

Relationship between Gender and Vocabulary Teaching Methodology among Iranian EFL Children: A Comparison of TPR and Direct Method

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Abstract

The present study intended to examine the impact of methodology on EFL vocabulary learning of elementary school boys and girls. To achieve this end, 40 elementary female and male students aged 9-10 were selected from among 60 students studying at a language institute in Isfahan, Iran. The students were selected based on the results of an overall language proficiency test as a placement test that had been prepared by the institute that identified students' level of proficiency. They were further divided into two experimental groups. Next, a pretest was used to identify the number of words students knew before treatment. The experimental group A learned vocabulary through Direct Method and in the experimental group B students learned vocabulary through Total Physical Response. After 12 weeks of instruction a post-test was administered to measure and compare the results of vocabulary learning of two groups after treatment. The data collected were put to statistical analysis using SPSS. The results of t-test showed the positive effect of TPR on learners' L2 vocabulary knowledge. With regard to the impact of gender on learners' L2 vocabulary knowledge, findings revealed that there were not any statistically significant differences between the male and female learners' vocabulary score.

Keywords: Total physical response, direct method, gender, vocabulary, Iranian EFL learners

1. Introduction

Since the English language has become the dominant international language, the importance of learning English has become more evident and hence teaching English has become more important. In the same way, teaching English to young learners (TEYL) has attracted many people in the last decades around the world, and therefore, English education has been increasingly practiced at the primary levels. Learning is among everyday experiences for everyone, but it is most obvious for young learners who acquire new behaviors, facts, languages, ideas and concepts very rapidly (Bartsch, Horvath, & Estes, 2003).

Therefore, considering the young learners' characteristics and also the language instruction are of utmost importance. Young learners tend to learn language more implicitly rather than explicitly (Cameron, 2001; Pinter, 2006; Slatterly & Willis, 2001). Recognizing meaningful messages is easy for them, but they cannot analyze the language as a system. Thus, presenting the language within 'meaningful contexts' is crucial while teaching English to young learners. In this way, language use will be reflected authentically (Cameron, 2001; Halliwell, 1992).

While the experience of language learning is something interesting and attractive for some learners, for some others it is a boring activity that makes them wish to get away from it. Teacher domination over the classroom, having learners to do what they are told to, lack of creativity, learners not having any room for their saying and being bound by their benches for over an hour, and following a monotonous schedule are some of the factors augmenting this boredom. The problem with traditional monotonous schedule is the assumption that what goes on in the classroom is appropriate for all learners while there are so many varieties among the students in terms of their personal characteristics, learning styles, and foreign language learning needs. Besides that, the activities that learners are engaged in traditional classrooms are not authentic because they are specifically designed for teaching purposes, so they don't have any similarity to their real life situations (Safdarian, 2012).

In contrast, recent research on young learners' course-books and materials used in foreign language classes shows the implementation of a variety of methodologies and teaching strategies that focus specifically on the acquisition of particular grammatical structures and sets of vocabulary items (Cameron, 2003). This goes back in the history to around 50 years ago, from the time that Grammar-translation method was introduced, to Direct method, after that to Audiolingual method, to Cognitive code and a host of variations in each. Other methods have also been introduced to

the field such as Silent way, Total Physical Response, Suggestopedia, Natural approach, etc. So, the problem is which of these methods is more beneficial in teaching English to young learners and which one motivates the learners more in their learning of English (Rahimi Tehrani, Barati, & Youhanaee, 2013).

Among many techniques and strategies available for foreign language educators to encourage students and help the acquisition of a language, the enormous benefits and applicability of language literature in foreign language learning have distinguished it from the other techniques that can be used in a language classroom. Literature in the language classroom can change the monotonous schedule, create a much more motivating environment and provide wide variety of language input which is adaptable to every learning style (Safdarian, 2012).

The use of suitable method would make the young learners more interested in studying. Total Physical Response (TPR) is one of methods commonly used in language learning. Total Physical Response is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action. It attempts to teach language through physical (motor) activity. TPR makes learning become enjoyable and less stressful.

The principal feature of the direct method is characterized, above all, by the use of the target language as a means of instruction and communication in the language classroom, and by the avoidance of the use of the first language and of the translation as a technique. Richards and Rodgers (1986, p. 38), list the principles of Direct Method as follows:

- “Classroom instructions are conducted exclusively in the target language;
- Only everyday vocabulary and sentences are taught;
- Oral communication skills are built up in a carefully graded progression organized around question-and answer exchanges between teachers and student in small intensive class;
- Grammar taught inductively;
- New teaching points are taught through modeling and practice;
- Concrete vocabulary is taught through demonstration, objects, and pictures; abstract vocabulary was taught through association of ideas;
- Both speech and listening comprehension are taught;
- Correct pronunciation and grammar are emphasized.”

2. Statement of the Problem

Teaching young learners English is completely different from teaching adults, for they have peculiar physical and behavioral characteristics. Young learners need to be provided with an atmosphere that is suitable to their imagination through different activities appropriate to their own world. In this sense, teachers should modify their teaching techniques and strategies in a way that appeal to students’ abilities, aptitudes and modalities and create that promising classroom environment where students learn English language through amusement and enjoyment (Cakir, 2004).

Ilham (2009) said that, “vocabulary is the main point to learn English. It is the first step to learn English because without knowing a lot of vocabulary in English, the children will get difficulties in mastering English. Moreover, teaching vocabulary in elementary schools, especially for children, was not an easy way” (pp. 2-3).

McCarthy (1990) stated that, “it was the experience of most language teachers that the single, biggest component of any language course was vocabulary. No matter how well the student learned grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of a foreign language were mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in a foreign language, could not happen in any meaningful way” (p. 9).

Having limited vocabulary is also a barrier that prevents students from learning a language. If learners do not know how to expand their vocabulary, they gradually lose interest in learning. Many students consider learning vocabulary a tedious job. Generally, they have lack of interests in learning English language as they find it a dry and difficult subject to learn. As a result, most students dislike learning English and although they attend English lessons, they are not interested in learning English properly. Consequently, the teacher should be creative and be a good model in teaching English for their students.

