



PROMOTING SOCIAL AWARENESS THROUGH TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR) IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

Students in Indonesia must be equipped with a number of skills to face global competition in the 21st century. One of these skills is soft skills, one of which is social awareness. Ideally, teaching English for elementary school students should be child-friendly. The purpose of learning English in elementary schools is to train students to be able to communicate verbally using English in the context of simple conversations and to train the social awareness to the students. This study aims to describe the stages in training Social Awareness through Total Physical Response (TPR) to teach English at Elementary School. This study used a qualitative approach, and the subjects of this study were the fourth grade, fifth, and sixth grade students. Data collection techniques was carried out by observing offline learning, interviews, and analyzing learning documents, such as textbooks, learning media and so on. It was found out that the social awareness can be trained by selecting learning activity and suitable materials for young learners. It proves that TPR can be used not only to teach English, but also to train the students' social awareness.

Keyword: *Social Awareness, TPR (Total Physical Response), English Learning*

Abstrak

Siswa-siswa di Indonesia harus dibekali sejumlah keterampilan untuk menghadapi persaingan global abad 21. Salah keterampilan tersebut adalah *soft skill*, salah satunya adalah kesadaran sosial (*Social Awareness*). Idealnya pembelajaran untuk siswa SD harus ramah anak. Tujuan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di SD adalah melatih siswa agar mampu berkomunikasi lisan menggunakan Bahasa Inggris dalam konteks percakapan sederhana dan melatih kesadaran social siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana tahapan dalam melatih *Social Awareness* melalui *Total Physical Response (TPR)* dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, dan sebagai subyek penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas empat, lima, dan enam SD di Kediri. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan observasi pembelajaran secara offline, wawancara, serta menganalisis dokumen pembelajaran, seperti buku ajar, media pembelajaran dan sebagainya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesadaran social siswa dapat dilatih melalui pemilihan aktivitas pembelajaran dan pemilihan materi yang sesuai dengan karakteristik pembelajar. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa TPR dapat digunakan tidak hanya mengajar Bahasa Inggris, namun juga melatih kesadaran social siswa.

Kata kunci: *Social Awareness, TPR (Total Physical Response), Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris*

Introduction

In the 21st century, students in Indonesia must be equipped with a number of skills to face global competition. In accordance with the 2013 curriculum, learning in schools must instill character education. One of them is *Social Awareness*. "*Social awareness*" is a person's ability to recognize other people or awareness that fosters a concern, which can then show one's ability to empathize with others around him. Based on this understanding, that someone has empathy for social problems and understands what must be done to address these social problems. "*Social Awareness*" must be taught to children from an early age in order to foster a sense of empathy, mutual respect, and cooperation.

It is important to teach children *Social awareness* from the early age. Suganda (2018) states that a collaborative learning model can improve students' *socio-emotional* behavior, one of which is *Social Awareness*. *Social awareness*

has a positive impact on children's behavior in the classroom. They become more active, communicative, and sensitive to the things around them. *Social Awareness* also contributes to their English academic achievement. Where they are motivated and more confident in learning English.

The learning process in English must empower students to be more active in practicing while the teacher also instills character education. Nurhajati (2020) stated that most of the English teachers in elementary schools in Kediri did not have an English educational background. This causes learning activities in elementary schools still focus on children's cognitive development, namely teachers train more aspects of knowledge. This causes the material provided is not child friendly. English language learning materials in elementary schools provided to students must be child-friendly. This means that child-friendly learning materials are materials taught that must be in accordance with the world of children and their level of ability (Nurhajati, 2020). The material taught to children is not only appropriate and needed by children, but also must be able to train social awareness.

One method that suits the child's character is *Total Physical Response* method (TPR). It is a method that was first developed by James J. Asher. Through this method children are directed to basic commands, children will respond physically before they start to produce verbal or speech responses (Fauziati, 2014). TPR is one of the child-friendly English learning methods used in foreign language teaching by imitating movements to describe foreign vocabulary and students having to imitate the movements made by the teacher. This method is quite interesting to apply in learning because children can remember vocabulary easily. This method combines the coordination of commands, speech, and gestures. Adnyani (2018) states that the TPR method can train children's listening skills with activities such as *imperative drills, action songs, and using flash cards*.

In the learning process using the TPR method, the teacher can include things or tasks that are able to train children's social awareness. Cahyaningrum, et al (2017) stated that the cultivation of character education for early childhood showed positive results through habituation and exemplary activities. Activities carried out such as assignments or such as praying before starting the lesson. The social awareness that students get when following the English learning process in the classroom using this TPR method, can be applied by students when they are outside the classroom, especially in daily life.

