The Effectiveness of Using Crossword Puzzles Media on Mufradat Learning Materials in Arabic Lessons at Islamic Junior High School (MTS West Sumba)

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Abstract: *This study aims to determine the effectiveness of crossword puzzles media on* mufradat *or vocabulary material in Arabic subjects at MTS Negeri [state Islamic junior high school] West Sumba in 2019. The research method used in this study was descriptive quantitative. In this study, the population was MTS N West Sumba students in 2019, while the sampling was 30 MTS N West Sumba students, consisting of ten seventh-grade students, ten eighth-grade students, and ten ninth-grade students. The data in this study were collected through observation and questionnaires. The use of crossword puzzles in* mufradat *learning materials in Arabic subjects at MTS N West Barat in 2019 had been carried out in a very effective category, with a success percentage of 97.24%.*

Keywords: *Media, Crosswords, Effectiveness, Vocabulary*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui efektivitas media teka-teki silang materi mufradat atau kosa kata pada mata pelajaran bahasa arab di MTS Negeri Sumba Barat tahun 2019. Metode penelitian yang digunakan pada penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kuantitatif. dalam penelitian ini yang menjadi populasi adalah siswa MTS Negeri Sumba Barat tahun 2019, sedangkan sampling dari penelitian ini adalah 30 siswa mts negeri sumba barat yang terdiri dari 10 siswa kelas VII, 10 siswa kelas VIII, dan 10 siswa kelas IX untuk mengumpulkan data dalam penelitian ini dilakukan dengan cara, observasi (pengamatan) dan kuesioner. Penggunaan media teka-teki silang materi pembelajaran mufradat pada mata pelajaran bahasa arab yang telah dilaksanakan di MTS Negeri Sumba Barat tahun 2019 telah terlaksana dengan katagori sangat efektif dengan persentase keberhasilan efektivitas 97,24 %.

Kata Kunci: Media, Teka-teki Silang, Efektivitas, Mufradat

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of learning Arabic is to develop the ability to communicate in Arabic, both spoken and written, which includes four language skills: listening (*istima'*), speaking (*kalam*), reading (*qira'ah*), and writing (*kitabah*). Ideally, these four skills must be possessed by students. To achieve these four skills, certainly, it must be passed through several stages, such as mastery of vocabulary. Therefore, learning *mufradat* (vocabulary) in Arabic subjects is a must.

Meanwhile, educators must make various efforts to achieve the objectives of learning Arabic, such as changing methods, strategies, and learning media, to make it more interesting and make students understand what is being taught. Many methods, strategies, and media can be used by an educator (Trevisan et al., 2010). Therefore, it takes high creativity and innovation educators to facilitate student understanding in learning and achieve the desired learning goals (Ojo & Adu, 2018). In this case, learning media is defined as a tool that can help the teaching and learning process and clarify the meaning of the message conveyed to achieve learning objectives better and more perfectly (Sutjipto, 2011). Meanwhile, according to (Musfiqon, 2012), learning media is a tool in the form of physical and non-physical, which is deliberately used as an intermediary for teachers and students in understanding learning materials to be more effective and efficient so that students receive learning materials more quickly and are interested in learning further.

In the selection of learning media, an educator must be careful and consider various aspects so that the media can facilitate the process of delivering material, and it is expected to be able to improve the students' abilities. Moreover, (Musfiqon, 2012) explained the criteria for selecting instructional media: (1) suitability for objectives, (2) effectiveness, (3) student circumstances, (4) availability, (5) low cost, (6) teacher skills, and (7) technical quality. In another opinion, there are several criteria for selecting learning media. These criteria are used as a teacher's corridor in choosing learning media. The criteria are (1) in accordance with the objectives to be achieved, (2) appropriate to support the content of lessons that are facts, concepts, principles, or generalizations, (3) practical, flexible, and enduring, (4) teachers are skilled using them, (5) target grouping, and (6) technical quality (Sutjipto, 2011).

Researchers suggested the positive impacts of using learning media. They are (1) teaching that is not rigid, (2) learning can be more interesting, and (3) learning becomes more interactive with the application of learning theory and accepted psychological principles in terms of student participation, feedback, and reinforcement. In addition, (4) the length of the learning time required is shortened because most media only require a short time to deliver messages and lesson content in sufficient quantities, and the possibility of being absorbed by students is greater. (5) The quality of learning outcomes can also be improved if integrating words and pictures as learning media can communicate knowledge elements in a well-organized, specific, and clear way (Sutjipto, 2011; Budiarto et al., 2020; Hanif, 2020; Maharani et al., 2018). Learning media has at least four functions, covering (1) attentional function, (2) affective function, (3) cognitive function, and (4) compensatory function (Arsyad, 2004). From the opinion above, it can be denoted that the benefits of utilizing learning media are to create a comfortable atmosphere during the learning process so that learning activities become more conducive, and the learning objectives can be adequately achieved. The presence of learning media in a learning process will also significantly impact understanding the material compared to not using learning media. As stated by (Musfiqon, 2012), learning media has become an integral part of learning. Even more, its existence cannot be separated in the learning process.

