

**TEACHING VOCABULARY
BY TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR) METHOD
WITH TABOO (AKA HOT SEAT) GAME FOR YOUNG
LEARNERS**

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Abstract

Vocabulary (kosa kata) merupakan komponen yang sangat utama dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Tanpa penguasaan Vocabulary sudah tentu penguasaan keempat skills Bahasa Inggris tersebut tidak dapat dikuasai oleh siswa maupun pelajar. Oleh karena itu, disarankan penggunaan metode mengajar yang cukup efektif dalam upaya peningkatan Vocabulary siswa, yakni dengan menggunakan games (permainan). Pembelajaran yang ditawarkan disini merupakan perpaduan antara Total Physical Response (TPR) dengan permainan Taboo Aka Hot Seat Games. Dengan memadukan keduanya

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diharapkan pembelajaran vocabulary akan lebih semangat dan penguasaan terhadap vocabulary akan lebih meningkat. Namun dalam menggunakan atau menggabungkan kedua hal tersebut guru atau pengajar harus terlebih dahulu memahami konsep TPR dan permainan tersebut, sehingga apa yang diharapkan dapat tercapai. Hal ini disarankan penggunaannya bagi young learners.

A. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is the first foreign language. It is not easy to teach English because every education level has different capability and characteristics especially in teaching young learners. In teaching young learners, teacher must be patient. He or she has to find new and interesting method to make the students feel enjoy when they are learning. Teaching young learners are more difficult than teaching teenagers or adults because young learners are very easy to be bored.

In mastering the English skills, the basic thing that students have to learn and understand is vocabulary because vocabulary is a key to learn any language. It is easier to use games in teaching young learners. It can make the them feel enjoy in learning vocabulary and it will be easy for them to acquire the lessons. Besides, vocabulary is lists of words with their meaning. Teaching vocabulary to young learners by using games will make them easier to remember, understand, and recognize the vocabularies that will be used.

Vocabulary relates to words. Mastering vocabulary is a difficult thing for the young learners in learning English. As we know, vocabulary is one of the important components of language that should be mastered by the young learners². They state that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write.

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² Richards, Jack C. and Willy A. Renandya. *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2005 p. 114

Many young learners cannot master the vocabulary. Lack of vocabulary is one problem that makes the young learners do not able to use English in their daily communication, both in written and spoken. It makes them cannot communicate well or even cannot join in a small conversation with their friends. It will make them unable to communicate, so, the communicative learning cannot run, because to communicate they should have the competence to recognize the words. Without understanding the words, the young learners cannot catch the idea that will or have been said by other people.

Young learners are the learners in the age of 5 – 16 or 18 years. It is in the level of Kindergarten, elementary school and secondary schools. Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL), actually, is not a new one in teaching English in Indonesia. M. Ramdhan Adhi stated in his web in title *Teaching Languages to Young Learners*³ in his idea to support the book written by Lynn Cameron. Related to that he stated that learning English has been done from elementary school or even from kindergarten optimally. Because of some limitations such as the materials that do not appropriate to the learners, low ability of the teachers and the creativities in teaching the learners, and also the limitation of time in teaching it, teaching English cannot run well.

Teaching vocabulary to young learners is not easy. Young learners have special characteristics so they need more attention. It is different from teaching adults. It is needed to teach in communicative ways. Vocabulary is list of words with their meaning and it also consists of collection of words. There are many words that children have to understand and remember. To help the children easy to remind and understand the words, the teacher should be creative.

Disability of the young learners in mastering the vocabulary may be caused by the disability of the teacher to teach vocabulary well. The teacher teaches the young learners conventionally, and it is not an effective way. As Courtrigh and Wesolek stated that traditional way

³ M. Ramdhan Adhi. *Buku Teaching Languages to Young Learners* retrieved from <http://mradhi.com/buku/buku-teaching-languages-to-young-learners.html>.

in vocabulary learning (such as filling in blanks or matching words and definitions) are not effective in word learning⁴. Instead, the teachers should change their habit in teaching. Interactive and communicative vocabulary activities can lead the young learners to be better in word learning. So that, they can teach communicatively by using communicative approaches, one of the communicative approaches is Total Physical Response (TPR).

Thus, the purpose of this paper is to encourage the English teachers to make their teaching more communicative, in this case by using TPR combining with games (taboo aka hot seat game) for the younger learners. It is hopefully can help them in learning vocabulary.

