

The Use of Crossword Puzzle to Improve Students' Adjective Vocabulary

Siti Masturoh¹, Wiyaka², Rini Pertiwi³

^{1,2,3} Program Studi Pendidikan Profesi Guru, Universitas PGRI Semarang, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

E-Mail : sitimasturoh100@gmail.com¹, wiyaka@upgris.ac.id², pertiwirini08@gmail.com³

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini dilaksanakan dengan tujuan untuk meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata Adjective peserta didik pada mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris di kelas VII B SMP N 37 Semarang melalui penggunaan media Crossword Puzzle. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian tindakan kelas yang dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus. Setiap siklus terdiri dari perencanaan, pelaksanaan, observasi dan refleksi. Subjek dalam penelitian ini adalah peserta didik kelas VII B SMP N 37 Semarang dan objek penelitian ini adalah keterampilan kosakata dan teka-teki silang. Teknik pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini adalah observasi dan tes tertulis. Penelitian ini dilakukan karena penulis menemukan permasalahan pada peserta didik yaitu kurangnya penguasaan kosakata Bahasa Inggris dan rendahnya minat belajar peserta didik. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian yang dilakukan, penulis sampai pada kesimpulan bahwa terdapat peningkatan hasil belajar yang signifikan pada siklus I dan II. Peningkatan hasil belajar ditunjukkan dari 59,4% menjadi 87,5% dari jumlah peserta didik. Berdasarkan data tersebut dapat disimpulkan bahwa penggunaan Crossword Puzzle dapat meningkatkan kemampuan kosakata Adjective peserta didik kelas VII B SMP N 37 Semarang.

Keywords: Teka-Teki Silang, Kosa Kata, Kata Sifat.

ABSTRACT

This research was carried out with the aim of improving students' mastery of Adjective vocabulary in English subjects in class VII B of SMP N 37 Semarang through the use of Crossword Puzzle media. This research is classroom action research that carried out in two cycles. Each cycle consists of planning, implementation, observation and reflection. The subjects in this research are students of class VII B of SMP N 37 Semarang and the objects of this research are vocabulary skills and crossword puzzle. Data collection techniques in this research are observation and written test. This research was conducted because the author found problems with students, namely their lack of mastery of English vocabulary and students' low interest in learning. Based on the results of the research conducted, the author came to the conclusion that there was a significant increase in learning outcomes in cycles I and II. The increase in learning outcomes was shown from 59.4% to 87.5% from the total number of students. Based on these data, it can be concluded that the use of Crossword Puzzle can improve the adjective vocabulary abilities of students in class VII B of SMP N 37 Semarang.

Keywords: Crossword Puzzle, Vocabulary, Adjective .

1. INTRODUCTION

English is an international language used by various countries in the world to communicate globally. English as an international communication language is something important to learn and understand. In the world of education, English has become an important component in the learning process as a subject that must be taught in schools. In learning English there are several skills that must be mastered, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. These skills must be mastered by students in order to be able to learn English in depth. In listening skills, for example, students must be able to listen to every word that is being discussed, both in dialogue and in spoken text. In this listening skill, a high level of accuracy is required and is able to listen completely to every word. In speaking skills, students are required to be able to speak English correctly and clearly in the pronunciation of each word. Students must also be able to master every word that will be spoken. This reading skill is almost similar to speaking skill. The difference is in the words spoken. For speaking skills, written text is usually not provided. Meanwhile, for reading skills, written texts are usually provided in the form of reading texts or dialogues. In this reading skill, what needs to be paid attention to is accuracy in reading each word and also intonation. The last one is writing skills. In this writing skill, students are required to be able to write in English. Students' writing ability can be seen from the accuracy of writing the letters of each word. This writing skill is sometimes a difficult part for students. This is because usually students are only able to speak without knowing how to write each word. These four abilities will be easy to master if students have a large and broad vocabulary. Vocabulary is one aspect of language that must be considered and mastered in order to support smooth

communication using language both verbally and in writing (Sudjianto and Dahidi, 2004: 97). In line with this opinion, Yunisah (2007: 11) states that vocabulary mastery is a measure of a person's understanding of the vocabulary of a language and their ability to use that vocabulary both orally and in writing. Bloomfield (1933, dalam Aziez, 2010: 3) provides a description of words as follows: "*A free form which consists of two or more lesser free forms as, for instance, poor John or John ran away or yes, sir, is a phrase. A free form which is not a phrase is a word. A word is then a free form which does not consist entirely of two or more lesser free form: in brief, a word is minimum free form*".

