

Unit 2

Total Physical Response and Picture Book

Cast:

- Missionary Li Wei
- Mr. Mahmut
- Mr. Ahmet
- Little group of Muslims
- Teacher Zhang Dong
- 4 or 5 students

Scene 2.1. Li Wei talking into camera in Restaurant. In the background Mr. Mahmut and a little group of Muslims are eating a beef and noodle dish.

Missionary Li Wei: Hello! The last time we met I told you how I became interested in serving Christ among Muslims through Mr. Mahmut. Mr. Mahmut even started teaching me the language, using a simple version of what I later learned was the “Look and Listen” technique.

One day I asked Mr. Mahmut just what foods he, as a Muslim, was allowed to eat. He told me Muslims eat only food that was “halal”. Halal, he said, means "permissible". I learned from him that foods which were not “halal” included anything that had a pig-based product in it, and carnivorous animals (though not fish), reptiles, certain birds, blood, alcohol and such things.

I talked to my parents about this afterwards, and we decided to make a few special dishes that were “halal”. I told Mr. Mahmut about our idea, and asked him if he could provide us with some halal recipes of his favorite meals. Well, Mr. Mahmut was delighted! He said that the food was almost as good as his mother’s cooking!”. He told some of his Muslim friends about us, and we soon had a regular trickle Muslims visiting us. I got to know some of the regulars, and tried to practice the words and phrases I was learning from Mr. Mahmut with them.

I realized, however, that I would not get very far learning the names of a few objects from Mr. Mahmut. I needed a more systematic approach, and told Mr. Mahmut about that desire. He promised to bring some simple readers and a grammar book the next time he came. He also gave me a really good suggestion. “Why don’t you ask Mr. Ahmet to teach you,” he said. Mr. Ahmet was one of the new regulars at our restaurant. “He seems to have extra time,” he added. “Give him a free meal in exchange for the lesson, and I’ll bet you he’ll be here like a shot!”

Well, I thought that was a great idea. I talked it over with my parents. They were hesitant at first. Although they were happy for me to share my faith with Muslims and very happy with the extra business, I could understand their hesitancy. They didn't want any problems. Nor did they want to see me locked into some kind of arrangement that would be hard to get out of. Nobody wants a freeloader showing up at their restaurant for the rest of his life! I got my parents to let me try it for 2 weeks, after which we'd reevaluate the whole thing.

The next time Mr. Ahmet came I told him that Mr. Mahmut had been teaching me their language, but that I wanted a couple of lessons just learn a few simple sentences. Would he be willing to help out for a couple of weeks? If he did, we would be happy to give him a free halal meal for each lesson.

Mr. Ahmet's shiny eyes smiled brightly, and he said it would be a privilege to teach me his language. He had spare time midmornings on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. That worked well for us, for after the morning breakfast rush, mid-mornings were slow times in the restaurant.

The next Monday Mr. Ahmet showed up. He had a big grammar book with him, opened it up and started explaining in bad Chinese about "irregular verbs", "the nominative case", "mood", "subjunctives" and a lot of other difficult stuff. For over an hour he tried to explain things to me, and I would nod every so often, but I had no idea what Mr. Ahmet was trying to explain. After the lesson Mr. Ahmet ate his free meal, thanked me and my parents, and promised he'd be back on Wednesday.

I felt very discouraged. Learning a foreign language suddenly seemed impossibly difficult... I hadn't understood a thing from Mr. Ahmet's complicated explanations. In fact, I doubted if I would get my mind around all of those things even if he came every day for a year!

My parents were right to limit this experiment to two weeks, I thought. We'll feed Mr. Ahmet for two weeks, I'll listen to him, and then I'll give up on this silly idea...

Still, something in my spirit resisted giving up this easy. There had to be a way forward... I knelt down, closed my eyes and cried out to the Lord. "Oh Lord," I prayed, "I would love to be able to share with Muslims in their own language all about your holiness and your way of salvation. I want to communicate meaningfully to them about your hatred of sin—that you hated it so much that sent Jesus to this earth to bear your wrath..."

