



THE USE OF TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE METHOD FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES IN ENGLISH VOCABULARY

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ABSTRACT

Using TPR method in teaching basic vocabulary is a good way for the beginner level of proficiency. The aim of the study is to elaborate how well the Total Physical Response (TPR) method improves the vocabulary of students with different learning styles. The respondents of this study were 30 students of SMP 23 Makassar. The research design was one experiment group with pre and posttest. Data were collected with questionnaire from Barsch Learning Style Inventory, vocabulary test, interviews, and classroom observation. Learning Style Inventory (LSI) showed that the most students were visual (40%) and auditory (40%) while 10 % of students were kinesthetic. Some students have combination of learning styles such as visual-auditory (6.67 %) and visual-kinesthetic (3.33 %), while 75 % of visual learners have significant vocabulary development with TPR method. Only 66.67 % auditory learners have significant vocabulary development after giving materials with TPR method. TPR method worked effectively for kinesthetic learning style since 100 % of kinesthetic learners have significant vocabulary development with TPR method. TPR method is also appropriate for visual auditory learners because 100 % of them develop significant vocabularies with the method. Only one visual-kinesthetic learner cannot adapt materials with TPR method, which is indicated by insignificant development with TPR method.

Key words: *Learning style, Total Physical Response Method, English Vocabulary Development.*

INTRODUCTION

Students have different qualities and characteristic. They have dissimilar levels of motivation, different attitudes about teaching and learning, and diverse responses to specific classroom environments and instructional practices. The more thoroughly teachers

understand the differences, the better chance they have of meeting the diverse learning needs of all of their students.

Students are individuals with individual needs, interests and methods of processing information (Deporter & Hernacki, 2004). There are some learner variables in language learning

such as motivation, age, learning style, personality, gender, strategies, metacognitive, autonomy, beliefs, culture and aptitude (Griffiths, 2008). They cannot be avoided as natural factors by teachers. Teachers may possibly consider these variables as references to present the materials to students so that knowledge, skills, and attitudes can be accepted well.

Some learner variables in language learning cannot be avoided as natural factors by teachers. They can be in the form of motivation, age, learning style, personality, gender, strategies, metacognitive, autonomy, beliefs, culture and aptitude (Griffiths, 2008). Based on these variables, teachers may possibly consider them as reference to present the materials to students in order to make knowledge, skills, and attitudes can be accepted well.

Recent studies showed that learning style is one of students' different features that have not been enough attention. Most of teachers use their own teaching method to teach their students rather than considering the students' learning style. In this issue, teaching method can be incorporated as an aspect which influences students' performance. In fact, the students will learn effectively if teachers present an appropriate teaching method to stimulate the learning process and towards the end it will improve the students' achievement. A study on learning and personality styles in Second Language Acquisition, Husain (1999)

suggested that teachers should match the teaching styles or teaching method with the students' learning and personality styles, in order to get better achievement.

Learning style as one of students' variable sometimes is not noticed by the teacher when teaching in the classroom. In the conventional way of teaching, teacher pretends all of the students are homogeneous. The use of a method may have been appropriate for the skills that will be taught to students but teachers sometimes do not pay attention to individual students' differences in learning style. Two researchers from Malaysia namely Gilakjani & Ahmadi (2011) supported that it is very important to understand and explore each individual's learning style.

This research attempted to inspect the effectiveness of Total Physical Response (TPR) method for the students with different learning styles (visual learner, auditory learner and kinesthetic learner styles) in vocabulary development. Using TPR method in teaching basic vocabulary is a good way for the beginner level of proficiency since students at this level have little or no prior knowledge of the target language and also students' capacity at this level for taking in and retaining new words is limited hence the teacher should present the material in a simple way that do not overwhelm the students (Brown, 2007). Many experts who conduct research using this method and the findings have shown that this method is really effective to improve students' vocabularies.

Larsen & Freeman(2000), stated that the language areas which TPR methods is mostly emphasized are vocabulary and grammatical structures. Thus, TPR method can be used by teacher to enrich vocabulary development.

