

Promoting TPR (Total Physical Response) Method in Teaching Vocabulary for EFL Beginners in Benin Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary learning is one of the most important fields in teaching English or any foreign language. One could learn all of the grammatical rules and exceptions that the language contains, but what if our brain did not store the needful amount of words to complete and utter the message that a person want to transmit ? The present research work aimed at promoting the use of Total Physical Response (TPR) method, as a technique to introduce English language vocabulary to EFL beginners. An overall of 150 students and 26 EFL teachers were involved in this study. To achieve the objectives of the study, class observation was used as an instrument to gain insight into learners' attitudes and reactions toward English language learning. Questionnaire was also used to collect reliable data. The results obtained revealed that teaching English vocabulary through Physical Response allows students to learn faster and easier, since children find support from the physical representation of their facilitator or their peers. Also the results may be a reference for other researchers who are interested in undertaking research on the learning or teaching of English vocabulary.

Key words: Total Physical Response, Method, Vocabulary, EFL

INTRODUCTION

All children in normal conditions have the mental capability to interact in a foreign language, but it is necessary to develop grammatical features, phonetic conventions, alphabet, and vocabulary. (Lightbown & Spada, 1999) cited Chomsky (1959, p.15) when they pointed out that "*Children are naturally programmed for language and language develops in the same way that other biological functions develop*". Children construct social systems of communication playing games and interacting with peers, using some strategies like giggling, laughing, body language, facial expressions that enable the learners' communication. Long (1998) affirmed in her study that her daughter developed a second language in an interactive social context, in which the girl acquired the new language playing games with peers.

Learning vocabulary is an important stage of learning a language. The more words learners know, the more they will be able to understand what they hear and read ; and the better they will be able to say what they want to express when speaking or writing. But it happens that sometimes students have problem to memorize and internalize the vocabulary easily and in a very fast way. So, the main goal of this research is to promote the effectiveness of TPR method in EFL beginners' vocabulary teaching process, particularly in BENIN Secondary Schools.

The design of lessons that incorporate physical activity are appropriate for teaching vocabulary to beginners, and

methods such as Total Physical Response (TPR) developed by James Asher (1977) in which the learner answers physically to the verbal commands, can be helpful to introduce English vocabulary to children, because children construct social systems of communication using their imagination, trying out ideas, developing kinesthesia and creating a sense of control over their world in a stress free environment.

Total Physical Response supports the cognitive development of children ; it stimulates all their senses, imagination and creativity. With TPR, children use physical and mental energy in a productive way, besides it facilitates the development of language and social skills like cooperation, negotiating, competing, and following rules. As a matter of fact, students need vocabulary to support themselves to produce sentences that can be understood by others. That is why vocabulary is very important to be mastered. (Harmer, 2001, p.246) contends that "*If language structures make up the skeleton of language, the nit is vocabulary that provides that vital organs and the flesh*". For that reason, the students should expand their vocabulary in order to be able to communicate with others. In addition Aminudin (2009) reported (Edge, 1993, p. 27) when he stated that "*The more vocabulary students learn the more ideas they should have, sot hey can communicate by using their ideas more effectively*". Nevertheless, students sometimes find it difficult to use or apply the vocabulary they have learned in previous classes. Teachers should take into account a suitable technique in

order to reach their objectives. Aminudin (2009) considered that a suitable method for children in learning vocabulary is Total Physical Response (TPR). Similarly, Asher (2009) exposed how some students experienced Spanish with TPR watching and performing commands.

Other students were enrolled in traditional courses where they sat in rows ; constructing Spanish in their heads. The students were engaged in exercises such as : listen and repeat, point out the grammar rules, complete exercise on books, memorize list of words, and memorize verb conjugation. The results of the study revealed how the TPR group with forty-five hours of instruction (and no homework) outperformed and excelled the traditional group with two hundred hours (and homework) in listening and reading skills. Even when the TPR group, with only “incidental learning” in reading of Spanish, matched the reading skill of traditional students who experienced “systematic” instruction in reading.

