

Crossword puzzle game to improve students' vocabulary mastery

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ABSTRACT

This research is a literature review about teaching vocabulary by using a game called crossword puzzle game. The purpose of this research was to describe the process of teaching vocabulary using crossword puzzle game, and to describe teacher problems and student problems in the teaching and learning process. In this research, the researcher used descriptive qualitative research. In several literature reviews, researchers found several cases such as, problems that are often encountered by a teacher, namely; The teacher has difficulty in handling the class because the students make it too crowded by themselves, the teaching method is wrong, and requires students to share some vocabulary words in the meeting but students can only master some of them, and also some obstacles that are often encountered by a student in learning vocabulary, that is; Students find the teacher's explanation boring, and they perceive vocabulary learning as knowing the main meaning of new words obtained only from textbooks or from the teacher, so it is difficult for them to use words based on the appropriate context. Therefore, teaching English vocabulary applies crossword puzzle games is effective in increasing students' vocabulary.

Keywords: *Crossword Puzzle Game, Vocabulary Mastery, Students Ability*

I. INTRODUCTION

Based on the curriculum that has been implemented in various schools in Indonesia, the results of teaching and learning English are expected to be able to communicate to the global world using English. As stated by the Ministry of Education and Culture in the Standards of Content for School-Based Curriculum, Kemendikbud (2013) foreign languages, especially English, are international languages that have a very important role in global communication. So, the foreign language material meant here is to develop the ability to communicate with citizens of the world.

Students can say something even though they only read text or vocabulary in a dictionary, as stated by Astriyanti and Anwar (2016) "Vocabulary is needed to improve four English skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing". This means that one important element in learning English is vocabulary. Students will find it difficult to express their ideas when they do not have enough vocabulary to support them to understand and speak English.

Teachers have an important role to increase students' interest in learning and teachers also need to apply an interesting method to improve their foreign language learning abilities. The teacher must know the student's situation and use appropriate techniques so that students enjoy learning and easily acquire new vocabulary. In addition, games can also increase students' vocabulary. According to Nurhayati (2015) "Games are one method that can make students feel that certain words are important and necessary".

There are many games that can be used in the teaching and learning process. One type of game is crossword puzzles. With crossword puzzles, students can acquire new vocabulary and can enrich the vocabulary they have. In line with Widyasari (2010) "there are several activities that will help to build vocabulary by applying words in conversation and crossword puzzles".

Crossword puzzles can sharpen students' brains to remember new words. In addition, students will practice solving crossword puzzles by sharing with their friends. Sabiqoh (2016) states that crossword puzzles are an effective teaching tool of terminology, definitions, spelling, and pair key concepts with related names, resulting in greater retention and memorization of facts.

On the other hand, Rizki, et al (2013) suggested that using picture games in the classroom would make the students fun that they would learn better and faster. Jaramillo (2012) also states that the crossword puzzle activity may prove to be a meaningful learning experience for building, understanding, and improving the retention of terms associated with a particular knowledge area.

II. METHODS

This research uses library research, where the data collected is in the form of library-based data. This research is about teaching English vocabulary through crossword puzzle games whose main objective is to find out whether crossword puzzle games are effective in increasing students' vocabulary or not.

As stated by Malunui (2014), crossword puzzles are a kind of game that is done by filling out blank forms presented with word-forming letters as answers to the questions given. Synonyms or word definitions are given with the number corresponding to the number in the box. Letters/words are put into a numbered grid pattern in response to the clues.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results in this research can be described from several expert opinions, one of which is:

According to Widyasari (2012) there are some kinds of crossword puzzles that can be performed in the process of teaching and learning vocabulary in the classroom using crossword puzzle game, those are:

1. Oral Puzzle. It is a puzzle that is giving oral by teachers, and students are given only an empty crossword puzzles without a clue. Give instructions orally can train hearing students. Tell students to fill out what they could and then repeat the instructions again until they understand.
2. Picture Puzzle. It is a puzzle using the picture as a clue. And only give the students the puzzle without the clues. For each clue, replaced with pictures. It works very well with a unit which embroiled many new vocabularies.
3. Object Puzzle. It is the crossword where inside the object is written a clue. give a blank puzzle without a hint to the student. The goods placed around the room, each given a labelled with the prompts number. Then the students are asked to go around at different stations; allow them to pick up the objects as they complete the puzzle.

According to Plaister in Rimbayanti (2016:17) in teaching vocabulary there are some advantages of crossword puzzle that can be taken, namely:

1. Learning vocabulary by doing, because doing action would be more meaningful and motivating students.
2. By doing puzzle, students are trained to involve in the problem solving.
3. It is interesting and challenging for students. It can avoid students' boredom of monotonous learning. In this case, puzzle tries to increase students' attention, their lesson materials and this procedure better learning.
4. The puzzle in group or classroom discussion students is trained to be more critical thinking.
5. The puzzle in group will make the students feel fun, enjoy in their learning English. This is meaningful and helpful for students' in learning English. It can encourage students' to participate in their learning English.

Based Elson (2012), THE PUZZLE GAME focuses on the personal development of the individual student. The goals of THE PUZZLE GAME include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Encourage students to read actively their textbook, with all of its supplementary features, in preparation for class.
2. Teach students the importance of self-discipline and self-reliance in developing good study habits to achieve success.
3. Show students how the rules of THE PUZZLE GAME are similar to situations in life where success depends upon the extent of one's preparedness, knowledge and luck.
4. Require students to exercise good ethics and honesty as Ethics Monitors when grading the puzzles.
5. Demonstrate the importance of honest record keeping.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Based on the analysis and discussion above, the writer concludes that using puzzle games is a good way to increase students' vocabulary, because using crossword puzzles has several benefits to improve students' vocabulary mastery and also their active participation.

Suggestions

For the Teacher

1. The teacher should prepare the material well before teaching by using this strategy such as lesson plan and teaching media.
2. The teacher should manage the class and the time well in order that the implementation of technique can run well and successfully
3. The teacher should be more creative for creating class atmosphere.

For the students

1. The students should be more creative to look for the way to learn English easier at school and have a good motivation in learning and try to practice day by day with friends at school and out of the school.
2. The students should be more serious and never be afraid to make a mistake in learning English.

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