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THE USE OF THE DIRECT METHOD IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A TARGET LANGUAGE FOR COMMUNICATION

Abstract. This research focuses on the advantages and disadvantages of the Direct Method to give instructions how to use it to communicate in the target language.

The article analyzes the peculiarities of the use of this method to understand how to create an effective immersive environment and to develop students' skills of thinking in a foreign language rather than constantly looking for analogies with their mother tongue.

This article highlights the principles of the Direct Method which allows students to effectively and quickly achieve the desired result, namely free and fast communication in a foreign language.

The main focus of the Direct Method is to develop conversational communication skills in a foreign language by minimizing the use of the native language and forming a language reflex that allows not only to speak, but also to think in the language being studied with the simplicity and ease of using a foreign language in practice.

It is stated in the article that are certain methods that are included into the Direct Method, namely 1) the Audio-lingual method which focuses on listening and speaking over reading and writing, 2) TPR (Total Physical Response) and 3) TPR storytelling, which combines the previously mentioned methods in a connective context, and 3) TPR storytelling.

The article also gives some characteristics of the Direct Method. The essential characteristics are the following ones: The assimilation of new material is based on the use of language samples and the construction of sentences by analogy, simulating a similar one. In the process of learning, listening and repeating samples, reading texts, students must derive rules from them themselves, with subsequent transformation of them into a complete system. The creation of vocabulary requires the use of context due



to the fact that words have many meanings. Understanding the fact that language does not consist of words, but of sentences, helps with the creation of a competent vocabulary in the student during the educational process, etc.

Keywords: Target Language, Direct Method, Audio-lingual Method, Total Physical Response, TPR storytelling.

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ВИКОРИСТАННЯ ПРЯМОГО МЕТОДУ В НАВЧАННІ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК ЦІЛЬОВОЇ МОВИ ДЛЯ СПІЛКУВАННЯ

Анотація. У статті розглянуто переваги та недоліки прямого методу задля того, щоб надати інструкції з належного використання цього методу для вільного спілкування цільовою мовою.

У статті проаналізовано особливості використання прямого методу задля того, щоб вчителі могли створювати ефективне середовище занурення та розвитку в учнів уміння вільно мислити на іноземній мові без постійного пошуку аналогій з рідної мови.

У цій статті висвітлено основні принципи прямого методу, який дозволяє студентам ефективно та швидко досягти бажаного результату, а саме вільного та швидкого спілкування іноземною мовою.

Основним напрямком прямого методу є розвиток навичок розмовного спілкування іноземною мовою шляхом мінімізації використання рідної мови та формування мовного рефлексу, який дозволяє не лише говорити, але й мислити мовою, що вивчається, з використання мовних одиниць на практиці у вільному спілкуванні.

У статті зазначено, що є також низка споріднених методів, які входять до прямого методу, а саме 1) аудіолінгвальний метод, який зосереджується на слуханні та говорінні замість читання та письма, 2) метод повної фізичної реакції (ПФР) і 3) TPR storytelling, який поєднує згадані раніше методи в зв'язному контексті, та 3) розповідь ПФР.

У статті також наведено деякі характеристики прямого методу. Серед основних зазначено: засвоєння нового матеріалу базується на використанні мовних зразків і побудові речень за аналогією. У процесі



вивчення, прослуховування і повторення зразків, читання текстів учні повинні самі виводити з них правила з подальшим перетворенням їх у цілісну систему. Створення словникового запасу вимагає використання контексту через те, що слова мають багато значень. Розуміння того, що мова складається не зі слів, а з речень, сприяє формуванню грамотного словникового запасу учнів під час навчального процесу, тощо.

Ключові слова: Цільова мова, прямий метод, аудіолінгвальний метод, метод повної фізичної реакції (ПФР), розповідь ПФР.

The formulation of the problem. Despite a significant number of works of modern scientists and practitioners, the issue of choosing the most effective methods of training to ensure oral communication in the process of learning a foreign language, especially for students of higher educational institutions for specific purposes, there are some questions that still remain open for revisions, development and discussions. That's why we try to systematize the abundant information into one short review with conclusions and notes for instructions to be used in practice during the classes of English, Maritime English, etc.

The relevance of the study of the Direct Method is determined by the social needs of students to reach the desirable purpose of acquisition of fluent English in a short time.

