



## USING TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE FOR PHYSICAL CULTURE STUDENTS

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### Abstract

In recent years the English language has played an increasingly important role as the medium of communication among people from different countries; Uzbekistan is no exception. In Uzbekistan where English is used as a foreign language, the ability in using English has become essential for students as it is the global language for the dissemination of academic knowledge and it helps transform the educational experience of countless students. Therefore, English is not only a subject studied in the classroom, but also a medium for social and practical use.

Response with students whose specialty is physical training.

The objectives of the project work are:

- To give general information about Total Physical Response;
- To analyse principles of Total Physical Response;
- To give advantages of using Total Physical Response in teaching language skills;
- To highlight the importance of Total Physical Response in teaching English

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action; it attempts to teach language through physical activity. Developed by James Asher, a professor of psychology at San Jose State University, California, it draws on several traditions, including developmental psychology, learning theory, and humanistic pedagogy, as well as on language teaching procedures proposed by Harold and Dorothy Palmer in 1925.

Total Physical Response is linked to the "trace theory" of memory in psychology, which holds that the more often or the more intensively a memory connection is traced, the stronger the memory association will be and the more likely it will be recalled. Retracing can be done verbally like by rote repetition and/or in association with motor activity. Combined tracing activities, such as verbal rehearsal accompanied by motor activity, hence increase the probability of successful recall. In a developmental sense, Asher sees successful adult second language learning as a parallel process to child first language acquisition. He claims that speech directed to young children consists primarily of commands, which children respond to physically





before they begin to produce verbal responses. Asher feels adults should recapitulate the processes by which children acquire their mother tongue.

Asher's emphasis on developing comprehension skills before the learner is taught to speak links him to a movement in foreign language teaching sometimes referred to as the Comprehension Approach.

Total Physical Response or TPR is a language teaching theory that has gained a significant fame during the last two decades. In order to define it, point out that "TPR is a language teaching theory built around the coordination of speech and action; it attempts to teach language through physical activity." That is to say that it is a teaching theory whereby a learner responds to the verbal input of the teacher with body motions. So, in TPR, instructors give commands to students in the target language, and students are meant to respond with body movements and actions.

TPR was developed in 1977 by James Asher, who is a university teacher of psychology who deduced that the physical response of children towards their parents' speech creates a positive feedback and he noted that children listen and respond with gestures before they speak. So, he saw in TPR an effective theory for learning the English language.

This theory is based on several principles. First, before starting to perform actions, students have to understand first the spoken language of their teacher. This is why TPR emphasizes the importance of listening more than speaking, especially in the early stages of learning. Second, students are meant to learn grammar and new vocabulary items through action. This is why imperatives are the main structures to communicate with students. In this way, grammar is not taught explicitly, but rather implicitly and students are expected to acquire the target language subconsciously. Third, teachers have to avoid over-correction and correct very little and not interrupt to correct mistakes. Otherwise, learners will be inhibited and won't be encouraged to learn.

In order to put this theory into practice, there is a variety of TPR activities that cannot only be used to teach vocabulary and grammatical items, but also to teach classroom language as well as instructions. These activities include:

1. **Commands:** They are the combinations of known words into a sentence that is imperative. So, the teacher would use a group of commands and students are said to act them out. These commands can be like: Stand up, raise your hand, take your pen, put it back on the table, sit down. To make these commands clear, teachers can use body language and facial expressions and through these commands, students can learn new words like hand, pen, table...etc.





2. Games: Commands can also be given in form of many games and one of them is Simon says. The latter is a game in which the teacher can take the role of “Simon” and give instructions to his/her students who are supposed to perform commands. In this game, when a student doesn't perform a command in the correct way, s/he is out of the game. This is just one example of the games that require physical response, other include back to the board, jigsaw reading, etc.

3. Storytelling: TPR Storytelling is based on telling short stories by teachers and their students are meant to act them out. It is a tool that enables students to fix events of a story in their memories.

4. Singing: It is one of the enjoyable ways that add variety to the class. It can help students acquire new vocabulary, improve pronunciation, and above all it is a powerful way to learn language and not to forget it. It can be more useful especially if the teacher plays meaningful songs that transmit moral messages and valuable pieces of advice.

