

THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY USING CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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Abstract: This study aims to help overcome the problems that exist in class VII B students of SMPN 1 Jabiren Raya, Pulang Pisau Regency, Jabiren Raya District. A total of 30 students were the subjects in this study. After conducting a pre-observation, a problem was found, namely related to the vocabulary that students still have a little. Therefore, to overcome this problem, the researcher used Crossword Puzzle printed on HVS paper as a method to help improve students' vocabulary. This research uses Classroom Action Research (CAR) method. This research design uses collaborative classroom action research. This study collaborated with the English teacher of SMPN 1 Jabiren Raya as a collaborator and observer. The model in this study uses the Kurt Lewin Model where the stages in each cycle begin with the stages of Planning, Action, Observation, and Reflection. This study consisted of two cycles in which in each cycle there was 1 meeting with a duration of 3 subject hours. To collect data, researchers used research instruments: Vocabulary Test, Interview, and Questioner. After the implementation of this research, there was an increase in students' vocabulary. It can be seen from the increase in each cycle, namely in cycle 1 students got 53.3% classical completeness and increased in cycle 2 to 90% after conducting vocabulary tests through multiple choice. Therefore, based on the research that has been conducted, the Crossword Puzzle method can improve students' vocabulary.

Keyword: *Improvement, Vocabulary, Crossword Puzzle*

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is the maximum essential element in gaining knowledge of an overseas language, vocabulary is also a chief key in language gaining knowledge and essential for language learners. In addition, vocabulary is the start of gaining knowledge of an overseas language (Susanto, 2017:183). The ability of students to master the vocabulary is different. The students have difficulty mastering new vocabulary and some of the students are faster in mastering new vocabulary. In addition, some students can master vocabulary, but they cannot spell correctly (Fudhla, 2017:102). According to Ocal and Ehri (2017:58) In recent years, the general concern about the spelling of words has lessened. However, the correct spelling of words to know is not trivial. Furthermore, spelling words correctly is something that needs to be learned, because spelling wrong words can affect when doing communication.

The researcher has conducted pre-observation on 7b grade students at SMPN 1 Jabiren Raya. The researcher found several problems when the researcher taught in the class, when teaching the researcher tested students to read English books on the conversation section on page 4 issued by KEMENDIKBUD in 2017 with the book title "When English Rings a Bell". When reading, students find it difficult to spell words, so the spelling of every word they say is still not quite right. In addition, the researcher also conducted a vocabulary test in the class. The aim of this test is to measure the students' vocabulary. In the test, students got an average score of 43.87 which is still far from the minimum completeness criteria (KKM) set at the school, which is 65. Based on the students' overall test results, it can be seen that they still lack vocabulary.

Students are still confused about the material in the learning book because the material in the book is in full English. This is what sometimes makes students wonder about the meaning of each vocabulary in the material given. Receiving educational information is challenging for them because of their limited

vocabulary. In addition, students are not enthusiastic about doing the exercises given, because students feel foreign to each vocabulary and do not understand what they read or hear in the exercise.

The crossword puzzle is the most popular game in all corners of the world. Completing crossword puzzles is a pleasant task because it includes a lot of things such as instructions, word games, and nuances of games. Crossword puzzles require players to fill in the blanks and certain boundaries in each grid, and also these crossword puzzles provide accurate answers so that the filler must fill in the answers correctly so that the answers fit the grid. (Thomas and Sangeetha, 2020:2310). When solving a puzzle in this game, players are given instructions to make it easier to fill in such as partial definitions, or the alphabet at the beginning of the grid and also the length of the word to be filled in each grid (Thomas and Sangeetha, 2020:2311).

Crossword puzzles can increase student activity in learning. This game encourages students to think critically, spell correctly, minimize errors in answers, and students are motivated to get factual information. Crossword puzzles are usually used to find out or learn new words, and new facts. In addition, crossword puzzles are effective when applied during the learning process, this has been proven to improve student learning outcomes and scientific discipline (Mshayisa, 2020:50).

In this study, the researcher applies the crossword puzzle method to improve students' vocabulary, because this method playing a game and also practicing students' ability in memorizing vocabulary.

The previous research that crossword puzzle provides much vocabulary size for students, increase students, chiefly improve learning capacity and also reduce the load in memorizing vocabulary, crossword has helped students in improving remembering terms, indications and make learning fun (Lin and Dunphy, 2013:88).

