

Using Total Physical Response (TPR) Method on Young Learners English Language Teaching

Cicik Nuraeni
Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika,
Jl. Kamal Raya No.18 Ringroad Barat, Cengkareng,
Jakarta Barat , Indonesia
cicik@bsi.ac.id

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe the use of Total Physical Response (TPR) method on young learners English Language Teaching (ELT) at Panti Asuhan Yauma. The method of the research is descriptive qualitative. In this research the researcher describes the activities carried out by teachers and students by using TPR method. The data resources are from teacher and students in Panti Asuhan Yauma Jakarta. The class consists of 30 students which their ages were around 5 to 11 years old. The data collected through observation in learning activities. The instruments were pre-test and post-test with 2 (two) criterion being assessed, namely vocabulary and comprehension. They were divided into 5 (five) elements such as accuracy of word, understanding each word, word choice, understanding the meaning, and speaking easily. The results showed that there was an improvement in vocabulary score about 27.40 and comprehension score about 28.77. The research finding first showed that when using the TPR method children enjoyed and were also very active in learning English. The researcher hopes that the study contributes to the activities of teaching and learning English, especially teaching English for young learners. It was proved by the score from pre-test and post-test.

Keywords: total physical response, young learner, English language teaching

Introduction

Teaching English in young learner is a challenge for teachers because it requires more preparation to create success in teaching. It is also not easy to do because the teachers should know effective ways of teaching young children, such as employing appropriate tricks and treats, creating students' interests, and making/helping them to pay attention to learning process in the classroom



(Ummah, 2017). Good teachers are those who teach and are able to create positive responses in their students.

English teaching and learning between young learner and adults cannot be equated. This is reflected by the different developmental characteristics of adults and children. Children are very talkative, having less concentration, having their own business, and they are fond of talking to friends. Consequently, the teachers must have the spirit of patience and high hospitality. The teacher and the students are the main elements in the class. The teachers should be able to manage the class well. Many experts reveal that the use of appropriate techniques used by the teachers can attract the children in class, especially in English classes. In the level of young learner, the teachers must relax and create fun approaches to delivering the materials to children. In addition, teachers must create a good learning environment and appropriate instruction for students (Rokhayati, 2017).

Young learner in Panti Asuhan Yauma is for children who are ages of five to ten or eleven years. For some children, schools may be frightening. They just want to play and interact with their friends at school (Rani, 2012). Children or young learners especially those up the ages of nine to ten learn differently from older learners, adolescents, and adults: they easily get bored, losing interest after ten minutes or so. Therefore, teachers must be able to make fun and enjoyable classroom. They also need to be able to invite children to participate in the teaching activities. However there are some children who talk with their friends and play when the teachers are teaching. So, it is a big task for the teachers to conduct the English teaching and learning process (Rani, 2012). Students usually feel bored when they learn English because the learning methods are boring, it means that choosing the appropriate method and activities with a focus on students' motivation will create a better learning process as the students will motivate themselves to learn more. In doing so, teachers should be more creative to provide teaching materials as well as teaching aids that are considered significant needed by the students (Nurani & Yohana, 2015).

A mnemonic strategy used for teaching Foreign Language (FL) vocabulary is the Total Physical Response (TPR) developed by Asher. TPR involves having students listen to a command in a foreign language and immediately responding with the appropriate physical action (Asher, 1964). When using this method, FL instructors give a series of commands in the target language (e.g., jump and clap your hands), while learners are expected to respond with whole-body movements (e.g., to jump while clapping their hands).

TPR is supported by several theoretical approaches to learning situations (Khorasgani, 2017). The physical aspect of TPR learning process makes it possible to integrate physical exercise and play into language teaching quite naturally and to enhance children's physical activity and engagement outside classes, contributing not only to their linguistic, but also to their physical development and movement. In the process of English teaching and learning, the use of TPR involves movements that the students can actively do in the classroom. In teaching, the teachers can use a song, a storytelling, or role-play in which there are commands to enable students to carry out instructions to perform an action. For example, the teacher says "run". Then the teacher instructs through giving commands to the students to take this action then all the students run. These activities can be done repeatedly. After that, the teacher asks the students to



repeat the words as what they are doing. In the lessons, teachers can change the position of the class into a circle. Students in the class perform the actions and listen to the commands given by the teacher. It is a language teaching method focus on physical (motor) activity through commands and responds of body. Physical activities are meant to reduce stress people or the learners feel when studying foreign language. Stress (an affective filter) intervenes between the act of learning and what is to be learned; the lower the stress the greater the learning. An important condition for successful language learning is stress free (Putri, 2016). Having fun makes language learners interested in learning and it is going to be more effective.

Young learners need to move, they have got huge amount of energy. They tend to have short attention spans. As (Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011) noticed, young learner is the best time for language acquisition. Ease of learning a foreign language diminishes with age. Children especially in young learner are linked to their surroundings and are more interested in the physical activities. As very young children are under 7 years old, who do not know how to read and write, it is very important to prepare them with activities that are applied without using a pencil and paper. TPR activities are mostly provided orally or pictures can be used. The child can point to the pictures when a certain word is uttered by the teacher. When a story is read by the teacher, the child can mime the actions (Er, 2013).