B. CONCEPT OF YOUNG LEARNERS



As English has become the dominant/ international/ common language in the world, it has also become one of the components of tertiary, secondary, primary and even pre-school education in the EFL teaching contexts. Thus, the concept of young learners has started to cover a larger age range than it did 2 or 3 decades ago. This change can clearly be seen in the quality and quantity of coursebooks written for different ages and levels of young English language learners, and the publications made in this area.

⁴ Courtright, Maggie and Cathy Wesolek. 2003. Incorporating Interactive Vocabulary Activities into Reading Classes. Retrieved November 2010, from <http://www.englishteachingforum .online/vol39/no2/2003.html>

Moreover, it also brings a demand for competent English language teachers to teach (very) young language learners.

Young Learners are the learners who learn from the younger age. Young Learners are the learners in age 5 – 16 (18) years old in the level of kindergarten up to secondary school, or even from the eight eighteen moon age.⁵ In Turkey, young learners are the children who have the old 3 – 12 years, they are classified in to three; they are very young learner (3 – 6 years old), young learner (7-9 years old) and old/late young learners(10 – 12 years old).⁶

In teaching English to young learners, *age* plays a crucial role in what we teach and how we teach it, since a young learner class is different from an adult and/or a teenager class in terms of the learners' language learning needs, the language competences emphasized, and the cognitive skills addressed. While, Brumfit⁷ (1997: v) gives a list of the characteristics which young learners share; 1) Young learners are only just beginning their schooling, so that teachers have a major opportunity to mould their expectations of life in school, 2) As a group they are potentially more differentiated than secondary or adult learners, for they are closer to their varied home cultures, and new to the conformity increasingly imposed across cultural grouping by the school, 3) They tend to be keen and enthusiastic learners, 4) Their learning can be closely linked with their development of ideas and concepts, because it is so close to their initial experiences of formal schooling, and 5) They need physical movement and activity as much as stimulation for their thinking, and the closer together these can be the better.

⁵ Retrieved from mpc.byu.edu/.../Age%20Characteristics%20of... and www.britishcouncil.org/srilanka-learning-you... at July, 30, 2012 on 11.43 am.

⁶(nn) *Teaching English for Young Learners* retrieved from www.classicalfolktale.wikipedia.com at July, 25, 2012.

⁷(nn) **Young Learner Characteristics (TEYL/TMYL)** retrieved from <http://peni.staff.uns.ac.id/2008/10/10/young-learner-characteristics/> at July, 30, 2012 on 11.50 am.

Thus, it can be stated that young learners are the learners in a various age from 3 – 12 years old. They need such kinds of interested method to teach. They still like to play then study seriously. So, the young learners meant in this article is the learners who still in elementary school, especially in Indonesia.

C. CONCEPT OF VOCABULARY TEACHING

Learning a foreign language basically is mastering the vocabulary of that language. As Zhihong states that the foundation of language form are the words. It means that some one will not be able to communicate affectively or express the idea without having enough words, which called vocabulary.

Talking about vocabulary, Hornby gives the definition as a list of words with their meanings in a foreign language⁸. Moreover, Cruse⁹ defines vocabulary as a list of words that have meaning, while Bolton¹⁰ states that vocabulary is a list of difficult of foreign words with an explanation of their meanings. Richards and Renandya¹¹ calculates that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write.

Thus, from some defenition given by experts above, it can be concluded that vocabulary is a list of words with the meanings in a foreign language using in speaking, listening. Reading, and writing.

Furthermore, it is known that teaching is a complex process in which teachers try to transfer the knowledge to their young learners. Related to teaching vocabulary, Ur states that in teaching vocabulary need to consider about some aspects, especially the form, in this case

⁸ Hornby, A.S. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. New York: Oxford University Press. 1995. p. 1331

⁹ Cruse, Alan. *Meaning in Language: An Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2000.

¹⁰ Bolton. 2003. Vocabulary Definition. Retrieved November 28, 2010 from <http://www.bolton.ac.uk/learning/bissto/glossary>

¹¹Richard and Renandya. Op.cit. p. 116

are pronunciation and spelling¹². The learners have to know what a word sounds like and what it looks like. In teaching, it needed to make sure that both of these aspects presented and learned accurately.

Moreover, Hunt and Beglar discuss three approaches to vocabulary teaching and learning¹³. The first approach is incidental learning which involves teachers' providing of opportunities, learning vocabulary by product of doing other things for extensive reading and listening. The second approach is explicit instruction which includes of diagnosing the words learners need to know, presenting words for the first time, elaborating word knowledge, and developing fluency with the words that have been known before. And the last approach is independent strategy development which involves practicing guessing meaning from the context and training learners to use dictionaries.