Taking into account the results above, it can be said that promoting Total Physical Response method will be useful in Benin EFL context to help students learn English vocabulary, because the method will help learners understand and memorize linguistic input since children use body movements as media in the process of learning.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to analyze the TPR method in the teaching of vocabulary and to promote its application to beginners in EFL classes. Another purpose was to investigate the pedagogical implications from the results of this study for teaching English vocabulary to beginners learners.

Research Questions

The following questions have been formulated for this research study:

1. What is the impact of TPR method on EFL beginners' vocabulary learning process ?
2. What are be learners' responses and attitudes towards TPR ?
3. What are the implications of designing TPR activities for beginners ?

Population and Sampling

EFL teachers of form 1 and 2 in some areas of “Ouémé” regions formed the population of this study. A total of twenty six EFL were involved. The second group were learners. They were selected from six public schools of “Ouémé” and were about one hundred and fifty (150). The criteria for the selection of these participants were the age and the cognitive development stage of the target group.

Materials, methods, and procedures

The instruments used for this research study were questionnaire and class observation. Two types of questionnaires

were administered. The first was designed for EFL teachers, and the second for learners. The research study was conducted in a natural setting and it dealt with participants' behavioral patterns concerning performance and perceptions towards the use of Total Physical Response approach. The research used a mixed method ; combining quantitative and qualitative methods. It was conducted as a descriptive and interpretative case study because the data was taken from two sources : questionnaires ; and class observation ; Dealing with the procedures, Participants' thoughts, opinions and feelings were taken into account in order to get information and draw reliable conclusions. The teachers' questionnaire was made of ten (10) questions with suggested answers for each. Class observation was conducted in six classes. The observation focused on how EFL teachers teach vocabulary, and the strategies used while teaching vocabulary. Attention was also focused on learners' attitudes, motivation, vocabulary understanding, physical response, communication of ideas and reactions towards the English language. Each observation lasted fifty five minutes (55mn). See Appendix B.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The topic of this study examined the use of Total Physical Response to teach vocabulary to beginners in Benin secondary schools. This review will deal with previous related research findings, basing on the theoretical framework of the research in the field.

Total Physical Response (TPR)

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a set of methods developed by Dr. James J. Asher, teacher of Psychology of the State University of San Jose, with the purpose of developing an efficient technique for the learning-teaching of languages. The method was originated based on the assumption that when an additional language is learned, this language is internalized through a process of decoding similar to the development of the first language. This process demands a long period of comprehension and development before the production of language. According to Asher (1977), TPR is based on the theory that the human brain is biologically programmed to learn any natural language with interaction. The process is visible when we observe how children internalize the language, the communication among parents and children combines the verbal and kinesthetic skills, the child answers physically to the verbal commands of the father, and the responds of the child is reinforced positively by the voice of the father.

For many months, the child absorbs the language without being able to speak it. So far, we have identified the importance of the social context in the development of the language, according to Vygotsky cited in (Brown, 2000, pp.287). Social interaction plays an important role, in the learning process and Brown proposed the zone of proximal development where learners construct the new language through socially mediated interaction. It is during this period that the internalization and the decoding of messages happen. After this stage, the child is capable of reproducing

the language spontaneously so, children combine words with movements and gestures having the major facility to obtain language competence. This process of internalization and assimilation of messages can be supported by kinesthesia in order to associate words and actions. The researcher agrees with Asher (1979, pp.10) when he contends that “*the assimilation of information and skills can be significantly accelerated through the use of the kinesthetic sensory system*”.