Analysis of recent researches and publications. The basic Direct Method of language learning was developed at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century and was based on the previously known natural method. Not only linguists, but also methodologists and even psychologists participated in the development of the methodology. The main goal set by the developers was to quickly and effectively teach students fluency in a foreign language. One of the main methods of language learning proposed by the authors of the method was *induction*, i.e., independent observation of learning the language according to the features of the language material and the subsequent creation of rules that are brought into a certain system [2].

The desire of students to communicate freely with others have always been inherent in human nature. At the beginning of the 2000, social and economic conditions in Europe changed fundamentally. In the new conditions, there is a need for people who know a foreign language theoretically to acquire skills first of all for oral communication. Learning languages using grammar and text-translation methods could not be satisfying requirements of society any more.

The history of methods of teaching foreign languages is most fully researched and described in the works of K.A. Ganshina, I.A. Gruzynska,



R.A. Kuznetsova, I.V. Rakhmanov, Y.A. Zhluktenko, etc. Among the foreign psychologists and linguists who participated in the development of the direct method are the following ones: B. Eggert, O. Jespersen, P. Passy, H. Sweet, W. Vietor and others, as well as Methodists M. Vendt, Sh. Schweitzer, etc. [3].

Turning to the history of the development of the methodology of teaching foreign languages, we see that the method of learning linguistic phenomena through translation into the native language was a prerequisite for the creation of a comparative method of teaching foreign languages in the true sense of the word.

Comparative methods had different names: visually intuitive, natural, anti-grammatical and direct. In methodological literature, the terms “direct” and “natural” are most often used to denote these methods. The natural method is essentially a type of the direct method. The development of the direct method was facilitated by the achievements in linguistics and psychology.

The name “Direct method” appeared because supporters of this method tried to associate lexical units of a foreign language directly with their meaning, bypassing the native language, in the educational process. Initially, this method was concerned with teaching only oral speech. Later, they began to set other practical goals, in particular, learning to read [5].

A living foreign language became the object of study. This way of learning the language was seen as simpler and shorter. Drawing an analogy with the natural way of acquiring the native language, supporters of the method found confirmation of the correctness of these provisions. In order to create conditions similar to those that exist during the acquisition of the native language, it is necessary to reproduce the appropriate language environment in foreign language classes.

The most consistent representatives of the direct method are Harold Palmer and Michael West. Direct method became the basis for the development of such specific teaching methods as audio-lingual and audiovisual.

Palmer's most valuable methodical provisions are the rationalization of the pedagogical process and systematization of educational material. Palmer considered the mastery of oral speech to be the main goal of learning a foreign language. His method is also called *the oral method* which includes reproductive and productive activities at the lessons [7].

M. West's method is not only a goal, but also a means of learning, especially at the initial stage: it allows you to accumulate vocabulary and thus create a base for the development of oral speech. In comparison with the methods of the classical school, the direct method was a progressive



phenomenon. He gave positive results thanks to rationalization of educational material, intensive training process, the use of visual aids and active learning methods.

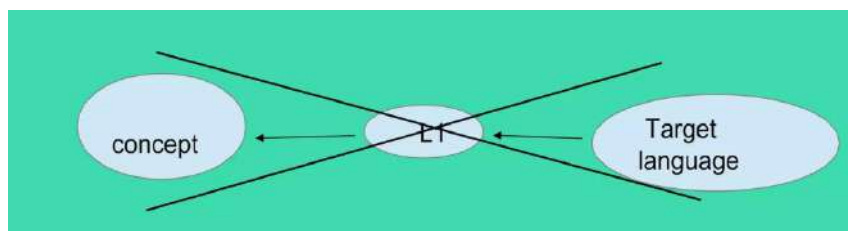
One of the modern variants of the direct method is the Bloomfield method. Leonard Bloomfield is a famous American linguist who made a significant impact on the modern state methods of teaching foreign languages in the USA and in other countries. Bloomfield's concepts are the following ones: learning a foreign language pursues practical goals – the ability to speak and understand speech; learning takes place on an oral basis and with oral anticipation, by creating associations; the great importance is attached to imitation and memorization. Linguistic material is learned in the process of listening to the informant and memorizing records of the target language [5].

