


Applying Total Physical Response to Boost Students' Confidence in English in Wetonkulon, Kebumen

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Abstract

The beginning time parents teach their children languages, they tend to repeat the new vocabularies and move their bodies to make their children understand them. Total Physical response, from now on is called TPR, is the finding of Dr. James J Asher. TPR can be used to teach new vocabularies, especially verbs. On this occasion, TPR is applied to teach English for the six graders of Elementary School Students of Wetonkulon Village, Puring District, Kebumen Regency, Central Java. TPR is an appropriate method to apply for most of elementary school students as they know better by moving while studying. By moving their bodies while learning, they remember the materials longer. They also have bravery to perform moving their bodies in front of class while uttering the given English poem. They even can remember the verses of the long poem well. In short, it can be concluded that the students who were ashamed of saying English when they were asked questions about English vocabularies, become confident after having English class with TPR method.

Keywords: Total Physical Response; English; Confidence; Wetonkulon; Kebumen

Pengaplikasian Total Physical Response untuk Meningkatkan Kepercayaan Diri Berbahasa Inggris di Wetonkulon, Kebumen

Abstrak

Ketika orang tua mengajarkan bahasa bagi anak-anaknya, mereka akan mengulang-ulang kata-kata baru dan menggerakkan badan untuk menjadikan anak-anak memahami apa yang diajarkan. Total Physical response, selanjutnya disebut TPR, merupakan temuan Dr. James J Asher. TPR bisa digunakan untuk memperkenalkan kosa kata baru terutama kata kerja. Dalam kesempatan kali ini, TPR diterapkan dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggris bagi para siswa kelas 6 SDN Wetonkulon, Kecamatan Puring, Kabupaten Kebumen, Jawa Tengah. TPR merupakan metode yang tepat bagi kebanyakan anak usia SD karena mereka memahami lebih baik dengan merespon dalam wujud gerakan ketika belajar. Dengan belajar sambil menggerakkan badan, mereka mengingat materi pelajaran lebih lama. Mereka juga berani tampil di depan kelas untuk memeragakan gerakan sebagaimana puisi Bahasa Inggris yang diajarkan kepada mereka. Bahkan, mereka mampu menghafalkan bait-bait puisi yang cukup panjang dengan baik. Secara singkat dapat disimpulkan bahwa para siswa SD yang semula malu-malu ketika diberikan beberapa pertanyaan terkait kosa kata dalam Bahasa Inggris, menjadi tampil percaya diri setelah diajarkan Bahasa Inggris dengan metode TPR.

Kata kunci: Total Physical Response; Bahasa Inggris; Kepercayaan Diri; Wetonkulon; Kebumen

1. Background

The beginning time parents teach their children languages, they tend to repeat the new vocabularies and move their bodies to make their children understand them. They who are called children are those whose age range are between 0 to 12 years old. Each age has its own characteristics seen from some aspects: psychological, social, psychomotoric, and else. The activity was done for the six grader of elementary school students in Wetonkulon, Kebumen. According to the theory, those 11 to 12 years old students are those who tend to be kinesthetic learners.

Through the movement, children at those ages feel more fun and understand the materials better. While some students think that English is difficult, they are given solution on how to learn it the fun way. Even some teachers deliver the English material based on the books without considering making physical activities for the students. This activity tries to show that physical movement while learning for elementary school students may boost their ability in English.

Total Physical response, from now on is called TPR, is the finding of Dr. James J Asher. TPR (and TPRS) is built on the theory and research of many language acquisition specialists. The TPR method asks language learners to respond physically to commands in the target language, which are first modeled by the instructor (<https://tprsonline.net/dr-james-j-asher/>). By applying TPR at class, teacher can teach new vocabularies, especially verbs.

2. Literature Review

Nuraeni, 2019 has used TPR on young learners at Panti Asuhan Yauma Jakarta. She found out how the young learners enjoyed and got improvement in vocabulary score. Nurani and Yohana also find out that TPR is effective to teach vocabulary. Not only in Indonesia, there are many teachers observed the advantage of using TPR to teach English, just like Khorasgani who observed Iranian young learners who understand English better since the use of TPR at classes.

However, this method has never been applied at SDN Wetonkulon. SDN Wetonkulon is the only elementary school exists in Wetonkulon, Puring, Kebumen, Central Java. Wetonkulon is a village in Puring, Kebumen. It is around 205 hectares in size. As a land that is fertile, this village is good of farming and makes most of the inhabitants (1757 people), farmers. They run traditional farming with very simple way of living. Besides farmers, around 557 people are traders, 14 civil servants, 3 police/armies, and 6 retirements.