This study focuses using crossword puzzles in improving the students' vocabulary, the researcher uses media images printed on HVS paper, then the researcher distributes them one by one to students, and students make groups to discuss together to answer the blank grid of crossword puzzles. In previous studies, According to Prayoga (2022:143), he stated that using mobile phones to play crossword puzzles made it easier for students to access the game, but in certain schools, mobile phone media was not so effectively applied due to a lack of facilities for students, and only some students had mobile phones. Therefore, the researcher is interested in using image media printed on HVS paper to make it easier for students who do not have mobile phones to participate in playing crossword puzzles.

In this study, the researcher chooses the 7th B grades of SMPN 1 Jabiren Raya as a subject. In this school many problems could be found, such as students do not understand English, always speaking using their mother tongue in their school, and also lack of English vocabulary. These problems lead them to confuse when they interact with English. Based on the background of the study, the researcher is interested in conducting research under the title "The Improvement of The Student's Vocabulary by Using Crossword Puzzle".

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher applies classroom action research for this study. A classroom action research approach is a method that helps the process of developing learning systems in education. According to Situmorang (2022:406) classroom action research can help solve a problem by developing a learning system through methods or media that will be useful and beneficial for the future.

The researcher uses the Kurt Lewin model, therefore for the stages of the cycle the researcher will explain below (Utami, 2013: 40-41):

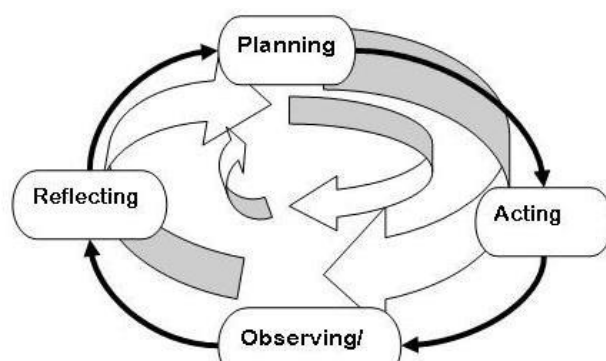


Figure 1. Kurt Lewin Model

- 1) **Determining the Thematic Concern (Reconnaissance)**
In the first week, the researcher and collaborator will conduct interviews and observations to gather as much data as they can on the issues that students may be experiencing or how the teaching and learning process is going.
- 2) **Planning**
Planning begins with a discussion with collaborators about the problems that existed at the time of reconnaissance will be held by the researcher and collaborator. This action's goal is to identify the issue and make plans for various steps, including choosing material depending on student proficiency, creating a lesson plan, and developing a research instrument.
- 3) **Action**
Two cycles will complete the action. Two meetings will be held for each cycle, and two lesson plans will be used. The teacher uses the action in each cycle. Using the previously created lesson plans, the instructor conducts the teaching and learning process. Before class begins, the teacher and researcher go through the rules.
- 4) **Observation**
After the action was carried out by the researcher and collaborator, the researcher will observe the lesson plans and the learning process carried out. the researcher filled out the observation checklist took documentation and made observation notes.
- 5) **Reflection**
Each cycle ends researcher and collaborator discussing the results of the actions taken. researcher and collaborator conduct discussions regarding the results and consider ideas or suggestions from the teacher, researcher, and students to improve actions in the next cycle. Successful actions will be held again in the next cycle, while actions that are not successful will be corrected in the next cycle.

ACTION SUCCESS CRITERIA

In this study, there were two cycles used to determine if an action met its success criteria. Each cycle included four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (Busrial, 2022:3). The research instrument used in this study consisted of an observation sheet, a material final test sheet, and a student response questionnaire sheet. The indicator of the success of the action from this research can be seen in the decrease in the number of students who have not met the minimum standard of learning proficiency, which is 65%. Completeness data on student scores are obtained by analyzing the results of research on learning activities using certain criteria. Students can be said to be complete if they meet the standard assessment criteria and take the final material test. The final material test data uses references from schools, namely students can be said to be complete individually if they get a score of more than or equal to 65%.

DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE

In this study will employing four types of instrument, including a vocabulary test, questionnaire, interview, and observation.

1) Vocabulary test

Vocabulary tests are a way to test students' ability to increase vocabulary size. After implementing the crossword puzzle learning technique, the researcher utilized a multiple-choice exam to gauge the students' vocabulary size in this study. In this test, students fill in 10 multiple-choice questions where in each question students must choose the most appropriate answer.

2) Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a research instrument that contains a series of questions to gather information from a survey or statistical study. In this questionnaire the respondents are students, each student answers 10 questions with an (X) mark for each answer. Students choose the answer according to what happened to them, if students strongly agree (SA); students always feel this way, if students agree (A); students feel this way most of the time, if students disagree (D); students don't feel this way very often. The aim of this instrument is to collect qualitative data.