Vocabulary has a very important role. Whether or not students master vocabulary will determine how well they communicate with each other. Students who have weak or little vocabulary mastery will find it difficult to communicate. Students' delivery of ideas or thoughts, both orally and in writing, is also determined by whether or not their mastery of vocabulary is good.

Each person's ability to master vocabulary is different. This is influenced by various factors. Each person's vocabulary mastery will increase over time. According to Yudiono (1984:47) there are several dominant factors that influence a person's level of vocabulary mastery, namely background knowledge or certain scientific disciplines, age, level of education, and references. Meanwhile, according to Bakri in Anggraini (2011: 28), the vocabulary mastery factor is stated as follows: "A child's vocabulary mastery is influenced by the age factor and when children communicate with other people, the older they get and communicate, the more vocabulary they master." In line with these two experts' opinions, Keraf 1986:64 states that the process of mastering a person's vocabulary takes place slowly. A person's

vocabulary increases and expands with age. The older a person is, the more things he knows. Apart from being influenced by age and level of education, reading is also a factor that influences a person's level of vocabulary mastery. The more references someone reads, the more vocabulary they will master. The same opinion was also expressed by Roekhan and Martutik (1991:51) who stated that the more reading, the greater the amount of vocabulary a person masters. The library is a very appropriate medium for supporting vocabulary through reading activities. Thus, it can be concluded that a person's ability to master vocabulary is influenced by factors, namely background knowledge, age, level of education, and reading references.

Students in studying English must be able to master basic English vocabulary, for example adjective vocabulary. This adjective vocabulary is used to describe how an object or thing looks. Adjectives or adjectives are a class of words that modify nouns or pronouns, usually by explaining them or making them more specific. Adjectives can describe the quantity, adequacy, order, quality, or emphasis of a word.

Klammer (2000:155) argues that "an adjective phrase is an adjective or any group of words that can substitute for an adjective". Students need to learn adjectives to make it easier for them to describe an object they are talking about. Studying adjective vocabulary requires appropriate and interesting media or tools to attract students' interest and make it easier for them to understand each adjective vocabulary term they learn.

Middle School English language learning in the current curriculum is the Merdeka Curriculum which is focused on strengthening the use of English both verbally and in writing. This means that the role of teachers in schools is very necessary to encourage students to actively use English and be able to master English. It cannot be

denied that learning a foreign language is not as easy as learning Indonesian. For example, learning English for students who have never known the language requires a lot of effort for the student. Meanwhile, for teachers who teach these students, teachers need various creative ideas and innovations to make it easier for them to learn and understand English. Students who have never taken English lessons at all need basic knowledge in English subjects such as knowledge of various letters and numbers. Problems like this currently occur frequently in secondary schools, including at SMP N 37 Semarang.

As with the current educational curriculum, students are required to be active during the learning process. The current educational curriculum focuses more on student activity or what is known as the Student Center. Different from the previous curriculum which focused on lecture techniques or known as the Teacher Center. The current implementation of the curriculum in English subjects means that participants are expected to be able to master the four skills involved in learning English. The current curriculum is a curriculum that is integrated with technological developments in each era. In this curriculum, both teachers and students are required to understand and be able to operate existing technology. Take a teacher as an example. Teachers are required to be able to understand technology and also be able to operate various types of technology. In the learning process, various kinds of technology, especially digital technology, are used to support learning that is both effective and fun. The same thing also applies to students. Students are required to be able to understand and operate technology, including digital technology, in order to be able to actively contribute to the learning process. The implementation of this curriculum also sees the implementation of ice breaking and games. In the midst of the

learning process, a teacher will give students an ice breaker to restore their enthusiasm and hopefully bring up their interest in learning.

