

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

English has become an international language and more, it, undoubtedly, becomes one of main requirements for those who want to be one step forward in this globalization era. People learn English more and more, and in some countries, English is taught even before a child enter the playgroup. Since the parents believe that foreign languages must be introduced to the children when they are in a very young age, Teaching English to Young Learners has become increasingly famous.

English gets important nowadays. In Indonesia, some schools apply English as a main subject, and implement it in some other subject, for

example in Math and Science. In English subject itself, teacher do not only teach the language skills, listening-speaking-reading-writing, but also the English components such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. However, there are still many teachers pay less attention on the process of vocabulary teaching. They are still using traditional techniques which are not effective anymore to be implemented to the students. The techniques might be neither not up-to-date nor appropriate to the modern students. As the results, the students get difficulties in improving their language skills and need different techniques to learn vocabulary.

Vocabulary is one of the most important aspects of language developments. People will not be able to listen, speak, read and write without having sufficient vocabulary. Sometimes, the teacher only

focus on the grammar and pronunciation, but they do not give much attention to the students' vocabulary. Perhaps it is because teaching vocabulary has been included in teaching reading, and the teachers tend to focus on teaching reading skills more than vocabulary to their students. Another possible reason is that, since the teachers do not have much time to applying various techniques in teaching vocabulary, they prefer to use a traditional way of teaching vocabulary, such as translating the word by word into the native language and memorizing them (Larsen, 2000). Unfortunately, not all students have a good skill of memorization. Apparently, the students receive limited number of vocabulary items.

The traditional technique in teaching vocabulary like translation may affect students' interest in learning English. This technique may be

helpful in text comprehension because the students know the meaning of the words. In other hand, the vocabulary that the students have learned will stay in their short term memory, since they only read and translate the new word without having an opportunity to experience it (Stevick, 1982). Consequently, they will forget the words easily and have to start again from the beginning. When students are given opportunity to make associations with new words and to form types of mental images such as acting them out, it will be more effective than only memorizing.

Teaching English vocabulary to the middle grade students, especially Junior High school students, is not an easy task since it requires a lot of creativity. Adolescent is a difficult time in development and a time of withdrawal from reliance on the social network as well as a notable withdrawal

from responsibilities. Students this age will usually lack motivation, at least to some extent, and will be confused about their place in the world. Adolescent is probably the most challenging and complicated period of life to describe, study, or experience. It is true that many adolescents make serious missteps on the path toward maturity, and some encounter obstacles that halt their progress completely (Berger & Thompson, 1995).

Psychosocial development helps the young person eventually attain adult status and maturity. Such psychosocial development as relating to parents with new independence, to friends with new intimacy, to society with new commitment, and to oneself with new understanding (Berger & Thompson, 1995). According to adolescent psychosocial development, teacher needs to set some

strategies in teaching process and treating classroom atmosphere to affect students positively and to help students through their adolescent transition and succeed academically.

Secondary school students are developing the learning habits on which they will continue to build throughout their student lives and beyond. This is an ideal stage at which to raise students' awareness of their individual learning styles, the learning strategies they are already using and the wider choice of learning strategies available to them. (Rogers, 2008).

From this group, teachers can point out certain characteristics that they would be aware of and consider in their teaching plan. In teaching English to adolescent, particularly teaching vocabulary, the teachers play important role since

they have to be able to set students motivation and interest in learning English. Since vocabulary is one of important items that are essential to improve the four language skills of the students, which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing, so it is important to find an exact way of situation to make students interested in improving their vocabularies.

Teachers teaching in this level need to plan a set of activities for an arranged time period, and be flexible enough to move on the next activities when they see the students are getting bored and not interested anymore. There are some factors, like the quality of the teachers, students' interest, and motivation which are involved together in teaching and learning process, in order to make the teaching English in junior high school successful. Besides, the

teaching technique and teaching media are also other important factors which play important role.