Consequently, we consider that there exists a relation between the motor development and the language development as fundamental base for the acquisition of a foreign language. (Asher, 1977, pp.11) reports that TPR is characterized by the association between language and actions. The researcher notes that this method is closely related to the behaviorist psychology where any physical action is a behavior because it integrates the action stimulus-response as support of the learning. Octaviany (2007) reported (Garcia,2001,pp.15) when he states that “*the two very important concepts in TPR are the notion of Total physical Response involvement and the role played by the right hemisphere of the brain in learning a second language by action*”. For Asher (1977, pp.12) learning a foreign language by action is a process occurred in the right acts ; in contrasts to audiolingual approaches that are focused in the use of the left hemisphere. The brain is divided in two hemispheres (right and left). This was evidenced in neurological studies that Asher refers to and in which were analyzed the brains of cats and the corpus callosum of an epileptic child whose brain was surgically divided, the results of these studies demonstrate that the brain is divided into two hemispheres and each has specific functions. Asher conceived TPR as directed to right-brain learning. Most second language teaching methods are directed to the left-brain learning.

The Goals of TPR

Numbers of authors have worked on the objectives of TPR. Researchers do agree that teachers who use TPR believe in the importance of having the students to enjoy their experience in learning to communicate a foreign language.

Richard and Rodgers (1986 :91) Declare that

“The general objectives of Total Response are to teach oral proficiency at a beginning level. Comprehension is a means to an end, and the ultimate aim is to give basic speaking skills. TPR aims to produce learners who are capable of an uninhibited communication that is intelligible to a native speaker”.

For the students to obtain academic improvement an appropriate method or technique must be developed. TPR was developed in order to improve the result of teaching-learning process of a second language, especially in teaching children. The researcher do agree with (Larsen-Freeman,2000, pp.113) when they declare that “*TPR was developed in order to reduce the stress people feel when studying foreign languages and thereby encourage students to persist in their study beyond a beginning level of proficiency.*”

Many scholars reported and summarized the main objectives of TPR as followed :

TPR develops listening and speaking skills at a beginning level. However, listening and physical response skills are emphasized over oral production. Using comprehension as a means of speaking. Students are not required to speak until they feel naturally ready or confident enough to do so. Grammar and vocabulary are emphasized over other language areas. Spoken language is emphasized over written language. In addition, the teacher directs and students “act” in response. “The instructor is the director of a stage play in which the students are the actors” (Asher, 1977, pp. 21). Example : The teacher models some actions in front of the class then the students should perform those commands. The teacher says :

Stand Up ! (Performing the action)

Then he says : “walk around!”(And he does it),

The same situation occurs with with other commands as : “Raise your hand”, “Walk”, “Stop”, and “Turn”.

Those commands and the performance of the actions should be repeated three or four times until students are ready to try it by themselves. Subsequently, the teacher in imperative form asks students to perform those actions. The students are able to act in response since they have already identified the words, thus the actions can be performed rapidly. After this stage, the command can be more complex introducing grammar components. Example : New commands. These verbs were introduced :

Wash	Look for	Comb
Your hands.	A towel	Your hair
Your face	The soap	Shade’s hair
Your hair	A comb	Tunde’s hair

Thus the objective of TPR is to use humor during the lessons whenever possible to make the atmosphere more enjoyable for learners. The imperative mood is the most common language function employed in TPR, so the teacher must add that funny side to the pedagogy for learners’ interest.

Teaching English Vocabulary

The basis of a language is the vocabulary Consequently, teaching English vocabulary is the priority when learners are in the beginning stage of the process. Vocabulary can be defined as words people must know to communicate effectively ; words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary). Hornby (1995) defined vocabulary as “the total number of words in a language ; vocabulary is a list of words with their meanings”. While Ur (1998) states :

“vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words we teach in the foreign language. However, a new item of vocabulary may be more than just a single word : for example, post office, and mother-in-law, which are made up of two or three words but express a single idea. A useful convention is to cover all such cases by talking about vocabulary “items” rather than “words”.