In facing these problems, teachers are required to be able to create creative ideas in the learning process. Creative ideas can be created through learning media or learning strategies that will be used in class. Through learning media, teachers can integrate the learning process with currently developing digital technology. In mastering English vocabulary, teachers can use crossword puzzles. Crossword Puzzle or crossword puzzle is a term that comes from English. Crossword puzzle consists of three words, namely "Cross" which means "cross" and "Word" which means "word" and "Puzzle" which means "puzzle". Meanwhile, in Indonesian, Crossword Puzzle is defined as a crossword puzzle or abbreviated as TTS. This Crossword Puzzle has often been heard in our ears because this crossword puzzle is a game. However, crossword puzzles are not necessarily only used as games or games, but crossword puzzles can also be used as an appropriate and fun learning method for students at the secondary school level. According to (Silberman, 2013:325) Crossword Puzzle is "composing review tests in the form of crossword puzzles that will invite students' interest and participation, crossword puzzles can be filled in individually or in groups".

Using Crossword Puzzles has advantages and disadvantages in the learning process. The advantages of using Crossword Puzzles are a. Can sharpen memory. When a puzzle is given, students will remember all previous learning experiences to choose an answer that is suitable (suitable) to answer the existing puzzle. In this way, the benefits of puzzles as a memory sharpener have been obtained by a student; b. Learn clarification. Requires students to learn to group or clarify several

words so that they provide the right answer; c. Develop analytical skills. When asked a question, students will review their experiences when learning and analyze their experiences, such as matching which words are most suitable so that they become the appropriate answer; d. Entertain. As a form of game that sharpens the brain, it requires good analysis. In principle, when you are busy looking for the answer, it is an activity to entertain yourself; e. Stimulates creativity. Meanwhile, the disadvantages of using Crossword Puzzles in the learning process are: a. Students can imitate the answers of their friends; b. Allows it to be done by other people; c. Giving crossword puzzles too often will make students feel bored; d. Instructions or instructions that are not clear will hinder the work on the crossword puzzle and the results obtained may deviate from the goal. The game method is a learning method that can arouse enthusiasm and enthusiasm for learning with a sense of enjoyment so that students do not feel bored and even enjoy learning even though the learning material being taught may be difficult. Soeparno (1988: 60) argues that: "Games are an activity to acquire certain skills in an enjoyable way." The presence of games in the learning process can change passive and monotonous learning into fun, active learning. In English subjects, in mastering English vocabulary, teachers can compose crossword puzzles containing various kinds of vocabulary in English. To make it easier to compose crossword puzzles, teachers can use digital technology in the form of laptops and online crossword-creating applications.

The basic material that teachers need to teach to students who have never studied English is in the form of basic vocabulary, such as adjectives. Adjectives are a class of words that modify nouns or pronouns, usually by explaining or making them more specific. Adjectives can describe the quantity,

adequacy, order, quality, or emphasis of a word. Students need to learn adjectives to make it easier for them to describe the object being discussed. Studying adjective vocabulary requires appropriate and interesting media or tools to attract students' interest and make it easier for them to understand each adjective vocabulary term they are studying. Using crossword puzzles in studying adjective vocabulary in English subjects is one of the right choices and is certainly interesting for advertising. In compiling crossword puzzles, teachers must choose some vocabulary and clues in language that is easy for students to understand according to their current phase. The problem that the author currently encounters is the poor mastery of students' vocabulary of English adjectives. This is because students have never received English subjects when studying in elementary school and because of the pandemic that hit several years ago. These two things make students experience difficulties in learning English. These problems were obtained from the results of observations and diagnostic tests carried out by the author during the English learning process in class VII B at SMP N 37 Semarang. Based on observations, students experience difficulties in learning English because most of them did not learn English in elementary school. Apart from that, from the results of the diagnostic assessment, the author found that the majority of students did not answer the diagnostic test questions. This is what made the author consider conducting Classroom Action Research by focusing on the English vocabulary mastery of class VII B students at SMP N 37 Semarang using crossword puzzles. Crossword Puzzle was chosen as a medium in the English learning process in this research because it is appropriate and very interesting because Crossword Puzzle is included in a game.

