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Total Physical Response in Different Age Groups

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Poděkování

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Děkuji Janě a Renatě za hlídání dětí.

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Abstract

Title: Total Physical Response in Different Age Groups

A foreign language teaching method called Total Physical Response is described in the theoretical part. The originator proposes the method for any age group; despite the fact, the use of the method changes in different age groups, due to cognitive development of students and their level of English. The practical part shows opinions of present English teachers in Poděbrady and its neighborhood about usage of the method in their lessons.

Key words: methodology, method, young learners, lower secondary, high school, teaching adults.

Anotace

Název: Pohybové aktivity v hodinách angličtiny dle věkových skupin

Diplomová práce ve své teoretické části popisuje metodu výuky cizích jazyků zvanou „Total Physical Response“. Její původce ji považuje za metodu vhodnou pro jakýkoliv věk; přesto se její užití v různých věkových skupinách liší, a to odlišnou vývojovou fází žáků a jejich úrovni anglického jazyka. Praktická část ukazuje názory současných učitelů v Poděbradech a okolí na zařazování této metody do hodin angličtiny.

Klíčová slova: didaktika, metoda, první stupeň ZŠ, druhý stupeň ZŠ, střední škola, vyučování dospělých

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Introduction

The name of this paper could be *How Total Physical Response Is Treated in Different Age Groups* or maybe *How Total Physical Response Is Treated in Different Age Groups in Communicative Approach*. I was interested in the idea of using physical action to learn English and therefore I studied the method called Total Physical Response, which has physical action in the centre of learning. The first part is thus about the concept and theory of Total Physical Response (or TPR for short).

The basic idea in writing the paper was, in fact, that each age group would need to use the action in a specific way, according to the developmental stage of students. Therefore, there are three parts to follow the theoretical one: primary school age, teenage learner and adults. Each group starts with a brief psychological description as the developmental stage influences the way teachers work with their students during English language classes. Then physical action is focused on in teaching the four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening (these terms are used in the books studied for the thesis, although Common European Framework of Reference for Languages puts it differently nowadays).

I tried to analyze how much the idea of Total Physical Response is present in methodology books. Sometimes is it mentioned directly, and sometimes it is easy to detect, sometimes it is difficult to distinguish if an activity fits the idea. Therefore, each age group has a brief conclusion.

The practical part shows the current situation and teachers' opinions about TPR ideas. This part is based on questionnaire research, observation and interviews.

Theoretical part

1. What is Total Physical Response

1.1. Definition

Developed by James Asher, an American professor of psychology, in 1963 Total Physical Response is a language teaching method. Richards and Rodgers define the method as ‘built around the coordination of speech and action; it attempts to teach language through physical (motor) activity.’¹ In the most basic form it consists of the teacher instructing students using the imperative format and students’ doing the command.

The objective is multi-skill language fluency. The production of a second language, however, does not come until comprehension has created a cognitive map of the language. This process is similar to the acquisition of our mother tongue. The language is used in chunks and grammar is taught inductively. Language structure is analyzed in the classical way only in advanced levels.

Asher himself, however, does not use the term ‘method’. He calls Total Physical Response **a language strategy**, or better a **teacher’s tool** that is compatible with different strategies. In his words, ‘There are no methods in foreign language instruction. Here is why: a method implies a formula and formula implies a science. Teaching is an art, not a science.’² Krashen, for example, uses the term method, but in his view it is not a complete method.

As a result, we are going to use the terms *method* and *strategy* as equivalents. First, we are going to study the background theories and classify Total Physical Response from different points of view. Then the methodology will be described in detail.

¹ RICHARDS, J.C.; RODGERS, T.S. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. p.87

² DAVIDHEISER JAMES C. *TPR Storytelling with high school and college students: Our personal experience*

1.2. Background Theories

When we consider the history of teaching foreign languages, Asher's strategy follows a long tradition of natural language acquisition; especially the emphasis on comprehension and the use of physical actions that has been used to teach a foreign language at introductory level. For example in the nineteenth century a Frenchman F. Gouin used a chain of action verbs as the basis for introducing and practicing new language items. He stressed teaching in context and making the meaning clear. Later Harold and Dorothy Palmer in 1925 proposed action-based teaching for beginners and considered it economical and successful.

Asher calls Total Physical Response a natural method, as in his strategy of adult second language learning, he follows a child's first language acquisition where parents talk to children mostly in commands and children express understanding by physical response before they can speak themselves. The focus on speaking from the very beginning seems to Asher very stressful for students and causes dislike of language study for the future. In the TPR Method, students do not speak at first. They respond by actions to the commands of their teacher and they speak only when they are ready, which usually occurs after 10 - 20 hours of instruction. It is important for **stress reduction** to wait until speaking appears itself. It starts when students begin to repeat commands and they instruct the rest of the class.

The reduction of stress is significant for humanistic psychology. In fact, Harmer considers Total Physical Response a humanistic approach³ where students' experience during the process is as important as the process itself and positive mood and affections created by games and movements facilitate the learning process. First language acquisition takes place naturally in a stress-free environment but classroom language learning is usually artificial and stressful. That is why Asher proposed the stress reduction as a way to more pleasant natural language acquisition.

Total Physical Response is sometimes referred to as one of the *Comprehension-based Approaches* because the emphasis is on comprehension skills (listening comprehension, to some extent reading comprehension) before productive ones. In such approaches, oral fluency for example is not specifically trained; it is expected to emerge

³ HARMER, J. *The practice of English Language Teaching*.

naturally and gradually from the comprehension experience after the so-called silent period is overcome. Learners are clearly exposed to the authentic language and they use it according to their immediate communicative needs. The system of the language is mastered progressively.⁴

The theory of language, i.e. the nature of language and how languages are organized, is not directly discussed by Asher, although Richards and Rodgers classify it as a structuralist or grammar-based view of language. Verb in command is the central linguistic motif around which learning is organized. Asher prefers using chunks rather than single items, and concrete nouns must prevail and precede abstractions.

In the theory of language learning, Asher is close to the behavioral stimulus-response model, where verbal instruction is the stimulus and the response is given by the students accordingly. Listening comprehension is the basis because it creates a 'cognitive map' of the target language and because skills acquired through listening transfer to other skills which evolve naturally later.

Total Physical Response is linked to the 'trace theory' of memory in psychology. It stresses 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.'⁵ Motor activity is a way of making the trace stronger as it accompanies verbal input and creates *combined tracing activity*.

The human brain is, in Asher's terms, biologically programmed to acquire languages. Thus, if the procedure of language teaching is compatible with the natural predisposition, Asher's goal is multilingualism – a student can study more languages at the same time without confusing them.

To understand how the brain works with language production, there are two areas in the left hemisphere. Broca's area, located in the frontal lobe, is the center of talking. If the area is damaged, people are unable to speak but they still understand what others are saying. Comprehension takes place in Wernicke's area in the temporal lobe. Damage in this area causes difficulty in understanding although a person can speak normally.

⁴ *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*.p.25

⁵RICHARDS, J.C.;RODGERS, T.S. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* .p 87

Traditional language teaching works with both areas at the same time, causing brain overload, slow-motion learning with short-term retention. In TPR the **understanding is practiced first** alone and then speaking, reading and writing can be used in the traditional way.⁶

Differences between the left and the right hemispheres are also very important. The left brain is critical and, for example, refuses translation, because the words are already known in the mother tongue. It evaluates the experience and works slowly, putting the emphasis on correctness (thinking about the correct form, mental conjugating, etc.). The left brain warns that a mistake may be made. Learning is involved here.

The right brain, by comparison, involves language acquiring. It controls nonverbal behavior and encourages playfulness. TPR, unlike other methods, is directed to the right hemisphere. Using the right hemisphere means to '*get it in the first exposure*' in Asher's words and he confirms that it is a way to long-term retention, instead of tiring the left brain with repetition. 'When a sufficient amount of right-hemisphere learning has taken place, the left hemisphere will be triggered to produce language and to initiate other, more abstract language processes.'⁷ The idea is to start new language items with the right brain and continue in classical left brain procedures.

Historically, school has played to the left hemisphere only (except the first grades). The arrangement of chairs as well as the teaching method offer information to be accepted by the left brain. 'Students who are 'academically gifted' can, on their own, switch the information coming into the left brain over to the right brain for complete processing to achieve meaning. Visualization and motion is processing information through the right brain.'⁸ This switching from one side of the brain to the other helps students achieve complex understanding. The brain-switching is the key for successful education in language teaching, mathematics as well as science.

⁶ ASHER, J. J. *TPR: After forty years still a very good idea.*

⁷ RICHARDS, J.C.;RODGERS, T.S. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching.* p.91

⁸ ASHER, J. J . *Future Directions for fast, stress-free learning on the right side of the brain.*

1.3. Typical Lesson

It is possible to adapt TPR according to different needs, but the core remains the same. At the beginning the teacher invites students to do the same actions as he does, e.g. *Stand up, Sit down*. When this is successfully performed, the teacher stops showing the actions and instructs only by words. Commands for two or three actions in a row follow, e.g. *Stand up, walk to the sofa, and sit down*. The order of the commands should change as students should not memorize fixed routines. Also commands that have not been heard before are given to develop students' flexibility in understanding, e.g. *Jump. Point to the door. Jump to the door*.

Later more complicated actions are required, sometimes involving imagination, e.g. *Sit in the car, turn the key, look around, and honk the horn twice*. Vocabulary and grammar can be turned into the sequence, for example conditionals: *If today is Friday, jump up and clap your hands*. Also instructions on how to make things and problem-solving games are easily turned into TPR session. This happens only after all of the students in the group are willing to speak.

Sometimes the action required is pointing or touching and many tasks for comprehension training use it. Here immediate feedback is necessary.

Usually at the end of the lesson the commands are written on the board. Written language reinforces the spoken language. In higher levels, reading and writing are studied more and the more advanced the level is, the more traditional methods are used.

1.4. Methodology of Total Physical Response

As we have already mentioned, the strategy requires **directives in context-clear situations** where an action response rather than a verbal response follows. The directive is interpreted and the action follows immediately. The motor activity must be visible so that both parties can see whether the message was or was not understood. ‘Whether the directive is translated into some L1 equivalent, whether it is repeated back ... is not critical to learning.’⁹ It is the active, kinetic response that accounts for the rapidity of language acquisition in children.

The **objective** of Total Physical Response is language acquisition with the stress on oral proficiency and communication intelligible to a native speaker. Comprehension is a means to reach the objective. This objective is divided into goals that must be simple, relevant and achievable in a lesson or two. Specific goals also depend on particular needs of learners. According to Larsen-Freeman, teachers who use the TPR method are interested in enjoyable learning experiences for students as the objective.

The objective of the initial phase (when students are not expected to talk) is to get comfortable and confident with the sounds, the grammatical patterns, and semantics of the new language. The target language is used in chunks as in real life situations.

Richards and Rodgers analyze Total Physical Response as a sentence-based syllabus where the initial attention is paid to meaning rather than form. Meaning is clarified by the action. Grammar is taught inductively, students are expected to work out the rule during the class activity. Grammatical features and lexical items are chosen to fit the classroom learning. In a lesson, 12 – 36 new lexical items can be introduced depending on the size of the group and their level.

Vocabulary and grammar structures prevail in the lessons. The major **activity** is imperative drills. Conversational dialogues are used later, after 120 hours of instruction,¹⁰ because of their abstract content. Other activities include role-plays centered on everyday situations, storytelling, skits made up by the students, and picture presentations used with teacher narration. The activities are often followed by true/false questions to check the understanding.

⁹ *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*.p.26

¹⁰ RICHARDS, J.C.;RODGERS, T.S. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. p.93

Reading and writing activities are employed as follow-ups to retrace language structure and vocabulary. Reading activities start with students picking up a piece of paper with a command on it and performing the action. Writing can follow with students writing a task for their classmates. Eventually, students read short excerpts from newspapers and magazines. The secret of the strategy is that students start reading naturally, without being aware of it. During the lesson, an announcement that we are moving from speaking to reading or writing is not allowed as it awakens stress, which disturbs the flow of natural language acquisition.

Instructional materials are more important in later stages. First the teacher's voice and **gestures** are sufficient for the activities, then **classroom objects** are used. As the class progresses, **pictures** and realia (real objects brought to the lesson) are helpful. Asher has developed kits that focus on specific situations, e.g. the home, the supermarket, etc. Students follow instructions such as *Put the stove in the kitchen*.

