
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Attitudes of Elementary Students toward Teaching and Learning English Vocabulary through Total Physical Response: A Case Study of Nguyen Khuyen Primary School

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| ABSTRACT

This study attempts to investigate elementary students' attitudes toward teaching and learning English vocabulary through Total Physical Response. It involved a class with 40 elementary students in the fourth grade. All of them were attending English classes at Nguyen Khuyen primary school in Bien Hoa City, where the case study was conducted. The qualitative data were obtained through two instruments: semi-structured interviews and classroom observation. Content analysis was employed for data analysis. The results revealed that the elementary students had positive attitudes toward the use of TPR in vocabulary teaching and learning. This study is expected to shed light on the implementation of teaching vocabulary methods in the Nguyen Khuyen primary school context and other similar contexts.

| KEYWORDS

The Total Physical Response, TPR, elementary students, attitudes

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

It is undeniable that English, the current most frequently spoken language in the world, is crucial in the era of globalization. Accordingly, the majority of parents concur the sooner young learners learn a second language, the better they will be in language learning (McKay, 2006; Pinter, 2006). In terms of language learning, the majority of scholars agree with Cameron (2001) that vocabulary development is the earliest and most fundamental phase in language acquisition and plays a significant influence on the language. Thus, when young learners began studying English for the first time, vocabulary was always at the top of their list of priorities. Regarding young learners, elementary students in particular, due to their limited concentration and attention spans, it is challenging to verbally explain terms to children compared to adults, so diversity of activities, speed, and organization are required (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990, pp. 2-4). Total Physical Response (TPR), a method James Asher proposed for teaching languages, is regarded as a suitable and efficient way to teach and reinforce English vocabulary to elementary students. On the use of TPR in teaching English to young learners in a range of academic contexts, a significant amount of research has been discovered. The majority of them focus on examining TPR's impact on vocabulary development in particular and the English language in general. However, there are so few studies conducted in the Vietnamese context. Additionally, these studies were mainly carried out to demonstrate the positive influence of TPR on elementary students' vocabulary retention. As a result, there is still a gap in research on more in-depth qualitative data to analyze elementary students' attitudes towards the use of the TPR method in teaching and learning English vocabulary.

1.1. Research Questions

This study, therefore, used qualitative methods design that can enhance the depth and breadth of this body of research to answer the following research question:

« What is primary elementary students' attitude toward the use of the TPR method in teaching and learning English vocabulary? »

1.2. Aims of the study

The present study aims at looking into to what extent the elementary students in Nguyen Khuyen primary school respond to teaching and learning English vocabulary through Total Physical Response. This study is a response to that need with the aim of « exploring elementary students' attitudes toward the use of the TPR method in teaching and learning English vocabulary. »

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definitions and characteristics of elementary students

Regarding elementary students in the context of the acquisition of a second language, most of the experts concurred that their definition is chiefly based on age as well as the time they experienced in primary schools of formal education, from 6 to 11 years old in particular. According to Scott and Ytreberg (1990), elementary students aged 8-10 have some characteristics, including forming their basic concepts, distinguishing between fact and fiction, being interested in asking questions at all times, relying on the spoken word as well as the physical world to convey and understanding the meaning, and being able to cooperate with others and learn from others. Slattery and Willis (2001) provided an overall of some major characteristics of elementary students from 7 to 12, including they are learning to read and write in their language and are developing as thinkers. What is more, they can plan, organize how best to carry out an activity, work with others and learn from others, understand the distinction between real and imaginary and be reliable and take responsibility for class activities and routines.

These overall descriptions would initially contribute to scaffolding the overall picture of the young learner's features. Nonetheless, these characteristics are not presenting enough detailed data as they merely cover the outer shell of the young learner. It indeed highlights a list of common characteristics relative to the way young learners acquire a second language.

