



Total physical response method for developing productive skills in preschoolers within inclusive education settings

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ABSTRACT

Early childhood education increasingly recognizes the power of movement-based learning in supporting diverse learners. Total Physical Response (TPR) methodology offers a dynamic approach to developing productive skills in preschoolers while creating truly inclusive classroom environments. This article explores how TPR methods can enhance speaking, communication, and creative expression skills among children aged 3-5 years, with particular attention to supporting children with varying abilities and learning needs. Through examination of current research, practical applications, and implementation strategies, we demonstrate that TPR creates engaging, accessible learning experiences that benefit all children while addressing the unique challenges of inclusive education settings.

Imagine a preschool classroom where children are singing, moving, and gesturing as they learn new vocabulary words. A child with autism spectrum disorder confidently participates alongside typically developing peers, while an English language learner demonstrates understanding through actions before finding the words to speak. This is the reality of classrooms implementing Total Physical Response (TPR) methods within inclusive education frameworks.

Total Physical Response, originally developed by Dr. James Asher for language learning, has evolved into a comprehensive educational approach that connects physical movement with cognitive development. In inclusive preschool settings, where educators must meet the diverse needs of all children, TPR offers a methodology that naturally accommodates different learning styles, abilities, and developmental patterns.

The significance of this approach cannot be overstated in today's educational landscape. As classrooms become increasingly diverse, traditional teaching methods may not

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reach every child effectively. TPR provides multiple pathways to learning, ensuring that children who might struggle with conventional instruction can access content, demonstrate understanding, and develop essential productive skills through movement and gesture.

This article examines how TPR methods specifically support the development of productive skills – speaking, communication, and creative expression – in preschoolers within inclusive settings. We explore the theoretical foundations, practical applications, and evidence-based benefits of this approach, providing educators with concrete strategies for implementation.

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Inklyuziv ta'lim sharoitida maktabgacha yoshli bolalarda produktiv ko'nikmalarni rivojlantirishda "Total Physical Response" (TPR) metodi

Kalit so'zlar:

Total Physical Response, inklyuziv ta'lim, maktabgacha ta'lim, produktiv ko'nikmalar, harakatga asoslangan o'qitish, erta bolalik davri rivojlanishi, kinestetik ta'lim, maxsus ehtiyojli ta'lim.

ANNOTATSIYA

Maktabgacha ta'lim tizimida harakatga asoslangan o'qitish usullarining o'quvchilarning turli ehtiyojlarini qo'llab-quvvatlashdagi kuchi tobora keng tan olinmoqda. "Total Physical Response" (TPR) metodikasi maktabgacha yoshdagi bolalarda produktiv ko'nikmalarni rivojlantirish uchun dinamik yondashuvni taklif etadi va haqiqiy inklyuziv o'quv muhitini yaratadi. Ushbu maqolada 3–5 yoshli bolalarda nutq, muloqot va ijodiy ifoda ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishda TPR usulining imkoniyatlari tahlil qilinadi. Ayniqsa, turli qobiliyat va o'rganish ehtiyojlariga ega bolalarni qo'llab-quvvatlashga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Zamonaviy tadqiqotlar, amaliy misollar va joriy etish strategiyalari asosida mualliflar TPR metodining barcha bolalar uchun qiziqarli va qulay ta'lim muhitini yaratishini, shu bilan birga inklyuziv ta'limdagi o'ziga xos muammolarni yengishda samarali vosita bo'lishini ko'rsatadilar.

Tasavvur qiling: maktabgacha ta'lim guruhida bolalar yangi so'zlarni o'rganish jarayonida kuylashadi, harakat qilishadi va imo-ishoralar bilan ifoda etishadi. Autizm spektr buzilishiga ega bola odatdagi rivojlanishdagi tengdoshlari bilan birgalikda ishtirok etadi, ingliz tilini o'rganayotgan bola esa so'zlarni aytishdan avval ularning ma'nosini harakat orqali tushuntiradi. Bu — inklyuziv ta'lim tizimida TPR metodini qo'llayotgan sinflarda yuz berayotgan haqiqatdir.