Realizing the facts that Social Awareness can be trained through repeated learning activity, the study was conducted. The aim of the study is to

determine what social awareness attitudes arise during the learning process. The research tries to answer the questions: "What are the stages of Teaching English with TPR to train *"Social Awareness"* at the elementary school?." and "What are the teaching materials that can instill *Social Awareness* in the students at the elementary school?"

Research Methods

This research used a qualitative approach, namely case studies. The case used was a teacher who taught English in elementary schools while instilling *soft skills*, namely *Social Awareness*. This research was conducted at outside, and with a model teacher who taught English. The process of the teaching and learning was carried out offline with a health protocol. The subjects of the research were an English teacher of an elementary school in Kediri, and a number of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students.

The data collection techniques used in this study were observation and interviews. Observations were carried out in the classroom. The researchers were not directly involved in the teaching and learning process. They conducted interviews with teachers and several students. The purpose of the interview was to obtain data and to clarify the data obtained in the observation. The data analysis followed the procedure proposed by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) that consists of data collection, categorization, analysis, and conclusion.

Results and Discussion/Hasil dan Pembahasan

From the results of observations and interviews conducted in July and August, it was found that the acquisition of Social Awareness at the learning stage using the TPR method.

1. Learning stages

The learning stages consist of 3 stages, namely: *Pre-Teaching*, *Whilst-Teaching*, and *Post-Teaching*. During *Pre-Teaching* (Initial Activities), the first thing is that the teacher prepared students psychologically and physically to participate in the learning process such as arranging learning settings (seating). After the students were ready to study, the teacher greeted the students and checked the students' attendance and leads the prayer. After that, the teacher did a *warm up* activity by singing together (*opening song*). An example of the song used was *"Good morning"* with the melody of the

song "*Happy Birthday*". The two teachers explained the learning objectives or basic competencies to be achieved.

The Whilst-Teaching activity (core activity) consists of five stages, namely: observing, asking questions, gathering information, associating, and communicating. Before entering the observation stage, the teacher invited students to follow the yell, "*If you're ready to study, say YES YES ...*". At the *observing* stage, the teacher introduced vocabulary through the pictures displayed in front followed by movements that present the vocabulary. The examples of vocabulary introduced were '*get up*', '*take a bath*', '*sweep the floor*', '*brush the teeth*', etc. Then, the teacher asked the students to follow the movement. At the *questioning* stage, the teacher asked questions related to vocabulary. The teacher says the word, and students were asked to make movements according to the vocabulary spoken by the teacher. This stage aims to measure students' understanding and provoke them to ask questions. At the stage of *gathering information*, the teacher introduces vocabulary in the context of everyday expressions followed by movements and asked students to repeat what the teacher said. Examples of expressions are '*I take a bath*', '*I sweep the floor*', '*I brush my teeth*'. At the *associating* stage, the teacher asks students in pairs with their next-door friends to practice saying the phrases that have been taught. A: '*What do you do every morning?*' B: '*I take a bath.*' At the *communication* stage, the teacher gives a game by instructing several students to come forward in pairs to have a dialogue, then alternate interlocutors in sequence.

During *Post-Teaching* activities, the teacher conducted an assessment to measure the achievement of learning objectives. In addition, the teacher evaluated the entire series of learning activities and the results obtained and then jointly finds direct and indirect benefits from the learning outcomes that have taken place by asking "*What have we learned today?*". The teacher provided feedback on the learning process and results by praising students. The teacher along with the students sing the closing song as a sign of the end of the class and to motivate students to continue learning. The song that was sung was '*Good Bye*' with the melody '*Gellang Si Patu Gilang*'.

The TPR applied by the teacher aims to introduce vocabulary and expressions without introducing their equivalent in Indonesian (translating). The way to introduce learning material is with repetitive movements, then accompanied by pronunciation of vocabulary/expressions in English. The reason for using this method is that children can guess the meaning of movements, facial expressions, and repetition.

2. Materials

The material used in learning is material that is in accordance with the child's world with the principle of '*here and now*', namely material whose themes they encounter every day. For example, *hobbies, professions, daily activities*. The linguistic scope includes everyday vocabulary and expressions (such as asking how things are, asking for things/favorites, etc.). The material involves students, made like games, songs, pictures, learning activities in pairs and in groups.