There have been some studies that applied TPR method. One of them was Munoz (2011), which focused on the teaching of English vocabulary to third graders. The study revealed that teaching English vocabulary through TPR allows children to learn faster and easier, since children find support from the physical representation of their facilitator or their peers. Furthermore he stated that a stress-free environment allows children to be more receptive and motivated to the target language learning. Similar to Munoz (2011); Hsu and Lin (2012), from National Changhua University of Education Taiwan investigated English functional vocabulary learning for resource classroom students namely students with special needs who are educated in regular as well as special education classes, using experimental design to evaluate the effects and found the immediate and maintaining effects of TPR in listening comprehension as well as on expressing abilities of English functional vocabulary and that students' motivation and interests in learning English were enhanced through TPR.

Sirajuddin (2011), who conducted study, entitled *Improving Speaking Ability by Using TPR Strategy at SMA Negeri 1 Samarinda*. He principally aimed to find whether the TPR

strategy significantly improves the students' achievement in speaking. This study was done at SMA Negeri 1 Samarinda and the sample was purposively taken from class x-7 which consisted of 40 students. The research instruments for this study were pre-test and post-test. The analysis revealed that TPR strategy resulted in higher improvement on students' speaking ability, compared to the conventional way. Specifically, the mean score of the control class progressed from 3.334 in pre-test to 3.566 in post-test; while the mean score of the experimental class increased from 3.70 in pre-test to 4.09 in post test.

With reference to learning style, Gilakjani (2012), which aimed to increase faculty awareness and understanding of the effect of learning styles on the teaching process, showed that Iranian EFL university students preferred visual learning style which indicates the greatest academic achievement in their educational major. This research enlighten the readers about the impact of visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning style on English Language Teaching hence it can enlarge the knowledge of the readers in this field.

Boström (2011) who conducted study entitled *Learning Style Compared With Their Teacher's Learning Style in Secondary Schools*, intended to compare students' learning style and teachers' learning style among 53 high school teachers and 102 secondary school students and 66 from vocational programs in Sweden. The students were tested with

Productivity Environmental Preference Survey (PEPS) (Dunn, Dunn & Price, 1984, 1991, 2000) and found that the teachers have a greater need for light and temperature, are more motivated, more adaptable, have less need for structure and authority and are more alert in the morning and less in the afternoon compared with the students. Moreover, the two groups namely academic and vocational program showed no statistically significant differences between them but the group of vocational students differed more from teachers learning style than their academic peers. Hence, he recommends teacher to take into account types of learning style and expand teaching strategies or method in the classroom.

Some researchers focused their study on learning style and its correlation to academic achievement in traditional classroom. Husain (1999), conducted a study which focused on students' learning and personality styles in second language acquisition and their relation to students' academic achievement and found that all groups have no significant differences in their achievement (post-test). Despite Husain's claim that there is no significant difference in students' academic achievement for all groups of learning style but the other research revealed otherwise. It was a study on the relation between learning styles and academic achievement of secondary school students conducted by Vaishnav (2013). The kinesthetic learning style was found to be more prevalent than visual and auditory learning styles among

secondary school students. The findings also show that the main effects of the three variables - visual, auditory and kinesthetic are significant on academic achievement.

Furthermore, Behabadi and Behfrouz (2013) who conducted study entitled *Learning Style and The Characteristics of Good Language Learners in the Iranian Context* to a group of 56 IELTS candidates (both male and female) taking part in the IELTS preparation courses in the TEFL research centre, Teheran, Iran. The instruments of this study were interview and IELTS General Module. The study revealed that the learners emphasize employing styles enabling them keep more vocabularies in mind and activate them. The findings also revealed that there is a high correlation between high scores in IELTS and possessing Kinesthetic, Auditory, and Visual styles. It also presented that the learners were interested in individuality rather than group work.

The results of these researches indicate that it is very important to understand and explore each individual's learning style. Additionally, those previous studies on TPR method simply said that the TPR Method was successfully implemented for beginner level. None of them specifically indicated which learning styles the method works effectively. Hence, this current study aims to find out the profile of each individual student in term of learning style and to elaborate how well TPR method improves the vocabulary of students with different learning styles.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research applied pre-experimental design to see the result of applying TPR Method for different learning styles in vocabulary development. This study was intended to investigate whether TPR method work effectively to which kind of learning style. There was only one group experiment involved in this research so there was no control group.

Variable of Research

This research has two variables namely independent and dependent variables. The independent variables of this research were the application of Total Physical Response method and learning styles of students, while the dependent variable was the students' vocabulary development.