The advantages of using Total Physical Response in English teaching and learning activities: (1) is fun, so many children enjoy participating this type of teaching and learning process, (2) can help the students remember English words and expressions, (3) can be applied in large and small class, (4) is not only appropriate for young learners but also adult learners, (5) is suitable for active students in class (Rokhayati, 2017).

The most usual TPR activities involve teacher's commands to which students respond physically, demonstrating comprehension. The followings are some example TPR activities based on commands: (1) Depending on the theme of the lesson, the teacher could prepare commands that will strengthen vocabularies learning using hand movement to manipulate any set of pictures or flashcards: *Point to / Touch / Pick up (your mouth / your cheek / an orange/ a strawberry)*. (2) For lessons outside the classroom, more action can be introduced with commands like: *Run forward. Jump. Take three steps to the left then two steps to the right. Jump up and down. Throw the ball. Raise your hands.*

The main focus of TPR is physical activities. The researcher conducted her research, entitled "Using Total Physical Response (TPR) Method on young learner English Language Teaching at Panti Asuhan Yauma Jakarta". The aim of this study was to investigate what so called Total Physical Response (TPR) method in teaching English vocabulary. This research describes how the environment of English language teaching activities in the level of young learner and its possible application in a young learner classroom.



Method

The method of this study was descriptive qualitative research because the problem was discussed and provided through descriptive data. The researcher conducted the study in the A-1 Class at Panti Asuhan Yauma Jakarta which consists of 30 students. Their ages were around 5 to 11 years old with 19 females and 11 males. The research took 1 (one) month, starting from 2nd May to 7th June 2018. Furthermore, the procedure of data collection in this research was obtained by observation. In the observation, the researcher observed English language teaching learning activities by implementing TPR Method. Here, the researcher also took part as the companion teacher to teach them. She conducted observation in two stages, divided into three main parts, they were pre-teaching, while-teaching, and post-teaching. She observed how the teacher taught using the TPR method in the whole English Language Teaching (ELT) activities. The researcher also did some interviews with both the teacher and students using simple and unstructured questions because she wanted to get the information as complete as possible. At the end of the teaching process, she interviewed the teacher first and followed by the students. By doing this, she got the information of the students' interest and response in joining learning activities.

The researcher used the instrument of assessment to measure the effectiveness of the Total Physical Response (TRP) method. I used a pre-test and post-test to assess change. The data analysis is emphasized on vocabulary and comprehension during learning activities.

Findings

The teacher chose the TPR teaching method to create enthusiasm and a focus on learning activities. Panti Asuhan Yauma supported these types of the learning activities by providing toys, story books, pictures, playground, etcetera. Each child may have different interests so they can choose different kinds of school supplies.

I gave the students a pre-test. The purpose of the pre-test was to measure the comprehension of English skills especially vocabulary before the Total Physical Response (TPR) method is used with the students. The researcher divided the components of the assessment into aspects of vocabulary and comprehension. The elements were categorized as vocabulary includes word accuracy, understanding meanings, and word choice. The comprehension aspect included understanding the meaning and speaking easily. Each aspect had a maximum score 100. The score is the effectiveness indicator of the improvement English vocabulary through TPR method. The effectiveness indicator of English skill can be analyzed from the students' achievements through the scoring of the pre and post – test. The indicator can be figured out in the table 1.



Table 1. Indicator of Assessment

No.	Assessed Aspects	Elements	Maximum Score
1.	Vocabulary	Accuracy of pronouncing? The Word	100
		Understanding Each Word Word Choice	
2.	Comprehension	Understanding the Meaning	100
		Speaking easily	

Based on the observation at Panti Asuhan Yauma, the students were taught by teacher-center method where the teacher actively involved in teaching while the learners are in a passive, receptive mode listening as the teacher teaches. In this method, students put all their focus on teacher. The teacher often finds it difficult to keep the students interested in the learning activities and the approach tends to require little or no critical thinking. The students still got low competencies in English skill particularly on vocabulary and comprehension. The assessment was given to them by interviewing them using English, then the researcher gave them score based on their skills.

The result of the pre-test can be viewed on the table 2 below:

Table 2. Pre-Test Result

Respondents	Criterion	
	Vocabulary	Comprehension
1	50	50
2	45	54
3	44	42
4	56	45
5	40	53
6	50	55
7	42	58
8	40	55
9	44	50
10	45	45
11	40	44
12	44	40
13	50	45
14	44	50
15	48	52
16	52	50
17	45	50



18	45	44
19	50	46
20	44	44
21	57	55
22	58	50
23	55	50
24	48	46
25	47	46
26	44	40
27	50	48
28	40	46
29	40	44
30	42	42
Total per Criterion	46.63	47.96
Means Score	47.29	

From the table 2, it can be seen that the lowest score is in vocabulary element which is 46.63. Besides that, the highest score is in comprehension element which is 47.96. While the total score of the criterion from the students is still low, about 47.29. The score of 47.29 means the students are failed in learning English. It means that the score indicate the students need a new method to enhance the two criterions above. They need a comfortable and enjoyable leaning method.

