

# 美和學校財團法人美和科技大學

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計畫名稱：A project on the application of different  
teaching methods to improve  
children's English learning  
透過不同教學方式增進兒童英語之  
學習過程

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# 透過不同教學方式增進兒童英語之學習過程

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## 摘要

近年來,由於雙語教學的重要性,兒童的英語教學已在台灣普遍化,也因此越來越競爭。此研究目的是協助補習班能使用不同教學方式傳達給學生且找出最有的效果及令學生最能接受的學習方式。結果指出”肢體回應法 TPR”是最適合教兒童學習英語的管道,同時也是學生最愉快的學習方式。

A project on the application of different teaching methods to  
improve children's English learning

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Abstract

Learning English has gained popularity among children in Taiwan in recent years. In fact, there are more and more competitive cram schools everywhere in Taiwan. The main goal of all the cram schools is help children acquire English in an easy and natural way. The main research on this project is to outline the techniques of teaching children English, and to determine which principles of the methods are helpful and accepted by the students. The result showed the "TPR" is the most popular and accepted technique by learners.

(**關鍵詞** : popularity, cram schools, technique )

# **1. Background of the study**

## **1.1 Introduction**

The teaching of English to young children has become especially important in recent years. It is a world-wide phenomenon that many teachers in classrooms have not been trained for all the techniques, thus, by observing and participating in teaching English to children of Melody cram school, various useful and practical techniques are encouraged to be used for the improvement of English.

In order to make classes more interesting, we know that most teachers try to apply different methods in teaching second language to attract attention of students. “Methods serve as a foil for reflection that can aid teachers in bringing to conscious awareness the thinking that underlies their actions” (Larsen-Freeman, 2003). When teachers are exposed to methods and asked to reflect on their principles and actively engage with their techniques, they can become clearer about why they do and what they do. They become aware of their own fundamental assumptions, values, and beliefs. By becoming clear on where they stand, teachers can choose to teach differently from the way they were taught. They are able to see why they are attracted to certain methods and replied by others. A knowledge of methods is a part of the knowledge base of teaching. With it, teachers join a community of practice (Freeman, 1992). In addition, a knowledge of methods helps expand a teacher’s repertoire of techniques; indeed, it makes instructors improve their professional growth.

## **1.2 A brief introduction of Medlody Cram School**

The Melody Cram School is located in Heng-Chun, near Kenting. The school was established in year 2001 with 20 students at that time, and now there are 50 students with 4 teachers. The main teaching subject is English: it is divided into two classes of children’s English with 12 students in each class, and two classes with junior high

school students.

## **2. Methods of Study**

The students who attend the Children English classes are on the fifth and sixth grades of elementary school. They are asked to join the program twice a week with one hour and a half each time. The two classes have the same level, thus, teachers tried to introduce them with different teaching techniques, but same contents.

Most common methods applied during this period were: the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Audio-Lingual Method, Desuggestopedia, Community Language Learning, and Total Physical Response.

a) The Grammar –Translation Method: it has been used by many teachers for many years. Mostly, it is applied in “reading” and “grammar”. In this method, teachers asked students to translate the contents they have been taught. Therefore, the main goal of this method is for students to be able to translate each language into the other.

b) The Direct Method: it is different from the Grammar-Translation Method: no translation is allowed, the teaching is used directly in the target language.

c) The Audio-Lingual Method: it is based on an oral- based approach. It is generally used in oral drill in grammatical sentence patterns.

d) Desuggestopedia: it is developed to help students eliminate the feeling that they cannot be successful or the negative association they may have toward studying and, thus, to help them overcome the barriers to learning. One of the ways the students’ mental reserves are stimulated is through integration of the fine arts (Lasern-Freeman, 2003).

e) Community Language Learning: In this technique, most students have conversation practice after the instructors’ explanation of the procedures. The main focus is “language is for communication”.

f) Total Physical Response: The teachers give a command in the target language and perform it with the students. Therefore, meaning in the target language can often be

conveyed through actions, and memory is activated through learner response.

Though there are other teaching principles, we have only introduced the six methods since these have been applied in these classrooms during these six months.

## **2.1 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to find the most useful techniques accepted by the teachers and the students. Furthermore, the required teaching methods make teachers plan, just as all good teachers are prepared to adapt to their plans, and know that they have to be prepared for emergencies. A good plan before teaching also makes life much easier in the classroom. A disciplined teacher who has always plans before teaching, may be able not only to balance each lesson, but use more energy and enthusiasm to enjoy the classes. Therefore, being prepared before giving classes is important and required by the school.