In Total Physical Response, students and teachers play different roles. On the one hand, students play the role of listeners in the sense that they listen attentively to the verbal input of their teachers. They also act as performers since they respond physically to commands given by the teacher both individually and collectively. Therefore, learners have little influence over the content of learning; they are not encouraged to speak or to contribute in the lessons especially in the first stages of learning.

Although the use of TPR in the classroom has often been effective, it still has many disadvantages as well. This theory is, first of all, time consuming . For instance, learning a single vocabulary item would require the instructions of the teacher, the students' demonstration, and the teacher's feedback. So, involving the whole class can waste a lot of time. It is also limited in terms of scope because teachers can't teach everything with it, they can only employ it to teach vocabulary and grammar, especially imperatives whereas students need to make a smooth transition to all other language skills. Moreover, it is not applicable for all class sizes: TPR works best with about 8 students. With more than 10 students, there will be too much noise, chaos and unfocused time.

TPR has also been criticized for focusing only on receptive skills, mainly listening, at the expense of productive skills. That is to say, the learner is not expected to expand any efforts or to express their own thoughts in a creative way. This is besides the fact that it is more useful with children, otherwise, preparation becomes an issue for teachers at higher levels. Above all, from the psychological point of view, TPR





activities might be embarrassing for shy students to whom it might be challenging to perform actions for the whole class.

TPR can be used to teach and practice many actions.

- Vocabulary connected with actions (smile, chop, headache, wriggle)
- Tenses past/present/future and continuous aspects (Every morning I clean my teeth, I make my bed, I eat breakfast)
- Classroom language (Open your books)
- Imperatives/Instructions (Stand up, close your eyes)
- Storytelling It can be adapted for all kinds of teaching situations, we just need to use our imagination.
- It is a lot of fun, students enjoy it and it can be a real stirrer in the class.
- It lifts the pace and the mood.
- It is very memorable. It really helps students to remember phrases or words.
- It is good for kinaesthetic learners who need to be active in the class.
- It can be used in large or small classes. It doesn't really matter how many students you have as long as you are prepared to take the lead, the students will follow.
- It works well with mixed-ability classes. The physical actions get across the meaning effectively so that all the students are able to understand and use the target language.
- It doesn't require a lot of preparation or materials. As long as you are clear what you want to practice, it won't take a lot of time to get ready.
- It is very effective with teenagers and young learners.
- It involves both left- and right-brained learning.

Total Physical Response is in a sense a revival and extension of Palmer and Palmer's English Through Actions, updated with references to more recent psychological theories. It has enjoyed some popularity because of its support by those who emphasize the role of comprehension in second language acquisition. I used the Total Physical Response in teaching the theme: 'Sports in our life'. I planned to use this method in introducing and practicing vocabulary concerning to this topic. It was easy for my students to catch the meaning of the words using this method. Then they worked in two teams. They asked some types of actions to actions to act and next team tried to act this. It was interesting, enjoyable, funny and at the same time easy to learn the meaning of the words for them.

I think, it will be effective if we use this method for teaching:

- Young learners;
- Action verbs, it doesn't matter level of learners;





- When it is somehow boring it is appropriate to use this method for motivating learners.

As the theme of my project work is devoted to the teaching problems of the topic 'Sports', I decided to organize my course in the sport ground. It was unusual lesson and students were keen to have not only the subjects concerning to their specialty but other subjects also to be held in the open air. I practiced usage of Total Physical Response method in teaching the topic "Sports in our life" and I think I achieved the goal put before me in organizing this lesson.

Total Physical Response is in a sense a revival and extension of Palmer and Palmer's English Through Actions, updated with references to more recent psychological theories. It has enjoyed some popularity because of its support by those who emphasize the role of comprehension in second language acquisition. Krashen, for example, regards provision of comprehensible input and reduction of stress as keys to successful language acquisition, and he sees performing physical actions in the target language as a means of making input comprehensible and minimizing stress. The experimental support for the effectiveness of Total Physical Response is sketchy and typically deals with only the very beginning stages of learning. Proponents of Communicative Language Teaching would question the relevance to real-world learner needs of the TPR syllabus and the utterances and sentences used within it. TPR practices therefore may be effective for reasons other than those proposed by Asher and do not necessarily demand commitment to the learning theories used to justify them. As I used this method in my teaching process I can suggest other teachers to use this method as an effective one in teaching vocabulary of the language, especially in teaching action verbs.

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