

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the writer discusses the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective and the significance of the study, the theoretical framework, the limitation of the study, the key terms used in this thesis and also the organization of this study.

### 1.1 Background of the study

English has developed and become an international language which is used and taught in most countries all over the world. Almost everyone from young children to adults are trying to learn and master this language. Therefore, more English teachers are needed to teach English.

Nowadays English is taught and learn by children at their early age. English becomes a familiar language for them but as young learners they usually find some difficulties in achieving it. Especially the children who live in countries where English is still treated as a foreign language. These children have only few hours to learn English at school. They might use the language during the English class. However, as soon as their English teacher leaves the classroom, they will start to use their national or even local language.

There are two skills that the students have to master in learning English, namely receptive and productive skills. Receptive skills include listening and reading while productive skills cover speaking and writing. In order to reach those skills, children must also attain certain number of vocabulary.

Vocabulary is one of the important components of a language. Most teachers tend to teach English vocabulary by asking the students to memorize the meaning of a list of English words. This kind of teaching method is called traditional method. This method usually tends to teach children to listen, repeat, and memorize some words with their translation. This traditional method will work if people are given enough time to do the memorization ([www.tpr-world.com](http://www.tpr-world.com)). However, children will get bored easily because the teaching – learning process only relies on the memorization and does not make the students active during the class. As a result, the student’s performance in learning will be less satisfactory. “One of the ways to lessen the boredom is by giving them a feeling of joy” (Bichter, 1971:192 as cited in Ronald, 2007:3). Students especially children will learn English easily if they feel happy. In order to make students feel happy the teacher should create an enjoyable learning process that uses varied methods.

There are many methods that can be used to teach English especially vocabulary instead of memorization. One of the methods is the Total Physical Response method. The Total Physical Response (TPR) is a method developed by Dr. James J. Asher (1982), a professor of psychology at San José State University, California, USA, to aid learning foreign languages. This method is one that combines information and skills through the use of the kinesthetic sensory system (<http://coe.sdsu.edu/ALMMMethods.htm#TPR>). This combination of skills allows the student to assimilate information and skills at a rapid rate. In the Total Physical Response the students learn to comprehend the language before they speak it, just as they did as infants ([www.tpr-world.com](http://www.tpr-world.com)). Piaget (1981) says

“infants internalize a map of how their language works by constructing reality through such motor behavior as touching, reaching, grasping, and crying.” It means that the child acquires the language by acting out the commands. The responses of the child are in turn positively reinforced by the commands. At this period the child absorbs the language without speaking it. After the following stage the child is able to reproduce the language spontaneously. If children want to acquire second language without stress, they should construct a reality on learning the new language. This can be done when an instructor speaks the foreign language to direct physical response: “stand up,” “sit down,” “close the door,” etc. The physical behavior seems to be controlled by the right side of the brain. This right-brain learning is called the Total Physical Response approach.

Asher in [http://en.wikipedia.org/Total\\_Physical\\_Response](http://en.wikipedia.org/Total_Physical_Response) suggests that in the Total Physical Response students are expected to respond to the given commands that require physical movement. The students act the commands physically by moving, grasping, jumping, and other physical behaviors in terms of learning and acquiring the new language. The Total Physical Response can be used to teach various things. It is well suited in teaching language and other vocabulary connected with actions. It can be used to teach imperatives and various tenses and aspects. This method is fun and easy to be comprehended by the children. The students will enjoy the teaching-learning process when they get up out of their chairs and move around.

According to Asher (1988) the Total Physical Response is proved to be successful in teaching English to all children and majority of adults in many

countries in which the native language are not English. Therefore, in this study the writer is interested in finding out whether the Total Physical Response method can give a better result in students' vocabulary achievement than the traditional method.

### **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Based on the background of the study, the problem to be answered in the study is: Is there any significant difference between the vocabulary achievement of the fourth grade elementary school students who are taught using the Total Physical Response method and those who are taught using the traditional method?

### **1.3 The objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study are to find out whether the students who are taught using the Total Physical Response method have significant difference on their vocabulary achievement from those who are taught using the traditional method.

### **1.4 The significance of the study**

The result of this study is expected to give contribution and positive inputs in the field of a language teaching, especially in the teaching of vocabulary. It is also expected that the result of this study can show the benefits of the Total Physical Response method so that the teachers can use and take the benefit of it.

### **1.5 The scope and limitation of the study**

In conducting the study, the writer limits only on the teaching vocabulary of action verbs by using the Total Physical response method and the Traditional method. This study was only conducted at SDK Santo Yosef Surabaya. The subjects of the study were the fourth grade students.

### **1.6 Theoretical framework**

The theory underlying this study is the theory of the Total Physical Response method. According to Harmer (1991: 37) “Children can acquire language while they are doing something.” One of the methods which involve the students in learning by doing activities is the Total Physical Response method.

The TPR method relies on the assumption that when learning a second or additional language, that language is internalized through a process of codebreaking similar to first language development and that the process allows for a long period of listening and developing comprehension prior to production ([http://en.wikipedia.org/Total\\_Physical\\_Response](http://en.wikipedia.org/Total_Physical_Response)). In TPR students learn a language by responding to the commands that require physical movement.

### **1.7 Hypotheses**

There are two hypotheses in this study. They are:

- The null hypothesis (Ho)

There is no significant difference between the vocabulary achievement of the students who are taught using the Total Physical Response method and those who are taught using the traditional method.

- The alternative hypothesis (Ha)

There is a significant difference between the vocabulary achievement of the students who are taught using the Total Physical Response method and those who are taught using the traditional method.

### **1.8 Definition of key terms**

The writer feels that it is important to define some key terms used in this study in order to avoid misinterpretation and misunderstanding. Those key terms are:

1. Total Physical Response :

A language learning method based on the coordination of speech and action (Asher, 1982).

2. Method :

A regular, orderly, definite procedure or way of teaching, investigating, etc (Webster 1986: 854).

3. Traditional method :

The conventional procedure in teaching English. In this study the traditional method is memorizing some translated words, for example, writing or speech translated to another language.

4. Achievement :

Performance by the student in a course: quality and quantity of a student work during a given period (Webster 1986: 724).

5. Effect :

The result of a change caused by somebody or something (Oxford, 1995: 134)

## **1.9 Organization of the study**

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction, discussing the background of the study, hypothesis, the scope and limitation of the study, and definition of key terms.

Chapter two deals with the review of related literature. In chapter three the writer will discuss the research methodology. Chapter four deals with data analysis and findings. Chapter five is the conclusion that consists of summary and suggestion.