

The Effectiveness of Crossword Puzzle in Teaching Vocabulary of Fourth Grade Elementary Students

Zainata Illiyin

Al Qolam Islamic Institute Malang

Corresponding email: zainatailliyin17@alqolam.ac.id

ABSTRACT

English is an international language in the world and it is used as foreign language in Indonesia. English is not our native language, therefore it is very difficult for Indonesian students to learn it. Besides, Bahasa Indonesia and English are not related languages. There are many elements found in them like grammatical and different pronunciation. Same with Bahasa Indonesia, English also has four basic aspects, there are speaking, listening, reading and writing. In this study, the writer want to research the effectiveness of crossword puzzle in teaching vocabulary to improve English skills above. The aim of this study was to find out whether the use of crossword puzzle related to things in the classroom, parts of human body, and fruits could increase elementary students in learning vocabulary. The approach of this study was quantitative. Vocabulary tests were used as the instruments of eliciting the data. The subjects of this study were the fourth grade students of MI Raudlatul Ulum Rejoyoso. The results showed that there was an increase between the pre-test (46.67) and the post-test (61.24). The difference between the pre-test and the post-test was statistically significant ($0.00 < 0.05$). This indicates that crossword puzzle increased students' vocabulary achievement. Vocabulary regarding parts of human body got the highest increase (3.7) compared to the other two topics, things in the classroom (3.1) and fruits (2.5) respectively. This suggests that realia can be used as alternative media in teaching vocabulary.

Keywords: Crossword puzzle, vocabulary, quantitative research.

First Receive: 08 November 2022	Revised: 18 December 2022	Accepted: 01 February 2023
Final Proof Recieved: 20 April 2023	Published: 01 June 2023	
How to cite (in APA style): Illiyin, Zainata (2023). The Effectiveness of Crossword Puzzle in Teaching Vocabulary of Fourth Grade Elementary Students. <i>ELITE Journal</i> , 5 (2), 417-424.		

INTRODUCTION

English is a foreign language which is considered important for the purpose of science, technology, arts and culture and the development of relations between nations in the world. English is listed as one of the subjects in elementary schools starting from the 1994 curriculum, the 2004 curriculum and also the 2006 basic education curriculum. At that time English was still a local content.

To learn English requires constant practice and patience. The kind of feeling that success among students is that it is not possible to achieve fluency or mastery over the English language. Most of the students study English from the examination point of view, so they are not able to produce even a single sentence without the grammatical error.

Based on the problems above, the writer took the initiative to create a fun method or media for elementary students so that they can memorize English vocabulary easily. One of fun methods in learning English is playing games.

Games are very enjoyable for students in learning foreign language. In this study, the game it is used is crossword puzzles because it is popular enough in Indonesia. According to **Paul (2003:187)**, crossword puzzle is a popular game which is using words the children have learned and some pictures as clues. The clues can also be definitions or sentences with gaps if

the children's level is high enough. Another source states that crossword puzzle is a group of words that have been arranged horizontally and vertically so that each word crosses at least one other word at a common letter, it is a fun way to practice spelling reading comprehension, reinforce vocabulary and

also improve writing skill. While according to **Hornby (1974:206)**, crossword puzzle is a puzzle in which words have to be written (from numbered clues) vertically and horizontally in spaces on a chequered square.

From those definitions, the writer concludes that crossword puzzle is a popular fun game to improve the student's writing skill which words have to be written horizontally and vertically based on their clues so that each word crosses at least one other words at common letter, and the clues can be words, pictures, definitions or sentences. According to **Tasuli (2000:6-18)**, there are several functions of crossword puzzle in teaching English, they are:

1. It will help the teachers draw the students' interest and engage their motivation.
2. It can also make the students active during the teaching-learning process.
3. The teachers are able to stimulate their students an active way and urge them to take part in the activities in which they have a chance to produce some English words with correct forms.
4. It will help the students develop their inner selves.
5. It motivates them to know more about the new vocabulary.
6. It helps them relate to others more effectively and cooperatively.
7. It trains them in creative freedom as they feel less embarrassed or nervous so they become more self-confident.
8. It gives a challenge to solve problems in an enjoyable situation.
9. It helps those who are slow learners or demotivated students to grasp the target of the lesson.
10. It can make the teachers to be more creative.

Furthermore, the use of crossword puzzle is not only to enrich their vocabulary, but it is also used to improve student's writing ability, help them in spelling well, clarify the word forms correctly, and also make their pronunciation correct.

The crossword puzzle also consist of some types. Crossword puzzle can be varied from the very simple to the very complicated. At primary level, the simple crossword puzzles can be given. These are types of crossword puzzle that can be used to teach English at school:

1. Picture Crossword with Word List

Students sound out words from the words list and then match them with the picture. Students copy the words from the word list into the crossword puzzles.