The findings and conclusions are expected to a better arrangement of language teaching concerned with benefits of educational development in the future.

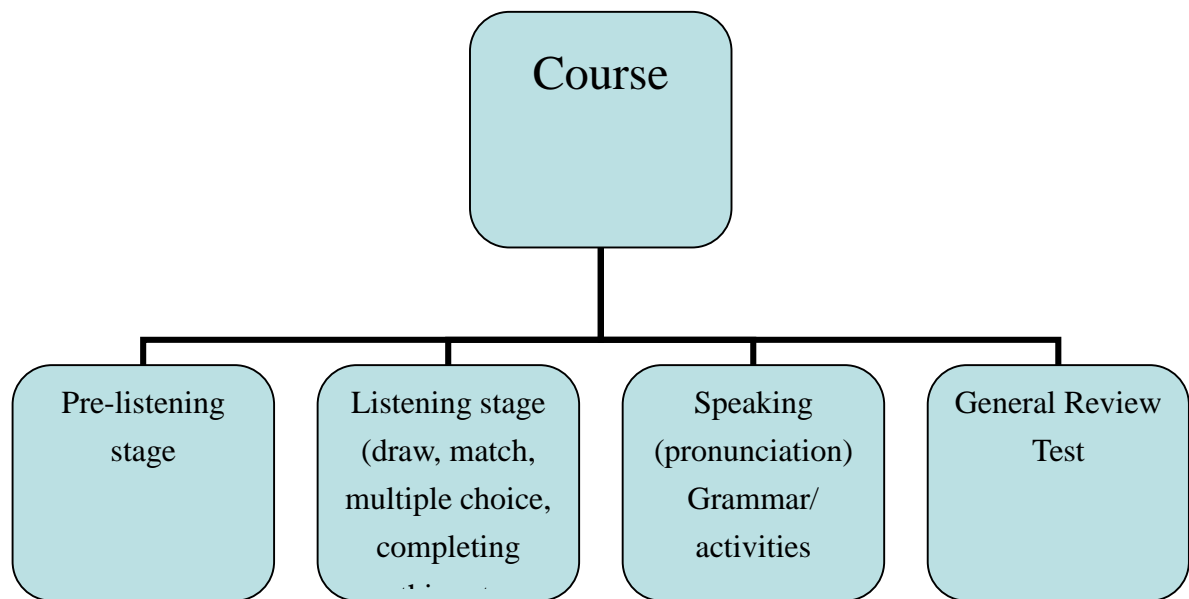
At the end of the course, the teachers were asked to give their suggestions. Besides, the students had evaluation at the end of the term and the results were shown after different methods of teaching.

## **2.2 The course design**

One of our approach is “language objectives”. Language objectives are often associated with an entire course of instruction as well as with individual units and lessons.

In each lesson, students have pre-listening stage. Pre-listening activities should help learners by focusing their attention on the topic, activating any knowledge they have

about the topic, and making it clear to the learners what they have been listening to, give feedback, and consolidate what they have learned. While pre-listening activities are about preparing for the questions or a task, listening activities are about the learners finding the answers or doing the task. There are various types of activities, for example: answering questions, multiple choices, true or false, completing something, and so on. Speaking activities can make learners practice orally about the issues mentioned in the listening content. Students can discuss about the exercises by practicing orally. After developing all these steps, students have a quiz after every unit. The lesson plan is shown below.



### 3. Findings and Discussion

As the project was focused on the elementary students, most teachers spent mucho time on listening stage. When they were practicing listening in the classroom, it was helpful to think about how they listen in real life. For example: “how are you today?”, “how is the weather?”, “did you study hard?”..., and so on. In addition, teacher have tried to:

- ask learners to do things in class which they would be likely to do outside.

- give them the information they would have in the real world, in other words, about the context.

- give them the opportunity to listen actively, and in different ways.

“Listen and Draw” was the most popular among the students since they are still kids.

He is an example done during the class:

TEACHER: Simon says put your hands on your head.

(Learners do the action)

TEACHER: Simon says touch your toes.

(Learners do the action)

TEACHER: Simon says put your hands on your hips.

