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**BASIC APPROACHES TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING  
IN THE CONTEXT OF STUDENTS' SUBJECT POSITION FORMATION**

Educational science is undergoing a period of transition to the humanistic paradigm, which is focused on the concerns of human condition, as well the development of subject characteristics as the components of the subject position. The issues related to the subject position occupy one of the central places in both theoretical and practical research in the field of the humanities and are becoming the priority direction in the investigation of psychological and pedagogical mechanisms of individual and professional development.

The profound changes that are taking place in the system of higher education bring the personality of the prospective specialist to the fore. Shifts in different spheres of society also put forward new requirements to the graduates of higher educational establishments, emphasizing the subject component of their professional development. Thus, investigating the approaches to the development of the modern model of the personality in the tertiary education seems to be a topical issue nowadays.

Therefore, the aim of the article is to compare the major approaches to teaching the English language in regard with the development of students' subject position and to determine their advantages and disadvantages.

In the context of the changes in the objectives and the content of foreign language teaching, under the aegis of the Council of Europe, an international organization that helps European countries to coordinate their efforts in teaching foreign languages, a communicatively-oriented approach to teaching foreign languages was introduced. The afore-mentioned organization maintains that "the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource

to be protected and developed; it can serve as a means of intense exchange of scientific and technical information, achievements in culture-related areas, ideas, workforce, and increased personal mobility” [5]. The key principle regulating teaching a foreign language is the “focus on acquiring a language as a means of communication in everyday life situations that are of importance for the learners” [5], while grammar and vocabulary seem to be the means of achieving the communicative goals. The fact that Ukraine is a member state of the Council of Europe requires adjusting Ukrainian educational standards to the European ones. Therefore, the distinction between the two groups of language competences – general language competences and communicative language competences – adopted by the Council of Europe has to be observed in language teaching in Ukraine. The notion of competence is usually understood as a set-in-advance requirement to educational outcomes. Further we are going to detail communicative language competences that are of special importance to our study.

Among them, the following kinds of competences are distinguished: a) grammatical, or linguistic (means knowing grammar rules and lexical units that provide for producing comprehensible utterances); b) sociolinguistic competence (corresponds to the ability to select and use appropriate language forms and means depending on the situation of communication); c) discursive competence (involves ability to create complete and coherent utterances of different functional styles, oral or written); and d) sociocultural competence (implies awareness of the cultural ways and attitudes of native-speakers, their traditions, rules of conducts, etiquette, as well as the ability to understand them and use in communication appropriately).

Therefore, it can be concluded that communicatively-oriented approach to teaching foreign languages is a dominant one in the foreign language methodology. It satisfies modern requirements and allows teaching languages as a means of communication and integration into the culture of native-speakers and their psychology. Within our research framework, we distinguish three main methods, or approaches, to teaching a foreign language: *communicative*, *intensive*, and *cultural-linguistic*, which answer the purpose of the model of students’ subject position

formation with the help of the English language, namely the development of an active and sophisticated individual, his/her worldview, motivation, creative initiative, and achieving efficient communication.

*The communicative approach* is aimed at providing language learners with the ability to communicate in a foreign language. It appeared at the beginning of the 1970s under the name of *the communicative-adaptive approach* and became very popular in Europe and the USA. The foundation for the approach was laid in the works by R. Langs, American Professor of Psychiatry. R. Langs introduced the theory of emotional life and psychoanalysis, which concentrated on individuals' adaptation to events, experienced emotionally. Moreover, adaptations can be both conscious and unconscious. R. Langs highlights the two most distinctive features of the communicative approach: "first, that it is a new way to understand human emotionally-laden communications and, second, that it has shown that the primary function of the emotion-processing mind is to cope with – adapt to – immediate emotionally-charged triggering events" [3].

