

TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE IS AN APPROACH TO TEACHING A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Abstract: Total Physical Response (TPR) is an approach to teaching a second language, based on listening linked to physical activities which are designed to reinforce comprehension. The method relies on the assumption that when learning a second or additional language, that language is internalized through a process of code-breaking similar to first language development. Students respond to commands that require physical movement.

Keywords: Language teaching, methods, methodology, communicative methodology, task-based approach, process approach, language learning. Foreign language, skill, techniques, learning styles, education technology.

Foreign language learning and teaching have undergone a significant paradigm shift as a result of the research and experiences that have expanded the scientific and theoretical knowledge base on how students learn and acquire a foreign language. Traditionally, learning a foreign language was thought to be a 'mimetic' activity, a process that involved students repeating or imitating new information. Grounded in behaviorist theories of learning and structural linguistics, the quality and quantity of language and feedback were regarded as the major determinants of language learning success.

TPR is an approach to teaching a second language, based on listening linked to physical activities which are designed to reinforce comprehension. The method relies on the assumption that when learning a second or additional language, that language is internalized through a process of code-breaking similar to first language development. Students respond to commands that require physical movement. Successful second language learning should be a parallel process to child first language acquisition.

Appropriate activities can produce stress-free learning. Learners are encouraged to speak when they feel ready to speak.

Theory of language: a grammar-based view of language, verb in imperative form.

Theory of language learning: a stimulus-response view.

- Communicative language teaching: an emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language. Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities.
 - The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation: the provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on the language but also on the learning process itself.
- Task-based language learning: In TBLL the role of the teacher changes from that of an instructor and prosecutor of errors to that of a supporter and inventor of tasks which her/his learners enjoy doing.

- It proved useful to divide the learning process in TBLL in three phases: The pre-task phase, the doing of the task, and the post-task phase. Taken together they form a task cycle. The major role of the teacher changes from phase to phase.

A second language implies that the learner resides in an environment where the acquired language is spoken. In the area of research, the term second language acquisition (SLA) is a general term that embraces foreign language learning and investigates the human capacity to learn languages other than the first language once it has been acquired. Scholarly inquiry into the acquisition of a nonnative language includes the disciplines of psychology, linguistics, language pedagogy, education, neurobiology, sociology, and anthropology. Inquiries of learning and teaching innovations have provided new insights into successful language learning strategies and environments designed to increase language achievement and proficiency. Language is the vehicle required for effective human-to-human interactions and yields a better understanding of one's own language and culture. Studying a language provides the learner with the opportunity to gain linguistic and social knowledge and to know when, how, and why to say what to whom National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (NSFLEP) (2014). Language scholars distinguish between the terms acquisition and learning: 'acquisition' refers to the process of learning first and second languages naturally, without formal instruction, whereas 'learning' is reserved for the formal study of second or foreign languages in classroom settings. Second language learning classrooms are common in most high schools and even in some primary schools. Although second language has become somewhat of a norm in the high school setting to some extent, research and resources available to those who teach the subject are limited. While foreign language teachers are able to use general classroom practices to help guide their instruction, specific, content-based practices for the topic are still disputed.

Language education may take place as a general school subject or in a specialized school. There are many methods of teaching languages. Some have fallen into relative obscurity and others are widely used: still others have a small following but offer useful insights. A teaching method comprises the principles and methods used for instruction. Commonly used teaching methods may include class participation, demonstration, recitation, or combinations of these. The choice of an appropriate teaching method depends largely on the information or skill that is being taught, it may also be influenced by the aptitude and enthusiasm of the students. For effective teaching to take place, a good method must be adopted by a teacher. A teacher has many options when choosing a style by which to teach. The teacher may write lesson plans of their own, borrow plans from other teachers, search online or within books for lesson plans. When deciding what teaching method to use a teacher needs to consider students' background knowledge, environment, and learning goals. Teachers are aware that students learn in different ways, but almost all children will respond well to praise. Students have different ways of absorbing information and demonstrating their knowledge. Teachers often use techniques which cater to multiple learning styles to help students retain information and strengthen understanding. A variety of strategies and methods are used to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn. The effectiveness of teaching method varies from person to person and also from activity to activity. Teaching by making students do, read, listen all have the transfer of information as their goal, but the information is transferred in very different ways in each case. Each has its benefits. In my own opinion, teaching by letting students do is the method that works best for me. Teaching by making students do works because it gives a learner first-hand experience.

A lesson plan may be carried out in several ways: questioning, explaining, modeling, collaborating, and demonstrating. Explaining, this form is similar to lecturing. Lecturing is teaching by giving a discourse on a specific subject that is open to the public, usually given in the classroom. This can also be associated with modeling. Modeling is used as a visual aid to learning. Students can visualize an object or problem, then use reasoning and hypothesizing to determine an answer.

Some of the practices are foreign language content specific, and others are recognized more broadly in education as best practice in several areas.