3) Interview

An interview is one of the instruments in this research. Therefore, the researchers conducted interviews with English teachers and students, to collect data and to find out more information about the teaching learning process.

4) Observation

Observation is the observation of the teaching learning process and evaluates a person, group, and phenomenon then draws conclusions and notes. During the observation, the researcher observed the teaching learning process and prepared a note sheet to record the results of the observations. The purpose of applying this instrument is to obtain information about the teaching learning process using crossword puzzles.

DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

Qualitative Technique

Data were examined using the findings of the researcher's observations and interviews performed during the study procedure. At the time of analyzing and processing data, the researcher was assisted by an English teacher. About Burns (2009: 157–160) there are five steps of the analysis technique. The steps in below.

1) Assembling The Data

Data were collected during the study through interviews and observations using data collection techniques.

2) Coding The Data

Data coding is the process of classifying data into manageable groups, such as concepts, themes, or type categories. The activities that were used during the teaching and learning process are the theme around which the researcher categorizes the data in this study.

3) Comparing The Data

The researcher compares the data in this stage to find links and relationships between the data. This is done to ascertain whether the activities made were suitable or whether some needed to be improved upon and repeated using other data gathering strategies.

4) Building Interpretation

After the three steps were carried out, the researcher looked back at the data that had been analyzed to ask a question, develop an explanation, and rethink the data connection. This stage is to bring up certain interpretations, behavior patterns, or attitudes in research.

5) Reporting The Outcomes

The researcher presents the study's findings in this final phase. this is also related to the question of why this research was conducted, describes the context of the research, and describes the results of the research that are supported by data and findings. In the end, other researchers are advised to improve this research and describe it in their research.

Quantitative Technique

Quantitative techniques were used to analyze the result data from the vocabulary test. This technique will analyze the pretest and posttest and then find the mean value of the results of the pretest and posttest (Fajriyani, 2011, p. 26-27). To calculate the mean value of students using the formula:

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

Notes:

M : Mean

∑ : Sum of the Total of Student's Score

N : The total number of Student

To get the results of the classical completeness of students in accordance with the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) of 65%, using the formula below:

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

Notes:

P : The class percentage

F : Total percentage score

N : Number of students

To analyze pretest scores, cycle one posttest, cycle two posttest, researchers used the formula:

$$P = \frac{y - y_1}{y} \times 100\%$$

P : Percentage of Students' Improvement

y : Pre- test Result

y₁ : Posttest 1

$$P = \frac{y_2 - y_1}{y} \times 100\%$$

P : Percentage of Students' Improvement

y : Pre- test Result

y₂ : Posttest 2

Value analysis is based on a range that defines the very high, high, sufficient, low, and very low categories. value analysis based on the range of values classified in the following table:

The criteria are ;

Table 1. Scoring Criteria

Value Range	Category
90 – 100	Very high
70 – 80	High

65 – 70	Sufficient
< 40	Low

Description:

Very high = The value achieved by students exceeds the target

High = The value achieved by students is high

Sufficient = The value achieved by students reaches the KKM target

Low = Low grades achieved by students

Very low = Very low grades achieved by students

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This research was conducted at SMPN 1 Jabiren Raya in class VII B and as many as thirty participants became the research subject. The researcher took several actions to collect data both from students, teachers, and vice principals at SMPN 1 Jabiren Raya. Before conducting this research, the researcher conducted pre-observations by conducting pre-interviews, pre-questioner and pretest.

1) The Result of Pre-Interview

In the pre-interview session the researcher interviewed the English teacher and vice principal to find out information and problems at the school. The pre-interview was divided into two namely, the vice principals and the English teacher. For the vice principal pre interview was held on October, 24th 2022 and then the English teacher a pre-interview was held on October, 26th 2022. The researcher asked the problem to the vice principal in their school. The vice principal said that some of students needed help understanding the English subject. Moreover, they required achieve the minimum completion criteria (KKM). They are also confused what the teacher said when the teacher tried to explain with full English. One way to solve this problem is by explaining in two languages or bilingual language as like as the teacher said. The researcher asked questions of the English teacher which divided into three categories. The first one is situation when learning in the classroom, the second one is about students' vocabulary mastery, and the last one is the strategy was using by the teacher when learning.

The first category talked about situation when learning in the classroom. The teacher said that the situation at the school is very noisy. Some of students doing laugh and cannot be reprimanded when studying, so make their friend distracted and unfocused when learning. When they were learning there are some of students left the room without permission even though the teacher was teaching in front of them.