There are different ways of introducing the vocabulary to the students. Research suggests that our “mental lexicon” is highly organized and efficient, and that semantic

related items are stored together. Therefore, grouping items of vocabulary in semantic fields (lexical set). Such as topics (e.g parts of the body), is one of the best ways of introducing it. Two other ways of relating vocabulary would be through synonymy (a word similar in meaning) and antonymy (a word opposite in meaning). One of the very interesting technics to teach vocabulary is through the use of pictures. Pictures are essential because they help students relate words with images, and useful for students who have visual memory. The other alternative form of teaching vocabulary is in the use of thinking maps. This strategy is beneficial when it is hard to use pictures to represent the words. It is another way to organize and categorize vocabulary based on a certain topic.

Principles of Teaching Vocabulary to Beginners

Ratnawati and Purwoningsih (2006), proposed the following principles based on Wallace's ideas (1982, pp.12). In the process of teaching-learning vocabulary the objectives must be clear ; the teacher has to decide what goal the learner is supposed to reach. Ratnawati (2006) reports (Wallace, 1982, pp. 11) when he says : *"The aims have to be clear for the teacher. How many of the things listed does the teacher expect the learner to be able to achieve the vocabulary ? What kinds of words ?"* Next, the teacher has to decide the number of vocabulary items to be learned. Ratnawati (2006) reported (Wallace, 1982, pp.11-12) when he said that *"How many new words in a lesson can the learner learn ? If there are too many words, the learner may become confused and discouraged"*. Another important aspect of the principles of teaching vocabulary is in the students' needs. The teacher has to select the suitable words according to the topic and the students' needs. The teacher should also create the appropriate environment in which the students could be capable to communicate and internalize the words they need. (Ratnawati, 2006, p.12) states that:

"In any case, one would hope that the choice of vocabulary will relate to the aims of a course and the objectives of individual lesson. It is also possible for the teacher, in a sense, to put the responsibility for choosing the vocabulary to be taught on the students, in other word, the students are put in a situation where they have to communicate and get the words they need, as they need them, using the teacher as an informant".

Frequent exposure and repetition are fundamental as principles in teaching vocabulary to beginners. When teaching vocabulary, the words cannot be taught once, it is not enough ; it is necessary to repeat the words many times until students have internalized the concept. Purwoningsih (2007) reports Wallace (1982, p.18) when he points out that : *"The teacher should give so much practice and repetition until his students master the target words well. He should also give opportunity to the students to use the words in writing or speaking"*.

The last step the teacher should care about is in the meaning and the presentation of words. Students should have a clear understanding about the meaning of words. Consequently, the teacher must be as comprehensible as possible. The teacher should present the target words in such

a way that their meanings are perfectly clear and unambiguous, so the new word should be presented in context not in isolation. The words should be appropriately chosen and taught by the teacher according to the situations. It is important that the students recognize the appropriate word that should be used in a situation (formal or informal) or with the interlocutor. Ratnawati reports Wallace (1982, p.12) when he states that:

"The choice of words can be various according to the situation in which we are speaking and according to how well we know the person whom we are talking to. Therefore, students should learn words in situations that are appropriate to them."

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This section deals with the presentation of data collected. The findings based on the different instruments are presented. Some results from the questionnaires are categorized using statistical table. The results from class observation are described and finally data have been analyzed.

Findings from the Questionnaires

Answers have been displayed according to the categories of questionnaire. Some items of the questionnaires are presented in a statistical table in which there are the suggested answers, the number of persons having chosen each answer and also the percentage. Following are the interpretations and the graphs illustrating them.

Teachers' Responses (see Appendices A)

For the first question, 72 % of EFL teachers have never heard about the term TPR but do practice it in their classes. This is certainly due to the academic level of those teachers. The majority of teachers do not have the required degree. The remaining teachers (28%) are experienced and are knowledgeable on the term TPR.

Dealing with the second question, the majority of teachers use commands in their classes. The next question provides answers regarding the atmosphere in the classroom.

The results in Table 1 show that seventy-three point zero seven percent (73.07 %) of the respondent teachers always try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in their class. Twenty-six point ninety-two percent (26.92%) sometimes try to do it, none of them ticked "never". So, this means that all the teachers are aware that setting a relaxed atmosphere in the class can help the beginners to fill free in their movement.