Suddenly Mr. Mahmut observation came to mind: children are the world's best language learners... I also remembered Christ's words: unless you become like little children you cannot inherit the kingdom!

Children don't learn language by taking complex grammar lessons, I thought. How do they learn? I thought of young nephew, baby Bao. He was just beginning to walk, and

got into everything. My older sister was always reprimanding or ordering him: “Bao, don’t touch the knife. Bao, sit still while I feed you. Bao, open your mouth wide! There, you can do it! Bao, walk to daddy! Bao, come here boy. Oh Bao, did you tip over the laundry basket? Bad boy... Bao! Don’t touch the stove, you’ll burn yourself. Bao! Don’t stick your fingers into the electric socket—you’ll kill yourself!”

They were all very simple sentences, I thought. Just commands that Bao had to follow. I could do that, I thought. If Mr. Ahmet were to give me a bunch of simple commands, I could obey them, just like baby Bao. I got a notebook and wrote some commands in Chinese: stand up, sit down, sit on the chair, go, go to the door, open the door, close the door, pick up the notebook, pick up the cup, put the cup down, put the cup on the plate, pick up the plate...

Cut

Scene 2.2. Missionary Li Wei models Total Physical Response with Mr. Ahmet

Title: The Total Physical Response Technique

Missionary Li Wei: *(Mr. Ahmet shows up at the door up with his big grammar books)*
Hello, Mr. Ahmet, Welcome.

Mr. Ahmet: Thank you very much. Are you ready for the lesson?

Missionary Li Wei: I am indeed. However, before you give explain a new point of grammar, would you be so kind as to drill these commands with me? You simply choose one of the commands from the list, demonstrate it, then tell me to do it. We’ll do that until I’ve got them memorized.”

Mr. Ahmet: Sure. *He puts the grammar book away, and reads over the list. Then he stands up.* “Stand” (in English). *Missionary Li Wei obeys.* “Sit” (in English).

Missionary Li Wei obeys. They learn the rest of the commands on the list. Soon Mr. Ahmet is telling Missionary Li Wei to stand up, sit down, sit on the chair, go, go to the door, open the door, close the door, pick up the notebook, pick up the cup, put the cup down, put the cup on the plate, pick up the plate...

Fade and Cut

Scene 2.3. Missionary Li Wei shows Mr. Ahmet out the door and turns to the camera

Missionary Li Wei: Well, that was a very successful lesson! He kept adding more commands, and I kept obeying. Something I’d mix up a command, and Mr. Ahmet

would smile and say in “No” in his own language. Then he’d model the right action. Before we knew it we’d spent an hour just having me act out all the commands on the list! Mr. Ahmet really got into it. When we’d gone through my list he started adding stuff of his own. By that time I was so mentally tired, however, I said, “Enough! I’m exhausted! Time to eat and rest!”

I was thrilled to learn all the new words and simple sentences—and we never even opened Mr. Ahmet’s difficult grammar book! In fact, I even thought Mr. Ahmet looked relieved when he left!

Cut

Scene 2.4. Teacher Zhang Dong explains TPR (Total Physical Response)

Teacher Zhang Dong: Missionary Li Wei discovered a very useful language learning technique. It’s called Total Physical Response (TPR). With TPR you respond to commands spoken in the target language. TPR is an excellent way to begin working with a Language Helper, for it re-activate the brain’s language learning capacity. You begin to associate words directly with items and actions, not with Chinese. There is no “back-translation” involved. You also begin to “sense” the language and to “internalize” basic grammar, like word order. Also, anxiety is kept low.

Although TPR is easy, it works a lot better if you plan your sessions in advance. This method will not be successful if you just make it up as you go along. So, like missionary Li Wei, write out the different action words (verbs) you want to learn. Then demonstrate the technique, using one of the verbs you want to learn, so the Language Helper understands what you are trying to listen and respond to.