The condition around them makes them think English is not too important. This way also leads the English teacher make English class only as a subject to learn as it is listed as one of the subjects. Even some teachers think that good students are those who sit still while listening to the subjects explained. On the other hand, elementary school students are those who like to move around.

Thus, by applying this method to the targeted students, hopefully they can get advantages of learning English. They can move but the movement is the movement as the responses of what the teacher instructs. This way will motivate them to have eagerness in learning English. Hopefully, they continue studying English at the higher level and make them succeed as they are good in English.

3. Method

TPR is an appropriate method to apply for most of elementary school students who cannot stop moving while studying. By moving their bodies while learning, they remember the materials longer. Total Physical Response is a strategy in which students make connections to words, phrases, and sentences by creating physical movements to define them (<https://www.teachhub.com/teaching-strategies/2020/09/how-to-use-total-physical-response-tpr-in-the-classroom/>). Through this way, they are introduced to some new vocabularies and are asked to demonstrate the words.

4. Results and Discussions

The applications of the method, which are done in two cycles (the first is done in August 11, 2023 and the second is done in August 19, 2023) show good results. The observation is

based on the students' response to the given condition. There are big differences about the condition of the students. From the first cycle, it is known that students are ashamed of doing anything or hesitate to answer the questions at the beginning of the class.

First, they were asked to count from 1 to ten in English. Only a little number of students show confidence in answering the questions, others do not answer as some are shy and others do not know the right answers. The first time they are asked the key words also show that they hesitate to answer. Then, they are asked the meaning of monkey, most of them answer after the teacher show the movement that shows tail and some body movements show the identification of the word.

The next step is giving them the copies of the poem, they are asked to read aloud together after the teacher. There are 2 pages of poems but they are given 1 page first. This time, they find the counting down from 5 to 3 from verse to verse. They read it while showing the number of finger(s) according to what they say. They are also asked to show the movement of felling down and bumping head.

They are then given the second page of the poem on which the words they read before are repeated with the changing of number 2 to 1. There is a bit difference at the final verse or the 5th verse in which the last line is altered. However, as the students have read and memorise the previous verses many times, they easily can show the appropriate physical responses.

From 22 students at class, the teacher divides them into 5 groups and each group compete on showing their togetherness with their team to show the physical responses as they say the poems without reading anymore. Almost all of the students perform perfectly and say the poems even louder to show that they do not hesitate to pronounce the words.

The second cycle is done in August 19, 2023. This time, after 8 days, they are asked to say again the poems that they memorize before and they show they confidence in saying it. Their body positions also look relaxed this time, they are no more ashamed but show their confidence and happiness. As an appreciation, they get snacks as their gifts.

Conclusion

One of the ways to teach children new languages is by repeating the new vocabularies and moving bodies to make children understand them. Total Physical Response is the finding of Dr. James J Asher that can be used to teach new vocabularies, especially verbs. On this occasion, TPR is applied to teach English for the six graders of Elementary School Students of Wetonkulon Village, Puring District, Kebumen Regency, Central Java. TPR is an appropriate method to apply for most of elementary school students as they know better by moving while studying. By moving their bodies while learning, they remember the materials longer. They also have bravery to perform moving their bodies in front of class while uttering the given English poem. They even can remember the verses of the long poem well. In short, it can be concluded that the students who were ashamed of saying English when they were asked questions about English vocabularies, become confident after having English class with TPR method.

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Attachments:

A. Pictures



Picture 1. Most of student still do not show their interest to start the class.



Picture 2. Almost all of the student start to pay attention though some still show their way of sit still.



Picture 3. We can see from their faces that they are happy and confident.



Picture 4. English class the following week. Student do not hesitate anymore to move.



Picture 5. They are even happier to get the appreciation the following week. This time, every student shows their confidence and do not hesitate to show the gifts they get.



Picture 6. Everyone is confident and no more shy.

B. List of Students

No	Nama
1.	Alfaruq
2.	Rafa Radithiya
3.	Afriza Keyla
4.	Arif H
5.	Bibit Waluyojati
6.	Desfia Zahrani
7.	Fauzi Baehtiar
8.	Fuad Kurnia A
9.	Latifa Nur A
10.	Melina Dwi R
11.	Nafis Aditya P
12.	Najwa F
13.	Naora Qonita H
14.	Rendi Rafiandra
15.	Refandi Alif N
16.	Syfa Naysila
17.	Tegar Agustina
18.	Wanda Putra R
19.	Widji Anggraeni
20.	Zaqi Kus D
21.	Triyana Cahya A
22.	Giandra Lionnel



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