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DIFFERENT VARIATIONS OF TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE ACTIVITIES AND THEIR BENEFITS IN TEACHING LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a dynamic language teaching method that combines physical movement with verbal input to enhance language acquisition. This article examines various TPR activities, such as commands, storytelling, role-playing, and games, which engage students physically while they learn. These activities accommodate diverse learning styles, benefiting kinesthetic learners who excel with movement.

The article emphasizes TPR's effectiveness in improving vocabulary retention, listening skills, and engagement. By linking actions to the language being taught, TPR reduces anxiety, creating a more enjoyable and less intimidating learning environment. Variations like group commands and interactive storytelling offer flexibility for different age groups and proficiency levels, making TPR a versatile method.

Additionally, TPR promotes natural language acquisition by mirroring how children learn their first language—through listening and physical response before speaking. The article concludes that incorporating diverse TPR activities accelerates learning and fosters a dynamic, inclusive classroom atmosphere.

KEYWORDS

Collaborative approach, language acquisition, inclusive, learning styles, kinaesthetic, student engagement, comprehension skills, commands, storytelling, role-playing, body movement, innovative method, traditional method, neural connections, physical act, active participation.

INTRODUCTION

In the ever-evolving landscape of language acquisition, educators constantly seek innovative methods to enhance student engagement and foster deeper understanding. Total Physical Response (TPR), a methodology that integrates physical movement with language learning, has emerged as a powerful tool for fostering proficiency across various age groups and learning contexts.

According to psychologists each child has unique traits, and their developmental progress varies. Psychologists argue that placing language expectations on young children, psychologists should consider pedagogical aspects, such as the students' curiosity and enthusiasm.

This article delves into the multifaceted benefits of TPR activities, exploring how they revolutionize traditional learning styles, improve communication skills, and cultivate a positive learning environment.

METHODOLOGY

TPR activities, used judiciously and integrated with other activities can be both highly motivating and linguistically purposeful. Careful choice of useful and communicative language at beginner level can make TPR activities entirely valid. Many learners respond well to kinaesthetic activities and they can genuinely serve as a memory aid. A lot of classroom warmers and

games are based, consciously or unconsciously, on TPR principles.

One of the most significant advantages of TPR activities lies in their ability to cater to diverse learning styles. Traditional language learning often prioritizes rote memorization and passive absorption of knowledge. However, TPR activities tap into the power of kinesthetic learning, allowing students to connect physical movement with language. By acting out vocabulary words and commands, learners forge deeper neural connections, enhancing memory and facilitating recall. Imagine a classroom learning the directions "jump," "touch your toes," and "sit down." Through the physical act of performing these actions, students not only associate the words with their meanings but also solidify the information in their long-term memory. This kinesthetic engagement caters to students who learn best through movement, ensuring inclusivity and optimizing learning outcomes for all.

Furthermore, TPR activities significantly enhance communication skills by providing a platform for active participation. Unlike traditional methods that emphasize passive listening, TPR requires students to respond physically to instructions and prompts. This constant interaction fosters a dynamic learning environment where students are not just absorbing information but actively using the language. For

instance, a game like "Simon Says" can be adapted for language learning with instructions like "Simon says touch your head" or "Simon says jump three times." This playful activity encourages students to listen attentively, comprehend the instructions, and execute them accordingly, honing their listening and comprehension skills in a fun and engaging way.

In a TPR lesson, teachers model actions which students then mimic as they simultaneously hear vocabulary words and commands in the target language. As a particular action is associated with each vocabulary word or phrase, students rapidly and naturally acquire language while establishing long-lasting associations between the brain and the muscles.

There are 2 phases in the TPR learning process.

- 1) Modelling by the instructor
- 2) Demonstration by the learner

A typical TPR activity might contain instructions such as "Walk to the door", "Open the door", "Sit down" and "Give Maria your dictionary". The students are required to carry out the instructions by physically performing the activities. Given a supportive classroom environment, there is little doubt that such activities can be both motivating and fun, and it is also likely that with even a fairly limited amount of repetition basic instructions such as these could be assimilated by the

learners, even if they were unable to reproduce them accurately themselves.

RESULTS

The basic idea of TPR is that a language learner hears something in the language and physically responds to it. However, TPR is not just limited to whole body commands such as walking, turning around, and pointing to your nose. In fact, there are four major types of activities that can be done using the TPR mindset. I like to refer to them as TPR-B, TPR-O, TPR-P, and TPRS. (TPRS is the only one of these expressions that is widely known, the others are terms I've made up.).

1) TPR-B for "TPR with body", which includes everything that can be done with general body movement: stand up, sit down, turn around, turn right, turn left, lift up your arm, touch your nose, etc. This is best done in a room with some space to move around.

2) TPR-O stands for "TPR with objects". This is best done sitting a table that has some objects on it. For example, one day you could raid the produce stand and then sit down with your Turkish friend to a table of fruit. That day you could not only learn the words for "apple", "banana", "orange", and so on, but also, "give me", "take", "put", "smell", "bite", "roll", "peel", and "show me".

For this activity, your friend could start off with: "This is an apple. This is an orange. This is an apple. This is an orange. Where is the apple? Where is the orange?" Once again new words can be fairly quickly built up one at a time.

3) TPR-P stands for "TPR with pictures". Pictures are extremely effective language learning tools. Let's say that you're actually living in England and have gone around and taken 150 or so pictures of people doing different things and then arranged these pictures in an album. Your English friend could go through and say "This is a man. This is a boy. This is a man. This is a boy. Where is the man? Where is the boy?"

Taking your own pictures, you can probably find some children's picture or story books that are also useful for this kind of learning. Newspaper and magazine pictures work well too.

4) TPR-S -was developed by Blaine Ray and is being used in classrooms throughout the United States. It involves the teacher (and eventually the students) acting out simple stories as a means of understanding the story and internalizing vocabulary. The last section of this article gives an internet link for more information about this approach.

CONCLUSION

Different variations of TPR offer a flexible and engaging approach to language teaching that

addresses the diverse needs of learners. By incorporating commands, storytelling, role-playing, games, and group activities, TPR not only improves language retention and comprehension but also creates an inclusive, stress-free learning environment. Its benefits extend beyond language acquisition, fostering listening skills, confidence, and a love for learning. As educators continue to seek effective methods for language teaching, TPR remains a valuable and dynamic tool that can transform the language learning experience.

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