A textbook is not recommended until later. It is not in the core of the strategy. However, Total Physical Response can be a means to help students to start with the texts in classical language classes. If the vocabulary is first internalized through actions, then working with the text seems easier. 'Comb the book to list all adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and nouns that students can internalize with TPR. Do this before your students even open the book. Then when students open the book for the first time, they encounter only 'friendly creatures.''¹¹

To keep the pace lively, lesson plans must be done ahead. Three commands are recommended to be introduced at once and practiced long enough to be completed successfully. Then three more commands can be presented. It is very important to change the order of the commands because students could remember the whole sequence and repeat it automatically. Also, it is important to make a command that consists of known vocabulary, but in new combinations to keep students alert. This is often enjoyable for students as well as the teacher.

The beginning of subsequent lessons is a time for reviewing the previous lesson as a warm up before introducing new material. **A variety of activities** is necessary to maintain student interest. **Enough practice** is essential for successful acquisition, and different techniques can be used for it. Asher advises to have five to ten minutes open

¹¹ ASHER, J. J. *TPR: After forty years still a very good idea*

for any questions students might have about the grammar, pronunciation or meaning at the end of the lesson.

Content of the lessons is determined by the teacher. The teacher is active during the lesson and it is up to him to choose supporting materials, what to teach, as well as who assists him in the lesson. The most important **role** is to provide opportunities for learning by the exposure of the target language.

Another role of the teacher in the lesson is to direct students' behavior and students are to imitate, listen and perform. When some students are ready to speak, they take the role of the director and instruct the rest of the class, including the teacher.

The interaction varies from teacher-whole class to teacher-individual student when the teacher wants to ask a group or one individual student to perform the commands. Students can learn by performing the actions as well as by observing each other. Later student-student interaction is common, again varying from a student-whole class to interaction of two individual students.

Translation is usually not necessary as the meaning is clear from the context. Translating is a short-term solution for Asher, overloading the brain; although in practice it is not completely disapproved. For example equivalents of abstract nouns to check the understanding can be used, paying attention that only one word is given in the mother tongue and the lesson goes on in the target language.

Correcting should be unobtrusive. Students are **expected to make errors** at the beginning and they should not be frustrated by them. Major mistakes are corrected first. Only later in the course are the grammatical forms studied in detail and minor mistakes corrected. Student should be encouraged to experiment with the language and make up new utterances.

Evaluation of language acquisition in class is done simply by instructing students and observing their actions. More advanced students are evaluated by their performance in skits they have created. In both cases, novel sentences are appreciated the most as they are an important measure of fluency. Novel sentences means students are thinking in the target language.

Evaluation after a certain period of time can be done by standardized language tests. Asher offers evidence that TPR students outperformed traditional classes even in reading and writing – skills not systematically trained.¹²

1.5. Evaluation by Other Scholars

Total Physical Response is in Krashen's opinion comprehensible, providing the context for understanding. It is also interesting with active participation of students and potential of filling an entire class period. The silent period is appreciated as a reduction of anxiety.

On the other hand, the demand of immediate physical response may be stressful for some students. It is limited by the fact that the utterances and sentences happen in the reality of a classroom and that it focuses on grammatical issues in the imperative form.

A criticism of the method also says that it does not provide students with important social functions of language such as greetings, asking directions, and ordering meals¹³. The proponents argue that it is not the aim at the beginning to teach this kind of language, that communication skills appear naturally later. Pushing production does not follow natural acquisition. Also, in advanced lessons, imperatives are used to initiate different speech acts, for example *John, ask Mary to walk to the door; Ned, tell Jack you're sorry*.

Bowen finds it difficult to see how this approach could extend beyond beginner level and work in a larger class of, for example, 30 learners. He appreciates the use of situational role-plays that provide a range of contexts for language practice. Otherwise, he proposes short TPR activities integrated with other activities. 'Careful choice of useful and communicative language at beginner level can make TPR activities entirely valid. Many learners respond well to kinesthetic activities and they can genuinely serve as a memory aid.'¹⁴

¹² ASHER, J. J. *The Total Physical Response (TPR) : Review of the evidence*

¹³ *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*.p.27

¹⁴ BOWEN, TIM. *Teaching approaches: total physical response*

It is true that the experiments to support the effectiveness of TPR were done at the beginning stages and thus are sketchy. However, the method can be combined with other techniques and is compatible with other approaches to teaching. The teacher can thus create a lesson plan that fits himself and the class the best. Asher calls TPR *the primary tool in your linguistic toolbox* and he advises to use it to motivate students and to introduce new vocabulary or grammar features.

1.6. Total Physical Response Today

Asher claims that his strategy is still popular for three reasons: Firstly, it is **aptitude-free**. The acquisition of the mother tongue is not limited by aptitude, so the acquisition of a foreign language in the same way is for everybody, unlike the traditional grammar-translation method. Secondly, there are **no age barriers**; every age group can be successfully instructed by the method. Finally, it is **stress-free**, as we have mentioned before.

Total Physical Response is highly motivating for students. At the very beginning, Asher claims that the teacher has only five minutes to convince students they really can learn the language.¹⁵ After this short time period students get to act on a couple of imperatives and they can feel the success of understanding a foreign language.

The strategy is motivating for teachers too. It is a challenge to change the traditional class into an imperative – action form; it is a refreshing change of teaching style. In research, students evaluated TPR classes as more interesting and the teacher more inspiring than classical lessons.¹⁶

Total Physical Response has a web page at <http://www.tpr-world.com/>, where literature supporting the method is available. James Asher and his colleagues publish different titles that provide materials and advice for teachers on how to apply the strategy. They are also organizing conferences of foreign language teaching and the application of TPR in different areas of language. Many teachers send supportive emails of thanks.

¹⁵ ASHER, J.J. *A new note about TPR*.

¹⁶ WOLFE, D.E., JONES G. *Integrating Total Physical Response Strategy in a Level I Spanish class*.

In his articles, Asher stresses that to experiencing language, i.e. interacting with it through physical action, results in long-term retention even after one exposure. On the other hand, translating words is limited to short-term retention even after repeated exposures. Experience according to neuroscientific research is the primary perception that assesses the external world accurately. Classic school methods only present secondary perception because the instructor is trying to create the reality for students. Furthermore, experience is aptitude-free while translation is aptitude-dependent. Therefore, Asher defines TPR as an **experience** rather than a concept.¹⁷

The strategy is used to add excitement to the class, to change the pace and to break down inhibitions caused by fear of speaking. It is to be combined with different approaches.

In the following part, we will see how TPR is combined with the communicative approach according to the age of the learners.

¹⁷ ASHER, J. J. *The Total Physical Response (TPR) : Review of the evidence*

2. Different Age Groups

Introduction

In this part of the thesis different age groups will be covered with their specific needs in language learning. The nature and application of TPR activities will be analyzed in current methodology books.

For young learners, physical movement is necessary. They need to move around and use their senses. They are not good readers or writers; the language comes through their ears. They love to play and while playing, they are absorbing the language, they are learning. Total Physical Response is present in the teaching of all the skills.

Teenagers are very effective learners; their cognitive processes reach the top quality. They can read and write well, they can analyze texts and grammar. Still, physical action is great motivation for them. Total Physical Response is involved mostly in language games.

Teaching adults differs according to the objectives and aims of individual classes. Adults tend to be analytical learners and need understanding to remember. They can be stressed with foreign language studies, so TPR helps to deal with that problem.

Whenever the term *physical action* is used, it is meant as a movement that helps the process of learning, almost synonymous with Total Physical Response. TPR includes an instruction for a physical action first obligatory, *physical action* does not necessarily follow an order. Another term, *kinesthetic learning*, will appear later. This term is a little broader than TPR: Total Physical Response uses kinesthetic learning in a way described in the first part. The words *movement* is used generally as any movement in the lesson.

2.1. Primary School

The primary school group means young learners from five to ten years old. During this short period of time children develop very much. It is a very individual process, but certain characteristics can be traced and generalized. Of course, the nature of foreign language learning is influenced by what they can or cannot do in their first language.

From the age of five to seven, pupils are usually at the beginner level. They can talk about present and past events, they can argue and explain their reasoning, their imagination is very vivid (sometimes overlapping into the real world) and they can understand direct human interaction. It is important in the Total Physical Response strategy that they understand situations more quickly than they understand the language used. They also use language skills before they are aware of them. The physical world is dominant for them, they understand through hands and eyes and ears. Young children are happy to work alone. Pair work and group work has to be introduced and slowly practiced. They love to play, they love learning. On the other hand, they hardly ever admit that they do not know something and praise is a very important form of motivation. Pupils at this age cannot decide for themselves what to learn.

At the end of primary school, when pupils reach eight to ten years, most of the characteristics mentioned above change. They may be at the beginner level or slightly higher, depending on their foreign language curriculum. These children have formed very decided views of the world and they know exactly what they like doing. They can tell the difference between fact and fiction. They rely on both the spoken word and the physical world to understand meaning. They are able to work with others and learn from others. They also are able to make some decisions about their own learning. Children of this age understand abstracts and symbols, they can generalize and systematize. They are aware of the rules of their mother tongue and they bring this language awareness to the foreign language classroom.

Children generally love to communicate. Ideally, any language is not taken as a subject to be learned, but as a means of communication. Children get absorbed by activities and they are not aware they are actually learning a language. As a result, children tend to have more positive attitudes towards English than older students.

It is important, however, not to force pupils to speak if they are not ready for it. And sometimes children do not have enough vocabulary to communicate in a foreign language so they will communicate in their first language to show they know the answer. Thus certain tolerance to the usage of the mother tongue is necessary. Telling children it is wrong to use their mother tongue can be confusing and turn them against one language or the other. Their first language can serve as a means to the goal of learning English, not an end in itself.

Children are naturally curious and active. They explore their environment to understand the world; they explore things first hand. This means they like to participate and take over the role of the instructor.

2.1.1. Methodology

The above characteristics directly influence the methodology used in a foreign language teaching in primary school. The methodology is generally very close to the TPR strategy, especially the fact that ‘most activities for the young learners should include movement and involve the senses.’¹⁸ Similarity between classical methodology and Total Physical Response can be seen in classroom management (visual aids, variety of activities, minimum of grammar, correction) as well as teaching all the skills.

Pictures, objects and the surroundings of the class and school must accompany the spoken word to convey meaning. Facial expressions and movements when talking are very important too. All of these serve as a **visual reinforcement** of spoken language.

Children have an amazing ability to absorb language through **play and other activities** which they find enjoyable. They pick up chunks and phrases because it helps them to communicate. Since concentration levels and attention spans are short, a variety of activities, pace, and organization is necessary. On the other hand, children benefit from familiar situations and knowing the rules. The same stories and rhymes can be repeated for the same or different purposes.

¹⁸ SCOTT, W. A, YTREBERG L. H. *Teaching English to Children*.p.5

Language must be played with. Playing with the language is common in first language development and it is natural in learning a foreign language too. They may not be aware of it, but children use language creatively and try to experiment and work out the rules. Singing songs, telling stories and making rhymes are the best ways to do it. Once pupils start to read and write, these skills help them grow in the language.

At the age of ten, the pupils are still not able to cope with the grammar as such. Thus the barest **minimum of grammar** should be taught as grammar. The teacher should note the structures and functions of language instead. Explaining grammar comes when a pupil asks for it or when the situation is convenient (e.g. correcting written work).

Correction must be sensitive. Whenever a pupil is trying to communicate something to the teacher, he or she should not be corrected; it does not create a good atmosphere. Children must feel secure and respected to cooperate during the lesson. Immediate and precise correction is appropriate in guided exercises.

2.1.2. Teaching the skills

Teaching language skills in primary school is also very close to the Total Physical Response approach, especially the emphasis on listening preceding the other skills. 'Language has to go in before it can go out.'¹⁹

Listening is the skill that children acquire first, especially if they have not yet learnt to read. Listening provides the main source of the foreign language, but it must be accompanied visually as mentioned before. Most of the listening practice comes from the teacher and therefore his or her speech must be very clear with enough repetitions of instructions or story lines.

