The Effectiveness of Using Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) to Enhance Students’ Vocabulary

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to find out the result whether there is a significant difference between those who are taught using Total Physical Response Storytelling method and those who are taught using Conventional Method. This experimental study involved two groups. Sample of this research were the students of VII-A using Total Physical Response Storytelling Method and VII-B using Conventional Method at SMP Negeri 2 Jonggol, Bogor. This study used essay Anatest, Microsoft Excel and 16th SPSS to calculate the data. It can be concluded that there is a significant difference between those who are taught using TPRS Method and those who are taught using Conventional Method to enhance students’ vocabulary.

Keywords: Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPR-S) Method, Conventional Method
In Indonesia, the students learn English as their foreign language. And based on the researcher’s experience as an English Major who studied in Adventist University of Indonesia, there were times when the researcher found difficulties to express ideas or feelings especially when the researcher had a conversation with the native speaker. It was because the researcher lacked of new vocabulary or it meant that the English words in the researcher’s mind was limited so it was hard to express thoughts and ideas using English words or to understand the new words that the researcher heard from the native speakers. As Keikhaie et al., (2015) stated, low speaking skill due to lack of vocabulary. The students reported that they had a low speaking ability in English due to a variety of problems. Mostly, they admitted they lacked vocabulary and it was leading them to be anxious or hesitant to speak English.

People all around the world use words to express their ideas, feelings, emotions and especially for daily communication, therefore the words is part of life and words cannot be separated from human’s life. Talking about communication, nowadays English has a very important role in world’s communication. It covers all aspects such as, politics, economics, technology, trade and especially in education all around the world. And also, people have known that English is an international language. It is strengthened by McKay (2002) who said, as an international language, English is used both in a global sense for international communication between countries and in a local sense as a language of wider communication within multilingual societies.

In learning English, Vocabulary, as an element of language is regarded as the important aspects in mastering the English skills, such as Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Schmitt (2010) stated that learning vocabulary is the central part of mastering a second language. Students must continuously learn words as they learn structure and as they practice the sound system. Harmer (1991) stated that if language structure makes up the skeleton of language, then vocabulary is the vital organs and the flesh.

As the background of this study, which focuses in enhancing students’ vocabulary, the researcher wants to make a comparison study between learning English using conventional method, and using Total Physical Response-Storytelling (TPR-S). Also, to compare between male and female students who had been taught using TPRS method. Then the researcher hoped to get the answers from the question below:

1. Is there any significant difference in the students’ vocabulary enhancement between those who are taught using TPR-Storytelling and those who are taught using conventional method?
2. Do the male students get the higher vocabulary enhancement significantly than female students?

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDY

Oxford dictionary (2015) defines vocabulary as all the words that people know or use and the words that people use when they are talking about a particular subject especially in books for learning a foreign language. According to Merriam Webster’s Dictionary, these are the simple definition of Vocabulary: 1) The words that make up a language. 2) All of the words known and used by a person. 3) Words that are related to a particular subject.

According to Kamil and Heibert (2005), vocabulary can be generically defined as knowledge of words or word meaning. They stated that vocabulary learning is the basis of language and without vocabulary, one cannot learn any language; it is the knowledge of words. Accordingly, Min and Hsu (2010) stated that vocabulary learning is closely related to foreign languages. In the foreign language learning process, the readers need to understand most of the vocabulary and the contextual meanings used in the passage. A better understanding of the vocabulary meaning, it would produce a better understanding on the whole meaning of the text. There are six principles for teaching vocabulary identified by Linse (2005):

1) Emphasize both direct and indirect teaching. 2) Teach vocabulary words before a new activity. 3) Teach to use context clues appropriately. 4) Present multiple exposures to new vocabulary items. 5) Give opportunities for deep processing of vocabulary items. 6) Have students keep vocabulary notebooks.

**TPR Storytelling** is a method for teaching foreign languages that was invented by Blaine Ray, a Spanish teacher in Bakersfield, California, in 1990. Concerned that his students were disinterested in the unexciting process of learning a language from a textbook, he began to use James Asher's **Total Physical
Response (TPR) to teach Spanish. According to Asher, TPR is based on the premise that the human brain has a biological program for acquiring any natural language on earth. It includes the sign language of the deaf.

Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) supports the cognitive and language development of the students as well as their social skill. In addition, Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPR-S) can increase the students’ motivation in learning English vocabulary and can develop an enjoyable classroom condition. As Ray and Seely (2003) mentioned there is much less pressure on the students, since they only have to learn to understand the language and do not have to produce it themselves.