The results in Table 2 show that sixty-nine point twenty-three percent (69.23%) of the respondent teachers

Table 1. Relaxed atmosphere

Establishing	Number	Percentage
Always	19	73.07
Sometimes	07	26.92
Never	00	00
Total	26	99.99

make use of songs, games, motto, riddles to set a relaxed atmosphere in the class where everybody can feel free to learn whereas nineteen point twenty-three percent (19.23%) of them base on good classroom management. However, a minority of eleven point fifty-four percent (11.54%) keep a friendly relationship with their students. So, the majority who use songs, games, motto, and riddles to get beginners involved in the learning process, because they know that students at this age like fun.

In Table 3, it resorts that sixty-five point thirty-eight percent (65.38%) of the teachers have declared that their students achieve success in vocabulary learning whereas thirty-six point sixty-two percent (36.62%) of them declared that sometimes their students achieve success in vocabulary learning. The majority of the respondents justified that this was due to the adequate materials they have used since it suit the vocabulary activities. The minority whose students achieve success sometimes contend that it is because the students consider English as a difficult subject in which they will never do well. Meanwhile, none of the respondents ticked "No".

The results in Table 4 show that half (50%) of the participants teach vocabulary by showing visual aids ; fifteen point thirty-eight percent (15.38%) teach vocabulary by giving examples and twenty-six point ninety-two percent (26.92%) use synonyms, antonyms and words of the family. This is not bad because in teaching vocabulary the teacher must give the explanation of the word's meaning by showing pictures, dramatizing, illustrating, paraphrasing or giving synonyms ; all these for students to interiorize the meaning. However, a minority(7.69%) of teachers declared that they teach vocabulary by translating the English words into French or L1 since their students do not show interest in learning and always find all words difficult. But this is not a so good idea because the students are beginners in the learning process so they can easily forget what they have learnt through these

Table 2. Way of establishing a relaxed atmosphere

How teachers set a relaxed atmosphere	Number	Percentage
By keeping a friendly relationship with the students	03	73.07
By keeping a friendly relationship with the students	03	11.54
By using songs, games, motto, riddles, etc.	18	69.23
By using good management	05	19.23
Total	26	100

Table 3. Success achievement in vocabulary learning

Beginners achieve success in vocabulary learning	Number	Percentage
yes	17	65.38
Sometimes	09	36.62
No	00	00
Total	26	100

methods. None of the teachers teach vocabulary by explaining the word in English because they find that the beginners' level is low.

The results in Table 5 reveal that forty-six point fifteen percent (46.15%) of the teachers teach vocabulary through TPR and thirty-eight point forty-six percent (38.46%) of them apply this method sometimes. They argued that it is a suitable method that can help students to learn new words easily and in a very fast way, especially the beginners. Also, they think that students like this method because when they are applying it, everybody wants to participate in the learning process and the class is lively. As a matter of fact, students learn while enjoying themselves. Moreover, a great minority (15.38%) of the teachers said that they don't need to apply TPR method during the vocabulary activities in their classroom, because the pictures in the book already help them. But as language teachers they need to bring also their own contributions and techniques in order to suit the teaching process and help learners efficiently.

Figure 1 above shows that seventy-five percent (75%) of the teachers who make use of TPR declared that their students enjoy this method whereas twenty-five percent (25%) of them assert that their students do not like this method. So for the majority of teachers, students like TPR method. This majority argued that they know it through some indicators such as the mood in the class, the enjoyment, and the active participation during the learning process. The minority who ticked "No" argued that it is because most of their students are shy and do not like involving the body anytime during activities.