There are several types of listening activities. As young pupils need a lot of physical action, most listening activities will include movement or motion. Vale considers Total Physical Response activities following: 'listen and draw', 'listen and act' (action rhymes), 'listen and make' (creating something), 'listen and move' (moving objects according to instructions), 'listen and match' (identifying a described object by

¹⁹ Ibid, p.34

mime) 'listen and play' (instruction for action games) 'listen and sing' (actions in respond to the words of a song), 'listen and speak' (instruction for what to say), 'listen and write', and 'listen and carry out a task'. These activities are often put together into one category, 'listen and do'. Similar activities are 'put up your hand when', 'Simon says', giving instructions or miming stories. Even 'listen and repeat' activities can be done in combination with movements or objects. When playing listening games, especially where instructions are included, pupils like to take over the role of the instructor.

Listening for information is probably the only activity done in a traditional way with a textbook and a pen. And one example when no movement is included is listening to a story as a time to relax, maybe sitting on the floor in a circle. Although these two cases do not count as TPR, they are part of teaching listening skills.

Speaking is the most demanding skill for teachers to teach. Scott and Ytrenerg recommend starting the presentation of a new language by using a puppet or simple drawings. Then controlled and guided practice follow.

Speaking is taught through dialogues. Controlled dialogues can help to continue with freer dialogues if pupils are ready for it. 'Dialogues which involve some sort of action or movement are the ones that work best with the young children.'²⁰ The dialogue has to be presented a couple of times and practiced with half of the class saying one line and the other half the other line before pupils work in pairs. Using real objects also make the dialogues more interesting.

Another type of speaking activity, very much used in Total Physical Response, is role-playing. It is quite simple and guided at first, but it is important that it involves real-life situations, where facial expressions, intonation and gestures are used naturally.

Story-telling is very popular for young children. In fact it is a combination of listening and speaking. Stories provide a natural and enjoyable context for exposure to language and an opportunity to familiarize children with the sounds, rhythm and intonation of English. The understanding of meaning is supported through visuals, mime, gesture, voice and characterization. Also, children develop learning strategies and thinking skills, such as predicting, hypothesizing, guessing and inferring meaning. As children increasingly develop their ability to understand, retell, act out and/or create

²⁰ Ibid, p.39

their own stories in English, this also has a positive effect on their motivation, confidence and self-esteem.

There are various possible approaches to using stories in class, from the occasional use of stories to supplement a topic, to using a story-based course book. The second example would suit TPR well. It uses storytelling widely, even as a central activity. What TPR brings that is new is including movements according to what is heard, for example standing in a circle and reacting to the teacher's storylines.

A class activity which includes movement is doing questionnaires. This activity is important for building the group atmosphere; interesting facts can be learned about one another. From a TPR point of view, this is the border line. There is an instruction first and it is followed, but the movement included is a natural one: going around the class and asking questions. A class questionnaire is similar to drilling, but it suits young learners' needs to move a lot. Doing questionnaires is convenient as it combines speaking and writing.

The last type of speaking activity is giving free mini-talks on common subjects. Minimal teacher control is involved. This is not part of TPR strategy, but again it is part of speaking skills that are nurtured by traditional methodology.

As for **reading**, the same Total Physical Response activities as 'listen and do' can be turned into 'read and do'. Scott and Ytzenberg recommend an approach which concentrates on meaning and which is pupil-centered, as five to seven year olds do not read much even in their mother tongue. Reading activities should be very simple, with pictures and flashcards as prompts. Eight to ten year olds can read better and the reading activities concentrate more on the content.

Reading aloud sentence by sentence is not very appreciated in the traditional way. It is recommended in small groups or while reading for example comics. Pronunciation practice of individual letters is recommended for languages with a different alphabet. Silent reading can be the first step to role-playing and this would be used in TPR. Reading as such can be encouraged by English corners.

Writing is a difficult skill because body-language cannot be used to help express the meaning. Writing usually comes at the end of lessons or activities because it consolidates learning and helps aid memory. It contains a physical dimension itself, however, pure TPR writing follows and instruction like in 'listen and write' activity.

Traditionally, copying is usually a starting point for the skill of writing. Fill-in exercises come next and then free writing activities. To be successful, sufficient vocabulary must be presented first. It is also necessary that a connection between written and spoken words be made. Free writing must spring naturally from other language work and correction can cover only the language items that have been studied.

Total Physical Response does not treat individual skills separately (we have seen that most activities have two skills practiced together anyway). Writing is a good example of this as it becomes part of TPR when the pupils write an instruction that is physically done later. Sometimes, the writing is part of doing the instruction.

2.1.3. Conclusion

The methodology of primary school foreign language teaching is very similar to the TPR strategy. This is due to the nature of young children, their need to move and their love to play. It is also natural that listening skills are basic for language learning as young children do not read or write much even in their first language. Concentration on meaning and teaching in chunks is used due to the lack of analytic abilities at this age.

The biggest difference is, however, that all of the skills are taught consciously as skills and all of the varieties of the skill are practiced in the methodology books. Speaking does not include movement until practice in dialogues and role-plays, whereas Total Physical Response involves physical action at the beginning, to internalize new language items. The nature of movement is sometimes different, e.g. changing place because it is necessary, not exactly following the instruction to change place.

The methodology books studied for primary school age do not always use the term Total Physical Response directly. Vale points out more precisely where TPR fits in each skill, but he sometimes puts it together with action games and group-formation activities. This suggests that different authors treat physical action differently – Asher does that in a specific, narrow way.

2.2. Teenage Learners

The second age group combines two different educational stages in the Czech Republic: lower secondary school children (aged 11 – 15) and high school students (15 – 19 years)²¹. The reason is that the English-speaking educational system differs from the Czech one and methodology books do not distinguish as a category which we call *druhy stupen* (grade 6 – 9). Harmer, for example, speaks about children (until 15 years), adolescents and adults. The age group 11 – 15 years is treated independently only in the practical part.

Eleven-year olds are usually still elementary English level. The level should reach A2 (pre-intermediate) by the end of lower secondary. The reality might be different according to the curriculum of each school and gift for languages of individual students. In the first year of high school, some students are still on elementary level. The best students start on A2 level the first year and finish on B1, B2 or exceptionally C1 level in the fourth year.

For teachers, teaching lower secondary students means a transition from young learners, their active participation and love of play, to high school teenagers who have a greater learning potential but are more difficult to manage and motivate. The students change gradually, with individual differences noted in the process. The period 11 – 15 years is most often described from a biological point of view and psychological aspects of a new physical appearance are mentioned. It is when the quest for identity starts.

The period 11 – 19 years is a significant step to adulthood. Identity and one's own self are in question, self-esteem is not stable, and emotions are strong. Stability is reached by the end of the period together with social adaptation.

Teachers must take these facts into consideration and **personalize** their lessons. Teenagers need to know why they are doing something, how it can help them and how it relates to their lives. This means that if teachers show interest in what is going on in their students' lives, the students will cooperate better and pay more attention.

Teenagers are generally much less motivated as the goals of education seem so distant. A possible solution is their participating in decisions on what happens in the

²¹ The terms and ages do not correspond exactly to the British nor American system. Middle school and Upper school respectively would be probably the closest expressions.

classroom so that they feel some ownership of and commitment to the learning program²². Another possibility is in the way the goals are set, and that is making goals achievable in a shorter time.

Despite the problems with motivation, learning is very effective at this age. Cognitive processes get much better; imagination and fantasy are at their top level. Students work with logical relationships, abstracts and general conceptions, they understand structures. Thinking is creative, flexible, independent, systematic and consistent. Different variations of one problem are considered, consequences are taken into consideration. The sense of life is in question.

A person's way of thinking results in critical evaluation of the world and people around (as well as oneself). Teenagers have a highly developed sense of what is right and what is not. However, lack of life experience causes certain radicalism and simplifications in their opinions.

Students of this age group are now able to cooperate and they enjoy **group work** and peer interaction. Thus they can share their opinions and learn what others are thinking about them. On the other hand, peer approval is so important that the teenage learner might be embarrassed about talking in front of others. A great compromise of these two poles is the use of **role-playing and acting**. It is a safe way to express themselves and vent their feelings as they play a role of someone else.

Physical action is very important to this age group. It is the main aid for reducing stress and stabilizing emotional pressure. It is also a great motivation. Unlike primary school children, teenagers can work better in the traditional analytical ways such as grammar and text analysis. Methodology thus includes physical actions mostly in various games.

²² PICCOLO, LOUANNE. *Teaching Teenagers: How to Motivate and Interest Them*

2.2.1. Teaching the Skills

Before dealing with games, we will consider the **language skills** that are taught according to Harmer and Scrivener. We will see that TPR cannot cover the whole scale that each skill requires, but really becomes a tool that helps students practice individual areas.

Generally, the aim of teaching the skills is to practice them as they are used in real life. Thus **speaking** should include interviews, discussions, project planning, surveys and exchanging information. The last exercise is often done through information gap activities where two students read two variations of the same text, where different information is missing in each text and the pair has to cooperate to find out the missing fact. All of these activities are hardly changed into Total Physical Response.

However, there are speaking activities proposed by Harmer, Ur and Scrivener that involve physical action, for example drama and role-play, ‘describe and draw’, ‘describe and arrange’ (for example with lego) or telling stories if the task demands responding to the content physically.

Reading is easier to include TPR in lower levels; in higher levels it is mostly as a pre-task, follow-up or as a part of other activities, such as role-play. Lee considers ‘read and do’ games pre-reading activities, which motivates students to read further. An example of such a game is the Treasure hunt, where a chain of clues leads to a kind of reward. The clues can be written for advanced level too, for example in the form of sentences with mixed word order.

But there are types of reading that demand concentration on the text, such as skimming and scanning. Both types should be trained in English lessons because they are common in real life (for example a quick reading of a newspaper to find certain information). Reading for pleasure is another type of reading; it means reading without tasks. This motivates students to improve their reading skill and appreciate literature. That is why it should be part of English lessons.

Writing has a physical dimension on its own and reinforces what has been learnt. Total Physical Response can be involved in writing short pieces, which are

mimed or acted out as in primary school. Longer passages are studied traditionally, from guided exercises to free writing.

Listening in a traditional way is how students can be exposed to different varieties of English and different kinds of listening (listening for overall understanding or detail). Again, the listening exercise must be realistic and useful. TPR could help with the pre-task stage, usually vocabulary study, or follow-up. It can also be used during the listening activity, depending on the topic and type of listening (for example putting pictures in the correct order).

A specific area of teenage interest that can be turned into games or activities is **music**. Teenage learners very often relate to music and learn from it. Most learners have strong personal preferences about music they like or dislike. Furthermore, songs are often about issues teenagers are interested in. These make music a good topic to talk about and work with. Songs are also useful for their repetitive nature and language used in chunks. This makes language easier to remember and use. The language is real, in current vocabulary and natural phonological features (such as linking or weak forms). Music creates a stress-free atmosphere in the classroom.

Listening to music can be used as a listening exercise. The most common tasks used while listening are gap fills, jumbled lines, spot the mistakes and translation activities. But songs can also be turned into interactive games and involve TPR when movement is used to accompany the lyrics.

2.2.2. Games

We will now look at **games** (involving physical action) from an educational point of view and later discuss the difference or better the overlap with Asher's approach.

Games are often viewed as a time-filler in foreign language classes. For example, people view work as respectable and play as easy. However, if the right games are used correctly, they can mean much more. They can take the stress out of learning a language and help pupils succeed by learning naturally. Using various games helps teachers deal with the different learning styles of their students (as will be explained

later). Games help students use and improve their thinking, problem solving, listening and speaking skills. A successful game should include four components: (a) competitive elements, (b) engaging content, (c) reward and (d) objective relevant content.²³

Grammar, vocabulary as well as language structure can be taught through games. They are internalized through repeated exposure to the target language during the game. Often, students are focused on the activity and end up absorbing the language subconsciously. They are usually more motivated to play games than they are to do deskwork.

Generally, there are several types of games, for example card games, team building games, ice-breakers (games that help the participants to get to know each other) and action games. Each type has its specific function and develops different skills and abilities; all of them will diversify English classes.

Physical action can be part of any type, for example dealing the cards. If the action is preceded by an instruction to do so, the game fits Total Physical Response perfectly. However, the **games are more complex** and when they get started, students play them and the instruction-action relationship is restrained, instructions are not always repeated and the action reflects the rules of the game.

A good way to start lessons is with warmers. A **warmer** is an activity that gets students thinking in English and awakens their brain cells, and hopefully makes them feel positive about the lesson. It reviews language from previous classes or introduces new topics, ideas and language items. It can also be freestanding and have little connection with what was done before or will be done later in the lesson. Warmers are often energetic and fun²⁴ and they often share TPR ideas.