Here is a Tip: Demonstrate the technique by giving commands in Chinese to a learning partner, if you have one, so the Language Helper can see what you mean. Then record the Language Helper giving the commands while you carry out the appropriate action. Have the Language Helper give the commands repeatedly and randomly until you can respond quickly without thinking in Chinese. Encourage the Language Helper to correct any wrong responses. Write down the commands at the end of the session.

After your session is over listen to the recording of the commands. Perform the actions as you listen, or make simple drawings that illustrate them to associate the meaning with the sound. Then listen to the recording again, and focus on the pronunciation. Practice mimicking the commands from the recording when you feel ready.

There are lots of areas of language (something called “semantic realms”) where you can practice TPR. Can you think of some?

Student #1: General body movements?

Teacher Zhang Dong: Right. Can you give me some examples?

Students brainstorm: Go in, go out, walk, run, stop, crawl, raise (right or left) hand, clap your hand, read, write, jump, eat, drink, listen, read, speak, stand up, sit down, look at, open, close, wake up, scream, laugh, tip toe, clean, hop, bend over, squat, face (me, the wall, etc.), lift/lower (arm (left leg, etc.)), shake my hand, kiss me (on the cheek), make a fist, snap your fingers, wave, drink, iron, pay, spit, look at, listen to/hear, carry on shoulder/ head/hand, hold, kick, throw, pick up, set down, take, give, hit, pinch, feel, drop, play, push, pull, wind, twirl, turn, stop, be quiet, tie (up)/untie, study, think, greet, play a game, play an instrument, discipline children, watch TV, dig, feed, cover, uncover, pray, ask/request, light (match/fire), put on (ring, clothes, etc), wash (self), wash (clothes), swim, dive, drive, sleep, wake up, shave, cut hair, cut nails, call, eat – banana, orange, etc., lie down, get up, go down (staircase, etc.), go up/across, come up/down, turn left/right/around, skip, wiggle finger, tap foot...

Teacher Zhang Dong: Wow! Yes, those are all things you can get your Language Helper to get you to respond to. Here are a bunch of TPR things your LH can get you to do just using your face: Smile, cough, laugh, cry, yawn, blink, frown, nap, sing, sniff, raise eye brows, whisper, belch, nod head, shake head, scratch, breath, kiss, smile, open/close eyes, sneeze, hiccup, hum, open/close your mouth, stick out your tongue, put your tongue back in, blink, wiggle your nose...

Can you think of other words, maybe some general verbs (action words) you can use with objects?

Students brainstorm: Well, I can think of some: touch, pick up, put down, put it back (return), show me, drop, move, give me (give him, etc.), take it back, throw, catch, turn over (flip), put the _____ on (under etc.) the _____, push, pull, lift.

Teacher Zhang Dong: Lets think of words pertaining to a kitchen. That's something missionary Li Wei is familiar with.

Students brainstorm: Cup, plate, bowl, chop sticks, knife, fork, spoon, napkin/tissue, dish, big round serving tray, tray you'd serve tea or coffee on, table, chair, pan, oven, stove, sink, faucet, counter, cupboard, refrigerator, peel, cut, slice, chop, boil, spill (water/milk), pour, eat, drink, flour, sugar, bread, tea leaves, coffee grounds, rice, nuts, yogurt, candy, drinks, water, milk, juice, soda, yogurt, fruits/veggies, apple, banana, orange, plum, grapes, fig, dates, raisons, lemon, tomato, cucumber, zucchini, onion, carrot, eggplant, small eggplant, potato, garlic, parsley, lettuce, grape leaves, celery, mint, cabbage...

Teacher Zhang Dong: Brilliant. The point is that before your Language Helper shows up for the lesson, you have a prepared list of related words, words that belong to the same semantic realm. Your Language Helper then uses these words to give you simple instructions, such as “touch the plate”.

Let's see if we can think of a few more semantic realms. Can you think of words pertaining to, say, a door?

Students brainstorm: Door, key, doorknob, hinge, peephole, doorbell, open the door, close the door, lock the door, unlock the door, look through the peephole, ring the doorbell, knock on the door.

Teacher Zhang Dong: That's right. What is the semantic realm for money?

