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**Total Physical Response (TPR) Method for Enhancing Students' Listening Comprehension Ability**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study was aimed to observe the impact of applying Total Physical Response (TPR) method to enhance students' ability in listening comprehension ability. Dealing with many kinds of listening text is one of the important skill in learning English. Listening skill means the students are not only able to listen but to comprehend and understand the listening as well. One of the methods that can be used to help students to enhance their listening skill is TPR. This study was conducted by using classroom action research which is consist of two cycles. The sample of this study is the first semester students of Nommensen HKBP University. Listening test, observation sheet and diary notes were employed to collect the data. Quantitatively, it showed that the total score of the students in the end of the treatment was 3246 and the mean of the students' score of the test was 81.15. The percentage of the students' score of the test was 40 students who passed and got score 75 or up to 75 it was 100%. Qualitatively, the students gave various responses about this method, but mostly responses were the positive one that it can be concluded that the students' comprehension progress in listening skill was better by using TPR method. Based on the data analysis, the result of the research showed the improvement of the Students' Listening Comprehension Ability through TPR method were increased on every treatments.

**INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, the use of English in many fields is very important especially in education field. In Indonesia education system, formerly English was taught to the students as a subject from the Elementary School to University. It is one of the foreign Languages for Indonesian students that must be mastered. As we known that there are four skills that need to be mastered, namely: listening skill, reading skill, speaking skill, and writing skill.

Out of four skills of English, listening is believed as the crucial skill that have many contributions to the internalization of language rules and facilitates the acquisition of speaking, reading and writing skills. Listening is complex and active process of how to interpret what listeners hear and what they have already known. It is an interactive process of recognition,

perception, and understanding of the oral input and an intention to complete a communication. Listening can be defined as "The process of understanding speech in a second or foreign language." (Richard and Lockhart, 1994).

The listening skill has an important role in communication. It is a complex activity since as stated by Rost, (2011) "listening is receiving what the speaker actually says; constructive and representing meaning; negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding and creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy. In addition to Banat, 2015, listening involves understanding a speakers' accent and pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary, and grasping the meaning. Consequently, listening is a vital in the language classroom

because it provides input for the learner in which without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin (Rost, 2002). In conclusion, it can be stated that listening is an kinds of language learning activity to comprehend and transfer the idea/messages or knowledge through sound or voice that is heard, and then gave response on what speaker says or instruct to listener.

A very interesting research done by Bergquist and Philips (1997) shows that we behave differently depending on our different modes of listening as showed in the chart below,

Characteristics	Effective	Ineffective
Non-verbal behavior	Positive posture, keeps attention and eye contact	Looks uninterested and bored, avoids eye contact and maintains distracting manners
Focus of attention	Keeps focus of her comments on the speaker.	Shifts focus attention to him.
Acceptance	Listener accepts ideas and feelings.	Does not accept speakers' ideas and feelings.
Empathy	Listeners empathize.	Listeners fail to empathize.
Probing	Listeners probe in a helpful way.	Listeners fail probe effectively.
Paraphrasing	Listener	Restate in

g	paraphrase to verify s/he understood the information	their own words important statements made by the speaker.
Summarizing	Listener summarizes the conversation in a good way.	Listener fails to summarize
Advice	Listener gives a range of ideas, several numbers of alternatives	Listener gives few ideas, suggesting one correct course of action

Most learners/students will spend more time listening to the foreign language than producing it. The ability to have a full comprehension on this listening skill gives the student confidence in communication. By mastering this skill, they are able to talk sensibly when they can understand what is said to them. While the failing to understand this skill, will lead the students to miss important information presented to them or respond in a funny way. It is unlike reading, in listening students do not have the chance to adjust the pace of speech, listen again or check an unknown word. They need to understand what they hear on the spot makes it even more crucial that they develop the ability to listen well.

It has been known that listening is the first language skill developed in acquiring a language. Since this is the first skill to be develop, it often gave the students some difficulties in learning English especially if their ability in

listening English text is very low. This condition will affect their ability in speaking, reading and writing in English. To solve this problem it is necessary to find the way of teaching listening skill that will support the students in learning English as the foreign language. The goal of teaching listening skill is for the students to have their comprehension on the text that they are listen to. In order to achieve this goal is the teachers have to provide a variety of purposeful listening activities throughout the entire courses in the classroom through making the listening activities more meaningful and interesting by preparing the best material and using the special technique for the students, in order to make the lesson easy for the students to learn and understand.