Miming games suit Total Physical Response perfectly. They can be done as follows: one student gets a piece of paper with instructions of what is going to be presented. The rest of the class watch and the first one to guess it right gets another slip of paper. Once they get the idea of the game, the students write similar instructions for their classmates²⁵.

²³ VERNON, SHELLEY. *Why English Language Games are essential in a teacher's toolbox*

²⁴ <http://www.onestopenglish.com/teenagers/skills/warmers/>

²⁵ <http://www.onestopenglish.com/teenagers/skills/games/teenagers-game-4-mime-games/146732.article>

Another example of an action game is the **circle game**²⁶. Students sit in a circle on their chairs. The teacher gives instructions such as *Everyone who has a sister change seats*. Those who fit the description must stand and change seats, the others remain seated. After a few turns, a chair is removed at each instruction, so that one person does not get a seat and they are out – they can now give the next instruction. The last student remaining is the winner.

2.2.3. Learning Styles

Dealing with physical action as a means to learn, we must take into consideration that some students will learn from it better than the others because it better suits their **learning style** – a kinesthetic learning style.

There are four basic learning styles: auditory learners, visual learners, kinesthetic learners, and tactile learners²⁷. Teachers must appeal to all four styles and the only way to reach them is to use various activities.

Students who learn best out of lectures, verbal explanations, tapes and oral instruction are called **auditory learners**. Language games for this type of learner are mainly listening based (games that involve repetition, dictation, and listening for clues).

Visual learners prefer to read silently and understand the meaning from illustrations that go with the text. They prefer written instructions and benefit from the teacher acting out situations or watching a demonstration.

Kinesthetic learners take in information best when using their whole bodies to complete exercises. **Tactile learners** are also physical learners, but they are more likely to learn from touching objects. Games suitable for these learning styles involve whole body responses such as acting, or students' touching and moving things around as part of the game activity. Games with these elements associate physical activity and touch with specific meanings. Three types of such games are called Touch Games, Spatial Games, and Craft Games.

²⁶ <http://www.onestopenglish.com/teenagers/skills/games/teenagers-game-6-circle-game/146734.article>

²⁷ VERNON, SHELLEY. *How to Teach English For Different Learning Styles*

Games involving touch presuppose having real items in the class and students have to perform certain tasks with them. These tasks are what differentiates the level of difficulty. Spatial games involve rearranging items or people. Craft games are games where the students have to actually assemble something and work with it according to instructions. An example of a craft game is drawing, which can also combine elements of auditory learning since the teacher will tell the students what to draw.

Examples of games are given in Appendix 2.

2.2.4. Conclusion

The methodology books studied for this age group sometimes indicate that an activity is *a kind of* Total Physical Response (Harmer, Vernon). In this age group, physical action is used either in introductory stages of new language items, or as a part of various games – games that help learning English through excitement.

Whether a game is completely the TPR type or not, all games can help students remember and practice the language. To reach the purpose, games must be relevant to the content and integrate different learning styles. Teenagers are very competitive, they like to show off and win.

Kinesthetic and tactile learners learn from physical and experiential elements more than others. Existence of such learning styles should motivate teachers to integrate more physical action into English lessons. However, building English lessons only on kinesthetic activities would discriminate the other styles.

Physical actions can be just changing position from sitting, grouping for study projects, moving the furniture to use the space of the classroom or pure Total Physical Response. On the other hand, many games involve movement without students needing to leave their seats, such as miming, moving certain body parts and passing things.

Total Physical Response is a tool (as Asher claims) that makes English lessons more varied and interesting. As was mentioned earlier, teachers supporting TPR use it before working in a traditional way. The more advanced students are in their foreign language level, the more traditional work with texts and textbooks are convenient. Ur proposes that for active language use in communicative grammar-practice procedures

too much time cannot be wasted on mime or artistic creation. Students are activated enough mentally (understanding, interpreting, perceiving, discriminating) and by producing language.

To sum up, 'a lot of classroom warmers and games are based, consciously or unconsciously, on TPR principles. As with other 'fringe' methods, however, wholesale adoption of this approach, to the total exclusion of any other, would probably not be sustainable for very long.'²⁸

²⁸ BOWEN, TIM. *Teaching approaches: total physical response*

2.3. Adults

Adulthood covers the period approximately from 20 to 60 years, but it is more relevant to describe it in terms of social values. Adults are mature mentally, physically as well as socially; they are independent existentially and economically; they are creative (creativity develops until 30) and responsible. They view the world realistically.

However, it is true that certain ages bring changes in physical sphere, together with the overall life situation. We will concentrate on changes that are relevant for the learning process.

Adults generally use **analogical thinking**. They build on existing knowledge and experience (as well as the accumulated experience of others) to see possible similarities when looking for a solution. They create meaningful wholes in order to master new materials, in other words, they create patterns focused on key issues and incorporate the new material into existing patterns of knowing and behaving. As a result, most adults rely on memory less than younger students. Adults need understanding for retention. They need constant use of something to grasp it.

Around the age of 25 is when the operation of analyze and differentiation, and orientation in time and space are the top quality. Concentration also gets better and decision-making process very instant. Memory (especially rote memory) is a little worse than at teen age, but the capacity to learn is better. This is due to the fact that adults use logical relationships and structures while reasoning.

The period of 30 – 45 years of age is still a time of good performance for reasoning, memory and concentration. The ability to learn is a little lower than at younger age, but it is still very good thanks to life experience and logical reasoning. A person of that age is creative and productive, patient, persistent and thorough. Only decision-making is not as instantaneous and takes more time. During this period, one's children usually leave home and physical shape deteriorates, which brings time to evaluate one's life so far (these are the most common topics even for English classes).

Approaching 46 – 60 years, the sense organs get weaker and the learning process is thus slower. The state of memory can be very different at this point. The ability of abstraction and generalization is weakened, problem-solving gets less flexible; but

extensive experience helps weigh a problem wisely. At this time people reach the top of their careers, although creativity is lower and stereotypes can be traced in thinking and behavior.

2.3.1. Methodology

Adults are in a different situation than children not only with their cognitive abilities, but also with time management - they usually work fulltime. Teaching adults thus must be different from other educational programs, as Rogers explains, especially in two areas: the **organization of learning and the relationship between the teacher and the students**.

The organizational difference means that the participants are more or less voluntary learners. They come to achieve a certain learning goal, i.e. they know what they want; and if they do not get it, they will stop coming. As a result, the teacher needs to attract participants into the program. In other words, he or she offers a learning opportunity that the students desire. Sometimes a group of adults choose the teacher that best fits their needs.

The **goals and objectives** of adult teaching programs may vary significantly. It may be imparting skills or knowledge; the development of comprehension and understanding; influencing attitudes; engaging to reflection; or learning whatever the participants want to learn. These goals influence the type of exercises used in the program. In one course the participants may be involved in discussions and activities; in another one these will be rare.

Generally, the objective of adult teaching is to reinforce their adult status. The teaching courses will then seek to promote personal growth of individuals, mature judgments about real-life situations, confidence and autonomy.

Adult student participants are in the middle of a process of growth - not at the start - so they already have their own set of patterns of learning. Other **advantages** of adult learners according to Rogers are the awareness of their purpose and needs; a greater use of reasoning power; and the desire to apply immediately what they have learnt. Furthermore, they are active and motivated to learn.

A **good teacher of adults** must have the right attitude towards the material used in lessons (enthusiasm) and, of course, towards the learners. This means sensitivity and support, flexibility, willingness to adapt materials to fit the group, and choosing suitable methods. A good teacher pays attention to the individual differences of the students, respects them and tries to use them as resources during the learning process. A good teacher must develop teaching skills (communication, planning, evaluation, adjusting the tasks to the needs) and understand the concepts of adult teaching and adult learning.

The roles of the teacher are the leader of the group (keeps things going), teacher, and a member of the group, but also an audience for members' performance. Adult learners often ask questions that push the teacher to the very limits of the subject; sometimes he will not know the answer, so there is a possibility of losing authority.

As for **methods**, the teacher needs to use a wide range of teaching-learning methodologies. The right method depends on a number of factors, including the need to get the learner actively engaged and his or her learning style; the demands of the subject; and the availability of resources. Activities should be **productive**. Learners should be active in doing, reading, writing, and talking. 'Learning is more naturally done actively than by passively receiving other people's wisdom.'²⁹ This means adult learners can be engaged directly with the activity rather than leaving practice until after explanation. It means also learning by doing the task, without theoretical preparation. Discovery learning is convenient as well as exploration, trial and error, copying, mimicking and practicing. The most effective activities are student-centered (such as experiments, group work, projects) and those where students engage with the teacher or the text directly. At this point Rogers is very close to Asher's approach.

However, Rogers distinguishes two kinds of learning: **Acquisition learning**, which is largely subconscious, such as when doing a task we are also learning without realizing it; and **formalized learning**, which is conscious. One of the aims of teaching adults is to make acquisition learning more conscious, or critical (in other words, to make learners more conscious of their learning), and to make formalized learning more task-oriented. Teaching adults should build on both learning processes because both ways of learning are important in life.

²⁹ ROGERS, ALAN. *Teaching adults*. p. 136

Total Physical Response encourages subconscious learning, without attempts to make it critical or formal, because of the stress factors involved. Rogers agrees that the most common emotional withdrawal mechanism during learning is **anxiety**. Anxiety is a fear of the difficulty of the subject matter, but also physical decline and aging. Symptoms of anxiety, negative self-image and self-esteem, can occur especially during times of evaluation. Acquisition learning itself does not generate anxiety, but formalizing learning as learning does. A small amount of anxiety can motivate students and help their performance. But too much anxiety inhibits thinking. Anxiety tends to be higher when facing intellectual or creative exercises; lower when faced with physical tasks – which is the reason of using Total Physical Response.

Rogers's solution is a variety of exercises and an atmosphere of acceptance in the class. Language experiments must be positively evaluated; reinforcements will be needed in all kinds of activities. Learning tasks can be broken into smaller units that are easier to achieve. Teaching in small groups helps to deal with the fear of failing in front of others.

Vernon proposes **English language games for adults** as a kind of stress reduction. She claims that adults can learn through games in the English language as much as children can. Adults learn through experience, from the known to the unknown. Unlike children, however, adults need to know why they are doing something. The teacher must explain how the game will help their English. Also, adults approach learning as problem solving and enjoy such games where their lifetime of strategies can be applied.

Adult **beginners** may feel frustrated for the reason that they have been successfully communicating for many years in their native tongue but have problems expressing themselves in a foreign language. The silent period for adults according to Vernon may be even 3 – 6 months.

Activities suitable for beginners provide students with the chance to communicate successfully in a highly structured way, with the meaning clearly demonstrated and integrated into the lesson. Some games such as Round Robin Advice fit the 'silent period' very well, since the students can have their parts of the interactions written out and practiced in advance and only have to select the correct response from the pre-written choices. Other games, like the Grammar Auction, put the focus on a

non-linguistic goal – making 'money,' or points, through bidding on grammatically correct sentences. Learners are focused on the goal, so they are not stressed with what they are saying.

Activities of highly patterned interactions are wonderful for beginners. For example Good Evening Beach Ball is a simple game when students catch the ball with several phrases written on it and read the phrase their thumbs are pointing to and then throw it to the next person. This particular motion can be relaxing and serve as an ice-breaker.

All of these games are close to Total Physical Response both in their idea of not stressing the learners by speaking and by involving physical action.

Higher level classes for adults use games for a refreshing effect and the opportunity to practice communicating. Successful games combine **verbal and analytical** elements so that both verbal (most often female) and analytical (male) student types can excel at them. Combinatory games mix language skills with strategic thinking. Two typical examples are word puzzles and quiz games.

There is another difference between male and female adult students. Men are more likely to be kinesthetic learners, who take in information best through touch and physical activity. Women are more likely to be auditory learners. This means that during the language games they learn through calling out answers and listening to others' responses.

Teachers must know their students and their goals in learning English. This is necessary in order to choose the right methods and activities to enrich students' learning experience and improve their English skills.

