

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

In English teaching, especially in Indonesian context, there are four skills that have been identified as the most important parameter in the textbooks and or curriculum development. The four skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is stated in the competence standard for elementary school that fifth graders are expected to achieve speaking ability in expressing instruction and giving simple information in school context. In detail, fifth grade students need to have the ability to introduce themselves, ask for something, ask for help, ask permission, express agreement and disagreement, express prohibition, give something, give instruction, offer help, show direction, order and command, etc. Furthermore, fifth graders start to learn how to politely speak to others by using polite expression such as: *do you mind ...*, *shall we...*, and so forth.

There are many methods that can be used in teaching or learning speaking in elementary school. But the applied methods need to be not only interesting but also effective in teaching speaking. Clearly, students will not be able to speak foreign language well just by memorizing lists of words, repeating mechanically some useful expressions, and so on. It is in line with Cameron's (2001) statement that meaning must first when children learn spoken language. Thus, if students

especially those who belong to young language learners, do not understand the spoken language, they cannot learn it effectively.

Unfortunately many teachers still apply traditional method in teaching English for young learners. For example, teachers make the students keep learning English through teachers' explanation of new words or grammar. In fact, this method is not effective because students will easily forget the words and the material if they learn different topic. Especially for young learners, those who are seven to twelve years old, this method is uninteresting.

Speaking is truly basic in the preschool. People speak first instead of both reading and writing. In the classroom, speaking is used twice as often as listening and the most often used skill (Brown, 2001). The statement clearly defines that students can not speak foreign language fluently unless they have more practice and use of spoken language instead of both grammar explanation.

In line with it, Dawson (1975) states that speaking is truly basic skill in language learning. Students need to get themselves involved in the classroom to get more practice in speaking foreign language, in this case speaking English. For the purpose of getting students involved in the classroom, enjoyable activities are recommended to be used by the teachers to make the students focus on teaching learning process.

James Asher, who developed a method called *Total Physical Response* (TPR), claimed that the principles of TPR may be simply an effective device to focus students on the input and to keep them actively get involved in the learning

activities. According to Asher (1977), TPR consists of three basic principles: (1) delay speech from students until understanding of spoken language has been extensively internalized, (2) achieve understanding of spoken language through utterances by the instructor in the imperative, (3) expect that, at some point in the understanding of spoken language, students will indicate a 'readiness' to talk (cited in Krashen, 1982, p. 140).

Three basic principles of TPR show that children substantial language acquisition will strongly influence students' understanding of foreign language. According to Krashen (1982) the use of TPR insures the active participation of students, and also provides contexts to help the students to understand the language they hear.

Referring to the explanations above, this research was conducted to help teachers to find the best way to teach speaking to young language learners. Therefore, Total Physical Response (TPR) was implemented in SD Tunas Harapan Bandung to find out the effectiveness of the method in teaching speaking to young learners.

1.2. Research Questions

Applying a new strategy and program to help teachers to find the best way to teach especially in teaching speaking to young learners is not an easy task to do. This becomes the basis of the research questions:

1. Is Total Physical Response (TPR) effective in improving young learners' speaking ability?
2. From students' point of view, what are the advantages and disadvantages of learning speaking with TPR implementation?
3. What strategies do the students use to overcome the obstacle in learning speaking by using TPR?

1.3. The Scope of the Study

Based on the aforementioned problems, the scope of this study was to find out the effectiveness of Total Physical Response (TPR) in teaching speaking English. Nevertheless, the context of the study was limited on teaching speaking to young language learners, especially to the fifth graders of SD Tunas Harapan Bandung.

1.4. Aims of the Study

This study was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of TPR in English teaching to improve children's speaking ability. It also endeavored to find the advantages and disadvantages of implementation TPR from the students' point of view, and also the students' strategies to overcome the obstacles in learning speaking by using TPR.

