

## The Increasing of Students' Listening Skills by Using Total Physical Response (TPR)

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### Abstract

#### Article Info

Received: 01/05/2023

Revised: 28/05/2023

Accepted: 30/05/2023

This study dealt with the increase in students' listening skills by using Total Physical Response (TPR). This study was conducted on students of Politeknik LP3I Medan. This study aimed to increase the student's listening skills by using Total Physical Response (TPR). This study conducted qualitative research that described the result of the study. There were 20 students as participants in this study. This study used Classroom Action Research (CAR) to know whether this method was effectively implemented in the listening class and can increase students' listening skills. To know whether the students' listening skills increased or not, the researcher used the pre-test and the post-test. A pre-test was conducted to know students' score results before applying Total Physical Response (TPR). Post-test was conducted to compare the pre-test and the post-test to know the difference between the pre-test and post-test. The result of this study, there was increased students' listening skills by using Total Physical Response (TPR). The class average scores in the pre-test were 292,5, and when the lecturer implemented Total Physical Response (TPR), the student scores increased to 366,6. It meant Total Physical Response (TPR) positively influenced the students.

Keywords: Increasing, Listening Skills, Physical Response

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The English language is a general course in every university in Indonesia. It is also a very important course in universities. Some universities apply for English language courses with a significant credit weight and implement them for up to four semesters with a weight of two credits each semester. Although this English language course is important, students still consider it only as a general course and less serious to study. As we know, the English language is a major aspect in the selection of job search in state-owned and private companies as well as in government institutions. This becomes a very serious problem that they will experience, especially for students. Universities have made maximum efforts in teaching the English language. This can be proven by each semester's six-credit weight of the English language. Students' ability in English will prove that they have excellent Human Resources (HR). Having excellent HR is the desire of every company. When students graduate, the expertise in their field is not enough to meet the requirements made by various companies, so the company will hold an English language test that we often hear TOEFL as a measure of the ability of English language of prospective employees. Every semester, the campus conducts TOEFL tests.

From the results of this test, most students do not achieve competent scores. Most students have low scores in the listening aspect. Listening is one of the aspects that must be achieved by students. Listening is also the number one aspect that must be achieved because listening is the main part to be able to respond or answer what the interlocutor is conveying. If students are very deficient in listening, they will not have English language skills and it will become a problem for them to find a job in a company. If this is not taken seriously, it can be said that the campus is not able to produce students who have excellent HR and this will become a very serious problem for the campus. Based on previous research, students' English language skills increase significantly in the listening aspect by applying Total Physical Response (TPR) and can also improve the pronunciation of English language students.



The research conducted by researcher wanted to know how to improve students' listening skills by applying Total Physical Response (TPR).

### **Literature Review**

#### **Listening Skill**

Listening skill is an important factor not only in communication but also in language learning. Starting from the works of Asher, Postovsky, Winitz, and Krashen in the early 70s, there has been increasing attention to the role of listening as a tool for understanding and a key factor in facilitating language learning. In other words, listening plays a role in communication and supports the excellence of listening comprehension in instructional methods. Since then, teaching listening has required more attention from various parties, making it better today. This argument is supported by Pinter, who stated that "English should start with an emphasis on listening and speaking". He also added that it should start with a lot of listening practice, and opportunities to listen to rich input will naturally lead to speaking later. The focus on listening skills is to facilitate language teaching. Listening to itself is hard work for children.

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

Total Physical Response (TPR) is one of the methods of teaching English developed by Dr James J. Asher, a psychology professor at San Jose State University, California. TPR works on the coordination of speech and action through physical movement to respond to verbal input to reduce student barriers and lower their affective filters. TPR came first when Asher saw that second language learning for adults was a parallel process to first language acquisition in children. The idea was based on speeches directed to young children consisting of commands, which were physically responded to by the child before they started producing verbal responses.

Asher saw three processes as central:

1. Children develop listening competence before they develop speaking ability. In the early stages of first language acquisition, they can understand complex speech that they cannot spontaneously produce or imitate
2. Children in comprehension get acquired because they are required to physically respond to verbal language in the form of parental commands.
3. Once a foundation in listening comprehension is established, speech develops naturally and easily from it.

The above three processes show that TPR not only affects listening ability but also speaking ability. Speaking ability will naturally emerge later after children acquire their first language. Brown's statement (2000:30) supports this argument: "They receive a lot of listening before they can speak, then it is accompanied by responding or doing actions."