The results in Table 6 refer to the problems encountered by the respondent teachers who use TPR method during the vocabulary activities. Those teachers encounter some problems with TPR, although the majority of their students enjoy

Table 4. Teachers' way of teaching vocabulary

Teachers' way of teaching vocabular	Number	Percentage
By showing visual aids (real object, photo, card, drawing)	13	50
By explaining the word in English	00	00
By translating the English word into French or L1	02	7.62
By giving many examples	04	15.38
By using synonyms, antonyms, words of the same family	07	26.92
Total	26	99.99

Table 5. Application of TPR method in vocabulary teaching

Using TPR method while teaching vocabulary	Number	Percentage
yes	12	46.15
Sometimes	10	38.46
No	04	15.38
Total	26	99.99

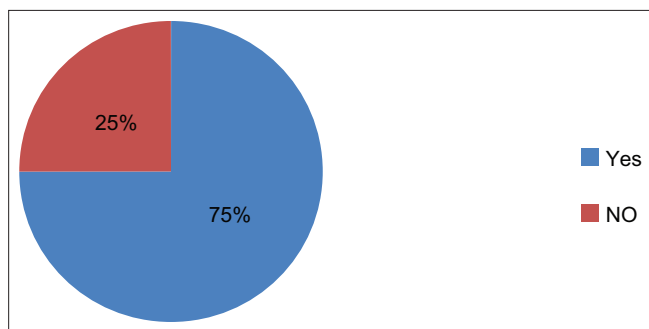


Figure 1. Students' Appreciation for TPR method

Table 6. Problems encountered by teachers who use TPR methods

Problems teachers may encounter while applying TPR method during vocabulary activities	Number	Percentage
Discipline problems	10	45.45
I have to manage confusion	02	9.09
Abstract words are difficult to teach through this method	07	31.81
Physical constraints	03	15.53
Total	22	99.98

it. But those problems can not spoil the fun because any teaching methodology has its limits. So, since the method is helping teachers to get good results, they have to deal with the problem and set the issue.

Dealing with suggestions, the respondents teachers who apply TPR suggested that all EFL teachers in Benin secondary schools should try TPR method and see how it works. They think that this method works with beginners. They also suggested that the number of students in the classes should be proportional to the size of the classroom so that students can feel free in their movements. Meanwhile some comment that TPR can not work with abstract words, TPR can not work in small size classroom with a great number of students because students can not feel free in their movement. Some could even get hurt. They are right; these are some disadvantages of this method. They also pointed out that the issue of learners' needs and interest should be taken into account in all teaching/learning skills.

Results from Class Observation

In order to get practical results and accurate data, six classes were observed. Beginners students were involved. The goal was to check on how EFL teachers implement English vocabulary to beginners and to examine the different methods they use to teach vocabulary TPR method. Response, were used specifically to collect data about learners' outcomes basing on their attitudes and motivation, physical response, vocabulary understanding, communication of ideas and feeling, involvement and attention towards the English language. In the first class, class A the teacher worked on the different parts of the body. Students learned the parts of the

body through physical response to verbal command. Here is the report,

Teacher : "Ok, everyone, Touch your head !"

Students : (they touched their head in response to the teacher's command).

Teacher : "Now, Touch your ears)

Students : (they touched their ears).

Then the students were able to follow the actions without the teacher's representation, those who did not follow or understand the command found support from their peers and quickly represented the physical action required. Thus, the presence of visual aids like flash cards, posters and body language while teaching body parts were useful to help learners to understand the meaning of the words. Consequently, students are obliged to develop listening skill so as to understand commands very well. In the next classes, the same activity was positively executed by students. Teachers succeeded in teaching simple words with the use of command. Four teachers really succeeded in teaching vocabulary through the approach of TPR. Two teachers failed in teaching vocabulary in an effective way. For one of the teacher, this was due to the size of the class. The class was crowded (72) and it was mess. The second did not know on how to start a lesson on vocabulary. There was an absence of contextualization.

