

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE METHOD IN TEACHING ENGLISH VOCABULARY AT BAN NONSAWAN SCHOOL, THAILAND

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: February 2022 Revised: March 2022 Published: April 2022	<i>When the teacher teach vocabulary about body parts in class, they use rhythm and movement to make students understand each body name. That is called the Total Physical Response (TPR) method. This study aims to investigate the student's perception on Total Physical Response (TPR) method as a technique in teaching English vocabulary. The research study used a qualitative descriptive method. To achieve the research objectives, the data was taken from two sources: questionnaire and interview in eighth graders at a Secondary School in Loei, Thailand, namely Ban Nonsawan School. An overall, 30 students were involved in the study. The results obtained reveal that Total Physical Response technique allows students to study harder and easier in learning English vocabulary. In addition, the result showed some improvement on get a new vocabulary with this technique. Moreover, the data showed that there were some benefits of Total Physical Response method: 1. Develop students' speaking abilities and vocabulary mastery, 2. Increase student participation in class, 3. Having a fun learning atmosphere.</i>
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INTRODUCTION

So far, teachers at Ban Nonsawan School in Loei, Thailand have had difficulty teaching English to students at school when pandemic took place. One of them is because the method used is not suitable (Widodo, 2005). This discrepancy will have an impact on aspects of students' English skills, one of which is their vocabulary. Lack of vocabulary can be an important factor underlying the school failure of disadvantaged students (Folse, 2008). Therefore, learning methods in English need to be improved to improve students' vocabulary mastery. Because, the more languages a person can use, the more opportunities they must work and live (Kubota, 2011). Furthermore (Nunan, 2003) states that in the world of business, industry, and government, workers are expected to immediately improve their English language skills. That way, parents who want their children to get English language teaching as early as possible to get benefits for future academic and career goals (Sad, 2010).

All children under normal conditions have the mental ability to interact in a foreign language, but it is necessary to develop features of grammar, phonetics, conventions, alphabet, and vocabulary (Li Chen, 2010). However, in English as a foreign language, language learning for students starts from mastering vocabulary. Learning vocabulary is an important stage in learning a language. The more words foreign language learners know, the more they will be able to understand what they hear and read and the better they will be able to say what they want to express when speaking or writing. But it happens that sometimes students have problems to memorize and internalize vocabulary with difficulty and in a very

slow way. This also happened at Ban Nonsawan School, where foreign language students had problems in learning activities.

In learning English, Vocabulary is the basic of learning that must be mastered by students. Some students find it difficult to memorize English vocabulary because they are not interested and rarely use the vocabulary in their daily life. Vocabulary produces language which plays a fundamental role in communication. Thus, vocabulary has an important role in communication with the community (Hatch and Brown, 1995). Vocabulary plays an important role for language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing). In addition, vocabulary is a basic level of learning in learning foreign languages (Cameron, 2001). That is, learning vocabulary is very important as a basic need to get a new language. Especially in this difficult situation, teachers cannot interact directly with students and only rely on existing technology. On the other hand, many students' have difficulty in learning vocabulary.

Vocabulary teaching is one of the most important components in language classes, especially in English. The main problem in teaching and learning vocabulary is the technique in teaching vocabulary that is less varied. In the eighth grade at Ban Nonsawan School, the teacher teach vocabulary based on the material for the day, then translates the meanings one by one. After that, the teacher reads the vocabulary, and the students repeat what the teacher said. This activity was repeated at the next meeting and was carried out through virtual learning. Students sometimes feel bored when learning English because they think English is difficult to learn. In fact, students are reluctant to respond to what the teacher says in the classroom during virtual learning. This must be overcome, that vocabulary learning must provide a more comfortable atmosphere for students.

What's more, the current situation hindered by the pandemic, requires them to study from home or take part in virtual learning. The application of a risky method carried out during the pandemic also triggered a lack of knowledge gained by students in learning English as their foreign language. To solve this problem, the researcher used a kind of technique in teaching English vocabulary. That technique is Total Physical Respond (TPR) to help students learning English vocabulary easily.