#### **Total Physical Response (TPR) Implementation Procedure**

Teachers can consider the procedures for performing TPR given by Asher as follows:

1. Review. This is a quick warm-up where students are individually prompted with commands. New commands. These verbs are introduced.
2. Role reversal. Students are willing to say commands that manipulate the instructor's and other student's behaviour.
3. Reading and writing. The instructor writes each new vocabulary item on the board and sentence to illustrate the item. Then he/she pronounces each item and enacts the sentence. The students listen as he/she reads the material. Some copy the information in their notebooks.

TPR implementation is not monotonous like the stages above. Different classroom conditions may have different stages. Asher in Jeanette Gordon also summarized the implementation of TPR in the classroom as follows. Students watch demonstrations of keywords and then use them to command.

1. Students listen again and watch the teacher act.
2. The teacher gives the command and models the action again, this time the students act simultaneously.



3. The teacher gives commands to the group without demonstrating the action.
4. The teacher gives commands to individuals without demonstrating the action.
5. The teacher models variations & combinations for the group.
6. Students perform variations & combinations.
7. If some students are ready, they give commands to their friends.

## 2. METHOD

This research conducted the Classroom Action Research (CAR) at Politeknik LP3I Medan. Classroom Action Research (CAR) can solve a lecturer's problem in teaching-learning. The problem was found directly by a lecturer in the classroom. This method can increase the lecturer's competency in teaching. Classroom Action Research (CAR) gave the solution to the lecturer's problem in teaching. Conducting Classroom Action Research (CAR) had a double role. They are practitioners and researchers. According to Borg "The main task in Classroom Action Research (CAR) is to develop the skills of a teacher from the need to overcome various existing problems in the learning process in the classroom or at school itself. This research used qualitative research although the data were collected in quantitative. Classroom Action Research (CAR) had three usefulness. It was useful for teachers, lecturers and the university. By using Classroom Action Research (CAR), the lecturers improved their teaching-learning process to be better and more creative lecturers in teaching and found the solution to their problems in teaching. The useful for students, it can reduce boredom in the learning process, and it can be a positive result in the learning process. It the useful for universities, it can create creative, innovative and professional lecturers. This research used pre-test and post-test to know the difference in the result after applying Total Physical Response (TPR).

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSION

### The Result

The researcher conducted two tests. They were pre-test and post-test. The following was the result of the pre-test and post-test.

#### Pre-test

In the pre-test, the students were not interested to face the test, especially in the listening part. In the test they have a comment, they did not know what the speakers said. They just guessed the right answer. They got difficulty comprehending the speaker's meaning. It can see from the facial expression and body language in doing the test. The following was the result of a pre-test.

Table 1. Pre-test Scores

No	Name	Score
1	ARP	450
2	ASYP	275
3	AWH	345
4	AR	255
5	AP	205
6	FK	240
7	IK	245
8	ID	335
9	KS	260
10	MR	265
11	MF	185
12	MF	240
13	NSD	155
14	PAT	350



15	RN	260
16	SP	495
17	SA	165
18	SM	415
19	TPAM	285
20	YH	425

From the pre-test result above, we can see almost all of the students did not get standard scores. From the score above, almost all of the students got low scores in listening. In the test, listening had the highest point. From the data above it just four students that have standard scores.

#### Post-test

From the result of the pre-test above, the students cannot achieve the standard score. Then, the researcher implemented Total Physical Response (TPR). In the post-test process, the students looked spirit and serious to do the test. In the post-test, the lecturers taught listening to the students using Total Physical Response (TPR). In the learning process, the students interact well with lecturers in doing exercises. The students understood more about listening and perceive what the speakers said in the listening section. The result of the post-test, the students' scores increased. The following was the student's score in the post-test.

Table 2. Post-test Scores

No	Name	Score
1	ARP	490
2	ASYP	285
3	AWH	510
4	AR	455
5	AP	350
6	FK	370
7	IK	270
8	ID	385
9	KS	410
10	MR	190
11	MF	315
12	MF	370
13	NSD	390
14	PAT	415
15	RN	240
16	SP	350
17	SA	255
18	SM	405
19	TPAM	455
20	YH	450

From the data above, we can see there was increasing from the pre-test to the post-test. In the pre-test, almost all of the students got low scores. After implementing Total Physical Response (TPR), the student's scores increased significantly.

#### Discussion

Based on the finding above, we can discuss that in the pre-test, the students got low scores in the test. The low scores were caused by student's misunderstanding about the topic and what the speakers talking about. This caused the difficulty of students in doing tests and then the students guessed without thinking what the right answer is. This had a bad habit in the learning process or test process.