Out of the four main types of activities that are the components of language learning (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), the latter two are of great importance. In Ukraine, the textbooks, such as *Headway*, *Upstream*, *English Grammar in Use*, *English File*, etc., published by Oxford and Cambridge Publishing Houses, have become extremely popular nowadays. What is common for the books of these publishing houses is that they are based on the communicative approach to language teaching, integrated with some more traditional elements, thus, ensuring the immersion of the student in the language by limiting the use of their native tongue.

The main objective of this approach is to, first of all, teach the student to speak a foreign language and, then, think in it. The communicative method implies moving from the development of language skills to understanding the laws of language. As a consequence, this approach requires the substitutions of drills or tasks directed to mechanic reproduction for role plays, pair work activities, analysis and correction of mistakes, comparing and contrasting, since they develop students' memory, logic, ability to think analytically and conceptually. New lexical items, for instance, can be

introduced in a variety of ways: using familiar words and word combinations to explain the new ones, watching videos or listening, getting involved in real life situations, dialogues, games, or creative activities. Another widely-used way of engaging students into foreign language communication under this approach is discussion, when students are encouraged to express their point of view on a situation or event. All these methods, which are targeted at the development of language skills, as well as creativity and worldview, allow to immerse students into the English-speaking environment, where they have to “function”: read, communicate, participate in role plays, express their opinions, make conclusions.

The central component of the communicative approach is, of course, communication, which is one of the leading activities of the youth. Appropriately organized communication has positive influence on knowledge acquisition and is of great educational value: “content knowledge is more profound, when this content is a means of communication” [1]. Among the benefits of group learning realized through communication within the group are the peer influence on personality development, group’s greater creative capacity compared to that of the individual learner, opportunity to exchange thoughts, share achievements, and discuss controversial issues. Learning motivation under this approach is higher (so is responsibility, appreciation for public success, tolerance, ability to accept other opinions), etc. The methods and techniques used in the educational process to encourage students’ creativity, initiative, and independent judgment, stimulate understanding of the culture, traditions, norms and rules of the country whose language is studied, promote intercultural awareness [4].

Taking the afore-mentioned into consideration, we should emphasize that the communicative approach in language teaching has a number of positive features. As for its disadvantages, the lack of attention to reading and writing should be mentioned. In addition to it, compared to vocabulary and speaking skills development, grammar is underestimated, despite the fact that accuracy can only be achieved if certain grammar structures are acquired.

*The intensive approach.* Recent decades are characterized by the increased amount of information, intensification of the scientific and technical progress, lack of time, stress, overloads, etc. It seems reasonable that people are trying to master certain methods of self-control and learn to use their mental resources and time wisely, while teachers are searching for a method to transmit more information to their students over a shorter period of time. The appearance of the intensive approach to language teaching, which relies on human mental reserves, seems quite natural in this context. Intensification of learning should be interpreted as “the transmission of a larger amount of information to students over the same time span and without compromising the requirements to the quality of learning outcomes” [1].

The faster pace of learning is achieved by means of improving the quality of learning materials and methods of teaching, which is reflected in a number of principles characteristic of intensive learning: 1. *The principle of collective interaction.* The application of this principle implies using a variety of forms of collective learning, promoting effective and active communication of the students, which turns into the main means of learning the academic discipline, stimulating experience sharing, exchange of ideas and knowledge in the process of pair and group work, role plays. The relations among the members of the group act as a means of increasing motivation, social and psychological stimuli of learning. 2. *The principle of personality-oriented communication,* based on the influence of communication and its nature on the realization of educational goals. Interpersonal role communication in a foreign language is a foundation for learning that stimulates students’ creative thinking development [4]. 3. *The principle of introducing role-plays into the educational process* is closely related to the previous two. Participation in role-plays, which requires assuming certain roles, encourages the manifestation of students’ personal qualities. On the other hand, role play is an effective way of motivating students’ cognition. 4. *The principle of concentration* in the organization of the learning material and the educational process. This principle suggests that the learning material should be rationally selected and requires distinguishing between the main and additional content and the main and additional reading lists respectively.