2. METHOD

The research method used in this research is Classroom Action Research (PTK). Classroom Action Research (PTK) or classroom action research is an examination of learning activities in the form of actions, which are deliberately created and occur in a class together (Arikunto, 2012: 3). Meanwhile, according to Susilowati (2018), Classroom Action Research (PTK) is research carried out by teachers or researchers as an action to improve and improve educational services in handling the teaching and learning process which has targets or research subjects, namely students. Sanjaya (2005: 13) PTK is one of the efforts that teachers can make to improve the quality of teachers' roles and responsibilities, especially in managing learning. As stated by Muchlisin Riadi (2019), the aim of Classroom Action Research is a form of research that occurs in the classroom in the form of certain actions taken to improve the teaching and learning process in order to improve learning outcomes that are better than before. Therefore, the data obtained from this research is data regarding how to use Crossword Puzzles in English learning and the value of students' results of completing Crossword Puzzles. The techniques and instruments used to collect data in this research are observations made during the learning process, field notes used by researchers to record other findings that are not on the observation sheet, related to student activities during the learning process, and tests. which is used to collect data on the value of students' work results. In this classroom action research, the data used is quantitative data. Sugiyono (2010: 5) states that quantitative data is data in the form of information or statements expressed in numbers or in the form of numbers. This means that the data that will be used in the research is data in the form of numbers which

are the results of Class Action Research (PTK). This data is obtained through the results of tests carried out by students. This data is obtained through the results of tests carried out by students.

Collecting research data certainly requires a research instrument. According to Arikunto (2010:211) "A good instrument must fulfill two important prerequisites, namely valid and reliable". Research instruments are tools or media used by researchers to collect research data. In this research, researchers used research instruments in the form of observations and tests. Observation is a way to make an assessment by making direct and systematic observations. In this case, the researcher made observations on the course of the learning process in class VII B. This observation was only carried out during the teaching and learning process to find out students' habits in the learning process in class which could influence their learning outcomes. Researchers observe everything during the learning process to obtain data about the influence of actions taken on the learning process and student learning outcomes. while a test is a series of questions or exercises or other tools used to measure the skills, knowledge, intelligence, abilities or talents of an individual or group. Test instruments were developed to answer input and output questions, namely preparing test equipment before and after students take part in learning (pre-test and post-test). The test equipment was developed in the form of written questions. In this case, the researcher gave a test in the form of a pre-test at the first meeting and a post-test at the second meeting in each cycle.

In this research, researchers used two types of data, namely primary and secondary data. According to Sugiyono (2018:456), primary data is a data source that directly provides data to data collectors. Data is collected by the researcher himself directly from the

source or first place where the research object is carried out. The primary data sources in this research were class VII B students and English subject teachers at SMP N 37 Semarang. Meanwhile, secondary data is a data source that does not provide data directly to data collectors, for example through other people or through documents. In this research, documentation and observation sheets are secondary sources.

These data are analyzed and processed so that research results are obtained based on success indicators from the Department of National Education (Ministry of National Education 2006), a person can be said to have completed their learning outcomes if the individual achieves a score of 75% of the total learning outcomes. questions given or get a score of 75. Meanwhile, to determine classical completeness on student learning outcomes if the class reaches a score of 85% of the total number of students who completed it or a score of 75. The indicator of success in this research is if 85% of the total number of students got a score of 75 Students' learning completeness can be determined using the formula:

$$\text{Individual Completeness} = \frac{\text{The number of individual correct answer}}{\text{The number of questions}} \times 100\%$$

Meanwhile, to determine classical completeness on student learning outcomes, it can be determined by using the following formula:

$$\text{Classical Completeness} = \frac{\text{The number of students who completed}}{\text{The number of students}} \times 100\%$$

