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TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR) METHOD IN TEACHING ENGLISH CLASSROOM INTERACTION TO YOUNG LEARNERS

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Abstract: This paper focused on the TPR method as a learning media for English as a foreign language to young learners. This study was designed to investigate the teachers' experience in using the TPR method as a means of teaching English to young learners. The research design of this study was a narrative inquiry and the participant of this study was an English teacher at one of the non-formal education institutions in Ciamis. The subject of this research were students and an English teacher in non-formal education Ciamis. The data collection included classroom observation and semi-structured interviews. The results of the study found that the TPR method had a positive influence as a means of learning English as a foreign language, particularly when the teacher teaches vocabulary. From the five-question indicators, it can be concluded that the TPR method is also quite effective to be applied as a learning medium for young learners since young learners have a good memory to input the vocabulary that is being taught. Moreover, it is easier for the teacher to provide learning students' enthusiasm for learning clearly appears that makes the class not boring.

Keywords: *teacher's experience; Total Physical Response (TPR); young learners*

INTRODUCTION

English is a foreign language must be learnt by EFL learners in Indonesia. English is taught from junior high school to university because English is the language of the world. While Anggrayani (2015, p.2) argued that the modern world is heavily reliant on English. People converse in English and study it so they may communicate with others and achieve their objectives. Teaching English to Indonesian students as a foreign language differs from teaching Indonesian as a mother tongue. Therefore, it is crucial to study English as a foreign language, starting with young learners.

Students must learn four language skills including listening, speaking, reading, and writing when they learn English. To achieve good English performance, students must learn vocabulary in advance because vocabulary is important to build the meaning. Furthermore, Imran (2020, p.41) declares that vocabulary is a collection of words that may be used to communicate with others. Therefore, knowing and memorizing a large vocabulary allows us to communicate with others quickly and fluently. Vocabulary is essential for learning a language; and mastering it is the most

crucial component of learning a second or foreign language.

Tawali (2018, p.34) states that teaching vocabulary is crucial in language acquisition since mastering vocabulary will aid children in mastering language abilities, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Therefore, students may utilize vocabulary to communicate in everyday life; it will also strengthen their notion that the English language may be utilized to communicate some thoughts, feelings, and ideas.

Furthermore, Alwasilah & Mahdi (2019, p.1) point out that if language development can begin at a young age, it would be great. This is comparable with the argument of Youlia Priatin and Nurfauziah (2021, p.1) in that the material will often be easier to understand for someone with a more vocabulary than for someone with a lesser vocabulary. Therefore, building a vocabulary is necessary for learning different languages. When children speak, read, or listen to English words, they have difficulties in pronouncing them. This issue emerges due to the difficulty of learning English pronunciation. Internal and external influences that arise from the students themselves impact pupils' acquisition of English. External elements such as environmental settings and conditions, learning materials, instructors' abilities to handle teaching and learning English, as well as internal factors such as motivation, interests, attitudes, and intellect, come from outside pupils.

A variety of methods are needed while teaching vocabulary to young students to maintain their motivation and interest. This is comparable with the argument of Syafrizal & Haerudin (2018, p.41) in that another component of a teacher's teaching approach that may be manipulated to be varied is the teacher's ability to modify other components of the teaching strategy. Due to the aforementioned problems, teachers must use specific strategies to encourage pupils to learn English. One of these is the TPR method. In 1997, Dr. James Asher advocated for the TPR approach, stating, TPR introduces language through the use of commands or imperative phrases and requires students to demonstrate their knowledge through action responses. As determined by Fahrurrozi (2017, p.119), learning is a path to the behavior change due to the experience. When language learners are immersed in settings where the meaning of spoken language is instantly felt and understood, they may concentrate on the general meaning rather than the grammar. Consequently, they advance more quickly when the language of teaching is used daily.

This is comparable with the argument Rambe (2019, p.45) who states that strategy seeks to incorporate infants' first language acquisition, and is based on how children learn their mother tongue. The method of TPR is a language education approach based on synchronizing actions and words, as well as teaching language through physical or motor activity. TPR is a method for teaching language that focuses on synchronizing actions and words, as well as teaching language through physical or motor activity. Therefore, TPR is an excellent strategy for teaching vocabulary acquisition since it allows students to practice communication skills.