Based on the explanation above, it is clear that there should be a method used in teaching listening. The method that can help students in comprehend and enhance their listening skills. Total Physical Response (TPR) is one of methods to teach imperatives to learners of foreign language that promotes learning language in a less stressful ways. Richards and Rodgers (2001) agree with Asher that TPR involves teaching a language through physical (motor) activity, but they also highlight that “TPR is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action”. In other words, it is to teach language through activity

TPR is one of the English teaching methods developed by Dr. James J. Asher, a professor of psychology at San Jose State University, California. This method activities generate a similar process to the one we follow when we are learning our first language: the facilitator introduces the second language by giving commands; then,

students listen and react to the utterances. Finally students are ready to start producing language. This facilitates the students’ exposure to the linguistic input and allows them react to it with no need of oral production on their part, in the same way that a child experiments learning his first language at early stages. TPR has important elements in common:

- a. It is based on the way of children’s learning their native language it is by acquiring listening comprehension before speaking reading ,and writing skills
- b. It shares the premise that learning a second language should be a “natural” experience with emphasis on communicative competence and realistic utterances
- c. It perceives language globally, with attention to detail emphasized later in the learning process
- d. It emphasizes on the use of the brain’s right hemisphere, for implication learning.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) agree with Asher that TPR involves teaching a language through physical (motor) activity, but they also highlight that “TPR is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action”. Then Asher found there are three processes as central of TPR (Richards and Rodgers,2002: 74):

1. Children develop listening competence before they develop the ability to speak. At the early stages of first language acquisition, they can understand complex utterances that they cannot spontaneously produce or imitate.
2. Children’s ability in listening comprehension is acquired because children are required to respond physically to spoken language in the form of parental commands.

3. Once a foundation in listening comprehension has been established, speech evolves naturally and effortlessly out of it.

Therefore, Garcia (2001) mentions two important concepts in TPR, which are that the use of TPR is closely related to the way people acquire their first language and the role of the right hemisphere of the brain in learning a second language by action. Finally, Garcia (2001) affirms that TPR activities generate a similar process to the one we follow when we are learning our first language: the facilitator introduces the second language by giving commands; then, students listen and react to the utterances.

**METHOD**

This study applied Classroom Action Research with two cycles in which each cycle involved four phases namely planning, acting, observing, and reflecting in the process of collecting the data. The subject of this study was the first semester students of English Department of Nommenen HKBP University that consist of 40 students. This study applied the listening test that consist consists of 30 fill in the blanks items, observation that used to collect information about students’ attitudes, perceptions, point of view, feelings, thoughts and opinions in learning English, observed and wrote the

phenomenon that happened in the class.

**RESULTS**

Since this study applied quantitative and qualitative data then there are two kinds of data. The data were taken from interview sheet, diary notes, questionnaire, and observation sheet namely qualitative data. The quantitative data were taken from the mean of student’s scores in giving the listening tests. In collecting the data, firstly the writer analyzed the situation by interviewed the students about their difficulties in listening comprehension. This research was conducted with 40 students taken as sample. The diary notes were used to write down the situation when teaching learning process was running. The diary notes were useful for recording all the students’ activities, students’ difficulties and students’ progression during conducting the research.

The quantitative data were taken from the test during conducted research. The test was given three times, a test and two tests after each cycle. The score of the students in every conducting test showed improvement continuously. The improvement of the students’ listening comprehension ability by applying total physical responses technique is shown in the following table.

**TABLE The Score of Treatment 1 until Treatment 3**

NO	Initial	TREATMENT 1	TREATMENT 2	TREATMENT 3
1.	BM	63	73	76
2.	TK	70	80	86
3.	DA	67	76	83
4.	FS	67	73	83
5.	SNE	70	76	86
6.	PT	70	76	86
7.	MT	67	73	80
8.	HS	63	70	76
9.	LT	67	73	80
10.	YP	67	76	86

