

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Mastering vocabulary helps students improve the four English skills including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Sarani & Shirzaei (2016), vocabulary is the key element of language proficiency that enables the learner to employ the four language abilities. This is because vocabulary is an important part of language and it is crucial for communications (Khakim & Anwar, 2020). The more vocabulary is mastered, the easier it is for learners to communicate and express their thoughts in writing or orally. As stated by Afidah & Machfudi (2022), students are able to communicate with other students in English when they have a large vocabulary. Therefore, teaching vocabulary becomes a crucial issue in the English language teaching.

In fact, while the writer was doing a School-Based Internship at one of the Indonesian Junior High School in Tasikmalaya and a direct observation classroom, she discovered that students' vocabulary mastery in the aspect of meaning and pronunciation is still lacking. They have difficulty with pronouncing words when the teacher asks them about the English vocabulary. It is also proven by their English teacher during the discussion session when doing pre-observation and their vocabulary score. Also, the researcher found that the English teacher uses methods that are not appropriate to students' vocabulary needs. This is due to the teacher's use of a traditional teaching method, in which she lectures students on the material and in the earlier learning activities, the teacher does not introduce the new vocabulary that will be used. As a result, students do not understand the new vocabulary used and lose interest in learning. Based on the linguistics point of view, in order to understand dialogue, reading and grammar in both written or spoken words, students should comprehend the meaning of the words (Soro, 2019). To solve the problem, the researcher needs a specific method that is appropriate to

students' vocabulary needs. By using the appropriate method, teachers can help students acquire new abilities and achieve learning objectives (Khakim & Anwar, 2020).

Total Physical Response (TPR) is one of the methods that can be used to teach vocabulary in EFL classes. As claimed by Celik et al. (2021), TPR is a teaching method that helps students learn new words and contributes to increasing students' interest and motivation toward learning. It was developed by Asher as a physiology emeritus of physiology at San Jose State University in 1965. According to Asher (2003), TPR is a language-learning process that focuses on words and physical activities. The TPR method is not simply restricted to entire body commands such as turning around, walking, and pointing to your ears, eyes, or other body parts. According to Asher (1996, as cited in Cang et al., 2021), there are four major types of TPR activities, that are TPR with Body (TPR-B), TPR with Objects (TPR-O), TPR-P with Pictures (TPR-P), and TPR with Storytelling (TPR-S).

In this study, the researcher intended to investigate TPR with Storytelling (TPRS) methods in enhancing junior high school students' vocabulary mastery. This refers to the previous research conducted by Rusiana & Nuraeningsih (2016), entitled "Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery through TPR Storytelling". Their study uses Classroom Action Research to determine the effect of the TPRS method on elementary students' vocabulary mastery and the findings show that the TPRS method can enhance students' vocabulary mastery. The difference between this study and previous study is the aspect of vocabulary, which is more focused on meaning and pronunciation. Also, the school level is to choose junior high school students as participants. Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in doing research entitled "Enhancing Students' Vocabulary Mastery by Using the Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) Method in an Indonesian Junior High School".

1.2. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, the formulation of the problem is, “How does the TPRS method enhance Indonesian junior high school students' vocabulary mastery?”

1.3. Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstanding the aspects in this study, the writer provides several definitions related to this study, including:

- 1) Vocabulary Mastery : The skills that require students to know the meaning of an English vocabulary that is used in the narrative text. It is not simply just to remember a set of words with their meaning but include their pronunciation.
- 2) Total Physical Response : It is a teaching method that requires Storytelling (TPRS) students to learn a language through the visualization of physical gestures and face expressions when teachers start storytelling.
- 3) Indonesian Junior High : The level of formal school in Indonesia School Students' after graduating from elementary school. It is administered during a three-year period from the seventh to the ninth grades, with an average student age range of 12 to 15 years.

1.4. Aim of the Research

Based on the formulation problem, the aim of this study is to identify how the TPRS method enhances Indonesian junior high school students' vocabulary mastery.

1.5. Significance of the Study

1.5.1. Theoretical Uses

This study will complement the previous study by focusing on the use of the TPRS method that combines storytelling and physical activities to enhance junior high school students' vocabulary mastery.

1.5.2. Practical Uses

This study can be used as a reference for improving the teaching-learning process and as information for teachers who want to apply the TPRS method in their classrooms.

1.5.3. Empirical Uses

This study is expected to contribute empirical insight into the use of the TPRS method in enhancing students' vocabulary mastery.