Sugiyono (2013:112) stated that there are some forms of pre-experimental designs namely One-Shot Case Study, One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design, and Intact-Group Design. For this study, the researcher conducted One-Group Pretest-Posttest design where there was only one group experiment and that group was given pre-test at the beginning of study to find out students' prior knowledge in vocabulary element and a post-test was given at the end of study to see students' vocabulary development after experience TPR Method.

Population and Sample

The population of this study was students of SMP 23 Makassar. Following Larsen-Freeman (2000:111), the "target language" should be introduced not just word by word. This means that English vocabulary should be presented in multi-word. It may include verb and noun in one command for example, point to the door, open your eyes, put your hands behind you, etc. Junior high school students can be considered as the appropriate subjects of this study since they have already been taught English vocabulary since they were in fourth grade of Elementary School, based on BSNP (2006).

The sample of this Research was the first grade students of SMP 23 Makassar academic year 2013/2014. The researcher applied purposive sampling method in choosing the sample of research namely by firstly identifying the learning style of the students using questionnaire. The researcher then used the finding of learning style questionnaire to choose the sample based on the balance distribution of three kinds of learning style in the classroom.

There were 9 classes of grade 1 namely 7A, 7B, 7C, 7D, 7E, 7F, 7G, 7H, 7I. The researcher took three classes randomly to administer the questionnaire to identify their learning style to find out the sample purposively namely 7A, 7B, and 7C. In class 7A which consists of 32 students only 29 students took LSI test, and the test showed that there are 17 visual learners,

11 auditory learners and 1 kinesthetic learner. In class 7B which consists of 31 students there are 13 visual learners, 15 auditory learners, 2 visual-auditory learners and 1 auditory-kinesthetic learner. Class 7C consists of 32 students but for this current research only 30 students took LSI test at that time. Based on the result of pilot study related to the chosen classroom to be taken in the present research, 7C became the chosen class because it has quite balanced learning style distribution for visual, auditory and kinesthetic namely there are 12 visual learners, 12 auditory learners, 3 kinesthetic learners, 2 visual-auditory learners and 1 visual-kinesthetic learner.

Although class 7A looks similar to class 7C but Three searcher chose the class C for three reasons. Firstly, the number of respondents in the class 7C who joined LSI test was 30 students and it was more than class 7A and as Rescoe (1982:253) in Sugiyono (2013:133) stated that adequate sample size in the study was between 30 to 500 respondents. Secondly, class 7C had a number of kinesthetic learners more than the class 7A. In addition, class 7C had some students who were identified as combination learning styles and of course the results of this study will be richer when choosing a class that has a wide variety of learning styles in it.

Procedures of Data Collection

The instruments used in this study were questionnaire, interview and classroom observation. The questionnaire consisting of 24 items of questions from Barsch's LSI was used

to identify the students' learning styles. It is categorized into 3 scales: often, sometimes, and seldom. The second instrument was interview which aims to crosscheck the information from the questionnaire. The classroom observation was used to find out the classroom activities and students' participation toward the given TPR method. The last instrument, vocabulary test, which consists of pre-test which was intended to see the students' prior knowledge in vocabulary element and post-test which was aimed to see students' vocabulary knowledge after they experience TPR method.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed chronologically as follows. First, data from questionnaire was analyzed by tabulating the students learning style results and differentiating them based on their preferred learning style. The Learning Style inventory was calculated into number to find out students learning style. Second, the researcher calculated the result of vocabulary test (pre-test and post-test) using the following formula;

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100 \%$$

Where:

P = Percentage of data

f = Number of Frequency

N = Total Sample

(Sudjana, 1992) as cited in (Sirajuddin, 2010)

The formula of the mean score was:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

\bar{x} = mean score

$\sum x$ = the sum of all score

N = the total number of subject

(Gay and Airasian, 2006)

The criterion of assessment

In analyzing data, the researcher used criterion for the students' assessment. The students' success and failure in mastering vocabulary are measured by referring to the ideal criterion issued by BSNP(2006), which stated that the ideal criterion of each learning indikator has been set in a basic competencies range between 0-100 percent. Ideal criterion of master each indikator is 75%. From the criterion, we can say that the students can be said to be successful if students achieve 75 % or more and if students achieve lower than 75 % means that students failed. This indicator was used to determine the students who significantly develop their vocabulary element.

Then, students were grouped based on their preferred learning style and their result of their pre-test and post test in vocabulary development. The researcher described the match between students' learning styles and students' vocabulary knowledge after experiencing TPR Method.