In accord with this principle, the new learning material should be presented at the beginning of the class, when learners are at the top of their activity; the time allocated for in-class sessions should be well-managed. 5. *The principle of polyfunctionality* reflects the main characteristics of the system of exercises in intensive learning. The most productive approach in teaching a foreign language is the one that combines language activity development and language material acquisition. The polyfunctional nature of tasks, which is understood as practicing each construction in a series of exercises providing for the realization of the same communicative skill in different situations, is critical for the implementation of the intensive approach. 6. *The problem-solving principle*. The primary goal of modern education is defined as the development of the ability to creatively transform life; creative process includes discovering something new (new knowledge, new problems, as well as new solutions to them). Problem-solving, i.e., “teaching students to solve nonstandard tasks, dealing with which they acquire new knowledge, skills, and abilities” [1], contributes to the achievement of the above-mentioned goal. The essence of this principle is that the teacher offers students the tasks that encourage them to search for the ways and means of their completion instead of presenting ready-made knowledge to them. 7. *The principle of individualized instruction* implies taking into consideration the individual differences of each student in the process of designing tasks and the choice of the forms of communication. 8. *The principle of novelty* requires applying the latest findings in pedagogy and psychology in creating the forms and methods of teaching. Moreover, it emphasizes the necessity to use up-to-date teaching methods and relevant language material. 9. *The principle of progression* concerns ensuring the efficacy of the learning process and the uniform pace of all students in language acquisition irrespective of their background knowledge and individual features. This can be attained by means of individualized instruction, as well as by limiting the number of students in the group. 10. *The principle of variety* emphasizes the need for a wide range of forms and means of teaching to be used and the implementation of audiovisual and technical means, as well as information technology.

*The cultural-linguistic approach* developed in close relation to the view of language as a cultural phenomenon. The understanding of language as a product of culture, as its important component appeared in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and is related to the emergence of a new interdisciplinary field called linguistic anthropology. This discipline is concerned with the interrelation and interconnection of language and culture, which is of paramount importance for linguistics nowadays; it studies historical and modern language facts in the light of spiritual culture [2]. This understanding of language and culture was stipulated by a number of factors, firstly, by the rapid growth of the humanities, which resulted in the accumulation of the data in pedagogy, psychology, culture studies, sociology, political science, etc. This posed the necessity to reveal the peculiarities of the process of communication, human behavior and human mind, as well as the system of values of people and the nature of their language. At the same time, the process of globalization brought about the need for taking into consideration the specific features of the national mentality of the representatives of different countries. Language, in its turn, is that very means with the help of which collective experience encoded in words, phraseological units, and texts is interpreted.

The first insights into the problem of language and culture interrelation were made by W. von Humboldt, who believed that material and spiritual culture of a nation were reflected in its language, which was a bridge between the individual and his/her environment. Another critical point in Humboldt's theory is that the inner form of the language is the realization of the culture of the people. Therefore, learning a new language encompasses not only individual's cultural development, but equips him/her with new ways of expressing ideas and feelings.

There is no denying the fact that language and culture are interrelated, while the nature of this connection is still a disputable issue among the scholars who are interested in the study of language and culture. As far as our research is concerned, we believe that language is not only part of culture, but it determines culture to some extent: many changes in the language are the responses of its system to the requirements of the modern world, and the language, then, forces culture to change as

well. And, on the contrary, new trends in the culture are always reflected in the language (new lexical items come into use, while others become obsolete, etc.).

Proceeding from the belief that language is a cultural phenomenon, we came to the conclusion that the English language is a phenomenon of the English culture. Thus, when learning English, we familiarize ourselves with the English culture as well, receiving the opportunity to acquire new ways of expressing our thoughts and feelings coming from the English language. People willing to acquire both the English language and the English culture are to be explained the cultural specificity of the language units, which will enable them to correlate the surface and the deep structures of the language. Using this approach implies paying attention to proverbs, sayings, and idioms and explaining how dissimilar the understanding of words by the representative of different cultures can be.

