

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Research

In this globalization era where there is no limit between one country to other countries, it causes English functioning as the international language become a necessity to be learnt by people in the world. As a consequence, English functions as a means to enable people among different countries communicate easily to accomplish their various goals. Since realizing this usefulness of learning English, it becomes the pushing factor of why lots of people across age levels nowadays are interested in learning English. Even they feel learning English is not merely driven due to their need alone but also their want.

However, when it comes to teaching English for young learners or children who commonly have not realized the usefulness of learning foreign language, it will lead to a very complicated problem. Moreover, according to the fact that children have special characteristics and needs which are profoundly dissimilar with people from different age levels like adults or teens, teaching English for young learners is considered to be the complicated and challenging activity for English teachers. Since all have known that sometimes children are not interested in learning English due to their blindness of the usefulness of foreign language learning, English teachers for young learners are expected to be creative to make the instruction exciting and fun for their students. It is because they are responsible for their students' success in their second language learning. It is so-called that English teachers for young learners are the central determiner of the success of their students learning. By considering this case, English teachers for young learners should be clever to find an appropriate method for achieving the goals of their

instruction. They should also provide the students with the activities which positively support their students' learning success.

The other reason why English teachers should apply the suitable method for their students in classroom process is primary driven by the principle aims of English teaching. Teaching English is not merely teaching how to read and understand the English textbook but rather on teaching so-called as four English skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Teaching English is considered to be the competence-requiring process which pushes English teachers to be competent in formulating the suitable and proper teaching methods for students of across age levels (children, teens, and adults) as well as across proficiency levels (beginners, intermediates, and advances). Furthermore, teaching English does not only attempt to enable people use English to fulfill their daily needs, but also help them to be able to access information as well as to attain academic or professional purposes.

When English teachers come to focus on teaching speaking skill to their students, especially young learners, besides having comprehensive understanding of students' special characteristics and needs, teachers should be smart in providing the activities for their students. Activities that will make their beginning students feel excited, relaxed, confident, fun, and comfortable are really demanded for students' learning success. It is assumed that if the teachers are able to provide those sorts of classroom activity conditions, students will be willingly to show their speaking skill without being desperately asked, or even forced.

An English teaching Method that is considered to be effective for teaching English speaking skill for young learners in the beginning level is the **Total Physical Response (TPR)**. This method was developed by James Asher in 1977 (Brown, 2001). Total physical Response creates the supportive condition in which students learn the target language coincide to their first

language acquisition. This method is considered of embracing lots of basic principles of children language acquisition. Total Physical Response suggests language teaching should employ the use of the target language in the instructional process that there will be no translation and in combination with the use of physical responses like smiling, eye contacts, grabbing, moving, reaching, etc. This is in line with statement declared by Asher (1977) cited in Brown (2001) that when learning the first language, children seem to do lots of listening more than speaking, furthermore the use of physical actions is involved while they are listening such as reaching, grabbing, moving, looking, and so forth.

Meanwhile, the Total Physical Response intended in this research refers to the implementation of the TPR which is made more creatively and innovatively to support the intended goal of this study. It little bit differs with the conventional way of Total Physical Response. In the conventional TPR which is proposed by Asher (1977: 43) cited in Brown (2001) it was claimed that the Total Physical Response heavily capitalized the imperative language function which was well known as commands, such as *open the door, walk slowly to the window, put your toothbrush on your book, etc* in which in the instructional process teacher just directly articulated the commands and students did the actions instructed to them, to illustrate the conventional TPR: the teacher says “walk slowly to the window!” then the student does the action commanded by walking slowly to the window. In the other hand, the Total Physical Response in this research refers to the instruction using the Total Physical Response through innovative techniques in which the teacher employs commands not only by directly verbalizing the instructions to be done by students in common way like explained above, but rather on using the commands in more interesting and creative ways through creative techniques such as *singing songs, story telling, games, even demonstrations*. Thus, in the Total Physical

Response of this research, the commands are packed into certain creative techniques so as to be more interesting, for instance by using songs, in which teacher sings the song containing commands then students do the commanded actions while singing or in demonstration where students can say the commands while they demonstrate the actions being done so that the advantage of activity is that they can relate the specific language to the specific actions.