These data on students' learning style, classroom observation and vocabulary test were triangulated to see how effective TPR

method for different learning styles in English vocabulary development. Firstly, the researcher matched the score of vocabulary test with the data in the classroom observation. This was to see whether students who experienced an increase in vocabulary test were really active or just being passive in the classroom. Then, students' learning style data, the result of vocabulary test and the classroom observation data were integrated before to find out whether TPR method worked effectively to which kinds of learning style by discussing them in relation to previous studies.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

Figure 1 (see appendix) showed that generally, most of 1st grade students of SMP 23 Makassar namely class 7C were visual learners (40 %) and auditory learners (40 %). Furthermore, 10 % of students were kinesthetic learners.

There were also some students who have combination learning style. 6.67 % of students were visual-auditory learners and 3.33 % of students were visual-kinesthetic learner while 90 % students had tendency to be single learning style learners and 10 % students had tendency to be combination learning style learners.

The finding of this research also revealed that the mean score of students' result in pre-test was 55.44 % while the mean score of students' result in post-test was 80.44 % (see figure 2). It indicates that the students'

achievement in learning English Vocabulary by applying TPR has a significant improvement. 75 % of visual learners have significant vocabulary development after learning using TPR method. Meanwhile, only 66.67 % out of 100 % auditory learners has significant vocabulary development after being given materials using TPR method. It can be seen that TPR method worked effectively for kinesthetic learning style since 100 % of kinesthetic learners have significant vocabulary development after having materials using TPR method. TPR method is also appropriate for visual-auditory learners because 100 % visual-auditory learners have significant vocabulary development. In contrast, the only one visual-kinesthetic learner cannot adapt himself with the material given using TPR method because his vocabulary development is not significant after learning using TPR method.

Discussion

Based on the data from Learning style inventory, this study revealed that respondents taking part in the study were mostly inclined towards being visual and auditory learning styles while kinesthetic and the two combination learning styles were only a few.

This study confirms some previous studies on visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles. Barbe and Milone (1981) in Gilakjani (2012), stated that for grade school children the most frequent modality strengths are visual (30%) or mixed (30%), followed by auditory (25%), and then by kinesthetic (15%). Barbe and Milone showed that visual learning

style became the very dominant in the classroom and confirm the result of the current study regarding to learning style of grade school children. The previous research also found mixed learning style as the dominant learning style (30 %) but for this current study, mixed or combination learning style occupied a low level that is only 10 % of the total sample who have the combination of learning style.

Identifying students' learning styles in this study indicates that teachers become aware of the importance of identifying students in the classroom so that the teacher provides materials using methods that can cover all learning styles in the classroom. For this current study, basically the teacher who taught class 7C using TPR method in some materials the text book but the teacher has not been fully aware of the importance of identifying students' learning styles. The teacher just taught English using TPR method because that method is effective to be applied in second and foreign language learning process.

It is very predictable that one of classroom has students with diverse learning styles. Every student has their own way in acquiring the knowledge and information. Knowing from beginning about the importance of identifying learning, the teacher may ask students who have visual learning style to sit in the front row of seat or in some front corner of the class so they can clearly see when teacher explains material so they can be free from visual obstruction. Researcher did not adjust the

seating of students because the school is state school and researcher found the class naturally and where the researcher in this case simply acted as an observer rather than as the experimenter. To a certain extent, this made some visual learners visually obstructed and it is one of the limitations of this study. For further research, the class should be set based on the learning styles of students so that academic achievement of students can be better than the results of this study.

Information of an individual's learning style is also very important for students. The individuals should know their own learning styles and what characteristics this style has and they should thereby behave according to this style. In this way, the individual can acquire the constantly changing and increasing amount of information without the assistance of others. However, in this study, the students were not aware of their learning style and how they should act with knowledge of the learning styles. This study simply identified students' learning styles and let the class run naturally because researcher only wanted to know the effectiveness of TPR method for heterogeneous classroom. This may be important for future researchers who want to conduct the same study, in which they should consider to provide knowledge about the importance of knowing the individual learning style because when the individual knows his/her learning style, s/he will integrate it in the process of learning so s/he

will learn more easily and fast and will hopefully be successful (Gilakjani, 2012).