The basic principles of cultural-linguistic approach are: a) acquiring all aspects of a foreign language in the light of culture; b) using authentic texts, literary works, audio and video materials; c) ensuring comprehensive learning, which means practicing speaking, listening, reading, and writing; d) the principle of novelty, which requires selecting up-to-date language material; e) learning the traditions, rules of conduct and etiquette of the target community.

Among the obvious advantages of the cultural-linguistic approach are: broadening the cultural world view of students; introducing them to the traditions and etiquette of the target community; interrelated acquisition of all aspects of language; motivating intercultural awareness, tolerance and respect for other cultures; investigating the relation between the language and the culture of native-speakers; and using creative, cognitive, and problem-solving tasks.

On the other hand, this approach has a number of drawbacks as well. Among them are: the opportunities to present the material in the cultural-linguistic context are sometimes limited; to be able to present the material in reference to the culture, the teacher has to be equipped with this information him/herself; and the preparation for the classes can be time-consuming.



Having analyzed the communicative, intensive, and cultural-linguistic approaches to teaching foreign languages, we have come to the conclusion that all three methods have both advantages and disadvantages. This makes it difficult to choose one of them as more effective for the development of the students' subject position. So, for achieving better results in this process, they have to be used in combination, depending on the situation. Among prospective lines of research in this field are the ways to address the disadvantages of these methods.

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### **Певна С. Є. Основні підходи до викладання англійської мови в контексті формування суб'єктної позиції студентів**

Статтю присвячено розгляду основних підходів до викладання англійської мови в контексті формування суб'єктної позиції студентів. Автором розглянуто три підходи до навчання англійської мови: комунікативний,

інтенсивний та лінгвокультурологічний. У результаті дослідження було виявлено переваги та недоліки всіх трьох методик, унаслідок чого автор дійшов висновку, що для досягнення мети формування суб'єктної позиції студентів засобами англійської мови неможливо зупинити свій вибір на будь-якій із цих методик (підходів), а треба вибірково, комбіновано та гармонійно використовувати окремі елементи кожної з них залежно від ситуації.

*Ключові слова:* метод, мотивація, освітня діяльність, підхід, принцип.

### **Певная С. Е. Основные подходы к преподаванию английского языка в контексте формирования субъектной позиции студентов**

Статья посвящена рассмотрению основных подходов к преподаванию английского языка в контексте формирования субъектной позиции студентов. Автором рассмотрены три подхода в обучении английскому языку: коммуникативный, интенсивный и лингвокультурологический. В результате исследования были выявлены преимущества и недостатки всех трех методик, вследствие чего автор пришел к выводу, что для достижения цели формирования субъектной позиции студентов средствами английского языка невозможно остановить свой выбор на какой-либо из данных методик (подходов), а следует выборочно, комбинированно и гармонично использовать отдельные элементы каждой из них в зависимости от ситуации.

*Ключевые слова:* метод, мотивация, образовательная деятельность, подход, принцип.

### **Pevna S. Ye. Basic Approaches to English Language Teaching in the Context of Students' Subject Position Formation**

The article focuses on the main approaches to English language teaching in the context of the development of students' subject position. The author discusses second language acquisition in relation to the notion of linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive, and sociocultural competencies. The importance of learning a foreign language as a

means of communication in real-life situations for the formation of students' subject position is emphasized.

Within the framework of this research, three main methods (approaches) to language teaching are distinguished: communicative, intensive, and cultural-linguistic. They all are part of the communicatively-oriented model of language teaching, which allows to achieve the aim of students' subject position formation by means of the English language. It is determined that the approaches mentioned are focused on widening the world view, increasing the level of motivation, cultivating creative initiative, and promoting effective communication.

On the basis of scientific literature analysis, the advantages and disadvantages of all three methods, as well as the main principles of their application are specified. Taking into consideration the pros and cons of the communicative, intensive, and cultural-linguistic approaches, the author suggests combining them to make the teaching process more effective. The choice of the method should depend on the objective that has to be achieved and the students' communicative needs.

*Key words:* method, motivation, educational activity, approach, principle.

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