How successful this was is shown in the evaluation process. Evaluation judges our achievements, effectiveness and the value of what we are doing. There are two basic types: the immediate one is hidden in the fact that the learner performs the task; such evaluation is running throughout the whole process of learning. This corresponds to acquisition learning in Rogers' distinction. The second type evaluates whether learning has been achieved by external criteria. This corresponds to formalized learning. There is

also unofficial evaluation, and that is the satisfaction shown in a good relationship with the teacher.

2.3.2. Conclusion

Adult learning and adult teaching are specific. Adults usually work and have families, they thus want to understand what they are doing and want to learn effectively. Adults are generally less flexible and they need time for learning. But there are also advantages. Adults enjoy learning by doing things and being active during English lessons. The methodology of teaching adult beginners is very close to Total Physical Response, where physical action beside help with the understanding also deals with stress.

Advanced levels are in a similar situation as teenage learners: TPR can be involved in some stages of lessons but it does not provide opportunities to practice different types of skills. The notion of games is more frequently used in methodology (Lee, Vernon) than Total Physical Response.

Individual courses for adults might have very different objectives and, consequently, methods and activities.

Summary of the Theoretical Part

We have studied the methodology of Total Physical Response. We have also studied children's development through primary school to high school as well as adult age and their needs. We have seen how much physical activity during English lessons is helpful for the process of learning and analyzed how much TPR can become part of the process in the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

There is a strong tendency to use other methods than TPR with higher age groups and levels. Total Physical Response can be used to motivate students, to introduce new language items in an interesting way and to practice language in follow-up activities.

In higher levels, Total Physical Response is part of many games that help practice the language. The problem is that sometimes it is not easy to distinguish how much TPR is present. Games are usually more complex, starting with listening to instructions and doing them, but then it depends on the particular game if the instruction-reaction or listen-do moment is still there.

An aspect of Total Physical Response that is the same in every age group is instructions during lessons. It is natural that the teacher gives instructions and manages the class; the instructions are often repeated and students understand them very well, so this kind of TPR is rather marginal.

Now to summarize TPR in the language skills learnt from child to teenage learners.

Listening is the skill children acquire first. Most listening comes from the teacher and children show understanding by physical actions, as they do in their first language when they are younger. Many listening activities are TPR based, for example listen and do, miming, moving to the rhythm of a song, etc. But even in the youngest group, TPR does not cover the whole range of listening, such as listening for information. For teenagers, listening means exposure to different variants of English and understanding language in its natural speed. Teenagers show understanding by answering questions. Total Physical Response can be part of some tasks, but most tasks will concentrate on the content and continue in a communicative activity.

Speaking is taught through controlled and guided dialogues in small children. They remember them better when movement is included, which makes role-playing their favorite speaking practice. Children love stories and story-telling is a considerable part of English teaching. Total Physical Response works with story-telling in a way that each phrase has a motion presented by the children. Role-play and drama are still popular in older students, but now more types of speaking activities can be involved, such as interview, discussion or information-gap activities. These generally do not contain a physical dimension; but it can be included in some tasks.

Reading and writing start slowly, the first as an introduction to another activity and the second also as visual reinforcement and physical action on its own. Total Physical Response for beginners is identical with the methodology used in primary school. With teenage learners, text reading serves as a source of information about the world as well as the language. The skill gets more attention and practice, because the aim is to read as in real life.

Writing at secondary school level and above is TPR, for example, when writing instructions for miming activities. It serves to practice vocabulary or grammar. But to write successful essays, traditional work must be done.

Regarding different ages, Asher mentions interesting findings about his tool. In testing, adult beginners got better results in language retention and understanding after being exposed to language through play. As for children beginners, older children outperform younger ones. Fourteen year-olds had better retention than ten year olds, and ten-year-olds were better than eight year-olds.³⁰ Adults turned out very creative in brainstorming activities. This suggests that TPR is an effective method for adult beginners – also the stress reduction is more important here than for children beginners.

The application of TPR in more advanced adult groups depends on the objectives of individual classes. Generally, it is similar to teenage learners of the same level; with respect to the specificity in adult teaching.

³⁰ ASHER, JAMES J. *The Total Physical Response (TPR) : Review of the evidence.*

Practical Part

The aim of the practical part is to find out knowledge about Total Physical Response, opinions and experience of local teachers with applying physical movement in English lessons.

There are two parts; the first one consists of a questionnaire research, the second of observation and interview in one of the schools from the research.

3. Questionnaire Research

I made a questionnaire of 11 questions (Appendix 1) dealing with the ideas of Total Physical Response. One question is a scale, most of them are multiple choice or closed questions with a possibility to add comments.

Teachers of local schools in Poděbrady were addressed on February 18th – 25th. Teachers of one elementary school refused to do so with the explanation that it takes too much time. Because the number was not sufficient, teachers in Nymburk were asked to fill it in on March 1st – 8th. Some primary school teachers did not understand the questionnaire so their category is the smallest.

Since there are not many adult level teachers in the area, I asked teachers in Prague language schools to answer the questions on March 7th - 14th. A private language school teaching a year intensive course for graduates did not reply at all.

The total number of questionnaires is thus 47.

My **hypothesis number 1** is that most teachers will not be familiar with the term Total Physical Response, but that will not mean they do not use physical activities.

Giving the theoretical part, the teachers of young learner should include TPR activities more often than the other age groups. I suppose that the findings of the questionnaire will agree with the fact that the older the level is, the less physical actions are involved in teaching. My **hypothesis number 2** is that adult teachers do not include movement at all.

Hypothesis number 3 is that if the teachers of teenagers are not in favor of the activities and games, the reason for not using them will be lack of time and a full syllabus.

3.1. Primary School

The curriculum for English learning differs. Some schools start teaching English beginning in the first grade once or twice a week, some only have a voluntary English club. Official curriculum in the third grade is then united, English lessons three times a week.

There were 10 filled questionnaires from primary school teachers. The age of pupils is 6-11 years. The number of students in a class varies from 12 to almost 30. This means that some classes are split for language classes into halves, but the rest stay undivided for financial reasons.

Only one teacher was male, also very typical for our current educational system. Most teachers have been teaching for more than 15 years, only three teachers for less than 6 years.

Only three teachers filled in that they had never heard the term Total Physical Response. The rest of them heard it during university studies or teacher training courses.

All ten teachers answered that they do include physical movement to their lesson plans. Two added it is for motivating the pupils and a different two said it is for grammar explanation. One teacher does dancing in the class, others for example *listen and do* activities, *miming*, *Simon says* or rhymes with movement.

It is a positive fact that all the teachers instruct their pupils in English. *Listen and do/listen and draw* are the most preferred activities, young learners like it. Surprisingly *imperative drill* is also used quite often. *Role-play* is included in English lessons once a week or once a month, *miming a story* and *class questionnaire* are used less often. The reason might be that the pupils are too young for the activity; they are not good at writing yet. *Miming* is probably used more often than *miming a story*. See chart 1 on the following page.

Chart 1:

	Every lesson	Once a week	Once a month	Less often	never
Imperative drill	3x	5x	1x	1x	
Instructions in English	10x				
Miming a story		2x	4x	3x	1x
Class questionnaire			5x	4x	1x
Role-plays		4x	6x		
Skits			2x	2x	6x
Listen and do/listen and draw	4x	6x			

All ten teachers agreed that movement in the lesson creates a better atmosphere, reduces stress and helps the students remember the language items. Most of them agreed it is fun and a great warm-up, six replied it changes the pace of the lesson. One interesting comment was added that movement can cause problems if it is not well controlled.

All the teachers also agree that pupils learn through playing a game, with one remark that some children tend to be easily distracted during games.

Half responded they do not let their pupils instruct the rest of the class. Of those who do, two noted that it is important to select the right student or it must be only easy instructions. Two teachers have good experience with this activity, their pupils like it.

Only one teacher thinks speaking in English is not stressful for students. The rest say it is stressful, especially for certain character types and new language items.

Implicit grammar was refused by three teachers, then teachers either combine both the implicit and explicit way or prefer implicit, for example the native speaker. Most teachers did not explain when each approach is used, only one commented that she uses that for simple rules.

All ten teachers use the Czech language for grammar explanation, nine for text translation; two also for instructions, especially for the youngest learners. One teacher never uses the Czech language as he is a native English speaker. The others use translation because it saves time (5x) and it is easier for them (3x) and for the students (3x). Two teachers practice it as teaching the skill of translation. One answer says translation confuses students.

All of the primary school teachers attend some teaching training courses, including the Internet teacher helps or they try to do new activities with their pupils.

To sum up, the teachers of primary schools include physical movement into their lesson plans; they do activities that involve TPR, even if they have never heard the term. As two teachers mentioned, the activities must be well organized or class management could break down. This only reinforces Tim Bowen's criticism that TPR works only in smaller groups.

3.2. Lower Secondary School

Eight questionnaires were filled in by teachers who teach the age group of 11 – 15 years. Two of them overlap to the primary school level and teach children from 9 years. Thus they can compare the work with younger learners.

The number of students per class varies from 10 – 23, with the same problem as in primary schools. Most teachers have been teaching more than 15 years, one for just a year. Two respondents were male (with no significant difference in the answers).

Half never heard the term Total Physical Response, half came across it during university studies. One teacher said she was using TPR in her lessons.

Six teachers include movement in their lesson plans in the form of moving games, students walking to the board, rhymes and songs. They use motion as a reaction to the language, for refreshment and motivation. One comments that she includes movement only with the youngest students (ages 10 – 11). One teacher says there is no time for such activities.

Chart 2:

	Every lesson	Once a week	Once a month	Less often	never
Imperative drill	2x	2x	1x	1x	1x
Instructions in English	8x				
Miming a story		2x	3x	1x	2x
Class questionnaire		2x	3x	2x	1x
Role-plays		3x	3x	2x	
Skits			1x	3x	4x
Listen and do/listen and draw	1x youngest learners	5x	3x		

See how often following activities are used in chart 2. We can see that all the teachers instruct their students in English. Interestingly, *imperative drill* as an independent activity seems to be used quite often. One teacher explains that she uses that every lesson with younger children, the other answer for every lesson usage includes no explanation. The rest might involve it during the study of imperative form and similar situations. *Listen and do* and similar activities are still popular, but they are not included in English lessons as often as in primary school. *Role-play*, *class questionnaire* and *miming a story* are almost equally used. I expected *miming a story* to be used less often and I wonder if the teachers meant all kinds of miming in the answer.

Movement in the lesson makes it fun (7x), creates a better atmosphere (6x), reduces stress (6x), is a great warm-up (4x) and changes the pace (3x). Only three teachers replied it also helps the students remember the language. Primary school teachers were more positive about it. One secondary school teacher mentioned movement is important for kinesthetic learning style students. One teacher does not like moving games for the noise and distraction (lack of concentration) they create.

Seven out of eight agree that students learn through playing a game. However, one teacher claims the students of this age are bored with games.

Five teachers let their students instruct the rest of the class, in percentage it is more than primary school teachers. The advantage is seen in that the student instructing feels important and responsible and the classmates react better to his or her commands. This corresponds to Penny Ur's recommendation to initiate exchanges by the students because their contributions are original and the class tends to listen more. The switching of roles is an interesting change in the lesson.

Six teachers agree speaking is stressful for the students, especially in a new language, which must be practiced a lot, and specifically untalented pupils are stressed with the skill. Two teachers do not see a problem in teaching the speaking skill.

Two teachers do not teach grammar implicitly with one comment that current circumstances are not in favor of it. The rest involves it, depending on the difficulty of the language item.

The Czech language is used for grammar explanation (8x), translation of texts (7x) and instructions (3x) if they are not understood in English. Translation saves time (4x) and thus is easier for the teacher to use it (5x) and for the students (4x) too. Translation is (1x) encouraged as a skill that must be practiced.

Two teachers do not innovate their teaching style. The rest do it through different teaching courses or they work on their own English. The Internet is used as a resource of new games and songs; work with PC and interactive board are newly used during the lessons.

To sum up, we can see that with older students activities such as listen and do/listen and draw or imperative drill are not used as often. On the other hand, some activities can now be involved more often, for example class questionnaire or taking up the role of teacher, because older children are more interested in peer interaction.

3.3. High School

This category contains 15 questionnaires. All of the teachers asked to fill them in were *Grammar School* (gymnazium) teachers, where classes are split into halves and thus the number of English teachers is higher than in primary and lower secondary schools.

Seven of fifteen also teach lower secondary school age, so we will analyze if there is some difference in their answers.