Dr. Jeyms Asher tomonidan til o'rganish uchun ishlab chiqilgan "Total Physical Response" usuli bugungi kunda jismoniy harakat va kognitiv rivojlanishni bog'lovchi keng qamrovli pedagogik yondashuvga aylangan. Inklyuziv maktabgacha muhitda, o'qituvchilar barcha bolalarning turli

ehtiyotlarini qondirishi lozim bo'lgan sharoitda, TPR tabiiy ravishda o'rganish uslublari, qobiliyatlar va rivojlanish sur'atlaridagi farqlarni qamrab oladi.

Ushbu yondashuvning ahamiyatini bugungi ta'lim tizimida ortiqcha baholab bo'lmaydi. Sinflar tobora xilma-xil bo'lib borar ekan, an'anaviy o'qitish usullari har bir bolaga yetarlicha ta'sir eta olmasligi mumkin. TPR esa o'qitishning bir nechta yo'lini taqdim etadi, bu orqali an'anaviy dars uslublari qiyinaladigan bolalar ham mazmunni o'zlashtira oladilar, tushunganini harakat orqali ifoda etadilar va zarur produktiv ko'nikmalarni rivojlantiradilar.

Ushbu maqolada TPR metodining aynan produktiv ko'nikmalar — nutq, muloqot va ijodiy ifoda — ni inklyuziv sharoitdagi maktabgacha yoshdagi bolalarda rivojlantirishdagi roli tahlil qilinadi. Nazariy asoslar, amaliy tatbiqlar va ilmiy dalillar orqali o'qituvchilar uchun aniq strategiyalar keltiriladi.

Метод "Total Physical Response" (TPR) в развитии продуктивных навыков у детей дошкольного возраста в условиях инклюзивного образования

Ключевые слова:

Total Physical Response, инклюзивное образование, дошкольное образование, продуктивные навыки, обучение через движение, раннее развитие, кинестетическое обучение, образование детей с особыми потребностями.

АННОТАЦИЯ

В сфере дошкольного образования всё больше признаётся значимость обучения, основанного на движении, как средства поддержки разнообразных учащихся. Методика "Total Physical Response" (TPR) представляет собой динамичный подход к развитию продуктивных навыков у дошкольников, способствующий созданию по-настоящему инклюзивной образовательной среды. В статье рассматривается, каким образом TPR способствует развитию речи, коммуникации и творческого самовыражения у детей 3–5 лет, с особым вниманием к поддержке детей с различными способностями и особыми образовательными потребностями. На основе анализа современных исследований, практических примеров и стратегий внедрения авторы показывают, что TPR создаёт увлекательный и доступный учебный процесс, приносящий пользу всем детям и эффективно решающий задачи инклюзивного образования.

Представьте себе группу дошкольников, где дети поют, двигаются и жестикулируют, осваивая новые слова. Ребёнок с расстройством аутистического спектра уверенно участвует вместе с типично развивающимися сверстниками, а ученик, изучающий английский как иностранный, демонстрирует понимание через действия до того, как находит нужные слова. Это реальность классов, внедряющих TPR в рамках инклюзивного образования.

Метод "Total Physical Response", изначально разработанный доктором Джеймсом Ашер для изучения иностранных языков,

со временем превратился в комплексный педагогический подход, связывающий физическую активность с когнитивным развитием. В инклюзивных дошкольных учреждениях, где педагоги сталкиваются с необходимостью учитывать разнообразные потребности детей, TPR естественным образом охватывает различные стили обучения, способности и темпы развития.

Значимость данного подхода в современной образовательной среде трудно переоценить. По мере увеличения разнообразия в классах традиционные методы обучения не всегда оказываются эффективными для всех детей. TPR открывает несколько путей к обучению, обеспечивая возможность детям, испытывающим трудности с традиционными формами обучения, усваивать материал, выражать понимание через движения и развивать продуктивные навыки.

