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2. The Direct Method of Teaching English

Introduction -

When the various demerits of translation-cum-grammar methods are realized, direct method comes as a reaction. It is also known as a natural method or reformed method.

Origin of Direct method -

The term direct method apparently originated in France in a circular of the French minister of Public Instruction in 1901. The method received official sanction in 1908 but was reversed in 1909 and again in 1925. The principles of the method came from Germany and were popularised by the International Phonetic Association.

Meaning of Direct Method -

It was realized that the foreign language should be learnt as the child learns his own mother tongue. The mother tongue is learnt in a natural environment where the learner experiences what he learns. If we teach English by making association between word experience of the learner without the help of mother-tongue, that is called Direct method. For Example - the teacher wants to teach the meaning of 'I am going'. He should not tell the students its meaning in the mother tongue but going himself or asking the students to go, the meaning should be clarified.

Aims of Direct Method -

The following are

of Direct Method:

- To make the pupil think in English
- To enable the pupil to express his thoughts and feelings directly by means of English without the intervention of mother-tongue
- To enable the pupil to acquire the ability to grasp sense of what he hears or reads in English as he grasps it in his mother-tongue.
- To develop in the pupil that instinct in writing language sense which we all possess in varying degrees in mother-tongue.

Principles of Direct Method -

1. Oral Teaching -

The direct method emphasises the oral aspects of teaching. It recognises that the language sense the direct association that we aim at its root in the spoken tongue. Oral work is necessary for teaching learning pronunciation.

2. Direct Bond between word and Idea -

The direct method expresses neither more nor less than the theory that languages should be taught by direct connection with objects and living ideas. In order to form the direct bond between thought and expression, no use of mother-tongue is to be made so that the habit of thinking in the foreign language may be formed as early as possible.

Parents.

2. Minimum use of Mother Tongue -

The principal is that a foreign word or word group should be associated with its meaning directly in other words without the habitual intervention of the native speech.

Merits of the Direct Method -

1. The direct method prepares an easy ground for written English.
2. The child gets many opportunities to listen to spoken English. This is very important for language mastery.
3. There is good scope for activity. The teaching work becomes interesting.
4. The direct method prepares an easy ground for written English.
5. It is the method of a living language not a dead one.
6. The method is interesting because it is full of activity.

Demerits of the Direct Method -

1. This method ignores reading and writing aspects of language learning.
2. This method is more suitable for small sized classes. In Indian schools, we have over crowded classes.
3. In India, there is scarcity of teachers who are trained on this line.
4. It is likely to prove a time consuming method. Indian students have weak language sense or weak background.
5. Grammar which is very important is not taught systematically.