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## THE ROLE OF SOME BRITISH AND AMERICAN INTENSIVE METHODS IN DEVELOPING STUDENTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS

*The article analyzes some British and American intensive methods that are used for the development of foreign language communicative skills of the students at higher educational institutions. The Direct Method, the Audio-Lingual Method, the Communicative Method, the Callan Method, the Task-Based Method and their modern versions are presented in the article. All the methods follow the oral-based approach and are very effective in preparing students to use the target language communicatively. While in the Direct Method the meaning is conveyed through the use of demonstration and visual aids emphasizing vocabulary acquisition, the Audio-Lingual Method drills students in the use of grammatical sentence patterns in certain situations. The Communicative Method embraces the concept what notions language expresses and what communicative functions students perform with the language. In the Communicative Method spoken functions and the notions of when and how it is appropriate to say certain things are of primary importance. When learning to communicate in a small environment students work with increased interest, motivation, feel more relaxed in expressing their thoughts, free themselves from the fear of making a lexical or grammatical mistake, focusing more on content than form, which contributes to the speed and fluency of their speech. The Callan Method creates immersive environment which encourages communication. The students learn to communicate in a constant dialogue with a teacher that increases their opportunities to develop speaking skills in the foreign language environment. This exciting and motivating process of ongoing talk prepares students for free communication in real-life situations. The Task-based Method gives students the experience of spontaneous interaction. So, it engages students in using language purposefully and cooperatively, gives them the chance to try out communicative strategies and develops students' conviction that they can achieve a communicative goal. Thus, intensive methods form not only a confident speaker, but an ambitious and successful personality who is proud of his achievements. In this way, the use of intensive methods leads to a substantial improvement of the students' learning outcomes.*

**Key words:** *intensive studying, speaking, foreign language communication, communicative skills, immersive environment.*

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## РОЛЬ ОКРЕМИХ БРИТАНСЬКИХ ТА АМЕРИКАНСЬКИХ МЕТОДІВ ІНТЕНСИВНОГО НАВЧАННЯ В РОЗВИТКУ ВМІНЬ І НАВИЧОК ІНШОМОВНОЇ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ СТУДЕНТІВ

У статті проаналізовано деякі британські та американські інтенсивні методи, які використовуються для розвитку вмінь і навичок іншомовної комунікації студентів вищих навчальних закладів. Прямий метод, аудіолінгвальний метод, комунікативний метод, метод Каллана, метод комунікативних завдань і їх сучасні версії представлені в статті. Ці методи застосовують усну комунікацію як основний навчальний підхід і є надзвичайно ефективними в підготовці студентів до використання мови в життєвих комунікативних ситуаціях. Якщо в прямому методі значення передається за допомогою демонстраційних і наочних посібників, які покращують засвоєння лексичного матеріалу, аудіолінгвальний метод навчає студентів використовувати граматичні моделі речень у комунікативних ситуаціях. В основі комунікативного методу покладено концепцію про важливість змісту мовлення та його комунікативної функції. У комунікативному методі поняття про те, коли і як доречно говорити певні речі, мають першочергове значення. Навчання ситуативного спілкування в невеликому середовищі стимулює зацікавленість і мотивацію студентів, а отже, їх готовність до повноцінної взаємодії поза групою. Крім того, студенти можуть більш вільно висловлювати свої думки, звільняючись від страху зробити лексичну або граматичну помилку, при цьому концентруючись більше на змісті, ніж на формі, що сприяє швидкості та плавності мовлення. Метод Каллана створює іммерсивне середовище, яке заохочує спілкування. Студенти вчаться спілкуватися в постійному діалозі з викладачем, що збільшує їхні можливості розвивати комунікативні навички в іншомовному середовищі. Цей захоплюючий і мотивуючий процес безперервного говоріння готує студентів до вільного спілкування в реальних життєвих ситуаціях. Метод комунікативних завдань надає студентам досвід спонтанної взаємодії, залучаючи студентів до використання мови у взаємодії з іншими студентами з певною комунікативною метою. Крім того, метод комунікативних завдань дає студентам можливість випробувати різні комунікативні стратегії та формує їх чітку впевненість, що вони можуть досягти комунікативну мету. Таким чином, інтенсивні методи формують упевненого мовця та амбіційну й успішну особистість, яка пишається своїми досягненнями, що, у свою чергу, призводить до значного поліпшення результатів навчання студентів.