2.2 Definition and characteristics of Total Physical Response (TPR)

Total Physical Response (TPR) has been developed by Dr. James J Asher, a professor of psychology at the University in San Jose, California, to support learners in acquiring a second language or foreign language naturally and effectively. It is judged as one of the methods which the principles of the Comprehension Approach, a general language approach to foreign language instruction emphasizing listening comprehension, put into practice (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Asher argued that second language teaching and learning should imitate the first language development by focusing on listening competence in the initial period and using physical movement to react to verbal input to reduce learners' inhibition and lower their affective filter. Thus, Asher (1977, p. 3) defined it as a method of teaching a language dealing with "coordination of speech and action" or, in detail, a language teaching method using physical movement to respond to the speech. Concerning the distinctive characteristics of TPR, Richards and Rodgers (1999) pointed out that TPR has some main ones: Firstly, a class full of movement and imperatives drills is a distinctive feature of the TPR method. Secondly, TPR is based upon the model of how children acquire their mother tongue. Thirdly, by employing various physical activities, TPR reduces young learners' inhibitions and lower learner effective filter (Richards & Rodgers, 1999). Lastly, TPR focuses on meaning rather than the form of items. Grammar is thus taught inductively (Richards & Rodgers, 1999).

2.3 Reasons for using TPR to teach English vocabulary to elementary students

Firstly, according to the theory of cognitive development by Piaget (1966), children are situated in a concrete operational stage. It can be explained that they effortlessly understand concrete aspects rather than abstract ones (Williams & Burden, 1999, p.31).

Secondly, with respect to the ability of language learning, Scott and Ytreberg (1990) noted, "Young learners' understanding comes from hands and eyes and ears, and the physical world is dominant at all times" (p.2). Thanks to the concept of TPR, it is beneficial that it responds positively to their tendency to learn best through movement. It also respects children's language acquisition: listening comprehension before speaking. Next, Scott and Ytreberg (1990) describe elementary students as "keen and enthusiastic learners," which means that they are full of energy all the time. Also, they noted that elementary students' concentration span is limited. They just focus on the lesson only for five to ten minutes every time the teacher calls to attention (p. 2). Marshall and Thomas (2007) gave an opinion that elementary students are keen on learning in a meaningful, playful context with abundant activities. By means of providing ample physical activities, TPR class provides a wealth of humor and enjoyment, which increases the concentration span of the elementary students (Marshall & Thomas, 2007). Last but not least, the fact that Guerrero (2015) put motivation as an extremely crucial factor in young learners' successful language acquisition is concordant with the orientation of TPR: creating a stress-free learning environment.

2.4 The effectiveness of TPR in teaching and learning English vocabulary to elementary students

A considerable number of studies on the use of TPR in teaching English to elementary students in a variety of academic contexts could be found. Most of them aim at investigating the effectiveness of TPR on the English language generally and vocabulary acquisition particularly. The following studies are arranged in chronological order to get a clear view of the impact of the TPR on various educational contexts. Especially, the studies conducted in foreign contexts are presented first and followed by those carried out in Vietnam.

Regarding studies conducted in the international context, in relation to the effect of TPR on Teaching Vocabulary to Elementary students, the first research was conducted by Pujiningsih (2013). The research was administered in MI NU Manafiu Ulum Kudus for about seven months. The method of the research is classroom action research. The subject of research was the elementary students of the sixth grade. In collecting the data, the researcher used observation notes, diaries, video recordings, interviews, and tests. The research findings showed that TPR could improve elementary students' English vocabulary, including meaning, spelling, pronunciation, and using words. The most significant improvement was the aspect of meaning and spelling. TPR could increase elementary students' motivation and confidence in learning vocabulary. Concerning the effect of TPR on English vocabulary mastery of elementary school children, Sariyati (2013) carried out a study that seeks the answer to the question of whether the application of TPR can enhance primary school elementary students' English vocabulary learning more efficiently than traditional teaching methods. This research employed a mixed-method combining quantitative and qualitative methods. A quasi-experimental design involving two groups (control and experiment) was conducted in the first grade in the Islamic elementary school in Bandung. The result of the study showed that the application of TPR does have a greatly positive effect on the participants' English vocabulary knowledge; specifically, the elementary students of the treatment group achieved marks considerably in the post-test than the control group. Furthermore, thanks to the distribution of his class observation, he realized that his elementary students expressed a positive and enthusiastic attitude toward classroom activity participation.

