

SOCIALIZATION ON THE USE OF TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR) METHOD IN ENHANCING ELEMENTARY STUDENTS 124385 LISTENING ABILITY

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ABSTRACT

This community service program aimed to improve the listening skills of fourth-grade students at SDN 124385 Pematangsiantar through the Total Physical Response (TPR) method. The implementation consisted of three main phases: preparation, implementation, and evaluation. The results showed a significant increase in students' listening abilities. Before the program, only 30–40% of students responded correctly to simple commands. After the program, more than 80% of students were able to follow instructions properly. Furthermore, student engagement improved from passive to active participation. The TPR method proved effective in creating a fun and interactive learning atmosphere, making it easier for students to comprehend English listening materials.

Keywords: Elementary Education, English Listening, Listening Skills, Total Physical Response

ABSTRAK

Program pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menyimak siswa kelas IV SDN 124385 Pematangsiantar melalui metode Total Physical Response (TPR). Pelaksanaannya terdiri dari tiga tahap utama, yaitu persiapan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya peningkatan yang signifikan pada kemampuan menyimak siswa. Sebelum program, hanya 30–40% siswa yang mampu merespons perintah sederhana dengan benar. Setelah program, lebih dari 80% siswa mampu mengikuti instruksi dengan benar. Selain itu, keterlibatan siswa meningkat dari pasif menjadi aktif. Metode TPR terbukti efektif dalam menciptakan suasana belajar yang menyenangkan dan interaktif, sehingga memudahkan siswa dalam memahami materi menyimak Bahasa Inggris.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Dasar, Menyimak Bahasa Inggris, Keterampilan Menyimak, Total Physical Response

INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the essential skills in today's era of globalization. As an international language, English proficiency plays a vital role in accessing information, technology, education, and future career opportunities (Masrul, 2019; Lumbangaol et al., 2024; Damanik et al., 2025). One of the fundamental aspects of mastering English is listening skills. According to Datu, Fansury, and Muliati (2023), listening ability serves as the foundation for students to develop other language competencies such as speaking, reading, and writing (Herman et al., 2025; Simanjuntak et al., 2025).

At the elementary school level, especially in Indonesia, listening skills often receive less attention in the teaching and learning process. Research conducted by Otegenova and Akimkhanova (2025) found that listening instruction at the elementary level is still dominated by teacher-centered lectures, which lack active student engagement. This condition is further supported by findings from Monita and Prasetyo (2021), who stated that the lack of interactive teaching methods makes students less motivated to participate in listening activities.

A similar issue was identified at SDN 124385 Pematangsiantar, the partner school in this community service program. Based on preliminary observations conducted by the service team, most fourth-grade students experienced difficulties in understanding and responding to simple oral instructions in English, such as "stand up," "sit down," or "touch your head." Furthermore, the English teacher at the school reported limitations in applying innovative and engaging teaching methods suitable for young learners.

Several previous research studies and community service programs have shown that implementing the Total Physical Response (TPR) method has a positive impact on improving students' listening skills. A study by Panuan and U-nakarin (2022) in Thailand demonstrated that TPR effectively enhances elementary students' listening and speaking abilities. Similar results were also reported by Binti et al. (2024), whose community service activities successfully increased student engagement through song-based TPR at the elementary level. In addition, Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum policy launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology also encourages the implementation of innovative teaching methods that emphasize active student participation and engagement in the learning process, including in foreign language instruction.

Through this community service program, the implementation team aims to provide solutions to the problems faced by the partner school by applying the TPR method in English language learning, particularly to enhance students' listening skills. This method is chosen because it is considered capable of creating a fun, interactive, and developmentally appropriate learning environment for elementary school students.

Based on the above background, the main objective of this community service activity is to improve the English listening skills of fourth-grade students at SDN 124385 through the implementation of the Total Physical Response (TPR) method as an effective and enjoyable teaching strategy.

METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

Method of Implementation

This Community Service Program (PKM) was conducted at SDN 124385 Pematangsiantar with the primary participants being fourth-grade students. The main focus of this activity was to improve the students' English listening skills through the implementation of the Total Physical Response (TPR) method, which is a teaching technique that combines verbal instructions with physical movements to enhance language comprehension. The implementation process was divided into three main stages: preparation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

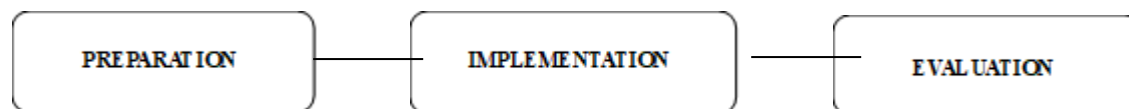


Figure 1. Procedures in Conducting the Community Service Program

Partner Profile

SDN 124385 is one of the public elementary schools located in Pematangsiantar City, North Sumatra. This school has limited learning resources, especially in the teaching of English. The fourth-grade students, totaling 30 individuals, became the main target of this activity. Based on the initial observation that I conducted, it was found that the students had low learning motivation and limited ability to comprehend oral instructions in English. The English teacher at the partner school also reported difficulties in applying varied and interactive teaching methods in the classroom.

Role of Lecturer and Student in the Activity

In this PKM activity, the lecturer acted as a supervisor during the planning and reporting process, while I, as the student, acted as the sole executor of the activities in the field.

Some of the activities that I carried out during this PKM implementation included:

- Conducting initial classroom observations to identify the students' learning problems.

- Preparing media and teaching aids based on the TPR method.
- Demonstrating TPR commands to the students.
- Leading educational games and group activities.
- Collecting data for the evaluation process through observation and interviews with the partner teacher.

Stages of Implementation

Phase 1. Preparation Stage (Pre-Activity)

At this stage, I focused on planning and coordinating with the partner school. The steps I took included:

- Conducting direct communication with the school principal and the English teacher to explain the objectives, schedule, and expected outcomes of this PKM activity.
- Conducting a needs assessment and initial observation to identify students' problems in listening skills.
- Developing a lesson plan (RPP) based on the TPR method tailored to the students' proficiency levels.
- Preparing learning media such as flashcards, Laptop, Speaker and TPR demonstration videos (e.g., from online sources like <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZanHgPprl-0>).
- Creating evaluation instruments in the form of observation sheets and checklists.

Phase 2. Implementation Stage (Activity Execution)

This stage was the core of the TPR method implementation in the classroom. The sequence of activities I conducted included the following:

Step 1 Greeting and Motivation Session:
Each learning session began with me greeting the students using simple English sentences such as:
"Hello, Good Morning. How are you today?"
This activity aimed to build students' interest and reduce their anxiety toward learning English.

Step 2 Introduction to TPR:
I explained to the students that learning English could be done in a fun way through physical movements. I introduced TPR by demonstrating basic commands such as:

"Stand up" (Berdiri), "Sit down" (Duduklah), "Touch your head" (Sentuh kepalamu), "Clap your hands" (Tepuk tanganmu)," and other simple instructions.



Figure 2. Implementation of Total Physical Response (TPR) Method: Students and Teacher Practicing Classroom Commands

Step 3 Demonstration of Commands by Myself:
I asked the students to listen carefully and follow the movements that I demonstrated according to the instructions I gave.

Step 4 Simon Says Game:
To improve students' concentration and listening accuracy, I conducted the "Simon Says" game. The rule was that students could only follow the command if it was preceded by the phrase "Simon says." This game successfully created an interactive learning atmosphere and encouraged students to focus more and pay attention to the instructions.



Figure 3. The Implementation of the “Simon Says” Game in English Learning Using the Total Physical Response Method

Step	5	Group	Activities:
I divided the students into several small groups. Each group was assigned the task of creating a sequence of daily activities using TPR commands. One student from each group acted as the instructor and gave oral commands such as: "Stand up! Brush your teeth! Eat breakfast!" Meanwhile, other group members performed the corresponding actions. This activity was conducted to encourage collaboration among students and to enhance their understanding of English instructions in real-life contexts.			

Step	6	TPR	Song	Integration:
To enrich the variety of activities, I also invited the students to sing popular TPR-based songs, such as "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes," while performing the corresponding movements.				

Phase 3. Monitoring and Evaluation Stage

The evaluation process in this activity was conducted in two stages:

- | During | the | Activity: |
|---|-----|-----------|
| I used oral test observations to monitor student participation, responses, and their level of engagement during each TPR activity. I recorded the extent to which students could follow the instructions correctly and their level of enthusiasm during the activities. | | |

- **Evaluation** **Instruments:**
The evaluation of this activity was conducted using several instruments, including:
- Oral test observations for each student to measure their response to the given commands.
- Performance assessment of students in following the instructions given during the activities.

