

# THE INFLUENCE OF USING CROSSWORD PUZZLE TOWARDS THE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY

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## Abstract

The objective of this research was to find out the influence of using crossword puzzle towards the students' vocabulary mastery at grade seven of SMP PGRI 6 Bandar Lampung.

Data collection was conducted through two pre-tests and two pos-tests for experimental group and control group. Treatment using crossword puzzle was administered for experimental group and traditional teaching was applied for the control group.

Data analysis was attempted using t-Test for two group design. Result indicated that p-value 1%= 2.64, 5%= 1.99 and t-value= 7.620. It meant that the result was statistically significant because p-value was smaller than t-value. Therefore, null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected and alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted.

Based on the data analysis, the writer concluded that there was influence of using crossword puzzle towards the students' vocabulary mastery at grade seven of SMP PGRI 6 Bandar Lampung.

*Keywords:* crossword puzzle, vocabulary mastery

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In our life, we need language to communicate to each other. Language is a means of communication which is used by people in their daily life. Every country has its own common language to make relationship with other people. Language is very important for people to communicate with others. Language is used to deliver messages from speaker to listener and from writer to reader. Communication is very important for all people in the world and without a certain language, they cannot communicate properly. We cannot share everything that we want to tell to everyone without a means of communication.

English as an international language is used by almost all people in the world. English as the language of science needs to be mastered by the people who want to improve their knowledge or to communicate with people from other countries. English is also as one of the official languages of the United Nations. Most scientific textbooks are also written in English.

In Indonesia, English is as a compulsory subject that must be learned by all students nearly in all levels of education. Learning English in Indonesia is very important for the students to improve their knowledge and skills of the target language. Because of the importance of English, it is also tested in the National Examination administered by the government.

Indonesia consists of many ethnic groups, and each ethnic group has its own local language. According to Depdiknas (2008 : 200), Indonesia has more than 746 local languages and 17,508 islands from Sabang to Merauke. Because of the various local languages, Indonesia needs a national language as a common language for all the Indonesian people throughout the country, so there must be a national language for all. Indonesian language is as a lingua franca. According to Foote and Roberts (1998:14) a lingua franca is the second choice language. So Indonesian language may be the second choice language that every Indonesian can share with. The local language may be the first language used by all Indonesian people belong to the language group.

English is a compulsory subject in formal educational institution, starting from junior high school to senior high school and up to university level. Teaching English as a foreign language is not easy because many students consider that English is a language which has many different characteristics compared with

Indonesian as the national language. The differences cover words, spelling, pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary.

Vocabulary is one of the important elements in any language. Students' vocabulary is generally considered as an important part, both in the process of learning a language or developing their abilities in a language. It is impossible for students to be able to master listening, speaking, reading, writing, without adequate mastery of vocabulary. When the students find difficult words, they do not want to continue learning English. With limited vocabulary students will get difficulties with the teacher's explanation. Therefore, vocabulary is one of the necessary components in learning English.

Vocabulary is very important to build sentences. Vocabulary is the component of language for people to deliver their minds, ideas or feelings. For example, when we want to speak to somebody we need vocabulary. And when we want to write, we also need vocabulary. Therefore vocabulary is very important for English learners and speakers to know. It is not easy to learn and teach vocabulary to Indonesian students, because English and Indonesian are very different in vocabulary. Vocabulary mastery is one of the problems of English language students.

Allen and Vallete (1997:57) stated that teaching vocabulary can be meaningful if the teacher conducts the teaching process by combining the available techniques of teaching. One of the available techniques is technique which can make students interested in teaching learning process. It is the technique which uses games. There is a research conducted by Efendi in 2013 which is entitled "The Use of Games to Improve Vocabulary Mastery". It shows that the use of games in teaching vocabulary was needed as one of the techniques to help teacher and students achieve learning goals. So, the writer tries to find one of the ways to solve the students' problem through the use of games, especially Crossword Puzzle. A game is a good way and as one of the approaches to be used by teachers to teach students vocabulary in the classroom.

## **2. THE INFLUENCE OF USING CROSSWORD PUZZLE TOWARDS THE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY**

There are many definitions of game. One of the definitions is from Jill Hadfield (199:4) that says game is an activity with rules and elements of fun. When we heard a word about game, our mind will think something enjoyable and interesting. Games can be used at many levels, from the beginners until advanced students. Everybody likes games because games are challenging. Usually, there are several rewards for the games, such as scores or points. The rewards make a situation on the game lively because the games can be a motivation for teaching learning language. There are many kinds of games that can be used as a technique in teaching language: such as cardboard, monopoly, scrabble, and many others. The writer wants to focus on one game; that is crossword puzzle.