Students: coin, bill, names of the various coins and bills, pay me 35 cents, put 1 dinar in your pocket, give me change for this 1 dinar bill, exchange this amount of money into dinars/liras.

Teacher Zhang Dong: Can you think of words having to do with a cassette recorder? This is important, for you want your Language Helper to speak as much to you in his or her native language as possible. Since you will be recording your lessons, you will be talking about your cassette recorder.

Students: button, microphone, speaker, headphones, volume control, DC adapter jack, DC adapter, handle, front, back, side, battery cover, battery, play button, record button, rewind button, fast forward, pause button, cassette, CD, put the cassette/CD in, take cassette? CD out, turn cassette/CD over, push play, turn up the volume, turn down the volume, stop the tape, push pause button, rewind the tape, fast forward, turn on, turn off, etc.

Teacher Zhang Dong: What about words that have to do with a book? What is the semantic realm of books?

Students: title, author, cover, table of contents, index, chapter, page, page number, section, paragraph, sentence, period, comma, quotation mark, open the book, close the book, turn to page number, turn the page, turn forward 5 pages, turn back a page, turn back three pages,

Teacher Zhang Dong: Well, I think you've got the idea. There are no end of semantic realms out there, each of which you can explore using TPR. Just make a list of related words, and get your Language Helper to give you commands using those words. You simply act out the commands.

Here are some more ideas. Think of all the words that pertain to a living room: all the different bits of furniture, the lights, curtains, lamps, plugs, TV, bookcase, cords, and whatnot. Or think of the different things that are in a bedroom, like sheets, blankets, coat hangers, mirror, dresser, etc. Or how about the bathroom? Besides the toilet and the tub it has numerous other objects your Language Helper can have you manipulate. Things like toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, plunger, shampoo, dry your hands, wipe off, wash, bath. There is, of course, no end of household items you can do things with, like broom, mop, clothes pin, dustpan, garbage can/bag, etc.

There are different kinds of tools which are used differently, like hammer, saw, wrench, pliers.

Or think of the things you can do with a pen: take off the cap, put the cap back on, write, sign your name, draw a line, circle, square, etc. (*demonstrates as he talks*) Or think of different types of clothing and what you do with them (wear, take off, wash, clean, repair, darn, etc).

You can have your Language Helper tell you to do different things with your voice, like speak, sing, hum, whisper, shout/yell, stop speaking (singing, humming). Besides your voice you have plenty of other body parts you can do things with, like your hair, forehead, eyebrow, eyelash, eye, ear, cheek, nose, lip/lips, mouth, moustache, beard, chin, throat, tooth/teeth, tongue, chest, back, shoulder, belly, arm, leg, thigh, foot, ankle, toes, etc.

Here is a list things you can try to include in your TPR sessions when you are working with different objects:

- requesting/complying/refusing an object/action/assistance/favour
- offering/accepting/declining an object/object
- giving instructions/orders to an employee/child
- making a promise or commitment to future action
- making an apology
- expressing regret/sorrow
- interrupting
- making a social introduction/introducing oneself
- asking/granting/refusing permission
- asking the time
- indicating a desire to enter a home/bidding someone to enter a home

Fade and Cut

Scene 2.5. Missionary Li Wei with picture book

Title: The Picture Book Technique

Missionary Li Wei: Remember how in Lesson 1 we introduced you to the “The Look and Listen Technique”? You can use this technique with pictures as well. This is called the Picture Book Technique, which I picked up from Baby Bao. It is really useful, enabling you to learn vocabulary and basic grammar structures from the first day of language learning. By providing simple information you can building on by going over the same sets of pictures over and over again. With each pass you learn something different.

Here are some basic guidelines to successfully using a picture book: (*shows at each stage what he means*)

Get at least 50-100 pictures that contain one or more people who are involved with either another person, or with objects, for that will help you learn simple sentences later. Arrange the photos in a book, like this.

