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## USING TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE METHOD IN TEACHING SPEAKING AT A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN SUMEDANG

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**Abstract:** The purposes of this research are to investigate how the teacher uses TPR Method in teaching speaking skill to young learners, to find out challenges in using TPR method to young learners, and to figure out the advantages and disadvantages of using TPR method in teaching speaking skill to young learners. The descriptive qualitative research design was used for this study. The data were collected through classroom observation, questionnaire, and documentation. The subjects were A-2 Class students at Al-Ma'soem Primary School in Sumedang which consists of 23 students. The result of the researches are the challenges in the application of the TPR Method are more about how we can continue to be creative in providing material. Then, the advantages in implementing the TPR Method are making them feel fun, enthusiasm, more active, and made them easily to remember the words. The disadvantages the material must be creative in every lesson, must be able to manage young learners, must be patient. The use of the TPR Method is very helpful for teachers in maintaining the mood of young because based on the characteristics of young learners they prefer to be active, the TPR Method is a suitable method.

**Keywords:** teaching speaking, total physical response method, TPR method, young learners

## INTRODUCTION

In teaching in Indonesia, English has been taught since childhood. In public schools usually it is taught in 3rd grade, even for private schools, English has been taught since kindergarten. In teaching English to young learners and adults is certainly different, teachers must relax and think of creative ways to teach the content to kids at their level. Teachers also need to provide pupils with suitable education and a positive learning environment (Rokhayani, 2017). In addition to the materials, the teaching methods and approaches used to young and adult learners are also different.

As we know, young learners mostly are very active, have lots of energy, but easily to get bored. Schneiderová (2013) notes that young learners always have a lot of energy

to do activities so that they love to do something that is physically related, they really like to do things that are not only silent in class but also explore and move their bodies, yet they can also quickly get bored with their activities, so they need new ideas to support their learning activities. When the brain and body work together, young learners appear to learn language fast and thoroughly (Savic, 2014).

The use of the TPR (Total Physical Response) method in teaching is one of the methods that can be applied to young learners. This TPR method emphasizes more on body language or gestures, teachers must also be able to play an active role as supervisors and directors of all behavior of young learners based on Iskandarwassid & Sunendar (2008). According to Richard and Rodgers (2001), TPR method is coordination between speech and action, through physical activity, it can be considered effective and efficient. We don't need to use power point, flash cards, or other media, we just have to practice with body language for young learners and also make them repeat our pronunciation. Therefore, TPR Method can be the good choice to us for giving the lesson especially in speaking skill to make them pronounce the English word correctly and make them brave, TPR satisfies the requirements for understandable input and stress reduction, which Krashen believes are essential for successful language learning (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 78-79), making it particularly suited to young students.

Many studies have been performed by researchers related to the use of TPR Method in teaching to Young Learners, such as; Nuraeni C (2019) conducted research with the title "*Using Total Physical Response (TPR) Method on Young Learners English Language Teaching*" the purpose of this research is to see the use of the TPR method in vocabulary and understanding. The researcher conducted the study at an Orphanage Yauma Jakarta which consists of 30 students. Their ages were around 5 to 11 years old. Shi, T (2018) conducted research with the title "*A Study of the TPR Method in the Teaching of English to Primary School Students*" And the last, Sumihatul (2017) conducted research with the title "*The Implementation of TPR (Total Physical Response) Method in Teaching English for Early Childhood*" the purpose of this research is to see the implementation of the TPR method in young learners.

The research conducted by the researcher is differences to the previous researcher even since all researchers discussed when we interact with young learners with TPR Method. The previous researcher focused on vocabulary and listening, which is where the differences occur. Here the researcher focuses on speaking, the challenges, and the advantages and disadvantages on using TPR method.

Therefore, this research aims to investigate how the teacher uses TPR Method in teaching speaking skill in the classroom to young learners, to find out challenges in the use of the TPR method in teaching speaking to young learners, and also to figure out the advantages and disadvantages of using TPR method in teaching speaking skill. The result of this research is that this research can be used as a source of reading for teachers who will use the TPR method in their teaching system and will know how to respond, challenges, as well as advantages and disadvantages. Additionally, as research reading for readers who want to know the use of this TPR method in young learners.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Young Learners**

When explaining about EYL (English for Young learners) we ourselves need to know the definition of young learners themselves. Young learners are agreed to be children from five or six years old who are in the first year of elementary schooling to

twelve years old of age (Bakhsh, 2016). According to Curtain and Dahlberg (2004), young learners are divided into four groups based on their age. The first group is pre-school students, who are typically still in kindergarten. They range in age from 2-4 years. Primary pupils, aged 5-7, Intermediate students, aged 8-10, formally enrolled in elementary school, and Early Adolescent pupils, aged 11-14, formally enrolled in Junior High School, round out the group.