Young learners usually are constantly developing, learning through tangible experiences, or what is known as "learning by doing". Furthermore, Syafryadin (2020, p.10) reveals that their reasoning improves in terms of knowledge and intellectual abilities; but they are unable to employ meta-language, the ability to use and explain language. Therefore, knowing the characteristics of young learners is considered crucial because young learners are always curious for new things and they want to explore concrete and abstract things.

Certain characteristics of young learners should be recognized by teachers and properly considered when teaching them. While Imaniah & Nargis (2017, p.5) point out that English for young learners (between the ages of three and twelve) is cognitively capable of learning a language in ways that support integrated skills and a content-based, experiential approach. In general, children have a wonderful learning period called the golden age, which helps them to acquire languages quickly, between the ages of 6 and 12. In light of these traits, teachers must make their lessons more engaging and similar to their everyday lives.

Previous research related to the present research revealed using the direct approach to teach vocabulary in elementary school and discussing the pupils' responses to the direct method to teach

language by Rahmawati (2019). Another study conducted by Obitube et al. (2020) evaluated the value of the total physical response (TPR) method in teaching Igbo to L2 learners. The last study conducted by Magnussen & Sukying (2021) revealed that learning using song and TPR, as well as both of the two approaches, greatly increased the participants' vocabulary learning, with the TPR&S method having a greater beneficial influence than either singing or TPR alone. The similarity between the previous and present studies is to improve the vocabulary of young learners. Therefore, the difference between the previous and present study lies in the method used; at which the present study used a narrative inquiry design.

In this regard, these previous studies were found to be relevant to this study as they investigated similar contexts. Previous studies conducted by Rahmawati (2019), Obitube et al. (2020), Magnussen and Sukying (2021), Kara and Eveyik-Aydın (2019), Bulan and Kasapoglu (2021) described an evidence that TPR method is a good medium for teaching vocabulary.

Based on the previous study, in this case, English is learnt from a young age using the total physical response (TPR) method. However, narrative inquiry design has not yet been clarified in the previous studies; so is the teacher experience in applying the Total Physical Response method for teaching young learners. Therefore, the researcher conducted research at one of the non-formal education CEMARA (Cidewa Environmental Management and Literacy Activities) at Kampung KB Lembur Idaman Dusun Cidewa in Ciamis. Based on the description, the problem can be formulated, namely: (1) How does the teacher experience applying the Total Physical Response method for teaching young learners?; and (2) How do the students respond to the method?

METHOD

The writer used a qualitative method in this research. In this case, narrative inquiry is a research method that is categorized into the type of qualitative research. While Barkhuizen & Consoli (2021, p.3) point out that "To me, narrative inquiry entails dealing with stories." Thus, Narrative inquiry is the method of obtaining information for the goal of study through storytelling. After that, the writer creates a narrative about the event. Barkhuizen et al. (2014, p.3) state that storytelling and research are mixed in narrative inquiry using stories as research data or as a medium for data analysis and revealing findings. In contrast, a narrative inquiry was used since the purpose of this research is the teacher's experience in applying the Total Physical Response method for teaching young learners.

This study used the purposive sampling technique which is different from convenience sampling in that researchers do not simply analyze those who are ready but rather use their opinion to pick up a sample, that they believe, will provide the data they need. Therefore, the getting of information from the informant would be stopped if the researcher considered the information was enough. The sample of the present study was an English teacher and students of Cemara Literacy Community Kampung KB Lembur Idaman Dusun Cidewa. Therefore, the researcher chooses the participants consisting of 19 female and 6 male elementary school students because they meet the criteria for the needs of this study. The choice of the students is based on their ability and the recommendation that the English teacher made. Further, the Total Physical Response (TPR) as a method of teaching English to young learners was implemented.

The writer constructed the research instruments consisting of the observation and the interview. The first instrument was an observation conducted by the writer to observe teacher interactions using Total Physical Response (TPR) as a method of teaching English to young learners. According to Cresswell (2012, p.213), observation is the process of collecting open-ended, actual information by observing people and places at a research site. Further, the writer conducted two times non-participants observations. Moreover, the researcher used a smartphone camera to record the classroom activities being observed.