**Ключові слова:** інтенсивне навчання, говоріння, іншомовна комунікація, комунікативні навички, іммерсивне середовище.

**Formulation of the problem.** The study of foreign languages is always conditioned by the development of basic scientific achievements and is organized on the model of theories developed by scientists in the field of methods of teaching foreign languages in a certain period. Therefore, an analytical review of teaching methods is necessary for the scientific justification of the choice of methods that can guarantee the high quality of the educational process and ensure the achievement of the main goal of teaching.

There is no method that allows you to learn a foreign language quickly and effortlessly. However, the process of mastering a foreign language can be significantly improved by the use of intensive teaching methods. The intensive methods have undeniable advantages as they enable learners to acquire new linguistic knowledge and develop their existing knowledge, motivate students and also promote students centred approach. The intensive methods are especially very beneficial in mixed ability classrooms as they support cooperative learning. Besides, they enable students

to be actively engaged with language in an authentic context and challenge them to build meanings and patterns which make them develop into autonomous learners. Besides, they turn learning into a fascinating process of immersion in a language environment as close as possible to real life. Intensive learning methods not only provide an opportunity to increase interest in learning foreign languages, but also significantly develop students' creative independence, enhance their communication, which promotes faster information exchange, transfer of acquired knowledge and more. The use of a wide range of intensive methods in teaching a foreign language stimulates the cognitive activity of students, creates positive motivation and contributes to the formation and development of sustainable skills of foreign language communication.

**The purpose of the article** is to highlight the theoretical foundations of some British and American methods of intensive teaching and analyse their role in the development of foreign language communicative skills of students at higher education institutions.

**State of research.** The methods of British and American intensive teaching were developed according to the principles of the Direct Method. One of the founders of the Direct Method is the German and American linguist and educator Maximilian Berlitz. The basis of teaching by this method is to limit the student to a foreign language environment. This method assumes that listening and speaking are the most natural ways to learn a language. The Direct Method is widely used in intensive foreign language teaching and is a basic method of the Oxford Methodical School. The modification of the Direct Method developed by the American linguist Diane Larsen-Freeman is applied in such American Universities as University of California, Los Angeles, University of Michigan and University of Pennsylvania. Prominent American linguist, one of the theorists of modern foreign linguistics L. Bloomfield, developed the ideas of Berlitz, creating his method, which was called Bloomfield's method. The main technique of the method is long-term listening, memorization of educational material and multiple mechanical repetition. It is important to use the informant as a source of speech. Bloomfield's method was used during World War II, known as the Army Method. This method provides a quick mastery of practical skills of using a foreign language orally within a limited vocabulary and communication topics. The ideas of the method were developed in the Audio-lingual method. The authors of the method are the American structuralism linguist Charles Freeze and the Methodist R. Lado. The method is aimed at forming and improving speaking skills. The most famous representative of the Cambridge Methodical School of Intensive Education is Professor of Cambridge University Robin Callan. His method was called the Callan method. The method was developed in 1959 and was based on the Communicative Method. The key factor in the success of the method is the maximum involvement of students in the learning process, based on the principle of complete immersion in the language environment.

Nowadays the Oxford School of Intensive learning is represented by the Streamline School methodology. The methodology is based on the Task-Based Method, which is an updated modification of the Communicative Method. The peculiarity of this method is the organization of educational communication aimed at solving practical problems that students face in real life.

**Presenting main material.** Tracing the evolution of the development of the intensive methods we take into consideration the language learning environment and the demands of the society. At the same time we investigate the set of the first intensive methods and

their modifications, which gives proper basis to successful contemporary second language acquisition.

In the XIX century scientists observed child language learning and turned their attention to naturalistic principle of language learning. It was stated that a foreign language may be taught without the use of the learner's native language. Instead of translation the meaning was conveyed through demonstration and action.

The German scholar F. Franke provided in 1884 a theoretical justification for a monolingual approach to teaching: a language is best taught by using it actively in the classroom when teachers encourage direct and spontaneous use of the foreign language. At the early stages the teacher replaces the textbook and learners are able to induce grammar rules on their own. Pronunciation is given a systematic attention and known words are used to teach new vocabulary using mime, demonstration and pictures (Richards, 1986: 9–11).