Create your photo book with later stages of language learning in mind. For instance, you might get a series of pictures which illustrate all the steps involved in a particular procedure (say, cooking a particular meal), or pictures of the major events in the daily cycle, yearly cycle, or life cycle. You can get photographs of major cultural happenings in great detail, and arrange the pictures in a logical, or chronological manner.

First go through photographs and learn the names of the people (man, woman, child, boy, girl, baby, etc.) and objects using the Look and Listen Technique. Don't forget to practice plurals: "These are some boys." "This is a pencil; these are pencils."

Next start learning to recognize some descriptions, such as color, size, shape, condition, or quantity. Also learn to understand sentences in which combinations of objects are named together using TPR. Have your Language Helper tell you things like, "Point to a red ball"; "Point to a blue chair". "Point to a red ball, a blue chair and a white cat".

In real life giving commands can be tricky as many languages have different ways of saying things politely. Have your Language Helper use the most polite forms that still sound natural when giving you instructions—what's the point in mastering the impolite forms first? You will only offend people.

Once you are familiar with the words for the people in your pictures and the objects they are involved with, it is a simple step to understanding statements about what those people are doing to, or with, those objects. Languages use different means of indicating who is doing what to whom or what. They may use word order, as in English, or they may utilize special markings on the nouns (case markings), or the verb itself somehow tells you who is the actor and who/what is being acted upon. In short, you need to learn how to tell who is doing what to whom.

In sentences with subjects and no objects (intransitive sentences), there are at least two types of subjects to consider. Some subjects are agents, that is, doers, like "John", in the sentence "John shouted". Other subjects have something happen to them as in the sentence "The snow fell". In some languages words like "sick", and "angry", are actually verbs with non-agent subjects while in other languages they are considered adjectives.

Take several dozen pictures in which someone is holding something or someone else. Have your Language Helper describe a picture. You then point to the picture being described. "A girl is holding a doll"; "a woman is holding a baby"; "a boy is holding a bat"; etc. Other verbs which can easily be learned this way are "having"; "touching",

“using”, “seeing/looking at”. Note that the verb “to have” is not a verb in every language (i.e, Turkish). It is, however, important to recognize that particular sentence pattern.

Get your Language Helper to use only a few verbs at a time so that only the subject and object vary from one picture to the next, thus enabling you to concentrate on recognizing who is doing the action and who it is done to without having to learning large numbers of verbs at the same time.

Record what you learn from your picture book on each “sweep” through it. Look at the pictures and listen and record you language helper describing what is going on in them. The Picture Book Technique enables you to associate large amounts of new vocabulary directly with the pictures instead of with translations of words from your own language. It will sharpen your comprehension skills to hear new vocabulary many times before speaking it, and that will, in turn, help your pronunciation when you eventually speak the word.

So, in conclusion, here are some guidelines to keep in mind: Aim to understand the words before you try to say them. Initially, *do not repeat the words out loud*, as this will not aid in understanding and may cause mispronunciation. *Do not immediately replay an item that you do not understand*. Initially, listen to the entire program without rewinding the tape recorder. Some words are understood only after being heard a number of times. Use the tape as background while doing other activities, such as washing dishes or riding in the car.

We’ll show you how all this works in more detail in the next lesson.

Fade and Cut.

Scene 2.6. Things learned in this lesson

Scroll by on screen. Voiceover: Teacher Zhang Dong

- When you make an arrangement with a language helper don’t initially get locked into some kind of arrangement that is hard to get out of.
- Children don’t learn language by taking complex grammar lessons. They begin by understanding the meanings of words and very simple sentences, like commands. TPR is a method where you obey lots of simple commands.
- Although TPR is easy, plan your sessions thoroughly in advance. Choose words from the same semantic realm. Have the Language Helper give the commands repeatedly and randomly until you can respond quickly without thinking in Chinese.

- Put together a photo book with later stages of language learning in mind. In other words, have lots of action pictures, pictures of people doing things.
- Go over the pictures lots of times, focusing on a new aspect of language each time. Drill it until you know it.
- Record your drills so that you can go over the lesson when you Language Helper is not there.

Fade and Cut