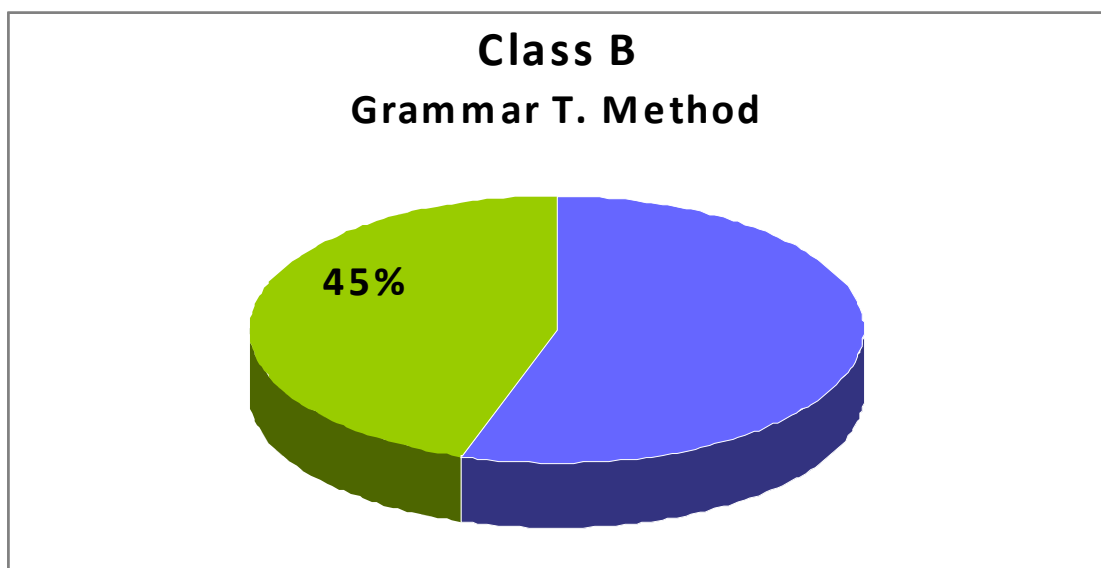
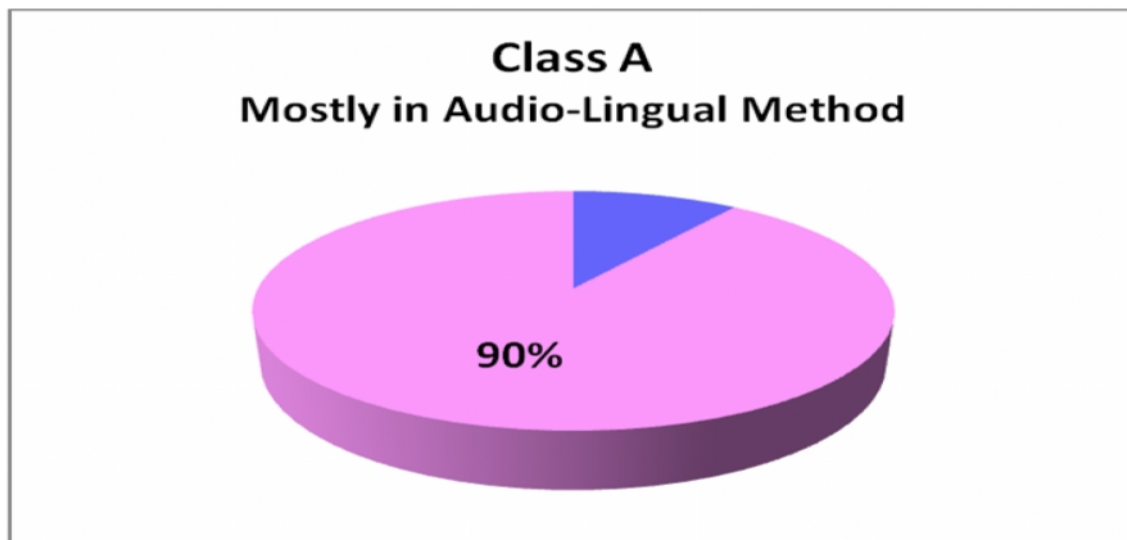
(Learners do the action)