2. Picture Crossword (No Word List)

Students use the picture clues to figure out the words that go in the crossword. Students print the words from the picture clues into crossword puzzles.

3. Word Clues (Regular) Crossword with Word List

Students use the verbal clues and the word list to figure out where the words go in the crossword. Students print the words from the word list into the crossword puzzles.

4. Word Clues (Regular) Crossword (No Word List)

Students use the verbal clues to figure out the crossword. Students print the words into the crossword puzzles.

The type of crossword puzzle that is used in this research is *picture crossword with word list (number 1)*, because this type is appropriate to Elementary School student's skill. The author wants to foster student's interest in learning English first, then invite them to start wording, followed by sentences and paragraphs. That's why the author uses this type of crossword puzzle to attract students' interest through interesting pictures.

METHOD

This study used quantitative design because quantitative is using statistic data. According to **Donald Ary (2010:648)**, he stated that Quantitative research is a ginnery employing operational definitions to generate numeric data to answer predator mined hypotheses or questions. In line with Ary, **Creswell** also states that a quantitative study consistent with the quantitative paradigm, it is an inquiry into social or human problems based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers and analyzed with statistical procedures in order to determine whether predictive generalization of the theory hold true. Based on the theories, it concluded that quantitative research methodology is better used by the researcher who excited to calculations.

In this study, the researcher apply an experiment study method. Experimental research examines a hypothesis to find an effect, relationship or the difference alteration toward groups which have treatment. In this paper the researcher found an effect of Edu-game (crossword puzzle) to increase English vocabulary students. The researcher applied crossword game as a treatment in course outline. The researcher used t-test as a tool to explore the significant of crossword puzzle toward memorizing vocabulary.

The data is very important in the study. The data are need to support and prove the study itself. The writer could be helped by them in order to find the aims of the study. There are to measure the effectiveness of crossword puzzle toward mastering vocabulary of the students at fourth grade MI Raudlatul Ulum.

The writer was collected the data of this study by using test and the result of the test was used to measure the student's writing scores. The test was in multiple choice test form and there are 50 items. The duration time to do each writing test are 90 minutes.

The writer collected the data of this study by using a test and the result of the test will use to measure the student's writing scores about anagram. The test is writing and arrange the words.

According to **Heaton**, a test of vocabulary measures the student's knowledge of the meaning of certain words and word group. In this study the writer used multiple choice test for measuring the students' vocabulary. The researcher divided the students into two groups. Two groups are divided to be experiment group and control group. The researcher included two variables, the first variable applied the crossword puzzle and the second variable applied traditional method.

The writer gave pre-test and post-test to both experimental and control group. Pre test is a test given before the writer gives treatment. The function of pre test is to know how are the student's writing scores before they taught by using crossword puzzle. Post test is a test given after a lesson or a period

of instruction. The function of post test is to know how are the student's writing scores after they taught by using crossword puzzle.

FINDING

The writer tried out the test instrument was define important before the test applied to the sample of the research. The writer added the information about the instrument quality that consist of instrument validity and instrument reliability.

Research Instruments Reliability

Reliability is necessary characteristic of any good test: for it to be valid at all, a test must be reliable as measuring instrument. According to **Susan Stainback**, reliability is often defined as the consistency and stability of the data or finding. From a positive perspective, reliability typical is consider to be synonymoconsistency of the data produced by observation made by different researchers, by same reseacher by the same researcher at different times, or by splitting a data set in two parts. To measure the reability test, the writer will use the Kuder Richardson (KR20).

Research Instruments Validity

The validity of a test is the extent to which measure, what is suppose to measured and nothing else. According to **Gronlund** who states that content validity is the process of determining the extent to which a set of test tasks provides relevant and representative sample of the domain of tasks under consideration. Instrumentation validity discussed about construct and content validities of the test which use in this research.

a. Face validity

This type of validity, in fact is often refered to as face validity : if a test item looks right to other testers, teachers, moderators, and tastes. The test used by the writer is suitable to others and the same level that is Elementary School level. So that is why, the writer makes the type of test items also suitable in the fourth grade students at Raudlatul Ulum elementary school Bantur. The view of validity test item as follows:

The kind of the test is writing test which is about part of speech especially noun, verb, and adjective.

- 1) The forms of the test items fill the puzzle.
- 2) The language of items use English.
- 3) The test items are suitable to the junior high school.

b. Construct validity

Construct validity is type of validity which assumes the existence of certain learning theories or construct underlying the acquisition of abilities and skills.

The test is focus to increase the vocabulary mastery that focus on noun, verb and adjective base on the syllabus. In this case, the test is a written test in order to measure the student's writing skill.