It is clear that, learning style identification will be useful for both of students and teacher. Teacher will prepare material based on students' learning style in the classroom so the method given can cover all of styles in the classroom. Moreover, students who are aware of their learning style will search answer to the problem and benefit from their unique performance and preferences in their learning style. Those learners will recognize their goals, unlike those whose learning style preferences are not identified. They know what they want to learn and "how." This awareness will modify their perspectives on learning something new (Fidan, 1986) in (Gilakjani, 2012).

In addition, based on the identification of students' learning styles, the researcher can review that every student has his/her own way to learn and it is possibly different between one to another. It means that each learning style has different characteristics that describe their own way in acquiring and processing information. Visual learners generally receive information through vision or seeing. They pay attention to the information in kind of pictures, hand-outs, books, etc. they are not disturbed by noise but they have weakness namely they cannot learn best when there is visual obstruction in front of them. Although some visual learners not always participated in the classroom during material but they can develop

their vocabulary element significantly. It is related to the theory of Deporter and Hernacky (2004 :114) that visual learner can learn best through seeing hence although they do not involve themselves and do physical movement in the classroom they still can process and retain information very well since they use their vision sensory .

Meanwhile, auditory learners have their own different characteristic; they dispose to learn through listening. They can learn in kind of verbal teaching, discussion and information they hear from other people. They interpret the important points of information that they listen, therefore there is only a little bit information given from their notes. Besides, some strengths, auditory learner also has some weaknesses namely they are distracted by noise and for them games and pictures are annoying and distracting and it may become the factor why only 66.67 % auditory learners who develop their vocabulary element significantly. TPR method principally applies many games and pictures and also involves physical movement which may produce an interactive and noisy classroom and like stated before that auditory learner cannot learn best in the noisy place hence based on the classroom observation conducted in this research, some of them may cannot develop their vocabulary element significantly. Moreover, kinesthetic learner disposes to learn through moving, doing or touching. For them, touch and movement are important. They learn by imitation and

practice and they love games which involve physical movement and their style is appropriate with the principle of TPR method implemented in the classroom. This learner also has some weakness namely they cannot sit for a long period of time in the classroom and sometimes make a noise in the classroom.

This research also shows that the use of TPR method develops students' vocabulary element. TPR is an effective method for developing students' vocabulary element in heterogeneous classroom. TPR method has been proven to have high effect in improving vocabulary mastery of the students which can be shown by the mean score of the students in pre test was 55.44 % while the mean score of the students' result in post-test was 80.44 %. This indicated that the students' achievement in learning English vocabulary after TPR treatment had a significant improvement for all of learning styles namely for visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning style.

The advantages of this method to reduce pressure and stress for students as viewed by Larsen &Freeman (2000), were also indicated by the findings from observation. Data from classroom observation showed that the students participated happily to the class activity without any stressful condition. It may become the reason that English vocabulary of the students investigated in this research was significantly improved.

Based on the result of the classroom observation conducted, motivation and interest

of students in following learning activity was significantly. This can be proven when the initial meeting materials by using TPR method only a few students who participate during the material, but after some of the materials provided in the classroom, it can be seen that TPR method increased the amount of student participation.

In this research, the development of the vocabulary was associated with the participation of students in the classroom. From the observation data, it showed that there was no relationship between student participation and vocabulary Development in the classroom. This indicates that although all students have increased their vocabulary elemen some students who were just passive in the classroom had post-test values higher than the few students who were active in the classroom. The active students with the very high post-test score were indicated that there were a positive correlation between participation and vocabulary development. But for the passive students who still can get higher post-test scores than the active students in the classroom, it was just an opposite thing which happens in this research. It can be said that the participation of the students were not always able to be used as an indikator in order to determine the progress of the students but can be used as a reference to see students' motivation when learning using TPR method. In addition, the use of TPR method was proven to improve students' performance since all of

students improved their vocabulary element after experiencing TPR method.

Primarily, the research finding designates that students' vocabulary element and students' participations in the heterogeneous classroom are improved after they experience TPR method. The findings obtained have essential implications on the field of designing and implementing Total Physical Response activities for beginner level that get involved in physical activity performance. This study offers the integration of Total Physical Response activities for different learning styles in presenting English vocabulary to students at early stages of their English language learning process, in order to promote students' foreign language awareness and to trigger their participation in the learning process.

Likewise, the student's interaction becomes more energetic since the material procedures imply student's participation, involvement, and attention including them in constant physical movement. Thus, student's anxiety and stress is considerably reduced since in TPR method, students are not strictly forced to do the instruction but they can do it voluntarily.