Children who grow and learn at this young age, The young learners here are elementary school students aged between 6-12 years. They can be divided into 2 groups, namely Younger Group (6-8 years) and Older Group (9-12 years). According to Scott & Ytreberg (1990) in Fajarina (2017), five to seven-year-old children can talk about what they are doing, tell you about what they have done or heard, plan activities, argue for something and tell you why they think what they think. Moreover, five to seven-year-old students can use logical reasoning, use their vivid imaginations, use a wide range of intonation patterns in their mother tongue, and understand direct human interaction.

Then, according to Suyanto (2007: 11), the characteristics of five to seven-year-old learners generally have an egocentric attitude, in which they tend to relate what they learn or do to themselves. They enjoy learning materials that are related to their daily and weekly lives, such as topics that employ words or phrases, such as "My...: my family, my house," for example. When children reach the age of adolescence, i.e. when they reach the age of ten years (4<sup>th</sup> grade), they begin a process of egocentric change that leads them to the reciprocity or reciprocity.

For level one students, aged 5-7 years, they continue to have trouble discriminating between concrete and abstract objects. They don't see or don't understand the distinction between the real world and the world of their imagination. They have no way of knowing whether anything is real or not. Students can easily be introduced to concrete objects in English.

Children are also active and inventive. They also enjoy learning through games, stories, and songs, so they are more motivated to learn English, even if it is in an indirect manner. Learning to speak while playing is a fun activity for kids, which is also known as recreational time out activities. According to Ur (2000), there are three sources of attention for children in the classroom: visuals, music, and books. They have a limited level of concentration and attention because they are easily bored. Learning activities must be varied and changed every 10-15 minutes to overcome this.

Color and happiness abound in the lives of children. Children will be happy if they are given activities and assignments that are accompanied by interesting and colorful pictures. Children's joy can also be expressed through songs. Stories are mostly a part of a child's life as games. Students can be taught to focus more on the context as a whole through stories than they would if it were spoken word for word. Meanwhile, students are more motivated to be more active and free in their use of English, which is sometimes spoken in accordance with their version of the language, thanks to games.

Finally, young learners are active thinkers who enjoy learning new things, including languages, by doing things (learning by doing), such as playing or singing while moving their limbs to indicate or give meaning to spoken expression

### **Speaking Skill**

In learning English, there are four skills that we must mastery, and one of them is speaking. Brown (2007:4) cited in Parmawati (2018) defines speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing

speech of sounds as the main instrument. Speaking in English can help students to express their thoughts and can share information with others (Indriani & Sakina, 2022). In everyday life, of course, we communicate one of them by speaking, which makes it easier for us to know what other people mean and what we want to convey as well. Through speaking we are able to connect our mind to every aspect in life.

Speaking is expressing thought, ideas, and feeling which use the ability to pronounce the words to organize the words into phrases or sentence to choose the words related to the topic (Torky. 2006 p.13). It can be said that learning speaking is certainly needed when English becomes a second language or a foreign language. For effective communication, speaking skills are used to improve speech intelligibility. So speaking is essential in daily life since we communicate and communicate with one another by speaking, of course, to receive and give information. Speaking is the most crucial for efficient communication, according to Ur (2000), among the four language abilities of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

As the language that used by globally, English has a very important role in all aspects, especially in the learning system. Therefore, at this time, there are many thoughts that we should be able to learn English. Lots of English tutoring courses have sprung up. Even though in Indonesia itself, English is not a second language (ESL) but a foreign language (EFL), but the enthusiasm and the community's need for the need for teaching English continues to increase. One of the important aspects in learning English is to learn speaking skills, speaking skills are needed of course because when we communicate, of course we have to speak and, in this era, of course English language skills cannot be underestimated because they are needed to support our lives in the future. These claims are confirmed by Leong & Ahmadi (2017), who claimed that learners who speak English very well may have a higher probability of receiving better schooling, locating satisfying jobs, and advancing in their careers.

Learning speaking is a must for us, it is giving students the skills to communicate effectively and correctly in English is the primary goal of English language instruction (Davies & Pearse, 2000) and of course to provide information or express the speaker's feelings towards the listener, so that there is good communication between them. Of course, in the delivery, each word must be arranged in order to produce a coherent and appropriate sentence so that it is easily understood by the listener.

