



# ELDERS LEARNING ENGLISH FOR EUROPE

## THE POLISH CASE

This study investigates motivational factors and language learning strategies involved in the process of learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in the elderly. This needs' analysis report is part of the implementation of ERASMUS+ project nr 2021-1-PL01-KA220-ADU-000033465.



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## Project information

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# **ELDERS LEARNING ENGLISH FOR EUROPE**

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most important social changes in recent years is related to the greater life expectancy of people. Demographic aging is therefore a global phenomenon and one of the main challenges facing the European Union.

The Council of the European Union advocates the right of older people to live in dignity, to promote their independence and participation in social, economic and civic life, and to ensure that older groups remain active as citizens, workers, consumers, carers and volunteers. Accordingly, one of the measures proposed is the participation of older people in training and lifelong learning activities.

It is obvious that the elderly group is increasingly traveling to other countries and interacting with people who speak other languages. For this, it is very important to learn languages, and more specifically English.

Thus, the goals of our project are:

- Improving and extending the offer of high-quality learning opportunities adapted to the needs of older people in order to improve their multilingual (English language) and digital skills.
- Expanding and developing the skills of trainers and other employees supporting the elderly, in particular motivating them to participate in foreign language learning and effective teaching.

The target group we target is twofold:

- Teachers / staff who support the teaching of foreign languages to older people.
- Older people interested in learning languages and with a low level of English proficiency.

For this purpose, the "Active XXI e-learning platform + mobile application" will be developed for older people who learn English as a foreign language, learning material (textbook) for students (seniors) and a methodology manual for trainers.

In addition, it is worth taking a broader look at the aspect of extending human life in Poland and in the world. The seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate in Poland in January 2022 was 2.8 percent, the EU statistical office Eurostat reported. This means that the unemployment rate in

January was slightly lower than just before the end of 2021. In December, it was 2.9 percent. According to Eurostat estimates, the number of unemployed in Poland amounted to 488,000. in the first month of 2022. In December, it was 498 thousand. people. Among the EU countries, the Czech Republic (2.2%) recorded a lower rate than Poland. Across the EU, the unemployment rate in this respect stood at 6.2 percent in January. In turn, in the euro area countries, unemployment averaged 6.8 percent.

Eurostat measures the harmonized unemployment rate as a percentage of the unemployed, able to take up and actively seeking employment for all economically active people in the country. It covers all people aged 15 to 74.

This methodology is different from that of the Central Statistical Office (GUS). According to the data of the Polish office, the unemployment rate, measured as a percentage of the unemployed registered in labour offices in relation to the total civilian population, was 5.5 percent at the end of January 2022. In January 2022, the registered unemployment rate reached 5.6%. - it follows from the preliminary data of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. In the unemployment registers at the end of January 2022, there were 162.6 thousand. (i.e. 14.9%) less unemployed than at the end of January 2021. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the situation was the best in the Greater Poland Voivodeship, where unemployment was 3.2 percent. The highest unemployment rate was recorded in the Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship (9.1%).<sup>1</sup>

Analysing the area of unemployment, it is worth getting acquainted with the values of entrepreneurship of Poles. According to the latest measurement made in mid-2020, the share of people running young businesses in Poland in the adult population aged 18-64 decreased from the low level of 5% in 2019 to 3.1% (with 1.6% of adults are at the stage of organizing their business, and 1.5% have been running a business for 3 to 42 months). At the same time, the share of Poles running mature companies that have been operating on the market for over 3.5 years has hardly changed - 12.2% compared to 13% in 2019. In relation to the number of adults, this gives approximately 706 thousand. While 19 million ? people were running young companies, 2.8 million people were running mature companies. It is worth remembering that 364 thousand from 706 thousands are projects at the stage of organization and that one person may run more than one company with a different experience in the market.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.prawo.pl/kadry/stopa-bezrobocia-w-styczniu-2022-r,513289.html> z dnia 15.03.2022

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.parp.gov.pl/storage/publications/pdf/poz-8\\_Raport-z-badania-GEM-2021-JM-WCAG.pdf](https://www.parp.gov.pl/storage/publications/pdf/poz-8_Raport-z-badania-GEM-2021-JM-WCAG.pdf)

When unemployment is considered, it is worth comparing these values with the remuneration of Poles. The year 2022 will bring another increase in the minimum wage. This time, its increase will be PLN 210 and will amount to PLN 3010 gross, i.e. net 2210. It will be similar with the minimum hourly rate, which will amount to 19.70 gross from January 2022, which will give 14.47 "per hand". These increases will also affect the national average. So far, it has amounted to PLN 5,852 gross (4,144.22 net), and from next year it will be PLN 5,922 gross (4,193.18 net)<sup>3</sup>.

On the other hand, when the employment of seniors is analysed, only 14 per cent of seniors of Poles aged 60+ are professionally active. The vast majority of seniors are no longer professionally active and live only on retirement or disability pension - according to the CBOS survey. The survey showed that a total of 86 percent of respondents aged 60 and over do not work at all. Only 10 percent work full-time. Older individuals aged 60-65 are the most professionally active among seniors with 28 percent still working professionally, including 23 percent full time workers. In the group of seniors aged 66 to 74, there are three times less employed (8%), while only 5% are employed and works full time.

CBOS pointed out that continuing to work at the age of 60 and over is related to the level of education. Among people with primary education, 96 percent do not take up permanent or occasional or part-time work. In the group of people with basic or secondary education, this percentage drops to 85% and 84 % respectively. The most professionally active ones are seniors with higher education. In this group, 22 percent are working full-time at the age of 60, and 70 percent do not take up any work.

The study emphasized that the primary source of income for seniors is only the retirement pension. According to the survey, the structure of income of older people, i.e. the fact that the vast majority of them only stay on retirement pension, affects their financial situation. 8% of their households described the material conditions of their households as bad or rather bad. People up to 59 years old were 14 percent and people in the age group of 60–65 were 13 percent. 55 percent people who are under 60 years of age declare that they live in rather good or good material conditions, and 37 percent describe them as average (neither good nor bad).

As indicated in the survey, analyses across age groups show that seniors are poorer than younger generations. However, extreme situations, such as lack of food or lack of money for

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3 <https://poradnikpracownika.pl/-rynek-pracy-w-polsce-w-2022-co-nas-czeka-w-nadchodzacych-roku> z dnia 15.03.2022

basic needs, are less common among seniors, because they have a fixed monthly income (retirement pension, disability pension).