Teaching vocabulary through Total Physical Response (TPR) is one way to teach vocabulary to students in a directed manner. (Pribilova, 2006) states that in teaching new words in a foreign language, a teacher should consider that young learners are still building their first language vocabulary and are still in the process of acquiring and organizing concepts of learning English vocabulary. Through the Total Physical Response (TPR) method, it is hoped that it will motivate students to have a high response in learning foreign languages, have discipline and find new words. Because by doing so, it will force students to look for new words and guess them, even they can appear in front of the class with confidence. To find the meaning of words from various vocabularies, the teacher will first provide a list of vocabulary words and their meanings, then ask students to memorize them.

Total Physical Response (TPR) method was first proposed by (James Asher, 1968). In Total Physical Response, physical movement is used in response to what students hear from the teacher's speech. In other words, Total Physical Response (TPR) is a physical movement that occurs from an instruction that occurs in the learning process that forms social interaction. According to (Richard and Rodgers, 2001) Total Physical Response is a language teaching method build around the coordination of speech and action; he tries to each language through physical activity (motor). Therefore, there is a relationship between motor development and language development as the basis for mastering foreign languages.

Previously, Ban Nonsawan School, Loei, Thailand had never used physical learning. However, it is more of a direct method of teaching, namely by providing material explanations and a little discussion without involving meaningful activities to the students. Lesson designs that incorporate physical activity are suitable for teaching vocabulary to the

students, and methods such as Total Physical Response (TPR) developed by (James Asher, 1968) in which learners physically respond to verbal commands, can help to introduce English vocabulary to young children. As children build social communication systems using their imaginations, experimenting with ideas, developing kinesthetics and creating a sense of control over their world in a stress-free environment. According to (Larsen & Freeman, 2000) states that the Total Physical Response (TPR) Method applied by the teacher aims to create a comfortable atmosphere so that students can enjoy learning and can learn to communicate in foreign languages well. This is because the method is a very easy to apply in language teaching and contains elements of gestures so that it can relieve students' stress in language learning, especially when learning a foreign language, in this case English during virtual learning.

Total Physical Response (TPR) supports children's cognitive development thereby stimulating all their senses, imagination, and creativity. With this technique, children use physical and mental energy productively, while facilitating the development of language and social skills such as cooperation, negotiating, competing, and following rules. In fact, students at Ban Nonsawan School need vocabulary to support themselves to produce sentences that can be understood by others. That's why vocabulary is so important to master. (Harmer, 2001) argues that "If the structure of language forms the framework of language, it is vocabulary that provides vital organs and flesh". For that, students must expand their vocabulary in order to communicate with others. In addition, (Aminudin, 2009) assessed that the method that is suitable for children in learning vocabulary is Total Physical Response (TPR). Thus, these EFL students in Loei, Thailand can improve their vocabulary mastery through the application of the total physical response method.

The Total Physical Response (TPR) method has many advantages. (Widodo, 2005) have gathered the advantages of the TPR method. The first is a successful teaching method that can be used for both children and adults. This means that this method can be used for secondary school students. Second, it's very easy to remember. This can help students to remember phrases or words in English. Third, it is very fun, students enjoy applying this method in their vocabulary mastery. It can really increase the speed and mood in learning. Fourth, they can make teaching more enjoyable for both teachers and students. Fifth, suitable for students who are required to be active in class. For example, in this situation students find it difficult to express themselves in class because they can only meet in virtual learning. Sixth, no matter how many students are involved, as long as the teacher is ready to lead, the students will follow. Seventh, this method can also be used in mixed ability classes. Physical actions and pictures enable all learners to understand a foreign language effectively. Eighth, effective for young learners. And lastly, the TPR method requires coordination of both the right and left hemispheres of the human brain.

Based on the research background that has been stated above, the formulation of the problem in this study is how is the students' perception toward Total Physical Response (TPR) method in teaching English Vocabulary? Researchers in a similar field of interest may benefit from the results of this research to conduct subsequent research in the future.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

The method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative research method. This method was chosen because the research will present a description about the students' perception toward Total Physical Response (TPR) method in teaching English Vocabulary and at the end build a conclusion based on the data gained. This research study was conducted in a natural setting and discussed the behavior patterns of participants regarding performance and perceptions of the use of the Total Physical Response method. In addition, (Creswell, 2006)

considers descriptive research methods to obtain information about current conditions and to assess hypotheses or questions regarding the current research situation. In addition, to determine student perception to the use of the TPR method, the researcher applied a qualitative research approach by conducting interview. With the aim of obtaining information from the opinions and feelings of participants and drawing reliable conclusions.