The findings related to the stages of learning and, obtained an overview:

- a. The process for training *Social Awareness* is by repeating the material for pre, whilst, and post stages. The material is introduced in stages, namely the initial stage students only see and listen, the second stage sees, hears, and says. The next stage is to practice in pairs before the child is able to communicate independently. In addition, the teacher always inserts activities to attract students' attention, for example by yelling, singing. Through these stages, the interaction of students with students and students with teachers increases. It reduces the distance between teachers and students, and students become more communicative.
- b. There are three indicators of *Social Awareness*, namely understanding the situation, empathy, and organizational awareness. Through learning activities with the TPR method, students can *understand the situation* by repeating the words read by the teacher with movements. For example, there are some students who still do not follow the lesson well because they play and talk with their friends next to them. Then another friend reminded the child to refocus on the activities of the teacher. This activity also increases students' *empathy*. For example, the teacher always gives a positive response as feedback for students who are able to carry out orders, even though the students still make mistakes. With this example, students become accustomed to always respecting others. Ways that can be done are to praise '*Good*', '*Excellent*', '*Well done*', or '*Thank you*' and *clapping*. This stimulates the other students to act like the teacher by clapping. Furthermore, TPR trains *organizational awareness*, namely students realize that they are part of the class and are responsible for what is done during learning. By being given games and assignments in pairs, communication between students is established by interacting with each other.

Choosing the right material also trains students' *Social Awareness*. For example, the material with the theme '*Hobby*', the vocabulary chosen by the teacher is a positive hobby and encourages students to do positive things. For the material with the theme '*Daily Activity*', the teacher introduces vocabulary with positive movements to suit current conditions, such as '*wear the mask*', '*wash the hand*'. In conclusion, the selection of materials can encourage students in a positive direction and train students' Social Awareness, namely knowing each other and understanding the needs of others.

If the result of the study is compared with some previous study, there some differences and similarities. The first different is the focus of the study. This research focuses on how to train Social Awareness using TPR in teaching English. A research conducted by Astutik (2017) focused on the process of teaching English in Kindergarten using TPR. The result shows that the students not only respond with physical or non-verbal movements but also with speech or verbal responses and develop students' vocabulary. Then, Adnyani (2018) did a research that focused on the TPR method to teach listening skill. Furthermore, research conducted by Zulpan (2018) found that the TPR method was able to improve the ability to read procedural texts. Furthermore, a research conducted by Nuraeni (2019), examined the TPR method for teaching English vocabulary. Meanwhile, research conducted by Gumiandari (2021), shows that students are easy to digest and able to respond well in learning English. It can be concluded that previous studies are still focused on the cognitive aspect.

The result of the study supports some studies on how to build character education to children. Social Awareness is included in the socio-emotional category and is one of the characters that must be instilled in children. Research on socio-emotional was conducted by Suganda (2018). The results show that a collaborative learning model can improve students' socio-emotional behavior, one of which is Social Awareness. Research conducted by Haryono (2020) on socio-emotional found the results that children's social emotionality increased through puzzle games and children became more communicative. In other words, character education can be instilled through the learning process. The results of this study also support the findings of this study, namely character education can be instilled through learning activities (the use of TPR in this case), material selection, and the process of interaction between teachers and students.

Finally, this research is the first step to examine how to build character in children by choosing the TPR method. Future researchers can find solutions on how to instill 21st century character (Collaboration, Creativity, Critical thinking,

and communication) which is linked to hybrid learning (blended learning) for English for children.

Conclusion

Total Physical Response (TPR) can be used to instill social awareness of the students. It can be done through repeated learning activity and selected the suitable materials to teach English at elementary school. The process of acquiring *Social Awareness* through the TPR method can go through three stages including *Pre-Teaching, Whilst-Teaching, and Post-Teaching*. At the *Pre-Teaching* stage, the teacher will convey greetings to students then arrange seats, pray and motivate students by doing warm-ups, namely by singing. At this stage, *Social Awareness* emerges, namely *understanding situations* where students can follow the teacher's orders. *Whilst-Teaching* stage, at this stage the teacher introduces vocabulary with movements that present vocabulary and gives games to students. At this stage, *Social Awareness* appears including *empathy, organizational awareness, and understanding the situation*. In the *Post-Teaching* stage, the teacher gives worksheets to students, evaluates learning activities, and provides feedback to students. At this stage, *Social Awareness* that appears includes *understanding the situation and empathy*.

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