2.1 Related Studies of Gender Differences in Learning Second Language.

Ellis (2003) pointed out that sex or gender is, of course, likely to interact with another variable in determining L2 proficiency. Other research studies have indicated that the learning styles preferences by gender make a significant difference in language learning. For example, Good and Brophy (1986) demonstrated that male students are usually more field-independent than female students.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

The researcher will give the pre-test for both of Experimental class and Control class, then the researcher will collect the result of the data. After calculating the data and getting the result of the pre-test, then the researcher will give the treatment to Experimental class for one month, by using TPR-Storytelling to enhance students’ vocabulary, while Control class will be given the conventional method.

After giving the treatment, then both of the Experimental class and Control class will be given the post-test. By analyzing the data, the researcher will find if there is a significant improvement in students’ vocabulary after using Total Physical Response Storytelling, especially to see if there is any significant difference between the mean of the pre-test and post-test of the Experimental class with the mean of pre-test and post-test of the Control class.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research used the quantitative method. It is an experimental design. In this experimental study, it compared the enhancement of students’ vocabulary between the Experimental class and the Control class by using pre-test and post-test. The pre-test and post-test were the same. The difference between the Experimental class and Control class was in the treatment. The Experimental class was given using Total Physical Response Storytelling method treatment, while the Control class was given the conventional method. After administering the pre-test, the treatment was given to the Experimental class. But in the control class, the students were treated using Conventional method, using textbook of the school. The following are several steps in TPR-S method, for the Experimental class in table 3.1:

**Total Physical Response Story Telling steps**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1 Establish Meaning</th>
<th>Step 2 Story</th>
<th>Step 3 Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Write the English meaning on board. Gesture (younger students require gestures)</td>
<td>1. Teacher will act out the prepared story. (emphasize the vocabulary on the story)</td>
<td>1. Give students the printed story, and students will translate the story (either as a group or individual). 2. Discuss the paragraph in the language. • Relate the situation, characters, and plot to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
word is a verb, ask if he does it.
3. Ask students to make a little story about them that relates with the topic.

answer all questions. They respond to the statements with “oh!”
4. Retell the story (without actors, or everyone acting with the partner, or illustrating)

students.
• Ask if they have ever been in such a situation.
• Capitalize on the cultural information in the story.
• Use the story to teach life lessons.
• Give a short quiz on the reading.

Adopted from Susan Gross (2007)

The following are the steps in teaching Control class that was taught using Conventional method as shown in table 3.2:

Conventional Method Steps
Table 3.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>STEP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1  | The teacher explains one by one the meaning of the English words according to the chosen topic.
Example : “Parts of Body”
- Eyes : mata
- Nose : hidung
- Ears : telinga, and so on. |
| 2  | The teacher asks the students to follow teacher’s direction and command. Example :
- Touch your nose!
- Raise your two hands!
- Clap your hands! |
| 3  | The teacher teaches a song about body parts “Head and Shoulder, Kneels and Toe.”
And all students will follow to sing that song. (repeat 2 times)
Or, if there is no song that has any relation with the today’s topic,
The teacher can give some games. Example: HANG MAN (guessing Words and they will be divided into some groups).
Note : both activities in a meeting is better. |
| 4  | The teacher re-explains one by one the meaning of the English words.
Example :
- Eyes : mata
- Nose : hidung
- Ears : telinga, and so on. |
| 5  | The teacher brings the students into a main activity, the students are given a paper activity. Connecting words with pictures, or Answer some questions from the textbook. |
The teacher asks the students to write the new vocabulary that has been given by the teacher on the students’ notebook.

The teacher gives 10 minutes to the students to memorize all new words. The teacher gives quiz (not required)

After the treatment, the post-test was conducted to find out whether the use of TPR-S method made an impact on the students’ vocabulary achievement. The post-test instrument was in the form of multiple-choice questions and it was consisted of 45 questions from the vocabulary test.

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Result of Pre-test, Post-test, Standard Deviation and Normalized Gain

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Physical Response</th>
<th>Conventional Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>St. Deviation</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre – test</td>
<td>56.74286</td>
<td>17.00059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post – test</td>
<td>79.17143</td>
<td>14.22609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain</td>
<td>0.550635</td>
<td>0.225388</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result of pre-test and post-test of each group as seen in Table 4.1. Based on the calculation of the mean and standard deviation in enhancing student’s vocabulary mastery through TPR-S and Conventional classes, the pre-test in TPR-S class was not high and the results of post – test showed a good enhancement. And also in Conventional class, the pre-test was not too high but there was an enhancement in the post-test. The researcher also counted the gain score and it was found that the normalized gain from both methods were in moderate category, which is in the criteria 0.31- 0.70 is moderate and the normalized gain of this research is 0.550635 for TPR-S Class and 0.392723 for Conventional Class.