Furthermore, Nunan states that the focus in the vocabulary class is how to encourage the young learners to develop strategies for inferring the meaning of new words context in which occur and teaching them to use a range of clues, both verbal and non verbal to determine meaning¹⁴. Then, Moras¹⁵ adds that meaningful task is the best answer to teaching vocabulary, as it relied on young learners' experiences and reality to facilitate learning. More clearly, Wanzek¹⁶ states that the goal in vocabulary lesson is that the learner can understand the meaning of new words.

Therefore, in teaching vocabulary, the important things that should be considered are how to make the young learners understand

¹² Ur, Penny. *A Course in Language Teaching Practice and Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1991. p. 60

¹³ Hunt, Alan and David Beglar. 1998. Current Research and Practice in Teaching Vocabulary. Retrieved November 14, 2010 from <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/files/98/jan/hunt.html>

¹⁴ Nunan, David. *Language Teaching Methodology: a Textbook for Teacher*. London: Pearson Education. 2000. p 121

¹⁵ Moras, Solange. (2000). Teacher Vocabulary to Advance Student: a Lexical Approach. Retrieved on December 01, 2010 from <http://www.3telus.net/linguisticsissues/index>

¹⁶ Wanzek, Jeanne. (2003). Vocabulary Instruction. Retrieved on 28 November 2010 from http://www.texasreading.org/3tier/components/vocabulary_activities.asp

what the words mean. Thus, the teacher can use himself as a model as in Total Physical Response Method, it is suggested by Asher and Zainil stated in benefit and principles of TPR.

C. CONCEPT OF TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a method used in communicative approach, while the aim of communicative approach is to develop the ability to communicate. Total Physical Response (TPR) is a [method](#) developed by Dr. James J. Asher, a professor emeritus of [psychology](#) at [San Jose State University](#), to aid learning second [languages](#). The method relies on the assumption that when learning a second or additional language, language is internalized through a process of code breaking similar to first [language development](#) and that the process allows for a long period of listening and developing [comprehension](#) prior to production. Students respond to commands that require physical movement¹⁷.

Moreover, Peck in Richards adds that the best known of English as a Second Language approach involving movement is Total Physical Response¹⁸. Total Physical Response (TPR) is one method for communicative language teaching, to do learning in communicative way. Zainil states that TPR is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action¹⁹. In addition, Asher²⁰ stated that TPR is a method of teaching language by using physical movement to react to verbal input in order to reduce learners inhibitions and lower their effective filter. It reacts the learners to react language without thinking too much, facilitates long term retention, and reduces learners anxiety and stress.

¹⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Total_Physical_Response retrieved on May 2012

¹⁸ Richard and Renandya. Op.cit.

¹⁹ Zainil. *Language Teaching Method*. Padang: Universitas Negeri Padang Press. 2005. p. 52-53.

²⁰ Asher, James. Asher, James. *Learning Another Language through Actions*. Los Gatos, CA: Sky Oaks Productions, Inc. 2003.

In addition, Richard and Renandya from Peck explain that in TPR the teacher gives commands, models them, and gradually weans the young learners from watching the teachers' model²¹. TPR also combines a number of other insights in its rationale principles of children language acquisition are important. Noted that children, in learning their first language, appear to do a lot of listening before they speak, and that their listening is accompanied by physical responses (reaching, grabbing, moving, looking, and so on).²²

In this method not only the teacher can give the commands or models but also another student. Then soon, the students or young learners are able to carry out a variety of commands. The young learners understand most of what is said, and in the process acquire receptive language, especially vocabulary and grammar. A lesson might start with:

Teacher : Stand up! (pause, then stands up)
 Touch your shoulder! (pauses, then touches shoulder)
 Sit down! (pause, then sits down).

Later, some young learners understand and follow the teachers' commands:

Teacher : Touch your head!
 Erika, Mahmud, and Syamid: (touch heads)
 Most other young learners : (follow others and touch heads)
 Teacher : Good! Great job, Erika, Mahmud and Syamid.²³

Asher²⁴ also gave the benefit of this method; they are instant understanding of the target language, regardless of academic aptitude, high speed long-term retention; and free of stress. By studying with this method, hopefully the learners will be good in learning languages,

²¹ Zainil. Ibid.

²² Jack C. Richard. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. (USA: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 74.

²³ Op.cit.

