

Michel Thomas[®] method

Polish

Introductory Course

Jolanta Cecuła

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Introduction

What is the Michel Thomas Method?

The Michel Thomas Method* all-audio courses, published by Hodder Education, provide an accelerated method for language learning that is truly revolutionary. And they promise a remarkable educational experience that will make your learning both exciting and pleasurable.

How does the Method work?

The Method works by breaking a language down into its component parts, enabling learners to reconstruct the language themselves – to form their own sentences, to say what they want, when they want. Because you learn the language in small steps, you can build it up yourself to produce ever more complicated sentences.

**No books
 No writing
 Just confidence – in hours**

The Michel Thomas Method is 'in tune' with the way your brain works, so you assimilate the language easily and don't forget it! The Method teaches you through your own language, so there's no stress, and no anxiety. The teacher builds up the new language, step by step, and you don't move on till you've absorbed and understood the previous point. As Michel Thomas said, *'What you understand, you know, and what you know, you don't forget.'*

With parallels to the way you learnt your own language, each language is learnt in 'real-time' conditions. There is no need to stop for homework, additional exercises or vocabulary memorization.

*US patent 6,565,358

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'Learning Spanish with Michel was the most extraordinary learning experience of my life – it was unforgettable.'

Emma Thompson

'Michel Thomas is a precious find indeed.'

The Guardian

The classroom situation on the recording lets you learn with others. You enjoy their success, and you learn from their mistakes. The students on the recordings are not reading from scripts and they have received no additional instruction or preparation – just the guidance you hear on the recording. You, as the learner, become the third student and participate actively in the class.

A very important part of the Michel Thomas Method is that full responsibility for your learning lies with the teacher, not with you, the pupil. This helps to ensure that you can relax, and feel confident, so allowing you to learn effectively.

You will enjoy the Method as it creates real excitement – you can't wait to use the language.

'There's no such thing as a poor student, only a poor teacher.'

Michel Thomas

What level of language will I achieve?

The Introductory and Foundation courses are designed for complete beginners. They make no assumption of a knowledge of any language other than English. They will give the beginner a practical and functional use of the

HOW ARE THE RECORDINGS BEST USED?

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- **Relax!** Make yourself comfortable before playing the recording and try to let go of the tensions and anxieties traditionally associated with learning.
- **Do not write or take any notes.** Remove notebooks, pens, dictionaries and anything else associated with learning at school.
- **Do not try to remember.** While participating in the recording and afterwards, it is important that you do not try to memorize specific words or expressions. It is a basic principle of the Michel Thomas Method that the responsibility for the student's learning lies with the teacher. With the Michel Thomas Method as your teacher, your learning will be based on understanding, and what you understand you don't forget.
- **Interact fully with the recordings.** Use the pause button and respond out loud (or in a whisper, or in your head, if you are in a public place) before the students' responses. *This is essential.* You do not learn by repetition but by thinking out the answers to each question; it is by your own thought process that you truly learn.
- **Give yourself time to think.** The students on the recordings had all the time they needed to think out their responses. On the recordings their 'thinking time' has been cut in order to make full use of the recording time. You can take all the time you need (by using your pause button). The pause button is the key to *your* learning! To get you used to pausing the recording before the students' responses, bleeps have been added to the first few tracks. When you hear the bleep, pause the recording, think out and say your response, then release the pause button to hear the student's, then the teacher's, response.
- **Start at the beginning of the course.** Whatever your existing knowledge of the language you are learning, it is important that you follow the way that the teacher builds up your knowledge of the language.
- **Do not get annoyed with yourself if you make a mistake.** Mistakes are part of the learning process; as long as you understand why you made the mistake and you have the 'ahaa' reaction – 'yes, of course, I understand now' – you are doing fine. If you made a mistake and you do not understand why, you may have been daydreaming for a few seconds. The course is structured so that you cannot go on unless you fully understand everything, so just go back a little and you will pick up where you left off.
- **Stop the recording whenever it suits you.** You will notice that this course is not divided into lessons; you will always be able to pick up from where you left off, without the need to review.

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spoken language. They are also appropriate for anyone who has studied a language before, but has forgotten much of it or does not have confidence in speaking.

The Introductory course comprises the first two hours of the Foundation Course. The Advanced course follows on from the Foundation course and expands on structures touched on in the earlier course to improve your understanding and mastery of complex language.