Besides, the writer used an observation checklist to obtain the data, which consists of activities from the beginning of learning to the end of learning. The writer also collected and observed the experiences of teachers in using the TPR method. Finally, the writer observed the

teaching and learning process conducted by the teacher to answer the first research question. In collecting data through observation, the writer carried out two times classroom observations with the participants. It was carried out on the 25th of June 2022 and the 26th of June 2022.

The second instrument was an interview. In this present study, the writer employed a semi-structured interview to investigate the teacher's experiences in using the Total Physical Response (TPR) method for young learners and to find out the students' responses to the method. Fraenkel (2012, p.451) reveals that a semi-structured interview is made up of a series of questions aimed at eliciting particular responses from respondents. It was carried out on the 9th of May 2022. The writer interviewed the teacher by asking several questions; then the writer analyzed the results of a five-question interview conducted by the writer with the English teacher as the subject at the research site to answer research question number two. The writer used open-ended questions to explore the teacher's experiences using the Total Physical Response (TPR) method of teaching English to young learners and how the students respond to the method. The interview was done to answer the following questions: (1) Is it true that the TPR method for learning English is used? (2) How was your experience using the TPR method? (3) Are there any difficulties or problems using the TPR method? (4) What are the advantages and disadvantages of using the TPR method?; and (5) How did the students respond to the method?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data taken from the observation and the interview was analyzed to meet the following research questions: The first research question that the writer formulated in this research was stated in the question as follows: "How does the teacher experience applying the Total Physical Response method for teaching young learners?" Meanwhile, the second research question is "How do the students respond to the method?" The result is elaborated in the following organization:

How does the teacher experience applying the Total Physical Response method for teaching young learners?

During the observation, the writer employed a video recorder and observation checklist to get valid data. The main focus of this observation was to look at classroom interaction in English young learners' classes, mainly in the level of elementary school. After the data is available, the researcher transcribed the results of the observations which was done to make the researcher ease to analyze the results of the observations. Here are the findings from the study based on the interaction that was performed in the classroom.

First, the lesson plan was created by the teacher, and the materials were arranged so that the content matched the learning goals. Before the classroom interaction began, the teacher also prepares pictures of animals as learning aids. After that, the teacher greeted them, checked the attendance list, and gave the stimulus to the students. At the first of learning, the teacher greeted students. Three students were absent from the first meeting. After all of the students joined and the teacher checked the attendance list, the teacher showed the pictures. The teacher provide stimulus to the students before explaining the material. The teacher gave the picture and question stimulus. It can be seen that the teacher gave students a vocabulary picture of animals.

The students looked enthusiastic to follow the teacher's instructions. Moreover, the teacher did the repetition to check the students' pronunciation. The teacher also repeated all the vocabulary to make students more fluent. After that, the teacher gave students exercises to check students understanding. It can be seen that the teacher gave the blank word on the picture and the students had to answer the vocabulary. Some students could answer the first number. For the next number, the teacher gave them the chance to be brave for raising their hand one by one, if they would like to answer the exercises. Some students had good enthusiasm to answer the exercises; but a few students could not answer or kept silent because they did not know the answer.

From the first result of observation, it can be found that the teacher used the TPR method and stimulus in teaching learning to improve her vocabulary. The result revealed that the teacher

should be better prepared for her presentation by using many pictures that could help students to remember the vocabulary with the meaning. It could impact the student's enthusiasm in the class. All of students looked enthusiastic when the teacher asked them to repeat the sentences. Some students could not answer the question when the teacher asked the meaning. However, they looked enthusiastic to follow the teacher's instructions.

Students looked fearful and shy when the teacher started asking them for answering questions. All of students always followed the teacher's instructions and students felt anxious when they did not have the confidence to speak. In this case, some students still had incorrect pronunciation to say the word or sentence. However, the teacher always corrected their pronunciation by using repetition. Therefore, they could be brave to speak English and answer teacher's questions; and this activity aims to increase vocabulary for young learners.

