

## Using Total Physical Response Method For Teaching English to Early Childhood

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**Abstract:** Choosing good method to make students learning English pleasant is a must. And Total Physical Response is one of an alternative good method for teaching English for young Learners. It can help young learners to memorize some commands or some vocabularies easily through use their physical movement. The purpose of this study is to analyze how teachers at TK Bintang Kudus teach English by using TPR method to their students. This research method uses qualitative descriptive design. Non-participant observation and interview are conducted as the data collection techniques. The results indicate that the teachers are more interested to implement TPR method in natural conditions both inside and outside of the classroom. The application of TPR method is also known that students not only respond with physical movement but also with verbal response. Interview data shows that teachers are more creative using the TPR method in interacting and communicating with the students. By using TPR method in daily activities in the school can make students more easily understand English.

**Key words:** Total Physical Response Method, Teaching English, Early Childhood

### INTRODUCTION

Language learning is not only limited to the mother tongue (first language) and a second language, but also a foreign language. In Indonesia, foreign language which is used in this case is English as a colloquial language is not a new thing again, even if it is only limited to words greetings or farewells for example: Good morning. How are you?, See you, Good bye and so on. Even English is also included in the subjects at formal schools starting from Kindergarten (TK) to Higher Education. Of course it is not easy to speak English in kindergarten, this is because teaching English to early childhood is different from teaching English for adults. The teacher must be patient for teaching English to kindergarten students. In dealing with children, a teacher must be creative, fun and also enjoyable in delivering the material. It cannot be separated from strategy, technique and the method used by the teacher. One fun method for teaching English to early age children is the TPR (Total Physical Response).

Some expert submit challenge the definition of TPR as a method effective language learning and fun especially to give to early childhood. This method is the first time developed by James J. Asher who has been successful in the development of methods learning foreign languages in children. Asher (1968, p.7) ) suggests that direct pronunciation in children contains a command, so that children will respond with body language before they begin to produce a verbal response. So it can be said that “Total Physical Response (TPR) is an English learning method that is suitable for children at an early age where it prioritizes activities that are directly

related to physical activities and movements. Meanwhile, according to Larsen & Freeman (1986, p.116) TPR is the comprehension approach or understanding approach, namely the method of Foreign Language Approach with commands or instructions". Richards & Rodgers (1999, p.87) also argues that "TPR is a learning method language compiled in coordination command, speech and motion (action); and strive to teach language through physical activity".

This is also reinforced by Richard (2001, p.73) who also states that Total Physical Response is a method of teaching language that uses the cooperation of speech and gestures which is an effort to teach language through an activity. The TPR method is a language learning method that is related to between the coordination of commands, speech and movement. So that a teacher tries to teach language through physical activities. Likewise with Tarigan (2009, p.133) who argues that "in the method both through the body movements of the students in answer or respond to commandments. Imperative form language means powerful to manipulate the behavior of students and guiding them towards understanding through action or deeds". Rachmawati (2013, p.3) states that "TPR is a popular method for introduce vocabulary related to actions or movements for early childhood". From the various definitions of TPR above, it can be concluded that the TPR method is a very easy to apply in language teaching because it contains elements of body movement so that it can relieve stress for students in language learning, especially at the time of learning a foreign language in this case is English.

The TPR method can also create a positive mood on child education that get facilitate learning. It can improve students' motivation in learning the target language especially English. Inside research by Wijayatiningsih and Mulyadi (2014, p.65) stated in her research that "The implementation of the TPR can help early childhood master simple vocabulary in English along with its meaning in Indonesian. Application of the TPR in English for early childhood suitable for application to kindergarten children". Kindergarten students at TK Bintang Kudus more interested in learning English while the teacher asked them to practice English vocabulary by giving physical response. Generally early childhood prefer to learn English with simple expressions then imitating what teachers practice, both verbally and non-verbal movement.

Teachers are directors and facilitators at school environment for provide material to the students. Teacher which is decisive about what will be studied and who plays the material lesson. Student in this TPR method has a leading role as a listener as well as actor. Students listen carefully then respond physically based on orders given by teachers are either groups and individuals. The succeed of applying the TPR method for teaching English is inseparable from eloquence teacher in pronunciation (verbal) English and the teacher's activeness in practicing movement/action.

In the early observations made by researcher at TK Bintang Kudus. It is known that the teacher at the kindergarten had used the Total Physical Response (TPR) in teaching English to students. For example, the teacher gave stimulation to students before she started of lesson with asking activities, such as examples :

Teacher : 'Who had breakfast this morning? Please raise your hands!'

(The teacher moved her hands when she said this)

Students : "me ... me .. (while raising their hands)"

The fragment conversation above is an example of teacher activities in the application of TPR to the students at TK Bintang Kudus. This shows that when the teacher gave command in English with the phrase "Rise Your Hand", the students respond by raising their hands. This means that students have understood the meaning of the sentence "Rise Your Hand" which is "waving the hand" so that there are actions or movements in which students aware responding to the teacher's commands in the English.

In this study, the researcher wanted to analyze that in the TPR, students did not only respond to teachers' commands only with gestures (non-verbal) but also with a verbal response. Researcher focused on researching the teachers about the process of English teaching to early childhood. It is because a teacher must have an active role in implementing the Total Physical Response.