After the researcher gave the pre-test, the second step was post-test as the final result from TPR method to the students. The aim of the second step was to measure the effectiveness of using TPR method through post-test, the result can be seen at the table 3.

Table 3. Post-Test Result

Respondents	Criterion	
	Vocabulary	Comprehension
1	70	73
2	73	75
3	81	84
4	76	78
5	68	73
6	74	77
7	75	76
8	70	80
9	80	82
10	82	75
11	70	72
12	65	68
13	77	82
14	68	70



15	70	70
16	68	64
17	72	80
18	71	81
19	69	75
20	82	84
21	75	77
22	68	72
23	77	75
24	70	74
25	71	75
26	80	84
27	82	80
28	82	84
29	78	82
30	77	80
Total per Criterion	74.03	76.73
Means Score	75.38	

From the table 3, it can be analyzed that there is improvement around 28.09. The number of 28.09 represent of the enhancement of English skill through applying TPR method. . The escalation is about improvement of vocabulary and comprehension elements. The total means score on the post-test was 75.38. It derived from vocabulary score was about 74.03 and comprehension score was about 76.73. It means that the students have a good improvement in mastering English skill especially in vocabulary and comprehension. The escalation process could be visualized on the figure below:

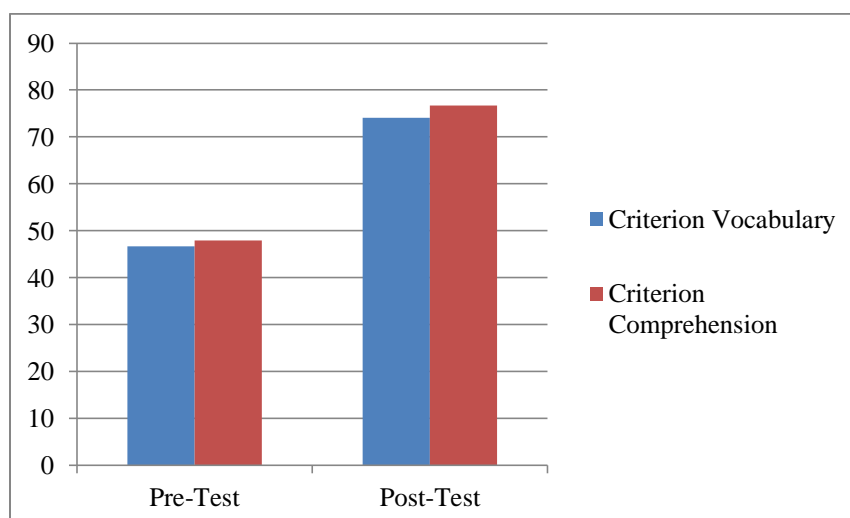


Fig.1. Escalation Chart



The score of 75.38 is the proof that the students have increased their ability in learning English. The TPR method made them feel confident to explore their ability in language. This thing can be analysed from the score of vocabulary and comprehension. Based on the score pre-test and post-test, the TPR method made their knowledge of vocabulary raised about 27.40. It shows that there is an escalation process in vocabulary. In the starting of the observation process, the students were really afraid of speaking English because they lacked of vocabulary. While the improvement of comprehension lies on 28.77. It proves that cognitively the students at Panti Asuhan Yauma understanding the meaning of the words and speaking without hesitation.

The TPR method encourages the students' self-confident, creativity, curiosity and motivation. It makes students enjoy and enthusiast in following the learning process. It gives positive impact to them because the topic given was familiar and easy to remember. TPR method made the teaching process was flexible and fun.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the researcher gives the conclusion as follows: the English language teaching process at Panti Asuhan Yauma where the researcher observed can be categorized well. It can be proved by the data analysis from pre-test to post test. The escalation of English vocabulary and comprehension from pre-test 47.29 escalated to 75.38. It was escalated about 28.09.

After implementing TPR method periodically, they were very enthusiastic, focus, and interactive in the learning activities especially in vocabulary and comprehension. Besides that, the teaching process through Total Physical Response (TPR) method also works well. It is reflected from student's capability in defining vocabulary meanings that are suited to its contexts. Students also can follow teacher's instructions. This can be overviewed from students' interaction in a more active-communicative learning circumstance as they will have a more enjoyable learning experience and could easily get across to learning materials given by the teacher. There are two research findings, first, this TPR method was able to be implemented for students which categorized as young learner students and the result showed that it was effective. Second, based on the data, it can be inferred that students had increase their vocabulary and comprehension. It was proved by the pre-test and post-test score.

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