

DIRECT METHOD OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Annotation. This article delves into the Direct Method as a teaching approach for English in primary school education. It explores the methodology's core principles, implementation strategies, and its suitability for young learners. Additionally, considerations for adaptation and potential challenges are discussed to provide a comprehensive overview of this instructional approach.

Key Words: Direct Method, primary school, English language teaching, immersion, communication, speaking skills, listening skills, visual aids, realia, grammar acquisition, adaptation, challenges, effectiveness.

Introduction

Imagine a classroom where English springs to life not through grammar drills but through engaging activities and real-world scenarios. This is the essence of the Direct Method, a language teaching approach that prioritizes immersion and communication in the target language. This article explores the core principles of the Direct Method and its suitability for teaching English in primary school settings.

The Philosophy Behind the Method

Developed in the early 20th century, the Direct Method emerged as a reaction to the grammar-translation method, which focused on memorizing rules and translating sentences. The Direct Method, also known as the Natural Method, sought to replicate how children learn their first language – through exposure, interaction, and natural language acquisition.

Key Principles in Action

English Immersion: The classroom becomes an English-only zone. Teachers communicate instructions, explanations, and conduct lessons entirely in English. This constant exposure promotes aural comprehension and vocabulary development.

Focus on Speaking and Listening: The Direct Method prioritizes spoken communication. Activities like dialogues, role-playing, and storytelling encourage students to practice speaking and listening from the very beginning.

Visual Aids and Realia: Teachers leverage real objects (realia) like pictures, flashcards, and gestures to convey meaning without relying on translation. This helps students connect words with their real-world referents.

Grammar Through Context: Grammar rules are not explicitly taught but implicitly learned through repeated exposure to correct language usage in context. Students gradually internalize grammatical structures by observing how native speakers use them.

Emphasis on Communication: The ultimate goal is to equip students with the ability to communicate effectively in English. Activities are designed to be interactive and promote meaningful communication, not just rote memorization.

The Direct Method for Young Learners

The Direct Method aligns well with the natural learning styles of young children. Primary school students are more receptive to acquiring language through play, visuals, and hands-on activities. The emphasis on speaking and listening before reading and writing also caters to their developmental stage.

Considerations and Adaptations

While the Direct Method offers numerous benefits, it's important to acknowledge potential challenges. Teachers might need to modify the approach to adapt to different age groups and learning styles within a primary school setting.

For instance, incorporating some basic vocabulary or sentence starters in the native language initially can ease the transition for beginners. Additionally, teachers with limited proficiency in the students' native language can leverage visuals, gestures, and technology to support comprehension.

Conclusion

The Direct Method offers a compelling approach to teaching English in primary schools. By fostering a communicative and immersive environment, it empowers young learners to develop a strong foundation in spoken English and a love for the language. However, it's crucial to adapt the method based on students' needs and the teacher's comfort level to maximize its effectiveness.

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