The core effective practices for foreign language learning are:

1. “use target language for learning: students and teachers speak, listen, read, write, view, and create in the target language 90% or more during classroom time: comprehensible input, contexts, and interactions;
2. use authentic cultural resources: present interactive reading and listening comprehension tasks using authentic cultural texts with appropriate scaffolding while promoting interpretation;
3. design communicative activities: teachers design and carry out interpersonal communication tasks for pairs, small groups, and whole class instruction;
4. plan with backward design model: instructors identify desired results then determine acceptable evidence then plan learning experiences and instruction;
5. teach grammar as concept and use in context: students focus on meaning before form;
6. provide appropriate feedback: oral corrective feedback in speech or writing elicits output beyond a simple yes or no response”.

Methodological changes follow each other within short periods of time. Even though the majority of educational innovations end in failure positive effects can be expected from most of them. But it is true that new methods do not appear all of a sudden or disconnected from the world into which they are born. They overlap for some time with current methodological practices. This 'incubation' period is a real test for new ideas: some of them pass the test, others do not. Many discussions, arguments and counterarguments are exhibited in the process. But sometimes what was considered a decisive gain against existing practices at a given moment, proved to be wrong a few years later, and a new theory or method replaced it in its turn. Once more? Where will the end lie? if there is to be one? The methods which prevail are usually those that are best suited to the challenges, demands and needs of the time.

Emphasis on meaning and authenticity of communication appeal to many teachers and learners of languages. After all, we use language for transmitting messages, which is content. and association of meaning and language is perceived as close to reality. The problem is that the transmission of meaning cannot be separated from the formal 'vehicle' through which it is conveyed. The role of each one of those elements in communication and their mutual relationships are at the root of a problem that has never been fully solved. Most methods are heavily rooted in linguistic theories, theories of learning or theoretical assumptions on the nature of linguistic communication. It would be unfair to study the communicative approach without linking it to such names as Vygotsky (1962; 1978), Austin (1962) or Halliday (1973; 1978), or Krashen (1983), among others.

Pair work, group work, cooperative/collaborative learning settings, authentic materials, culturally integrated lesson content, and interactive tasks focused on the cognitive and affective domains were integrated into foreign language classrooms. In addition, there has been a call for the reconceptualization of theoretical underpinnings related to use of the target language for language instruction. When performing a task in the real world, language is automatically limited: structures and words to be used will be restricted to the semantic field covered by the task. And so, they are as well the logical steps underlying the fulfilment of the task. Gouin's (1892) 'series method' and the 'logic of nature' can be called upon here to illustrate the situation. The logic of cause and effect' (any cause produces a specific effect and any effect is the result of a specific cause) pushes the task forward in a way that the learner can automatically and unconsciously detect. On the basis of this understanding of the ongoing process, the learner will be able to understand the language being used and carry out the

task, occasionally with the help of his peers or the teacher (the 'outside world'), finding the right words for the right things or ideas.

Each of these theories of language acquisition addresses a different aspect of a learner's ability to acquire a language. Behaviorist explanations explain systematic aspects, whereas innatism explanations explain the acquisition of complex grammar. Interactionist explanations assist in understanding how learners relate form and meaning in language, how they interact in conversation, and how they use language appropriately. More recently, researchers have identified nine contemporary language learning theories: Universal Grammar, Autonomous Induction, Associative-Cognitive CREED, Skill Acquisition, Input Processing, Processability, Concept- Oriented Approach, Interaction Framework, and Vygotskian Sociocultural Theory (VanPatten and Williams, 2008). Some of these theories share a linguistic view of language cognition, others view it from a psychological point of view and in the case of Sociocultural Theory, a social approach is taken. The Universal Grammar (UG) and Autonomous Induction theory share the linguistic view that learners have innate knowledge of grammatical structures that is not learned through mere exposure to input. They believe that linguistic knowledge is predetermined and is independent from experience. Learning is believed to occur incidentally by deduction from innate abstract knowledge.

Greater use of qualitative and mixed methods investigating students in their classrooms with special attention to cultural, situational, and longitudinal contexts is needed and recommended. As foreign language research draws on related disciplines (psychology, psycholinguistics, neurobiology, neurolinguistics, sociology, and linguistics) to better explain conditions that lead to greater language proficiency and differential success among foreign language learners, a deeper understanding of how languages are acquired and consequently how they should be taught will be gained. Furthermore, as learning and teaching innovations continue to be tested and researched, new insights will be gained that will influence teaching practices globally. Best practices are a must for all teachers to educate students effectively and efficiently.

Although the best practices for second language learning are fairly relative, all foreign language teachers must look at the research available and make educated decisions about how to engage in instruction. The above six core effective practices – target language use, context-based grammar, appropriate feedback, communicative activities, backwards design, and authentic material usage – are available to instructors to help guide their practice. With this availability comes responsibility, though, as foreign language educators must now all implement this information to classroom practice to become the best learning resource possible to all students. Methods developed in a specific educational, social and cultural context cannot be exported wholesale and used in countries with different philosophies, values and beliefs.

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