The second category is related to the students' vocabulary mastery. when researcher interviewed the English teacher, the teacher stated that students still lack in their vocabulary. They still have not understand yet about the teacher explained. Moreover, the book was released by KEMENDIKBUD in 2017 with the title "When English Rings A Bell" this book made students confuse because this book used full English.

The last category is related to the strategy was using by the teacher when learning. When learning the teacher still used the general strategy as like as lecture, question and answer, and practice. This strategy is usually used by English teachers every time they teach. In fact, it is rare to use strategies such as playing, singing, etc.

The result of this interview was students need help understanding English lessons because they have lacked vocabulary and the pronunciation of each word is still need to be fluent.

2) The Result of Questioner

The questioner was conducted to know that the responses by students about their vocabulary as well as their understanding related to English subjects. The questioner was given to students in VII B grade on Tuesday, November 14th 2022. The description of questioner are below:

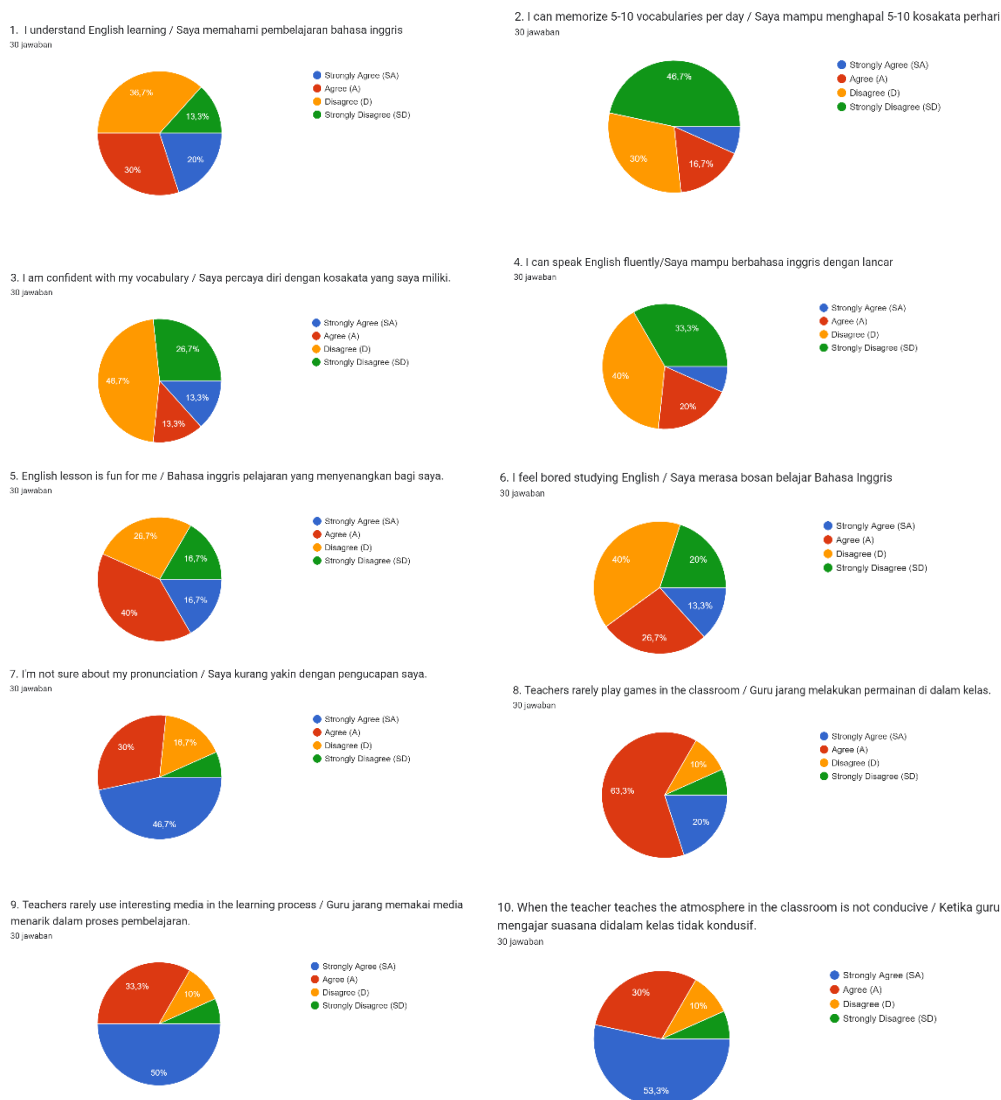


Figure 2. The Result of Questioner

3) Pretest Result

Then after that the researcher conducted a field survey to see the conditions and facilities available at the school. After the pre observation, the researcher conducted a pretest. A pretest was held on November 15th, 2022. This pretest uses 10 multiple choice questions. The purpose of this pretest is to see the problems that exist in students' vocabulary mastery. From 30 students' only 7 students were able to reach the minimum completeness criteria KKM score and as many as 27 people who have not been able to reach The Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) score. To find the result of data above, the researcher calculated the average score:

