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كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية

قسم اللغة الانكليزية

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عنوان المحاضرة

Direct Method

Introduction

Direct Method is not new. Its principles have been applied by language teachers for many years. Most recently, it was revived as a method when the goal of instruction became learning how to use another language to communicate. Since the Grammar-Translation Method was not very effective in preparing students to use the target language communicatively, the Direct Method became popular.

The Direct Method has one very basic rule: No translation is allowed. In fact, the Direct Method receives its name from the fact that meaning is to be conveyed directly in the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids, with no recourse to the students' native language.

Direct Method

It is a teaching approach in language instruction where the target language is used as the primary means of communication between the teacher and students. This method emphasizes the use of gestures, realia, and visual aids to help students understand the meaning of the language being taught. The focus is on the spoken language, rather than grammar rules, and students are encouraged to communicate with each other and the teacher in the target language as much as possible. The direct method aims to create a natural and communicative language learning environment that helps students develop their speaking and listening skills.

Principles of Direct Method

1. Reading in the target language should be taught from the beginning of language instruction; however, the reading skill will be developed through practice with speaking. Language is primarily speech. Culture consists of more than the fine arts (e.g. in this lesson we observed the students studying geography and cultural attitudes).

2. Objects (e.g. realia or pictures) present in the immediate classroom environment should be used to help students understand the meaning.
3. The native language should not be used in the classroom.
4. The teacher should demonstrate, not explain or translate. It is desirable that students make a direct association between the target language form and meaning.
5. Students should learn to think in the target language as soon as possible. Vocabulary is acquired more naturally if students use it in full sentences, rather than memorizing word lists.
6. The purpose of language learning is communication (therefore students need to learn how to ask questions as well as answer them).
7. Pronunciation should be worked on right from the beginning of language instruction.
8. Self-correction facilitates language learning.
9. Lessons should contain some conversational activity—some opportunity for students to use language in real contexts. Students should be encouraged to speak as much as possible.
10. Grammar should be taught inductively. There may never be an explicit grammar rule given.
11. Writing is an important skill, to be developed from the beginning of language instruction.
12. The syllabus is based on situations or topics, not usually on linguistic structures.
13. Learning another language also involves learning how speakers of that language live.

The Goals of Teachers Who Use the Direct Method

Teachers who use the Direct Method intend that students learn how to communicate in the foreign language through minimizing the use of the mother tongue during the lesson, as well as through training linguistic reflexes. This leads to thinking in the foreign language, and hence, the ease of using the target language in

practice is gained. It must be pointed that the Direct Method is based on Krashen's theory, and teacher's aim is to make the input more comprehensible for their students.

The Role of the Teacher and Learner

The role of the teacher is to direct the class activities, encourage students to participate in class by asking them questions constantly, and corrects their mistakes immediately. Something really important in this role is that students and teachers are partners in the learning process. In the other hand, the students' role is less passive than in the Grammar Translation Method. Moreover, there is students' self-correction; they have to speak a lot.

Characteristics of the Direct Method

In this method the classroom instruction is conducive exclusively in the target language. So teachers should not use learners' mother tongue to teach them a new foreign language. Moreover, learners acquire the vocabulary by practising every day. Something quite important is that the vocabulary is touch in the initial phase, and grammar, reading and writing are introduced in the intermediate phase. The communication skills are built in a careful way. Also in this method grammar is taught inductively. Furthermore, speech and listening skills are developed in this method. Briefly, students should talk for the bulk of class time. Vocabulary is emphasized over grammar. Although work on all four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) occurs from the start, oral communication is seen as basic. Thus the reading and writing exercises are based upon what the students practice orally first. Pronunciation also receives attention right from the beginning of a course.

Techniques of Direct Method

In this method, the techniques that seem suitable to application as follows:

- Reading Aloud

Students take turns reading sections of a passage, play, or dialogue out loud. At the end of each student's turn, the teacher uses gestures, pictures, realia, examples, or other means to make the meaning of the section clear.

- Question and Answer Exercise

This exercise is conducted only in the target language. Students are asked questions and answer in full sentences so that they practice new words and grammatical structures. They have the opportunity to ask questions as well as answer them.

- Getting Students to Self-correct

The teacher of this class has the students self-correct by asking them to make a choice between what they said and an alternative answer he supplied. There are, however, other ways of getting students to self-correct. For example, a teacher might simply repeat what a student has just said, using a questioning voice to signal to the student that something was wrong with it. Another possibility is for the teacher to repeat what the student said, stopping just before the error. The student then knows that the next word was wrong.

- Conversation Practice

The teacher asks students a number of questions in the target language, which they have to understand to be able to answer correctly. In the class we observed, the teacher asked individual students questions about themselves. The questions contained a particular grammar structure. Later, the students were able to ask each other their own questions using the same grammatical structure.

- Fill in the blanks exercise

This technique has already been discussed in the Grammar-Translation Method, but differs in its application in the Direct Method. All the items are in the target language; furthermore, no explicit grammar rule would be applied. The students would have induced the grammar rule they need to fill in the blanks from examples and practice with earlier parts of the lesson.

- Dictation

The teacher reads the passage three times. The first time the teacher reads it at a normal speed, while the students just listen. The second time he reads the passage phrase by phrase, pausing long enough to allow students to write down what they have heard. The last time the teacher again reads at a normal speed, and students check their work.

- Map Drawing

The class included one example of a technique used to give students listening comprehension practice. The students were given a map with the geographical features unnamed. Then the teacher gave the students directions such as the following, ‘Find the mountain range in the West. Write the words “Rocky Mountains” across the mountain range.’ He gave instructions for all the geographical features of the United States so that students would have a completely labeled map if they followed his instructions correctly. The students then instructed the teacher to do the same thing with a map he had drawn on the board. Each student could have a turn giving the teacher instructions for finding and labeling one geographical feature.

- Paragraph Writing

The teacher in this class asked the students to write a paragraph in their own words on the major geographical features of the United States. They could have done this from memory, or they could have used the reading passage in the lesson as a model.