The Callan Method, developed by Robert Callan, was created on the basis of the developments made at the beginning of the 20th century. Training in the case is conducted using the basic principles of the direct method, in a simple, relaxed environment. The Callan Method is an intensive and highly effective small group class divided into 12 main stages. The very first level, or A1 Beginner, is designed for beginners who are practically not familiar with the English language, and the twelfth level, C1 Advanced, is aimed at “advanced” students who can already communicate with native speakers of a foreign language independently, at a very good level [7, 104].

The purpose of the article is to study the Direct Method of learning a foreign language (with limited use of the native language) and determine its advantages and disadvantages in the process of learning a target language.

Main material presentation. *The Direct Method* is a way of presenting the subject of foreign languages in which the teacher directly uses the foreign language as the language of instructions, and without the use of students' language in the teaching.

This method is called Direct, because the concept / meaning of the words in English should be connected directly with the **Target Language** (English) without the translation into the native language (Pic. 1):



Pic. 1. Correlation between the concept of the word and the target language interpretation



The English language should be learnt naturally through demonstration. That's why it is also known as *Natural Method*, *Anti-Grammatical Method*, *Phonetical* or *Reform Method*. It is a natural method which is aimed to help students to learn English in the same way the mother tongue is acquired.

The aim of this method is to develop communicative ability in learners of English and other languages.

When students get trouble in understanding the word, teachers can interpret the words by the use of props. In this method, during the process of teaching, teacher uses the language that is taught, while the learners' language should be avoided [6, p. 27].

There are some steps of English language learning which are followed by using the direct method, namely: selecting the appropriate topic to the level of the students' ability, then teachers tell the words or phrases that correspond to the level of their ability to use props when needed and the last stage is the practice of studied units.

The main objective is the mastery of the target language in which students communicate orally in the target language.

We highlight the principle characteristics of the direct Method which include:

1) Ability to think.

The basic aim expected by this method is to develop students' ability to think in English language, but not in the mother tongue of students. From the beginning of class, the students are trained to think in a foreign language.

Proponents of direct methods sought to exclude the native language during the time of teaching a foreign language, and to use monolingual methods of semanticizing language material, trying to establish "direct" connections of words and concepts reflected in the very name of the method [5].

2) Ability to speak.

The method focuses more attention on developing students' ability to speak than the other aspects. The mastery level of English should be obtained first through listening, speaking, and only then reading and finally writing with some grammar spots [2, 39].

3) Classroom instructions are conducted exclusively in the target language.

After going into the classroom, the student or students are really conditioned to accept and converse in a foreign language and it is prohibited to speak any other language. The English language learning by using the English language does not include the other language as a medium. Translation from and into English is something that should be avoided in this method, so it is not justified to translate English to any language [6, p. 29].



4) Basic material is given first.

The subject consists of words and sentence structures which are widely used every day. The conversation between individual's draws the first form and it is commonly used in the society, so that at the beginning, their English conversation should be contained the vocabulary and sentence structure in accordance with the intent and purpose of student learning. First, simple words are presented to introduce that have been known by students, and then the students practice to name the objects beginning from the existing objects in the classroom, at home and outside the classroom, and so on [8, 29].

Thus, for example, specifically for English coursebooks, Direct Language Lab has designed an Internet platform where every user can find even more attractive exercises, making use of additional hours of learning. Coursebooks produced by Direct Language Lab are *modern* and contain only *up-to-date vocabulary and grammar adapted* to present examination standards. English designed with Direct Method coursebooks include questions relating to *current topics* which are of interest to students. All the levels of English designed with Direct Method coursebooks contain a wide range of questions ascribed to a group of words. This facilitates better acquisition of meanings of words and consolidation of their use in various contexts [7].

5) Contextual/topical teaching.

The syllabus is based on situations or topics, not usually on linguistic structures. A special role is given to visibility: external-object-depicting, action, "internal", contextual, which are capable of help to establish these "direct" connections between subjects and phenomena, on the one hand, and their verbal variants in a foreign language, on the other hand [2, p. 38].

6) Repeated pronunciation and imitation of the words.

At the beginning, the students learning is conditioned to listen to sentences perfectly that have a clear meaning, so that students are able and easy to repeat and understand them. Firstly, the reading is given orally as *listening is prioritized*.