The Michel Thomas Method teaches the everyday conversational language that will allow you to communicate in a wide variety of situations, empowered by the ability to create your own sentences and use the language naturally, having absorbed the vocabulary and grammatical structures.

How quickly can I learn with the Michel Thomas Method?

One of the most remarkable features of the Michel Thomas Method is the speed with which results are achieved. A knowledge of the language that will take months of conventional study can be achieved in a matter of hours with the Michel Thomas Method. The teacher masterfully guides the student through an instructional process at a very rapid rate – yet the process will appear informal, relaxed and unhurried. The teacher moves quickly between numerous practice sessions, which all build the learners' confidence in their ability to communicate in complex ways.

Because the Michel Thomas Method is based on understanding, not memorization, there is no set limit to the length of time that you should study the course. It offers immersion without strain or stress, and you will find the recordings are not divided into lessons, though the material has been indexed for your convenience. This means that you can stop and start as you please.

The excitement of learning will motivate you to continue listening and learning for as long a time as is practical for you. This will enable you to make progress faster than you ever imagined possible.

Who is the Michel Thomas Method for?

Anyone can learn a language with the Michel Thomas Method – and the wide diversity of Michel Thomas's own students proves this. Not only did Michel instruct the rich and famous, but he also taught many so-called 'hopeless cases'. For example, in 1997, Michel taught French to a group of sixteen-year-olds in north London who had been told they could never learn a language, and gave them the ability to use the new language far beyond their expectations – in just a week. Perhaps more importantly, he gave them the confidence to speak and a belief in, and the experience of, their own ability to learn.

Whatever your motivation for learning a language, the Michel Thomas Method quite simply offers the most effective method that is available.

What can I do next?

Try to speak with native speakers whenever possible, as this is invaluable for improving your fluency. Television and radio programmes via satellite podcasts, newspapers and magazines (print or on-line) (especially those which feature interviews) will give you practice in the most current and idiomatic language. Expose yourself to the language whenever you can – you will have firm foundations on which to build.

Continue your study with the Foundation and Advanced courses. Then build your vocabulary with the existing and planned Vocabulary courses, which carry forward the Michel Thomas Method teaching tradition and faithfully follow Michel Thomas's unique approach to foreign language learning. The series editor is Dr Rose Lee Hayden, Michel's most experienced and trusted teacher. The courses remain faithful to the method Michel Thomas used in his earlier courses, with the all-audio and 'building-block' approach. The presenter builds on Michel's foundations to encourage the student at home to build up their vocabulary in the foreign language, using relationships with English, where appropriate, or connections within the foreign language itself. The student takes part in the audio, following prompts by the presenter, as in Michel Thomas' original Foundation and Advanced courses.

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Who was Michel Thomas?



Michel with Grace Kelly

Michel Thomas (1914–2005) spent most of his childhood in Germany and France. He studied psychology at the Sorbonne (Paris) and at the University of Vienna. During the Second World War he fought for the French Resistance; after the war he worked for the U.S. army. His war-time experiences, including two years in concentration and labour camps and torture at the hands of the Gestapo, fuelled his passion for teaching languages, as a result of which he developed a uniquely effective language-

teaching method that brought to his door celebrities (including Barbra Streisand and Emma Thompson), diplomats, academics and business executives from around the world. He established the first Michel Thomas Language Center in Beverly Hills in 1947, and continued to travel the world teaching languages for the rest of his life.

Whom did Michel Thomas teach?

People came from all over the world to learn a foreign language with Michel Thomas – because his method works. His students, numbering in the thousands, included well-known people from the arts and from the corporate, political and academic worlds. For example, he taught French to filmstar Grace Kelly prior to her marriage to Prince Rainier of Monaco.

Michel's list of clients included:

- *Celebrities:* Emma Thompson, Woody Allen, Barbra Streisand, Warren Beatty, Melanie Griffith, Eddie Izzard, Bob Dylan, Jean Marsh, Donald Sutherland, Mrs George Harrison, Anne Bancroft, Mel Brooks, Nastassja Kinski, Carl Reiner, Raquel Welch, Johnny Carson, Julie Andrews, Isabelle Adjani, Candice Bergen, Barbara Hershey, Priscilla Presley, Loretta Swit, Tony Curtis, Diana Ross, Herb Alpert, Angie Dickinson, Lucille Ball, Doris Day, Janet Leigh, Natalie Wood, Jayne Mansfield, Ann-Margaret, Yves Montand,

Kim Novak, Otto Preminger, Max von Sydow, Peter Sellers, François Truffaut, Sophia Coppola.