By using TPR, the instruction process was designed in a conducive condition for students' language learning in which the language learning provided to the students was in a condition as stress-free and fun as possible by involving variety of class activities. In the ground that Total Physical Response capitalizes on the ways students learn their first language, this method highly associates the language with physical activities. It means that the language being taught directly relates to the activities being done by the speaker. Since children basically transform their perception into conception, then they use language to express their conception, the TPR is viewed to be suitable to facilitate students' language learning.

As known above that teaching English for young learners is considered to be a complicated matter due to students' special characteristics that are profoundly different from adults' characteristics, by remain considering on children's attention span, intellectual development, and affective factors, English teachers for young learners are pushed to be able to serve a suitable teaching method to deal with this problem. In addition, since the teacher's capability of providing activities that are considered to be interesting, alive, and fun for their students is necessary, the Total Physical Response is predicted to be the suitable method to achieve the success learning goals formulated. The activities provided in class are expected to enable students to demonstrate their understanding by doing, which support the fact that students will get excited when they are able to express few things in their second language learnt and

eagerly to show off their ability to convey something namely newfound knowledge from the second language learning to their family and friends.

According to the fact above, this research is conducted to investigate whether the Total Physical Response effective to improve speaking skill of the students of upper beginning level (sixth grade students) in a state-owned elementary school in Cirebon Regency (In Indonesian Sekolah Dasar Negeri (SDN) is used for naming the state-owned elementary school). The research is also carried out to observe the sixth grade students' attitudes of elementary school toward the use of the Total Physical Response in the English instruction.

### **1.2 Statement of Problems**

This research is carried out to examine problems covered in these three following research questions:

1. Does the Total Physical Response result in effective language teaching to improve the sixth grade students' speaking skill in SDN 2 Plumbon-Cirebon?
2. How are the sixth grade students' attitudes in SDN 2 Plumbon-Cirebon toward the use of the Total Physical Response in the instructional process?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Research**

According to the formulated problems, this research was conducted to find out the following objectives:

1. To investigate whether the Total Physical Response effective to improve the sixth grade students' speaking skill in SDN 2 Plumbon-Cirebon .

2. To examine how the sixth grade students' attitudes in SDN 2 Plumbon -Cirebon toward the use of the Total Physical Response in the instruction process.

#### **1.4 Scope of the Research**

Total Physical Response method is a language teaching method that coordinates speech and action together. Total Physical Response is assumed to hold many principles of human language acquisition. However, using Total Physical Response requires teacher to be able to make the teaching-learning process as exciting and less-pressure as possible for the success of students' language acquisition. As a result, Total Physical Response of this research refers to the employment of various techniques and activities intentionally formulated in order to bring about the improvement of students speaking skill. The techniques used for the instructional process of the research included story telling, games, singing & dancing, and demonstration with innovative regulations. Thus, this research focused on the effectiveness of the use of Total Physical Response in English teaching-learning process. Furthermore, the students' attitudes toward the use of Total Physical Response were also examined in this research.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Research**

According to the fact that students especially young learners possess special needs and characteristics which profoundly dissimilar with students from different age levels like teens or adults, teachers are demanded to be able to use an appropriate method which is not merely making the instructional process interesting and fun to students but also causing their students

acquire new knowledge and perform as well as show off the newfound knowledge to their family and friends. For that reason, the contribution which was expected result from the conducted research was finding the suitable, proper, and better method for teaching speaking skill. Therefore, the Total Physical Response of this research was expected to be one of the effective methods of teaching speaking skill for students of the beginning level, especially for the students of the institution in which the research was conducted.

In addition, due to this research was considered to employ an action research design, the conducted research did not merely aim to provide any educational practitioners with a statistical or descriptive report of the research, but it further aimed to be able to improve the English teaching-learning process in the institution where this research took place. As a result, the implementation of this research was expected to bring about positive changes for the instructional process and the teaching-learning output in the school where this research took place.