1.5. Hypothesis

According to Hatch and Farhady (1982: 85-86), a hypothesis is a tentative statement about the outcome of the research. In short, in statistical notation, the hypothesis of this study will be stated as follows:

$$H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$$

$$H_A: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$$

H_0 : null hypothesis

H_A : alternative or research hypothesis

μ_1 : control group

μ_2 : experimental group

The null hypothesis (H_0) states that there is no difference in mean adjustment level between the students who receive experimental treatments and the students who do not receive experimental treatments. Alternative or research hypothesis (H_A) are the opposite of null hypothesis. In this study, the alternative hypothesis states that there is difference between experimental group and control group.

1.6. Research Methodology

1.6.1. Research Design

The type of the research method that suits best to the topic under analysis is one of the great concerns in conducting the research. Among the different alternatives, the quasi experimental design emerged as one of the best research approaches as it is practical compromises between true experimentation and the nature of human language behavior which wish to investigate.

In addition, non-random control group pre-test post-test design was used in this study as it was a quasi experimental design. The design was used to reach more valid result as the true experimental design.

1.6.2. Population and Sample

The population of this study was the fifth grade students of SD Tunas Harapan Bandung. There are three classes of fifth graders, each of which consists of 41 students. Two classes were randomly chosen to be the samples of this research study. One class, 5B, was the experimental group which received experimental treatments, and the other, 5A, was the control group which did not receive any experimental treatments.

1.6.3. Data Collection

Since the study was quasi experimental, pre-test and post-test were used as instruments to collect the data. The collected data were the scores obtained from pre and post test that were given to both control and experimental group. Pre-test was used to measure initial ability of the children before they receive any experimental treatments. Post-test was given to control and experimental group after experimental group received experimental treatments. The scores from post-test were used to measure whether the implemented method influenced the experimental group or not.

Open interview was administered to students to answer second and third research questions, to find out the advantages and disadvantages of implementation of the method from students' point of view and students' strategies to overcome the obstacles in learning speaking with TPR. It was also administered to collect the data of students' language behavior or their response toward the implemented method.

1.6.4. Data Analysis

A major application of the t-test for independent samples is found in experimental research (Kranzler and Moursund, 1998). In this study, scores which were obtained from pre-test of control and experimental group were analyzed using independent t-test formula as the two groups are not paired in any way. It

showed that there was no difference between the two groups before experimental treatments given to experimental group.

Matched t-test then was used to analyze the two dependent groups of scores; pre and post test that are paired. The analysis of matched t-test was aimed to find out whether there was any development after the treatments or not. This formula showed the possible change of the group influenced by the implemented method.

The data collected from interview then were categorized into advantages and disadvantages of implementation of TPR from students' point of view, and students' strategies to overcome the obstacles in TPR implementation. The data were used to strengthen the quantitative data taken from the scores of pre and post test.

1.7. Clarification of the Key Terms

Some terms need to be clarified in order to comprehend the notions underlying the title of this study. Some terms are clarified as follows:

1. Total Physical Response (TPR) is a method developed by James Asher. It consists basically of obeying commands given by the instructor that involve an overt physical response.
2. Speaking Ability is a productive skill in oral mode (C.J. Orwig, 1991: 1). It can also be defined as student's competence in producing oral mode.

3. Young learners are children between 7-12 years old.

1.8. Organization of the Paper

This research paper was presented into five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 contains introduction which discusses background, research study questions, scope of the research study, aims of the research study, hypothesis, research method, clarification of the key term, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II consists of theoretical foundation from the experts and their research studies, which serve as the basic for investigating the research problem.

Chapter III includes methodology of the research study which will discuss the steps and procedures of the research, the instruments that will be used in the procedures.

Chapter IV provides the result of the research study after conducting the research and obtaining the necessary data. This section will include analysis, findings, and discussion.

Chapter V contains the interpretation toward the result of the research in a form of conclusion, and the suggestion in associating with the research.