The presented analyses used combined sets from 13 studies in the period between August 2015 and August 2016. In this way, a large sample (13,385) of adult Polish residents was obtained. Seniors are presented against the background of the total number of respondents, as well as compared to other age groups.<sup>4</sup>

During and after the pandemic, the situation of Seniors in Poland changed. Due to the danger of the disease, they were isolated and restricted from all activities. People aged 60 and over constitute over 25.3% of the population of Poland. It is an extremely diverse and growing group population. In 2030, it will constitute almost 30% of the total population, and in 2050 it will exceed 40%<sup>5</sup>. 9.8% of people aged 65 and over, i.e. every tenth person at this age, lived in almost complete social isolation before forced isolation during the pandemic.<sup>6</sup>

Only 3% of people aged 65 and over used the Internet freely before the pandemic, and slightly less than 27% used it in a limited way. Digital competences in the group of people aged 60-65 not examined by the Central Statistical Office of Poland (GUS) are slightly higher, but we can conclude that before the pandemic about 1/3 of Polish seniors (about 3.2 million) used the Internet, and only a few a percentage (not less than 3%) of all people 60+ did it in a smooth manner, and at least a dozen percent of people aged 60 and over (not less than 14%) in a relatively functional manner. We can see a great need for digital education of older people, especially from younger groups of seniors, as well as the need to expand competences by digitally excluded people (those who are able to perform basic activities using a computer and network, but have very limited skills and a high distrust of online tools).<sup>7</sup>

Although it does not replace face-to-face relationships and activities, the Internet helped seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic period. When the possible relationship between the mental condition of respondents and Internet use are analysed, it can be seen that it is related to the subjectively perceived psychophysical condition. Compared to people who did not use the Internet, those who used the Internet less frequently described their psychophysical condition

<sup>4</sup> <https://forsal.pl/artykuly/995510,praca-seniorow-wsrod-polakow-w-wieku-60-aktywnych-zawodowo-jest-tylko-14-proc.html> z dnia 18.03.2022

<sup>5</sup> Źródło: Wyniki bieżących bilansów ludności, GUS (2019).

<sup>6</sup> <https://seniorhub.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/raport-jakosc-zycia-osob-starszych-09.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://seniorhub.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/raport-jakosc-zycia-osob-starszych-09.pdf>

as worse than before the pandemic. Moreover, people using the Internet more often declared that the pandemic did not worsen their psychophysical condition.

The Internet and computer help to function better in times of crisis and eliminate the feeling of loneliness. Most Internet users aged 60 and over feel the positive effect of using the network in the COVID-19 era, but few feel a significant improvement in their own functioning thanks to the use of the Internet. These data require more detail, but it can be concluded that although it does not replace seniors' social contacts with other people, the Internet helps in the era of social isolation.<sup>8</sup>

Digital education of seniors should be under the special care of both the state and parliamentarians, regardless of political stance. Many seniors theoretically have access to the Internet, but cannot use it, for example in the area of e-services. Digital competences can be developed among others during courses offered by the Universities of the Third Age.<sup>9</sup>

Cybercriminals come up with more and more audacious methods of extorting personal data or gaining access to our credit card or savings deposited in a bank. Many of the techniques used by fraudsters target the oldest people, but according to a study by the Financial Market Development Foundation and Provident Polska, seniors are the most vigilant group on the web. As much as 93 percent, consumers over 65 years of age can correctly recognize a fake e-mail. This is the highest result of all age groups. Seniors should also be praised for their concern for the security of their computers - every 2nd person from this group checks the device for malware installed on it at least once a month<sup>10</sup>.

## **WHAT TO DO TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR SENIORS AFTER COVID-19?**

Several initiatives can be taken, including stimulating the activity of seniors - including encouraging learning and travel. Our ELENE language study program for seniors fits perfectly into the overall global support for seniors. An important element is the creation and expansion of a network of support and activation institutions, through both nationwide initiatives and programs and local activities .

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<sup>8</sup> <https://seniorhub.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/raport-jakosc-zycia-osob-starszych-09.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://pap-mediroom.pl/polityka-i-spoleczenstwo/komisja-ds-cyfryzacji-seniorzy-pod-szczegolna-cyfrowa-opieka>

<sup>10</sup> <https://techno-senior.com/2021/08/03/seniorzy-w-cyfrowym-swiecie/>

The amount of funds allocated to the social activation of older people under voivodship programs or subsidies from EU programs should be increased. Building awareness of the challenges of aging and the needs of older people among younger generations is very important. Tools of education and building empathy should be used, allowing children, adolescents and young adults to understand the differences resulting from age (including dysfunctions), prepare them for elementary support for elderly people from family and neighbourhood communities, as well as for their own old age. It is necessary to introduce lessons on old age into the education program, promote volunteering for the elderly, and develop local intergenerational projects. Also at the level of higher education, subjects relating to old age should be introduced, not only for students of social or medical faculties, but also for other students (e.g. polytechnic or economic)<sup>11</sup>.

## HOW TO ACTIVATE SENIORS

As can be concluded from the above data, seniors want to be active, they feel bad when the number of limitations in using the benefits of life in society accumulates. In addition to the exclusion and the inability to contact the local community; their travel situation have also changed, mainly due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The current situation in the country, including the outbreak of an armed attack by Russia on Ukraine, has a significant impact on tourists' travel plans.

Despite the opening of the borders, most decide to stay there and organize trips within Poland, which can be seen from the siege experienced by the most popular resorts in Poland in recent years. However, there is a group that limits vacation travel plans. The available data show that people aged 55 and over have a smaller share in the group of tourists looking for accommodation on Nocowanie.pl than a year ago<sup>12</sup>.

Many weeks of social isolation meant that Poles who had switched to work and distance learning wanted a bit of freedom. As soon as most of the restrictions were removed, a great relaxation could be noticed. When on May 4, 2020, the owners of accommodation facilities were given the green light to accept accommodation reservations, tourists quickly took the opportunity to plan a holiday trip.

<sup>11</sup> <https://seniorhub.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/raport-jakosc-zycia-osob-starszych-09.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.horecanet.pl/podroze-seniora-2020-analiza/>

More and more seniors and retirees are healthy, fit and still active people who want to get to know new places and travel including other countries. Travel agencies dedicated to seniors are established, and in hotels located in the Mediterranean basin, one can meet a Polish resident or the possibility of renting a Polish guide. This is especially important for people who do not communicate in English.

Proper preparation of a trip already in Poland, checking the area, or booking an airport transfer are issues in which it is worth supporting departing seniors. One should also remember to additionally take care of safety, e.g. by checking where there are medical points that can provide quick help and equip the first aid kit well. It is also worth remembering to ensure communication with the elderly. Especially when traveling abroad, one should check the travel rules.