Moreover, this research was not only aimed to observe whether Total Physical Response was effective or not but to serve contribution to enabling students to know and understand of learning how to learn something, especially learning how to learn various skills which was expected to be useful for their future life. Since through Total Physical Response students were conditioned to be accustomed to solve a problem in order ways, sequentially, and systematically, they were expected to be able to gain English proficiency to extend their future skills. It was expected that Total Physical Response employed for this research would lead them to be able to learn how to acquire new skills in this fast-changing world so that they would know how to acquire new skill needed for their future career.

## **1.6 Research Method**

This research was designed to employ a sort of experimental research method. This research was considered as quasi-experimental research. The design of the research was one group pre-test post-test design like proposed by Arikunto (1990: 279). It indicated that the effect of the interventions/treatments of the research could be measured in certain by using the data from the pre-test. Before doing the pre-test, the students were not told that they were going to be tested, but it was informed that it was just sort of introduction. Therefore, they did not realize that they were being tested.

The research focused on the input and the output aspects as well as on what happens inside the teaching-learning process when the teacher and students came together so that students' progress on the investigated ability could be observed intensively in order to ensure that the use of Total Physical Response for the research was effective to improve students' speaking ability. The research was carried out directly by the researcher through a sequence of treatments/interventions investigating the some aspects of the use of Total Physical Response: its effectiveness and the students' attitudes toward the use of Total Physical Response employed in this research. A sequence of steps were also undertaken for each treatment, namely the first step was to plan the research, then moving to the second step which was actually to apply the plan and examine the effects in the teaching-learning process. Finally, the last step was to reflect to the process of the teaching-learning, then coming back to plan for the next treatment. The research aimed to gain the clear understanding on the phenomenon under discussion and hopefully to bring change for positive namely improvement of the teaching-learning process in the place where this research was done.

This quantitative research attempted to observe whether or not Total Physical Response used in the research was effective to improve students' speaking skill. As a result, it would



increase the predictive understanding of the contribution of Total Physical Response application in the instructional process, especially for its contributions in teaching speaking skill for young learners in the upper beginning level of elementary school. The validity and reliability of the research instruments would be tested as well.

### **1.7 Data Collection**

To collect the data for analysis, participant observation would be conducted. Total Physical Response would be applied by the researcher in classroom as treatments to investigate its effects toward students' speaking skill. In the instructional process, the teacher would provide the students with variety of activities that would be considered fun and joyful for the students. The teaching process was going to be conducted by using the target language and employ the use of physical responses. The authentic materials, such as realia, would be involved in the instructional process. Firstly, the researcher was going to undertake an early observation toward the teaching learning process occurred in the research location in the first week. Afterward in the next step pre-test was conducted to gain the data of students' prior competence which would be compared with the data of the post-test for the analysis of Total Physical Response effectiveness. The instructional process was going to be recorded by tape recorder as well as video tape so as to be able to observe students' progress of their speaking ability to assure that the use of Total Physical Response had been effective or not to bring about the progress as the bases for the next instruction. It was also aimed to avoid inaccuracy and incomplete data.

After getting the data related to the teaching-learning process, questionnaires would be distributed to the all subjects of this research. The questionnaires contained a set of ten questions asking students' impressions of the use of Total Physical Response. By distributing

questionnaires, students' feelings or impressions after the instructional process and its effects for them would be observed. In addition, informal interviews with a small number of students were undertaken to investigate what activity students liked best among the various activities provided in class by using Total Physical Response.

### **1.8 Data Analysis**

The data collections acquired would be used for analysis. The data gained from the tests would be examined to investigate whether Total Physical Response of this reasearch was effective to improve students' speaking skill. The data of the pre-test and post-test would be compared to see whether or not Total Physical Response of this research resulted in effective language teaching to improve students' speaking skill. Meanwhile, the data from the questionnaires would be analyzed to investigate students' attitudes toward the use of Total Physical Response and to ensure the effectiveness of Total Physical Response employed in the research.