How do the students respond to the method?

The second research question that the writer formulated in this research is stated in the question as follows: "How do the students respond to the method?" The writer analyzed the results of a five-questions interview conducted by the writer with the English teacher as the subjects at the research site to answer the second research question. The first question asked by the writer to the teacher was "Is it true that using the TPR method for learning English?". The teacher said that it was correct to use the TPR method because a teacher had to optimize their ability to comprehend students. If this is implemented following the requirements of the students, the learning objectives would almost certainly be achieved.

The writer asked the second question: "how was your experience using the TPR method?". The teacher stated that TPR is very useful, especially for children. For example, when a teacher wants to show body parts in English but the children do not have basic English yet. So, the teachers point to body parts while using English. For example, by pointing while saying "This is the eye" or "ears" pupils would automatically know the eyes and ears in English.

Next question, the writer asked, "are there any difficulties or problems using the TPR method?". The teacher answered that due to classes being unified, controlling students and observing them in learning is quite difficult because the class is a large class consisting of approximately 25 children. As a result, kindergarten children respond to learning slowly, while elementary school children are more familiar with the material that the teacher provides.

Next, the writer asked, "what are the advantages and disadvantages of using the TPR method?". The teacher said that the disadvantage deals with tiredness, frequent communication and moving bodies; and it's quite draining, too. Meanwhile, the advantages are that students are more enthusiastic, and more motivated in learning. They also easily remember what the teacher taught; so using the TPR method is very effective.

Further, the writer asked the last question "how do the students respond to the method?". The teacher said that the students can easily remember the vocabulary given; and in learning, the children are also more enthusiastic and more motivated to learn English. Besides that, the TPR method makes learning more interesting and does not make the class monotonous. From the first result of the interview, it can be concluded that the TPR method is interesting for students. Meanwhile, TPR as methods and strategies is also very easy to use for teachers. Also, TPR makes young learner easier to remember the vocabulary that is being taught. Consequently, in learning, the children are more enthusiastic.

The first question points to the use of the TPR method that is recommended in learning English for young learners; so, children can more easily understand learning activities. In the second point, the researcher was asked the teacher for the experience in using the TPR method, because young learners do not yet have basic English. The teacher teaches the students by pointing at the limbs when using English and automatically the children will understand the limbs in English.

The question number three explains the obstacles in using the TPR method. Because the classes are combined from kindergarten to grade 4 elementary school, controlling children is quite difficult. When elementary school children understand what the teacher says, kindergarten children are still thinking. Otherwise, with the TPR method, the children become happy especially with the combination of English songs (example song: head shoulders knee, and toes).

The fourth point explains the advantages and disadvantages of using the TPR method, the drawbacks of which make teachers very tired because teachers have to communicate a lot with students while moving their bodies. Meanwhile, the advantage is that it makes students more motivated in learning. Using the TPR method is very effective in making students easier to remember what the teacher teaches. The last question point asks about students' responses to the method. The answer from the teacher was very impressive, considering that the TPR method makes teachers easier to teach and makes students motivated in learning, So, students can easily remember the vocabulary that is being taught.

From the result of the interview, it can be revealed that the TPR method is interesting for students. Meanwhile, TPR as a method and strategy is also very easy to use for teachers. Thus, TPR makes young learners easier to remember the vocabulary that is being taught; and in learning the children are more enthusiastic.

Discussion

The TPR method is one of the learning methods in the classroom to introduce vocabulary through physical (motor) activities to young learners. The teacher employed some action sequences, such as listening and speaking, listening and write, listen and move, dialogue, and role play.

The first findings are, the teacher felt quite memorable using this TPR method, which made students more enthusiastic about learning English and made it easier for the teacher to teach. It is similar to Obitube et al. (2020) in that the TPR method can increase students' enthusiasm for learning English and make teacher easier for the teaching.

Second, in the use of the TPR method to teach vocabulary, the difficulties or problems experienced by the teacher lie in activities that make teachers very tired because teachers have to communicate a lot with students. Meanwhile, students become more motivated because of the interesting learning done in class. It was in line with the Rahmawati (2019) who states that using the TPR method to teach vocabulary cause teachers to get extremely exhausted.