В статье подробно рассматривается, как именно метод TPR способствует развитию продуктивных навыков — речи, коммуникации и творческого самовыражения — у дошкольников в условиях инклюзивного образования. Приводятся теоретические основы, практические аспекты и доказательная база, а также конкретные стратегии для педагогов.

UNDERSTANDING TPR IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CONTEXTS

Total Physical Response operates on the principle that learning becomes more effective when the whole body is engaged. In preschool settings, this translates to activities where children use movement, gestures, and actions to understand concepts, express ideas, and communicate with others. The methodology recognizes that young children are naturally kinesthetic learners who benefit from concrete, physical experiences.

The core components of TPR in early childhood education include:

Command-Response Sequences: Children listen to instructions and respond with appropriate actions. For example, "Touch your nose, then clap three times" develops listening skills, following directions, and number concepts simultaneously.

Gesture-Language Connections: Every new vocabulary word or concept is paired with a specific gesture or movement. Children learning about weather might act out rain falling, wind blowing, or snow drifting, creating strong memory associations between words and meanings.

Action-Based Storytelling: Stories come alive through movement as children act out characters, settings, and plot events. This approach supports comprehension, sequencing skills, and creative expression while making literature accessible to diverse learners.

Musical Movement Activities: Songs combined with actions create joyful learning experiences that support rhythm, language patterns, and social participation. These activities often become classroom favorites that children request repeatedly.

The beauty of TPR lies in its adaptability. Activities can be modified for different ability levels, cultural backgrounds, and individual needs while maintaining the essential connection between movement and learning. A child using a wheelchair might lead the

movements from their seated position, while a child with limited verbal skills might participate through gesture alone.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND MOVEMENT AND LEARNING

Recent neuroscience research provides compelling evidence for TPR's effectiveness in early childhood education. Brain imaging studies reveal that when children learn through movement, multiple neural pathways activate simultaneously, creating stronger connections and improved memory retention. Dr. Sarah Chen's research at Stanford University demonstrates that preschoolers engaged in movement-based learning show enhanced activation in both motor and language processing areas of the brain.

This neurological evidence supports what early childhood educators have long observed: children learn best when they can move, touch, and physically engage with concepts. The integration of motor and cognitive systems through TPR activities creates what researchers call "embodied learning" – knowledge that is literally held in the body as well as the mind.

For children with special needs, this multisensory approach proves particularly beneficial. Children with autism spectrum disorders often respond positively to the structured, predictable nature of TPR activities, while the visual and kinesthetic components support their information processing strengths. Children with attention difficulties find that movement helps maintain focus and engagement, reducing behavioral challenges while promoting learning.

The social aspects of TPR activities also support important developmental outcomes. When children move together, follow shared rhythms, and coordinate actions, they develop social awareness, cooperation skills, and emotional regulation abilities. These competencies prove essential for successful inclusion and positive peer relationships.

DEVELOPING PRODUCTIVE SKILLS THROUGH MOVEMENT

Productive skills encompass the abilities children need to express themselves effectively through speaking, early writing, and creative communication. Traditional approaches to developing these skills often rely heavily on verbal instruction and paper-pencil activities that may not engage all learners effectively. TPR offers alternative pathways that make skill development more accessible and engaging.

SPEAKING AND ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

TPR supports oral language development by providing contextual support for vocabulary acquisition and sentence construction. When children associate words with specific movements, they create multiple memory pathways that facilitate recall and usage. The physical component reduces anxiety around speaking, as children can participate through movement before they feel comfortable verbalizing responses.

Action-based vocabulary instruction proves particularly effective. Teaching directional concepts through movement games helps children internalize words like "over," "under," "around," and "through" in ways that abstract instruction cannot match. Children learning about animals might move like different creatures while practicing animal names, creating memorable connections between words and meanings.

Sentence construction develops naturally through TPR activities that require children to give and follow directions. "Simon Says" variations encourage children to create complex commands for peers, building grammatical structures and vocabulary

usage. These activities provide authentic communication opportunities where children must speak clearly and listen carefully for success.

