

# THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF USING CROSSWORD PUZZLE IN LEARNING VOCABULARY AT THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

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## ABSTRACT

*This research is about students perception on teaching vocabulary using crossword puzzle at seventh grade of MTs Noor Aini Banjarmasin. The using crossword puzzle to describe students interest and students problem in learning process. The objective of this research are to know to know Students interest in learning vocabulary using crossword puzzle and To find out the weakness of learning vocabulary using crossword puzzle. This thesis is use qualitative research and the instrument of data is interview. The researcher used three major of data analysis: they were data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing or verification. From the data analysis, the researcher found in teaching vocabulary by using crossword puzzle at MTs Noor Aini were as follows: The first, the teaching and learning process by using crossword puzzle was running well, the classroom atmosphere was the students looked active in classroom. The second, the students got some problems. They were: over-crowded class, lack of vocabulary, and some of students quite noisy.*

**Key words:** crossword puzzle; qualitative research method; teaching vocabulary

## INTRODUCTION

Most countries in the world have English as their second language and foreign language. That is why English was established as an international language, which can facilitate citizens from different countries to build an international relationship in many fields. Nowadays in Indonesia, English language is included as one of the subjects to be taught to students started from junior high school level up to university.

Teaching vocabulary is considered as one of the most discussed parts of teaching English as a foreign language. When the teaching and learning process takes place, problems would appear to the teachers. They have problems with how to teach students in order to gain satisfying results. Most students feel boring, sleepy, monotonous while the teacher teach English. The teacher should prepare and find out the appropriate techniques, which will be implemented to the students. A good teacher should prepare himself or herself with various techniques. Teachers should be creative and be able to master the material in order to be understood by students and make

them interested. One of method to make the student more interesting is with Puzzle.

Perception basically involves the relationship between students and their environment, how they understand and interpret the stimuli in their environment by using the knowledge they have. After students perceive objects in their environment, then students process the results of sensing it so that the meaning of the object arises (Desmita, 2012: 118).

One of the types of vocabulary game is a crossword puzzle. The crossword puzzle is a kind of word game. In order to finish a crossword puzzle, the player has to accurately fill in all the blank squares with letters that form words. The words are based on the clues provided, which can be complete sentences, phrases, or words. Since crossword puzzles are usually considered a game, something to be enjoyed rather than slogged through, they tend to be fun and learner-friendly (Childers, 1996). Apart from motivating student learning, these puzzles can help students to extend their vocabulary knowledge. Crosswords can be used to teach terminology, definitions, spelling, and

pairing key concepts. Since students need to spell items correctly to complete the puzzle, they gain greater retention and memorization of vocabulary (Moore & Dettlaff, 2005). Usually, after students learn new words, they tend to forget as time passes. So, one way to help them retain new words is to expose them to those words repeatedly. Given the nature of crossword puzzles, students can practice more on new words they have just learned from the textbook. They can also use them to review for the exam.

The crossword puzzle is widely used in teaching activities, not only for English but also for other subjects. Usually, the question contained in Crossword puzzle is various, such as synonyms, antonyms, nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher interested in researching a thesis entitled **“The students’ perception of using crossword puzzle in learning vocabulary at the secondary school”**

## **METHOD**

This is interview study. It is one of types in qualitative research. According to Miles (2014) qualitative data were a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanation of human processes. With qualitative data, one has been preserved chronological flow, see which events led to consequences, and drive fruitful explanation.

Point of this research, the researcher analyzed and described the students perception on teaching vocabulary using crossword puzzle. The researcher paid attention to the students response, find out about the disadvantages this media.

MTs Noor Aini is located on Jalan Alalak Tengah RT 23 Kota Banjarmasin. It has 10 classes, grade VII consists three classes, grade VIII consist of three classes, and grade IX consist of two classes. There are just one of English Teacher. The plan of this study starts from May until June 2020.

In order to get data related to students perception on teaching vocabulary using crossword puzzle, Here, the researcher interviewed 2 students. In this research,

to collect data the researcher use some technique, namely: **Interview**

In this research, the researcher collecting data by interviewing 2 students to get information on the use of crossword puzzle media, and the students’ response when the use of crossword puzzle as media in learning their vocabulary at seventh grade of MTs Noor Aini Banjarmasin.