The end of June and the first days of July 2020 and the continuing trend in 2021 clearly show that Poles no longer want to stay at home. If, for various reasons, they cannot go on vacation, they often decide to go on a weekend trip to, for example, the nearest lake district. The holiday weather contributes to this - there are crowds on the beach, in the mountains and by the lakes. Rarely does anyone keep the required distance, which should not be the case. The analyses show that in the summer of 2022-2021, people aged 55 and over continued to be interested in these directions. However, **drops** are noticeable everywhere - the share of seniors in the group planning a trip to Ciechocin in 2020 is only 3.7%, while in 2019 it was 15.4%. Even fewer older tourists want to go to Kołobrzeg - this percentage is 0.6 percent for San, while in 2020 it was 6.2 percent. Due to the uncertain situation in the world, Poles opted for safe accommodation in the country - primarily those that inform about the safety rules implemented at home.<sup>13</sup>

The holiday preferences of Polish seniors do not differ significantly from the choices made by other age groups. However, there are also differences - it turns out, for example, that Poles over 60 pay less for holidays abroad, because they often decide to go outside the peak season. People over 60 are becoming more and more interested in organized holidays abroad. During the first three quarters of this year, the popularity of foreign travels increased by 20% in this age group. The statistics kept by Travelplanet.pl also show that it is the older holidaymakers who can discover real price deals. Destinations most often chosen by seniors are similar to the choices of other age groups, they are: Greece, Egypt, Turkey, Spain and Bulgaria.

Data from Travelplanet.pl indicate that Greece was slightly less popular among older people this year - in the period from January to the end of September, slightly more than 1/4 of seniors went there, while in this period Peloponnese and its surroundings were chosen by every third Polish tourist. Unlike the general public, seniors left for Egypt more willingly (15% compared to 14%). A clearly higher percentage of seniors also left for Tunisia this year (2.4% compared to 1.6% in total). Turkey (13.7% as compared to 17% of all tourists) and Bulgaria (5.3% of seniors as compared to 8.4%). was much less popular among seniors The standard of rest for seniors, as well as the places where they want to spend their vacation, also do not differ significantly from the average. Every fifth senior, as well as tourists in general, chose to stay in a 5 \* hotel, which does not differ from the average. On the other hand, slightly less often than all tourists stayed in 4 \* hotels (40% compared to 45% in total), and more often than in general - in 3 \* standard hotels (33% seniors compared to 30% in total) in 2 \* hotels and lower categories (6% of seniors compared to 5% of the total)<sup>14</sup>.

One of the possibilities of active participation in social life for Seniors in Poland is learning English. Knowledge of the English language makes it easier for seniors to find themselves in the modern world. They can travel freely without fearing that they will not be understood at the airport, hotel or restaurant. Language courses for seniors give retirees better access to information and at the same time meet new people or spend time in a new company. Knowledge of the English language is necessary in today's world - it is the language of international communication. English for seniors is a great idea for development in the autumn of one's life. With the elderly in mind, special courses, both stationary and online, are created. The English language for seniors is often a big challenge, as most older people did not learn it compulsorily at school. In the past, mostly Russian was taught in schools. Today, English is much more important as it is used to communicate internationally. In addition, the vast majority of film productions, as well as elements of pop culture, are addressed to English-speaking audiences.

Many seniors decide to start learning a foreign language (including English) after retirement, when they have more time for themselves. Sometimes, in the case of still professionally active seniors, starting education is a must.

Many language schools offer special groups for seniors. Classes are conducted at various levels and adjusted to the pace and abilities of the students. Many schools focus on teaching practical

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.egospodarka.pl/127701,Jak-wypoczywaja-seniorzy,1,39,1.html>

language skills, and not on rigid grammatical correctness and language rules on paper. In addition, many companies that employ seniors subsidize learning English - they pay extra for classes or organize special language courses within the company. This is to improve the language competences of seniors and adapt them to the conditions of the modern labour market.<sup>15</sup>

Older people are often abandoned and it is certainly worth encouraging them to develop despite their age, because one can never know when learning English will be useful. Not only is it a mind training, it also helps in simple communication in the hotel or on the street to help a lost foreigner.

Although anyone who starts learning a language would like to speak it immediately like a native speaker, the reality is more complicated. Nevertheless, it is worth spending time learning English, because knowing it brings great benefits, also for pensioners. Why learning English is good for seniors?<sup>16</sup>

- Learning a language is a challenge. It can become a passion for a senior and a useful activity that will fill the days off.
- Learning new words is great training for one's brain. By stimulating memory, it allows one to maintain good condition.
- The English language can be a pretext to make new friends, for example during courses at language schools or during online lessons.
- Knowledge of the English language makes it easier for seniors to find their place in the modern world. They can travel freely without fearing that they will not be understood at the airport, hotel or restaurant.
- Language courses for seniors give retirees better access to information. Many interesting sources on the Internet are available in English. Knowing English allows one to freely navigate on the web and develop other interests. It also makes watching foreign movies more enjoyable, and the lyrics of your favourite songs no longer hide secrets.
- A foreign language can also be a connecting factor between generations. A senior who knows English can understand their grandchildren and the slang they use more easily, and will be able to be supportive, e.g. while doing homework.

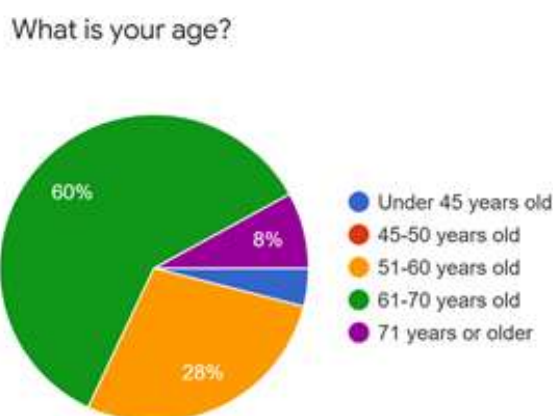
<sup>15</sup> <https://poprostuzdrowo.pl/angielski-dla-seniorow-z-dnia-18.03.2022>

<sup>16</sup> <https://angloville.pl/artykuly/angielski-dla-seniorow-czyli-nigdy-nie-jest-za-pozno-na-nauke/>

## FINDINGS

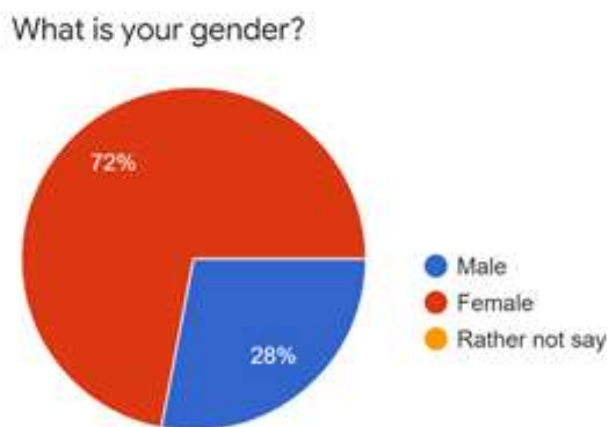
Research has been carried out to find out the opinions of seniors about learning English in this era. 25 seniors aged between 45 and 71 and over participated in the study. The dominant group of respondents were people aged between 61 and 70 years of age.

A detailed summary is presented in the diagram below.