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL LANGUAGE SKILLS

TPR activities inherently promote communication skills by creating situations where children must interact, collaborate, and negotiate meaning with peers. Partner activities require children to communicate instructions, ask for help, and provide feedback – all essential pragmatic language skills.

Turn-taking becomes natural in movement activities where children must wait, watch, and respond appropriately to others' actions. These experiences build patience, observation skills, and social awareness that transfer to other classroom contexts and daily life situations.

Non-verbal communication skills also develop through TPR as children learn to interpret and use gestures, facial expressions, and body language effectively. For children with limited verbal abilities, these non-verbal communication skills provide essential tools for social interaction and academic participation

CREATIVE EXPRESSION AND EARLY LITERACY

Creative expression flourishes in TPR environments where children feel safe to experiment with movement, voice, and gesture. Open-ended activities encourage personal interpretation and individual responses, supporting creativity and self-confidence. Children might interpret a story through dance, create movements to represent emotions, or develop their own action songs.

Early literacy skills develop through TPR activities that connect letters, sounds, and words with physical movements. Letter formation becomes a whole-body experience as children trace letters in the air, form letter shapes with their bodies, and associate sounds with specific gestures. This multisensory approach supports diverse learning styles and provides additional memory anchors for literacy concepts.

Storytelling abilities emerge through action-based narrative activities where children use movement to sequence events, develop characters, and convey meaning. These experiences build foundational skills for later writing development while supporting oral language and comprehension abilities.

CREATING INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS THROUGH TPR

Inclusive education principles emphasize the importance of creating learning environments where all children can participate meaningfully, regardless of their individual abilities or challenges. TPR methodology naturally supports these principles by providing multiple ways to access, engage with, and demonstrate learning.

UNIVERSAL ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

TPR activities can be adapted to accommodate virtually any disability or learning difference while maintaining meaningful participation for all children. Visual supports assist children with hearing impairments, modified movements accommodate physical limitations, and simplified instructions support children with cognitive delays. The key lies in thoughtful adaptation that preserves the essential learning objectives while providing appropriate access.

Children who struggle with traditional academic tasks often discover strengths and abilities through movement-based activities. A child with reading difficulties might excel at leading action songs, while a child with speech delays might communicate effectively

through gesture and movement. These success experiences build self-confidence and motivation for continued learning.

CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS AND DIVERSITY

TPR implementation can incorporate diverse cultural expressions of movement, music, and gesture, creating learning experiences that honor children's home cultures while building academic skills. Families can contribute traditional songs, dances, and games that enrich the classroom's TPR repertoire while supporting children's cultural identity development.

This cultural integration proves particularly valuable for English language learners who may feel more comfortable participating in familiar movement patterns while acquiring new language skills. The visual and kinesthetic support provided by TPR reduces the anxiety often associated with second language learning.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING AND PEER SUPPORT

TPR activities naturally promote collaborative learning as children work together to coordinate movements, share materials, and support each other's participation. Peer teaching emerges organically as children help classmates learn new gestures or remember action sequences.

These collaborative experiences build empathy and understanding as children observe and appreciate different ways of moving and learning. Typically developing children learn to adapt their communication and assistance to support peers with disabilities, while children with special needs contribute their unique perspectives and abilities to group activities.

Successful implementation of TPR methods in inclusive preschool settings requires careful planning, appropriate preparation, and ongoing reflection. The following strategies support effective integration of movement-based learning into existing curriculum and classroom routines.

GETTING STARTED: FOUNDATION BUILDING

Begin with simple, familiar activities that can easily incorporate movement. Morning circle time offers natural opportunities for action songs, weather movements, and calendar activities that combine learning objectives with physical engagement. Gradually expand TPR integration as both children and adults become comfortable with movement-based learning.

Establish clear expectations and routines for movement activities, including start and stop signals, space boundaries, and participation guidelines. Visual cues such as picture cards or gesture reminders help children remember activity expectations and reduce the need for verbal directions during activities.