These natural language learning principles came to be known as the Direct Method. It was officially approved in France and Germany at the end of the XIX century and became widely known in the USA where Sauveur and Maximilian Berlitz established successful commercial language schools.

The Direct Method was extremely successful in private language schools of the Berlitz chain, where the learners were highly motivated and teachers were native speakers. The Berlitz Method still remains one of the effective means of learning foreign languages nowadays because it is immersive, goal-orientated and follow the pattern PPP (Present, Practice, Production).

The main principles of the Direct Method are:

- classroom instructions are given only in the target language;
- everyday vocabulary and sentences are taught;
- oral communication skills are developed gradually using question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small classes;
- grammar is taught inductively;
- new teaching points are introduced orally;
- concrete vocabulary is taught through demonstrations, objects and pictures while abstract vocabulary is taught by association of ideas;
- both speech and listening comprehension is given attention;
- correct pronunciation and grammar are emphasized (Zimmerman, 1997: 5–9).

There are no standardized procedures in the Direct Method. The term of the method appeared only in 1963. So, the teachers may develop their own techniques relying on the core of the method: a foreign language is introduced through the ear, reinforced through the eye and consolidated by reading and writing.

In spite of the fact that academic teaching considers the Direct Method being nontraditional and rather unusual but at the same time it is more adaptive to students' needs and very popular with motivated students. Using the Direct Method allows the lecturers at higher education institutions create innovative exciting lessons according to the demands of their curriculum and the interests of their students.

The Direct Method gave the basis to the development of the Audio-Lingual Method in the USA and Communicative Method in the UK.

In the Audio-Lingual Method the students are taught a language directly as in the Direct Method but instead of teaching vocabulary it drills students in the use of grammar. Three factors influenced greatly the development of the Audio-Lingual Method:

- a structural linguistics, also known as American Structuralism or Descriptivism, which was founded by American linguist Leonard Bloomfield. At the beginning of the XX century the problem of teaching the indigenous languages arose: there weren't enough trained native teachers and the languages were taught using observation. Thus, oral speech was given a strong focus;

- a behavioral psychology. Behaviorist psychologists Charles Fries and B.F. Skinner stated that grammatical learning structure was a starting point for the students, who were given certain vocabulary to realize such drills. So, giving a stimulus and response immediately conveys feedback. The students are not expected any intentions or conscious answers;

- the beginning of the World War II. It was necessary to provide soldiers with basic communication skills. That's why the Audio-Lingual Method is also referred to as The Army Method.

The technique was popularized after the end of the war and is still used now, being combined with other methods. In practice it meant that a teacher presented new words in a sample structure, without any grammar explanation and the students had to memorize it by drilling until they can use it spontaneously. It is quite different to a communicative language teaching: a teacher expects just a proposed pattern but in an appropriate situation.

The drills and patterns included in the Audio-Lingual Method are:

- repetition (the students repeat an utterance as soon as they hear it);
- inflection (one word in a sentence appears in another form when repeated);
- replacement (one word is replaced with another);
- restatement (the students rephrase an utterance).
- Students imitate their teacher in the classroom. Correct grammar is expected to be used but without

any explanations. Attention is also paid to correct pronunciation and intonation.

Therefore, in a modern world the ability to act in certain situations is extremely vital as it gives future professionals the skills to communicate freely with their foreign peers, which promotes a special rapport in their career.

The Communicative Method grew out of Audiolingualism improving it by implementing structural – situational teaching, which suggests placing the language in clear situational context. The Communicative Method is based on the principle of language use. The main idea of communicative learning is the deep conviction that if the students are involved in solving communicative tasks focused on content more than on form, learning will occur spontaneously (Harmer, 1991: 69–70).