Source: own study based on the conducted research

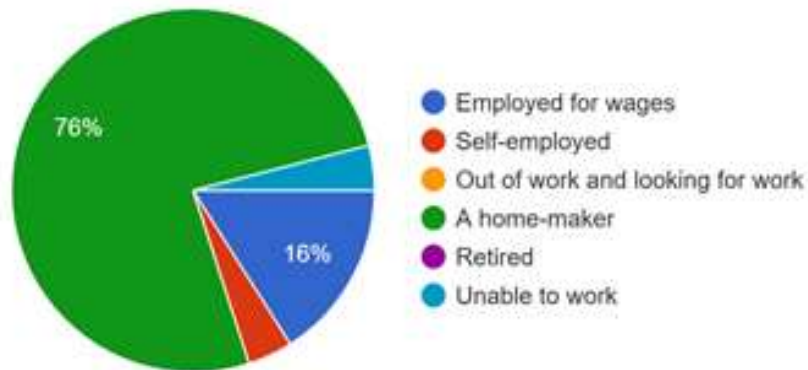
All respondents were from Poland. When the gender division of respondents were analysed, it was found that 72% of the participants were women, and 28% were men -. The results can be seen in the diagram below.



Source: own study based on the conducted research

When the respondents' source of income was analysed, it was found while 76% of the respondents were retired, 16% of them were employed full-time. A small percentage was self-employed, and 4% had other sources of income A detailed list can be seen in the diagram below.

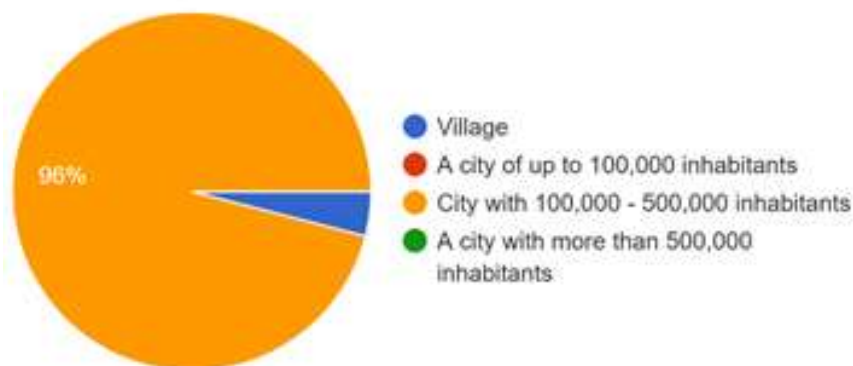
Are you currently...?



Source: own study based on the conducted research

Most of the respondents ( 96%) lived in large cities with 100,000 to 500,000 inhabitants, and the rest (4%) were rural residents -The summary is presented in the chart below.

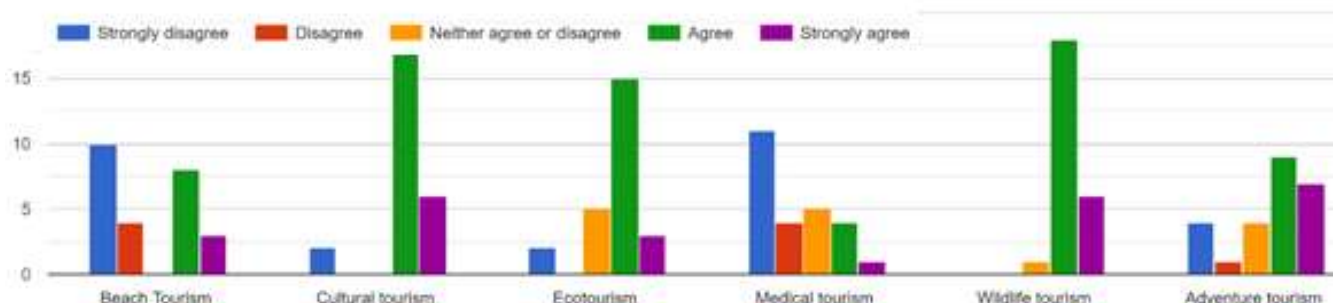
Size of the place of residence



Source: own study based on the conducted research

All the survey participants travelled outside Poland. Seniors responded unanimously that their favourite destination is cultural tourism - on a par with nature tourism. Ecotourism came second, followed by adventure tourism. Seniors unequivocally emphasized that they did not plan medical tourism and did not prefer to relax on the beach. The percentage set of answers is presented in the chart below.

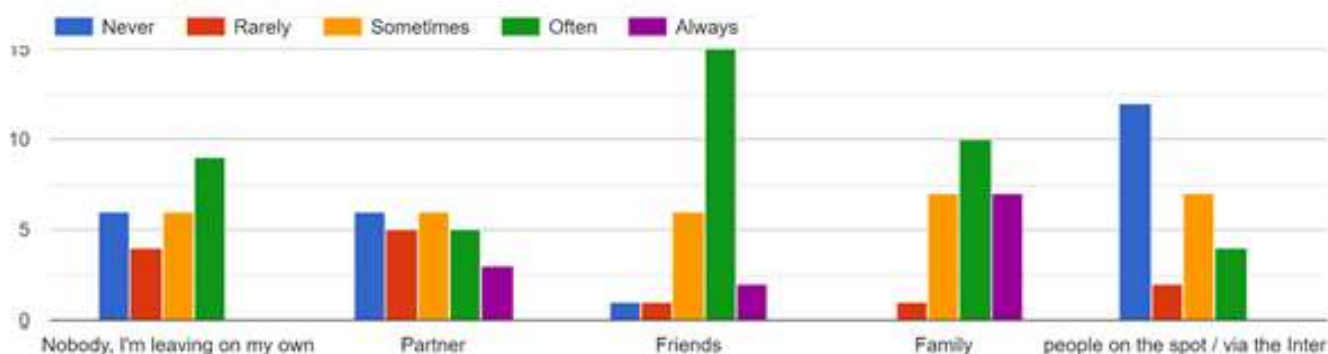
What is your preferred form of tourism?



Source: own study based on the conducted research

When they were asked about people who accompany them during travel, the respondents indicated that they were most often friends, which was followed by family. Other responses included partners, single trips, and people they met on the spot or via the Internet. The majority of respondents indicated that they never (11 respondents) decided to choose people they met on the spot or via the Internet as travel companions - it is 14 people (rarely, sometimes, often). A detailed list of the answers is presented in the chart below.

Who accompanies you in your trip?