### **1.9 Subjects**

The subjects involved in this research were selected by using purposive sampling in which the particular settings, persons, and events were chosen in order to attain the important information for the purpose of the study. The subjects were sixth grade students of elementary school, namely sixth grade students of SDN 2 Plumbon - Cirebon, in which their proficiency level was in the beginning level. Considering that the preliminary aim of this research was to make a better change or create improvement both on the instructional outcomes and process, the

sixth grade students in this school were selected. According to the preliminary observation, it indicated that this grade highly required immediate efforts to bring about improvements on certain aspects both improvements on their speaking skill as well as on the instructional process. According to the result of the preliminary observation, the significant imbalance between the students' length of the learning experiences with their existing knowledge considered still in low proficiency level, the sixth grade were assumed to be the very grade that needed immediate improvement most. This consideration was based on the data derived from the preliminary observation which revealed that even though the students had experienced English instruction for around two years, the sixth grade students' existing knowledge of English were very minim which could be assumed that they did not have oral competence and confidence to speak the target language. As a result, this research was carried out in order to build skill and confidence of sixth grade students to speak in English.

Based on the students' grade, the subjects of this research were categorized as the advance beginners or upper beginners. According to Sophie Ioannou-Georgiou and Pavlos Pavlou (2003), advance beginners are children who have been taught English at school or in private classes for a year (or have been equivalent of 80-100 hours of instruction). The ages of the students were around 11-12 year old. The number of subjects involved in this study was twenty five students. The research would be conducted for around two months to investigate whether or not Total Physical Response effective to improve and develop students' speaking skill.

### **1.10 Clarification of Terms**

**1. Total Physical Response:** the method of teaching English directly by using English as the target language and associating the language teaching with the physical activities or employing the use of physical responses. It is the method for English teaching which coordinates speech with actions. Total Physical Response employed in this research refers to the implementations of various enjoyable techniques (story telling, games, singing&dancing, and demonstration with innovative regulations) intentionally formulated by the researcher to create a more proper and favorable atmosphere of instructional process in order to yield improvement of students' speaking skill in the place where the research takes place. Shortly, Total Physical Response of this research refers to the application of Total Physical Response by using the researcher's new ideas of assumedly appropriate techniques that are creatively created in order to find the effective method for instruction. The techniques were assumed to be innovative because it represented the researcher's new ideas that were tried out into the practice in order to create effective and interesting instructional climate.

**2. Speaking skill:** the ability of speaker to convey message to the hearer in intention to be understood by the hearer, as well as the capability of expressing ideas, thoughts, feelings, emotions, and reactions in spoken language.

**3. Beginners:** English students whose the proficiency level is in the beginning/novice level indicating that the students of this level only have little or no prior knowledge of English as the target language. Furthermore, upper beginners are English students who have been taught English at school or in private classes for a year (or have been equivalent of 80-100 hours of instruction).

### **1.11 Organization of the Paper**

This paper consists of five chapters providing comprehensive descriptions and reports of the research having been carried out including how the research was conducted as well as the statistical and interpretative reports obtained from the research. Each chapter of this paper relates one to the others closely to describe all the aspects of the undertaken research.

The five chapters in this paper are Introduction, Theoretical Foundation, Research Methodology, Findings and Discussions, as well as Conclusions and Suggestions. Introduction as the first chapter consists of research background, statement of the problems, objectives of the research, scope of the problems, significance of the research, research method, data collection, data analysis, subjects of the research, clarification of the problems, and organization of paper. Meanwhile, the second chapter which is going to be the Theoretical Foundation comprises the underlying theories providing the basis of the conducted research and describing the related theories for data analysis as well as focusing the research. Whereas, Research Methodology embraces the method of the conducted research, including the subjects of the research and the instruments used in the research as well as a brief description of techniques used for data analysis. On the other hand, Finding and Discussion will cover the results of data analysis involving the statistical and interpretative reports of the results including its discussion. Furthermore, this paper is ended by Conclusions and Suggestions based on the results obtained from the research.