The researcher saw a good improvement in TPR-S class. Even though, in pre-test, the Conventional class got higher results than TPR-S class, but in post-test the TPR-S class got higher result than Conventional class. There were some reasons on why TPR-S class had a higher enhancement than Conventional class. There were some meetings when the researcher gave treatment in Conventional class, the students were absent. In fact, in every meeting there were 4-5 students who did not come to school. And because of this case, the students who did not come could not follow the given treatment by the researcher.

In addition, students in TPR-S class gave more attention to learn compared to the students in Conventional class. For example, when the researcher entered in the TPR-S class, all students were already sitting calmly in their own seats. While in the Conventional class, the researcher had to go out of the classroom to find some students who were still sitting or playing on the court and asked them to enter the class.

This indication showed that there was a higher enhancement in students’ vocabulary through the TPR-S class rather than Conventional class.
Result of Pre-test, Post-test, Standard Deviation and Normalized Gain in TPR-S group

Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male Mean</th>
<th>Male St. Deviation</th>
<th>Female Mean</th>
<th>Female St. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre – test</td>
<td>61.42857</td>
<td>13.18341</td>
<td>53.61905</td>
<td>18.78158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post – test</td>
<td>82.64286</td>
<td>15.48998</td>
<td>76.85714</td>
<td>13.19199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain</td>
<td>0.611509</td>
<td>0.268047</td>
<td>0.510052</td>
<td>0.187975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result of pre-test and post-test of each group as seen in the table 4.2. Based on the calculation of the mean and standard deviation in enhancing students’ vocabulary mastery in male and female students, the pre-test in both groups were not too high and the results of post – test showed a good enhancement. And also in male students, there was an enhancement in students’ vocabulary mastery by seeing the gain of male group 0.611509 which was higher than female group which was just 0.510052.

The researcher also counted the gain score and it was found that the normalized gain from both methods were in moderate category. It was shown by the clarification of gain score if the gain score is 0.31- 0.70 which is moderate. And from this TPR-S class, the gain score of the male students was 0.611509 and for the female students was 0.510052.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of this study is to know whether TPR-S is an effective method to enhance students’ vocabulary in learning English. And also, to discuss which group got higher score in TPR-Storytelling class, either female or male students. The researcher conducted the study in SMPN 2 Jonggol, Bogor with quantitative research design. The participants were first year junior high school students consisted of 35 students in each class. And young learners in this study were around 10-12 years old who still learnt the basic level of English vocabulary.

To answer the questions of the research: “Is there any significant difference between those who are taught using TPR-Storytelling and those who are taught using Conventional method towards the enhancement of students’ vocabulary? Which group got the higher score from the experimental class that will be taught using TPR-Storytelling method, whether they were the female or male students?

The researcher concluded:

1. Total Physical Response Storytelling succeeded in improving students’ vocabulary enhancement. It is shown by t-test scores that the result was found that the pValue Sig. (0.003) < α (0.50). It was concluded that there was a significant difference in the students’ vocabulary enhancement between those who were taught using Total Physical Response Storytelling and those who were taught using conventional method.

2. Total Physical Response Storytelling method was better to use for male students because as Riazi and Mansoorian(2008) stated that male students were more interested and mastered in kinesthetic learning styles. And Khalil (2005) analyzed findings of 194 high school students and 184 university EFL learners in Palestine and found that female students used strategies more
often than did male students, especially memory and metacognitive ones. Since, TPR-S required more action and movement (kinesthetic) in the classroom, so male students felt enjoyable and easy to acquire the new vocabulary rather than female students. It was shown by t-test scores that the result was found that the pValue Sig. (0.187) < α (0.50). It was concluded that Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted, it means that female students do not get the higher vocabulary enhancement after they have been taught using TPR-S. Or other words, male students got the higher vocabulary enhancement than female students after they have been taught using TPR-S.

3. By doing TPR-S method it will make the students feel enjoy to learn English. They can have an action in the classroom, some students can express the way they act that can bring a fun and interest in the classroom environment. As Mahmood and Iqbal (2010) stated that TPRS builds confidence in students. They may feel enjoy in joining the class. And also, according to Ansari (2012) that TPR-S is fun and easy and it is a good tool for learning vocabulary.

The researcher gave several recommendations as an effort to enhance students’ vocabulary in teaching English:

1. Teachers: using TPR-S method can be used as an alternative method in teaching vocabulary. This method brings stress-free learning style and students will not be bored in joining the class because of the actions that both teacher or students perform in the classroom.

2. For future researchers: the result of this research can be used as resource, reference, and guidance for the same research especially in enhancing students’ vocabulary.
References:


