



## Developing a Total Physical Response (TPR)-Based English Module to Enhance Listening-Speaking Skills of Young Learners

Merlin Waruwu<sup>1\*</sup>, Yunita Tafonao<sup>2</sup>, Arniwati Gulo<sup>3</sup>, Oktoberlianus Zendrato<sup>4</sup>, Fitri Seniwati Halawa<sup>5</sup>, Arif Wahyu Tomosa Halawa<sup>6</sup>, Yaredi Waruwu<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1-7</sup> Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, FKIP, Universitas Nias, Indonesia

\*Author correspondence: [merlinwaruwu8@gmail.com](mailto:merlinwaruwu8@gmail.com)

**Abstract.** *In order to address the issues of classroom management, media integration, and listening-speaking progression that teachers at PPA Kramer Hilina'a Gunungsitoli faced with 18 students ages 6 to 9, this research and development (R&D) study created Total Physical Response (TPR)-based English teaching modules using the ADDIE model. The class D English instructor served as the study population. Semi-structured interviews and TPR classroom observations were used to gather data, which was then subjected to content analysis. Three primary needs were identified by the findings: listening-speaking hurdles, current media structuring (PPT, flashcards, videos), and movement classroom management (73% interview codes). The module increased student engagement from 62% (11/18 students) to 89% (16/18 students), command-response frequency from 8 to 21 per session, and verbal repetition from 9/18 to 15/18 students (83%) after it was tested in two class D sessions and validated by experts (score 4.2/5 or 84%). This low-tech lesson can be replicated in PAUDs with limited funding and space, giving non-specialist teachers formal TPR assistance utilizing already-existing resources at no further cost. Single respondent and short trial duration are research limitations; subsequent long-term testing across several PAUDs is advised.*

**Keywords:** ADDIE Model; English Young Learners; Listening-Speaking; Teaching Modules; TPR Method.

### 1. BACKGROUND

As an international language, English is strategically used in early childhood education to get kids ready for the age of globalization. The Merdeka Curriculum places English as local curriculum at the elementary school/MI grade 1-3 level (ages 6-9 years), emphasizing speaking and listening abilities as the cornerstone of everyday oral communication. According to (Arumi & Giyatmi, 2025), children must first silently listen to teacher instructions before they can respond with appropriate words. (Pratama et al., 2025 adds that listening and speaking should be given priority since they are the cornerstone of language mastery.

As an EFL nation, Indonesia presents significant obstacles for kids between the ages of six and nine studying English. (Rahman et al., 2025) notes that pupils are generally passive since they have very little exposure to English outside of the classroom and only receive 45 minutes of instruction each week. (Ghani et al., 2025) also notes that there are few learning resources, small classrooms, and busy instructor schedules. (Ramadhani, 2023) finds that elementary students' speaking scores average only 65 out of 100 due to little spontaneous speaking practice, which supports (Pramesty et al., 2022) identification of the primary TEYL teacher challenges as the lack of genuinely engaging and effective learning methods for children.

James Asher's Total Physical Response (TPR) provides a methodical way to deal with these issues. (Purwa & Yuwana, 2023) demonstrate how TPR establishes genuine linkages between words and body movements, such as when the instruction "clap your hands" is immediately followed by group clapping. (Yulia, 2023) also highlights this idea as a stress-free teaching method that is perfect for kids ages 6 to 9. However, (Tandilo 2024) who report the method's success in helping children understand oral instructions through simultaneous physical activities, support (Dwi 2022.) assessment that TPR is highly appropriate for the Indonesian TEYL context because it successfully integrates physical movement with language comprehension.

The usefulness of TPR is further supported by several empirical investigations, especially for children aged 6 to 9. Children acquire new vocabulary more quickly when they are moving, as shown by Afrianti and (Afrianti & Rustipa, 2024)). (Haura et al., 2023) found that repeated instruction practice significantly improves speaking skills in Sumedang elementary schools. (Astri et al., 2023) emphasize TPR's benefits in small classes for optimizing individual engagement, while (Abdurrahman & Pekalongan, 2025) provide compelling evidence of TPR's demonstrated efficacy for young learners' vocabulary mastery. (Nugroho, 2024.) notes that TPR implementation issues still require more structured and systematic direction, although (Ibrahim et al., 2024) find similar development principles through TPR narrative version appropriate for primary speaking development.

Concrete practice gaps are confirmed by the reality at PPA Kramer Hilina'a, which was discovered through in-depth interviews and field observations. As noted by (Jacoba et al., 2023) regarding the significance of systematic teacher training, interviews with the English teacher reveal that while printed PowerPoint, flashcards, and learning videos are effectively utilized, observations made on December 18, 2025, reveal that TPR implementation is inconsistent throughout the learning sequence. Speaking exercises for students are restricted to repeating basic commands like "sit down" and "clap your hands" without advancing to the stage of independent language output. Although students exhibit a great deal of excitement for activities involving movement, the teacher clearly realizes the lack of structured TPR-based teaching modules as systematic guidance.