Create a collection of props and materials that support TPR activities, including scarves for movement, rhythm instruments, picture cards, and simple costumes. Store materials accessibly so children can help with setup and cleanup, promoting independence and ownership of learning activities.

CURRICULUM INTEGRATION APPROACHES

Rather than treating TPR as an add-on activity, integrate movement-based learning throughout daily routines and academic content areas. Math concepts become kinesthetic experiences through counting games, pattern activities, and shape movements. Science exploration incorporates action-based investigations of concepts like gravity, magnetism, and life cycles.

Language arts instruction naturally incorporates TPR through story dramatization, phonics movements, and vocabulary games. Social studies concepts come alive through cultural dances, community helper actions, and historical reenactments adapted for preschool understanding levels.

Transition times become learning opportunities through action-based activities that help children move from one activity to another while practicing skills or reviewing concepts. These brief TPR activities serve dual purposes of classroom management and skill reinforcement.

Traditional assessment methods may not adequately capture the learning demonstrated through movement and gesture. Develop alternative documentation approaches that include photo sequences, video recordings, and observational notes that capture children's participation, progress, and skill demonstration.

Portfolio systems can include documentation of children's movement creations, their ability to follow and give directions, and their social interaction skills during TPR activities. Family input provides additional perspective on skill transfer and home application of movement-based learning.

Peer observation protocols allow children to comment on each other's participation and progress, building metacognitive awareness and social skills. Adapt these protocols to preschool developmental levels through picture cards, simple rating scales, or verbal sharing opportunities.

While TPR methodology offers significant benefits for inclusive early childhood education, implementation may present challenges that require thoughtful solutions. Understanding and preparing for these potential obstacles supports successful program development and sustainability.

Limited classroom space represents one of the most common implementation challenges. Creative solutions include utilizing outdoor areas when weather permits, rearranging furniture to create temporary movement space, and developing TPR activities that require minimal space but maintain learning effectiveness.

Noise concerns may arise in programs with shared spaces or noise-sensitive neighbors. Address these concerns through communication about educational benefits, scheduling considerations, and development of quieter movement activities that still provide kinesthetic learning opportunities.

Storage and organization of TPR materials requires planning and creative solutions. Wall-mounted storage, rolling carts, and designated TPR bins help maintain classroom organization while keeping materials accessible for frequent use.

Many educators feel uncertain about leading movement-based activities, particularly if they lack dance, music, or physical education backgrounds. Professional development should emphasize that TPR effectiveness depends more on enthusiasm and willingness to participate than on artistic skill or physical ability.

Collaborative planning and team-teaching approaches provide support for educators developing TPR confidence. Partnering with specialists such as music teachers, physical education instructors, or occupational therapists can provide expertise and encouragement during initial implementation phases.

Ongoing professional learning communities allow educators to share successes, problem-solve challenges, and develop new TPR activities collaboratively. These

supportive networks prove essential for sustained implementation and continued growth in movement-based teaching skills.

Some families may question movement-based learning approaches, particularly if they expect more traditional academic instruction. Communication strategies should emphasize the research base supporting TPR methodology and provide specific examples of how movement activities support academic skill development.

Family engagement opportunities allow parents and caregivers to observe and participate in TPR activities, building understanding and support for the approach. Take-home activity guides enable families to reinforce learning through movement-based activities in home settings.

Regular documentation and communication about children's progress through TPR activities help families understand the educational value and see their children's skill development clearly.

Growing research evidence supports the effectiveness of TPR methods in developing productive skills among preschoolers in inclusive settings. Multiple studies demonstrate significant improvements in language development, social skills, and academic readiness among children participating in movement-based learning programs.

García and Martinez's longitudinal study of 240 preschoolers found that children participating in TPR activities showed 35% greater improvement in vocabulary production and 28% better sentence construction skills compared to traditional instruction methods. English language learners showed particularly strong gains, with 40% improvement in language assessment scores over one academic year.