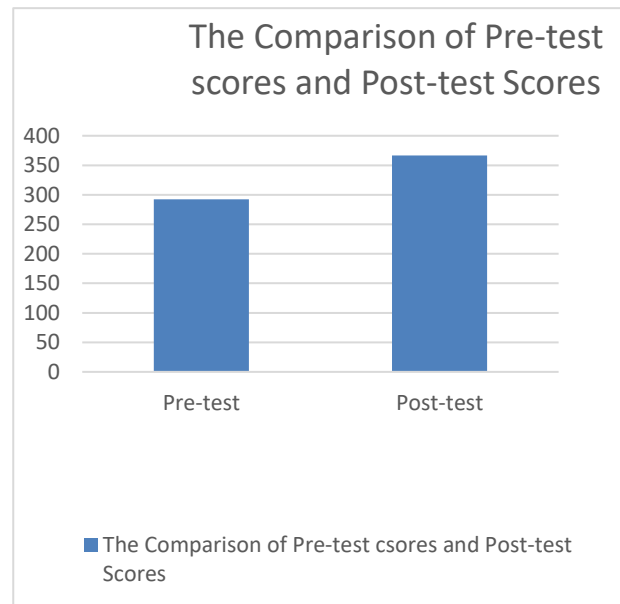
Before implementing Total Physical Response (TPR), the students were not active in learning. This was caused by a student's misunderstanding. So the students were hesitant and shy to respond to the learning. They judge that listening was the difficult section of the test because they did not listen well to what speakers said and the speakers were very fast to speak. Of 20 students, it was just 3 students responded well to the learning. This influenced students' spirit in learning and their competency in learning and test. At the time, the test was held every semester, the students got non-standard scores. To see this phenomenon the lecturer implemented Total Physical Response (TPR) to solve this problem. After implementing this method, the students were enthusiastic to study and they enjoyed the learning process. In the learning process, the lecturer taught listening to the students by using Total Physical Response (TPR), the students were spirit to study and understand faster than before. They can do the exercises well. In the listening class in implementing Total Physical Response (TPR), the teacher spoke and did something and invited the student to listen to the lecturer. This can make students understand more what the lecturer means. Then the lecturer asked the students to do the same thing to make them understand. In the pre-test, the average class score was 292.5. This is far from the expectation, the ideal average class score was 350. After implementing Total Physical Response (TPR), the student's scores increased by 366.6. This score has fulfilled the university standard. The following was the comparison of pre-test scores and post-test scores.

**Table 3. The Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test**

<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Pre-test</b>	<b>Post-test</b>
1	ARP	450	490
2	ASYP	275	285
3	AWH	345	510
4	AR	255	455
5	AP	205	350
6	FK	240	370
7	IK	245	270
8	ID	335	385
9	KS	260	410
10	MR	265	190
11	MF	185	315
12	MF	240	370
13	NSD	155	390
14	PAT	350	415
15	RN	260	240
16	SP	495	350
17	SA	165	255
18	SM	415	405
19	TPAM	285	455
20	YH	425	450

Based on the data above. We can see the comparison of the pre-test and post-test above significantly increased. It means that Total Physical Response (TPR) was effective to be implemented in listening classes before doing the TOEFL test at university. The data show there was an increase in every student in the post-test.

Figure 1. The Diagram of the Pre-test and Post-test



The figure above showed that Total Physical Response (TPR) was successfully implemented in the listening class. This method was appropriate to be implemented for students. It can increase students' listening significantly. This method was effective for students in the learning process.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study can be concluded that the implementation of Total Physical Response (TPR) was effective in the listening class. It can be seen from the increasing students' listening scores in the pre-test to post-test. In the pre-test, the students looked confused to do the test and then the students did not know what the speakers said. So the students guessed in answering the test. It was not good for their habit of doing tests. It was caused by misunderstanding the students perceiving the essentials of what the speakers meant. It was also caused by a lack of vocabulary knowledge in understanding the speakers. And then, when the lecturer implemented Total Physical Response (TPR), the students were enthusiastic about the learning process. They were actively involved in the class and understood more what the speakers said. The students were spirit in doing exercises and the students got new knowledge about vocabulary which help them to comprehend what the speakers said. It made them easy in doing the test. In the post-test, the students looked like able to answer the test carefully to get maximal scores. It can be seen from the data, the comparison between the pre-test and post-test, there was increased significantly.

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