Physical activities are very significant and interesting for young learners, because they like to do things, better than they like listening and reading. During their writer's teaching experience as a teacher, the writer found that English language teachers usually depend on asking questions, presenting information, and asking students to read their course book. The lessons become mostly teacher-centered. The teachers do not give the students the practice they needed to learn the language. The writer did experiences of learning English language with young students and noticed that the students were attracted and interested more to physical activities. According to my observation, physical activities easily get students' attention and promote interaction with each

other. That is why the writer agrees that physical response is a very important way of responding to language.

In this research, the writer focused on teaching English vocabulary considering that vocabulary constitutes the knowledge of meaning which is one of the components of language, because studying a language cannot be separated from studying vocabulary.

There are many methods used in teaching language to children. Total Physical Response is one of methods in teaching language that may support to realize the expected situation. It can also be presented by using a game that is appropriate to the learners' characters. By using the Total Physical Responses, it is hoped that the teacher will be able to motivate them to learn and pay attention to the material presented by

the teacher, and finally, they are able to master English well.

1.2 The Problem

The curriculum used nowadays is competency-oriented, meaning that students are required to have certain competencies or skills as a result of the learning process in schools. Competency-based education emphasizes on capability that must be owned by a certain level of education. Competence according to Hall and Jones (1976:29) is "a statement which describes the appearance of a certain ability unanimously which is a blend of knowledge and ability that can be observed and measured". Competency of graduate is a main capital to compete at a global level, because the competition is on the ability of human resources.

Since then, the application of the competency-based education is expected to produce graduates who are able to compete on a global level.

In the implementation of the process of learning the English language, the writer often finds students in Junior High School school had difficulty in achieving a basic competence (R & Irving, 2017). This is due to a less adequate mastery of English vocabulary students. They often found it difficult in understanding the meaning of a word in their vocabulary relatively because of the inadequate so that the process of the achievement of a basic competence will run longer.

There are some shortcuts in case students meet difficulty in understanding the meaning of a word during the learning process. One of such as permitting students to look for the meaning of the

words in the dictionary. Or teacher can also notify directly the meaning of those words to the students.

However, those ways may not result efficiently and effectively for the students, because only some students having a dictionary and those students will become dependant on the dictionary not on understanding the context of the word. Moreover students prefer to wait for the meaning of the words that is provided by the teacher. In those kinds of condition, it can be found that some students will forget the material easily because they are not active during learning process or involved in learning process directly. Furthermore, there are no good atmosphere and environment of learning process in the class because there is no interaction or response between students and teacher. The central of the teaching learning process is the teacher. If there is a

new vocabulary that the students seem not to understand, the teacher will directly answer it by translating. The students just sit in their chairs and listen to teacher's explanation. As the result, the students get easily bored and passive. They do not enjoy the learning process, as strongly supported by Harmer (2007: 84) who states that the students must be encouraged to respond to texts and situations with their own thoughts and experiences, rather than just answering questions and doing abstract learning activities. The teacher must give them tasks which they are able to do, rather than risk humiliating them. Another issues relating to students, for example, is the lack of interest to learn and lack of courage because of the boring environment and learning process they meet around.

Regarding to the constraints above, then the author tried to find a wide variety of techniques and strategies in order to understand and comprehend English vocabulary of grade seven junior high school students. It is hoped that it can increase the students' awareness to not always rely on the dictionary or waiting for a response from teachers in understanding the meaning of a word, and this will facilitate them to be more brave and courageous to achieve language competences while enhancing the understanding of English vocabulary.

One of the teaching techniques which can be applied to make the students associated with the target language they are learning is Total Physical Response by using story. TPR using story is one of major types of TPR activities besides Total Physical Response Body, Total Physical Response Object, and

Total Physical Response Picture. From the four major types of TPR activities, the writer is interested to apply Total Physical Response by using story since it is the most interesting, practical and enjoyable. In this technique, new vocabulary items are firstly introduced by using physical response.

A story featuring the words is read by the teacher and the students are trying to act the words out. The teacher can introduce new vocabularies easily and comprehensively within a story's context. It is because the learners usually learn new skills when they get interested in the topic given or when it is useful to them. As far as the writer knows, story is a way to emphasize the uniqueness of each student's imagination, and through that imagination, student may generate language. As Marsh stated (Marsh, 2000) through this technique, the teachers

contextualizes the acquired vocabulary and act it out. The students will be able to hear, see, act out, retell, revise and write or create it and have more opportunities to experience the acquired vocabularies which stay longer in their memory (Stevick, 1982).