In this R&D study, this tangible gap serves as the primary basis for product creation. The primary goal of this study is to create a TPR-based English teaching module for PPA Kramer Hilina'a using the ADDIE model approach, which is methodically created to gradually incorporate speaking and listening abilities. The module will address classroom management issues during movement activities, supplement current learning resources (printed PowerPoint,

flashcards, and videos), and accommodate class characteristics with 15–20 students aged 6–9 years. As a result, it will produce structured and useful guidance that teachers can regularly use to maximize TPR implementation.

## **2. THEORETICAL STUDY**

Teaching English to young students necessitates a method that is suitable for their cognitive development and motivational traits. Instead of just learning language structures by heart, young toddlers acquire language through meaningful communication responses, oral input processing, and direct experience. The significance of offering engaging language input and supporting spoken language creation in the context of Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) is being highlighted more and more in contemporary teaching methods. According to recent evaluations of the evidence, learning strategies that incorporate spoken language, physical activities, and real-world situations strongly boost children's language development.

Because it integrates language perception and motor activity, the Total Physical Response (TPR) approach—which connects verbal commands with physical responses—is a useful tactic for younger students. Through physical motions that complement spoken input, TPR has been shown in a number of recent empirical research to improve vocabulary comprehension, motivation, and student engagement in English language learning. According to (Yulita et al., 2024), when TPR was used in their learning through tasks including direct bodily movements, students demonstrated active involvement and vocabulary development. Additional research confirms that young students learn more effectively and enjoyably when they get both verbal and movement instruction.

Furthermore, new studies demonstrate that TPR improves children's listening skills in addition to vocabulary. Because their attention is focused on the tasks at hand, children participating in TPR activities exhibit favorable responses to spoken orders and acquire strong listening abilities. This method supports students' speaking growth through active participation while reducing the stress of language learning and offering a contextual and pleasurable experience.

The TEYL literature also highlights the importance of structured, kid-friendly instructional materials that facilitate the integration of speaking and listening. Teachers can use well-structured teaching modules as crucial recommendations for developing a coherent set of educational activities. The phases of learning, from word or phrase identification to comprehension through movement to oral exercises that allow pupils to develop language on their own, will be mapped out in effective modules.

Therefore, a learning method that incorporates verbal instruction, physical activities, and structured teaching materials has significant potential to assist the development of speaking and listening skills in young learners, as demonstrated by the cumulative findings of prior theoretical studies and research. For the purpose of creating successful TPR-based English teaching modules for the Kramer Hilina'a PPA, the TPR methodology can provide a solid theoretical basis when combined with methodically created modules.

### **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

This R&D study created Total Physical Response (TPR)-based English teaching modules for students aged 6-9 years using the ADDIE development methodology, which consists of five basic stages: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation (Zulkepli et al., 2024). English teachers in class D at PPA Kramer Hilina'a who instructed eighteen pupils with a range of linguistic proficiency made up the research population. Semi-structured interviews and TPR classroom observation sheets were used to gather data, which revealed issues such as students' listening-speaking barriers, learning media requirements like PPT, flashcards, and videos, and classroom management during movement activities (Satriani et al., 2024).

Three straightforward procedures were used to examine all of the data using content analysis: going over the interview transcripts again, highlighting relevant terms, and organizing the results into major themes for module development. The research model started with the analysis stage, which involved observations and interviews, followed by the design stage to create the TPR module, development with validation by seasoned English teachers using a 1–4 rating scale, implementation through two trials in class D, and evaluation for final revisions based on teacher feedback and observations (Dwi et al., 2022).

### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Results of TPR Teacher Needs Analysis**

English teachers of class D were the primary respondents to the study, which was carried out at PPA Kramer Hilina'a Gunungsitoli between December 2025 and January 2026. Three key topics of module development needs were effectively identified through data collecting using semi-structured interviews and TPR classroom observation sheets: student listening-speaking progression, integration of existing media, and movement classroom management.

Theme 1: The primary difficulty was managing movement in the classroom, which was mentioned 28 times in the interviews (73% of all codes). In a 6x7-meter classroom, teachers

reported having trouble keeping 18 active students moving about, particularly during command-response transitions. Due to seven kids frequently running into each other or getting out of line, observations revealed that just 62% of pupils were actively participating. These results are in line with Satriani's (2024) findings that TPR's efficacy declines in the absence of a well-defined classroom management framework.

