the foreign language competencies of future specialists and their professional qualities, which are essential for the post-war reconstruction of the country.

It is well known that learning English requires, first and foremost, student motivation. University-level teaching is usually conducted without an individual approach and with emotional restraint; thus, students often do not prepare adequately and sometimes act as “tourists” in the classroom [1, p.524].

In Ukrainian higher education institutions, the situation is further complicated by the full-scale Russian invasion, which has caused radical changes in teaching approaches in higher education in general, and in English as a foreign language in particular [2, p.13]. Both students and teachers may experience traumatic events and fear as a result of losses, forced displacement, or time spent in shelters, making them psychologically vulnerable [2, p.14].

Therefore, implementing the principles of positive pedagogy deserves special attention in teaching English as a foreign language and is particularly relevant today. In scientific terms, positive pedagogy is based on positive psychology. It can be assumed that teacher encouragement, recognition of personal strengths, and the creation of positive emotions help students achieve success in learning. This approach provides the teacher with a foundation for creating a positive and effective learning environment, managing classroom dynamics, and using teaching methods that meet learners' needs and abilities [1, p.525].

Analysis of Recent Studies and Publications.

The founder of the term "positive pedagogy" is considered to be Martin Seligman, who developed an approach based on promoting a positive attitude and the learner's well-being, which directly affects academic success [3, p.132]. M. Seligman proposed the theory of well-being, grounded in five key elements summarized by the acronym PERMA [4, p.9]:

Positive pedagogy is based on this model and stimulates the activity of foreign language teachers, allowing them to demonstrate creativity, ambition, and an individual approach to each student.

Mandić's study [3] examining the potential of positive pedagogy in EFL teaching was conducted among three groups of university students. Experimental lessons implemented principles of positive pedagogy in teaching English as a foreign language. In the first group, the focus was on verbalizing personal emotions and discussing current experiences in and outside the classroom. In the second group, lessons emphasized emotional vocabulary precision, helping students recognize and express feelings more accurately. The third group engaged in empathy workshops, combining individual and pair tasks, discussions of social situations, and multimedia materials,

thus fostering socio-emotional competencies and interpersonal interaction.

Data were collected through open-ended questionnaires, pedagogical observation, and analysis of group discussions. Both linguistic and emotional aspects of students' responses were analyzed, including their ability to relate personal experiences to others and their level of emotional engagement.

The results demonstrated that lessons based on positive pedagogy increased emotional awareness, empathy, motivation, and created a supportive and safe learning environment without disrupting the traditional educational process.

Unresolved Aspects of the Overall Problem.

Since the need to improve the learning process and develop the scientific foundation for the problem is undeniable, and given that the topic has not been extensively studied by Ukrainian scholars—although it is gaining global significance—it is necessary to systematize and analyze the opportunities and benefits of implementing positive pedagogy in English language teaching.

While optimizing the motivational component of English learning has long been necessary, the emotional dimension of positive pedagogy in this context remains insufficiently explored both theoretically and empirically. Therefore, the problem requires clarification and systematization within the Ukrainian educational context.

Purpose of the Article. The **purpose** of the article is to theoretically substantiate the pedagogical potential of positive pedagogy and to determine its practical application in teaching English in Ukrainian higher education institutions in both face-to-face and online formats.

To achieve this aim, the following **tasks** were set: to characterize the concept of positive pedagogy and its place in modern foreign language teaching methodology;

to analyze key approaches to applying positive pedagogy principles in domestic and international research; to identify specific features of implementing positive pedagogy principles in EFL teaching under different learning formats; to generalize and classify the principles of positive pedagogy according to online and offline learning conditions; to present

Table 1

PERMA Model by M. Seligman [4]

	P	E	R	M	A
Element	Positive Emotion	Engagement	Relationships	Meaning	Accomplishment
Meaning	Strive to experience positive emotions in life and work	Perform any task with enthusiasm	Receive support from others to reduce stress	Have purpose and meaning in life	strive to achieve goals that can bring a sense of satisfaction and prosperity

examples of teaching tasks aimed at fostering a positive learning environment and enhancing student motivation.

Main Research Findings. New approaches to foreign language learning require teachers to understand students' thoughts, emotions, and expectations. The emotional exhaustion and busy schedules of both teachers and students provide every reason to conclude that theoretical and practical approaches to foreign language learning must be redefined urgently.

Positive pedagogy possesses unique characteristics that enable students to acquire knowledge with minimal perceived effort. Among various definitions of "positive pedagogy," the one proposed by Australian researchers is most relevant here: "the development of an educational environment that enables learners not only to participate in traditional academic

programs but also to acquire knowledge and skills for enhancing their own well-being and that of others" [5, p.432].