According the problem and discussion above, this study is an attempt to determine the effect of Total Physical Response story for teaching vocabulary at grade seven junior high school students. TPR story is commonly found applied to young learners. The writer would like to figure out the effect of TPR story if it is applied to Junior High students. The formulated research questions is:

Do the students who are taught by Total Physical Response story get a higher achievement than students who are taught by translation method?

1.3 The Objectives

Derived directly from the above mentioned problems, the objective of the present study is to determine the effectiveness of Total Physical Response technique for teaching vocabulary at grade seven junior high school students. Specifically, the objective is:

to know whether the students who are taught by Total Physical Response story get a higher achievement than students who are taught by translation method or not.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used in this study is learning theory as was proposed by Dr. James J. Asher (Richard & Rodgers, 1986) which points out that children learn new vocabulary by listening first

before they learn to speak, and the children will be able to recall the vocabulary items easily if they are combined with physical activities. This theory is supported by Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell in the late 1970s and early 1980s. the theories will be discussed deeper in the next chapter.

1.5 The Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical framework above, the questions of the present study could be tentatively answered. The following hypotheses are formulated:

Ho : There is no significant difference between the English vocabulary achievement of the students who are taught by using TPR-Story and those who are taught by translation

Ha : There is significant difference between the English vocabulary achievement of the students who are taught by using TPR-Story and those who are taught by translation

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

Being aware that there are many aspects to teach in vocabulary such as grammar, spelling, word formation, and meanings, then the witer scoped and limited the study to teach on meanings. Moreover, since there are many aspects of meanings to teach, such as denotation, connotation, synonym, hyponyms, homophone, homonimy and polysemy, the write only focused on denotation, because it deals with the real meaning of a word or phrase related to the real world, which is that people mostly deal with in daily life (International Dictionary of English, 1995).

The vocabulary items which were taught to the students are only the verbs, nouns, and adjectives. Those types of vocabulary were chosen because they were common words which occurred in the stories. Regarding to the limited time allocation, there were only eight stories taken.

1.7 The Significance of the Study

By doing the study, the writer hopes that the results will give beneficial contribution to the vocabulary teaching for junior high students, particularly grade seven, where they can learn English in a creative and interesting method to enrich their vocabulary through the Total Physical Response method. It is also hoped that the results of this study will enrich the number of effective vocabulary teaching techniques, so that the teachers will have

wide opportunities to choose and use the best one of various kinds of teaching activities and techniques in the classroom.

Furthermore, the writer expects that TPR-Story will promote students' English fluency since it eliminates the need of memorization of lengthy vocabulary lists.

1.8 Definition of Key-terms

The key terms to be defined are:

1.8.1 *Total Physical Response*

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action; it attempts to teach language through physical (motor) activity.

1.8.2 *Stress-free way of learning/Fun learning*

Fun learning method is a method of instruction in which a teacher can create a warm ambiance and fun in learning due to its warm and pleasant atmosphere. Whatever we teach, it will be easily accepted with pleasure and when something is easier then the child will easily do a change.

A skilled teacher in using a variety of approaches and classroom management strategies will easily be able to create and maintain a climate of learning and fun. The climate that gives the opportunity to students to develop their potentialities itself optimally.

So that we can create an atmosphere of fun learning, required the use of a proper method of learning. As we know, the position of the methods is very important in the process of interaction between teachers and students when learning, i.e., extrinsic motivation as a

tool, as a teaching strategy and as a tool to achieve a goal. Therefore, a teacher should be able to choose the method that suits the child's condition and adjusted to the material to be delivered.

1.8.3 *Vocabulary*

Vocabulary is a list or collection of words or of words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or defined.

1.8.4 *Variable*

Variable is an element, feature, or factor that is liable to vary or change, or a quantity that during a calculation is assumed to vary or be capable of varying in value.