Students could become bored by repeatedly listening to a narration or dialog as they attempted to understand the meaning of new words or phrases in context (Purcell, 1992). It means that vocabulary must be learned in the class and must be organized in a good teaching learning process. Therefore, language teachers are required to employ a way to make learning vocabulary easier for children and use effective and appropriate methods. Consequently, one of the challenges that language teachers encounter with regard to the variety of teaching methods is which of method, among teaching methods, is beneficial in teaching English to young learners best, and which one motivates the learners more in their learning of English (Rahimi Tehrani, Barati, & Youhanaee, 2013).

3. Objectives of the Study

This research compared student’s vocabulary learning through the implementation of TPR and Direct method to investigate the effect of two methods, namely Direct method and Total Physical Response on the progress of Iranian EFL young learners in learning English vocabulary. In this regard, the study also explored whether the gender of young learners might influence vocabulary learning outcomes in relation to TPR and Direct method.

3.1 Research Questions

The present study was interested in answers to the following questions:

- 1) Does the application of Total Physical Response Method have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement?
- 2) Does the application of Direct Method have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement?
- 3) Is there any significant difference between the effects of TPR and DM on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement?
- 4) Does gender have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning?

3.2 Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were designed based on research questions:

- 1) The application of Total Physical Response Method does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement.
- 2) The application of Direct Method does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement.
- 3) There is not any significant difference between the effects of TPR and DM on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement.
- 4) Gender does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning.

4. Methodology

4.1 Participants

Forty elementary female and male students aged 9-10 were selected from among 60 students studying at a language institute in Isfahan, Iran. The students were selected based on the result of the overall proficiency test as a placement test prepared by the institute that classified the students into the same level of proficiency. The selected participants were divided into two groups. Group A (20 students) consisting of ten boys and ten girls who learned vocabularies through Direct method; and group B (20 students) consisting of ten boys and ten girls who learned vocabularies through TPR approach. The researchers taught each group three times a week for thirty minutes a day.

4.2 Instruments and Materials

4.2.1 Overall Proficiency Test

The overall proficiency test was administered to the participants for the purpose of determining that they were at the same level of English proficiency and ensuring their homogeneity. The reliability and validity of the test have been established by the institute authorities.

4.2.2 Pre-test

In order to indicate number of words students knew before and learned after treatment the researchers gave an oral vocabulary test. The actual pictures from the book (*Back Pack1*) were shown one at a time to each student in order of their appearance in the book. Students were asked to answer the questions of each picture from this book. The questions asked for each picture were, "What is this?", "What is s/he doing?" "What is she wearing?". Then each student's responses were recorded on their own individual recording sheet, one for each unit; and were measured as their prior knowledge of vocabulary.

4.2.3 Post-test

The post-test was administrated to measure and compare the results of vocabulary learning of two groups after the treatment. The students were assessed on the new targeted vocabulary items after the treatment. For group B, the researchers asked some questions including, "What is this?", "What is s/he doing?", "What is your teacher wearing?", "Is he jumping?", "Can you jump?" and so on. Then the researchers gave commands to students one by one and they acted out the commands and answered the questions. For group A, the researchers asked some questions including, "What are they?", "What is s/he doing?" "What do you have in your bag?" "Is she dancing?" "Can you touch your toes?" and so on. Then each student's responses were recorded on their own individual recording sheet. The students' scores on post tests were used for data analysis and answering the research questions consequently.

4.2.4 Field notes

Field notes were used to record the situation and the activities during the teaching and learning process, such as how the teacher carried out the material and the students' responded (Octavian, 2007). The researchers used field note to know what happens during the process of implementing Total Physical Response and Direct method in improving vocabulary. This field note helped record the students' activities and the researchers could check the progress and consider what to do in the next meeting.

4.2.5 Book

For the purpose of this study, the researchers taught four units of a book (*Back Pack1*) including Unit 1 Celebrations, Unit 2 Head to toes, Unit 3 Ready for school, and Unit 4 Things I Wear.

4.2.6. Flash card

Flash card can be an excellent learning and teaching tool especially when introducing new vocabulary or drilling familiar words. Besides being used by the teacher, they can also be used in a variety of activities. Flash cards are very versatile teaching resource especially for ESL and language teaching. They can be used virtually in any lesson and at every level of teaching ESL. In fact flash cards are indispensable for the beginner and elementary level as at these stages the learners are engaged in developing their vocabulary. Therefore, the researchers used some flash cards, where they wanted to teach new words or reviewed the vocabularies in both groups. The researchers showed the flash cards to students and asked some questions. In group B when the researchers taught verbs, showed flash cards to each student and asked her or him to act out. On the other hand, in group B the researchers showed flash cards to each student and asked “what is s/he doing?”

4.2.7 Picture

Language teachers use different types of teaching materials to explain the meaning of new words. The use of visual materials is useful and it is an important way of vocabulary learning. Visual things make the learning process easier, and they are used by teachers for better learning. English teachers feel that using visual materials such as pictures, real objects, etc. in teaching new words makes the learning process enjoyable and memorable. Teacher also found that visual elements can motivate students for better learning. Therefore, picture was one of the educational aids for researchers to teach vocabularies to both groups. In both groups the researchers hanged the related picture on the board and pointed to picture and simultaneously repeated the words, or drew new words on the board and repeated.

4.2.8 Song

One advantage of using songs in the young learner classroom is their flexibility. Songs can be used for a number of purposes and there are many reasons why songs can be considered a valuable pedagogical tool. Songs can help young learners improve their listening skills and pronunciation, therefore potentially helping them to improve their speaking skills (Murphey, 1992). Songs can also be useful tools in the learning of vocabulary, sentence structures, and sentence patterns, not to mention their reflectivity of the mother tongue culture (Murphey, 1992). Perhaps the greatest benefit of using songs in the classroom is that they can be fun. In group B, the researchers sang the song and at the same time all students sang with them and they acted out the commands along with the researchers and pointed to any word or flash card that they had. In group A, the researchers played the related CD of the lesson two or three times then said the new words and the students repeated after them. Therefore, song was one of the educational aids for researchers to teach vocabularies to both groups.