The procedure of data collection are follows:

- a. Gain access to the informant through a formal invitation and establish a time and place to conduct and get data from interview
- b. The English teacher help the researcher to interview the informant in his course because of corona virus the researcher cannot go to school
- c. The researcher ask questions, indicates the response option to questions, the answers write on sheet
- d. Make sure the place of interview is set to be comfortable for the interviewer
- e. When asking open-ended questions, the interviewer writes down answers to the questions
- f. The researcher may want to write down comments that help explain the data, such as demeanor of the interviewer or specifics about situation
- g. After gathering the data, the researcher turn and display those data into good sentences
- h. After displaying the data, the conclusion is drawn. And the document (the text of interview) will be prepared as a valid data

Qualitative research gathers a text database, so the data analysis of text consists of dividing it into a group of sentences called *text segment* and determining the meaning of each group of sentences. (Creswell, 2012: 18). According to Miles et al (2014), the steps of doing data analysis were as follows:

1. Data Reduction/Data condensation

It was the process of data condensation refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and/or transforming the data that appear in the full

corpus (body) of written-up field notes, documents, and other empirical materials. By condensing, we're making data stronger. (We stay away from data reduction as a term because that implies we're weakening or losing something in the process.) In this the first step, the activities teaching to motivate students were selected from general to specific. It meant that the whole teaching and learning English to motivated students are then checked in this step. They were categorized as the need of the research.

## 2. Data Display

In this the second step of analysis activity was data display. Data display was the activity an organized, compressed assembly of information that allows conclusion drawing and action. Looking at displays helped us understand what is happening and to do something-either analyzed further or took action-based on that understanding. This step showed the display information to make conclusion.

## 3. Drawing and Verifying Conclusions

The third step of analysis activity was conclusion drawing and verification. From the start of data collection, the qualitative analyst has been interpreted what things meant by noting patterns, explanations, causal flows, and propositions. The competent researcher hold these conclusions lightly, maintaining openness and skepticism, but the conclusions were still there, vague at first, then increasingly explicit and grounded. "Final" conclusions might not appear until data collection was over, depending on the size of the corpus of field notes; the coding, storage, and retrieval methods used; the sophistication of the researcher; and any necessary deadlines to be met. The conclusions of the observation were drawn from the result of data condensation and data display.

In short, the researcher would take the data first. The data process has been become data condensation. After that it was presented in the form of description in data display and finally the researcher can draw conclusion from data condensation and data display which already exist

## FINDING

The researcher interviewed the Students grade VII of MTs. Noor Aini Banjarmasin as an informant. The research was taken for only one meeting, so this research can not show the perfect result because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The interview has been held on June 20th 2020.

Based on the results of interviews MTs Noor Aini's students it was concluded that students were interested in learning vocabulary using crossword puzzles as media. Students feel less bored and find it more fun to learn while playing. Informant said *"Yes I like. Because puzzles are fun, while playing puzzles can be while learning vocabulary also in English, so I don't get bored easily"*

Besides, using this media helps students find new unfamiliar vocabulary, easy to understand, challenging crossword puzzles by filling in answers in empty boxes accompanied by pictures as clues. This media is suitable to be applied in learning English, especially learning about vocabulary, an unusual way of learning, and tends to be relaxed, so that students do not feel overwhelmed. They think learning vocabulary is more fun when it is presented in the form of a game.

To use this media, students are divided into several groups, each group is given 30 minutes to work on 20 questions. Provided a picture as a clue to answer. The problem given relates to the occupation which was studied at the previous meeting. After the answer is complete, students are asked to come forward to write down the answers into a whiteboard in groups and to be corrected together. They need to spell items correctly to complete the puzzle, students will be able too to use the words correctly because they connect facts as the puzzle clue to the words which have to be known the spelling. The group that gets the highest score will get a score and a reward.

Behind the students' love of this media, the researcher also found the weakness of this crossword puzzle teaching medium. So far, there are still many students who have difficulty learning English due to a lack of vocabulary. Lack of vocabulary is a major factor

in their difficulty learning. There are still many students who stumble when they pronounce the word or even misspelling it. Lack of students' interest in learning English makes it difficult for them. Moreover, students get dizzy if there are too many crossword puzzle questions given.