Regarding TPR studies conducted in the Vietnamese context, there have been few studies conducted to examine the effectiveness of TPR in teaching English to Elementary students. Hoang Thi Kim Dung (2013) researched to find out the answers to the three main issues: the attitudes of teachers and elementary students towards the teaching and learning vocabulary, the real situation of using TPR activities in teaching vocabulary to children, and the effect of using TPR activities in teaching this language element. Data was collected through one questionnaire in English for the teachers and one Vietnamese questionnaire for the elementary students, and some follow-up interviews. The results revealed that first, although there are many difficulties in teaching vocabulary to children, most of the teachers are interested in working with them. Secondly, although TPR activities are not used with high frequency, they are proved to be very useful and effective in vocabulary learning and teaching to children through experimental teaching. Based on this study, the writer concludes that teaching English vocabulary through TPR is very beneficial for elementary students, especially children, to facilitate their learning of English vocabulary. It is suggested that TPR in teaching English vocabulary is recommended for the English teacher. One more article was written by Ngo Thi Cam Anh and Pham Vu Phi Ho (2018) about the effect of using the TPR approach in teaching vocabulary to young learners and exploring the attitudes of young learners towards learning vocabulary using the TPR approach. Nevertheless, he only provided the theoretical background of variations involving the topic, and no methodological method was conducted to measure the effectiveness.

Obviously, there are not many studies related to the TPR method conducted in the Vietnamese context. Additionally, these studies were mainly carried out to demonstrate the positive influence of TPR on Elementary students' vocabulary retention. Research analyzing young learners' attitudes towards the use of the TPR method in teaching and learning English vocabulary are limited. As a result, the current study aims to close this research gap and, hopefully, contribute to future research on this subject. A conceptual framework has been established based on the examined literature to give a theoretical foundation for the current study. It is discussed in the following section.

3. Methodology

3.1 The participants

The research was conducted at the Nguyen Khuyen Primary school, which has a total number of students was 510. However, the researcher only chose students in the fourth grade because they are subjects the researcher the most easily and conveniently approached under the permission of the Nguyen Khuyen primary school board. That is why convenience sampling was employed in this study because it concerned "a group of individuals that is ready and available" (Fink, 1995, p. 67). The participants in the present study consisted of 40 elementary students in the fourth grade (28 males and 12 females). All of them are nine-year-old elementary students and are members of the 4A class. They have been learning English for two years with the same level of cognitive capacity, and all have equipped knowledge from the previous grades. Most of them have grasped many basic words, phrases, or simple grammar, which support the knowledge of the current course.

3.2 Research design

The present study was conducted with an experimental research design by collecting qualitative data through video videotaping and semi-structured interview. Gass and Mackay (2005) characterized its orientation toward the process rather than the product, its focus on quality rather than on quantity, and its inductive approach to data analysis. Particularly, it is judged as a valuable and suitable approach in the area of foreign language teaching, especially in the field of teaching ESL to elementary students (Gass & Mackay, 2005).

3.3 Research instruments

3.3.1 Semi-structured interview questions design

The first instrument for this study was the interview, as Ary, Jocab, and Razavieh (2002) appreciated it being one of the most popular techniques to collect qualitative data. It is regarded as the best tool to employ in linguistic studies to obtain data that cannot be observed (Patton, 2002). The type which the researcher chose is a semi-structured interview which « is generally organized around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee. Semi-structured in-depth interviews "are the most widely used interviewing format for qualitative research and can occur either with an individual or in groups. » (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). One of the benefits of a semi-structured interview is providing opportunities for the interviewees to talk about what is important to them while also helping the researcher to cover an agenda, achieving both breadth and depth in the data (Hobson & Townsend, 2010). Accordingly, the data collected is rich and rewarding because the interviewees express various ideas and feelings (Patton, 1990).

In this study, the researcher prepared nine questions to ask 20 interviewees. Categories and themes relating to the elementary students' attitudes towards the TPR were explored. The questions from the interview focused on four variables. The description of interview questions was summarized in the table as follows:

Table 3.3.1 Description of interview questions

Interview question item	Content
1	
2	Learning and teaching activities
3	
4	The way teachers implemented TPR in teaching English vocabulary
5	The effect of TPR on vocabulary retention
6	
7	
8	Benefits and Disadvantages of TPR
9	

In terms of reliability, the interview questions were worded and open-ended, which means there are no ambiguous or leading questions.