11.	GE	56	70	76
12.	TST	67	73	80
13.	DS	67	73	76
14.	TH	67	73	80
15.	RP	70	80	86
16.	FDW	67	73	80
17.	RNM	70	76	83
18.	DST	67	73	80
19.	RBP	63	70	76
20.	ML	67	76	80
21.	IB	67	73	80
22.	LL	70	80	86
23.	RSM	67	73	80
24.	KL	67	76	83
25.	LND	67	76	76
26.	FK	56	73	80
27.	KO	67	73	83
28.	DH	70	76	76
29.	EW	70	80	86
30.	OH	70	80	86
31.	TYC	67	73	80
32.	MU	67	73	83
33.	PH	67	73	80
34.	TM	67	73	83
35.	RWP	63	73	80
36.	SPR	56	70	76
37.	RR	67	73	80
38.	EP	70	76	86
39.	CN	67	73	83
40.	HN	67	73	80
	<b>Total</b>	$\sum X = 2661$	$\sum X = 2973$	$\sum X = 3246$
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>X = 66.52</b>	<b>X = 74.32</b>	<b>X = 81.15</b>

From the table above, it can be concluded that:

- 1) The highest and lowest score treatment 1 were 70 points and 56 points.
- 2) The highest and lowest score treatment 2 were 80 points and 70 points.
- 3) The highest and lowest score treatment 3 were 86 points and 76 points.

The data showed that the students' listening score in the test got improvement in every meeting. In the first meeting, these students were not active. They looked so shy and afraid when they faced and listened to the

audio and felt lack of confidence to share their information about the text they were listened to. But in cycle II they were felt more confidence in doing the listening. Although their score was just increased 13 points, but the researcher was proud of them because they were become more active in every meeting, and they also got good score in the last treatment, it proofed that the technique ran so well.

Then there were passive students in the beginning of the class. But in the next meeting until the last meeting these students tried to be more cooperative. The data showed the improvement of

student's listening test in high score. In the first treatment, the number of the students was 40 and the total score of the students was 2661, so the mean was  $X = \frac{2661}{40} \times 100\% = 66,52$ . In the second treatment, the number of the students was 40 and the total score of the students was 2973, so the mean was  $X = \frac{2973}{40} \times 100\% = 74,32$ . In the last treatment, the number of the students was 40 and the total score of the students was 3246, so the mean was  $X = \frac{3246}{40} \times 100\% = 81,15$ . In the first treatment, the number of the students who got the point 75 was nothing. The percentage of this was  $P1 = \frac{0}{40} \times 100\% = 0\%$ . In the second treatment, the number of the students who got the point 75 was 15 students. The percentage of this was  $P2 = \frac{15}{40} \times 100\% = 37,5\%$ . In the last treatment, all of the students got the point 75 up. The percentage of this was  $P3 = \frac{40}{40} \times 100\% = 100\%$ .

Then the qualitative data were taken from the dairy notes, observation sheet, and interview. The dairy notes showed any significant improvement on students' listening comprehension. The students were not interested in listening the text at the first even they felt afraid of the listening. Then they turned to realize that listening is an important skill and enjoyable activity. Diary notes was written in every meeting during learning and teaching process of researching that used to know the development of students' listening comprehension ability, and help the researcher to solve the students' problem. In the beginning, the students were lack of enthusiasm in

teaching learning process but then the students paid more attention to do their work and were more confident to share their knowledge in the next meeting. There were an interview that was done in the first meeting about the teaching learning process in the class, about the topic given in listening class, and this step was also to know the students' capability in listening class. The teacher stated that the students had good capability in listening subject, but some of them were still confused in expressing their ideas and catching the idea of the speaker, the researcher also interviewed the students about their difficulties in English especially in listening class.

After analyzing all the data, the finding of this research showed that total physical response (TPR) technique was able to improve the students' listening comprehension ability. The data showed that the students' score improved in every treatment. It means that the action was done successfully. It was supported by the mean of the treatment I was 66.52, for the treatment II was 74.32, and the treatment III was 81.15. The quantitative data were taken from diary notes, observation sheet and interview sheet. From the diary note, it could be concluded that the students were excited to follow the lesson by using TPR. From observation sheet, there students were seriously in following the lesson. From the interview sheet, showed that the students faced difficulties in listening because of lack of vocabularies, the speech speed, and noise.

## CONCLUSION

This research finally concludes that the score of the students were increasing in each treatment. The mean of treatment 1 was 66.52, treatment 2 was 74.32, and treatment 3 was 81.15. After

analyzing the result of the data, the researcher concluded that total physical response technique significantly improved students' listening comprehension ability. It is important to the English teacher to use an appropriate strategy in teaching English especially in teaching listening. Total physical response is one of the strategies that English teacher can used in teaching listening skill. For the students, it is suggested to use total physical response technique because this technique trained the students to share their knowledge to their friends. Total physical response also trained the students to be in the control of his/her duty.

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