

## Opportunities in Learning a Foreign Language on the Example of a Specialist Engineering Programme

**Lidija Tepes Golubic, Milan Bajic**

Polytechnic of Zagreb (Croatia)

[ltepes2@tvz.hr](mailto:ltepes2@tvz.hr) [mbajic@tvz.hr](mailto:mbajic@tvz.hr)

### Abstract

In this era of intense student mobility, availability and possibilities of new media which still have not been entirely researched, speaking a foreign language is of key importance for communication, education, work, progress, etc. Children in Croatia start learning a foreign language from the first year of primary school, even though they have the opportunity to learn a foreign language even before that. There is a noticeable domination of the English language when we talk about learning a new language, even though pupils and later students basically have a possibility of choosing other foreign languages. Not so long ago speaking the German language was a necessity as well as prestige, while nowadays German has been suppressed by English. At the Polytechnic of Zagreb students can choose between 4 study groups: informatics, computer engineering, electrical engineering or civil engineering. All four study groups offer to their students a possibility of learning technical German or English language. In this paper we will show through statistics which language the students have been choosing since 2005, we will try to explain why the situation is like it is and try to presuppose whether the more intense use of new media in teaching a foreign language would affect a more equal ratio in the number of students of both offered languages. Except for including new media and technologies in teaching a foreign language, which is the teacher's role, the key factor is also motivating a student to learn a foreign language.

What is troublesome is that the number of German learning students is decreasing every year, and it is generally troublesome compared to the number of students who have decided to learn English. Technical foreign language is extremely important for our future engineers, experts and scientists. To successfully finish one's studies presupposes the knowledge of at least one foreign language in order for young people to be competent on the international job market.