This age group is from 15 – 19 years old. The number of students per class is about 15. Half of the teachers have been teaching for more than 15 years (8x), the least experienced has been teaching for 2 years. Two respondents were male without significance differences in their answers.

All fifteen teachers have heard of the term Total Physical Response, at university, teaching courses, conferences or methodology books.

Thirteen of them include physical movement to the lesson plans in the form of games, role-play, miming and warm-up activities. They use it for language practice, especially imperative and vocabulary; depending on the age of the students and the type of lessons. Lower levels and younger students get more physical activity. Two teachers do not involve movement to their lesson plan because they think students are too old for it. Both teach only high school students.

Chart 3:

	Every lesson	Once a week	Once a month	Less often	never
Imperative drill	1x	2x	6x	4x	2x
Instructions in English	15x				
Miming a story		2x	2x	7x	4x
Class questionnaire		1x	5x	7x	2x
Role-plays	1x	9x	3x	2x	
Skits		1x	1x	9x	4x
Listen and do/listen and draw		2x	2x	11x	

Certain differences in the answers can be seen in the question about frequency of activities. High school teachers replied *never* more times. Teachers of both secondary and high school age tend to use *miming* and *questionnaires* at least once a week, high school teachers only once a month. An exception is *skits*, where high school teachers indicated they use it more often. This may be thanks to a higher language level and better communication skills of older students. See chart 3 (high school only teachers' answers are bold).

The effect of physical action in English lessons is to have fun (13x), to help remember language (12x), a better atmosphere maker (10x), stress reduction (9x), a change of pace (9x), and as a great warm-up (7x). Action as a means to remember is evaluated better here than in the previous group. One teacher remarks that these characteristics of movement in the lesson are applied on younger students and beginners.

All fifteen teachers answered that the students can learn through playing a game, however, some added that this is only true to some extent. It depends on the game and how the goals are set. One teacher experienced that the students do not take it seriously and forget vocabulary easily. On the other hand, positive comments say it involves more parts of the brain and offers new context for language practice.

Five teachers do not let the students instruct the rest of the class. Ten do allow it and they appreciate that the class pays attention better, that the instructor feels important and the lesson is more interesting. The right students must be chosen, however.

Seven teachers think speaking is not stressful; their students are used to it. The rest are more considerate about the matter, saying it depends on the level and age of the students, especially the level of individuals in the group. Some students do not like improvisation, some are more introverted in their personality.

The majority combine both ways of teaching grammar. Easier grammar, if there is enough time and good resource material, is taught implicitly. It can be combined with a grammar box in textbooks to make sure the students understand.

The native language is used for grammar explanation (12x), translation of texts or parts that are too difficult (9x) and sometimes for instructions (1x). The level is now high enough to understand all instructions in English. One teacher mentions peer explanation in Czech if there are some students who do not get it.

Translation is used to save time (8x), and because it is easier for the teacher (3x) and the students (3x). It is practiced as a skill (4x) that helps understand the differences between the languages.

Only two teachers are not interested in innovating their teaching, one because she is going to retire soon. The most common ways of development are seminars and conferences, using new technologies and new materials. Two teachers review individual lessons and make improvements for next ones.

To sum up, in this age group, teachers still use activities that include physical action, although they do so less often than teachers of the previous age group. The effect of movement in the lesson is evaluated positively; however some teachers do not consider learning through play appropriate for the age group. Speaking is not seen as stressful as before, students are quite fluent at this level.

3.4. Adults

Fourteen questionnaires were returned by the adult-teaching group. They were filled in by teachers of a private language school in Prague. Teaching in private schools differs from the state ones, as we will see.

The first significant difference is the number of students per class. It ranges from one-to-one teaching to teaching 10 students, on average there are 6 students in a class. One teacher was male, without any contrast in his answers. Two were native speakers.

Another difference in numbers is how long the teachers have been teaching. Only one has been teaching for more than 15 years, the rest for less than 6 years. This means that the career is attractive for young teachers, some of them are still studying.

Eight teachers have never heard the term Total Physical Response; six have heard it at university. Surprisingly, only four teachers do not include physical movement in their lesson plan with the explanations being that it is not suitable for the students, the students do not want it or the teacher feels strange instructing people older (and in a better social position) than she is. Ten teachers, especially native English speakers, include movement in the form of gestures, mingle activities, role-play, games, mime, students' writing on the board or relaxation at the end of the lesson.

A comment must be made that most adult classes are once a week for 90 minutes, in other words less often than students at school, but for a longer period of time. This might be convenient for activities that take more time, or it might simply provide more time for any activity and leave out the stress of lack of time. In our questionnaire, it implies that answers *every lesson* and *once a week* might be in fact the same. Chart 4 shows how often TPR like activities are included in lesson.

Chart 4:

	Every lesson	Once a week	Once a month	Less often	never
Imperative drill		1x	1x	5x	7x
Instructions in English	14x				
Miming a story		2x	2x	6x	4x
Class questionnaire		1x	5x	6x	2x
Role-plays		7x	4x	2x	1x
Skits		2x		3x	9x
Listen and do/listen and draw	1x (not draw)	1x	7x	3x	2x

Only once is an activity, '*listen and do*', mentioned as used every lesson. Except instructions in English, the teachers preferred to tick the answer *once a week*. The most popular activity is role-play, I believe it is so because it prepares the learners for real life situations - and for adults it is necessary to do meaningful activities as we have studied earlier. '*Listen and do*' type activity and *class questionnaire* then follow in the frequency of usage. Questionnaire is not done in one-to-one teaching and probably is not popular in very small groups. *Miming* is preferred by one native speaker, the other does not use it. *Imperative drill* is not very convenient for adults, even beginners. *Skits* are not a favorite activity; it might be due to the lower level of English and non-practical context.

The effect of physical activity is evaluated mostly favorably. It is fun (11x), helps the students remember language items (10x), is a great warm-up (10x), creates a better atmosphere (9x), changes the pace of the lesson (8x), and reduces stress (7x). One teacher thinks that a good start of an adult language lesson is with relaxation, not physical action. One remark says that none of the effects of physical activity is true for adult classes. Physical motion as stress reduction is evaluated by less than half of the teachers; the theoretical part would suggest higher numbers.

Interestingly, all fourteen teachers agree that their students learn through playing a game, especially new grammar and vocabulary, although it must be well chosen and instructed and it does not work all the time for everybody.

Half of those who responded let the students instruct the rest of the class (some only rarely). According to their experience, it contributes to a better class atmosphere, the students receive it sometimes better from their peers, it gives them the feeling of feedback and it helps to fix correct grammar and improve memory. However, it might be difficult for beginners and the students must get used to it to feel comfortable.

Speaking appears again stressful for this age group. Only one teacher replied *no*, the rest consider it difficult for beginners or some individual students. Creating a convenient atmosphere for speaking is mentioned once.

Most teachers combine both ways of explaining grammar. If the students have enough experience with the language, the language item is not too difficult and a textbook or an activity is convenient, they prefer inductive and discovery techniques. If those are not successful, the teachers explain traditionally.

As for the Czech language used, seven answered they use it for text translation as the students want it or need it. Six said they explain grammar to make sure the students really understand. Instructions in Czech in beginner classes helps the students feel more secure. In higher language levels, the Czech translation follows explanations in English and are used to help understand the exact meaning.

In two cases, the teachers comment that translation may confuse the students. Otherwise, teachers say it is easier for both the students (5x) and the teacher (2x), it saves time (3x) and may be practiced as an independent skill (3x). It is important that the student feel comfortable in adult-level teaching. With different age groups, a

teacher's position (*it is easier for the teacher*) was mentioned more often. Here the needs of the students are higher than those of the teacher.

With one exception, the teachers seek to innovate their teaching style through university studies, workshops organized by language schools or internet research.

To sum up, we have seen the difference in the organization of adult teaching, especially in smaller groups and younger teachers. As classes may vary according to the needs of students, the aims and objectives of the course, one or two answers usually contrasted with the rest. Generally, the activities of physical movement are used a little less often than in the high school group, but this might be caused by the difference in the frequency of English classes.

Adults may need more time to get used to the teacher's style. Students must feel comfortable to continue coming to the lessons and this factor influences the teacher's attitude. This fact is stronger in the private sphere, where the adult learner is the client who must be satisfied.

3.5. Conclusion

The results of the questionnaires do not oppose the general assumption that with increasing age and level of students, Total Physical Response plays a smaller role in English language teaching.

My **hypothesis number 1** that most teachers would not be familiar with the Total Physical Response approach was wrong. 32 of 47 teachers had heard the term. I probably underestimated their education, or, more likely, the fact that TPR was introduced in the 1960s. The best result concerning knowledge of TPR was in the high school-teaching group (all fifteen teachers). This might be thanks to the prestige of local schools (gymnazium). The worst results were in the adult-teaching group.

I was right about the presumption that even those who do not know the term still use the activities that are used in Total Physical Response. Some mentioned rhymes and songs, some dancing, some call students to the board. Only three teachers of adults had never heard the term and do not use physical activities either. Their reason is that their

students are not comfortable with it or they consider it inappropriate. I can only speculate if reading Asher's test results would change their opinion.

My **hypothesis number 2** for adult-level teachers not including movement at all was wrong. Teachers seem to include physical action in their lesson plans. The native teachers use miming and gestures to explain things and they provide their students with role-play and miming activities as well. I expected that teachers would be passive in the movement planning and use mostly activities from their textbooks. It is not possible to indicate from the questionnaires if that is so, the question should have been given differently or a question about using textbook and additional materials should have been added.

As for **hypothesis number 3**, lack of time, or a full syllabus were not inscribed as most important reasons of not using games and activities in teenage learner teaching. Only one lower secondary teacher mentioned there is no time. One high school teacher explained her reason was that the students are too old for learning through games. In fact, the respondents skipped the *why* in brackets so I cannot analyze their reasons more explicitly. From the other answers, negative opinions of games are that they make noise, some students lose concentration, some do not take it seriously and some are bored. A general point can be made that games and activities must be well chosen, planned and managed.

Despite the results of the questionnaire, the observations and interviews and also my own teaching experiment showed that the hypothesis was right.

4. Observation and Interview

To get a deeper insight of Total Physical Response and kinesthetic activities in reality, I continued my research by observations in three different classes and interviews with the teachers at Gymnazium Jiriho z Podebrad in Podebrady, which took place on March 21st – 24th 2011.

During observations, I focused mostly on kinesthetic elements of the lessons and the usage of the Czech language. I taught two classes myself and tried to involve TPR in the lessons.

The interviews followed the observations and/or my teaching. We analyzed how successful the application of TPR was and I further questioned the course book, additional materials, grammar explanation and how much time is left for extra-work.

4.1. Prima

Prima is the first class of eight-year curriculum; it corresponds to the 6th grade in lower secondary school. The pupils are 11 – 12 years old, i.e. the age that is a transition between the primary and secondary school. I visited group 2 with 16 pupils present.

The class had just finished a textbook called *Project 1* (elementary level A1)) and started to continue with the *Project 2* (level A1-A2). The textbook is the core of the lessons for two reasons. Firstly, it offers language practice including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and all the skills in a progressive system convenient for the age of the students. The book has been accredited by the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic. Secondly, the book is considerably expensive and there is a strong parent voice to use the book as much as possible to make the best of the investment.

4.1.1. Lesson Observation 1: March 22nd

The lesson started with a vocabulary knock-out. Two pupils stood up, the teacher said in Czech a word familiar to the pupils from previous lessons, and whoever replied faster could stand up for the next round. The winner got a reward – a picture of a dog. The pupils collect the pictures and when they get seven of them, they get the best mark for the activity in the class.

Then the pupils worked with the student's book on page 6. It was a revision of a room description, with *there is/are* and prepositions as grammar unit. While the teacher was preparing a listening exercise, the task was to look at the picture and remember as much as possible. The listening exercise from the textbook were questions about the details from the picture. The pupils were to write the answers. The pupils wanted to get the reward so most of them ran to the teacher's desk after the last question with their answers. However, there were mistakes in the answers, so no reward was given and the correct form was reminded.

The pupils then worked in pairs and asked each other more questions about the picture. For homework, they were to write 8 sentences about the picture; and also to draw or take a picture of their room and describe it (not for the next lesson).

Last five minutes a song Hokey Kokey was played. It was in the textbook. First, the teacher quickly translated the meaning and then played it while the pupils remained seated and listened.