4.3 Procedure

The present study had a quasi-experimental research design. Based on the result of the Institute placement test 40 students were selected. Students were divided into two groups. All students were similarly at the same level of language proficiency. Group A (20 students) learned vocabularies through Direct method and group B (20 students) learned vocabularies through TPR. Students in the study were assessed on vocabulary knowledge by the pretest, the researchers worked with each student individually to collect the data. The actual pictures from the book were shown one at a time to each student in order of their appearance in the book. Students were asked to name each of pictures from Back Pack1 and answer the questions. . The questions asked for each picture were, “*What is this?*” “*What is s/he doing?*” “*what are there in this picture?*” as the picture in the book was pointed to. Each student’s responses were recorded on their own individual recording sheet; one for each story.

For the group taught through TPR the following steps were followed. The topic of the first unit was Celebration. The researchers entered the class and greeted the students. Then they arranged the students' seat in a circle because the pattern of this method (TPR) is U-shape or circle. The teacher stood up in the middle of the circle. She asked the students whether they were hungry or not? All of them answered in choirs, “*yes*” “*ok, we will go home after we study about food and drinks*”. They were curious with dinning set brought by the researchers. They played the song and sung and performed the actions and showed the objects or pointed to them. Then, the researchers showed the students the dinning set and said their names: *cake, ice-cream, lemonade, juice, salad, pour the water, drink milk, take some rice*. The teacher repeated the words and commands for two or three times and she performed and showed them simultaneously. The researchers asked who wants to be volunteer. Some students raised their hands while standing up. The researchers said that all of students would get their turn in order to be quite. Then, the students sat and the teacher chose some who were less active than others. After that, the volunteers did the teacher’s instruction. Following it, each volunteer gave instructions to the students who were sitting. They might sit after giving all of instructions as the teacher did. Then, the researchers asked more volunteers to come to the front. The researchers said, “*drink the water*”. Then, they encouraged the students to make different sentences. One student, for example replied, “*drink the milk*”. The other students made different sentences using the words given. Then, the researchers said, “*eat*”. One student in the left side answered, “*eat rice*”. Good, “*eat the rice*”, the teacher replied. This way the teacher checked students' pronunciation and using word in the sentences. The researchers gave a summary of the lesson by asking the students to do some instructions in turn. Then, the teacher closed the meeting.

The topic of the second unit was Body parts. The researchers entered the class and she greeted the students. The researchers asked them whether they ever heard the song:

- Head, shoulder, knees, and toes

- Knees and toes
- And ears, and eyes, and nose, and cheek,
- Head, shoulder, knees, and toes
- Knees and toes

All of them answered that they never heard the song before. Then, the researchers asked students to listen to the song while watching the movement of the researchers. The researchers sang and touched the parts of body based on the song. Then, they asked volunteers to sing in front with her. The researchers asked all students to sing along with her and the volunteers. They sang twice, and the researchers let the volunteers sing. Then, the researchers asked them to act out each command that they said: *touch your ears, close your eyes, bend your knees, wiggle your nose and shake your hand*. There were still some mistakes because they did not know the meaning of *touch, bend and shake*. After the same verbs were given for different parts of the body and researchers acted out the commands, the students understood the meaning. In improving the students' ability to pronounce the new words related to *parts of the body*, the researchers asked a student to be the instructor. Then, the first student who became instructor gave instructions to the second student. From the first student, researchers checked the pronunciation, and from the second student, researchers checked whether the meaning is correct. Then, the researchers asked the students to make new imperative sentences using the words *open, close, touch, shake, bend and wiggle* and at the same time they performed the actions. The researchers gave a conclusion of the material given. The researchers asked them to practice some instruction and closed the meeting.

The topic of the third unit was *Ready for School*. In the beginning, the researchers greeted the students. They asked "what objects they can find in the classroom?". The students answered, "board, table, chair". Then, the researchers asked "what they have got in their bag?". All students opened their bag in a hurry and answered, "book, bag, pencil, pen". The researchers asked some volunteers to come in front of the class and they immediately raised their hands. Three volunteers came in front and brought their bags. Then the teacher gave commands, "open your bag", "take your pencil", "take your pen", and "close your bag", "read a book", "sit down", "stand up". At the same time she did the actions with students. After they mastered the vocabularies, then they gave instruction to the other students. Then, the researchers asked a student to be the instructor. The first student who became instructor gave instructions to the second student. Then the researchers asked them to make new sentences based on the words given. The researchers asked the students to make new imperative sentences by using words *open, close, sit, stand, write and read*. The researchers gave a summary of the lesson by asking the students to do some instructions in turn. Then, the teacher closed the meeting.

The topic of the fourth unit was *Things I Wear*. In the beginning, the researchers greeted the students. The teacher said, "Good afternoon students". Students replied, "Good afternoon, Ms. How are you today?" *I'm fine. Ok, today we will study about clothes you wear*. The researchers began to mention the names of clothes: *hat, skirt, shirt, pants, dress, sneakers, socks, and shoes*. Then, they asked, "what is it?" She asked while holding a hat. There was no answer. *This is a hat. Ok, now please all of you repeat after me*. The researchers asked the students to touch the clothes they wore and said the names along with them. The researchers asked the students to touch the correct name of clothes they were wearing. One by one the researchers asked two boys to be volunteers and did instructions along with them, *touch your hat, put your hat off, put your hat on, put your left shoe off, and put your right shoe off*. When the teacher found out that the instructions were sufficient, she asked the first boy to give commands to the second boy. Next, a girl gave instructions to the rest students. The researchers pronounced the words and repeated by the students, they were: *put on, put off, shirt, dress, pants, socks, and shoes, sneakers*. Then, she asked all of the students to pronounce the words. Then, she asked the students randomly to pronounce *sneakers*. By doing so, the researchers and the other students could check whether the pronunciation was correct or incorrect. It was repeated for all words. The researchers gave the students a clue, "touch" and asked them to make new sentence with the vocabularies they had learnt before. The boy in front of the teacher answered, "touch your shirt". Then, the teacher asked one student to give a clue and the other students made different sentences. Most of students made a sentence that was slightly different from the example given. The teacher asked the students to stand up and did her instructions in series. Then, she summarized the lesson by reviewing some instructions and closed the meeting.