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- *Diplomats, dignitaries and academics:* Former U.S. Ambassador to France, Walter Curley; U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Joseph V. Reed; Cardinal John O'Connor, Archbishop of New York; Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua, Archbishop of Philadelphia; Armand Hammer; Sarah Ferguson, Duchess of York; Professor Herbert Morris, Dean of Humanities at UCLA; Warren Keegan, Professor of Business at Pace University in New York; Professor Wesley Posvar, former President of the University of Pittsburgh.

- *Executives from the following corporations:* AT&T International, Coca-Cola, Procter & Gamble, Chase Manhattan Bank, American Express, Merrill Lynch, New York Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Boeing Aircraft, General Electric, Westinghouse Electric, Bank of America, Max Factor, Rand Corporation, Bertelsmann Music Group-RCA, Veuve Clicquot Inc., McDonald's Corporation, Rover, British Aerospace.

Track listing

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this track listing:

fem. = feminine; masc. = masculine; neut. = neuter

Word order

Word order in Polish is quite flexible. The word order as given in all the phrases, sentences and questions printed below (and heard in the recording) are just examples of many different possible word orders, to help you to get started. Feel free to experiment with them to help you develop your own linguistic abilities in Polish. Communication, after all, is about expressing our thoughts and ideas and sharing them with others and each of us does it in a different way. So enjoy finding your own way of expressing yourself!

CD1 Track 1

Introduction

to 'it, this'; *jest* 'is'; *to jest* 'it is, this is'.

In Polish there are no words for 'a', 'an' and 'the'; *mapa* 'map'; *bank* 'bank'; *to jest mapa* 'it is a map' or 'it is the map'.

nie 'not, no'; *to nie jest film* 'this is not a film'.

To ask a question, raise the pitch of your voice at the end of the sentence.

tak 'yes, so, like this / that'; *studio* 'studio'; *teatr* 'theatre'.

Putting the word *czy* at the front of a sentence turns it into a question; you do not need to change the word order, and raising your voice at the end is optional. *Czy to jest park?* '[Question word] this is park?' = 'Is this a park?' *Czy* also means 'or'; *Czy to jest klub czy bar?* 'Is this a club or bar?' In short sentences you can omit *jest*.

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CD1 Track 2

mam 'I have'; *mam to* 'I have it'. *Ja* means 'I' but there is no need to say it, unless you want to emphasise the 'I'.

In Polish you don't use 'don't' or 'doesn't' to make sentences negative: *nie mam* 'not I have' = 'I don't have'.

Use *tego* for 'it' in negative sentences when 'it' is the object, or recipient, of the action; *nie mam tego* 'I don't have it'.

czytam 'I read, I am reading'; *ale* 'but', *paszport* 'passport'; *pan* 'you' (when talking to a man); *pani* 'you' (when talking to a woman); *pan / pani ma* 'you have'; *pan / pani czyta* 'you read, are reading'.

CD1 Track 3

co 'what'; *co to jest?* 'what this is?' = 'what is this?' The order of 'this is' (etc.) doesn't change in the question, so questions and statements in Polish have the same word order, unlike in English.

dla mnie 'for me'; *co pani ma dla mnie?* 'what do you (fem.) have for me?'

czego 'what' (in negative questions); *czego pan / pani nie ma?* 'what do you not have?'

dla czego 'for what' = 'why.'

CD1 Track 4

jestem 'am' = 'I am'; *gotowy* 'ready' (describing a man), *gotowa* 'ready' (woman), *gotowe* 'ready' (neut.); *jestem gotowy* 'I (masc.) am ready'; *pan / pani jest gotowy / gotowa* 'you are ready'; *to jest gotowe* 'it is ready'; *pan / pani nie jest gotowy / gotowa* = 'you are not ready'. *Pan* literally means 'sir' and *pani* 'madam', so what you are actually saying is 'sir / madam is not ready'.