Besides practicing much the listening, repeated pronunciation and imitation of the words and word phrases are preferable in order to achieve the mastery of the language automatically [4, 29].

Even at the stage of reading, students take turn reading sections of a passage, play or dialogue always out loud.

7) Grammar is an additional tool, figured out by students.

Grammar is a tool to regulate the expression of language. So the grammar is not given intentionally and separately, but it is taught while using the words or phrases and sentences that appear in the conversation. Grammar



is taught by means of situation and made orally not by memorizing grammar rules [6, p. 31].

It's preferable to let students make certain conclusions and figure out the rules to use in speech, taken from the given examples.

Instead of analytical procedures of explaining grammar rules, students must be encouraged to use language naturally and spontaneously, so that they induce grammar freely [3, 41].

The principal feature of the direct method is *the rejection of deductive approach* to the presentation of grammatical material. Regularity, that is, the rule of using this or that grammatical phenomenon, is deduced only after its assimilation in the course of multiple repetitions of the language patterns as in the course of the lesson itself, and with the help of a textbook through a system of exercises. Priority without practical application of certain language sample of theoretical material is characterized as the inductance of the direct method [4].

8) Direct and indirect props.

The best thing about this method is that it links the foreign word with idea that it represents. In the teaching process, it is always used some tools (props) both props direct and indirect and the demonstration by using *visual aids*: symbols or specific movements, miming, gestures, authentic objects (realia), pictures, presentations, known words etc. The words are learnt much better through realia and other props.

This method relatively needs much more various props, such as video films, tapes, and various media / props. This method attracts the students, because they get excited or interested and the lesson is not difficult [6, p. 32].

Thus, the Direct Method includes the so-called **Total Physical Response Method**, or **TPR** as it is popularly known, is a language learning method that has body movement and language acquisition at its core. Moving the body, singing, dancing all work very well in this method as it helps the learner "cement" the action and the meaning with its association in their heads.

TPR can serve as an excellent tool to teach imperatives, instructions, steps of a process, verbs, new vocabulary terms, etc. There are some stages while using this method:

1. **Preparation:** The teacher prepares a list of vocabulary terms or verbs to be taught in the class.

2. **Teacher Demonstration:** The teacher demonstrates the verb using body movement and exaggerated actions while saying the word aloud at the same time and asking students to repeat it after him/her.

3. **Student Practice:** The students demonstrate the action while the teacher says the word aloud.



4. Student Participation: Students demonstrate the action and say the word aloud at the same time.

5. Writing: The teacher writes the word on the board to let the students see how it is written.

6. Repetition and Practice: The teacher asks the students to repeat their pronunciation of the word and the body movement and action associated with it. It is recommended that the teacher periodically checks retention [5].

So, as for the *concrete meaning* of the word, it is taught by using objects, while *abstract meaning* is through the association.

9) The fluency of speech.

The fluency of speech must be reached by means of different discussions and disputes in English. Learners are given the opportunity to practice by questioning and answering with the teacher / classmates. Therefore, students need to learn how to ask questions as well as answer them.

At the advanced level of students' English, this method is very effective, because each individual student is brought into the atmosphere of the real environment to listen actively and use the conversation in a foreign language [7, 102].

Therefore, every lesson contains some speaking element in order for students to practice all the target vocabulary they have learned in a certain context.

10) The use of lexical chunks.

In recent years it has been recognized both that native speakers have a vast stock of lexical chunks and that these lexical chunks are vital for fluent production. Fluency does not depend so much on having a set of generative grammar rules and a separate stock of words - the 'slot and filler' or open choice principle - as on having rapid access to a stock of chunks [1, 51].

“Lexical chunk” is an umbrella term which includes all the other terms. We define a lexical chunk as any pair or group of words which are commonly found together, or in close proximity. “Collocation” is also included in the term 'lexical chunk', but we refer to it separately from time to time, so we define it as a pair of lexical content words commonly found together. Following this definition, “basic” + “principles” is a collocation, but “look” + “at” is a lexical chunk with a content word and a grammar function word [8, 29].

Therefore, the teaching of a language starts with the teaching of sentence patterns rather than individual words. This enables the learner to internalize the structure of the target language. New vocabulary items are introduced gradually based on the principle of selection and gradation. They



are taught through material association, explanation or use in suitable context.

