



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TPR (*TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE*) METHOD IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY

Catur Sugiarti Putri¹, Taslim²

^{1,2}Universitas Muhammadiyah Bone

Email: pcatursugiarti@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Mastering vocabulary plays a crucial role in language acquisition by enhancing reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Introducing English vocabulary to young learners is fundamental to establishing a good language base. Research emphasizes the challenges elementary students face in vocabulary acquisition, emphasizing the necessity for innovative teaching methods beyond conventional approaches. This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of the total physical response method in improving students' vocabulary. Using a pre-experimental design with a one-group pretest-posttest model with the population of the 4th grade student of SD Impres 7/83 Pasempe, the data analysis employing a paired sample t-test revealed a significant increase in the average score from the pre-test to the post-test, with an average improvement of 31% and a substantial significance value (Sig 2-tailed) of 0.001. These findings indicate a notable enhancement in students' vocabulary proficiency following the implementation of the total physical response method. As a result, H1 is accepted, while H2 is rejected.

Keywords: *Vocabulary Mastery, TPR, ELT*

1.1. Introduction

Undoubtedly, English has emerged as the predominant global language, exerting significant influence over contemporary educational systems worldwide. Its widespread adoption transcends geographical, cultural, and linguistic boundaries, positioning it as the universal language in academia, commerce, diplomacy, and technology. The profound impact of English on education is undeniable, reshaping curriculum frameworks, pedagogical methodologies, and educational policies on a global scale. The primary driver behind English's ascendancy in education lies in its pivotal role as the lingua franca of international communication (Neelambaram & Vijayalakshmi, 2024). In our increasingly interconnected world, proficiency in English is indispensable for active participation in global academic dialogues, collaborative research endeavors, and cross-cultural engagements. Consequently, educational institutions across the globe have integrated English language instruction into their curricula to equip students with the requisite linguistic competencies essential for succeeding in the global arena.

The basis of language learning is vocabulary and as such . Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings. Vocabulary knowledge encompasses more than



just a definition; it also involves understanding how the word fits into the larger context of the world (Octavia & Soepriatmadji, 2020) Mastering vocabulary is a crucial aspect of language learning. When learners learn, understand, and master vocabulary, they can easily develop important competencies like reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce English vocabulary to young learners as they begin their journey to learn and understand the English language. This will help them comprehend sentences and prepare them to advance to the next level.

Research findings suggest that many young children, particularly those in elementary school, face difficulties in acquiring new vocabulary. Based on feedback received from educators and students, the current approaches to teaching vocabulary seem to be ineffective. Although innovative learning techniques have emerged, conventional techniques like lectures and memorization persist. (Fauzi & Aini, 2022).

To address this issue, a more engaging approach to vocabulary acquisition is suggested. Total Physical Response (TPR) presents a suitable language teaching method, as it draws inspiration from how children learn their mother tongue. This method involves physical responses that indicate a comprehension of the language, mirroring how children learn their first language. (Mariyam & Musfiroh, 2019). (Hounhanou, 2020) Total Physical Response (TPR) is a language teaching approach developed by Dr. James J. Asher, a psychology professor at the State University of San Jose. It operates on the belief that acquiring a second language entails a decoding process analogous to that of a first language. The primary aim of this technique is to establish a productive methodology for teaching languages.

Based on observation and interview of the students at SD Inpres 7/83 Pasempe to evaluate their level of vocabulary mastery by the researcher. The results indicated that the students had a basic level of proficiency in vocabulary mastery. To improve their vocabulary mastery, the effectiveness of the Total Physical Response (TPR) method needs to be evaluated. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine whether the TPR method is effective in enhancing the vocabulary mastery of elementary school students of SD Inpres 7/83 Pasempe.



1.2. Research Question

The questions have been formulated for this research study: “Is the total physical response method effective for elementary school students' vocabulary mastery? “.

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Design

The chosen research type for this study is experimental research, employing pre-experimental methods to test the hypothesis. The selected research design is the One Group Pretest-Posttest design. This design includes a pretest conducted before the treatment is administered. By doing so, the impact of the treatment can be more accurately assessed by comparing the condition before and after the treatment. The effectiveness of the treatment is evaluated by comparing the pretest and posttest scores. This design allows researchers to observe changes within the same group, minimizing the variability that could arise from comparing different groups (Sugiyono, 2019).

$O_1 \quad X \quad O_2$

Notes:

O1 : Pre-Test

O2 : Post-Test

X : Learning treatment using total physical response

2.2. Samples/Participant

Population refers to all the individuals or elements being studied, whether they are objects or subjects with specific characteristics. It encompasses all the humans, animals, events, or objects living in a shared community that are the focus of research outcomes. There are various types of populations, such as teachers, students, facilities, curriculum, school institutions, school and community relations, company employees, plant species, forests, rice varieties, marketing activities, and production results (Suriani et al., 2023).