Third, for teachers, the perceived advantage of the TPR method is that it is easier for young learners to increase their vocabulary. Thus, it has a good effect when applied to vocabulary learning in English classes. Total Physical Response (TPR) is about a speech by a teacher and actions by students at the same time. This is comparable to what is found by Kara & Eveyik-Aydın (2019) in that the purposes of the TPR method encourage students to listen to and follow what the teacher instructs. Additionally, TPR pupils are required to respond nonverbally (physically) to a series of commands.

Fourth, the teacher who so far using the TPR method has not faced any shortcomings that have an impact on teaching and learning process in the classroom. It was in line with Magnussen & Sukying (2021) who states that the results of the checklist observations in her research leads the students paid more attention to the material and felt enthusiastic about vocabulary activities using the TPR method.

Last, having been asked about how the students responded when using the TPR method for learning vocabulary in class, the teacher answered five-question about the descriptive text material in English learning that day. Young learners can easily remember the vocabulary that is being taught. In learning the children are also more enthusiastic, which can motivate learning. Apart from the media we use for learning, the addition of the TPR method makes learning more interesting.

The result shows that TPR is a method that is interesting for students. Nuraeni (2019) points

out that while employing the TPR approach, kids were engaged and liked learning English. In addition, TPR as a method and strategies is also very easy to use for teachers. TPR also makes young learners easier to remember the vocabulary that is being taught, so that in learning, the children are more enthusiastic. Regarding future research, it would be beneficial to explore the current findings by examining how is the experience of students in using The Total Physical Response (TPR) method using the narrative inquiry method as well. Thus, the readers or the other researchers will get the perspective not only from the teacher's side but also from the student's side.

CONCLUSIONS

This research raises the topic of the teacher's experience in using the TPR method in the classroom and how the students respond to the method. Narrative inquiry was taken as a research design in this study because this design is quite relevant to the topic that the writer wants to explore. From the data collection process, of the six indicators of interview questions asked, on the indicator of questions about experience, the teacher felt the TPR method was good enough to be applied to learning with students in class.

The teacher also feels quite memorable in using the TPR method because it made students more enthusiastic about learning English. Also, it easier for the teacher to teach as well as for students in understanding the material being studied. In using the TPR method, the teacher also did not feel that she had a significant problem. The problem felt by the teacher is the tiredness because the teacher has to communicate a lot with students.

The advantages felt by the teacher in using this TPR method due to its practicality for young learners to increase their vocabulary. Students become more motivated because of the interesting learning done in class. The TPR method was also quite good used as a learning medium for young learners because the enthusiasm of students in learning is quite visible and does not make the class monotonous.

SUGGESTIONS

The findings discussed previously provides the writer several suggestions, especially for English teachers, students, and future researchers:

First, the teachers must be able to conduct the TPR method in teaching and learning English to young learners in the classroom. Thus, all teachers and students could collaborate to achieve the learning objective. Furthermore, teachers should be able to recognize more about learning media that can be blended with TPR methods such as applications related to speaking, writing, and listening to have better teaching and learning activity. So, teachers do not spend too much extra energy because of the combination of the TPR method with other learning media.

Second, TPR make the young learners easier to remember the vocabulary that is being taught. Even, the children are also more enthusiastic and motivated during the learning process. Apart from the media we use for learning, the addition of the TPR method makes learning more interesting enabling the teacher to create a fresh environment for teaching and learning activities in the classroom. As a result, it would pique the interest of the students in learning, particularly in studying English, which is, incidentally, a foreign language for students in Indonesia.

Third, the result of the present research can also be used as a guide for future researchers who want to delve deeper into the topic of research on the use of the TPR method in learning English as a foreign language. Due to the limitations of the writer in digging up information in this study, further researchers can also explore students' perspectives in using the TPR method by using the same research design. To add to the literature review, future researchers can also explore this topic by using different research designs such as quantitative research designs with a focus on participants. Both teachers and students get results that are not based solely on the opinion or view of one participant, and are obtained in the form of numbers collected from more participants.

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