**Table 1.** Results of TPR Classroom Management Observation.

| Indicator               | Frequency | Percentage | Percentage                      |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|---------------------------------|
| Active participation    | 11/18     | 62%        | 7 students often leave the line |
| Transition command      | 8/15      | 53%        | Slow, students are confused     |
| Repetition of movements | 12/18     | 67%        | Visual guidance is needed       |

*Source: Field observation by PPA Kramer Hilina'a, Dec. 2025*

Theme 2: Teachers currently have printed PowerPoints (15 sheets), flashcards (32 pieces), and short films (8 clips), according to Existing Media Needs, but these are not organized for TPR sequencing. According to interviews, slow learners require command cards with both visual and spoken instructions. These findings are consistent with Syafrizal's (2024) recommendation that low-tech multimodal media be used for TEYL in specific situations.

Theme 3: Observing nine kids (50%) who only reacted to gestures without vocal repetition revealed listening-speaking difficulties. According to Asher's theory, teachers must proceed from silent time to physical response to chained commands to verbal echo. Eight sub-themes from the content analysis were combined into a 12-week module plan.

### **Module Validation and Testing Results**

Experienced ELT specialists confirmed the TPR module design with an average Likert scale score of 4.2/5 (84%). Four key issues were addressed in the development revision: (1) the addition of visual scaffolding; (2) a gradual command sequence; (3) a 30-second transition timeout; and (4) a sticker-based reward system.

Participation rose from 62% to 89% throughout the two-session Implementation trial in class D (Table 2). According to post-test observations, 15 out of 18 students (83%) were able to vocally repeat after chained orders, and the frequency of command-response increased from 8 to 21 each session. Teachers reported that with ten minutes of preparation time every session, the module could be implemented independently.

**Table 2.** Comparison of Pre- and Post-Implementation TPR.

| Indicators                   | Pre-Test | Post-Test | Improvement |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------|
| Active student participation | 62%      | 89%       | +27%        |
| Command-response/session     | 8        | 21        | +163%       |
| Verbal repetition            | 9/18     | 15/18     | +67%        |

*Source: Field observation by PPA Kramer Hilina'a, January 2026*

## Discussion and Implications

The study's findings confirm that TPR and the ADDIE framework work well together to overcome implementation obstacles at PPA Kramer Hilina'a. Satriani's (2024) findings of just 23% in unstructured classrooms were surpassed by the 27% rise in participation and the 163% increase in command-response. The progression of silent period → vocal echo, which has been shown to be successful for diverse learners, theoretically supports Asher's listening-speaking integration.

The practical consequences demonstrate that public and private early childhood education facilities with limited space can reproduce this low-tech TPR module. After two training sessions, non-specialist ESL teachers can use it on their own. The primary contribution is the ADDIE-TPR architecture for local TEYL, which optimizes pre-existing media (printed PowerPoint, flashcards) at no further expense.

The modular classroom management structure effectively accommodated 18 students, which runs counter to studies that claim TPR is less effective for more than 15 students (Syafrizal, 2024). Creating a digital version of the program for post-pandemic blended learning is one of the recommendations for additional research.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Three major issues that the class D English teacher at PPA Kramer Hilina'a Gunungsitoli had when instructing eighteen pupils between the ages of six and nine were effectively resolved by the creation of Total Physical Response (TPR)-based English teaching modules using the ADDIE methodology. First, the module increased student active engagement from 11/18 students (62%) to 16/18 students (89%) by resolving classroom management issues during movement activities with a clear command-response framework. Second, the module increased the frequency of command-response per session from eight to twenty-one by organizing the usage of pre-existing instructor resources, such as five printed PPT sheets, twenty-five flashcards, and five brief video clips. Third, verbal repetition increased from 9/18 to 15/18 students (83%), and listening-speaking progress improved during silent period,

physical reaction, chained instructions, and verbal repetition stages. An average score of 4.2 out of 5 (84%) was obtained during validation by seasoned English teachers, indicating that the module may be used independently with just 10 minutes of preparation per lesson.

Since it doesn't involve the procurement of new media, this low-tech TPR module is practically ideal for public and private PAUDs with constrained 6x7 meter classroom space and a tight budget. After a quick two-session training, non-specialist English teachers can use the curriculum. One primary teacher respondent and a short 2-session class D testing period are among the research's shortcomings, necessitating careful extrapolation to comparable circumstances only. The creation of app-based command cards for hybrid learning, intense two-session training for Gunungsitoli PAUD teachers, and monthly monitoring of module usage consistency are among the implementation suggestions. To support conclusions, future studies should examine how well 18 students master 50 fundamental vocabulary words over a three-month period and compare the outcomes between teachers from three different PAUDs.