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{1120}{30}$$

$$M = 37.33$$

After that to get the results of the classical completeness of students in accordance with the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) of 65%, using the formula below:

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

$$P = \frac{7}{30} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 23.3\%$$

Based on the results of the data that has been calculated using the formula above, it can be seen that student scores are still below average or have not reached the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM) score of 65%, while the average score they get is 37.33 with a percentage of classical completeness of 23.3%.

4) Posttest Result Cycle 1

In the pretest there were 7 students who passed while in the posttest was increase to 16 students. To find out the result of the data above, the researcher calculated the average score:

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{1890}{30}$$

$$M = 63$$

After that to get the results of the classical completeness of students in accordance with the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) of 65%, using the formula below:

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

$$P = \frac{16}{30} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 53.3\%$$

Based on the results of the data that has been calculated using the formula above, it can be seen that students still have not reached the minimum completeness criteria in this cycle 1, where the average score they obtained was 63 with a percentage of classical completeness of 53.3%, which is still not reaching the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) of 65%. There was an improve from the pretest to the cycle 1 posttest. This percentage was calculated using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{y_1 - y}{y} \times 100\%$$

$$P = \frac{63 - 37.33}{37.33} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 69\%$$

The data shows that there is an increase in scores where in the pretest students get a score of 37.33 and increased to 63 in the posttest with an average score increase of 69%.

5) Posttest Result Cycle 2

It can be seen that the data above shows that in this cycle 2 posttest, there are 27 students was passed and 3 students was not passed. Therefore, to find the results of the average student score, the researcher calculates the data as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{2520}{30}$$

$$M = 84$$

After that to get the results of the classical completeness of students in accordance with the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) of 65%, using the formula below:

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

$$P = \frac{27}{30} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 90\%$$

Based on the data calculated above, it can be concluded that students have reached the target of Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) with an average score of 84 with classical completeness of 90%. There was an improve from the pretest to the cycle 2 posttest. This percentage was calculated using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{y_2 - y_1}{y_1} \times 100\%$$

$$P = \frac{84 - 37.33}{37.33} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 83\%$$

Based on the results of the vocabulary test conducted, there was an improve from pretest to posttest cycle 2, where in the pretest students got an average score of 37.33 and improved in the posttest to 85. This can be interpreted that there was an improve in the average score of 83% and 27 students passed with a percentage of 90% classical completeness. It can be concluded that the target achievement has been achieved and exceeds the minimum completeness criteria (KKM).

CONCLUSION

Using crossword puzzles to improve students' vocabulary was declared effective in improving the problems that occurred before the implementing of Classroom Action Research (CAR). Every action takes place, and applies crossword techniques in the learning process. The researcher used HVS paper

media that had printed crossword pictures to facilitate the learning system. In addition, the researcher divided students into several groups to make it easier for students to discuss.

Based on the Classroom Action Research (CAR) that has been carried out at SMPN 1 Jabiren Raya, Pulang Pisau Regency, Jabiren Raya District, it can be concluded that this research was successful by previously designed plans and targets. Using crossword technique was declared successful develop in the learning process. The success of using crossword as a learning technique can be seen as follows:

- 1) Pre-observation, at this stage a vocabulary test was conducted on students. The results of this test were seven students who passed according to the minimum completeness criteria (KKM) and got an average score of 37.33 with 23.3% classical completeness.
- 2) Cycle 1, at this stage a posttest was held to measure whether there was an improvement from the previous test. The posttest results show that sixteen students who passed and the average score they got was 63 with 53.3% classical completeness.
- 3) Cycle 2, at this stage a second posttest was held to see if there was progress and improvement from the previous learning results. As for the results of the second posttest, the students who passed were twenty seven people and the average score was 84 with classical completeness of 90%.

Based on result process, it can be concluded that there is an increase in each cycle, in which initially students have less vocabulary and then an increase in each cycle that has been implemented. This is of course, in each cycle improvements are made to get maximum results so that the use of crossword puzzles to improve vocabulary is declared successful by planning procedures and the planned targets are achieved.

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