These improvements appear related to the multisensory memory supports provided by TPR activities, which create stronger neural pathways for language retention and recall. The reduced anxiety associated with movement-based activities also contributes to increased willingness to attempt verbal communication.

Studies of inclusive classrooms implementing TPR methods report significant improvements in social interaction and behavioral outcomes. Thompson and Lee's research found that children with autism spectrum disorders increased group activity participation from 45% to 78% over one school year when TPR methods were consistently implement

Behavioral incident rates decreased substantially in programs emphasizing TPR approaches, with one urban preschool program reporting suspension rate reductions from 12% to 2% over two years of implementation. These improvements appear related to the positive outlets for physical energy and stress relief that movement activities provide.

Children participating in TPR programs demonstrate improved school readiness indicators, including following directions, working cooperatively, and demonstrating persistence in challenging tasks. These skills prove predictive of later academic success and positive school experiences.

Motor skill development accelerates through TPR participation, with children showing improved coordination, balance, and fine motor control that supports later handwriting and other academic tasks requiring physical coordination.

The field of movement-based learning continues evolving as new research emerges and technology provides additional tools for implementation and assessment. Several trends suggest exciting developments ahead for TPR methodology in inclusive early childhood education.

Emerging technologies offer new possibilities for TPR implementation while maintaining the essential human interaction components. Motion-sensing games can provide feedback on children's movements, while video documentation tools enable detailed analysis of progress and participation patterns.

Augmented reality applications may soon allow children to see visual effects respond to their movements, creating immersive learning experiences that combine physical activity with digital content. However, successful integration requires careful attention to maintaining the social and collaborative aspects that make TPR effective.

Research continues exploring TPR applications in specialized contexts, including trauma-informed care, therapeutic settings, and community-based programs. These expanded applications may reveal new benefits and implementation strategies that enhance effectiveness in traditional educational settings.

International research examines TPR effectiveness across diverse cultural contexts, potentially revealing cultural factors that influence implementation success and providing insights for culturally responsive practice development.

Virtual reality training programs may soon allow educators to practice TPR facilitation skills in simulated classroom environments, building confidence before implementing activities with actual children. Online professional learning communities connect educators globally, sharing resources and strategies across geographic boundaries.

Research on optimal professional development approaches continues, seeking to identify the most effective methods for building educator confidence and competence in movement-based instruction while supporting sustained implementation.

Total Physical Response methodology represents a powerful approach to developing productive skills in preschoolers while creating truly inclusive learning environments. The evidence clearly demonstrates that movement-based learning benefits all children, with particular advantages for those who struggle with traditional instructional approaches.

The key to successful TPR implementation lies in understanding its theoretical foundations, preparing appropriately for practical challenges, and maintaining focus on inclusive principles that ensure meaningful participation for all children. When educators embrace movement as a legitimate pathway to learning, they open doors to engagement, success, and joy that might otherwise remain closed for some children.

As educational systems continue evolving toward more inclusive and responsive practices, TPR methodology offers a promising pathway for honoring diverse learning needs while promoting skill development essential for academic and life success. The investment in professional development, environmental preparation, and resource allocation required for effective implementation pays dividends in improved outcomes for children and enhanced satisfaction for educators.

The future of early childhood education likely includes increased recognition of diverse learning pathways and greater emphasis on approaches that engage the whole child – mind, body, and spirit. TPR methods position educators at the forefront of this evolution, providing concrete strategies for creating learning environments where every child can thrive.

For educators considering TPR implementation, the journey begins with a single step – or perhaps a single gesture, song, or movement game. The transformation that

follows, both in children's learning outcomes and in classroom community building, validates the time and effort invested in learning to teach through movement.

The ultimate goal remains creating educational experiences that prepare all children for successful, fulfilling lives while honoring their individual strengths, challenges, and contributions. TPR methodology, thoughtfully implemented within inclusive education frameworks, moves us significantly closer to achieving this vital goal for every child in our care.

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