### **Total Physical Response (TPR) Method**

James Asher, a psychology professor at the University of San Jose, developed the Total Physical Response (TPR) method for teaching language. This is a popular language teaching strategy among foreign language instructors. This is one of the language teaching strategies that is particularly suited to the teaching of grammar. This method is commonly applied for teaching foreign languages to young learners, but it is also frequently applied to adult learners, such as university learners. The TPR method is a language teaching method that focuses on speech and action coordination. Several theoretical perspectives on educational contexts support TPR (Khorasgani & Khanehgir 2017). The physical component of the TPR learning process makes it possible to naturally incorporate physical activity and play into language teaching and to increase children's outside-of-class physical activity and engagement, supporting both their linguistic and physical development and movement.

TPR was created after Asher thoroughly researched how young learners learn words and built his method on three first language acquisition principles: listening

before speaking, language learning is linked to bodily movement, and listening skill prepares a kid for speaking. The same applies to building methods for young learners when English becomes a second language or a foreign language. When we give orders to children, whether we do things like our example "pencil" or "keep the pencil on the table" while we point at the object or examples of its movements will make children understand, slowly but surely, they will learn to respond and finally try to speak what is being said. We have given an example, because basically the nature of a child is to observe and imitate

There are stages to the TPR method's application in learning speaking. In the TPR method, the teacher gave instructions to the learners, after that young learners then respond with gestures to the teacher's commands. TPR is also described by Richard and Rodgers in Tarigan (1990) as a language teaching method based on speech and action coordination, as well as a method of teaching language through physical activity. Making students learn to use the language is the primary goal of the TPR teaching approach. Let the students understand the study material before beginning to teach them the language through action. The goal of TPR method was originally developed by Jammes Asher, and has been widely featured in various papers, magazines and books (Asher 2007, in Tarigan, 1990). Basically the TPR method or total physical response (TPR) consists of structuring or obeying orders or commands given by the instructor / instructor which involves a clear physical response.

Even before they can speak, children continue to pick up their parents' language. Through their bodies, children communicate with their parents in all languages. Children combine their physical and linguistic development. Freeman (2000) noted that children in learning their first language listen more before they speak. Listening activities are usually accompanied by physical responses such as reaching, grabbing, moving, looking, and so on. This TPR method is very easy and light in terms of language use and also contains elements of game movement so that it can then eliminate student boredom (Peck 2001, 140-145).

There are characteristics to Total Physical Response. Asher, the creator of this method, concentrated on two aspects of first language acquisition that are described in Nunan (1991). Before beginning to speak, the kid receives a large amount of understandable input. Young children are capable of understanding much more language than they are capable of producing. Then, early input is accompanied by a lot of physical manipulation and action language. 'Throw the ball to Him,' 'Place your arm through here,' and so on. The imperative is used to frame this action language that encourages physical manipulation (Putri, 2016).

In every case, there are certain advantages and disadvantages that arise from it, as well as this TPR method. TPR has some advantages and disadvantages. Its advantages include, the first it is a lot of fun for the learners, they can enjoy it the study and it lifts the learner's mood (Shi, 2018). It assists the students recognize phrases or words; it is good method for kinesthetic learners who are required to be active in the class. The TPR method can be used by large or even small classes, as long as we prepared to take the lead, then it will work well with the class. The physical action gets across the meaning effectively so the learners can understand and apply the target language. TPR seems to be effective to be applied in teaching teenagers and young learners since it involves both left and right brained learning according to (Sariyati, 2013).

In addition to such advantages, TPR Method also has disadvantage, first of all students who are not used to such things might find it embarrassing. This can be the

case initially that if the teacher is prepared to perform the actions, the students feel happier about copying. In addition, the students are in a group and do not have to perform for the whole class. This pleasure is reserved for the teacher. Then it is only suitable for beginner levels. Whilst, it is clear that it is far more useful at lower levels because the target language lends itself to such activities even though it can successfully be applied at Intermediate and Advanced level. It is not flexibly used to teach everything, and if used a lot, it would become repetitive.

## **METHOD**

This research uses descriptive qualitative method. Qualitative descriptive methods, according to Sugiyono (2016) are "Research methods based on the concept of postpositivism used to assess the condition of natural things (as opposed to experiment) where the researcher is the instrument." The author uses a qualitative descriptive method in this study because the author focuses on the phenomenon of the teaching and learning process in the classroom which is then observed and described in real terms or facts. The main subject of this research is the students, but the teacher also plays a role for the success of this research. The researcher conducted the study in the A-2 Class at Al-Ma'soem Primary School in Sumedang which consists of 23 students. Their ages were around 7 to 8 years old with 13 females and 10 males. The research took four meetings, starting from 29<sup>th</sup> of March to 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2022.