3.3.2 Observation through videotaping

According to Patton (1990), one of the benefits of observation is "permitting a better understanding of the contexts in which such phenomena occur." Also, he claims that observation provides sensitive information from being in a setting that informants may be reluctant to discuss in interviews. Moreover, getting close to social phenomena allows the researcher to have the opportunity to add his own experience in the setting to the analysis of what is happening (Patton, 1990). Hence, to find out the attitudes of elementary students toward the TPR application in vocabulary class, the researcher decided to use observation through videotaping. Smith (1981) defined videotaping as "mechanical recording devices usually give greater flexibility than observations done by hand." Videotaping was chosen for the following reasons. First of all, Edwards and Westgate (1987) consider videotaping may eliminate some of the challenges and difficulties that occur in the experimental setting with direct observation. Additionally, it allows researchers to verify their observations and to give them greatly deep insight into the consistency between self-assessment and observable behavior since they take time to capture the data on video record at leisure. In this study, videotaping was conducted to support the data collected from the interview, which firmly consolidated the reliability and reliability of the findings of the study. The variables which the researcher chose to observe are based on the elementary students' attitudes in the TPR class, including learning atmosphere, participation, motivation, understanding and remembering the words, and language skills.

3.4 Treatment

The experimental group was given the intervention with TPR for one month period from the 10th of June, 2022, to the 3rd of July, 2022. Under those circumstances, the head teachers of Nguyen Khuyen primary school and the researcher herself regarded Smart Choice 1, the current textbook of the fourth grade, as the suitable material for this training course. The training course consisted of eight units related to the topics: "Jobs," "Places," "Food," "Appearance and Characteristics," "Clothes," "Sports activities," "Daily activities," and "Vacation." Each lesson was conducted in a forty-five-minute class. The treatment was conducted two-day a week and lasted eight weeks. Every experimental class in the training course was recorded with a camera. The process of teaching in the

treatment was divided into three parts. They are pre-activities, whilst-activities, and post-activities. The activities of these lessons included various techniques and TPR activities like the TPR-P and TPR-B, and TPR-O.

3.5 Data collection procedures

The whole process of teaching and learning during the experiment was recorded with the researcher's smartphone. Each time the researcher started to record, she made sure that the camera caught all the view of the class with the appearance of the teacher and participants. On the last day of the course, the researcher set up an informal semi-structured interview with 20 students individually to explore the learners' attitudes towards TPR. To be clearer, the researcher coded them from the first (S1) to the twentieth (S20). Then, the researcher transcribed all the audio-recorded data in the semi-interview.

3.6 Data analysis procedures

All the data recorded from teaching and learning during the experiment and from the interview was analyzed through the use of "content analysis," which is broadly defined as the "systematic coding of qualitative or quantitative data based on specific themes or categories" (Cohen & Morison, 2007). Data of this study was arranged in the appropriate aspects related to the variables of the study. To analyze the obtained data, the following steps were conducted. Firstly, the researcher presented data in a paper, read the transcripts many times to make sure that she was acquainted with the data, and then drew up a list of different types of information. Next, she coded the collected data based on the variables of the attitudes of the study. Then, codes with consistent features were grouped to form larger categories. Then the researcher discovered the relationships of categories to identify the themes. In the last step, the researcher interpreted the categories and themes to see the relationships and connections. Data obtained from the interview was analyzed by employing "content analysis." Categories and themes relating to the elementary students' attitudes towards the TPR were explored. Their key expressions related to the variables investigated were taken as notes on a sheet. Five variables were identified: learning and teaching activities, the way the teacher implemented TPR in teaching English vocabulary; the effect of TPR on vocabulary retention; benefits and disadvantages.

Concerning qualitative data from observation through videotaping, to save time, the researcher created an observation sheet based on all the variables of the attitudes of elementary students in the progress of learning English vocabulary in 16 forty-five-minute periods. The observation sheet was taken note of every aspect that the researcher observed through videotape in 16 forty-five periods and compared it with the responses from the interview to conclude at last.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Finding results

4.1.1 Data from the responses of the interview

To explore students' attitudes towards the use of the TPR method in teaching and learning English vocabulary at TELC, the researcher interviewed 20 interviewees. Data obtained from the interview was analyzed by employing "content analysis." Categories and themes relating to the student's attitudes toward the TPR were explored. 20 students who took part in the interview were coded as S1 to S20. Their key expressions related to the variables investigated were taken as notes on a sheet. Five variables were identified: learning and teaching activities, the way the teacher implemented TPR in teaching English vocabulary; the effect of TPR on vocabulary retention; benefits and disadvantages.