Population and Sample

Based on (McMilan, 2001), the sample can be selected from a larger group or persons, identified as the population or it can simply refer to the group or subjects from whom data are collected (even though the subjects are not selected for the population). The population in this study were eighth grade students at one of the secondary schools in Loei, Thailand, namely Ban Nonsawan School. The sample of this study was 30 students from academic year 2020-2021.

Instruments

The researcher used questionnaire and interview to collect the data. In the research, questionnaire was used to obtain the information about students' perception toward TPR method in teaching English vocabulary. This questionnaire is designed for eighth grade students. The questionnaire contains 15 questions with suggested answers for each question. Interview was used to obtain the supporting data for the research could not get enough questionnaire. Interview were conducted with students in the eighth grade of secondary school at Ban Nonsawan School. Interview focused on how students learn vocabulary using the TPR method in learning.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this qualitative research uses narrative discussion by describing in detail the findings or results of the research and summarizing them to find out how deep the results of this study are. Questionnaire is a form utilized in a survey design that respondents in research entire and go back to the writer. The respondent chooses answers to question and substances basic personal or demographic statistics. Processing the records using statistics percentage through making tables in column. Then, interviews were conducted after all students answered the questionnaire. This was done to determine students' perceptions of TPR method in the teaching vocabulary. (Alwasiah, 2009) argues that the interview was conducted to get the depth of the research subject. In in-depth interviews, the person being studied can obtain more information about the topic than the students regarding their responses by using the TPR method. Questions in the interview have been modified based on (Richard & Rodgers, 2001) TPR is a teaching method based on the coordination of language speaking and action, it is an effort to each language through physical activity.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

The researcher decided that table to three components in every category and the questionnaire included fifteen question and handled classroom interaction. These questionnaires have been added to the students, one sheet questionnaire for one student. The first part of the questionnaire is students' perceptions of TPR activities in virtual classrooms while learning English vocabulary. The questions in this section are divided into five questions. All students are interested in learning English vocabulary combined with the TPR method. They are enjoying in learning English, increasing participation in class activities, and for the teacher to be able to implement English learning techniques with this method and for students to improve their vocabulary learning. The results on the table have a good response to achievement for students as well as teachers.

Table 1
Students' perception Toward TPR Activity

Number	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I feel easy learning with this method	40%	60%	-	-
2	I understand lessons more quickly using this technique	53,3%	46,7%	-	-
3	I feel enjoy and active learning with this method	43,3%	53,3%	3,3%	-
4	I get new information through this method	56,7%	43,3%	-	-
5	I love learning vocabulary by using this method	36,7%	63,3%	-	-

From table 1 above, the first question received a good response from students with a total of 40% strongly agree and 60% agree, that they find it easy to learn using the TPR method. Question number two got answers 53.3% strongly agree and 46.7% agree, that they can understand faster by using this method. Then for question number three, students answered strongly agree 43.3%, agree 53.3%, and 3.3% answered disagree. When viewed from the results, there is one student who feels less enjoy learning with this method. However, most students feel they enjoy and actively participate in learning using this method. Furthermore, for question number four, students answered strongly agree 56.7% and agree 43.3%. These results indicate that students obtain new information from this method. Finally, question number five obtained 36.7% strongly agree and 63.3% agree that students stated that learning vocabulary using this method was fun. So, it can be said that the TPR method received a good response from the perspective of students at the Ban Nonsawan School. The students stated that learning vocabulary with this method was very easy and fun to do in virtual meetings.

The second part of the questionnaire is the perception about the benefit of TPR method during virtual meeting while learning English vocabulary. The questions in this section are divided into five questions. All students are response actively about the combined TPR method for teaching English vocabulary. They are also giving a good opinion for this method.