By using interview, observation, and documentation, the researchers followed these steps. The first is observation, there are several aspects that we need to observe as teachers to find out the level of effectiveness and success of using the TPR method itself in improving speaking skills of young learners. The observed aspects are: (1) how the school facilitates students and teachers in teaching; (2) how the teachers start running the class using the TPR method when teaching English for young learners; (3) the reaction or feedback from young learners in receiving English learning, especially using the TPR method and how speaking skills are gained after the activity is done; and how this TPR method can stimulate young learners to improve speaking skills and understanding in English, remembering, pronunciation, and the meaning of it.

Then there is interview that addressed to the teacher and students, the selection of students to be interviewed was based on the results of their activity of children in the class with 2 male students and 2 females students. The use of the interview is to find out how the teacher uses TPR Method in teaching speaking skill in the classroom to young learners, to find out challenges found in the use of the TPR method in teaching speaking to young learners, to figure out the advantages and disadvantages of using TPR method in teaching speaking skill, and also to know how the young learners feel and react when we use TPR method as a way to teach them.

The interview questions for teacher consist of how to learn English for young learners, the learning system, the effectiveness when applied TPR to young learners. Next, how children's responses when learning using the TPR method, the improvement of children speaking ability by using TPR, and the last advantages and disadvantages in learning using the TPR method. However, the question for the students consist of the understanding of learning english, the enjoyment in learning English and using TPR method like dancing and singing, vocabulary that students know (min.10).

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **How the Teacher Uses TPR Method in Teaching Speaking Skill to Young Learners**

Based on the observation in the class by the researcher and on the interview to the teacher, the teachers do the TPR Method in the classroom in only a few chapters of the lesson, not all of them. Mentioned by the teacher who are in the interview she conducted that "TPR Method is a method that is very easy to apply and very good to be applied to the learning process, especially for young learners. But not all subjects or sub-chapters in a lesson we can apply this TPR Method. We as teachers must be able to know which lessons are good for young learners to use TPR Method for."

The teachers also prepare lesson plans in advance to find out and prepare what activities will be carried out today and also analyse in advance whether today's learning activities will be suitable for using the TPR Method or not. Usually, in teaching speaking skills to young learners, teachers use the TPR Method in mentioning, listening and do, listen and mention, repeat after me, etc. In the observations made, the school environment is also very adequate in supporting the use of the TPR Method in the school.

For the implementation of the English program, the use of media is adequate, and the evaluation of learning in class is also running smoothly with is done by giving assignments to students, doing quizzes or asking questions spontaneously during class or at the end of learning. There is also a game. The response from young learners was very positive, they take the classes properly and follow all the direction from the teacher properly.

### **Challenges in Using TPR Method to Young Learners**

The challenges from TPR Methods from the teacher's side, of course the teacher must be creative in doing learning using the TPR method. TPR method emphasizes more on body language or gestures, teachers must also be able to play an active role as supervisors and directors of all behaviour of young learners (Iskandarwassid & Sunendar, 2008: 64). From the observation, as we know sometimes young learners are easily to get bored, therefore the need for creative changes in every learning they do. Not to mention that young learners who are difficult to focus on when learning takes place are also included in the challenges contained in the application of this TPR Method, especially if learning activities using the TPR Method are carried out outside the classroom.

Come into the strategies in teaching speaking to young learners, teaching young students to speak in public is extremely rewarding, the particular reason for the circumstance they are less self-conscious than older learners (Kerdeman & Phillips, 1993). The young learners' need to acquire vocabulary, pronunciation, structure, and functions in order to express themselves, however, makes it challenging for the teachers. The challenges contained in the application of the TPR Method are more about how we can continue to be creative in providing material to young learners so that they do not get bored and remain enthusiastic in participating in class learning. We have to be good at finding interesting things so that young learners want to participate, especially because English is a foreign language, where for young learners at that age sometimes they still can't understand the core meaning of their own mother tongue so do as a foreign language of course. That's why there are many English books whose books are illustrated, in color to attract the attention of young learners.

### **The Advantages and Disadvantages of Using TPR Method in Teaching Speaking Skill to Young Learners**

The advantages in implementing the TPR Method are of course very many, making the enthusiasm of young learners in learning English which is a foreign language, young learners become more active, they find this class to be fun, and it makes them easy to remember the words that have been learned, they are also enjoyable to speak in English, like a simple word or other words. Besides the advantages, the TPR method also has the disadvantage that the material must be creative in every lesson, must be able to manage young learners, and must be patient because in learning you need to do things repeatedly in speaking.