Czy pan / pani jest gotowy / gotowa? = 'Are you ready?' *Czy* can be omitted from short questions in colloquial speech.

CD1 Track 5

można 'possible' = 'one can, one may, it is possible'; *można?* with rising intonation means 'may I?'; *nie można* 'not possible' = 'it is not possible'.

kupić 'to buy'; *można to kupić* 'possible it to buy' = 'it is possible to buy it'; *czy można to kupić?* 'is it possible to buy this?'

The letter -ć is a typical ending for the basic or 'to' form of the verb; *czytać* 'to read'.

CD1 Track 6

Mam 'I have' also means 'shall I?' or 'am I supposed to?'; *mam to czytać?* 'shall I read this?'

robić 'to do, make'; *nie mam tego robić?* 'am I not supposed to do it?'

już 'already, by now'; *jeszcze* 'still, yet'; *jeszcze nie* 'yet not' = 'not yet'; *pan jeszcze nie jest gotowy?* 'you (masc.) yet not is ready?' = 'aren't you ready yet?'

CD1 Track 7

przepraszam 'excuse me, I'm sorry'; *coś* 'something'; *problem* 'problem'.

CD1 Track 8

Adding -y is one of the most common ways of making a noun plural in Polish: *problemy* 'problems'.

Stress is almost always on the penultimate syllable in Polish; this rule applies even when an extra syllable is added to make the plural:

dokument 'document', *dokumenty* 'documents'.

gdzie 'where'.

Feminine nouns end in -a; in the plural -a becomes -y: *mapy* 'maps'; *kamera* 'camera', *kamery* 'cameras'.

są 'are'; *gdzie są mapy?* 'where are the maps?'

tutaj 'here', *czy kamery są tutaj?* 'are the cameras here?'

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CD1 Track 9*i* 'and'.*klub jest tutaj* 'club is here' = 'there is a club here'.*tam* 'there'; *telefon* 'telephone'.**CD1 Track 10**

umieć 'to know how to / to be able to'; *umiem* 'I know how to / I am able to', *pan / pani umie* 'you know how to / you are able to'. The verb that follows is in the form ending in -ć, the 'to' form of the verb: *umiem to robić* 'I know how to / am able to do' = 'I know how to / am able to do it'.

gotować 'to cook'; *umiem gotować* 'I know how to cook'.**CD1 Track 11**

The Polish equivalent of English words ending in '-tion' is -cja; *intonacja* 'intonation'; *organizacja* 'organisation'; *sytuacja* 'situation'; *tradycja* 'tradition'; *informacja* 'information (desk)'. These words are all feminine, since they end in -a.

Polska 'Poland, Polish' (with feminine nouns only); *angielska* 'English' (with feminine nouns); *Czy to jest polska czy angielska tradycja?* 'Is this a Polish or an English tradition?'

konferencja 'conference'; *restauracja* 'restoration, restaurant'; *daleko* 'far'.

CD1 Track 12*wszystko* 'everything, all'.

rozumieć 'to understand'; *rozumiem* 'I understand', *pan / pani rozumie* 'you understand'.

dobrze 'well'; *(nie) rozumiem to (tego) dobrze* 'I (don't) understand it well'.

tego goes after the verb if it is not emphasised, but if you want to emphasise it, place it earlier in the sentence: *pani tego nie rozumie* 'you (fem.) don't understand it'.

CD2 Track 1

zaczynać 'to begin, start'; *zaczynam* 'I begin, am beginning', *pan / pani zaczyna* 'you begin, are beginning'. There is only one present tense in Polish, which can be translated by the English 'I begin' and 'I am beginning' (etc.).

If there are two verbs, it is usually safest to place *to* between them: *zaczynam to robić* 'I'm starting it to do' = 'I'm starting to do it'.

właśnie 'just'; *właśnie zaczynam* 'just I am beginning' = 'I'm just beginning'.**CD2 Track 2***teraz* 'now'.