Table 2
Students' perception Toward the Benefit of TPR

Number	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6	I can get more information using this method	50%	50%	-	-
7	I can learn the material through this method	26,7%	73,3%	-	-
8	I feel happy to learn through this method	56,7%	33,3%	10%	-
9	I can learn quickly and easily	46,7%	53,3%	-	-
10	I am motivated to learn vocabulary through this method	66,7%	33,3%	-	-

From table 2 above, students answering question number six get balanced results, namely 50% strongly agree and 50% agree. This means that Ban Nonsawan school students get a lot of information by using this TPR method. Because it is known that they have never used any other method besides the direct method in learning vocabulary. Some students find this method. Furthermore, question number seven, obtained 26.7% strongly agree and 73.3% agree to learn the material using this method. Although learning is done in virtual meetings, students can follow the lesson well using this method. For question number eight, 56.7% students answered strongly agree, 33.3% and three students, namely 10% disagreed, felt happy to learn using this method. Some students were satisfied with learning to use this method, but there were three students who stated that they were not happy using this method. The researcher found several opinions from students stating that "I like learning English vocabulary, but it would be better if it could be done with face-to-face" other opinions such as "it is very fun to use this method, but I am late in learning because of network problems" and "learning with this method reduces my stress a bit from the pandemic and I get some exciting new information." Then, students who answered question number nine strongly agreed 46.7% and agreed 53.3%. The students stated that they could learn vocabulary quickly and easily using this method. This method provides good benefits for students' interest in learning English vocabulary. Where learning English is not easy for students who use English as their second language. Finally, students answered question number ten strongly agree 66.7% and agree 33.3%. Stating that they feel motivated by learning vocabulary with this method. The students said they got the power to search for new vocabulary in learning English.

The third part of the questionnaire is the perception about the weakness of TPR method during virtual meeting while learning English vocabulary. The questions in this section are divided into five questions. Generally, the students are liked learning with this method. The result showed by students' response in this questionnaire.

Table 3
Students' perception Toward the Weakness of TPR

Number	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11	I do not understand when I learn through this method	-	-	53,3%	46,7%
12	This method is less fit to use at the time of learning	-	-	56,7%	43,3%
13	I feel bored quickly	-	3,3%	30%	66,7%
14	I prefer learning by way of discussions, lectures etc., rather than using this method	-	6,7%	53,3%	40%
15	I can't improve my learning ability through this method	-	-	43,3%	56,7%

From table 3 above, question number eleven got 53.3% disagree and 46.7% strongly disagree that students did not understand the material using this TPR method. Overall, students can understand the material well with this method even though it is done with a virtual meeting. Question number twelve disagreed 56.7% and strongly disagreed 43.3% on the statement that the TPR method was not suitable for use when learning English vocabulary. The students claim that with this method they use new vocabulary and combine their old vocabulary in their daily life. They also said that they became confident in using English vocabulary. Next question number thirteen got a significant answer from the students. Students answered agree 3.3%, disagree 30% and strongly disagree 93.33%. Students who

answered agree stated that "I feel bored when learning vocabulary." However, most of the students were happy and active when learning with this method. Then for question number fourteen students answered agree 6.7%, disagree 53.3% and strongly disagree 40% that they prefer learning English vocabulary using this method. However, there were two students who claimed that they preferred to use their old methods such as the direct method and discussion. Finally, for question number fifteen, students answered 43.3% disagree and strongly disagree 56.7% which stated that they could not improve their vocabulary when learning with the TPR method. However, the students' answers were very surprising. Most of them said that they could improve their English vocabulary using the TPR method.

Based on the results of respondents on the use of the Total Physical Response method in teaching vocabulary at Ban Nonsawan School, Loei, Thailand, the researchers attempted to provide supporting data in the form of interviews conducted one-on-one through virtual meetings with eighth grade students at Ban Nonsawan School. From the results of this interview, the researcher got several important points in using the TPR method in teaching English vocabulary.

What do you think about the Total Physical Response method? Based on the interviews obtained, the TPR method is a very important method for students in improving their English vocabulary mastery and provides benefits for the development and application of learning for teachers at Ban Nonsawan School. How is the application of the TPR method in the learning process? Some students answered that the application of the TPR method which was carried out in a virtual meeting was quite satisfactory. The students are not easily bored following the lesson in front of a computer screen for one hour because learning with this method involves their physical and motoric movements in imitating what is instructed by the teacher. The TPR method also helps students think critically and seek new information or insights about English vocabulary. So, this method encourages students in their learning process even in a pandemic situation.