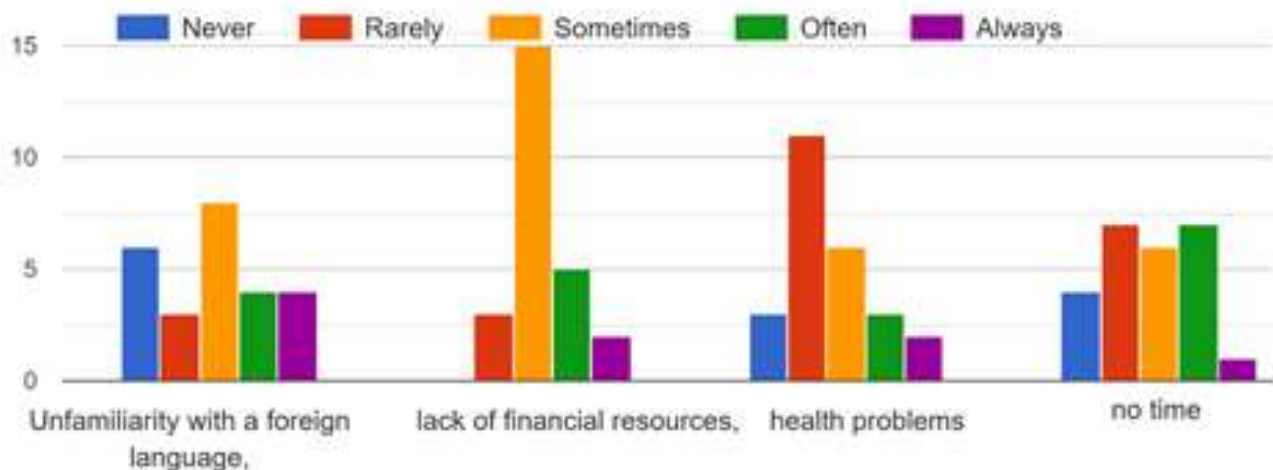
Source: own study based on the conducted research

The questions aimed to analyse the barriers to which seniors are exposed when traveling. As many as 15 respondents reported a problem with the lack of financial resources; in total 21 people expressed a positive opinion in this area. Only 4 people indicated that they had never

had problems with financial resources for the trip. When cultural barriers were analysed, 19 people claimed that they never or rarely encountered difficulties, or rarely; only 5 respondents indicated that they often faced cultural barriers when traveling. Travel limitations may be health problems - often or always for 5 people; others faced such difficulties rarely or not at all.

Since the participants are a group of seniors, health problems certainly limit the choice of holiday destination; then the climate, the quality of the medical care offered, or the amount of the additional policy covering any costs of treatment for the trip should be taken into account. The barrier related to the lack of time was very evenly distributed, , most answers were divided between rarely and often - it may result from professional activity or helping relatives - e.g. caring for grandchildren. Difficulties related to not knowing a foreign language were defined as the last barrier. Only 8 respondents indicated that they encountered this difficulty often or always during trips abroad; the remaining 17 people either did not have this problem; or it was relatively rare.

Which of the following barriers limit you from travelling?



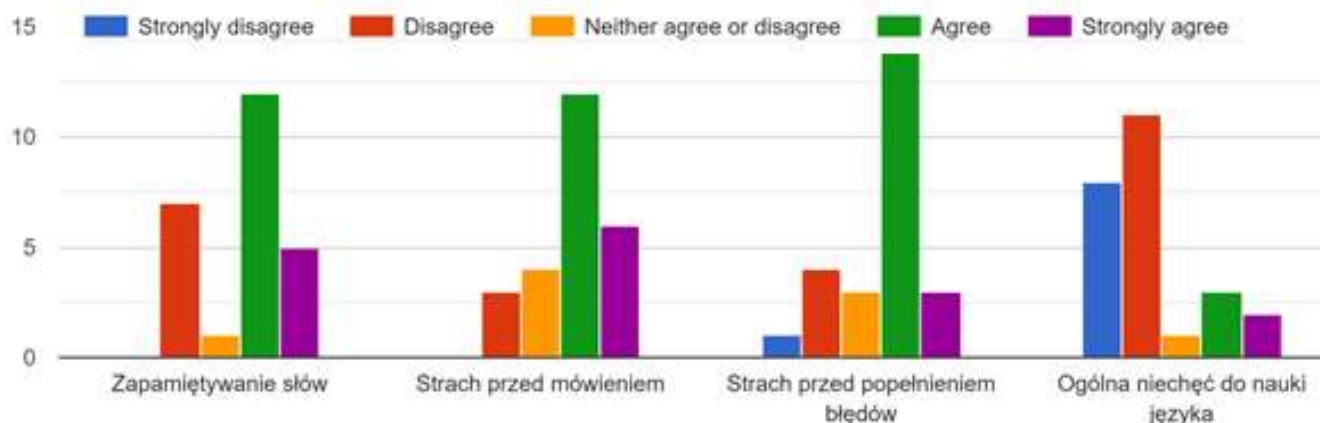
Source: own study based on the conducted research

Looking at the previous statement, it is good to analyse the difficulties indicated by seniors participating in the study while learning a foreign language in more detail.

The first fear is the fear of making a mistake - this is what 17 respondents declared - only 1 person does not agree with this statement. 20 respondents declared the fear of the inability to

remember words in a foreign language; also 20 respondents declared fear and fear of speaking a foreign language. At the same time, it is comforting that also 20 people do not see any problems or barriers or reluctance to learn a foreign language. A detailed list of the answers is presented in the chart below.

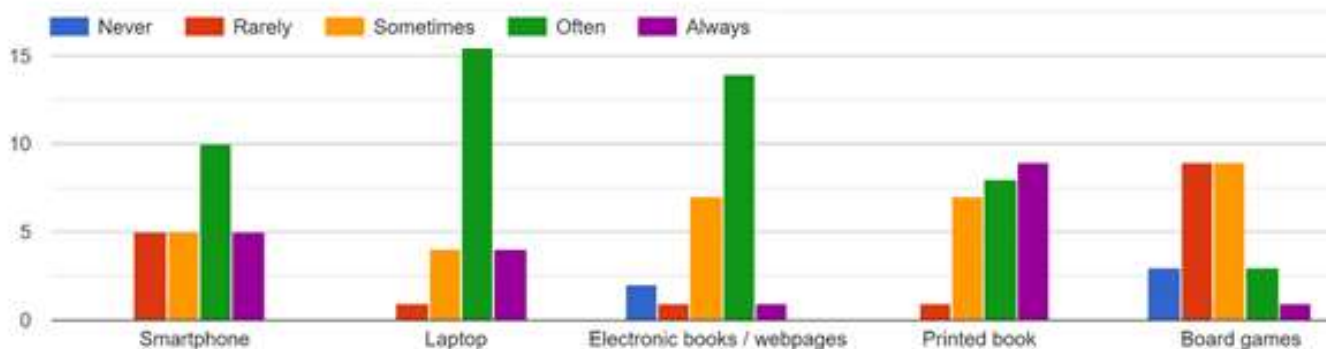
Difficulty in learning a foreign language is:



Source: own study based on the conducted research

Another area of analysis was the choice of a tool for learning a foreign language by the respondents. 20 respondents indicated using the laptop as a tool to support language learning; 4 people said that sometimes used the laptop and only 1 said that they rarely used the laptop. 15 respondents indicated that they would use a smartphone often and always; while 10 respondents indicated that they could use it sometimes or rarely. 3 respondents would not use electronic books, 7 seniors would sometimes use them; while 15 respondents would use them often and always. Traditional books, i.e. printed books, are close to 15 respondents, 7 seniors would rarely read paper editions of books for learning a foreign language, while only one person indicated that they would never use them. Board games are the least popular among our respondents when choosing a tool for learning a foreign language; answer rarely and never selected 12 respondents; 9 seniors assessed that sometimes they would play board games; while 4 people indicated always and often.

