

DIRECT METHOD


INTRODUCTION

The basic premise of the DM was similar to that of Gouin's Series Method, namely that second language acquisition where lots of oral interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation between first and foreign languages, and little or no analysis of grammatical rules.




The DM enjoyed considerable popularity at the beginning of the 20th century.


It was most widely accepted in private language schools where students were highly motivated and where native-speaking teachers could be employed.



Teachers who use the DM intend to teach students how to communicate in the target language by learning to think in the target language. The teacher directs the class activities, where the student's role is less passive than in the GTM. The teacher and the students are more like partners in the teaching/learning process. The initiation of the interaction goes both ways, from teacher to students and from student to teacher, although the latter is often teacher-directed. Students converse with one another as well.



The students' feeling, needs and interests are not considered. Language is primarily spoken not written. Students study common, every speech in the target language. They also study culture consisting of the history of the people who speak the target language and geography of the country where the language is spoken, and information about the daily lives of the speakers of the language.



Vocabulary is emphasized over grammar. Oral communication is seen as basic. Reading and writing exercises are based on the students' oral practice. Pronunciation receives attention. The students' native language should not be used in the classroom. Students are evaluated by asking them to use the language, not to demonstrate their knowledge about the language. They are doing so by using both oral and written skills. The feedback used is by the employment of various techniques by the teacher who tries to get students to self-correct whenever possible.

Principles of the DM

Richards and Rodgers (2001: 12) summarize the following principles of the DM :

- 1- Classroom instruction was conducted exclusively in the target language.
- 2- Only everyday vocabulary and sentences were taught.
- 3- Oral communication skills were built up in a careful treated progression organized around question and answer exchanges between teachers and students in intensive classes.



4- Grammar was taught inductively.

5- New teaching points were taught through modeling and practice.

6- Concrete vocabulary was taught through demonstration, objects, and pictures. Abstract vocabulary was taught by association of ideas.

7- Both speech and listening comprehension were taught.

8- Correct pronunciation and grammar were emphasized.



Larsen-Freeman (2000:29) add the following principles:

1- Students need to associate meaning and the target language directly.

2- Students speak in the target language a great deal and communicate as if they were in real situation.

3- The syllabus used is based upon situation, or topics.



The Teaching Techniques used in the DM are :

1- Reading aloud

2- Question and answer exercises

3- Self-correct by students

4- Conversation practice

5- Fill-in-the-blank exercise

6- Dictation

7- Map drawing : The students were given a map with the geographical features unnamed, and then the teacher gives the students directions.


8- Paragraph writing

Merits of the DM

- 1- The focus is on oral skills.
- 2- The use of target language is wide.
- 3- Teacher _ student and student_ student interaction is accomplished

Demerits of the DM

- 1-It offered innovations at the level of teaching procedures but lacked a thorough methodology basis.
- 2- Its main focus was on the exclusive use of the target language in the classroom, but it failed to address many issues.
- 3- DM did not take well in public education, which is a method difficult to use where the constraints of the budget, classroom size, time, and teacher background are found.
- 4- It has weak theoretical foundation .
- 5- Its success may have been more a factor of the skill, proficiency, and personality of the teacher than the methodology itself.



By the end of the first quarter of the 20th century, the use of the DM had declined both in Europe and in the US. But by the middle of the century, the DM was revived and redirected into the most visible of all language teaching revolutions in the modern era, the Audiolingual Method.



THANK YOU