

Direct Method (DM)

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Direct Method: The method of teaching a foreign language without the use of the mother tongue is called the direct method. It only uses the target language to teach the target language. It is also called natural language because the learners who follow the direct method do not use their mother tongue to learn a second language. The direct method is teaching a foreign language and not treating the study of grammar as the most important thing. So, the direct method is a system of teaching a foreign language using only that language.

Key Concepts

- Learn a language by hearing and speaking it, not by translating.
- No use of students' native language.
- Focus on everyday vocabulary and spoken communication.
- Grammar is taught naturally, not through direct rules.
- Emphasis on correct pronunciation.

Objectives / Purpose / Goal

- To develop speaking and listening skills first.
- To make learning more natural and similar to how we learn our first language.
- To improve fluency and pronunciation.
- To help students think in the target language rather than translate.

Key Features

- Only the target language is used in class.
- Everyday conversations and practical vocabulary are emphasized.
- Speaking and listening come before reading and writing.
- Grammar is taught indirectly through examples, not by rules.
- Objects, pictures, gestures, and actions are used instead of translation.

Techniques Used

- Question and Answer – The teacher asks questions, and students answer in full sentences.
- Repetition Drills – Students repeat words and sentences to improve pronunciation.
- Role Play – Acting out real-life situations in the target language.
- Conversation Practice – Students talk about daily life using new words.
- Picture Description – Using images to learn new words and sentence structures.

Advantages

- Improves speaking skills quickly.
- Pronunciation and fluency develop naturally.
- Encourages thinking in the target language.
- Makes learning more engaging with actions and real-life examples.
- Useful for everyday communication.

Disadvantages

- Difficult for beginners because they don't understand the language at first.
- Grammar rules are not directly explained, which may confuse some learners.
- Not effective for academic language learning, like writing complex texts.
- Needs skilled teachers who are fluent in the language.
- Limited for large classrooms, where teachers cannot give personal attention to every student.

Differences between GTM and DM or GTM vs DM:

Grammar translation and direct methods are leading second language teaching methods. Still, they are conspicuously different with respect to the following fields.

Goal of method

- GTM: The students should be able to read literature written in the target language.
- DM: The students should learn how to communicate in the target language.

Skills of method

- GTM: Reading and writing skills are improved in GTM.
- DM: Spoken and listening skills are the main focus of DM.

Role of the teacher

- GTM: The teacher is the authority in the classroom.
- DM: The teacher and students are more like partners in the teaching-learning procedure.

Role of the students

- GTM: The students play a passive role and do what the teacher instructs.
- DM: The students play an active role with interactional participation.

Characteristics of the teaching and learning process

- GTM: Accuracy of grammar and translation is emphasized. Grammar is taught in the deductive method. Students are ordered to memorize vocabulary meaning equivalent to their mother tongue, and in GTM, speaking and listening receive little or no attention.
- DM: Grammar is taught using the inductive method. Speaking and listening are taught based on native-like pronunciation and correct grammar. Vocabulary is taught directly through synonyms and antonyms.

Role of students' native language

- GTM: The student's native language is mostly used for translation.
- DM: The student's native language is a secondary tool in the classroom because it is hardly used.

Teacher's responding to the students' errors

- GTM: Students' errors are corrected by the teacher.
- DM: Students' errors are left for self-correction.

Label of students

- GTM: All labels of students are fit and could be matched.
- DM: Only enthusiastic students are perfect.

To conclude, both methods are vividly opposite. The weaknesses of the Grammar Translation Method are the strengths of the Direct Method, or vice versa.