When in the interview section, students also said that they encountered several problems when the teacher applied this media in the classroom. Besides the lack of knowledge of vocabulary. Students also said that they were disturbed by noisy classes, overcrowded students in the class made this media ineffective. When they were asked to do the questions, there were still some students who were busy with their own activities.

Even though it has weaknesses, crossword puzzle as media can be used as a distraction so that students do not get bored, because if the teacher only focuses on the textbook it makes students bored, especially on English lessons. The informant mention "*learning with crossword puzzle better than textbook, the problem is that learning usually makes me bored and sleepy quickly, but if there is a puzzle it becomes more exciting and fun.*" Students who tend to be sleepy and not enthusiastic about learning. With this media, it can attract students' interest as well as help students find new vocabulary and learn more varied.

## **DISCUSSION**

Learning process by using crossword puzzle as media could help students interested learning, crossword puzzle made teaching –learning process more attractive and students could active while studied. Vocabulary could be learnt through the crosswords puzzle is a good interested strategy for students, because they can find the related meaning of words through the guessing words in the crossword puzzle, and game can makes the students enjoy the learning English vocabulary to memorize the vocabulary.

Crossword puzzle as media was an exciting media, the students were very enjoy in learning vocabulary. The students easily memorize new vocabulary learn English by using crossword puzzle in

the classroom. Napa (1993) in Bagus Prasetyo (2016) says that crossword puzzles make learning materials more enjoyable, interesting, and challenging. Most of the students liked the crossword puzzle media, because crossword puzzle more attractive and easy to learning vocabulary. They learned new word while answering the puzzle. Crossword puzzle could make the students learning vocabulary unconsciously. The students feel that doing crossword puzzles is like a game rather than learning.

The result of this research was in line with some previous researches; one of them was conducted by Bagus Prasetyo (2016) he reported that teaching using Crossword Puzzles could improve students' vocabulary. The researcher used these previous researches as references, but there was a difference between this research and these previous researches. This research used crossword puzzles in the form of phrases and sentences as the clues. The researcher used tool such picture as clues to help the students to complete the crossword puzzle. The researcher using pictures and for the topic the researcher using noun for learning vocabulary by using crossword puzzle as media. In this research, the researcher conducted only one interviewed because of corona virus, the researcher could not go to school for observation. The researcher only interviewed the informant once. From that interview was described that the students' vocabulary could improve by using crossword puzzle as media. Based on Bagus's result he mention if the students could improve their covabulary mastery by using crossword puzzle. In this research, the researcher face some disadvantages of teaching vocabulary by using crossword puzzle. Like many students still lack of vocabulary and over-crowded class made class quite noisy. This media not run well effective to use in class. Because some students were quite noisy and busy with their own activity like gossiping and having noisy.

From the results of the interview, the average student liked the use of teaching media with a

crossword puzzle and also this media have some advantages. The findings showed that the participants had a positive perception. Students felt more excited about learning and felt challenging while doing the task, teachers who tended to text books were the main reason why students did not like English lessons and also teacher were difficulties to calm student who made noisy at class. Varied learning can attract students' interest. Students tend to be bored and sleepy if they only focus on the text book. Teacher should be more creative for made students put their interest to learnt English, especially in vocabulary.

## CONCLUSION

### A. Conclusion

After on the result of analysis as present in chapter it can be concluded that:

1. The proses of use crossword puzzle as media in vocabulary learning process used a picture as clues to help students complete the crossword puzzle. The topic that used the researcher was noun related on occupation. The process was very fun and enjoyed.
2. The students were very fun by use crossword puzzle in learning process. Crossword puzzle as media made students be better than before and also the students can easily understand. The students responses to learn were generally positive and very helpful to improve their vocabulary.
3. The disadvantages of process teaching vocabulary use crossword puzzle did not run well. Overcrowded class and some students were quite noisy because they were busy with their own activity the main of problem.

### B. Suggestions

Based on the conclusion above, the researcher tries to give suggestions as follows:

1. Suggested to teacher to use crossword puzzle as alternative learning process to improve students' vocabulary in learning vocabulary.

2. Suggested students should more active in learning English language. The students should pay more attention to every particular material in learning the English language. Students should to practice more and customize themselves to be more active both individual and collective assignment especially in learning vocabulary.
3. For school principal, would be better to motivate teacher to conduct class action research when there is teaching problem in class.

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