Consequently, the managerial activity of a communicative teacher should be aimed at involving students in solving communicative problems in the language being studied to encourage them to use the language. In such training knowledge is more the result not of explanation, but of students' free participation in the target environment. Attention is transferred from the learning product (knowledge of grammar and vocabulary) to the learning process. In other words, if the goal of language is communication, then communication in the learning process is the best way to achieve this goal. Communicative teachers develop students' speaking skills, for example, how to invite and apologize, agree and disagree, while making sure that they know how to use basic tenses or conditional sentences in particular. Therefore, role-playing games, communication games, simulations, puzzle solving, interviewing, searching books in the library, writing poems or composing stories are integral components of communicative learning. In order to make these activities truly communicative, the following conditions are necessary:

- students must be willing to communicate;
- students must have a purpose for communication and should focus on the content and not on a separate language form;
- students have to use different language structures;
- the teacher should not interfere in order to stop the activities of students;
- the activities should be aimed at reproducing real communication.

The key to stimulating the communicative goal and communicative desire is the information gap, which is the gap between the knowledge of the two participants in communication. The motive for real communication is the need to bridge this gap. I need

to know this – you have the information – I ask you and you tell me. The communicative goal can be the following: to define something, to encourage someone to do something, or to offer to do something. Thus, communicative learning is a term that describes a learning sequence that aims to improve students' ability to communicate (Harmer, 1991: 109–110).

The PPP lesson model (Presentation, Practice, Production) is used for the practical implementation of the basic principles of communicative learning. The main feature of the PPP model is contextual-situational language learning. The basic difference of this model from the model of ordinary lessons is the presence of the third stage, the purpose of which is the fluency of language (Thornbury, 2009: 18–20). At this stage, students can speak as much as they want, dialogue takes place only between students, the teacher takes a seat at the last desk, there is no reference to any rule or language form, students' language is completely unpredictable, there is no correction of students' mistakes.

Effectiveness of the Communicative Method lies in its ability to teach a foreign language without pressure so that students can communicate openly despite the presence of some errors in speech. The Communicative Method develops students' critical thinking, enables experimenting with the language in a friendly atmosphere. The Communicative method makes learning not only effective but also an exciting process of immersion in a language environment as close as possible to real life. Thus, the Communicative Method is an effective intensive means of forming and improving students' communicative skills.

The British methodist Robert Callan used the immersive nature of the Communicative Method to create his own method, which got the name the Callan Method. The Callan Method suggests student's complete immersion into the language environment, which results in intensifying foreign language learning. This method is primarily aimed at forming and developing listening and speaking skills in the foreign language. The development of the dialogic speech through conversational practice in the question-answer model is a priority of the Callan Method. As a result students become more attentive and involved in the learning process which leads to better memorization of target vocabulary and grammar.

The Callan Method can be identified as a series of clear instructions having twelve stages. So, it can be effectively applied for the students with different levels of foreign language knowledge. For instance, Stage 1 is designed for complete beginners while Stage 12 is aimed at advanced students.

The main features of the Callan Method are:

- the lesson is held as a question-and-answer session in which the teacher asks questions and the student answers them. Then, it is the students' turn to ask questions. Through questions and answers to questions, a particular word or word combination, language pattern or grammatical construction is trained through repetition;

- the whole lesson is a quick interaction between the teacher and the student. Due to the rate of speech, close to the rate of native speakers, students gradually begin to think in English;

- the teacher repeats each question twice, helping his students answer it. Students' answers are long sentences that have the same grammatical structure as the teacher's question, which helps students memorize vocabulary and certain grammatical material;

- the teacher corrects students' mistakes by repeating them and then forcing students to pronounce correctly.

To sum up, the Callan Method has proved to be a very efficient intensive method of learning a foreign language, which makes a student be busy and concentrated hard all the time during the lesson having no time for chatting. So, the Callan Method helps students speak reflectively and freely, which is crucial for developing communicative skills (Callan, 2012: 7).

The Communicative Method and its variations have firm roots in the USA nowadays. An American linguist, Professor Emerita in Education and Linguistics at the University of Michigan, Larsen-Freeman suggests the following scheme of the modification of the Communicative Method:

- each student has a reading passage in front of him/her;

- the students are called on one by one to read the text loudly;

- after finishing reading the passage the students are asked in the target language if they have questions;

- the teacher answers the students' questions in the target language;

- the teacher works with the students on the pronunciation;

- the teacher gives questions to the students and the questions and statements are about the students in the classroom;

- the students make up their own questions and statements and direct them to other students in the classroom;

- the teacher instructs the students to turn to an exercise in the lesson which asks them to fill in the blanks;

- the students read a sentence out loudly and supply the missing word as they are reading;

– the teacher asks the students to take out their notebooks and gives them a dictation about the discussed topic (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 26–28).