### To learn a foreign language would you use

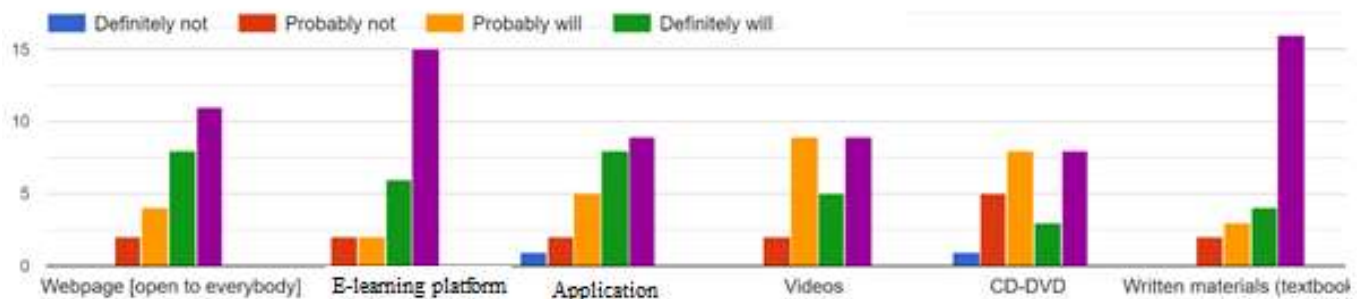


Source: own study based on the conducted research

Another issue that the respondents asked about was the possibility of choosing a method of learning a foreign language during the COVID-19 pandemic. Via the website, 11 respondents indicated that they would certainly benefit from learning a foreign language, and 8 people probably. It is possible that 4 seniors marked this, and probably not was marked by only 2 respondents. The e-learning platform was presented as the second option; where 15 respondents indicated that they would definitely use it; 6 people said it was probably a good idea. "Rather not" and "will not be used" were marked by 4 people from the e-learning platform.

The third way to learn a foreign language would be to use the application on the phone, here 17 seniors would definitely and probably choose this option; 5 respondents indicated that it was possible; only 3 respondents said they would not and would probably not use it. 14 respondents would choose watching movies in a foreign language as a language learning tool during the COVID pandemic; this possibility does not exclude 9 seniors; only 2 people firmly stated that they would not make such an attempt. Looking at the possibility of learning via DVDs or CDs - 6 respondents are rather not interested, and 19 people did not exclude such a possibility. Written material was presented as the last tool; such as textbooks, here 23 respondents claimed that such a possibility was acceptable, there were 2 seniors for such a solution. A detailed list can be found on the list below.

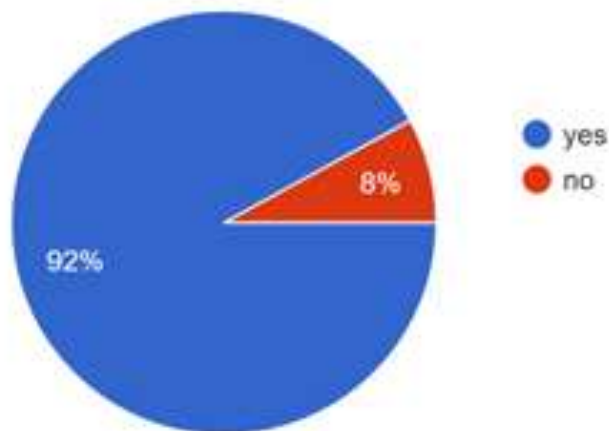
Because of COVID-19 - If you could choose, which way would be the best for you to learn a language?



Source: own study based on the conducted research

92% of the respondents participating in the survey declared their willingness to learn English, only 2 respondents (8%) did not express such willingness.

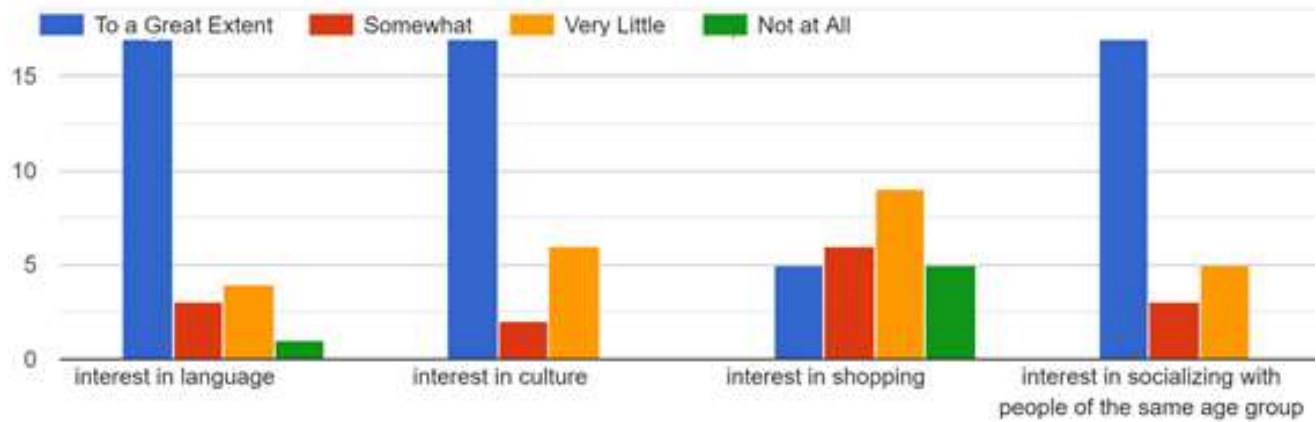
Have you ever travelled to a foreign country?



Source: own study based on the conducted research

Then, the respondents were asked about their motivation to learn English. Interest in language was most densely indicated; interest in culture and interest in contacts with people of the same age (17 responses each) were marked respectively. The least popular option was the possibility of going shopping. Details are shown in the chart below.

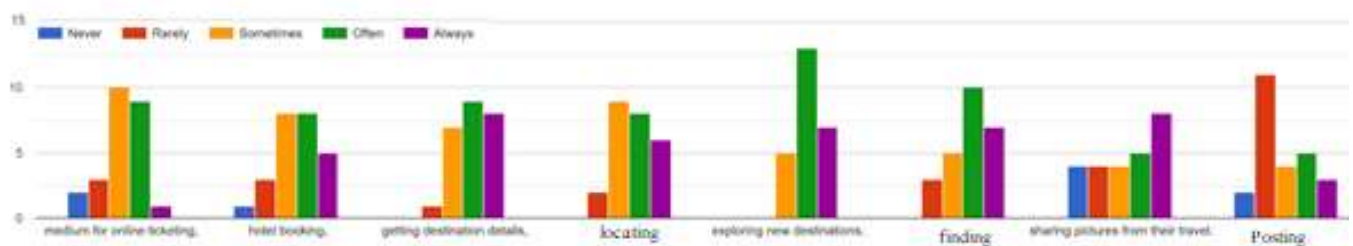
## Why would you study English?