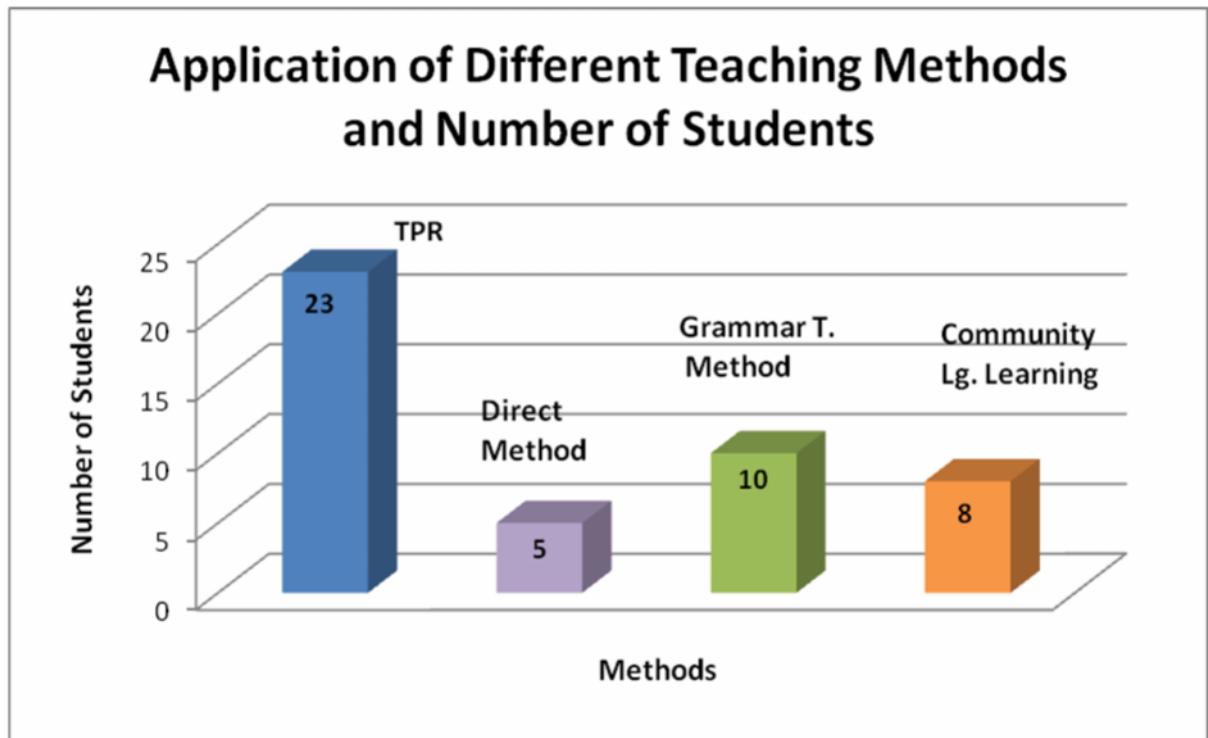
As demonstrated during the observation, this type of activity appealed in particular to children because it was fun and competitive. Keeping lively and entertaining was motivating for young learners. However, the “grammar Translation Method” was mostly applied in the other class. Each student was called on to read a few lines from the passage. After they had finished reading, they were asked to translate into Mandarin Chinese the few lines they just read. The teacher helped them with new vocabularies. After finishing reading, the teacher asked them questions in their native language. Mostly, the students didn’t like this method since it is more boring than



other game activities. However, this method might be more helpful in teaching grammar part because students understand better when the teacher explains in Chinese.

The following graphs shows the two classes applied mostly in different teaching methods, and the results shows students prefer learning English by listening, though they listen most of the time when “Grammar Translation” is done, the students still prefer Audio-Lingual rather than translation method.





The following shows the graphs which demonstrate different teaching methods with a number of students who prefer certain teaching techniques. Among 24 students, the Total Physical Response (TPR) was the most accepted by the students, there were 23 following the Grammar translation methods with 10 students, while only 8 members preferred Community Language Learning, and the least popular was Direct Method with only 5 students.

## **4. Conclusion**

In summary, the teacher's job is to help learners learn. This relates both to the formal classroom process and learning outside the classroom.

Teachers are responsible for a large amount of what happens in the classroom.

- What is taught, the resources used, the type and order of activities, classroom management, assessment, feedback, correction, and so on. It is also part of the teacher's job to encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning and become "active learners". An effective teacher understands all the students' situation in learning English. From the chart, it can be seen the "TPR" is the most popular and accepted by learners and instructors in teaching English to children.

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