The study focuses on 4th-grade students at SD Inpres 7/83 Pasempe. Various sampling methods were utilized to select the sample, with a specific emphasis on non-probability sampling, also known as saturated sampling or a census. Saturated sampling involves using all members of the population as samples and is typically employed when



the population is small, usually less than 30 individuals (Sugiyono, 2019). Given the small population size of only 10 individuals, the researcher opted for saturated sampling to ensure that all population members were represented in the study.

2.3. Instruments

The research focuses on assessing the impact of total physical response on enhancing students' vocabulary acquisition. A pretest and posttest will be employed as research tools, each containing questions related to verbs.

2.4. Data Analysis

Once data has been collected using a research instrument in the form of a pretest-posttest, the next step is to test the data with the help of SPSS program. In order to validate the research hypothesis that has been proposed, several tests must be carried out :

a. Normality Test

Assessing the normality of data is crucial for many statistical tests, as normal data is an underlying assumption in parametric testing. There are several methods available to test the normality of continuous data, including the Shapiro–Wilk test, Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, skewness, kurtosis, histogram, box plot, P–P Plot, Q–Q Plot, and mean with SD. The two most widely used tests of normality are the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test and the Shapiro–Wilk test (Gupta et al., 2019).

This research used The Shapiro–Wilk test, The Shapiro–Wilk test is more appropriate for small sample sizes (< 50 samples), although it can also handle larger sample sizes, while the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test is used for $n \geq 50$. In both tests, the null hypothesis states that the data are drawn from a normally distributed population. If the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted, and the data are considered normally distributed.

b. Hypothesis Test

The researcher employed the Two Paired Samples Test, commonly known as the paired t-test, using the SPSS program to test their hypothesis. (Palimbong et al., 2022) The Paired Sample T-test analysis is a statistical method used to compare the means of two variables in a single group. This analysis is performed to test two related or paired



samples. Paired samples refer to a sample of the same subject that undergoes two different treatments or measurements, such as measurements taken before and after treatment.

The testing process compared two variables - the students' vocabulary mastery before and after learning through the total physical response method. A hypothesis was formulated before the testing of this comparative hypothesis.

H1: Utilizing the Total Physical Response method is an effective approach towards enhancing vocabulary mastery among elementary school students.

H2: Utilizing the Total Physical Response method is not an effective approach towards enhancing vocabulary mastery among elementary school students.

3.FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Finding

The data analysis for enhancing students' English vocabulary through the TPR Method involved compiling data from 10 students through blank fields and responses. The assessment administered by the researcher included pre-test and post-test evaluations focused on vocabulary related to verbs.

Table 3.1. Students' Score of Pre-Test and Post-Test

Pre-Test	Post-Test	Improvement
53	84	31

The study consisted of four sessions with the involvement of 10 students. During the initial pre-test phase, the combined score was 530, with an average of 53. Afterwards, following the post-test evaluation, the total score increased to 840, with an average of 84. The implementation of the TPR method resulted in a 31% improvement in the students' vocabulary proficiency. This significant increase in scores highlights the effectiveness of the Total Physical Response (TPR) method in enhancing language acquisition.



Table 3.2. Classification and Frequency

No.	Categories	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
		Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	Excellent	0	0%	4	40%
2.	Very Good	2	20%	6	60%
3.	Good	6	60%	0	0%
4.	Average	1	10%	0	0%
5.	Poor	1	10%	0	0%
Total		10	100%	10	100%

The table above provides an analysis of the categories, frequencies, and percentage scores from students' vocabulary tests, comparing their pre-test and post-test results. In the pre-test, 20% of the student achieved a very good score, while 60% scored in the good category. The remaining students' scores were evenly split between the average and poor categories, each accounting for 10%. However, in the post-test results, there was an improvement as 60% of the students achieved a "very good" score, while the remaining students scored within the "excellent" category, accounting for 40%.

In the table provided below, you can see the learning outcome of the fourth-grade students at SD Inpres 7/83 Pasempe through their performance in the pre-test and post test.

Table 4.3. Learning Outcomes using SPSS

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre Test TPR	10	20.00	70.00	53.0000	16.36392
Post Test TPR	10	70.00	100.00	84.0000	10.74968
Valid N (listwise)	10				

In the pre-test, the students achieved scores ranging from a minimum of 20 to a maximum of 70, with an average score of 53 and a standard deviation of 16,36392. Regarding the post-test, the students achieved scores ranging from a minimum of 70 to a maximum of 100, with an average score of 84 and a standard deviation of 10,74968.

a. Normality Test

This research used The Shapiro–Wilk test, The Shapiro–Wilk test is more appropriate for small sample sizes (< 50 samples), although it can also handle larger sample sizes, while the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test is used for $n \geq 50$. In both tests, the null hypothesis states that the data are drawn from a normally distributed population. If



the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted, and the data are considered normally distributed (Gupta et al., 2019).