4.1.2. My Comments:

The first striking fact about the lesson was that it took place in a computer classroom. Each student has a monitor in front of them, which limits their view on the board, and also it limits the teacher's view on the students! The first instruction of the lesson was to shut the PC down. However, there were moment, for example when the teacher checked the answers of volunteers at her desk or when she was starting her computer for the listening exercise, when the pupils turned on the computer and started

to play games! I think this could have been prevented by walking in the rows, although the teacher was already busy all the lesson.

The second most interesting fact, this time a positive one, is how the teacher motivates the pupils. At this age, they are motivated to work in the lessons to get the picture of a dog each time they are first to have correct answers. Almost every activity is done in a kind of competition for the reward.

The lesson contented physical dimension of two types. The first type was managing the lesson by the teacher with instructions like *Open the books, close the books* or *write it down*. The second type was the introductory game that included standing up while answering. The nature of physical action here was more visual to see who was successful in the knock-out, and of course to add some excitement to the lesson. The Czech language was used for the vocabulary knock-out. I think it could have been left out if pictures were used, but that would need more time for preparation for the teacher.

The Hokey Kokey song can be a TPR activity. My first question in the interview was about the way it was done.

4.1.3. Interview with Mgr. Martina Černá:

The teacher explained that she does the song with motions as it is suggested, but this time she felt she did not have enough time, so she quickly explained the motions and played the tune. The classroom is not convenient for dancing in a circle neither. It is planned to do the song properly the following lesson.

The teacher translates every new vocabulary into Czech because it is, in her opinion, necessary. The pupils are thinking in Czech and translating quickly in their minds into English, so to understand properly they need the exact Czech words. Thinking in the target language does not happen until advanced levels. Translation in the lessons saves time and energy in her opinion. Having the pupils guess the meaning from gestures and motions might be confusing.

The course book seems quite easy for the students; especially *Project 1* was finished quite quickly. Grammar even in *Project 2* is not new for the pupils, so they are able to complete grammar boxes themselves.

The course book has enough songs and activities where the pupils are to act out the story, so the teacher does not need to bring extra materials. She enjoys using drama technique in her lessons, but does not have special drama lessons. She incorporates it into the lessons where it is appropriate and natural. For example, in the lesson previous to my observation, there was a story about chicken and it was only natural that one pupil read the narrator and two pupils two characters in the story. Then the story was act out.

4.1.4. Lesson Observation 2: March 23rd

This lesson started with homework check and three rewards were given. Then *have got* was revised in the student's book – the pupils made sentences according to the picture.

Then the Hokey Kokey song was played. The pupils were standing in a circle and the teacher presented the motions and translated them into Czech. Then she played the song and the class danced together. There were two boys who overacted and did wrong gestures on purpose. The teacher also wanted the pupils to sing while dancing, but most of them were not able to dance and sing at the same time.

The song was planned in the middle of the lesson as a distraction, which was achieved. The lesson continued with the listening exercises on page 8. The pupils managed to calm down and concentrate on the listening thanks to the right motivation by the teacher.

At the very end, homework was reminded. I had no further questions after this lesson.

4.1.5. Conclusion:

The pupils in prima enjoy playful lessons. They are physically very active, especially when they run to get reward or raise up hand to answer. The course book offers activities of kinesthetic learning, especially acting out stories. The teacher adds physical dimension in short games. Total Physical Response as such was not seen during my observation unless instructions to open the books etc.

There is a problem with the space in classroom. This particular classroom was inconvenient for language teaching because of the computers on the table (they are rarely used in the lesson). Only few classrooms have enough space, mostly the desks must be removed for more room. This experience shows that a convenient classroom is a significant factor to use kinesthetic activities in the English lessons.

4.2. Tercie

Tercie is the third year of eight-year curriculum, parallel to the 8th class of lower secondary school. The students are 13 – 14 years old; there were 13 students in the group I observed.

Their course book is *Project 4*, the level A2. The group I visited is a little lower level than the other half of the class. The behavior of couple boys is quite difficult and they were asked to sit individually for the rest of the school year. Despite, they like to sit together and disturb.

After the first observation, I prepared a lesson and tried to imply some TPR activities.

4.2.1. Lesson Observation 1: March 21st

The students are used to talking about their weekend the first lesson in the week. This time the teacher told them to pantomime their weekend and gave them a couple minutes.

They continued with a small competition in their workbook, it was a vocabulary revision. The first student was rewarded with a 'plus'.

The main part of the lesson was work with the student's book at page 6 and 7 called *Work Experience*. This was translated into Czech as *brigada*. The students were reading and listening to three short dialogues. The teacher then asked comprehensive questions. The listening continued with an extract without text, again comprehensive questions followed.

Grammar of the unit was *going to/will*. The students were able to complete the box themselves, the teacher added more explanations and suggestions how to remember the difference, sometimes using the Czech language. An exercise was then done in pairs and checked; two exercises were set for homework and homework from the previous lesson was checked.

4.2.2. My Comments:

There were two types of kinesthetic activities in the lesson. The first, the same as in prima, were instructions to open books, raise hands, etc. The second was the introductory activity to mime the students' weekend. The students are not used to miming, they seemed confused and they were miming while sitting, although standing up would be better for some performance. The activity, as it was new to the students, needed more time. There was no time to present how successful the students were in understanding the pantomime. I would choose a pair or two to say something interesting about their classmates' weekend.

The students, compared to prima, seem more passive. They enjoy sitting at the desk better than physical action. Sometimes they raise hands voluntarily but mostly they wait for their teacher to invite them to answer.

The Czech language was not used too much, only to translate key words and sum up grammar points.

4.2.3. Lesson Plan for March 22nd:

1. Revision of *going to*.

- a) The students write an activity they do not like on a piece of paper (e.g. play football – write on the board), fold it pass to the teacher.
- b) A volunteer takes one piece, presents the activity by pantomime, the rest of the class must say: *This afternoon, (s)he is going to...* (on the board)
- c) The volunteer than says, if it's true and what (she) is really going to do 3x done with whole class as examples.
- d) The rest of the activity is done in groups; teacher redistributes the pieces with the activities into the groups.

2. Revision of *will as sudden decision*.

Each group gets a piece of paper with a situation, e.g. *Let's go the disco. What will you do?* to make the students produce sentences such as *I'll choose the restaurant, I'll take money, etc.* Write down the suggestions; final sentence *That will be great!* Present the suggestion to the class.

3. Revision of stative verbs.

Read a list of verbs, stative verb is a signal to stand up, non-stative to sit down.

4. Check the homework exercises in workbook 3/3 and 3/4

5. Listening in student's book 7/6

6. Act out the episode, set for homework if not enough time

4.2.4. My Comments on the Lesson:

Generally, I think the lesson worked well. But the students were not used to this kind of teaching, so it took them too much time to take a piece of paper and write something on it. I indicated *activity you don't like* on the board and some students

started copying this, so I explained again in Czech what they are to do. Collecting the small pieces of paper from all the students took time that was boring for the fastest students. Finally the first volunteer came and read aloud the activity, so I had to stress he is to mime it. He was a little confused how to mime his activity. The second and third examples made the activity clear, but time was needed to group the students and give them sheets with activities.

The second activity to revise *will* was done in the same groups. There were only three groups, one understood the point immediately, the second worked ok, but the third did not cooperate much. I asked the teacher to evaluate them negatively.

The stative verb exercise could have been better explained as a memory aid that *when you stand, it is stative*. It was interesting for me to see how quickly some students reacted, whereas some were very confused and only followed their colleagues. This activity could be improved by writing the verbs on the board, to make it visual and to prevent a situation when the students at the back of the class mishear.

Workbook correction and listening was done traditionally. The workbook exercises included all three grammar units mixed together. The listening task was to fill in the grid and most students had it correctly after the first listening.

There were 7 minutes left to act out the story from the textbook so I asked the students at the end of the lesson to act it out the following lesson. I know it may be difficult for the students to meet in the same group and practice again, but it can lead to better retention of the language items.

I think it is very demanding to manage TPR classes and lessons with a lot of physical movement, because of the time consumed by changing places and also noise of chairs moving, etc. I tried to eliminate time where only one student would perform because the rest would be bored and disturb; but it was not perfect and I wonder how much better I could do; and how much it is unrealistic to keep everybody pay attention.

4.2.5. Interview with PhDr. Ludmila Lukavcová:

We first went through my lesson and then continued with other topics.

PhDr. Lukavcová encouraged me that the students seemed to like the lesson. She enjoyed the first activity, but suggested leaving out the writing part so that in small groups one student performs an activity and the rest guess what it is in a sentence. This saves time that is needed in lessons for new language items.

The *will* activity could also be done in small groups when one student comes up with a plan and his classmates must react. This saves more time and teacher's preparation. Of course, it works better in a group than the other. The group I was teaching was more difficult to cooperate with.

The teacher agrees that standing can help remember what a stative verb is, but some students did not understand what they were supposed to do. Speaking up is necessary. The teacher sometimes asks the students to raise a hand; it does not make noise like when moving the chairs.

The students are used to acting and drama, but the preparation needs to be about 15 minutes. They first read their lines from the books and sometimes change it or add something. Then they must close their books and practice without reading. Usually some groups want to perform and get good marks. Sometimes the students are evaluated during the group work. Good atmosphere in the class is very important for acting and role-play.

To sum up, Total Physical Response can make the lesson interesting, help remember the language and release energy. However, the lessons are very short and there is not enough time for extra activities.

As for frequency of activities, most work is done with a course book. It proposes acting and drama quite often. The students are used to the book and the way the grammar boxes are organized. Grammar goes in cycles; it is revised and deepened each time, so the students can build on their previous knowledge.

PhDr. Lukavcová pointed out that my expectations were generally too high. Students have problems to concentrate and sometimes they refuse 'special' activities. She once took them to the theatre for a performance in English about grammar – present

simple and present continuous were explained on a scene – and the students did not appreciate it at all.

4.2.6. Lesson Observation 2: March 23rd

Students were asked to present their scenes. Nobody volunteered so a group was chosen, but their presentation was poor, so the students were given additional time to practice. A different group was then chosen to perform; they were evaluated by marks and praised. Pronunciation and grammar mistake were corrected after the performance with the whole class.

The lesson continued with grammar exercises in the textbook. The usage of past simple and continuous was explained by visual drawing on the board; it was not the first encounter with the grammar so only few mistakes were made in the following exercises.

4.2.7. Conclusion:

The application of Total Physical Response and kinesthetic activities within the syllabus are both possible and appreciated by the students, but they must not take too much time. The problem with my activities was that the students were confused about what they were supposed to do; this would get better once the students got used to the instructions. However, some activities could be simplified for the better result. I did not realize how much noise it makes to stand up and go to a different place. It is not convenient to explain something while anybody is on the move so I had to wait until everybody was seated again. Class management must be thorough in this sense to be successful.

Interview with PhDr. Lukavcová suggests that a full syllabus prevents teachers from using additional activities; it suggests my hypothesis number 3 was right.

4.3. 2.A

The last class I visited was the second grade of four-year curriculum. The students are 15 – 16 years old and there were 17 of them in the group. They were finishing the textbook called *New Opportunities pre-intermediate*.

4.3.1. Lesson Observation 1: March 21st

The lesson started with a revision of prepositions, the students got a sheet of paper each with exercises and they filled in prepositions. Translation was needed in a case of homonymy when the student was not able to understand the sentence. Also, the difference in meaning of one verb with two different prepositions was explained in Czech.

The main part of the lesson was work with the textbook and grammar. Key words from the previous lesson were translated quickly. The students were asked to work with a mini-dictionary for other vocabulary study.

After reading a short text and answering comprehensive questions, the table of reported speech was studied. This textbook also has the students to fill the grammar boxes themselves and find out the rules. The teacher summarized the grammar of the table; she focused on the verbs that are used in indirect speech and the position of negation.

The practice was done in pairs from structured exercises to free ones.

4.3.2. My Comments:

Since this was the most advanced group from all my observations, I expected that TPR application would be least possible here. It turned out to be right. Total Physical Response as such could be seen in class management and instructions like *Who was not here last time raise your hand; Open your book*, etc. Other kinesthetic activities were not present.

My only suggestion is that indirect speech can be practiced as mini-scenes where one student says the instruction and a classmate puts it in the correct form of the indirect speech. But I am not sure if it is age-relevant.