The experimental group A was taught through Direct method. The arrangement of the class was the same as regular classes. For the first unit the researchers entered the class and greeted the students. She stood in front of the class and placed a big picture of the new lesson in the front of the classroom. Then she asked the students to close their books and listened to the song and at the same time she pointed to the part of the picture which song described. Then the researchers started to talk about the picture and told a short story with new words; simultaneously she repeated new words two or three times. Then, the students asked if they had any questions. For example a boy raised his hand and asked "what is the meaning of drink?". The researchers gave examples "I'm drinking water, I'm drinking milk". The researchers asked whether he understood the meaning or not. He said "No". The researchers brought verbs flash cards and said "look at the flash card. He is drinking water" and acted out at the same time. The boy nodded and said that he understood the meaning. Then she asked the students to make a sentence with "drink" and she called on one by one, they read their sentences. After all of the students' questions had been answered, the researchers asked some of their own. The students were required to answer together in harmony. She pointed to the picture and asked "Is he drinking water?" and the class replied in chorus, "No". The researchers reminded the class to answer in a full sentence and said "No, he isn't. He is eating rice". Then, the researchers asked, "Is it a cake?". They replied, "No, it isn't. It is salad". The researchers asked, "Is he drinking juice?" and they replied, "No, he isn't. He is eating rice". The question and answer session continued for a few more minutes. Finally, the teacher invited the students to ask questions. The

researchers called on students to pose questions one at a time to which the class replied. The researchers gave flash cards to the students and they started to pose questions. After several questions had been posed, a girl asked, “*Is she drinking lemonade?*”. Before the students had a chance to respond, the researchers worked with the students on the pronunciation of “*lemonade*”, because the girl pronounced it incorrectly. Then, she included the rest of the class in this practice as well and they repeated after her. After she insured that the students' pronunciation was correct, she allowed them to answer the question. By the time that the students posed their questions if they pronounced any words incorrectly the researchers interrupted them and correct their pronunciation. The teacher pointed to the picture or flash card and said the word and students repeated after her. Then, the researchers gave a summary of the lesson by asking the students to play the game Hang Man. This game helped students to memorize the new words.

For the second unit the researchers taught body parts. She entered the class and greeted the students. First she asked some questions, for example, she asked “*What color is your hair?* ”. Just two or three students answered her question. Then, she asked the students to listen to the song while looking at the picture of the lesson which the researchers placed on the board and she pointed to every word that song described. Then, she pointed to her body parts and also she acted out the verbs and repeated their names or sentences and the students repeated after her. This way, the researchers worked on students' pronunciation and helped the students to learn more. After that, the researchers asked if they had any question and nobody raised her/his hand. The researchers asked some questions for example, “*Are your eyes brown?*” and a girl replied “*No*”. The researchers reminded her to answer in a full sentence and she helped her to complete her answer, “*No, they aren't. They are black.* ” Then she asked, “*Is your hair yellow?*” and a boy replied, “*No, it isn't. It's black*”. Then, she called on their names one by one and every one that she called her name should point to her body parts that the researchers said and repeated after her. This way, she checked the students' pronunciation and she knew how much they learned the new word. If they pronounced any words incorrect the researchers immediately correct them. Finally, the researchers invited volunteers to come in front of the class and do pantomime and the students should guess which verb was it.

The topic of third unit was Ready for school. In the beginning, the researchers greeted the students and she asked “*What objects they can see in the class room?*” some of the students answered “*book, chair, table*”. Then, she showed the objects in the class and said their names and the students repeated after her. The researchers opened her book and pointed to the pictures and told some sentences. For example she pointed to the picture and said, “*She is reading a book. He is writing on the board*”. After that the researchers asked the students “*open their bags and tell what they have got in their bags*”. They opened their bags one by one and told the class, name of objects that they had in it. The researchers helped students if they didn't know meaning of the objects or she correct students' pronunciation immediately if they had any problem. At the end of the class, the researchers asked students to look at objects in the class and made some sentences with new words that they learned that day.

The topic of fourth unit was Things I Wear. In the beginning, the researchers greeted the students. She brought clothes flash cards and showed each flash card to the students and the researchers began to mention the names of clothes: *hat, skirt, shirt, pants, dress, sneakers, and socks*. Then, she asked, “*What is it?*” She asked while holding a flash card. There was no answer. The researchers said, “*This is a hat. Ok, now please all of you repeat after me.* ” Then she took another flash card and asked “*What is this?*” The students answered and the researchers repeated after them and then the students repeated the words two or three times after the researchers. The researchers herself acted out the verbs and showed the flash cards for example she said, look at me I'm putting my hat off, I'm touching my hat, I'm putting off my left shoe. When the researchers found out that the instructions were sufficient, she invited the students to come in front of the class one by one and gave flash card to each student and s/he asked some questions and the other students answered. This way the researchers checked the students' pronunciation and if they have any problem she immediately corrected their pronunciation or if they didn't know the meaning of any word or didn't know the meaning of any word or did not know the name of any word the researchers helped them.

4.4 Data Analysis

After collecting the required data, a number of statistical tests were performed to check the research hypotheses. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) Version 22 was used to perform all the statistical analyses in this study.

To examine the first hypothesis, a paired samples t-test was run on the pretest and posttest scores for the TPR group to examine the effect of teaching English vocabularies through TPR approach. Moreover, to investigate the second hypothesis, another paired samples t-test was conducted in order to examine the difference between the participants' scores on the pretest and posttest in the direct method group. Additionally, to examine hypothesis three, an Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was carried out to compare the effects of TPR and DM on EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning. Afterwards, in order to examine the fourth hypothesis, independent samples t-tests were carried out on male and female learners' vocabulary scores to study the effect of gender on learners' L2 vocabulary learning.

5. Results

5.1 First research question

The first research question tried to examine if teaching English vocabularies through TPR approach had any significant effect on improving Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning. Subsequently, the first null hypothesis was made in reply to this question.

Hypothesis 1: The application of Total Physical Response Method does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement.

In order to investigate the first research question, a paired samples t-test was run on the pretest and posttest scores in the TPR group. The minimum alpha for confirmation of the research hypothesis was .05. At first the descriptive data for L2 vocabulary pretest and posttest are displayed in Table 1. Similarly, the results from the paired samples t-tests are reported in Table 2.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for TPR pretest and posttest scores

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	10.10	20	2.732	.611
	Posttest	15.30	20	2.203	.493

As reported in Table 1, the mean score of vocabulary posttest ($M = 15.30$) is higher than the mean score of pretest ($M = 10.10$) in the TPR group. Although the mean score of the two tests are different, it is not clear whether these differences are significant or not. Therefore, paired samples t-tests were carried out on pretest and posttest scores.