Table 1 Activity Implementation Schedule

NO	Stage	Activity Description	Duration
1	Preparation	Coordination, initial observation, media preparation	1 day before the activity
2	Implementation	Socialization, TPR demonstration, games, group activities, TPR songs	50 minutes
3	Evaluation	Data analysis of activity results	20 minutes

RESULTS

Phase 1: Preparation

In the initial stage of the activity, I conducted coordination with the school principal and the English teacher at SDN 124385. The coordination aimed to explain the objectives, schedule, and benefits of the Community Service Program (PKM) that I implemented.

I also conducted classroom observations to directly assess the students' ability to understand oral English instructions. The observation results showed that most students still had difficulty following simple commands such as "Stand up" or "Sit down." Out of 30 students, only about 30% were able to respond correctly.

After identifying this condition, I developed a lesson plan (RPP) based on the TPR method. In addition, I prepared learning media such as flashcards, posters, and TPR demonstration videos from the internet. I also created evaluation instruments in the form of observation sheets and checklists to be used during the evaluation phase.

Phase 2: Implementation

This phase became the core part of the activity. I conducted the activity in one meeting with a duration of approximately 70 minutes. I started by greeting the students in English to create a friendly and comfortable atmosphere, using sentences like "Good Morning, how are you today?".

Next, I introduced the TPR method to the students and demonstrated several simple commands such as “Stand up,” “Sit down,” and “Touch your head.” Initially, the students seemed hesitant, but after several repetitions, they began to actively participate.

One of the most engaging sessions for the students was the “Simon Says” game. In this game, more than 85% of the students were able to follow the commands correctly according to the game rules.

After that, I invited the students to participate in group activities. Each group was asked to create a sequence of daily activities in English and practice them with movements. In the final session, I led the students in singing the song “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes” while performing the corresponding actions based on the lyrics.

Phase 3:

In this phase, I conducted an evaluation using oral tests and direct observation of the students. From the observation results, I noticed a significant improvement in the students' ability to understand and follow oral English instructions.

More than 80% of the students were able to respond to the commands correctly and showed great enthusiasm during the learning process.

DISCUSSION

Challenges in Implementing the TPR Method

During the implementation of this PKM activity, I encountered several challenges, including:

1. **Low Student Motivation:**
At the beginning of the activity, some students seemed unenthusiastic and less interested when I invited them to participate. They were not yet familiar with learning English through physical activities.
2. **Limited Vocabulary Mastery:**
Many students did not understand the meaning of the English commands I gave. They often appeared confused when receiving new instructions.
3. **Classroom Management During Physical Activities:**
Managing a class with a fairly large number of students (30 students) while conducting movement-based activities proved to be quite challenging. I had to work extra hard to ensure the students stayed focused and the classroom remained conducive.
4. **Limited Learning Time:**
The 70-minute duration felt too short to implement all the planned activities, starting from

introducing the method, demonstrating commands, playing games, and conducting evaluations.

Steps I Took to Overcome the Challenges

To overcome these challenges, I applied several strategies, namely:

1. **Building Student Motivation:**
I started each session by giving greetings and praise. Additionally, I selected enjoyable activities such as games and songs to make students more interested.
2. **Utilizing Visual Media and Repetition:**
I used visual aids (flashcards) and videos to help students better understand the meaning of each command. I also repeated each command several times to help students memorize better.
3. **Dividing Students into Small Groups:**
To make classroom management easier, I divided the students into small groups. This allowed me to more effectively monitor and control student participation during the activities.
4. **Adjusting Activities to the Available Time:**
I prioritized the most important and effective activities to achieve the learning objectives. Some group activities were simplified to ensure all activities could be completed within the available time.

Table 1. Observation Results Before and After TPR Implementation

NO	Indicator	Pre-Activity (Observed)	Post-Activity (Observed)
1	Responsiveness to Basic Commands	Low (Only 30–40% of students responded correctly)	High (80% students responsive)
2	Understanding of Complex Instructions	Very limited (Students confused and hesitant)	Improved (majority understood)
3	Student Engagement	Passive (Low motivation and participation)	Active and enthusiastic
4	Listening Test Scores	Average score below 60%	Improved above 80%



Figure 4. Group photo taken after the activity with students of Grade IV class at SD Negeri 124385 Pematangsiantar.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Total Physical Response (TPR) method in this community service program successfully enhanced the listening skills of fourth-grade students at SDN 124385 Pematangsiantar. This activity contributed to the field by providing practical evidence that TPR is effective in improving students' English listening comprehension in elementary education settings. The scientific justification lies in the alignment between TPR principles and young learners' cognitive characteristics. This program is expected to be continued and adapted by teachers for regular classroom instruction, and future initiatives should explore the long-term impact of TPR on other English language skills.

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