A class can be said to have achieved learning completeness if the class achieves a score of 85% of the total number of students who have completed it or a score of 75. The indicator of success for this research is if 85% of the total number of students get a score of 75 in completing the Crossword Puzzle.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This Classroom Action Research (PTK) was conducted at SMP N 37 Semarang. This research involved students in class VII B for the 2023/2024 academic year in the English subject. The English learning process was initially dominated by conventional methods, namely lectures. Because the lecture method often dominates during the learning process, students become bored easily and are less interested in participating in the learning process. Apart from that, teachers do not integrate learning with technology. Some of these things result in a low level of students' ability to understand lesson material and make students' learning outcomes less good. Therefore, researchers tried to make slight changes to the implementation of the English learning process. Researchers have several considerations which are the reasons for researchers to make changes to the implementation of the learning process. The reason is that English is a subject that is difficult for students to learn, students need a learning process that is fun and not tense, and the classroom atmosphere is not conducive considering climate factors and students who are allowed to bring cellphones in the classroom. In this case, researchers try to integrate technology into the English language learning process with the aim that the learning process carried out will be more effective and also fun. Researchers are trying to use the Crossword Puzzle learning media in the learning process which can also be used as a game that sharpens the brain. By using this media, students' interest in learning can be raised so that students' learning outcomes increase and are satisfactory as expected. The students will also feel happy and enjoy learning English in the

classroom.

This Classroom Action Research was carried out in two cycles. The first cycle was carried out in two meetings and the second cycle was carried out in two meetings. Researchers used research techniques proposed by Wardhani (2007). Each cycle includes four stages, namely planning, implementation, observation and reflection. In this planning activity, researchers carry out research preparations. These preparations include determining the place or class used for research, determining the research time, determining the main material, preparing source books, tools and learning media, dividing student study groups, preparing learning tools such as syllabi and teaching modules, making attendance lists and registers. values, determining observers, preparing observation sheets, preparing assessment instruments. The action stage is the implementation of all plans that have been made in the action planning that takes place in the classroom. In carrying out this action the researcher was assisted by an observer. This stage consists of initial activities, core activities and final activities. The observation stage is carried out simultaneously with the action, namely during the learning process and the reflection stage is carried out after completing learning in each cycle. Conduct cycle action evaluations, discuss cycle evaluation results with observers/colleagues and improve implementation of actions according to evaluation results for use in the next cycle. Sugiyono (2010:335) states that data analysis is the process of systematically searching and compiling data obtained from interviews, field notes and documentation, by organizing the data into categories, breaking it down into units, synthesizing it, arranging it into

patterns, choosing which ones. what is important and what will be studied, and make conclusions so that they are easily understood by yourself and others. In this research, the data analyzed is qualitative data and quantitative data. Qualitative data is taken from observations made before and during the learning process. Meanwhile, quantitative data is taken from the results of tests carried out by students. In analyzing quantitative data from student test results, researchers carry out an analytical process to determine the percentage of test results using the following formula:

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

Information:

P= Percentage

F= The number of items answered

N= The number of students

Research conducted on 32 students obtained the following results:

Table 1. Data on Completeness of Learning Results in Cycle 1

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Complete	19	59,4 %
2.	Incomplete	13	40,6 %
Total		32	100 %

Based on the table above, it can be seen that there were 19 students who completed with a percentage of 59.4% and 13 students who did not complete with a percentage of 40.6%. In this first cycle, data was obtained that there were 19 students who had fulfilled the requirements calculated from the total number of students, namely 32 students. Meanwhile, there are still 13 students who have not completed the total number of students. Thus, it can be said that the use of Crossword Puzzles in the English learning process on adjective material can improve students' mastery of English vocabulary which can be seen from the students' learning outcomes even though they have not met the criteria for completeness by the Ministry of National Education (2006), namely 85% of the total number of participants. educate. Apart from being able to improve mastery of English vocabulary, using Crossword Puzzles as a medium in the English learning process can increase students' interest in learning and activeness during the learning process.