11) No gap between active and passive vocabulary.

This method does not differentiate between active and passive vocabularies. According to this method whatever is required for understanding through English is also required for expressing through it. If English is taught through the mother tongue, the gulf between the active and passive vocabularies is widened. The learner acquires more of passive vocabulary because he concentrates on understanding English rather than expressing through it [7, 108].

12) Students' Learning by self-correction.

Instead of long and detailed explanations of the teacher, students are asked to perform self-correction or choose the correct option from the given sentences. This approach is considered to be much more effective than explicit correction, which doesn't require students to be focused and engaged.

It's strongly required to let students the possibility to find out their own mistakes and correct them with the help of the teacher. The teacher can ask the student to make a choice between some variants and, thus, help him/her to remember his/her own mistake [3, 42].

The Direct Method includes several methods in itself, namely:

1) **the Audio-lingual method** which focuses on listening and speaking over reading and writing,

2) **TPR (Total Physical Response)**, which is a method of teaching language or vocabulary concepts by using physical movement to react to verbal input with simple action verb. As the example, the rolling a dice game can help students to give each other different commands with verbs of certain numbers shown on the dice.

3) **TPR storytelling**, which combines the previously mentioned methods in a connective context, when students can play out a short story in groups taking turns in speaking role-play. Employing activities that use the direct approach method can help a teacher make classes more interactive and engaging. It also helps students to create a meaningful connection to the target language in the classroom [5, 72].

In the learning process by using this method, teacher plays three major roles, they are as follows:

1. The teacher **should demonstrate**, not explain or translate the new material. The teacher is the main source provider of comprehensible input in the target language. Teachers are required to provide a lot of time to provide the input of language with a variety of assistance as a gesture so that the learners can interpret the given input [2, 38].



2. The teachers play a role as the **creators of the atmosphere** of charming, relaxed and friendly group so that it will minimize the occurrence of affective filters in learning. To minimize the occurrence of affective filter, the teachers do not force the learners to speak in the group before they are ready to talk; the teachers do not correct a mistake made by the learners; and teachers provide learning materials in accordance with the interests of the learners [6, p. 35].

3. Teachers collect and design the learning materials and the diverse group activities to be used in the group. In selecting the learning materials are not only selected based on the only perception of the teachers but also have the interests and needs of the learners, in addition to the teacher also must choose the right activity for the presentation of a particular material [2, 39].

The direct method is accompanied by a number of difficulties and has a number of disadvantages:

1. Getting grammar rules sometimes becomes challenging due to the fully inductive explanation, especially if students come from backgrounds where they were previously taught with the help of the Grammar-Translation Method.

2. Students are not that proficient in writing because teachers don't usually have enough opportunities to focus on it properly.

3. There may be some pronunciation mistakes as these rules are not taught explicitly but rather through the reading practice.

4. The absolute elimination of the native language from the process of learning foreign languages becomes an obstacle.

Conclusions. The Direct Method, also known as the Natural Method, emphasises teaching a language through immersion and direct communication, mirroring the way a child learns their first language. The approach aims to create an environment that replicates real-life language usage, encouraging learners to think, communicate, and respond directly in the target language.

The Direct Method is excellent for boosting students' motivation and, as a result, for material retention because of the immersive learning environment.

The teacher should not explain but associate the meaning through action and demonstration. This time learners who is learning about the particular subject are induce grammar rules through illustration and demonstration. This method includes the teacher-student and student-student activities. Correct pronunciation is given careful attention in this method, new vocabulary is taught by using known words.



This method enhance communication skills of the students. The positive side of the method that limits the use native language in the process of learning foreign languages are:

- living language is the object of learning and its acquisition is based on the development of the communication skills in this language;
- visualization tools for artificial are widely used in the reproduction of a target language units in foreign language classes;
- learning a foreign language is effective with the natural assimilation of the native language, as the main principle is connected with an intuitive approach to a learning of the foreign language;
- self-correction is thought to be much more effective than simple correction made by a teacher. Therefore, students are going to deal with a lot of self-correction activities based on either some typical mistakes or those that they made during the speaking task.

Thus, despite different cons, the Direct Method is considered to be rather effective and beneficial method of teaching English for communication and specific purposes of students.

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