Crossword puzzle can be used in teaching learning process. It will be helpful for students to master vocabulary because it is one of the games that is played using words. Karim and Hasbullah (1986:36) say that one of the interesting techniques in teaching language is using crossword puzzle. Crossword puzzle is more helpful in teaching and learning process. The students will be motivated to join and participate in the activity because they are interested in the game which is used to facilitate learning. Every student likes game because it is challenging. Tarigan (2011:229) said crossword puzzle is a kind of a play on words by filling in the empty boxes as an answer to the question or question specified in the crossword puzzle. Using crossword puzzle can make the students more focused in learning and the game can be used in teaching and learning a language. Because they will use their logic to fill in the empty boxes. Crossword puzzle is one form of the games that can be applied in teaching students.

According to Wallace (1982:49) vocabulary is most frequently taught in a spoken or written context. Acquiring vocabulary is a very important tool to master a language. It is impossible to learn a language without vocabulary. As Nilawati (2009:9) states to support a speaker's interaction in communication, vocabulary becomes important because it can be used as a basic element in a language. The writer believes vocabulary is one important part of learning language. If the students' vocabulary mastery is limited, they will find some difficulties to support the speaker's interaction in communication.

According to Thornbury (2002:12) words or vocabulary is the element that has much close relationship with the other elements and skills, the following is the characteristics of vocabulary, they are:

1. Words have different function.
2. The same word can have a variety of forms.
3. Word can be added to, or combined with, to form new words.
4. Words can be grouped together to form units as if they were single words.

5. Many words commonly occur with other words.
6. Words may look or sound the same but have quite different meanings.
7. Different words may share similar meaning, or may have opposite meaning.
8. Some words can be defined in terms of their relationship with other words.
9. Words can have the same or similar meanings but be used in different situation or for different effects.

Based on the definition above, vocabulary has much relationship with other elements and skills. So, the teacher has to teach many words to be remembered by students. The teacher has to think and select a good method or technique to motivate their students to be interested in the lesson so that can gain a success in learning English.

Vocabulary is very important in teaching and learning language. Students can express their ideas through the use of vocabulary orally or in written context. Thus they should have a good idea to learn vocabulary so that they can improve their vocabulary mastery.

According to Thornbury (2002:1) all languages have words, language emerges first as word. The teaching of new word never stops. It implies that if we learn more vocabulary, our language skill will improve. Vocabulary mastery is the competence or complete knowledge of a list or set of words that make up a language which might be used by students. So it is impossible for the students to write and speak in English language without having enough vocabulary.

Wallace (1982:207) explains that teaching should consider these following factors:

1. Aims

The aim of teaching vocabulary is to make the teacher easy to formulate the materials which will be taught to the students.

2. Quantity

The teachers have to decide the number of vocabulary items to be learned. The learners will get confused or discouraged if they get many new words at the same time. Therefore, the teachers should select new words which are easy to understand by the learners.

3. Need

In teaching vocabulary, the teacher has to choose the words really needed by the students for communication.

4. Frequent exposure and repetition

Frequent exposure and repetition here means that the teacher should give much practice and repetition so that the students master the target words well. They also give opportunity to the students to use words in writing or speaking.

5. Meaningful presentation

In teaching vocabulary the teacher should present target words in such a way that the meaning of the target words are perfectly clear and unambiguous.

6. Situation and presentation

The teachers tell the students that they have to use the words appropriately. The use of words depends on the situation in which they are used and depends on the person to whom they are speaking.

The aim of vocabulary lesson depends on the interaction between the teacher and the students. The teachers must know different kinds of vocabulary and the need and the ability of the students. Therefore teacher must know how to teach vocabulary and help the students in understanding and mastering vocabulary.

In teaching learning process using crossword puzzle, the students can be more interested in their learning. When the students are interested in learning, they will give more attention to the lesson. That condition gives a good chance for both the teacher and the students to practice a better teaching and learning activity. On a certain occasion, the teacher can deliver the material very well and the students can understand what they have learned on that day. Using crossword puzzle in teaching learning process does not require the teacher to explain too many materials. The teacher just explains the materials and plays the game and then the students can follow the teaching process. Crossword puzzle used as a teaching technique for teaching vocabulary is very effective and more interesting because the students will memorize the vocabulary more easily. The students might enjoy the game very much.