DISCUSSION

From the findings of this research the Total Physical Response method was confirmed to be appropriate for teaching English and for Beginners' English vocabulary learning at early stages of their learning process. (Hewitt and Linares, 1999, pp.203) indicated on their findings that "*the activities involving physical movement in English language are fun and stimulating for younger students*". For that reason, it may be assumed that TPR is appropriate with children or beginners. This idea goes in line with the findings of (Li, 2010 p.2) "TPR is best suited for beginning language learners".

TPR is only suitable for beginner levels. The method is not flexibly used to teach everything, and if used a lot, it would become repetitive. This method is a funny way of changing the dynamics and pace of a lesson used in conjunction with other methods and techniques. James Usher himself, considered TPR to be ineffective because if the teacher uses it for a long period of time without switching it with other activities that help teach the target language. Also from the observation, some teachers complained that the method is made up of mainly of commands, it tends to neglect narrative, descriptions, and conversation forms of language.

Li (2010) reported Asher (1995, p.48) when he states that : "The Total Physical Response method goes in contradiction to traditional approaches which start with production memorization or explicit grammar instructions". Also, learners could easily get confused if the teacher says an unknown command. This method does not develop pupils' writing skills. There is generally no basic text in TPR. The use of imperative to present grammatical structures and vocabulary of the target language generates some issues. The

teacher does not correct any student errors during oral communication. Teachers who have already tested the method stressed that TPR should be used in association with other methods and techniques. They have also questioned the relevance of TPR as far as its syllabus is concerned.

From the findings, it derives that TPR method has an impact on the English language, it helped in the development of a high stimulus in beginners when they started to achieve the goals of the lessons. Consequently learners generated a good attitude and motivation towards English language learning; in other words, when learners were integrated to the activities, and when they were becoming active part of the class through their physical representation of verbal commands, their attitude and motivation increased as their outcomes were successful. Those results of the findings align with (Midraj's et al. 2008, p.126) when they declare that "*There is a correlation between EFL student's extrinsic motivation and their language achievement*". The findings of this research also go in concordance with the research of (Maiztegui and Kestelman, 1973). In fact they have declared that through the TPR method, students showed higher retention, less frustration, and consequently higher motivation. In all, TPR impacts beginners positively.

Another important aspect from this research is that the results strongly indicated that TPR promoted a stress-free class environment while dealing with learners' responses and attitude. When students learned in a friendly atmosphere in which the opportunities to be involved in the activities are plentiful, learners could be better integrated to the class. This idea correlates strongly with the words of Li, (2010) when he reported Asher (1995 : 27). He states : "*The total Physical response method is stress-free because it is brain compatible*". Therefore, children's attention is improved as they become the center of the class and their performance is not predetermined by a dominant guider. In this way, the students can take part in the teaching activities at this time. The results of the present study indicate that the Total Physical Response method is different from the traditional methods to teach English since this method does not include explicit grammar instruction, and students learn at their own pace as they learn their first language.

Moreover, this research study and the findings obtained have significant implications on the field of designing and implementing Total Physical Response activities for learners that get involved in physical activity performance. The application of this method lead learners to the development of some learning skills and promote cooperative learning through TPR activities. The main skill developed by learners is the listening skill since this method pretends to teach the language similarly as the process that learners follow to acquire their mother tongue. Likewise, Machova (2009) cited Asher (2003, p.39) who states that "*the infant acquires language first through listening as the baby is not able to speak*".

Finally the results of this study demonstrate that children can develop listening skills and vocabulary understanding when they are involved in physical movement as a means to differentiate those commands or words. Even when learners

repeat the words they are more attentive to listen to the commands that the teacher proposes with the intention of getting them to move their bodies as the command requests to do it. That is why (Machova, 2009, p.43) affirmed that "*In TPR listening comprehension is prior to oral development*".