Based on the above statement, in this study, researcher wanted to know more the use of the Total Physical Response in teaching English at TK Bintang Kudus. In addition, researcher also wanted to find out what obstacles that face the teachers and how to overcome these obstacles based on the perspective of English teachers in the kindergarten.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

In this study, the researcher used descriptive qualitative method. This research carried out at TK Bintang Kudus Regency, Central Java. The reason that Researcher conducted is because TK Bintang Kudus is a Kindergarten schoolchildren which have applied TPR to English vocabulary teaching on its students. The subjects in this study are English teachers at TK Bintang and students in class B. Meanwhile, the data source in this study is the application of TPR method used by TK Bintang Kudus teachers tackling in teaching English vocabulary to its students and this research data is verbal data and nonverbal used by teachers and students on moment applying the TPR method in learning English.

Instruments used are observation and interview. In this study, the researcher used non-participant observation because here the researcher was not directly involved in English learning activities in the classroom, and also in the interaction between teachers and students outside the classroom.

Researcher only observed activities and interactions between teachers and students of class B. Observations are carried out inside and outside classes during school hours, which is at 8.00 AM until 09.00 AM every Tuesday for 6 (six) times.

For obtaining accurate and valid data, Researcher recorded data sources with video recorder. In addition, interviews were also conducted to get additional data. This technique obtain data from perspective teachers at TK Bintang Kudus responding to the obstacles faced when applying TPR to students, anything that cause these obstacles and how to fix. Interview is needed to check the truth of the observation data.

In this study, the data analysis technique carried out was to review the data that has been collected, identifying aspects of the implementation of the TPR used teachers, identify and conduct the process of reducing aspects of the TPR that appears or does not appear in the implementation of English language teaching. Furthermore, conduct a review of data from the observation with the results of the interview to know the obstacles, causes the occurrence of

obstacles and how to overcome them. These obstacles are from the teachers' perspective. The last is to make a conclusion based on data analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Explanation of the observation results and interview about the TPR method on English teaching at TK Bintang Kudus are described in detail as next:

### ***1. At the beginning students say one part language with move their bodies fastly.***

For example, when some crowded and scrambling for helping teacher to color, the teacher said: "Back off. come on ... back off." then the students imitate by saying: "back off" followed by moving backwards. Likewise When the teacher asks the students to stand up, "stand up. please. children stand up please...", the students imitating the teacher's sentence and followed by standing movements.

Line with interview results previously, this was because teachers felt that easier to teach TPR about the work is not a noun. Here it is very necessary teachers' creativity to be able to make all materials can be easily given to students by maximizing TPR method, both verbs and words thing. For example, by showing objects or a picture of an object intended.

### ***2. Language learning is more effective when it is fun.***

In this aspect, singing and playing are activities done by English teachers at TK Bintang Kudus responding to their students during classroom learning. Teachers at this school every time teach English always using singing and playing techniques. Like when singing a song about a day, month and color with English. After that, usually the teachers ask students to color the picture on student activity sheet according to the material which are given.

The teachers said that it help students to better understand English vocabulary. The teachers explained that by singing students are happier to learn English. In addition to singing and playing, teachers also usually ask the students to color.

### ***3. Spoken language should be emphasized in written language.***

From the beginning to the end of the observation, researcher found that language teachers at TK Bintang Kudus are always using the writing on the whiteboard of each explaining the material or vocabulary in English. After saying English vocabulary, the teacher writes the vocabulary on the board then followed by all students who said vocabulary and write on the sheet works. Even though this is done in a slow way, but students looks happy and enjoy the writing session which is given by teachers.

The teachers explained during the interview that writing is done to help students better understand English, In addition, writing is also good for practicing students' motor skills.

From the six observations that conducted, researcher found that teachers only gave materials, the first about the part of the boy, fruits, and animals. That means teachers are always solidify the provision of material (first day) and the second meeting, about the the part of the body. The third meeting is about fruits, while at the fourth meeting to strengthen material (third day) is about fruits. In the sixth meeting to strengthen material (five day) is about the animals. In this aspect, teachers also do not allowed give home work because of improper material being mastered by students will make it difficult they are working on it.

## CONCLUSION (Font size: 12, Times New Roman, Bold, Capital Letters)

Obtaining the data that English teachers at TK Bintang Kudus using aspects of the TPR method both in the classroom and outside the classroom in teaching language students. Use English towards TPR method is known to be more optimally used by teachers when interacting with students outside learning English materials. It means on the sidelines of giving material in class, teachers also often interact with students by applying the TPR method. This can be known at the time of requesting students not to be noisy by saying "*silent please*" while placing the index finger on the lips and so on. Teacher's speech and actions in the response of students, both verbal and nonverbal, students say '*silent please*' and put his index finger on his lips as if it tell to the others. Some aspects TPR method is also often used by teachers interacting with students outside the classroom or outside of class hours, one of which is such as the word "stop" to stop students who quarrel by moving the palm facing forward. In short, of some aspects TPR method found that teachers are more many implement TPR in nature conditions both inside and outside the classroom. Interview data shows that teachers more creative using the TPR method by not fixating on one material, so that teachers can explore the method TPR optimally such as saying English vocabulary followed by movements or actions.

From the conclusion above, the implications that can be described from this study as follows: that the TPR method is a way that proper use by English teachers not only in teaching the subject matter about learning English in class but also in interacting and communicating everyday. By applying TPR method to daily activities by teachers in the school environment can make it easier for students to understand the language target being studied.

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