Table 2. Paired samples t-test for TPR pretest and posttest scores

Pair	Pretest	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	Lower			
1	Posttest	5.200	2.802	.627	-6.511	-3.889	-8.299	19	.000

The results of the paired sample t-test in Table 4.2 reveal that the differences between pretest and posttest scores are statistically significant ($P < .05$) for the TPR group. Therefore, students' L2 vocabulary knowledge has improved significantly after receiving instruction following the TPR approach.

Based on these results, therefore, deductions can be made that EFL learners' vocabulary scores in the TPR group increased significantly from pretest to posttest, suggesting that teaching English vocabularies through TPR approach can lead to L2 vocabulary learning improvement. Consequently, the first null hypothesis predicting that the application of TPR method does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement is rejected.

5.2 Second research question

The second research question tried to investigate if teaching English vocabularies using the direct method had any effects on EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement. Subsequently, hypothesis two was formulated to answer this question.

Hypothesis 2: The application of Direct Method does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement.

A paired samples t-test was conducted in order to examine the difference between the participants' scores on the pretest and posttest in the direct method group. Table 3 shows the descriptive data and t-test results are demonstrated in Table 4.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for DM pretest and posttest scores

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	8.10	20	3.655	.817
	Posttest	11.10	20	3.508	.784

Table 3 shows that the mean score of the posttest ($M = 11.10$) is greater than the mean score of pretest ($M = 8.10$) in the direct method group. However, the significance of this difference should be checked in the paired samples t-test table below.

Table 4. Paired samples t-test for DM pretest and posttest scores

Pair	Pretest	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	Lower			
1	Posttest	3.000	1.777	.397	-3.832	-2.168	7.550	9	.000

The results of the t-test, illustrated in Table 4.4, reveal that there are statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) between the two sets of scores in the direct method group. That is, the mean score of the posttest is significantly larger than the pretest mean score. This finding indicates that applying the direct method has promoted EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning.

On the whole, these results showed that teaching English vocabularies using the direct method had a positive effect on EFL learners' vocabulary learning improvement. Therefore, the second hypothesis as the application of Direct Method does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement is rejected.

5.3 Third research question

The third research question addressed the difference between L2 vocabulary learning improvement of learners in the TPR and DM groups. As mentioned in chapter one hypothesis three was formulated in response to this research question.

Hypothesis 3: There is not any significant difference between the effects of TPR and DM on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement.

In order to investigate the third hypothesis, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was carried out. Pallant (2011) stated that ANCOVA can be used when there is a two-group pretest/posttest design. The scores on the pretest are treated as a covariate to control for pre-existing differences between the groups. This makes ANCOVA very useful in situations when sample sizes are quite small.

The major assumption associated with ANCOVA is that the relationship between the dependent variable and each of the covariates should be linear (straight-line). One of the reasons for including covariates is to increase the power of the analysis of variance test and violation of this assumption is likely to reduce the power (sensitivity) of the test. Therefore, in the current study scatterplots are used to check for the assumption of linear relationship between the dependent variable (posttests) and the covariates (pretests) for both groups. Figure 1 below displayed the distribution of the vocabulary scores for each of the groups.

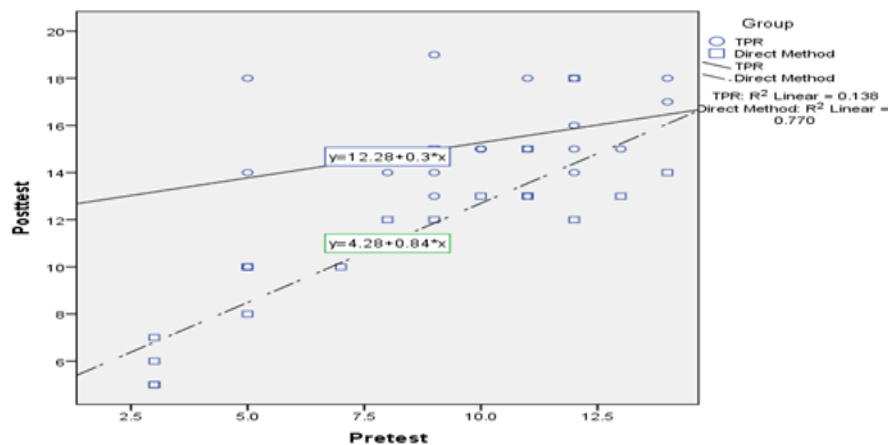


Figure 1. Distribution of the vocabulary scores in TPR and DM groups

As illustrated in Figure 1, there was no curvilinear relationship for any of the groups. Owing to the fact that the relationship was clearly linear, the assumption of a linear relationship was not violated and it was acceptable to run the ANCOVA.

Another assumption which was required to be checked before running ANCOVA was the homogeneity of variance. To make sure that vocabulary scores had similar variances across both groups Levene's test of equality of variance was run. Levene's test of equality of error variance checks the assumption that each dependent variable will have similar variances for all groups (all cells in the factor design matrix). The result of the Levene's test for homogeneity of variance is reported in Table 5.

Table 5. Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.396	1	38	.533

a. Design: Intercept + Pretest + Group

Levene tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups. As Table 5 depicts, the Levene's statistics is .533. Thus, the variance is equal and there is no significant difference between the variance of groups. In this case we have not violated the assumption because our Sig. value is larger than the cut-off of .05.