4.1.1.1 The elementary students' attitudes toward teaching and learning activities

In term of the student's attitudes towards TPR teaching and learning activities, including themes "the content, learning atmosphere and participation, the researcher gathered the responses as follow:

Regarding the content of activities and the learning atmosphere, all of them found teaching and learning activities focused on the lesson content. Also, it was effective in introducing and reviewing vocabulary. Most of them agreed that TPR activities were joyful and interesting, which allowed them to move all the time physically. S1 reported that: "It's easy to understand and follow instruction and principles of learning activities." "They were very exciting and full of positive energy. I had no pressure in studying the new words (S3)." Moreover, the enjoyable class atmosphere made me feel emotionally easy with learning tasks (S4)."

On the other hand, one student (S7) showed feelings that he felt boring because of the repetition of learning activities. Additionally, the activities made the learning atmosphere chaotic and cluttered (S7 and S17). They claimed that: "The activities were not various and repeated many times, which made me too familiar with them. Furthermore, some students seem too excited." and "The atmosphere was so noisy that we could not hear the teacher's voice and instructions."

The class participants also agreed that they were fond of participating in every TPR activity. Particularly, the ones which they liked most were "The Amazing Race" and "Simon says." S1 expressed: "I guessed everyone liked participating in TPR classes. I found that

most of my classmates were excited when joining every activity of TPR". Similarly, S3 claimed: "I enjoyed the TPR activities very much. All members in my group fought to be volunteers and waited for the commands from the teacher."

Nevertheless, three learners (S5, S7, and S10) affirmed that not everyone participated in all of the TPR activities because of their shyness. For example, S7 stated that: "Most of them are exciting. But some students are shy. They don't like to go to the platform and respond to the commands."

4.1.1.2 The elementary students' attitudes toward the way teachers implemented TPR in teaching English vocabulary

Regarding students' attitudes toward the way teachers implemented TPR in teaching English vocabulary in relation to "teaching performance, organization, and management, behavior as well as the way giving feedback," data is presented as follows:

Most of the participants (16/20) asserted that the teacher's instruction and demonstration were easy to understand. Some of the learners expressed: "She presented and illustrated attractively and humorously (S1)". "I felt easier to understand the English lesson explained by the teacher because she gave clues in actions, objects, and pictures. I could guess the words without difficulty (S10)." Strikingly, nearly all of the participants enjoyed the teacher's behavior and attitudes; particularly, the way the teacher gave feedback and assessment. Some learners expressed: "The teacher fostered every learner and revised our mistakes politely and positively (S4)"....and; she never assessed our performance too strictly; on the contrary, errors made by us are usually overlooked, but she just corrected our errors after we become more advanced." (S7).

However, some thoughts were raising some issues about the teacher's teaching vocabulary through TPR. First of all, two interviewees (S3 and S16) reflected that the teacher seemed to overuse the imperative drills, which made the students easily get bored after a few days. Additionally, the two remaining participants (S2 and S9) commented that "Sometimes she was confused in teaching adjectives such as "smart," "confident. Besides, a few considered that the teacher needed to improve her organization and management of the class activities. S4 shared that "I thought that the teacher needs to manage in-class activities. Some learners got too excited and noisy; some ran around the class when attending learning activities. Although the teacher required them not to do that, they still repeated it later". One interviewee (S10) suggested that the teacher should organize the class in groups more frequently than individually because they found that it was more effective and funnier when working with their friends.

4.1.1.3 The elementary students' attitudes toward the effect of TPR on vocabulary retention

It was noteworthy that all interviewees appreciated the remarkable effect of TPR on their vocabulary retention. More specifically, they agreed that the TPR method facilitated memorizing the meanings of words better than some methods, and it could be beneficial in improving their vocabulary learning. For example, S1 recognized that "I grasped the meaning of the new words for the first time the teacher demonstrated." Specifically, when asked, "Do you think the TPR affects your vocabulary retention?" Astonishingly, it has been found that all of the participants had a high opinion of the value of TPR in understanding the meaning of the words as well as remembering them for a long time. Two responses from S3 and S14 as evidence: "I strongly agreed that using the TPR method has great significance to my vocabulary retention. When encountering the words, I recall their meanings easily" (S3) and "I didn't think I could retain the meanings of many such words after a long time. My vocabulary knowledge has been increased considerably" (S4).