The indicator of vocabulary test

The measured	Indicators	Number of Question	Total
--------------	------------	--------------------	-------

aspects			
Mastery of word form	• The ability to decide the synonym	22, 25	2
	• The ability to decide the antonym	1,2,3,4	4
Mastery of words meaning	• The ability to give meaning of a word	5,6,7,8,9	5
Vocabulary knowledge	• The ability to decide the noun	10,16,18,34,39,45,48,49,50	9
	• The ability to decide the adjective	14,20,31,32,40,43,47	7
	• The ability to decide the verb	11,12,13,15,17,19,21,23,24,26,27,28,30,33,35,36,37,38,41,42,46	21
Total number of questions			50

c. Content validity

The test item in this research is to measure the student's writing ability and base on the English teaching learning curriculum apply at Raudlatul Ulum elementary school. In making the test, the writer try to match each of item test with the curriculum that is used by MI Raudlatul Ulum Bantur.

DISCUSSION

This study suggested that games has a positive effect on student learning progress. In line with previous studies, the researcher found various positive changes from the crossword puzzle game, both from the significant addition of vocabulary and increasing students' speaking skills. So, when students succeed in mastering one vocabulary, they are also asked to pronounce the vocabulary and translate it. As we know that crossword puzzle games are very fun but challenging media for students who want to increase their vocabulary. they are invited to play while learning to memorize vocabulary one by one through fun pictures. Researchers have proven the effectiveness of crossword puzzles through a series of tests (post tests) which show that students are very enthusiastic about memorizing vocabulary using this method.

CONCLUSION

The education is the most important aspect of human needs after economics. It cannot be denied that the existence of education will always change, develop according to the times. This has resulted in new problems that must be addressed immediately. One of the problems is the student's lack of understanding of the basic materials of English. Therefore, effective

learning strategies have begun to emerge to overcome these problems. the method of this crossword puzzle game has been done by several researchers before, and the results they found that this game was effective in improving student's abilities in arranging words, reading, writing and even understanding a sentence. In addition, crossword puzzles can also improve student's speaking skills if they are asked to recite them after they have finished compiling the puzzles. The effectiveness of crossword puzzle game has been researched by researchers. The results of their research indicate that this game is proven effective in improving student's English skills which includes four basics namely speaking, listening, reading and writing. Teachers can use this game

to attract student's interest in learning English.

The authors hope the crossword puzzle game can provide many benefits for students and teachers in schools. This game certainly provides a lot of convenience for students to get to know new vocabulary in an easy and fun way. Therefore, the application of this game must be in accordance with the terms of the game so that the results achieved are maximum. The application of crossword puzzles can be modified to suit the conditions and learning abilities of students in a class or school.

REFERENCES

- Ary, Donald. (2010). *Introduction to Research in Education Ceight*. Canada: Wadsworth Engage Learning.
- BBC (British Study Centres). *10 Reasons to Learn English*. (Online). Accessed on October 19, 2022 at 6 a.m. from british-study.com
- Creswell, John W. (1994). *Qualitative and Quantitative Approach*. California: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Diniyati, Nurul. (2009). Thesis: *The Use of Crossword Puzzles to Improve Student's Spelling*. Semarang University.
- Gronlund, Norman E. (1990). *Measurement and Evaluation in Teaching*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Heaton. (1990). *Writing English Language Test (New Edition)*. New York: Longman Inc.
- Hornby, AS. (1974). *Oxford Advanced Dictionary of Current English*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Mohammed Asaad and Affendi Shabdin. (2020). *The Relationship Between Morphological Awareness and Vovabulary Errors Among 1.2 Postgraduate Students*. The Journal of Asia TEFL Vol. 17.
- Paul, David. (2003). *Teaching English to Children in Asia*. Longman.
- Ruang Guru. *Mengapa Bahasa Inggris Digunakan sebagai Bahasa Internasional?* (Online) accessed on October 20, 2022 at 7 a.m. from blog.ruangguru.com
- Stainback, Susan. (2013). *Understanding & Conducting Qualitative Research*. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company: Dubuque, Iowa as quoted by Sugiyono on his book which the title is *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D*, CV. Alfabeta: Bandung.
- Sudjana. (2005). *Metode Statistika*. Bandung: Tarsito.
- Sudrajat, Didi. (2015). *Studi tentang Pelaksanaan Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris di SD Kota Tenggara*. Artikel Cendekia: Pusat Kajian Bahasa dan Budaya Vol.9, No.1. Available at web:cendekia.pusatbahasa.or.id
- Sugiono, Anas. (1978). *Pengantar Statistik Pendidikan*. Jakarta: Rajawali Press.
- Suharto. (1988). *Metodologi Penelitian dalam Pendidikan Bahasa*. Jakarta: Depdikbud Proyek Pengembangan Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan.
- Sujono, Anas. (2005) *Pengantar Evaluasi Pendidikan*. Jakarta: Raja Grafindo.

Tasuli. (2000). *Crossword Puzzle is an Effective Way to Teach English Vocabulary*. Unpublished: UNNES.