Source: own study based on the conducted research

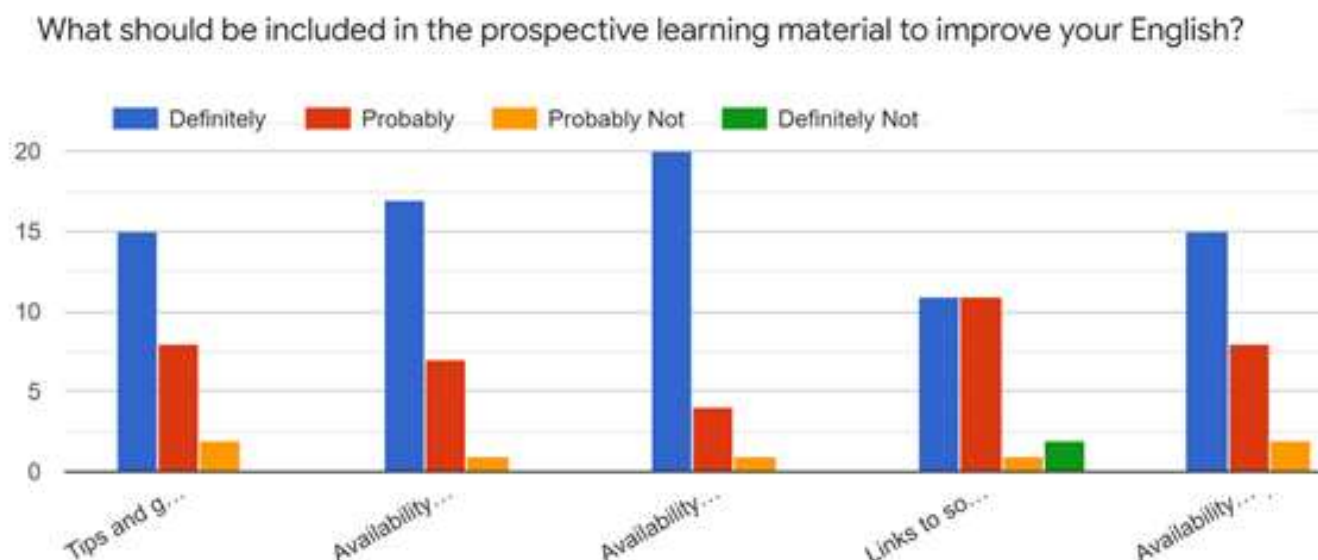
According to the respondents, mobile travel applications are mainly used to discover new places (always, often - 20 respondents); searching for reviews of places and getting details of the destination (always, often - 17 respondents); location of local attractions (always, often - 14 respondents); hotel reservation (always, often - 13 answers); sharing photos from the trip (always, often - 12 answers); as a medium for selling tickets online (always, often - 10 answers), posting opinions about the destination (always, often - 8 respondents). A detailed list is presented in the chart below.

## Use of travel apps as:



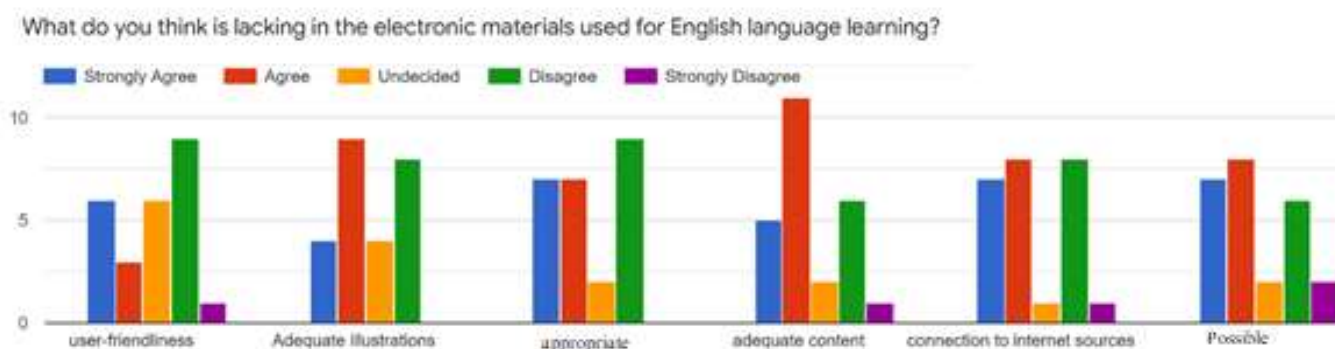
Source: own study based on the conducted research

Senior respondents, when asked about what should be included in future learning materials to improve their English, indicated respectively availability of video materials (20 respondents); availability of modular sections in PDF format (17 respondents); tips for self-study and availability of learning apps for tablet or phone (15 responses each); and links to social websites (11 respondents). A detailed list is presented in the diagram below.



Source: own study based on the conducted research

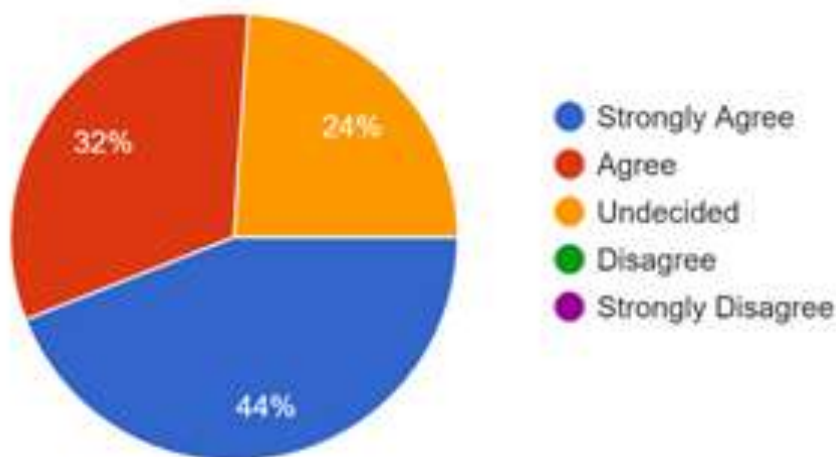
When asked what they thought was missing in electronic materials used to learn English, the respondents most often indicated: appropriate content (16 votes); Internet connection to sources and the ability to use mobile devices (15 respondents); the right amount of communication exercises (14 seniors); and relevant illustrations (13 seniors). Detailed answers are presented in the diagrams below.



Source: own study based on the conducted research

When asked about the desire to have their own application tailored to their individual needs, which would help them in their travels - 75% agreed and 24% were undecided.

Would you like to have your own application adapted to your needs to help you in your trips?