²⁴ Asher. Ibid.

because looking form the benefits of this method it will make the students understanding faster.

Further, there are seven principles of TPR as 1) assimilation and skills can be increased significantly, 2) vocabulary retention can be increased through physical activities, 3) comprehension skills are established, 4) teaching of speaking should be delayed until comprehension skills are established, 5) skills acquired through listening transfer to other skills, 6) teaching should emphasize meaning than form, and 7) teaching should minimize learners' stress.²⁵ Thus, the teacher who wants to apply this method should pay remind these principles to make the aims of TPR become applied; and in order to implement TPR effectively, it is necessary to plan regular sessions that progress in a logical order, and to keep several principles in mind.

Finally, TPR is one of communicative approaches that should involve the components of communicative competence to make the application of the teaching is more easily. It motivates young learners to do and to coordinate action and speak. So, using TPR by giving a model to the young learners will make the young learners easy to remember and recycle the vocabulary given and may be encourage to learn.

D. THE CONCEPT OF GAME

Game is the enjoyment activities. As stated in Oxford Dictionary that game is form of play or sport with rules.²⁶ It is also an activity providing entertainment or amusement.²⁷ So, it can be concluded that game is an activity to entertain or to amuse the user.

²⁵ Zainil. Op. cit. p. 52.

²⁶ Manser, Martin H. *Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary*. New york: Oxford University Press. 1991. p. 171.

²⁷ Farlex. *The Free Dictionary*.

Children are like playing, so it is more useful if the teacher uses games as a method in teaching vocabulary to young learners. Games are interesting activities that will make the students enjoy and easy to acquire the lessons. The best interesting activities that the teacher can use to teach vocabulary to young learners is game. Aydan Ersoz²⁸ stated that games are motivating the children in learning vocabulary because games are very interesting and amusing. Games are not only used in teaching vocabulary but also in all language skills and many types of communication.

Further, games will help to encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work. It helps the teacher to create the contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful.²⁹ Through games children can do experiment, discover, and interact with their environment³⁰. Games will bring target language to life. So, it will be easier for the children or learners to learn the language by games.

There are some benefits of games as stated by Lengeling and Casey³¹; they are *affective* which encourage the creativities and spontaneous use of language and promote communicative competence; *cognitive* in which reinforces and focuses on grammar communicatively; *class dynamic*, it involves young learners centered; *adaptability*, easily adjusted for age, level, and interest, and also utilizes four skills.

Added by Lee Su Kim,³² there are many advantages of using games in the classroom. *The first*, Games can break the usual routine of the language class; *second*, games can motivate and challenge the

²⁸Teaching Vocabulary by Using Games to Young Learners retrieved from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/40698294/Teaching-Vocabulary-by-Using-Games-to-Young-Learners> at May 2012.

²⁹ Wright, Andre, et. al. *From Games for Language learning*. Taken from TEFL GAMES.COM.

³⁰ <http://www.teflgames.com/why.html>.

³¹ Lengeling, M. Martha and Casey Malarcher. Retrieved from <http://www.teflgames.com/why.html>.

³² Teaching Vocabulary by Using Games to Young Learners retrieved from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/40698294/Teaching-Vocabulary-by-Using-Games-to-Young-Learners> at May 2012.

children in learning process; *next*, in learning a language needs an effort. Games help the students to make the effort of learning a language; *fourth*, games are providing the students to practice in the four skills of English that are speaking, reading, writing, and listening; *then*, games help the students to interact and communicate; *the last*, games create a meaningful context in using language. In choosing a game, the teacher has to consider some things such as time, material, the topic of the lessons, and the students themselves.

Besides, Lee in Huyen and Khuat³³ list several advantages of games when used in the classroom. They are *a welcome break from the usual routine of the language class, motivating and challenging, effort of learning, and language practice in the various skills.*

Thus, it can be stated that games can make as the aims or effort to learn language to motivate young learners to learn. There are such kinds of games that can be used in learning language; taboo (aka hot seat), scrambled letters, aka the alphabet game, bingo, logical games, semantic games, back-and-forth games, and others. In this writing, the writer presents Taboo (aka hot seat) game combined with Total Physical Response (TPR).