4.3.3. Lesson Plan for March 23rd:

1. Preposition revision (Appendix 3)
 - a) Prepositions of place: in 3 groups, each group gets a set of instructions face off, one student takes an instructions, performs it and the rest must say the original instruction and the preposition
 - b) Time and place prepositions: AT – IN – ON on the board, each student picks a card with a word, must stand in the correct line
 - c) Adjectives: OF – FOR – AT – WITH – FROM – ABOUT –TO cards displace in the classroom, again each student gets a card, must stand in the correct group and produce a sentence.
 - d) Short test – dictate 9 sentences in CZ, students write in EN

2. Indirect speech revision: GW and PW
Sentences from survival instructions p.131 cut into individual phrases, face off, students pick and tell partner in indirect form; then turn at the pair behind and exchange info; put instructions in the correct order

4.3.4. My Comments on the Lesson:

The lesson was difficult to prepare and manage as well. I spent the evening before the lesson typing on PC and cutting paper into small pieces. Shortly before the lesson, the teacher informed me that her group is joined together with another group. I was not prepared for the whole class, so we decided to have the other group sit at the back and do their own work.

The class seemed really crowded. I hoped to use space at the back for a table that the students would use for their instructions. Instead, I let the students work, and there was not much physical activity going on as they chose e.g. to walk their finger over the

table instead of really climbing over the desk. Only the instructions to walk along the wall and run towards the door were obvious. When I stopped the activity, I asked if there were problems or questions. The class was silent, so I elicited the difference between round and around the table and showed them myself, to end the activity and move on.

I took a marker and started writing huge AT – IN – ON on the board. The students picked a small card each and three rows were done easily and mostly correctly. However, some of the students are really tall and it was difficult to manage the part when the students read their card and left to be seated. I asked them several times to speak up and the others to listen carefully.

The third part was similar, with the same problem that the students said their sentences silently and the rest did not pay enough attention, even though more mistakes were made.

To test the attention paid during these activities, I prepared a short test. I dictated the sentences in Czech to save time and energy. The results were quite poor; I got 14 sheets, none of which was completely correct. The best student made 1 mistake in prepositions, five students made 2 mistakes, four students made 3 mistakes and the rest even more. I am afraid I did not present authority for the students and they did not take it seriously.

The final part was revision of indirect speech. I tried to use the exercise from the textbook in a creative way. However, I forgot to remind the rules so there were many mistakes in the form.

4.3.5. Interview with. Mgr. Alena Vojáčková:

In the interview we evaluated my lesson and talked about reasons why TPR could not be used widely.

Mgr. Vojáčková agrees that such activities can diversify English lessons, but only one activity per lesson. The main reason is that too many activities would lose their attractive character. The kinesthetic learning must be well managed; especially that

everybody must see and hear well. Sometimes it is better to have everybody seated after an activity and only then tell the results.

Mgr. Vojáčková has a good experience with a couple games, for example one vocabulary game for advanced students, describing and miming how to buy a coffee from the coffee machine. But the school does not have good resources of such activities and extra activities are difficult for the teacher to prepare.

There is also a lack of time. In gymnasium, there is a special organization of English classes: two classes are divided into four groups according to the level of English. However, if there are changes in the timetable and one class stays undivided, it does not mean that the English teacher gets extra time for extra activities, because that class consists of four different groups.

The most time is spent working with the textbook, because it leads to B2 level at the end of the curriculum. The *New Opportunities* particularly takes a lot of time to work with according to the teacher. If she uses other materials, then these are grammar practice, communicative activities or practice for the final exam (maturita).

Grammar in the textbook is done in a discovery way. But in Mgr. Vojáčková's words, it will need explaining in Czech sooner or later because the grammar gets more complicated and it is very difficult to use English to explain English. The native language is also used for vocabulary translation to save time; the explanation and nimit-dictionary are used probably half of the time. Anyway, the students mix the two languages in their heads, so it is sometimes better to make them alert about the similarity or difference in the two languages.

The book offers mostly communicative activities, pair work and group work. Role-play is not used as often as in younger classes. The teacher occasionally has the students write on the board, because those not occupied by writing get bored, so it is easier to do the writing herself.

4.3.6. Conclusion:

Kinesthetic activities are seen as a means to diversify the lessons, but the work must be done in quite fast pace to cover the textbook. It is demanding for the teacher to come up with new activities. The students at this age and level are used to working at the desk.

The interview with Mgr. Vojáčková also suggests that my hypothesis number 3 was right.

Summary

Total Physical Response is a foreign language teaching strategy. It is built on a natural language acquisition and stays present in all of the levels in natural teacher-student communication (classroom management). The use of TPR is possible and advisable in all four skills in primary school, although it does not mean that Total Physical Response can practice the whole scale of the skills.

This is particularly true in older students and higher levels. The current methodologists do not share the same opinion about TPR. Some mention it specifically, some use different terms (action games, kinesthetic activities). Thus it is not easy to detect a TPR activity. Asher puts physical response to language in the center of learning-teaching process. All of the methodology books I studied for this thesis deal somehow with physical actions, but they are not the central element. In fact, the same situation can be seen from different points of view and treated from different angles with different names. That is why kinesthetic learning in the broader meaning is used in the practical part.

The current situation in schools is that the work is done with textbooks and the pace is quite fast. There is not much time for extra activities, also space is not convenient. However, TPR activities diversify the lesson and may attract more attention, if the same type is not repeated all over and if it is well managed.

I prepared two lessons containing TPR. My experience of teaching those two classes was that the preparation was very time-consuming and the students' reaction was sometimes reluctant as they were not used to that type of work. The class management was difficult. As it was my first experiment with the strategy, some changes would be necessary for successful application of the activities in the future.

However, I am happy to have learned more about Total Physical Response (and about the criticism) and hope to use it in practice, if possible and convenient.

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Appendix 1

Poděbrady
February 2011

Dear Sir/Madame,

I would like you to fill in this short questionnaire that will help me write my thesis about physical actions during English lessons.

Whenever you have something to add to the question, please feel free to write it down.

Best wishes,

Markéta Pinkasová,
Pedagogická fakulta UK Praha

Age (class) of your students: _____ The number of students in the class:
Number of years you have been teaching: _____ You are male/female
School: _____

1. Have you ever heard the term “TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE”?
 - Yes (where?) _____
 - No
2. Do you include physical movement to your lesson plans?
 - Yes (how?) _____
 - No (why?) _____
3. How often do you use these activities?

	Every lesson	Once a week	Once a month	Less often	never
Imperative drill ³¹					
Instructions in English					
Miming a story					
Class questionnaire					
Role plays					
Skits ³²					
Listen and do/listen and draw					

³¹ Kind of exercise, teacher gives commands to students, they must perform them

³² Drama made by students

4. Do you agree that movement in the lesson
 - Is fun?
 - Is great warm-up?
 - Creates a better atmosphere?
 - Reduces stress?
 - Helps to remember the language items?
 - Changes the pace?
 - Other _____
5. Do you think your students learn through playing a game?
 - Yes _____
 - No _____
6. Do you let your students instruct the rest of the class?
 - No
 - Yes
 - If yes, what is your experience?

7. Do you think speaking in English is stressful for students?
 - Yes
 - Yes, new language items (grammar or vocabulary)
 - No
 - Other _____
8. Do you teach grammar implicitly (i.e. students work out the rules themselves from examples)?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Combination of both (explain when yes and when no)

9. In which situations do you use the Czech language in English classes?
 - Translation of texts
 - Instructions
 - Grammar explanation
 - Never
 - Other
10. What is your opinion of translation?
 - It is easier for the teacher
 - It is easier for the students
 - Saves time
 - It confuses students
 - It is a skill that must be practiced
 - Other _____

11. Do you innovate your teaching style or continue to study?

- No
- Yes (what exactly?) _____

Thank you very much for your help
Have nice English lessons!

Markéta Pinkasová

Appendix 2

Games for Teenage Learners

Auditory Learner

Recitation games

These games are any games that involve students repeating language they have had demonstrated or written down for them. They can be used as pronunciation exercise, but also grammar and vocabulary revision.

Chinese Whispers also known as Telephone or Silent Post is a game where the first player whispers a phrase or sentence to the next player. Each player successively whispers what he or she has heard to the next. The last player announces the statement to the entire group. Errors typically accumulate in the retellings, so the statement announced by the last player differs significantly, and often amusingly, from the one uttered by the first.

Jazz Chants is stress and rhythm practice. Choose a jazz chant you want to use and make one copy of the chant for every pair of students in your class. Play the recording for the first time just for fun. Give each student a copy of the recording script, and play the recording again as they listen and read at the same time. Put students into pairs and have them put a small circle above each word that is stressed. Check their answers, then play the recording again as they listen and check. Finally, play the recording one more time and have students sing along.

Karaoke Night is famous singing activity.

Listening games

Vocabulary Scavenger Hunt is often a reading activity where students work in pairs to search through magazines and newspapers for words or pictures that match the class list of vocabulary words. It can be turned into listening, it then involves trying to locate the necessary vocabulary words on multiple tapes at different listening stations.

Cloze Passages is an activity where the students listen to a prepared tape while reading a transcription and filling in any blanks with words they have just heard.

Jigsaw Listening (or reading) is an information gap exercise. Learners hear or read different parts of a text, then exchange information with others in order to complete a

task. It is also an excellent team building game, as the teams send representatives to different listening stations, and then try to reconstruct the story when all the listeners have returned to the team.

Quiz and story building games

Jeopardy is based on quiz show, questions from various fields are asked.

Listening memory games

Story and sentence building games

Madlibs a game where students fill in words to make funny and nonsensical stories.

Visual Learner

Board games

Such games involve making a game board, often based on commercial boards, and using them to practice grammar, vocabulary, phonics, and spelling.

Grammatical Chutes and Ladders

Parts of Speech Path Finding (based on the Candy Land Board)

A Day in the Life (based on the game Life) where students participate in mini-role-plays generated by the roll of the die and scenario cards are all fun to play.

Picture games

*These games use flashcards and for example comic strip that are to be re-written. Other games like **Jeopardy** can be adapted and use pictures.*

Reading games

Reading Treasure Hunts. In its simplest form, a treasure hunt is a series of clues that direct the player to the next clue in the series, and finally to a small surprise or treat. Treasure hunts are wonderfully fun ways to practice reading skills, improve comprehension, and develop memory skills. A variant with color-coded pencils is possible, where the students look for examples of grammar or vocabulary as skimming practice.

Ten Important Sentences with Watermelon, where teams send a representative to put sentences in order, helps with summarizing, working under pressure, and team building. This game has the added bonus of fitting tactile learners as well.

Kinesthetic and Tactile Learner

Spatial Games

Charades is a favorite pantomime game: a word or phrase is acted out without speaking; teammates must get it right

Population Punctuation is a game where all but one person in class has a card with words or punctuation on it and the one person who is 'it' tries to arrange the people at the front of the class so that the cards make a correctly punctuated sentence using as many people as possible.

Craft Games

Lego Negotiations is a game where students have to negotiate with other teams for certain pieces to create their Lego creature according to the directions they've been given. This can be done with home made tangrams if you don't have access to Legos.

Map drawing is another good example, and it can also combine elements of auditory learning since the teacher will tell the students what to draw on their map.

Source:

www.teachingenglishgames.com

www.onestopenglish.com

<http://hubpages.com>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/>

Appendix 3

Preposition Revision

- a) Run towards the door.
 Run away from the door.
 Go round the table.
 Go around the table.
 Go over the table.
 Hide behind the desk.
 Walk along the wall.
 Walk across the class.
 Put the paper above the window.

b)

AT	IN	ON
The weekend	The morning	Sunday
Home	April	1 st April
School	The street	The bus
Supper time	The car	Friday evening
12 o'clock	2011	The train

c)

OF	FOR	AT	WITH	FROM	ABOUT	TO
Afraid	Famous	good	bored	different	Complain	Similar
Proud	Necessary	Bad		borrow	Sorry	listen
Tired	Responsible	look			ask	
Take care	Apologise					
	Ask					
	useful					

d) Test sentences:

1. I get up late on Sunday morning.
2. I was born on 1st May.
3. Christmas is in December.
4. I play tennis at the weekend.
5. I'm sick on the bus but not in a car.
6. I apologise for (am sorry about) my behavior.
7. She's different from her sister.
8. I'm tired of this.
9. I'm good at English.