

**USING EFFECTIVE METHODS IN TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TO  
PRIMARY CLASS STUDENTS**

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**Abstract:** Teaching a foreign language to primary class students can be both challenging and rewarding. It requires the use of effective methods that engage young learners and facilitate their language acquisition. In this article, we will explore some practical and proven techniques to help teachers make language learning an enjoyable and effective experience for primary class students.

**Keywords:**TPRS, Cooperative Learning, multisensory approach, repetition, technology, grammar-translation.

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**Introduction:** Immersion Technique: Surrounded by the Language

One effective method is to create an immersive language learning environment. By surrounding students with the target language, they are more likely to absorb and understand it naturally. Teachers can achieve this by using real-life objects, pictures, and visuals to introduce vocabulary and concepts. Additionally, incorporating songs, stories, and games in the target language will further immerse students in the learning process.

**Total Physical Response (TPR): Actions Speak Louder**

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a teaching method that emphasizes the importance of physical gestures and actions in language learning. It involves providing students with instructions in the target language and asking them to respond through specific physical actions. For example, the teacher may say, "Stand up," and the students will stand up. This method helps students associate words with actions, making language learning more tangible and memorable.

**Cooperative Learning: Learning Together**

Cooperative learning encourages students to work together in small groups to achieve a common language learning goal. This method promotes peer interaction and collaboration, allowing students to practice their language skills in a supportive environment. Teachers can assign group activities such as role-plays, discussions, or language games that require students to communicate and use the target language cooperatively.

**Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS): Storytelling with Actions**

Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) combines storytelling with physical actions, making it an engaging method for teaching a foreign language. In TPRS, the teacher tells a story in the target language and incorporates actions that reflect the story's events. Students follow along, responding to the story using the target language and corresponding actions. This method not only enhances language comprehension but also encourages creativity and imagination.

**Multisensory Approach: Engaging the Senses**

A multisensory approach caters to the diverse learning styles of primary class students by engaging multiple senses during language learning. Teachers can incorporate visual aids, audio recordings, kinesthetic activities, and tactile materials to reinforce language concepts. For example, using flashcards with pictures, listening to songs, and engaging in hands-on activities

like sorting objects based on their names in the target language can enhance language retention and understanding.

**Visual aids and props:** Using visual aids and props such as flashcards, pictures, and real objects can support vocabulary learning. Visuals help students make connections between words and their meanings, aiding comprehension and retention.

**Songs and chants:** Incorporating songs and chants in foreign language lessons engages students' auditory skills and aids in pronunciation. Simple, repetitive songs and chants can teach vocabulary, grammar structures, and cultural aspects in an enjoyable and memorable way.

**Role-play and drama:** Encouraging students to role-play and act out scenarios in the target language reinforces vocabulary and sentence structures. This method allows students to practice using the language in realistic contexts and boosts their confidence.

**Games and interactive activities:** Utilizing games and interactive activities in the classroom makes learning a foreign language enjoyable and engaging. Games such as Bingo, memory matching, and board games can reinforce vocabulary, grammar, and language skills.

**Cultural immersion:** Exposing students to the culture of the target language fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation for the language. This can be done through storytelling, cultural celebrations, and exploring authentic resources like videos, books, and songs.

**Repetition and reinforcement:** Consistent reinforcement is crucial for young learners. Regularly reviewing and practicing previously taught vocabulary and structures through quizzes, worksheets, and interactive exercises helps solidify their learning.

**Incorporating technology:** Utilizing technology such as interactive language learning apps, online games, and educational websites can make foreign language learning more interactive and engaging for primary class students.

**Collaboration and communication:** Promoting collaborative learning and encouraging students to communicate in the target language with their peers creates an authentic learning environment. Class discussions, group projects, and language partnerships encourage students to use the language actively.

**Positive reinforcement:** Celebrating students' progress and successes with rewards, praise, and certificates encourages their motivation and confidence in learning a foreign language. Remember, each student is unique, and adapting these methods to suit their learning styles and abilities will improve the effectiveness of teaching a foreign language to primary class students.

### Grammar-translation

Those who've studied an ancient language like Latin or Sanskrit have likely used this method. It involves learning grammar rules, reading original texts and translating both from and into the target language.

You don't really learn to speak—although, to be fair, it's hard to practice speaking languages that have no remaining native speakers.

For the longest time, this approach was also commonly used for teaching modern foreign languages. Though it's fallen out of favor, there are some benefits to it for occasional use.

With grammar-translation, you might give your students a brief passage in the target language, provide the new vocabulary and give them time to try translating. The reading might include a new verb tense, a new case or a complex grammatical construction.

When it occurs, speaking might only consist of a word or phrase and is typically in the context of completing the exercises. Explanations of the material are in the native language.

After the assignment, you could give students a series of translation sentences or a brief paragraph in the native language for them to translate into the target language as homework.

#### **Direct**

The direct method, also known as the natural approach, was a response to the grammar-translation method. Here, the emphasis is on the spoken language.

Based on observations of children learning their native tongues, this approach centers on listening and comprehension at the beginning of the language learning process.

Lessons are taught in the target language—in fact, the native language is strictly forbidden. A typical lesson might involve viewing pictures while the teacher repeats the vocabulary words, then listening to recordings of these words used in a comprehensible dialogue.

Once students have had time to listen and absorb the sounds of the target language, speaking is encouraged at all times, especially because grammar instruction isn't taught explicitly.

Rather, students should learn grammar inductively. Allow them to use the language naturally, then gently correct mistakes and give praise to proper language usage. (Note that many have found this method of grammar instruction insufficient.)

Direct method activities might include pantomiming, word-picture association, question-answer patterns, dialogues and role playing.

#### **Audio-lingual**

The theory behind the audio-lingual approach is that repetition is the mother of all learning. This methodology emphasizes drill work in order to make answers to questions instinctive and automatic.

This approach gives highest priority to the spoken form of the target language. New information is first heard by students; written forms come only after extensive drilling. Classes are generally held in the target language.

An example of an audio-lingual activity is a substitution drill. The instructor might start with a basic sentence, such as "I see the ball." Then they hold up a series of other photos for students to substitute for the word "ball." These exercises are drilled into students until they get the pronunciations and rhythm right.

The audio-lingual approach borrows from the behaviorist school of psychology, so languages are taught through a system of reinforcement. Reinforcements are anything that makes students feel good about themselves or the situation—clapping, a sticker, etc.

#### **Conclusion**

Teaching a foreign language to primary class students requires the use of effective methods that cater to their unique learning needs. By implementing the immersion technique, Total Physical

Response (TPR), cooperative learning, Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS), and a multisensory approach, teachers can create an engaging and effective language learning environment. By nurturing language skills from an early age, educators can empower students to become confident communicators in a foreign language.

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