All in all, none of the assumptions were violated and it was safe to conduct the ANCOVA. Tables 6 and 7 report the descriptive data of vocabulary pretest and posttest scores with regard to TPR and DM group. Additionally, ANCOVA results are demonstrated in Table 4.8.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of TPR and DM groups

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
Pretest	TPR	20	10.10	2.732	.611	5	14
	Direct Method	20	8.10	3.655	.817	3	14
	Total	40	9.10	3.342	.528	3	14
Posttest	TPR	20	15.30	2.203	.493	10	19
	Direct Method	20	11.10	3.508	.784	5	18
	Total	40	13.20	3.589	.567	5	19

Considering the pretest scores, illustrated in Table 6, the mean score of the pretest in the TPR group ($M = 10.10$) is higher than the mean score of the pretest in the DM group ($M = 8.10$). Although the mean score of the posttests for the TPR group ($M = 15.30$) is larger than the mean score of the posttests for the DM group ($M = 11.10$), it is not clear to what extent that difference is because of the pretest score variations. Therefore, ANCOVA is carried out to examine if there was a significant difference between the posttest scores while pretest scores are hold constant. Adjusted means of posttests are reported in Table 7.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics of adjusted posttests in TPR and DM groups

Group	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
TPR	14.652 ^a	.477	13.686	15.618
Direct Method	11.748 ^a	.477	10.782	12.714

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values:
Pretest = 9.10.

Table 7 shows that the adjusted mean of posttest scores are greater in the TPR group than in the DM group, suggesting that the application of TPR approach resulted in better vocabulary knowledge improvement than the DM. Table 8 checks the significance of these differences using the ANCOVA.

Table 8. ANCOVA across TPR and DM groups

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Squared	Eta Squared
Corrected Model	342.321 ^a	2	171.161	39.561	.000	.681	
Intercept	227.829	1	227.829	52.660	.000	.587	
Pretest	165.921	1	165.921	38.350	.000	.509	
Group	76.628	1	76.628	17.711	.000	.324	
Error	160.079	37	4.326				
Total	7472.000	40					
Corrected Total	502.400	39					

a. R Squared = .681 (Adjusted R Squared = .664)

The results of the ANCOVA in Table 8 reveal that, after adjusting for pretest scores, there is a statistically significant difference between the TPR and DM groups regarding the vocabulary posttest scores, $F = 17.71$, $p = .000$. Moreover, Table 8 shows that there is a small relationship between the pretest and posttest scores, as indicated by a partial eta squared value of .324.

All in all, based on these findings, it could be concluded that teaching English vocabularies using the TPR approach led to better L2 vocabulary knowledge ability than did the application of the DM. Thus, the third null hypothesis predicting

that there is not any significant difference between the effects of TPR and DM on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement is rejected.

5.4 Forth research question

The last research question examined the difference between vocabulary learning of male and female learners in both groups. As mentioned in chapter one hypothesis four was formulated in response to this research question.

Hypothesis 4: Gender does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning.

In order to examine the last hypothesis, independent samples t-tests were carried out on male and female learners' vocabulary scores. At first the descriptive data are displayed in Table 9; similarly, results from the t-tests are displayed in Table 10.

Table 9. Descriptive statistics for male and female learners

Group		Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
TPR	Pretest	Female	10	10.50	2.550	.806
		Male	10	9.70	2.983	.943
	Posttest	Female	10	16.10	2.025	.640
		Male	10	14.50	2.173	.687
Direct Method	Pretest	Female	10	8.50	3.536	1.118
		Male	10	7.70	3.917	1.239
	Posttest	Female	10	11.50	2.799	.885
		Male	10	10.70	4.218	1.334

Table 9 shows that the mean scores of female learners are slightly higher than the mean scores of male learners in all of the 8 sets of scores. As for the posttests in the TPR group, the difference between the mean score of female ($M = 16.10$) and male ($M = 14.50$) learners is the largest.

However, as for the other 6 sets of scores, differences between female and male learners are smaller than 1. Although the mean scores are different, it is not clear whether these differences are significant or not. Therefore, independent samples t-tests were carried out (see Table 10).

Table 10. Independent samples t-tests across gender

Group			Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
			F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper	
TPR	Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.407	.532	.645	18	.527	.800	1.241	-1.807	3.407
		Equal variances not assumed			.645	17.573	.527	.800	1.241	-1.812	3.412
	Posttest	Equal variances assumed	.159	.694	1.703	18	.106	1.600	.939	-.373	3.573
		Equal variances not assumed			1.703	17.911	.106	1.600	.939	-.374	3.574
Direct Method	Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.355	.559	.479	18	.637	.800	1.669	-2.706	4.306
		Equal variances not assumed			.479	17.814	.637	.800	1.669	-2.708	4.308
	Posttest	Equal variances assumed	1.560	.228	.500	18	.623	.800	1.601	-2.563	4.163
		Equal variances not assumed			.500	15.639	.624	.800	1.601	-2.600	4.200

The results of independent samples t-tests, reported in Table 10, show that there is not any statistically significant

differences ($p > .05$) between the male and female learners regarding their L2 vocabulary scores in any of the TPR and DM groups. Therefore, the differences in Table 9 are found to be not statistically significant after conducting independent samples t-tests.

Based on the observed results deductions could be made that gender did not play any role in learners' L2 vocabulary learning. Thus, the fourth null hypothesis stating that gender does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning is confirmed.

6. Discussion

The first research question tried to examine whether teaching English vocabularies through TPR approach had any significant effect on improving Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning. Subsequently, the first null hypothesis was made in reply to this question. Findings suggested that the implementation of TPR method resulted in better L2 vocabulary learning ability. Therefore, the first null hypothesis was rejected.

The findings of the present study are in line with those of previous studies (e.g., Hsu & Lin, 2014; Li, 2010; Machova, 2009; Oktiana, 2013; Pujiningsih, 2010; Sariyati, 2013) in revealing a positive impact of TPR method on improving EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning.

Hsu and Lin (2014) purpose was to investigate the effects of TPR on English vocabulary learning for resource classroom students. A multiple probe design across subjects of single-subject experimental design was used to evaluate the effects. The data collected from the students during the baseline, intervention, maintenance phases were analyzed by using visual inspection techniques, time-series C statistic. Findings showed that students learned the expressing abilities of English functional vocabulary immediately through TPR.

The issue of vocabulary understanding through TPR was also highlighted by Li (2010) who found that students demonstrate their understanding through actions. Children associate the vocabulary with the actions; Li (2010) argues that "students can establish the connection between the target language with the action and understand the target language by themselves; consequently, students will remember the meaning of the vocabulary unconsciously" (p 1-2). As for the current study, therefore, it was indispensable to support the words with actions, to facilitate the children's understanding of the vocabulary. In addition, Machova (2009) stated that TPR is a good method for teaching English vocabulary to young language learners because TPR would make the long term recall easier for learners.

