

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The rapid development of human civilization in the era of Society 5.0 highlights the increasingly crucial role of education in preparing individuals with strong critical thinking and technological literacy. According to Susanto and Jaya (2023), limitless human imagination and scientific thinking continue to merge into an integrated system shaped by technology, leading to a civilization that requires creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration as essential skills. In the context of language learning, these competencies are closely related to students' ability to communicate effectively in a global environment.

Vocabulary plays a very important role in learning a foreign language, as it involves the ability to understand, remember, and use words appropriately in various communication situations. Vocabulary mastery serves as the fundamental foundation that supports other language skills such as reading, writing, and speaking, especially in the era of globalization, which demands effective and adaptive communication. Without sufficient vocabulary mastery, students will experience difficulties in developing overall English language proficiency.

In Indonesia, particularly at the elementary school level, many students face challenges in expanding their vocabulary due to the limited use of interactive learning methods and minimal opportunities for practice. At SDN 182 Bengkulu Utara, English vocabulary learning is often dominated by traditional approaches such as rote memorization and mechanical exercises. This situation makes students less active in using vocabulary contextually and reduces their motivation to learn English. Additionally, anxiety about making mistakes, low self-confidence, and limited opportunities to participate in interactive classroom activities further hinder students' vocabulary development.

Several previous studies have reported various challenges in teaching English vocabulary at the elementary school level. A study conducted by Putri and Sari (2022) found that students experienced difficulties in retaining new vocabulary due to limited exposure to meaningful and interactive learning activities. Similarly, Rahmawati et al. (2022) revealed that traditional teaching methods, such as memorization-based instruction, reduced students' motivation and participation in vocabulary learning. Furthermore, Hidayati and Pratama (2023) reported that elementary school students often lacked confidence in using English vocabulary because they rarely practiced words in contextual and communicative situations. Another study by Yuliana (2023)

also emphasized that insufficient opportunities for active engagement and classroom interaction contributed to students' low vocabulary mastery. These findings indicate that vocabulary learning at the elementary school level requires more interactive and student-centered approaches to overcome these challenges.

To address these challenges, innovative teaching methods are needed to improve students' vocabulary mastery. One method that emphasizes physical activity and meaningful interaction is the Total Physical Response (TPR) method. The TPR method encourages students to respond physically to verbal instructions, making vocabulary learning more engaging and enjoyable. Therefore, the author is interested in investigating the implementation of the Total Physical Response (TPR) method to enhance students' vocabulary mastery at SDN 182 Bengkulu Utara. This study is expected to provide practical contributions to English language teaching, particularly at the elementary school level.

B. Identification of the Problem

1. Low vocabulary mastery among students

The researcher found that many fifth-grade students had low vocabulary mastery. This was indicated by their difficulty in understanding the meaning of

English words and their limited ability to recall vocabulary during classroom activities.

2. Lack of interaction and engaging learning experiences

Based on the English teacher's description during the initial observation, the learning process still relies on conventional approaches, such as reading from textbooks and completing basic translation tasks. As a result, students became less active and less motivated to participate in vocabulary learning activities.

3. Difficulties in applying vocabulary in real-life situations

The researcher also observed that students had difficulty using English vocabulary in real-life contexts, such as making simple sentences or speaking in English.

C. Limitation of the Problem

The scope of this study is limited to the fifth-grade students of SDN 182 Bengkulu Utara. To determine the significance effect of Total Physical Response (TPR) on students' vocabulary mastery, particularly in terms of comprehension, retention, and application in real-life contexts. This study will identify differences in vocabulary learning outcomes between students taught using the Total Physical Response (TPR) method and students taught using lecture-method at SDN 182 Bengkulu Utara.

D. Research Question

Is there any significance effect of Total Physical Response (TPR) method on students' English vocabulary mastery at SDN 182 Bengkulu Utara?

E. Research Objective

Based on the background and research question, this study aims to determine whether the Total Physical Response (TPR) method has an effect on students' English vocabulary mastery at SDN 182 Bengkulu Utara

F. Significances of the Research

This study aims to contribute valuable insights to the field of English language education by investigating the impact The Effectiveness of Total Physical Response (TPR) Method in Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery at SDN 182 Bengkulu Utara. The findings of this research are expected to benefit various stakeholders, including:

1. Teachers:

This study can provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of the TPR method in enhancing students' vocabulary acquisition. It is hoped that these findings will encourage teachers to integrate physical activities and contextual interactions into the learning process, creating a more dynamic, interactive, and enjoyable classroom environment.

2. Students:

Through the implementation of the TPR method, students are expected to master English vocabulary their ability to understand, retain, and apply English vocabulary more effectively. This improvement in vocabulary mastery will not only strengthen their overall English proficiency but also boost their confidence and readiness to communicate in real-life situations.

3. Future Researchers:

The results of this study will contribute to the existing literature on the application of the TPR method in English language teaching, particularly at the elementary school level. The findings can serve as a foundation for further research exploring other aspects of TPR, such as its impact on listening, speaking, or writing skills, as well as its application in various educational contexts.

G. Definition of Key Terms

1. Total Physical Response (TPR)

Total Physical Response (IPR) is a language teaching method that connects verbal commands with physical movements to help students understand and retain vocabulary more effectively. This method was first developed by James Asher, based on the theory that language learning can be remforced through

physical interaction between teachers and students (Asher, J. J. 2009). TPR emphasizes bodily responses to verbal instructions as a more natural form of language comprehension. Thus, this method is considered effective in enhancing student engagement and vocabulary.

2. Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary mastery refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and use words in the target language. Vocabulary is one of the fundamental aspects of language skills, encompassing word meanings, appropriate usage in context, and correct pronunciation (Nation, P., 2021). In the context of learning English as a foreign language, vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role in developing students' communication skills. Students with a broader vocabulary tend to be more confident in understanding and using English in various situations (Schmitt, N., 2022).