

THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL STUDIES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING OF FUTURE ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS

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The Department of Foreign Languages at Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Communication provides language education to more than 2500 students of three faculties every year. The future engineers of the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels represent a specific discourse community with specific approaches and needs which have to be addressed in order to provide them with a meaningful level of language skills. Since the majority of the target group is expected to find their future employment in multinational companies or abroad, they are most likely to experience a multicultural environment from the very beginning of their careers. Therefore, along with language and linguistics, the curriculum contains also cultural courses. The main aims of these courses is to provide students with insight into the main differences between the main dialects of English and to familiarize them with cultural differences, customs and habits of the English speaking countries. Teaching cultural courses to students of engineering brings all sets of challenges, since they are not only a specific discourse community, but also because the future engineers will have to deal with the interaction of humanities and technical subjects, linguistics and science and technology, considering the impact of scientific and technical progress on the lives of people as well as the possible consequences of the fast technical development in the interconnected world. The main challenges of teaching cultural courses to engineers will be identified while stressing the importance of intercultural awareness and the specific discourse community in the ever-changing digitalized and globalizing world. .

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Biographical note

An experienced lecturer, who teaches a wide range of English courses at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Communication, Faculty of Information Technology, Faculty of Business and Management, Brno University of Technology (BUT), Pavel Sedláček graduated from Masaryk University in

Brno in Teaching of languages and geography. Apart from teaching a variety of Professional English courses at BUT, being also a university-trained geographer, he specializes in teaching cultural study courses, in which he focuses on North America, the EU and the Commonwealth countries. His main point of interest has become North America and its cultural uniqueness and relations with the EU and the rest of the world. He has been a long time member of the Central European Association for Canadian Studies and has been conducting research on the development of Canadian cities. Interactions between cultures, influences of culture on languages and city development are among his other interests.