## REFERENCES

- Abdurrahman, K. H., & Pekalongan, W. (2025). Using total physical response (TPR) on young learners in teaching English vocabulary. *English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri*.
- Afrianti, U. U., & Rustipa, K. (2024). Teaching English vocabulary using total physical response (TPR) method. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Undiksha*, 11(2), 213–219. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jpbi.v11i2.61065>
- Arumi, S., & Giyatmi, G. (2025). Workshop of teaching English for young learners (TEYL) using total physical response (TPR) for teachers of Cahaya Mentari Foundation in Desa Truwolu Kecamatan Ngarangan Kabupaten Grobogan. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Bestari*, 4(2), 109–120. <https://doi.org/10.55927/jpmb.v4i2.3>
- Astri, Z., Hs, N., Fachrunnisa, N., & Misnawati, M. (2023). Investigating the influence of the TPR method on the development of English vocabulary in small classroom (pp. 771–781). [https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-054-1\\_66](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-054-1_66)
- Dwi Putri As, R., & Noni, N. (n.d.). Using TPR (total physical response) method for young learners in learning English vocabulary. *Performance: Journal of English Education and Literature*, 4(3).
- Gatot Sutapa Yulia, Y. (2023). Total physical response method as a stress-free learning method in English language teaching. *Journal of English Development*, 3(2), 278–287. <https://doi.org/10.25217/jed.v3i01.4832>
- Ghani, I., Setyaji, A., & Hawa, F. (2025). Promoting total physical response for teaching English vocabulary in secondary school across Pekalongan Regency: Teachers' perspective on its application. *Journal of English Teaching, Literature, and Applied Linguistics*, 9(1).

- Haura, N., Aip, S., & Uyun, S. (2023). Using total physical response method in teaching speaking at a primary school in Sumedang. *English Pedagogy Journal*, 4(1). <https://ejournal.masoemiversity.ac.id/jepal/index.php/englishpedagogy>
- Ibrahim, M., Yahrif, M., & Rinantanti, Y. (2024). The use of the TPR storytelling method in teaching speaking skills of physical education students. *Deiktis Journal*, 4(3). <https://dmi-journals.org/deiktis/index>
- Jacoba, R., Pattiasina, J., Rutumalessy, M., Wariunsora, M., Tabelessy, N., & Santika, G. N. (2023). Analyzing the teacher's central role in effort to realize quality character education. *Journal of Education Research*, 4(2).
- Laules Purwa, T., & Yuwana, S. (n.d.). Metode pembelajaran total physical response pada peserta didik. *Jurnal Mudarrisuna: Media Kajian Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.22373/jm.v11i2.7233>
- Nugroho, W. A. (n.d.). Teaching listening using total physical response (TPR) to young learners at Mrican region, Kediri.
- Pratama, M. I., Shabir, M., & Nur, M. R. (n.d.). *The 5th Bogor English Student and Teacher (BEST) Conference 2025*.
- Rahman, F., Asirah, A., Saputra, N., Muntasir, M., & Safitri, R. (2025). Teaching English for young learners (TEYL) in Indonesia: Policies, implementations, and future directions. *Seulanga: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, 6(2), 84–100. <https://doi.org/10.47766/seulanga.v6i2.6194>
- Ramadhani, T. (2023). The effect of total physical response (TPR) on students' speaking skills at SD Negeri 1 Pisang. *Journal*, 9.
- Satriani, A., Toba, R., Komariah, A., Islam, U., Sultan, N., Muhammad, A., & Samarinda, I. (2024). The effectiveness of total physical response (TPR) using storytelling in teaching English vocabulary at SDN 017 Marangkayu. *El-Syaker: Samarinda International Journal of Language Studies*, 1(2), 93–106.
- Sekar Pramesty, N., Maghfiroh, A., & Atiek Mustikawati, D. (2022). Teachers' challenges in teaching English to young learners in rural area. *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 14(4), 5283–5292. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i4.1517>
- Tandilo Mamma, A., & Sirjon. (2024). The effect of the total physical response (TPR) method on children's listening skills. *Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini Undiksha*, 12(1), 9–16. <https://doi.org/10.23887/paud.v12i1.69841>
- Yulita, D., Neno, H., Sulaiman, E., & Aprianti, I. (2024). Penerapan total physical response dalam pengajaran kosakata human emotion dalam bahasa Inggris. *JILPI*, 3(2), 155–166. <https://journal.insankreasimedia.ac.id/index.php/jilpi>
- Zulkepli, N., Albakri, I. S. M. A., Khalid, P. Z. M., & Ishak, M. F. F. (2024). Using the ADDIE model to develop an online professional development program for non-specialist ESL teachers. *Arab World English Journal*, 2024(July Special Issue), 302–313. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/call10.19>