According to Soeparno (1998:72), steps of teaching vocabulary using crossword puzzle are as follows:

1. The teacher explains the rules of the game.
2. The students are divided into several groups and each group consists of four or five persons.

3. Each group gets a crossword puzzle frame which is completed with questions.
4. Students work the crossword puzzle with their group members.
5. The fastest group finishes the crossword puzzle without an error is declared the winner.

Based on the definition above, this research is very important because the students of grade seven at SMP PGRI 6 Bandar Lampung have some weaknesses of vocabulary mastery. This makes the students inactive in speaking English. Hopefully, the use of crossword puzzle will improve students' vocabulary in order to achieve the teaching objectives.

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### 3. METHOD

There are two definitions of variable in this research. They are the use of crossword puzzle which is teaching vocabulary technique that helps the students improve their ability. Students' vocabulary mastery is the students' understanding of words in the target language.

The writer conducted the research at grade seven of SMP PGRI 6 Bandar Lampung. The population of the research is all students of grade seven at the high school.

To select the group of the research sample, the writer used cluster sampling technique. The writer chose the cluster sampling technique because it is applicative in this type of sampling technique. In this sampling technique a researcher used simple one-stage cluster sampling. Simple one-stage cluster sampling is a simple type of cluster sampling technique. In simple one-stage cluster sampling, the writer listed all the clusters in the population, and from the list, the writer selected the cluster. All units or elements in the sampled cluster are selected to be the research sample. In this research, the writer listed all the classes in the population. From the list, The writer selected one class as a experimental group, and one class again as a control group. It consisted of 40 students. All students in this class were the sample of this research.

### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the calculation above, the writer found the result of the two pre-tests and post-tests of the experimental group and the control group. The writer made statistical calculation by applying t-Test formula to see the influence the treatment of using crossword puzzle in the experimental group and the treatment of using traditional teaching in the control group. The statistical calculation of the experimental group and the control group is as follows:

For control group (x)

$$Mx = \frac{120}{40} = 3$$

$$x^2 = \sum x^2 - \frac{(\sum x)^2}{N}$$

$$x^2 = 900 - \frac{(120)^2}{40}$$

$$x^2 = 900 - \frac{14400}{40}$$

$$x^2 = 900 - 360$$

$$x^2 = 540$$

While, for experimental group (y)

$$My = \frac{480}{40} = 12$$

$$y^2 = \sum y^2 - \frac{(\sum y)^2}{N}$$

$$x^2 = 7400 - \frac{(480)^2}{40}$$

$$x^2 = 7400 - \frac{230400}{40}$$

$$x^2 = 7400 - 5760$$

$$x^2 = 1,640$$

The equation of t-Test for two group design is presented as follows:

$$t = \frac{|M_x - M_y|}{\sqrt{\frac{(\sum x^2 + \sum y^2)}{N_x + N_y - 2} \left(\frac{1}{N_x} + \frac{1}{N_y}\right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{|13 - 12|}{\sqrt{\frac{(540 + 1640)}{40 + 40 - 2} \left(\frac{1}{40} + \frac{1}{40}\right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{1}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{2180}{78}\right) \left(\frac{2}{40}\right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{1}{\sqrt{27.948 \left(\frac{2}{40}\right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{1}{\sqrt{\frac{55.896}{40}}}$$

$$t = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1.397}}$$

$$t = \frac{1.181}{9}$$

$$t = 7.620$$

$$df = n_x + n_y - 2$$

$$= 40 + 40 - 2$$

$$= 78$$

$$p\text{-value} = 1\% = 2.64$$

$$5\% = 1.99$$

$$t\text{-value} = 7.620 \text{ therefore, } p < t \longrightarrow 2.64 / 1.99 < 7.620$$

The result indicated that p-value 1% = 2.64, 5% = 1.99 and t-value = 7.620 and it is statistically significant. This calculation shows that p-value is smaller than t-value. Therefore, null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted. So there was an influence of using crossword puzzle towards the students' vocabulary mastery at grade seven of SMP PGRI 6 Bandar Lampung.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Moreover, in the control group the average of students' vocabulary score (post-test) was 2,030. After finding the result of the two post-tests and two pre-tests, the writer applied the equation of t-Test for two group design. The statistical calculation found that at p 5% = 1.99, p 1% = 2.64 with degree of freedom (df = 78) and t-value = 7.620. It means that alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted and null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected. So the application of using crossword puzzle had an influence towards the students' vocabulary mastery.

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