Table 3.3 Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Pre Test TPR	.266	10	.044	.848	10	.055
Post Test TPR	.245	10	.090	.892	10	.177

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

According to the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, if the Sig value is > than 0.05, the data is considered normally distributed. Conversely, if the Sig value is < than 0.05, the data is not normally distributed. The results of the normality test for the two research variables indicate that the Sig value for the pre-test and post-test is 0.055 and 0.177, respectively. Since both Sig values are > than 0.05, it can be concluded that both sets of data are normally distributed.

b. Hypothesis Test

Table 4.4 Paired Sample Test

Paired Samples Test						
	Paired Differences			T	df	Sig (Two-Sided)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
Pair 1 Pre-Post	-31.00000	11.97219	3.78594	-8.188	9	<.001

After conducting a paired sample t-test, the obtained value of Sig (2-sided) is 0.001, indicating a statistically significant result. With a significance level of less than 0.05, we can confidently accept the hypothesis. This demonstrates a significant difference in students' vocabulary learning outcomes when comparing the TPR method for pre-test and post-test. Consequently, it can be reasonably concluded that the Total Physical Response (TPR) method effectively enhances students' English vocabulary at SD Inpres 7/83 Pasempe.

3.2. Discussion



Upon analyzing research data, a significant finding emerged: a 31% surge in scores was observed from the pre-test to the post-test score when employing the total physical response technique to teach English vocabulary. This finding addresses the research question "*Is the total physical response method effective for elementary school students' vocabulary mastery?*" . The substantial enhancement in scores underscores the effectiveness of incorporating physical gestures and movements in facilitating the understanding and retention of new vocabulary among young learners. This approach capitalizes on the intrinsic link between physical activity and cognitive processes, making the learning experience more immersive and enduring.

Teachers use a variety of resources such as songs and flashcards to physically demonstrate action verbs, mimicking how children naturally learn their first words. (Rambe, 2019) One of the primary advantages of the Total Physical Response (TPR) method is that students not only passively listen to the language but also actively engage by practicing the words, aiding in faster word retention. This active participation significantly enhances comprehension, as nuances like general meaning and emotions are often conveyed through expressions, gestures, and other visual cues. Moreover, the adaptable nature of the TPR method allows for seamless integration into various educational settings, whether in traditional classrooms, online environments, or self-study scenarios.

Additionally, the Total Physical Response method fosters a positive and inclusive classroom environment. Students of diverse backgrounds and learning abilities can participate actively, as the method's focus on physical activity and interaction helps bridge language gaps and supports kinesthetic learners. The emphasis on movement also caters to students with varying attention spans, providing them with a constructive outlet for their energy while reinforcing educational content. Research by (Astutik & Aulina, 2018) show that Total Physical Response (TPR) method can be used effectively both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers interact with students using TPR method outside lesson times, enhancing student engagement. Students respond verbally and nonverbally to TPR cues like "silent please," indicating effective communication. Teachers creatively use TPR for various purposes, such as managing student behavior with commands like "stop." Overall, teachers apply TPR extensively in diverse settings, fostering interactive and engaging English teaching practices.



Ultimately, the TPR method proves to be a powerful tool in language education, making vocabulary acquisition efficient and transforming the learning process into an enjoyable experience. It draws inspiration from how children naturally learn language through movement and play, adapting these principles for learners of all ages, showing that learning can be both fun and highly effective. The researcher conclusion, drawn from the data analysis, asserts that the Total Physical Response (TPR) method significantly enhanced students' vocabulary acquisition. The results of the post-test indicated an improvement in vocabulary mastery after the researcher implemented the TPR method. While the method's effectiveness is applicable across all grades, the study mainly focused on evaluating its impact on fourth-grade students at SD Inpres 7/83 Pasempe. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the implementation of the TPR method is effective and resulted in substantial enhancements in the vocabulary mastery of the students at SD Inpres 7/83 Pasempe.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1. Conclusion

Based on the research conducted on "The Effectiveness of The TPR (Total Physical Response) Method in Enhancing Students' Vocabulary Mastery at SD Inpres 7/83 Pasempe," it was determined that students' vocabulary proficiency improved once the Total Physical Response method was utilized. The noticeable enhancement in students' scores from the pre-test to the post-test substantiated this conclusion.

The paired sample t-test analysis revealed a notable rise in the mean score, with an average increase of 31% from the pre-test to the post-test. This signifies a considerable enhancement in students' vocabulary mastery post the adoption of the Total Physical Response technique. Consequently, H1 is affirmed, while H2 is negated. By incorporating physical movement with language practice, students were able to create stronger mental associations with new words, leading to deeper understanding and longer-lasting recall. Teachers observed that students were more confident in using their newly acquired vocabulary in both spoken and written forms, demonstrating the practical benefits of this interactive teaching approach. Overall, the implementation of the TPR method at SD Inpres 7/83 Pasempe proved to be a highly effective strategy for enhancing vocabulary mastery, paving the way for its potential adoption in other educational settings.



4.2. Suggestion

Based on the conclusions described above, the researcher offers several recommendations:

1. Acknowledging the significant role of vocabulary in language acquisition, it is advisable to initiate vocabulary instruction at an early stage
2. To enhance student engagement and motivation in learning English, it is recommended to employ diverse and engaging teaching methods to sustain an interesting learning environment.

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