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Teaching Vocabulary to the ESL Learners Using Total Physical Response Method

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Abstract: *In children`s development early years play an important role. Physical, emotional, cognitive and language development progress very fast. It is very period to start teaching vocabulary either for L1 or L2 languages. For this there are a lot of methods and techniques but the most appropriate one is Total Physical Response (TPR) method. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), TPR is the method in which teaching will rely on actions, activities and coordination of speech. Because there is no texting, vocabulary can be taught through using songs, images and games which include actions. In this literature review comparison of scholars view about how to teach vocabulary using TPR method will be discussed and analyzed.*

Keywords: *teaching, vocabulary, total physical response.*

Children are programmed from their early ages to have an aptitude for learning languages. Chomsky (1959, p.15), states that the language learning develops in the same way as our biological functioning. Children learn not only language but also other skills through games, body language and communication with peers. They enjoy movements and fantasy and like imagine things in their mind (Pinter, 2006:2). So, teacher should be able to find out the method that will suit learners and contribute for their further progress. There are variety of methods which can be applied but for mentioned above actions the TPR method can be counted as the most suitable because before producing verbal communication learners respond physically. Moreover, according to Hatch and Brown (1995:1), this method can integrate physical actions, playing games and engagement into a class which can lead learners not only actively participate during the lesson but also develop their linguistic aspects. In this literature review ideas of scholars about using TPR method analyzed with their suggestions. Although there are different effective and interactive methods, the topic of the literature review was chosen because as Richards and Rodgers (1986:87) stated that actions like moving and playing directed to produce language acquisition seems to be successful more in child first language learning. As Eve Susanti`s (2016), research on investigating the effectiveness of TPR method showed that school learners even higher classes were significantly better at language learning because of the experimental and research method she used between two groups. However, at the same time research findings of J. Viviane (2020), concluded that the activities used in TPR method for young learners appropriate with children or beginners.

Teaching English language for primary school learners is twice difficult considering the fact that learners are taught mostly vocabulary. Vocabulary is the most powerful tool in exploring language and should be

taught thoroughly starting from the first form. As noted by Thornbury (2002:13), “without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”. We can deduce that in learning language vocabulary stands in the primary position.

In this literature review we will discuss and compare scholar`s point of view about the use of TPR method in teaching vocabulary for young learners. Similarly will find answers to the following questions:

1. How to teach vocabulary using TPR method for young learners.
2. Weather this method is effective method or not.
3. How should be implemented correctly in teaching vocabulary for young learners.

The definition of Vocabulary

While defining the meaning of the word vocabulary, first we should know is that vocabulary is the beginning and most important stage while learning languages. No matter it is L1 or L2, we need to have a good vocabulary stock in order to be able to communicate without any difficulties. As it is noted by John (2000:16), learning vocabulary makes learners gain knowledge and be able to recognize the meaning of a word in a context. While Ur (1198), claims that vocabulary can be defined as a word and the item. Because in English language there are words which consist of more than one word but the meaning is one. Therefore while talking about vocabulary useful convention can be identifying vocabulary as ‘items’ and ‘words’. It is essential to know words meaning because vocabulary helps to develop not only communication skills, but also language learning skills. According to Eva Susanti (2017), one element of macro skills is vocabulary. If a person will master vocabulary well, one can achieve higher results in learning languages.

Principles of teaching vocabulary to young learners.

At the young age children`s brain functions as a sponge. Whatever you put in your mind will be analyzed and stored. So, it is very crucial to find out the suitable method among other ways of introducing vocabulary. Here teacher plays an important role because for choosing the correct method first action that should be done is to identify learners` aims and needs. Renowati (2006), claims that teacher should have clear understanding of learners goals, should know what to expect from them and what kind of words to teach, how many words to teach in a day. Moreover, Wallance (1982) states that creating the needed atmosphere is another factor of teaching vocabulary. According to Viviane (2020), vocabulary should be taught by repeating words more than once or in a regular basis until learners have internalized the meaning. From my own experience I can say that, according to standards of teaching, in first class learners will have only words that should be learned during the whole year. Each lesson new words should be revised until it will be edged in their mind. It is really difficult to deliver the concept of the word for learners who just started to learn their mother language and plus second language.

Definition of TPR Method

“TPR” is the abbreviation of The Total Physical Response and it is a method of language teaching. According to Tingting Shi (2018), TPR is the method where learners will enjoy learning without any struggles. The method where learners overcome communication stress in learning languages. This method was suggested by J. Asher. He pointed out that language should be taught with active actions where learners will improve their language learning ability. Moreover, Asher (1997), noted that TPR method is a thoery which depends on natural programme of the brain that is produce learning languages with interaction. That is true that interaction is the key factor in learning and as a teacher I can mention that during the lesson learners learn the new words quickly when I practice playing interactive games such as “ Find who am I?” or “ Find the answer” where they should move around the class to fins their peers.

Experiments of researchers in Promoting Vocabulary for Young learners using TPRS method

To start with Cicih Nuraeni (2019), she conducted a research with 5- 11 years old learners using TPR method and observing teachers' teaching strategies. As a tool she used vocabulary and comprehension and assessed by criteria: word, word forms and word choice. Results showed that during the experiment children enjoyed and were actively participated in the lesson. In addition teachers' guidelines were correctly given which helped to increase comprehension of learners. The second research by Eva Susanti (2016), reveals that TPR method is also effective in teaching vocabulary however, her test from my point of view was difficult because with multiple choice questions young learners may struggle. It is because they don't know reading and writing well. It would be better to simplify tests and turn them into image cards to show learners. Also, TPR method was not used successfully because of minimum action. According to J.Viviane (2020), in classes were she observed the teaching process teachers paid more attention to verbal communication such as learning body parts by pointing at them. Learners were able to remember words because at the end they practiced the activity with their peers. Although four teachers succeeded in teaching vocabulary, two of them failed first because of the class size and the second who don't know how to begin teaching vocabulary. This is evident that teaching in crowded class is complex and there will not enough time for each pupil. In terms of teacher qualification, if a teacher don't know how to correctly give instructions and guide learners that teacher should observe other colleagues teaching process to improve themselves.

To conclude, from the all literature that was reviewed, to teach vocabulary first of all teacher should be able give correct instructions and guidelines. Because guiding is the first step for further improvement of a learner. If learners especially young learners will not take appropriate instructions their perception will be confused. Moreover, to teach vocabulary more handouts with images of words and their implications are needed. Learners will learn firstly concept then the meaning. They are interested not in boring words sticked to the blackboard but colourful pictures of the them. From the researches we can see that not all teachers used TPR method effectively and in appropriate context. It can be because of not fully understanding of the thoery.

To the questions stated in the introduction part, we found out that TPR method is the most suitable method to teach young learners and it is proven to be effective and successful. In addition, vocabulary is best learned while learners participate in peer works and exercises which require actions and movements. Teachers should pay more attention to the needs of learners and support their ideas. Furthermore, based on their interest implement tothe teaching process.

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