The data of Oktiana (2013) was collected by giving the pretest and posttest to the second grade students of Bandungkulon. The collected data was analyzed by conducting t-tests. The results of data analysis showed that teaching vocabulary to young learners using TPR was effective to improve student's vocabulary mastery.

In an action research, Pujiningsih (2010) aimed to know whether TPR can improve students' English vocabulary. The participants of research were the students of the sixth grade. In collecting the data the researchers used observation notes, diaries, video recording, interview, and tests. Findings showed that TPR can improve the students' English vocabulary including the meaning, spelling, pronunciation, and using of words and the most significant improvement was the aspect of meaning and spelling.

In addition, Sariyati's (2013) findings revealed that after conducting the experimental research to investigate whether TPR method was effective in vocabulary mastery of elementary school children, Total Physical Response method had high effect in improving vocabulary mastery of the students.

Levine (2005) stated that the characteristics of young learners are physically moving about while acquiring and learning languages and they engage in enjoyable activities with language. In addition, Hewitt and Linares (1999) found that the activities involving physical movement in English language teaching are fun and stimulating for younger students. Therefore, this method is best used with children or beginners. Moreover, according to Li (2010) TPR is best suited for beginning language learners. Overall, from the findings gained on this research regarding the first research question, it can be inferred that the TPR is effective and suitable to be used for children to learn English vocabulary.

The second research question addressed the effect of implementing the DM on learners' L2 vocabulary development. As mentioned in chapter one, null hypothesis two was formulated in response to this research question. Null hypothesis two mentioned that the application of DM does not have any significant effect on learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement. Results revealed that this method played a significant role in improving learners' L2 vocabulary and therefore the second null hypothesis was rejected.

The findings of the present study mentioned above were in congruence with Wanzek (2014), Coyne, et al. (2009), Coyne, et al. (2010), Handayani's (2012), Silverman and Hines (2009), Silverman (2007), and Crevecoeur, Coyne and Mccoach (2014) who came to the point that students' L2 vocabulary learning would improve when it was thought using the DM.

There is comparatively little research to report on methods of presenting and practicing vocabulary in the classroom. According to Wanzek (2014), Direct vocabulary instruction, in which the teacher intentionally focuses instruction on developing students' knowledge of word meanings by targeting specific words, has been recommended as one important means of improving vocabulary learning (e.g., Biemiller, 2001; Blachowicz, Fisher, Ogle, & Watts-Taffe, 2006; Robbins & Ehri, 1994). In fact, increasing the amount of direct vocabulary instruction results in more word meanings being acquired by students (Beck & McKeown, 2007; Biemiller & Boote, 2006).

Coyne, et al. (2009) found that there were statistically significant differences at posttest favoring words taught with

direct method over words receiving through only incidental exposure. These findings are consistent with a growing body of research documenting the efficacy of directly teaching word meanings to young students within oral language activities such as storybook readings (Justice, Meier & Walpole, 2005; Penno, Wilkinson & Moore, 2002; Walsh & Blewitt, 2006). Moderate to large effect sizes for these comparisons indicate that direct instruction of vocabulary results in reliably greater word learning in kindergarten students than does incidental exposure by itself.

In another study, Coyne, et al.'s (2010) findings indicated that kindergarten students who received direct vocabulary instruction demonstrated greater knowledge of target words at posttest compared with students who did not receive vocabulary instruction. Differences in target word learning between treatment and control students were characterized by large effect sizes. This finding is consistent with a growing body of research that suggests that young students can learn the meanings of sophisticated vocabulary through instruction that is direct (e.g., Beck & McKeown, 2007; Biemiller & Boote, 2006).

The objective of Handayani's (2012) study was to find out whether or not DM can improve students' vocabulary mastery. This research applied a quantitative method and one group pretest-posttest design. The result of data analysis showed that teaching English vocabulary using DM was effective to increase student's teaching English vocabulary mastery.

Some other studies that explored the rate of vocabulary learning indicated that teaching English vocabulary through direct instruction can be effective across participants (Silverman, 2007) and that augmenting an English vocabulary intervention with multimedia enhancements in direct teaching can increase English language learners' word learning (Silverman & Hines, 2009). The findings from the Crevecoeur, Coyne and McCoach's (2014) study provided additional support for the efficacy of directly teaching English vocabularies to children.

The third research question tried to investigate the difference between L2 vocabulary learning improvement of learners in the TPR and DM groups. Based on this question, null hypothesis 3 was formulated. Findings related to the third research question suggested that learners' L2 vocabulary scores were significantly larger when the TPR approach was used than when the DM was employed. Thus, null hypothesis three was rejected.

No other studied has been done so far to compare the differences between the efficacy of these two methods for L2 vocabulary development. Concerning L2 vocabulary teaching, there are two studies which compared these methods of teaching with Grammar Translation method. Abdullah (2013) conducted a contrastive study of the Grammar Translation and the DM. He mentioned that the direct method sought to immerse the learner in the same way as when a first language is learnt.

In another study, Castro (2010) evaluated the effectiveness of TPR compared to the Grammar-Translation approach for acquiring and retaining new vocabulary in an ESL class. All participants took two written pretests that examined their knowledge of common words. Following each pretest, the instructor taught three classes using the Grammar-Translation approach and three classes using TPR. Following the treatments, all adults took the written vocabulary test. Results indicated that both Grammar-Translation and TPR approaches made an important difference in student retention of vocabulary. The improvements in vocabulary acquisition and retention were 49% using Grammar-Translation and 45% using TPR.

One explanation for the results of the current study might be that TPR could develop a high stimulus in children when they start to achieve the goals of the lessons, as a consequence the children generate a good attitude and motivation towards English language learning; in other words, when children are integrated to the activities, and when they are becoming active part of the class through their physical representation of verbal commands, their attitude and motivation increases as their outcomes are successful.

Another reason for the superiority of TPR over DM might be related to the issue of children's integration and attention in a free-stress class environment. When children are learning in a friendly atmosphere in which the opportunities to be involved in the activities are plentiful, children can be better integrated to the class. Similarly, Li (2010) reported Asher (1997) when he states that the TPR 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. This way the students can take part in the teaching activity but generally they experience less stress because children are involved in fun activities at the time (Li, 2010).