Meanwhile, in cycle II, the learning outcomes of students using the Crossword Puzzle for English subjects in adjective material increased compared to the results of research in cycle I. The increase in learning outcomes can be seen from the following table:

Table 2. Data on Completeness of Learning Result in Cycle II

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Complete	28	87,5 %
2.	Incomplete	4	12,5 %
Total		32	100 %

Based on Table 2 above, it can be seen that there was an increase in student learning outcomes in cycle II, a total of 28 students who had achieved completion out of the total number of students with a percentage of 87.5%. Meanwhile, there are still 4 students who have not achieved completion out of the total number of students with a percentage of 12.5%. With a percentage of student completeness of 87.5%, it can be said that the learning outcomes of students in cycle II have met the completeness criteria put forward by the Ministry of National Education (2006). From the data analysis of students' learning outcomes in the English learning process on adjective material with Crossword Puzzle media in cycle I and cycle II, it can be concluded that there is an increase in the level of mastery of English vocabulary in Adjective material which can be seen from the results of working on Crossword Puzzle. Students are also motivated to participate in the learning process so that their interest in learning arises and influences their learning outcomes to be good and able to achieve the

predetermined KKM. However, there are still 4 students who have not reached the KKM in the English learning process in Adjective material. The four students who still have not reached the minimum completeness criteria (KKM) need to be given special treatment or by providing lots of practice questions and also providing guidance in the students' learning process.

4. CONCLUSION

A learning process can be said to be successful if the process goes well and smoothly and students are able to accept and understand the learning material being taught. This success can be achieved if there is good communication between teachers and students during the learning process. This success can also be seen from the learning outcomes of students and the enthusiasm of students in class. Students are enthusiastic about participating in the learning process in the classroom because the classroom atmosphere is comfortable and the learning process is enjoyable. Therefore, educators must be able to present an effective and enjoyable learning process using various interesting media. Seeing the very rapid development of technology today, the learning process can be integrated with technology. The use of technology in the learning process can improve students' learning experience. Educators must choose the right technology to use as media in the learning process so that the media is appropriate and effective. The choice of technology as a learning medium must also be adjusted to the learning level of students. This is intended to prevent errors and difficulties for students in operating the learning media. Learning media that can be integrated with technology can be print media and online media. Print media is usually paper. Meanwhile, online media can be in the form of online applications. Based

on research activities that have been carried out, starting from research data collection activities to processing and analyzing data related to the use of Crossword Puzzle adjective vocabulary material in the English learning process, it can be concluded that the use of Crossword Puzzle is very effective in learning English, especially in vocabulary material adjective so that it can improve students' vocabulary mastery. Apart from that, the use of Crossword Puzzles in the learning process can foster interest and attract students' attention in learning activities. Students' interest and motivation to learn can arise because the media used in the learning process is very interesting, namely the use of Crossword Puzzles. This is caused by students who do not feel burdened and stressed in the learning process because they feel that this Crossword Puzzle is a game and not a task. The results of this classroom action research show that the level of student activity has increased. Students look more active during the learning process in the classroom. This activity includes being active in working on the Crossword Puzzle provided, being active in asking questions regarding unclear instructions or clues, and also being active in finding answers to the questions provided.

The improvement experienced by students in the English learning process in Classroom Action Research is due to the use of learning media in the form of Crossword Puzzles which attract students' attention. This increase is shown by the learning outcomes of students, students who are conducive to the learning process in the classroom, and also the activeness of students because they are enthusiastic about working on the Crossword Puzzle given. By using learning media, students become more interested in participating in the learning process so that

their desire to learn increases and ultimately their learning outcomes improve. In other words, the use of technology in the implementation of the learning process can increase students' understanding of the material being taught. Choosing technology as the right learning media can have a good effect on the learning process carried out. The classroom atmosphere and learning process are good and comfortable, ensuring good communication between teachers and students. Increasing students' motivation and interest in learning depends on how the learning process is planned and the learning media used. The more mature and precise the planning and selection of learning media used, the better, more effective and more enjoyable the implementation of the learning process will be.

SUGGESTION

Based on this research, the researcher provides suggestions to teachers and students. For teachers, teachers must be able to implement technology in the learning process, like Canva. The implementation of this technology aims to involve students actively in the learning process. For students, students must try something new and increase their knowledge and insight through the learning process. Students must be able to use technology that is currently developing in society for the learning process.

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