The advantages of this TPR Method can be seen through the observations that the author made in class and the interview to the students, making the enthusiasm of young learners in learning English which is a foreign language, young learners become more active, they find this class to be fun, and it makes them easy to remember the words that have been learned, they are also enjoyable to speak in English, like a simple word or other words. Through interviews with their English teachers, they will sing, play games first, or any activities that move their limbs and make the young learners' mood happy. "We know the character of young learners, if we want them to silence, they do not want to," that's roughly what the teacher said.

In doing learning it is also easier to divide the young learners into small or large groups and they can still follow the lesson and still understand. From the observations made, young learners are able and understand the new vocabulary they receive and are able to say it aloud, either when singing, or answering spontaneous questions posed by the teacher.

Besides the advantages, the TPR method also has the disadvantage. Disadvantages learning strategies must be appropriate, must be able to use gestures. The material too must be creative in every lesson, must be able to manage young learners, must be patient because in learning you need to do things repeatedly in speaking. In the observations made by the author, when you see the application of the TPR Method first-hand, it is certainly not easy, because you see young learners who are easily distracted, sometimes they don't follow the directions, sometimes there are still mistakes when they follow the directions. But still the point is to keep young learners in the mood and have a lot of patience in repeating

Based on the explanation above, it is suggested to do some activities that can be used by teachers to teach young learners in speaking skills, there are: storytelling, role play, picture describing, playing cards, and also finding the differences. It can be said that these activities are activities that are very suitable for young learners in improving their speaking skills through the TPR method.

Storytelling is an activity where children tell a story using their own language and way to their classmates. In this activity young learners are trained to be able to determine the beginning, development and ending of the story that they re-telling again. It can also boost their confidence because they will be asked to do storytelling one by one in front of the class.

Role play refers to an activity where young learners will pretend to be someone in some context. Here young learners will be trained to be able to express and speak to make sentences based on their own imagination of a character they play. The next activity is picture describing. In this activity young learners can be divided into groups or individually. Where they will be given a picture and then discuss the picture and



explain it in front of the class. They can explain about the color, the number of things in the picture, or even explain what they know and think about the picture that the teacher gives them.

The next activity is playing cards. In this activity young learners can be divided into groups or individually. They will be giving random cards and playing by describing what is on the card, such as the alphabet, number, or even color. An example of a game could be a card containing an alphabet and then they answer what alphabet it is, determine the color of the card and the alphabet then tell examples of objects, animals or plants starting from the alphabet on the card.

The last activity is called find the differences. In this activity young learners can be divided into groups or individually. They will be given two pictures and told to look for some differences in the two pictures. Later one person or group will be checked and asked which differences they have found in the two pictures. Then after the teacher checks one by one, the teacher will announce and tell the correct answers to young learners. In this activity young learners are trained in carefulness and accuracy in working on a task.

According to the explanation of the activities above, we can develop these activities according to the needs of young learners in class and according to the abilities of young learners. And all those activities also involve speaking activities, where young learners are required to speak, and so that all these activities can be followed by young learners, so that they are enthusiastic and not bored in following the lessons, therefore we apply the TPR method. Where young learners move their bodies, don't just stay in their chairs. They are free to use their body language to express, describe, and answer all of these activity sessions.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this section we will elaborate the conclusion that we can draw together from this research of "The Use of TPR Method in the Teaching of Speaking Skill". This TPR method emphasizes more on body language or gestures, teachers must also be able to play an active role as supervisors and directors of all behavior of young learners (Iskandarwassid & Sunendar, 2008: 64). The challenges contained in the application of the TPR Method are more about how we can continue to be creative in providing material to young learners so that they do not get bored and remain enthusiastic in participating in class learning.

The advantages in implementing the TPR Method are of course very many, making the enthusiasm of young learners in learning English which is a foreign language, young learners became more active, they found this class to be fun, and it made them easily to remember the words that have been learned, also they are enjoyable to speak in English, like a simple word or other words. Besides the advantages also the TPR Method has disadvantages the material must be creative in every lesson, must be able to manage young learners, must be patient because in learning you need to do things repeatedly in speaking. The use of the TPR Method is very helpful for teachers in maintaining the mood of young learners so that they are enthusiastic in learning. Because based on the characteristics of young learners they prefer to be active, the TPR Method is a suitable method where they want to be freely active using their bodies and cannot stand still.

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