The responses explaining the reasons showed that the students acknowledged the effectiveness of TPR on vocabulary retention because of two main advantages. Firstly, TPR was effective in the way that it strongly supported the learners easily in reviewing the learned words. S3 said that: "We practiced with the commands owing to the words quite a few times. Whenever needing to recall the words, I immediately remembered the physically attached to them. Then the meanings of these words come into my mind." The second one is the learning atmosphere that TPR activities have created. S9 confirmed: "Learning atmosphere was also one of the remarkable advantages"; Or "...that TPR was effective because it created an enjoyable learning atmosphere, and stimulated learners" (S8). However, although they agreed that vocabulary knowledge had been increased, not every aspect of the word was managed well. Such as, S13 accepted that "The written form was a challenge for me because the teacher occasionally gave us chances to write the words."

To get more in-depth information if TPR facilitated elementary students to develop other language skills, the researcher raised the question: "Did you have any improvement in language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) while and after learning English vocabulary through TPR? If yes, which skill is most developed when learning English vocabulary with TPR?" In addition, all of the participants stated that their listening and speaking skills also have improved because, in the training course, they were required to listen and give commands by speech in the learning activities.

4.1.1.4 The elementary students' attitudes toward benefits and disadvantage

The interview results indicated that the participants recognized that TPR has many benefits after their training course. Most of them (15/20) claimed that it created a fun, easy, and memorable learning atmosphere and activities. S9 reported: "We are interested in physical movements, imitation, songs, etc. And TPR has all techniques, which always make me excited". To contribute to the benefits of TPR, 20 reported, "The activities of TPR are engaging and immersive, which facilitates learners with the meaning in a real context." S3 asserted: "This method created a positive and lively atmosphere in the class. We were always energetic whenever we had English class with TPR." One learner (S1) was in favor of the procedure of TPR which was fairly simple, suitable, and easy to follow. Moreover, TPR facilitates them to understand the target language without translation to the mother tongue. The remaining students highly agreed that the effectiveness of TPR on their vocabulary retention is the most significant benefit." S8 approved that: "My vocabulary is extremely improved with this method."

However, with the last question, "Did you meet any difficulties in learning English vocabulary through TPR? What limitations of TPR do you think need to change or improve?" they also shared some disadvantages of TPR that they experienced. As mentioned above in previous aspects, S2 and S3 complained to the researcher about "overusing TPR," which causes learners to be bored. One participant (as4) found that TPR is not a creative method because the learners follow the commands all the time, and the other admitted that TPR is not suitable for shy students. "TPR procedure utilized too many imperative drills, which made me feel overloaded sometimes" (S9). Moreover, S14 reflected: "It is not a very creative method. I am not allowed to express my views and thoughts." ".....The imperative drills take much time (S7)"; ".....It can be a challenge for shy learners. It makes me nervous whenever the teacher calls me (S6). As a result, few learners preferred to add other new techniques in English class.

4.1.2 Data from observation through videotaping

On the first day of the training course, when the teacher introduced TPR and took some examples as a demonstration, although they joined some physical games at Nguyen Khuyen primary school, the elementary students seemed to be strange to this method. Nonetheless, they became familiar with TPR as well as caught and followed the principles easily and quickly. Also, more elementary students were interested and motivated in their learning with TPR. They fought to volunteer for learning patterns). Several excerpts illustrated what happened in an exact lesson described as follows:

Firstly, in the "Reviewing" stage, for the warm-up, the teacher required students to move with her simple commands like: "Touch your nose" " or "Clean the board." Then, she continued giving commands related to the words, such as "play a computer game, "do homework," and "watch TV." It can be viewed that most of the students participated fairly enthusiastically. The atmosphere was getting noisier than at the beginning.