E. TABOO (AKA HOT SEAT) GAME

Many games can be adapted to include a physical component or otherwise fit the principles of TPR, one of them is taboo (aka hot seat) game. Taboo (aka hot seat) game presented by Koprowski.³⁴ He said that this game can recycle the young learners' vocabulary. In this game teacher divides young learners into teams A and B. Team A sits in a group in one side of the classroom, team B sits on the other side. Brings two chairs to the front of room so that when seated, a student is facing his or her respective team and their back is to the black or

³³ Huyen, Nguyen Thi Thanh and Khuat Thi Thu Nga, *Learning Vocabulary Through Games*. Fom Asean EFL Journal. p. 31

³⁴ Koprowski, Mark. *Ten Good Games for Recycling Vocabulary*. (The Internet TESL Journal). Retrieved on 20 Juli 2010 from http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Koprowski-Recycling_Vocabulary.html.

white board. One member of each team sits in the team's chair. The teacher writes a word, phrase or sentence on the board. The students that sit in the chairs **mustn't** see what's written on the board. When the teacher yells 'go', the teams have a minute, using verbal clues, body movements or gestures (response physically), to get their seated teammate to say the item written on the board.

The only rule (or taboo) is that they **mustn't** say the item written on the board, in full or part. The first student in the hot seat response physically and utter the word scores a point for their team. When the round is over, two new team players are rotated into the hot seat and a new item is written up. This game can play in turns, rather than two young learners in the hot seat, but only one member for each team play at a time. The first team to score X number of points wins.

F. THE APPLICATION OF TABOO AKA HOT SEAT GAME WITH TPR IN LEARNING PROCESS

The young learners on the chair (hot-seat) should follow the model given by his/her friends in his/her own group, and then utter the model or action.

1. The teacher writes a sentence (where the young learners on the hot-seat cannot see) like;
- 'point to the door'.
2. Then, the young learner(she/he) from the group models the sentences on the action and do not utter.
3. The young learners who sit in the chair (hot-seat) follow the action, and then utter action.
4. Then the teacher can continue to write other sentence such as:
- 'open the door'
5. Then, she/he gives a model based on this sentence (utterance) and the young learners on the chair follow the action and then utter what she/he has been acted.
6. Teacher can also write a range of sentences such as :
'point to the door', 'open the door', and 'get out'

7. The student models, then the students who sit in the hot-seat follow the model and utter.

The other example as seen below:

1. The teacher writes a sentences, as:
“stand up!”
2. Then, one of the young learners in the group model the utterance on the action but does not utter.
3. The young learners who sit in the chair (hot-seat) follow the action, then utter.
4. The teacher can continue to the utterance such as;
“take your bag!”
5. The younger learners in the group models the utterance, take her/his bag but do not utter again.
6. Then, the young learners who sit follow the action (the model), then utters.
7. The teacher can continue with “get out!”
8. She / he models the utterance, and the learners who sit in the hot-seat also follow the model, then utter.
9. The teacher can combine to write the utterances; “stand up! Take your bag! And get out!”
10. The model acts three utterances, and the students in the hot-seat follows, then say the three utterances.

In this game, the young learner from the group is as a model and the other young learners who sit on the hot-seat are following the action then telling or uttering the model given by their friend. Teacher can change the young learners on the hot-seat with other young learners, and following the rules of games.

Teacher can combine three or more commands to be written on the black/white board, and the young learners to model and to do it, and teacher should constantly monitor the progress. One thing to be considered is whether the young learners are able to follow all the sentences or commands given, teacher may not use too many items at

one time, because it makes the young learners confuse and merely slows down the learning process.³⁵

Using taboo (aka hot seat) game hopefully will make teaching vocabulary more effective and fun. When the situation is relaxed and fun, the young learners will be easier to master the lesson given, especially in learning vocabulary. Teaching vocabulary by TPR with taboo (aka hot seat) game will be interested ways for young learners.

G. CONCLUSION

Total Physical Response, which usually called TPR, is one of communicative approaches that can be used by the teacher to make the young learners more communicative in the classroom, because TPR is the building of coordination between speech and action. Teacher as a model explain the meanings of vocabulary by using action, giving directly examples. By combining TPR with taboo (aka hot seat) game, it will be more interested. By games young learners will be encourage and motivate to learn. The experts state that games can lower the anxiety, encourage, entertain, teach and promote fluency of the young learners. Therefore, through games, young learners can low their anxiety, fun and encouraging, that will make them enjoy in learning.

By coordinating speech, action and game the young learners are hoped more active, more communicative, more interested in the classroom. In order to make the teaching process more communicative the teachers should leave the traditional way in teaching vocabulary, they should have the ability to use this method, Total Physical Response combining with games. Teachers can also find other games to make variation.

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