że 'that' (when followed by another part of a sentence with a verb in it): *rozumiem, że pan / pani właśnie teraz zaczyna to robić* 'I understand that you're just starting to do it now'.

to 'this, that'; *to jest wszystko* 'that is all'; *jest* is dropped in short sentences: *to wszystko* 'that all' = 'that is all'; *czy to już wszystko?* 'Is that everything, Is there anything else?'; *(czy) coś jeszcze?* '[Question word] something yet?' = 'Anything else?' (said in shops).

wiem 'I know' (a fact), *pan / pani wie* 'you know'.**CD2 Track 3***bardzo* 'very'; *wiem to bardzo dobrze* 'I know it very well'.

czy also means 'whether': *nie wiem czy mam to* 'I don't know whether I have it'.

blisko 'close, nearby'.**CD2 Track 4**

The Polish equivalents of the English word endings '-ic' and '-ical' are -yczny and -iczny: *tragiczny* 'tragic'; *ekonomiczny* 'economic'; *polityczny* 'political'; *logiczny* 'logical'. The -y at the end is the masculine ending.

In Polish endings change according to the gender of the person or thing being described: *jestem gotowy* 'I am ready' (male, describing

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himself), *jestem gotowa* 'I am ready' (female, describing herself).

The neuter ('it') ending is -e: *to nie jest logiczne, ale jest bardzo praktyczne* 'it is not logical, but it is very practical'.

w 'in'; *w Polsce* 'in Poland'. Here the *w* runs into the following word when spoken and sounds like an 'f'.

dobra 'good' (fem. form).

CD2 Track 5

ciekawý 'interesting' (masc.), *ciekawa* (fem.), *ciekawe* (neut.).

ten 'this' (masc.), *ta* (fem.), *to* (neut.); *ten film* 'this film'; *ta opera* 'this opera'; *ta opera jest bardzo ciekawa* 'this opera is very interesting'.

nic 'nothing': Polish uses what looks like a double negative in English: *nic nie mam* (emphasises *nic*) / *nie mam nic* (neutral word order) = 'I have nothing'.

CD2 Track 6

a 'and' (when used to contrast two things); *ja nic nie wiem a pani wie wszystko* = 'I know nothing and you (fem.) know everything'.

ciekawý / *ciekawa jestem* 'I am curious, I wonder, I'm wondering'; *ciekawa jestem co to jest* 'I (fem.) wonder what this is'.

toaleta 'toilet'; *ciekawý jestem gdzie jest toaleta* 'I (masc.) wonder where the toilet is'.

uniwersytet 'university' (stress is on -wer-).

CD2 Track 7

komputer 'computer'; *gdzie można kupić komputery?* 'where is it possible to buy computers?'

gazeta 'newspaper'; *nie można* 'not possible'; *nic nie można tutaj kupić* (emphasises *nic*) 'one can't buy anything here'.

CD2 Track 8

mówić 'to speak'; *mówić po angielsku* 'to speak English'; *po polsku* (speak) 'Polish'; *czy pani umie mówić po polsku?* 'do you know how to / are you able to speak Polish?'

pani może 'you (fem.) may / can'; *pan nie może* 'you (masc.) not may / can' = 'you may not / cannot'.

When there are two or more words in a sentence, little words like *to* are usually placed before the verb they belong to, but nouns are placed after it: *pan może to kupić* 'you (masc.) may / can buy it'; *czy pan może kupić gazety?* 'can you (masc.) buy the newspapers?'

CD2 Track 9

kiedy 'when'; *on* 'he'; *ona* 'she'.

On and *ona* take the same verb endings as *pan* and *pani*: *on może* 'he may / can', *ona ma* 'she has', *on czyta* 'he reads', *ona umie* 'she is able (to)', *on wie* 'he knows', *ona zaczyna* 'she begins'.

CD2 Track 10

przygotować 'to prepare'.

CD2 Track 11

There are two key endings for verbs in the 'I' form. The verbs we've met so far have all ended in -m, e.g. *jestem* 'I am', *zaczynam* 'I start'. 'I may / can' has the other ending, -ę, so *mogę*: *czy mogę to kupić?* 'May I buy it?'

CD2 Track 12

bilet 'ticket'; *koncert* 'concert'; *na* 'for' (in sense 'on to, towards'): *bilet na koncert* 'a ticket for the concert'.

lubić 'to like', (*nie*) *lubię* 'I (don't) like', *pan / pani lubi* 'you like'.

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- Just confidence

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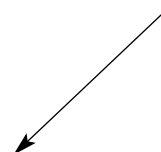
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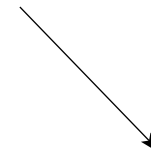
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