Do you feel the TPR method has changed your learning patterns? The TPR method can improve students' critical thinking processes and awaken their motor system to perform instructions on objects and others. The next question that researchers want to know is the impact of the TPR method. What is the impact of using the TPR method on improving your vocabulary? The students learn vocabulary better than before. They claim that this method aroused their interest in learning English more than ever before. The students admitted that before the implementation of this method, learning English was difficult for them to understand. However, after applying this method, the students became motivated to learn English. The students also said that they enjoyed following the teacher's fun instructions while teaching them. Teaching and learning activities are not boring even though it is only done in virtual meetings.

Discussion

Most students claim that the Total Physical Response method is appropriate for second language learners. According to (Evan, 2011), the TPR method was first introduced by Asher, a professor at San José State University who was inspired by how children learn their first language by responding using physical responses through commands. Asher initiated TPR when he was curious as to why so many people find it so difficult to learn a second language but almost none have a hard time learning their first language (Kennedy, 2000). As described in Table 1, the students responded well to the learning activities using the TPR method. It was proven by them that they did not experience significant obstacles during the learning process. On the contrary, they become enthusiastic and actively participate in learning vocabulary with this method.

Then Asher (as quoted from Silver, Adelman, & Price, 2003) observed the characteristics of successful language learners, namely: Good language learners achieve

fluency more quickly when they are involved in situations where the meaning of spoken language is immediately felt and understood; They often begin their language learning by seeing the influence of language on actions and demonstrate their understanding by doing well in language-commanded tasks; They can focus on the meaning of a language as a whole rather than on grammar and progress more quickly when dealing with instruction from a language, and they progress rapidly when content involving English is clearly useful for use in the classroom and outside the classroom. In the description of the findings in Table 2, the researcher obtained several important points such as; the application of the TPR method helps students to think critically so that they quickly understand the material. Furthermore, students give answers that they are responsive to observing and physically responding to an action or teacher's instructions when learning takes place. For example, the teacher gives instructions such as "Guys, can you read this?", "Put your hand in your head", "Shake your hand" and etc. Furthermore, the TPR method also gives students motivation to learn more vocabulary and helps students confidently use the vocabulary in their daily life or in speaking in class. The habit of applying English conversation will help students learn new vocabulary and get new information. Because previously, the teacher had never applied the habit of speaking using English to second language learners.

Therefore, Asher found the answer that this was because the methods used by many teachers were not used when learners were learning their first language as well as the stress that is often found in a second language learning environment (Kennedy, 2000; Maroto, Garrido, & Fuentes). Teachers at Ban Nonsawan School said that it was very difficult for them to teach with their lack of understanding in applying learning methods. They therefore imply that Dr. Asher decided to take a stress-free approach to second language learning as well as first language learning where the child learning the language responds physically to parental commands. This approach is then known as the TPR method which helps in teaching English vocabulary to students at Ban Nonsawan School. The existence of the TPR method can reduce various problems faced by teachers when they have to deal with pandemic situations that require them to only be able to meet face-to-face through virtual meetings. However, the students were not discouraged to learn even though they looked enthusiastic even though they could only meet face to face in front of the computer layer. As quoted in Table 3, the researcher revealed that most of the students were able to improve their learning patterns by applying this method. The students said that actually learning English is easy and fun if done with the right approach. The TPR method is claimed to help students, especially at Ban Nonsawan School, in overcoming their stress during a pandemic situation. In other words, TPR is designed based on the way children learn their mother tongue (Neupane, 2008).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion obtained, it can be concluded that the total physical response method can be used properly in improving English vocabulary mastery for secondary school students who use English as their second language. Moreover, the application of this TPR method to eighth grade students in Thailand secondary school. This method has proven to be very suitable for vocabulary learning because it can be applied expressively with gestures. Moreover, the conditions and situations that were hindered by the pandemic required that students and teachers could not meet face-to-face, resulting in teachers having to work extra hard to find the right method to apply in learning. The students claim to enjoy learning vocabulary with this method because it can reduce their stress when faced with difficult situations like this pandemic. The TPR method can motivate students to be interested in learning English vocabulary because this method is very entertaining for them. This is evidenced by their opinions and enthusiasm when learning activities are carried out with virtual meetings.

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