An implication can be deduced that TPR method is an appropriate and essential to be used in language teaching for heterogonous classroom which consists of visual, auditory, kinesthetic learner and visual-auditory at the beginner level except for visual-kinesthetic learner in this study. For that reason researcher

strongly suggests that English teachers should often implement this method on their lessons especially in vocabulary building for beginner level in order to create best results in teaching and learning English.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Generally, most of 1st grade students of SMP 23 Makassar namely 7C were visual learners and auditory learners. 40 % of students were visual learner and also 40 % of students were auditory learners. Furthermore, 10 % of students were kinesthetic learners. Some students have combinations learning style. 6.67 % of students were Visual-Auditory learners and 3.33 % of students were visual-kinesthetic learner. There were 90 % students had tendency to be single learning style learners and 10 % students had tendency to be combination learning style learners.

Moreover, students with visual learning style, auditory learning style, kinesthetic learning style and visual-auditory learning style have significant vocabulary development after experiencing TPR method. In contrast, the only one visual-kinesthetic learner cannot adapt himself with the material given using TPR method because his vocabulary development is not significant after learning using TPR method.

Based on the result of this research, the teacher is expected to be aware of students' different learning styles which are particularly important in second or foreign language acquisition, and to identify these as early as possible before starting teaching in

heterogeneous classroom. Then, teacher is expected to provide various teaching material that can suit all students' learning styles and fulfill students' needs. Moreover, teacher is expected to apply TPR method in teaching English vocabulary for heterogeneous classrooms which consist of different learning style especially at the beginner level. Further research on the use of TPR method for different learning styles, future researchers are expected to apply TPR method for language skills such as writing, reading, listening or speaking.

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APPENDICES

Figure 1. Learning Style Percentage in the Classroom

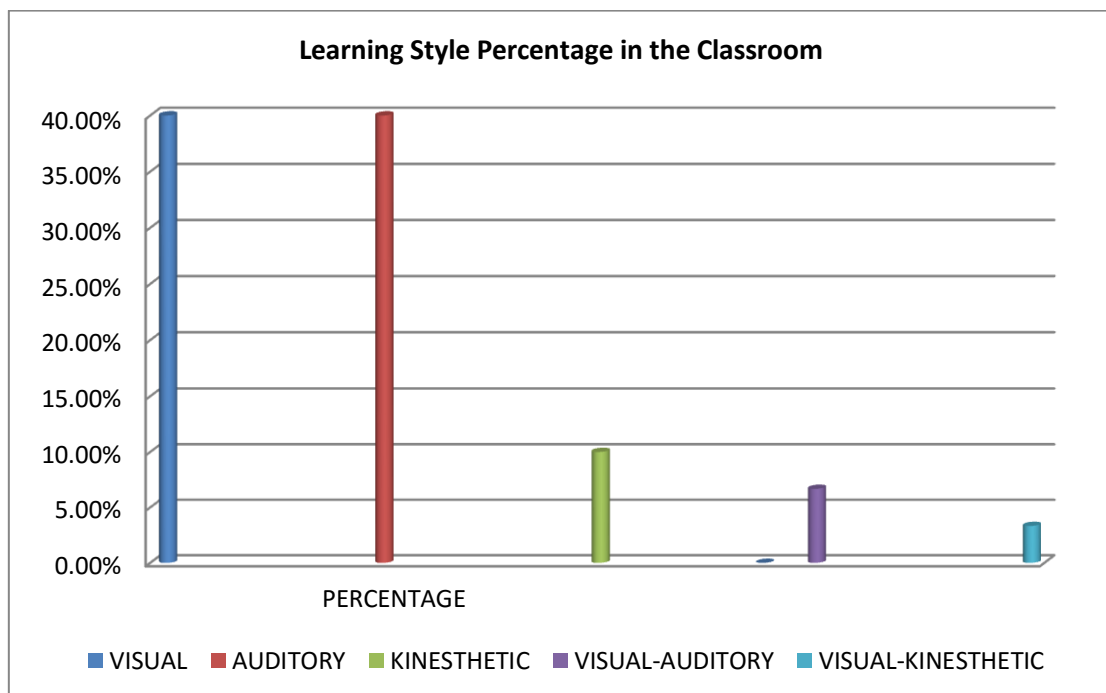


Figure 2. Students' Vocabulary Development