Larsen-Freeman's approach facilitates immensely second language acquisition. Students associate the meaning with the target language directly, they speak in the target language and communicate as if they were in real situations. The syllabus is made to expand the vocabulary of the students. As far as grammar is concerned, Larsen-Freeman relies on the Audio-Lingual Method. New structural patterns are presented through dialogues, which are imitated and repeated by the students till the automated skills. The drills are not monotonous but represent a wide range of activities, such as:

- backward build-up,
- chain,
- substitution,
- transformation,
- question-and-answer.

Students' successful responses are positively reinforced. A significant detail is that explicit grammar rules are not provided but students become aware of their usage, inducing the grammar rules from the given examples.

Therefore, Larsen-Freeman's modifications of the pure intensive methods provoke students' interest in studying a foreign language and create the atmosphere of mastering firstly speaking skills. It causes to develop students' reading and writing skills, basing upon the previous oral work.

Among the intensive methods of learning a foreign language the Task-Based Method has to be mentioned. It is a method which is focused on the premise "learning by doing" while the teacher plays a passive role as far as possible. The principles of Task-Based Method promote the effective development of communicative skills of the students (Nunan, 2004: 35–37):

- the students have to be provided with the language they need in order to complete the task; each task has to be connected with the one before;
- the learners can experience how the target language items function in closely related contexts and in completely different ones;
- the learners are able to recognize the relationship between function and form and meaning;
- creative language use develops from reproduction of language models, provided by the teacher;
- students are given opportunities to reflect on what they have learned and how well they are doing;
- the learners use the authentic language which encourages them to communicate interactionally and actively in the target language.

The different task types stimulate students' interaction despite their different levels of proficiency. Besides, real-world tasks are designed to simulate authentic task behavior. Using task-based instructions students learn English more effectively, because they are using the language to do things – to access information, to solve problems and to talk about personal experience. They demonstrate a higher competence in foreign language for communication than those who studied using the 3Ps (Presentation, Practice, Production) model. Students become more motivated by the tasks which are connected to real life situations rather than the activities in the book. Using task activities is a good way to improve English vocabulary and gives students more chances to practice English. Consequently, such task types are primarily focused on the achievement of the communicative goal.

The components of the task-based teaching framework and types of tasks in language teaching have a positive effect on students' learning process. Using authentic material helps students keep engaged in the meaningful interactions in the classroom, enhances the interactions among students in class, improves learners' communicative competency and provides students with more opportunities to use English. In task-based learning students can learn more effectively when their attention is focused on the tasks, therefore they are focused more on the language they use than on the grammatical form. Thus, the employment of the Task-Based Method on students' performance improves their communicative skills.

**Conclusions.** All in all, the intensive teaching methods and their modifications discussed in the article can be effectively used for developing foreign language communicative skills of the students at higher educational institutions. A great advantage of these methods is the positive interaction of the participants. The teacher needs to change the classroom atmosphere, support students' attempts to take risks, find their own options, and not be afraid to make mistakes. In a favorable psychological climate, the student becomes aware of oneself and one's personal qualities as a value, which is an important condition for the formation of self-esteem, self-respect and desire for self-improvement. Intensive learning captures students, facilitating intensive work than they are used to doing during a traditional lesson. Students become more active, make more effort, and thus, the learning becomes more focused and effective.

The overview of the intensive methods mentioned above is an opportunity to all the lecturers to consolidate their teaching skills and adjust them to the audience. These intensive methods may be used as a separate tool to develop certain students' skills being

vocabulary extension or grammar awareness. Moreover, their implementation in complex allows the teaching staff be more creative establishing a good rapport with the students. Each lesson may become a positive experience on the road to solid foreign language acquisition and lead to a great variety of activ-

ities, which is of paramount importance these days. The students of higher educational institutions need master their speaking skills in relatively short period of time, which enables them to communicate freely with their peers and colleagues, thus promoting their personal and professional development.

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