The current study found that the TPR is different from DM in that TPR did not include explicit instruction, and the children learned at their own pace. Li (2010) reported Asher (1997) when he states that the TPR method goes in contradiction to traditional approaches which start with production memorization or explicit instructions. Overall, results with regard to the third research question demonstrated that children can develop better L2 vocabulary knowledge when they are involved in physical movement than when they are taught via the DM.

The fourth research question sought to investigate if gender had any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning. Therefore, null hypothesis four was formulated to answer this question. Results indicated that there were not any statistically significant differences between male and female learners regarding their L2 vocabulary scores in any of the TPR and DM groups.

This study runs counter to previous research which demonstrate gender differences in several areas of vocabulary acquisition (e.g., Jiménez, 1992, 1997; Jiménez & Moreno, 2004; Jiménez & Ojeda, 2008, 2009; Meara & Fitzpatrick, 2000; Nyikos, 1990). Nonetheless, other studies on vocabulary learning concluded that there were no gender differences

(Llach & Gallego, 2012; Grace, 2000; Jiménez & Terrazas, 2008).

One may reasonably argue that the uniform teaching methods and materials, the formal context of language acquisition, and the age and language level of the respondents account for the lack of significant gender differences. The participants in the present study make up a very homogeneous sample of students regarding their individual characteristics and those of their learning context. Sunderland (2010) claims that the FL context, in which the FL is just another school subject and identity issues are not salient, waters down any possible gender differences.

As Sunderland (2010) indicates, this type of quantitative study is prone to show inter-group similarities (between girls and boys) and intra-group differences (among girls and among boys). This point suggests that these are tendencies rather than straightforward, definitive conclusions.

It is widely accepted that promoting right to equality between sexes is very positive because this affects students' learning results directly. This aspect of language learning should be very carefully supervised, just in case practical constraints imposed on L2 students end up preventing either males or females or both from accelerating their natural EFL learning process.

Results are inconclusive within this area, with variability depending on the aspect examined. Boyle (1987) determined that, exceptionally, boys are superior to girls in the comprehension of heard vocabulary. Similarly, Scarella and Zimmerman (1998) found that men performed significantly better than women in a test of academic vocabulary recognition, understanding, and use. In Lin and Wu (2003), Lynn, Fergusson and Horwood (2005), and Edelen-bos and Vinjé (2000) males also outperformed females in vocabulary knowledge in foreign languages. Nevertheless, Jiménez and Terrazas (2008) discovered no significant gender differences in performance in a receptive vocabulary test. Meara and Fitzpatrick (2000) and Jiménez and Moreno (2004) also pointed out that female learners performed better than males in productive vocabulary. Additionally, highly significant differences were found in favor of females in the mean number of words produced in response to the 15 cues of a lexical availability test (Jiménez & Ojeda, 2009). Based on these inconclusive results with regard to gender differences, the non-significant finding of the current study is hardly surprising. Therefore, future research needs to be done with regard to this point.

7. Conclusions

Based on the reported results and the discussion conducted in the previous sections, several conclusions can be drawn.

First, it can be concluded that EFL learners' vocabulary scores in the TPR group increased significantly from pretest to posttest, suggesting that teaching English vocabularies through TPR approach can lead to L2 vocabulary learning improvement. Therefore, TPR offers advantages in teaching and learning English vocabularies, especially for children and beginning learners. TPR involves children actively in the classroom activities. It can be effective in introducing English vocabulary and delivering instruction and the usefulness of this method has been proved by many experts in several countries and it has given significant benefits to students' achievement in learning English vocabulary. As children are physically active by nature, the TPR will make English vocabulary learning more effective since children will feel fun and excitement during the learning process.

Second, consistent with the previous literature, deductions can be made that students' L2 vocabulary knowledge would improve when they were thought using the DM. Findings from this study contribute to the evidence on directly teaching vocabulary to English language learners and provide support for additional research on these students' response to intervention.

Third, considering the difference between the effects of TPR and DM on learners' L2 vocabulary learning development, results of this study suggested that teaching English vocabularies using the TPR approach led to better L2 vocabulary learning ability than did the application of the DM. One aspect in which the present study agrees with previous studies is in the enthusiasm that the instruction using the TPR approach creates in the students. Most of the participants in the present study enjoyed the TPR approach over the DM.

Finally, with regard to the impact of gender on learners' L2 vocabulary learning, deductions can be made that male and female learners display similar behaviors in L2 vocabulary learning. A lack of gender differences might be the result of homogeneous EFL instruction or the type of task accomplished.

7.1 Implications of the Study

The results of the current study can be beneficial for EFL learners and teachers in number of ways.

First, the findings obtained have significant implications in designing and implementing TPR activities for children that get involved in physical activity performance. This study proposes the incorporation of TPR activities to introduce English vocabulary to children at early stages of their English language learning process, in order to stimulate children's foreign language awareness and to activate their involvement in the learning process.

Second, TPR is a language teaching method which can help to improve classroom environment in terms of interaction and engagement; and it can also help to improve language and L2 vocabulary development. For that reason it is suggested that children's English teachers often implement this method on their lessons in order to generate good results in teaching and learning.

Third, even though this study has revealed no significant differences in male and female vocabulary learning, these have called for a strong awareness of this matter. For instance, information of male and female learners' vocabulary at different stages of instruction can show how realistic the expectations of a given lexical syllabus are, or what would constitute an optimal syllabus for each gender group. In this respect, therefore, this finding can have implications for language teachers.

Fourth, another point from this study is that children can learn new vocabularies if they were taught as part of playful

and purposeful physical activities i.e., TPR. These strategies must be easily used by all educators, especially those in settings serving children, who have long been considered to be at the highest risk of failure due to a limited vocabulary.

Finally, the findings have not only shown several pedagogical implications for the education of primary EFL students, but have also provided information of importance that may be taken into consideration by educational policy-makers. Education should focus on monitoring achievement levels at different learning stages and on vocabulary development, since the level of English of FL learners at Iranian schools are insufficient for the professional requirements that students should fulfill in future. It would be advisable that these results in vocabulary learning and vocabulary growth were not only reflected upon by instructors, researchers and text designers in the short run, but also converted into effective training and learning.

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