Secondly, in the "New commands" stage, most of the students tried to outdo others by imitating the sports activities. It can be observed that they paid attention to every action of the teacher and responded to the teacher's commands physically, enthusiastically, and positively. It was remarkable that the students successfully guessed nearly every meaning of the new word. Next, in the "Role reversal" stage, through videotaping, the teacher was surprised at their vocabulary acquisition. They could grasp the meaning of the words quickly, easily respond physically to the commands, and give the commands to their friends, which made the researcher believe that it was a factor that helped them develop their listening and speaking. When the teacher turned on the "Sports song" and required her students to listen to catch the activities in the song and demonstrate them, the researcher concurred with responses from the interview that the learning atmosphere was extremely exciting. The students participated fairly enthusiastically in activities. Nearly every member of the class attended learning activities enthusiastically without embarrassment. In addition, the teacher had positive, friendly, and helpful attitudes toward Elementary students. Correspondingly, the students always showed joyful, exciting emotions with their teacher. It is worth noting that some shy learners who attend class activities in the initial days become more excited and attentive later after the teacher's encouragement." However, sometimes the class was extremely in confusion. Some students got overexcited, which made the learning atmosphere noisy, although the teacher warned and tried to manage them. The learning atmosphere was joyful but chaotic, seldom

Finally, with the "Reading and Writing" stage, the students remembered the words fairly well after the lesson." (Observation excerpt Unit 5, 19/06/2022). Additionally, from some videos on some final days of the training course, some students seemed to neglect their studies although they were extremely excited with activities in the initial days. It can be observed from the video that some students were not willing to participate in learning activities, although they were invited by the teacher. Some people avoided the activities or reluctantly followed the teacher's instructions. They just watched their friends take part in the activities, which showed that maybe the repetition of the imperative drill made them boring. (Observation excerpt Unit 8, 01/07/2022). It is evident that the process of a TPR class was performed reasonably and fairly adequately in accordance with TPR principles and procedure. From that, the observation result could be trustworthy.

4.2 Discussion

Upon analyzing the results from the responses of the interview, it became evident that the participants had positive attitudes toward the use of TPR. They reported in the affective reaction interview that they felt "interested," "enthusiastic," and "joyful" at higher frequencies than emotions such as "bored" and "shy." Furthermore, the elementary students were all in accordance with many of the positive statements in the interview regarding nearly every aspect of TPR on learning vocabulary, including learning and teaching activities; The way teachers implemented TPR in teaching English vocabulary; The effect of TPR on vocabulary retention; Benefits and disadvantages.

The findings of the videotaping were also consistent with those of the interview. The observation sheet collected from the videotape provided additional support for the findings that this population of elementary students demonstrated enthusiasm, excitement, and engagement with their learning via such activities. It can be concluded that the findings of the interview and observation through videotaping were in alignment with each other.

In general, the elementary students were eager to join class activities which was a considerable sign of the effectiveness of TPR. One possible explanation for this may be because of the increased level of elementary students' motivation in the experimental group in vocabulary learning. Supporting these views were Lightbown and Spada (1999), the two researchers claimed that high motivation could gain language learners' enthusiasm and get a positive mood to learn the second language. TPR brought young learners an interesting experience in their vocabulary learning. Being provided a learning atmosphere full of physical movement, which is different from the traditional methods like Grammar Translation, the Elementary students seemed to be motivated and pay more interest in learning vocabulary. The TPR activities capture learners' interest and intrinsic motivation and foster enjoyment in learning. They were designed to be funny, meaningful, and learner-centered, which gave the elementary students an active role in participation; hence, their motivation increased. Besides, TPR created more interactions in the class. The elementary students themselves had chances to learn as well as play together through the game, and action songs, which made them happy. They also interacted with the teacher to make the relationship between them closer.

These findings support the claims made by Hoang Thi Kim Dung (2013), who conducted a study to find out the answers to the attitudes of teachers and elementary students towards teaching and learning vocabulary through TPR. It has been found that a stress-free environment allows children to be more receptive and motivated to the target language learning. In the same fashion, the findings of their studies revealed similar results to those of the current study that the elementary students agreed that the accessibility, liveliness, and attractiveness of TPR make them highly motivated (Sariyati, 2013; Ummah, 2017)

However, although the elementary students overwhelmingly responded positively to TPR, these results reveal that the noisy, cluttered learning atmosphere sometimes, the repetitive learning activities and the overused imperative drills made elementary students boring and dissatisfied. Furthermore, some opinions were shown that due to its principal using the imperative, it is of limited utility to the learner. More considerably, the findings in terms of the disadvantages of TPR collected from responses of interviews and observation sheets in this study mirror those found in the previous research of Hoang Thi Kim Dung (2013) and Ummah (2017).