Implications and Suggestions

The results obtained from this research were significant. However, some issues still exist and are lowering the quality of English teaching in Benin secondary schools. First of all the training of EFL teachers on how to apply TPR in teaching vocabulary is fundamental. There are varieties ways of teaching vocabulary in EFL classes. The results from the questionnaire have shown that a great number of teachers were not knowledgeable on the term but practiced it somehow in their classes. Another group of experienced teachers applied the approach appropriately but have never heard about the term TPR. It will be profitable if teachers gained a hand on how to use the technique of TPR especially in teaching vocabulary.

Furthermore, the implementation of the Total Physical Response in Benin EFL classes in the teaching of vocabulary will stimulate learners' foreign language awareness and it will activate their involvement in the learning process. By adopting TPR for the teaching of vocabulary, learners' interaction will become more dynamic since the procedures imply learners' participation, involvement, and attention including them in constant physical movement. Moreover, teachers will realize that learners' nervousness and stress will be reduced since the activities with the approach lead learners to work independently. They are not strictly forced to do the tasks. They work at their own pace. Finally, it is suggested that the stakeholders provide adequate materials that can help in the teaching of vocabulary especially with the method of TPR. This will enhance the school effectiveness in terms of good proficiency.

CONCLUSION

This research study was conducted with the aim of promoting the application of the Total Physical Response through the teaching of vocabulary in Benin EFL classes. To examine the use of this method in Benin, a mixed method combining quantitative and qualitative methods was used in this research study to collect and analyze the data. During this research, teachers and students have played a key role. The usefulness of this method has given significant benefits to students' achievement in learning English vocabulary. Observation helped to have an idea on how vocabulary is taught through TPR. The results obtained in the study answered the research questions and research investigation, and confirmed what has been found in the literature review. Thus the following findings came out from the investigation. First TPR is successful with beginners since it involves them actively in the classroom activities; it can be effective in introducing English vocabulary. Secondly, it has given significant benefits to students' achievement in learning English vocabulary. Thirdly it favors a high-speed understanding of vocab-

ulary ; a long term retention and zero stress. However, TPR can cause some students over acting as they are too excited participating in learning activity. Another issue may be addressed in further research observing how the implementation of TPR activities can help learners with disabilities in their integration in class activities.

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APPENDIX A

Dear teacher, I am carrying out some research on TPR. I would be grateful if you could spare some time for the completion of the following questionnaire. Please tick only the appropriate letter. Thanks for your cooperation.

1. **Have you ever heard about the term TPR ?**
 - a- Yes
 - b- No
2. **What types of activities do you use in class in teaching vocabulary ?**
 - a- Use of songs
 - b- Use of commands
 - c- Use of stories
3. **Do you try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in your class ?**
 - a- Always
 - b- Sometimes
 - c- Never
4. **How do you do it ?**
 - a- By keeping a friendly relationship with learners
 - b- By using songs, games, motto and riddles
 - c- By using good strategies while teaching vocabulary
5. **Do your students achieve success in vocabulary learning ?**
 - a- Yes
 - b- Sometimes
 - c- Never
6. **How do you teach vocabulary**
 - a- By showing visual aids (real object, photo, card, drawing).
 - b- By explaining the word in English
 - c- By translating the English word into french or L1
 - d- By giving many examples*
 - e- By using synonyms, antonyms, words of the same family.
7. **TPR is a method by which students learn new words in a very fast way, through body actions. Do you make use of this method in your class ?**
 - a- Yes
 - b- Sometimes
 - c- No
8. **If yes or sometimes, do your students like this method ?**
 - a- Yes
 - b- No
9. **What problems may you encounter while using this method ?**
 - a- Discipline problem
 - b- I have to manage confusion
 - c- Abstract words are difficult to teach through this method
 - d- Physical constraints.
10. **Make any suggestions and comments about the use of TPR in Benin EFL classes**

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APPENDIX B

Observation grid				
Teacher's code_ Lesson_				
Class Development	Low	Medium	High	Comment
Presents good involvement and attention				
Reveal good attitude and motivation towards ELT				
Demonstrate vocabulary understanding				
Communicates ideas and feelings				
Responds physically to verbal commands: TPR				