In the CAVILAM – Alliance Française methodological materials (available on the *Le Français Facile avec RFI* platform), positive pedagogy is defined as an approach aimed at maintaining student motivation and emotional engagement [6].

The principles of positive pedagogy proposed by CAVILAM – Alliance Française focus on students' emotional well-being, autonomy, and sustained motivation (Table 2).

The analysis supports the view that the concept of positive education can be expanded into the concept of a positive university [5, p.438].

Considering that universities operate in face-to-face, online, or hybrid formats, the implementation of positive pedagogy principles may vary. Comparative

Table 2

Implementation of Positive Pedagogy Principles (According to CAVILAM – Alliance Française) in Teaching a Second Foreign Language [6]

№	Principle of Positive Pedagogy	Suggested Learning Activities
1	Fostering recognition and belonging	Pair work with partner rotation; small group collaboration; informal communication via forums or chats; short oral reflections at the end of class
2	Building self-confidence and self-esteem	Mini-presentations highlighting strengths; gradual task complexity; individual oral or written responses with supportive teacher feedback
3	Considering students' emotional state	Discussion of emotionally rich texts; flexible pacing; emotional check-ins at the beginning of class; mood self-assessment scales
4	Integration of various learning types	Role plays; combination of audio, video, and text materials; visualization through diagrams and mind maps; project-based tasks
5	Right to make mistakes and positive feedback	Peer assessment; non-personalized analysis of typical errors; formative assessment; use of language portfolios
6	Stimulating motivation and engagement	Gamification elements; communicative tasks; clearly defined learning goals; use of relevant topics
7	Developing student autonomy	Online self-study platforms; independent mini-research projects; choice of task format

Table 3

Comparative Characteristics of Implementing Positive Pedagogy Principles in EFL Teaching in Offline and Online Formats (Author's Development)

Principle of Positive Pedagogy	Implementation in Offline Format	Implementation in Online Format
Recognition and belonging	Creating a cooperative atmosphere through non-verbal communication; direct interpersonal interaction; teamwork	Use of synchronous and asynchronous communication; breakout rooms; online forums and chats to support academic community
Building confidence and self-esteem	Oral encouragement during classes; gradual involvement in public speaking; individual consultations	Written comments; individualized pacing; opportunities for revision and resubmission
Considering emotional state	Observing students' emotional reactions; adjusting activities during lessons; short reflective discussions	Digital feedback tools; asynchronous reflection; attention to psycho-emotional workload
Integration of learning types	Combination of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic activities; simulations; printed materials	Multimedia resources; interactive platforms; personalized content

Continuation of table 3

Right to mistakes and positive feedback	Collective analysis of typical errors; formative assessment without overemphasis on mistakes; supportive comments	Automated and personalized feedback; audio/video comments
Stimulating motivation and engagement	Dynamic lesson pacing; live discussions; authentic communicative situations	Gamification; structured course design; reminders and intermediate milestones
Developing autonomy	Combining classroom work with independent tasks; teaching planning and self-assessment	Access to materials anytime; flexible pace and format; digital learning tools

analysis shows that while these principles are universal, their forms of realization differ according to the learning format.

The online environment expands possibilities for personalization and autonomy, while face-to-face instruction provides direct emotional interaction and a stronger sense of social presence.

Conclusions. The theoretical and methodological analysis confirms that positive pedagogy holds substantial didactic potential for transforming foreign language teaching in Ukrainian higher education. By incorporating principles of positive psychology, particularly Seligman's PERMA model, this approach unites linguistic competence with the development of emotional intelligence, motivation, and psychological resilience—skills essential for academic success and post-war recovery. Emotional and motivational engagement emerge not as supplementary factors but as core determinants of EFL learning outcomes. Positive pedagogy shifts instruction from a purely cognitive model to a holistic one, where emotional well-being, meaning, and belonging directly enhance language acquisition and communicative competence.

A comparative analysis of offline and online contexts reveals that the adaptability of positive pedagogy ensures its universal relevance. In-person environments better foster empathy, interpersonal trust, and immediate emotional feedback, while digital platforms strengthen learner autonomy, self-regulation, and flexibility. The teacher's role evolves from a transmitter of information to an architect of positive emotional climates—facilitating well-being while maintaining cognitive rigor and emotional sensitivity. Moreover, implementing positive pedagogy can drive institutional transformation toward a “positive university,” embedding well-being and engagement into educational philosophy. This shift contributes to

improved academic culture, higher student retention, and greater teacher satisfaction, positioning universities as models of resilience where learning, well-being, and civic responsibility coexist harmoniously.

Practically, the study underscores the need to create new textbooks, materials, and digital tools based on positive pedagogy principles. Ultimately, positive pedagogy represents more than a methodological innovation—it is a paradigm shift that restores humanistic values, fosters emotional sustainability, and redefines the role of education.

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