It can be explained that the disadvantage of TPR is that the imperative responses do not support learners' real-life environment. It leaves out the form of narrative, description, and conversation (Tomscha, 1986). Besides, although most elementary students agreed that their teachers' teaching methods, behavior as well as way of giving feedback did have a positive effect on their learning; some of her shortcomings were reflected, such as: overusing the imperative drills, confusingly teaching some items, organizing and managing as well as assessing the elementary students' performance. All issues which were raised related to the lack of experience of the teacher in organization and management. Moreover, although the teacher herself perceived that she clearly understood the principles of TPR, it does not mean that she used TPR in the right way. One more explanation is that the TPR approach stimulus the elementary students to learn English vocabulary by actions, so suitable words taught in class should be main verbs or verb phrases, whereas the language input is restricted to the imperative since it is fairly difficult to give instructions without using imperatives. That is the reason why it was hard for her to explain everything with TPR or totally 100% apply TPR in her classes.

5. Conclusion

This empirical study was conducted to explore their attitudes towards the use of TPR in teaching English vocabulary. The quantitative data were collected from the semi-interview and observation through videotaping. The overall results from data collection have answered the research questions in this study.

The results of this study have indicated that the participants who were treated with TPR also had positive attitudes toward the use of TPR in learning English vocabulary. In conclusion, the data collected from the interview and observation revealed that most

elementary students were satisfied with the use of TPR in teaching and learning English vocabulary. The method could create an English environment for the learners, and it brought them some benefits in learning English vocabulary.

5.1. Pedagogical implications and suggestions

Based on the findings of the present study, some pedagogical implications are suggested:

The findings of the study have shed light on the following implications and recommendations for college English teachers and elementary students at Nguyen Khuyen primary school. The elementary students' positive attitudes toward TPR imply that the application of TPR in teaching English vocabulary could lead to achievement in vocabulary learning.

For EFL teachers: The findings have shed new light on the effectiveness of TPR in promoting elementary students' vocabulary. Notably, the result of the study provided the teacher with insightful perspectives on how TPR has a positive effect on the process of learning vocabulary. These impacts will usher in positive attitudes towards the use of TPR, which may offer teachers encouragement to utilize TPR in their practice. Besides, the teacher should spend time investigating the principles, benefits, and disadvantages of TPR in teaching vocabulary so that they can apply this method appropriately and effectively in their teaching process. In general, it is necessary for the teacher to associate TPR with many techniques in the English vocabulary teaching progress to make sure that the learners grasp the meaning effectively and are highly motivated. To implement the TPR successfully, EFL teachers should prepare their lessons carefully before going to class. TPR should not be used for teaching vocabulary in isolation. Teachers should use this method to enhance language skills such as listening, speaking, and writing. Through the practice of skills, elementary students may learn and memorize vocabulary better.

For young English learners: The findings of the study imply that TPR is suitable for elementary students in English vocabulary learning. Elementary students should be encouraged to take part in activities during the lesson. They should concentrate on activities or assignments provided by the teachers so that they can acquire the language more easily under the guidance of the teachers. TPR requires learners to be active, so elementary students should be dynamic and have positive attitudes toward their learning.

5.2. Limitation of the study

Although the study has reached its aims, there are still some unavoidable limitations.

First of all, the time for conducting the training experiment in this study was limited. This research was conducted within only a month, which means a total of four weeks, with 16 forty-five periods. Therefore, if the study were conducted for a longer time, it would be desirable to yield more generalizable findings. The second limitation lies within the teachers' practice, perception, and own approach to teaching the English Language. That is to say, not all the activities relating to TPR were taught during the treatment. The following limitation is due to the shortage of time and the small scale of the thesis; not all elementary students of this age range get involved in this study. The age range only focuses on those aged nine years old. And finally, the participants were only 40 elementary students in only one site of the study, so the findings may not be generalizable to other sites.

5.3. Recommendations for further study

Further studies should overcome the mentioned limitations in this study. First, they may be conducted for a longer time with the larger participants at different levels. Secondly, the research scope of this study is at an English language center in Vietnam, while further research can be conducted in other contexts like Vietnamese primary schools. In addition, the age range can also be wider from five to twelve. Moreover, this study looks at the perception of elementary students toward TPR on vocabulary teaching and learning. Future studies can be on the effect of other English skills or English elements such as listening, speaking, or grammar.

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