Source: own study based on the conducted research

## CONCLUSION

Man learns throughout his life. For older people, retirement and the associated large amount of free time is a perfect opportunity to acquire new information and skills. One of the most valuable areas of knowledge that pensioners can explore are foreign languages, and in particular - English. Goethe said that he who does not speak foreign languages knows nothing about his own. These words are especially relevant today. The pace of globalization means that in order to be up to date with the current international situation, technical innovations, or even to be able to cope with completely normal life situations, knowledge of foreign languages is simply necessary. Since older people want to understand and communicate in Shakespeare's speech, it is no longer difficult to find a suitable offer. English for seniors is an increasingly popular item in the offer of language schools and more. However, one should not think of such

a course as an ordinary product. The popularity of this service is also of great importance in the social dimension<sup>17</sup>.

In summary, seniors do not have to lag behind when it comes to taking advantage of new technological opportunities. Many of them keep up with the times and are as good at using the computer or surfing the Internet as their younger colleagues or family. English lessons for seniors are an option for those who cannot participate in classes for various reasons. In smaller towns and villages, it is also more difficult to find English classes for seniors - then the Internet becomes a solution.

Online courses are an interesting form of learning for older people. A lot of this type of material is available for free, and the interactive form of the lesson is more engaging than the classic form of a lesson / lecture. The involvement of multimedia allows one to experience a given issue more fully and, for example, perfect one's accent or become familiar with a living language.

Remote foreign language lessons have been known for a long time and are very popular. Obviously it is a convenient form of learning, especially for people who do not want to spend time traveling to a full-time school and traditional lessons. A survey conducted by IQS commissioned by Tutlo shows that online language courses are gaining new followers, also among the youngest and oldest age groups. Thanks to the Internet, children can learn English with their grandparents and not only acquire new skills, but also strengthen intergenerational ties. Without a doubt, remote English learning is becoming more and more popular. Research conducted by IQS on behalf of the Tutlo language platform shows that half of the surveyed parents believe that classes at school are not attractive to young people<sup>18</sup>.

As much as 63 percent of those interviewed say that the attractiveness of language learning is increased by the use of new technologies such as e-learning. Among seniors who decided to learn a foreign language, as many as 64 percent uses the Internet for this purpose. Holidays, when many children are taken care of by their grandparents, are a good time to learn together online. The benefits of such learning are confirmed by institutions specializing in organizing activities that connect different generations<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> <https://zycieseniora.com/z-zycia-wziete/nauka-angielskiego-dla-seniorow-przeglad-mozliwosci> z dnia 18.03.2022

<sup>18</sup> O badaniu: Badanie preferencji dotyczących nauki języka angielskiego zrealizowano we wrześniu 2019 r. wśród trzech grup: aktywnych zawodowo mieszkańców miast powyżej 100 tys., rodziców posiadających dzieci w przedziale od 7 do 17 lat oraz osób powyżej 55 roku życia, mieszkających w miastach powyżej 100 tys. mieszkańców. Badanie przeprowadzono na zlecenie firmy Tutlo przez instytut badawczy IQS.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.magazynswiatoseniora.pl/artukul/dziadek-z-wnukiem-ucza-sie-angielskiego-miedzypokoleniowa-edukacja-przez-internet>

Learning English for seniors online is also more freedom when the Senior decides to have the course without a teacher; then has access to educational content at any time. Thanks to this, they can learn at their own pace and when they have the time,. In addition, many on-line courses offer access to training materials and dates are set for on-line meetings with students and the teacher, where you can practice the acquired knowledge in practice.

Of course, English for seniors is also the basis of many residential courses. The offer is extremely wide. More and more language schools are organizing a special course of education for the elderly. At the same time, nothing prevents one from enrolling in a regular course - however, one should take into account the fact that the pace of work and the subject of individual lessons may be far from the possibilities or interests of the senior. Therefore, it is also worth checking the possibilities that do not require large financial outlays or are even free.

Apart from language schools, interesting classes are organized by the Universities of the Third Age. The development of linguistic skills takes place there through a series of meetings in small groups, and the program can be varied and focused as much on education as socializing with other students, meeting interesting people, etc. Without diminishing the educational role of these classes, it is worth mentioning that their additional advantage is motivating the elderly to explore the world, the proverbial leaving home and making contacts.

Courses are also organized by various public benefit organizations and local government units. The duration, level of difficulty and conditions of participation in these courses can be absolutely different from each other, as they usually have different ideas. For example, activities co-financed by the European Union are usually part of larger programs that aim to activate older people in employment, fight against exclusion, etc.

Apart from the courses themselves, in community centres or libraries, sometimes free classes are organized, which also help to develop language competences. These can be, for example, free conversations with a native speaker, discussion clubs where only English is spoken (under the supervision of philologists) and any other type of activity that people who are fluent in this language on a daily basis want to support.

The offer of language classes for older people is very wide, especially in larger cities. English for seniors, whether in the form of courses, lessons or conversations, is no longer considered an extravaganza, but rather a useful form of entertainment and leisure activities. It is worth

spending some time and helping your loved ones find a form of foreign language teaching that will give them the most fun and bring the best educational results.<sup>20</sup>

One of the reasons was shown by the high-profile advertising campaign of one of the auction portals, where an elderly man, a pensioner, learned English to be able to communicate with his grandson living in the UK. Other reasons are also related to the possibility of communication: knowledge of a foreign language means the freedom to travel, work, interpret and obtain information.

English for seniors is also a fight against a kind of exclusion. Comparing our society with another, where learning foreign languages begins at a very early stage and is carried out intensively (Scandinavia, Benelux countries, Germany, etc.), it is clear that seniors in these countries can take advantage of the opportunities that Polish retirees can benefit from rules unreachable. Wallet aside, not knowing the language closes many doors. It is impossible to freely correspond with people scattered all over the world, visit or acquire interesting things on the Internet. It is impossible to live, even for a week, outside the country and get to know new cultures, places, tastes, etc. English for seniors opens these doors.

Hence, it is certainly the most important advantage of learning English for seniors. Older people are very often afraid to travel outside Poland for a simple reason - they do not know Polish and do not always want to use the offer of a travel agency.

One has to remember that seniors grew up at a time when they learned Russian at school and their knowledge of English manifests itself in knowing a few words, such as "ok", "good", "great", etc. Knowledge of the English language allows you to freely communicate with people from all over the world. If you are a senior who runs a company and would like to open up to cooperation with foreign entities, it is definitely worth knowing English, and it is not a language that is difficult to learn. Therefore, the ability to speak English can directly translate into an increase in earnings and brand recognition.<sup>21</sup>

Today's seniors want to stay active as long as possible and make the most of their retirement. Free time, more freedom and fewer responsibilities make it the perfect time to devote yourself to your passions, find new interests, and even take on completely new challenges, e.g. start learning a foreign language. We prove that learning English for seniors is possible!

<sup>20</sup> <https://zycieseniora.com/z-zycia-wzieta/nauka-angielskiego-dla-seniorow-przeglad-mozliwosci>

<sup>21</sup> <https://pogodzinach.lca.pl/drukuj,83667.htm>