On the other hand, in language learning, game media is needed to accommodate educators' and students' needs in order for the learning process to become interesting and not boring. In this regard,

the media of crossword puzzles can be one solution. A crossword puzzle is a game played by filling in the blank spaces in the form of a box with letters to form a word according to the clues (Khalilullah, 2012). Another definition of crossword puzzles, according (Wulan, 2019), is that crossword puzzles are games comprised of a set of clues and an n × n grid that contains answers to the clues. Answers in the grid are interlaced; they appear horizontally (across) and vertically (down). Realistic puzzles have a few blank squares to aid in creative puzzle construction. In addition, crossword puzzles are an educational game because they can help students learn to work together and increase activeness in teaching and learning activities. This educational crossword puzzle game is not only in the form of text but also has interesting supporting pictures so that students do not feel bored and are motivated to learn.

This game media is a language game media that is very easy to use and has been known to various levels of society. As asserted by (Fathul Mujib, 2011), a game is a specific situation or condition when a person seeks pleasure or satisfaction through activity or play activity. According to Tedjasaputra (Syamsuardi, 2012), educational game tools are a medium of the system, which is basically a systematic and synergistic process with various components, such as activity materials and procedures for grouping children. The crossword puzzle game media, in this case, is one form of vocabulary teaching method. Filling out crossword puzzles is indeed very fun, besides helping remember popular vocabulary (*mufradat*). Apart from that, it is also useful for knowledge of a general nature in a relaxed manner. Completing a crossword puzzle makes a person think about searching for answers. If the answer has not been found, then a feeling of curiosity strikes and one will look for ways to solve it. Usually, people do crossword puzzles in a relaxed state and to fill their spare time (Orawiwatnakul, 2017). Thus, crossword puzzles can be used as a medium in learning Arabic, given this game's characteristics, which are easy and fun and expected to facilitate the learning process. In addition, the characteristics of students, in general, are happy to be invited to play. Therefore, crossword puzzles can be used as specific learning media in Arabic learning (*mufradat*), seeing the function of crossword puzzles, including awakening the brain nerves, which gives a refreshing effect on memory, so that brain function returns optimally as it is accustomed to study leisurely continuously (Santosa et al., 2019). If the Arabic learning process is relaxed, the material taught by the teacher will enter the brain more so that learning is more effective.

Based on the explanation, one solution that can be used is learning media utilizing crossword puzzles. The use of crossword puzzles is expected to increase learning mastery at MTs N West Sumba, especially in learning Arabic. This crossword puzzle media is designed to make it easier for students in the learning process. It is because the crossword puzzle media can attract students' interest in learning and improve student learning outcomes.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed quantitative approaches and methods. Quantitative methods emphasize more on aspects of objective measurement of social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2018). The primary purpose of this method is to explain a problem but produce generalizations (Sumanto, 1995). This research was conducted from July 22 to August 31, 2019, at MTS N West Sumba.

In this study, the population was MTS N West Sumba students in 2019, while the sampling was 30 MTS N West Sumba students, consisting of ten seventh-grade students, ten eighth-grade students, and ten ninth-grade students.

To collect data in this study, it was done by a) observation, by conducting direct observations of the object under study. The second, b) questionnaire is a technique of collecting data by sending or submitting a list of questions to be filled out by the respondents themselves. The research data were

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analyzed quantitatively through the frequency distribution by giving a percentage. In this case, the researcher used the formula:

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

Description:
P = Percentage figures,
F = Frequency (number of respondents' answers),
N = Number of cases (number of frequencies)

The subsequent analysis was to find the effectiveness level of the variables studied. The mean percent (M %) obtained was compared with the PAP scale V scale, with the following criteria:
V Scale Conversion Guidelines (Agung, 2014).

Table 1. V Scale Conversion Guidelines

Percentage	Criteria
90-100	Very effective
80-89	Effective
65-79	Effective enough
55-64	Less effective
0-54	Ineffective

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Educators are required to be able to solve the learning difficulties of students in the classroom. Various methods must be carried out properly, starting from the planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up stages. Choosing the right media is also an effort to overcome students' learning difficulties.

The effectiveness of crossword puzzles on mufradat (vocabulary) material can be measured based on the effectiveness level expressed by Kirkpatric, comprising reactions/responses, learning, behavior, and results. However, this research discussion was limited to the students' response level to the use of crossword puzzles, where the data were obtained from questionnaires given to students shortly after completing the learning of mufradat material using crosswords as media.

Students' responses to crossword puzzles on mufradat (vocabulary) material in Arabic subjects at MTs N West Sumba were obtained from questionnaires distributed shortly after learning. The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions, where the indicators for each question measured students' responses to planning, implementation, assessment, and follow-up. From the data analysis, the percentage value of effectiveness was 97.24%, with a very effective category. Meanwhile, the explanation is as follows:

Table 2. Recapitulation of the Questionnaire on the Effectiveness of Crossword Puzzles on *Mufradat* (Vocabulary) Material in Arabic Subjects at MTs N West Sumba in 2019

No Question	Frequency		P = Percentage		Total score
	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	
1	5	25	17	83	145
2	3	27	10	90	147
3	3	27	10	90	147
4	5	25	17	83	145
5	3	27	10	90	147
6	4	26	13	87	146
7	3	27	10	90	147
8	4	26	13	87	146
9	3	27	10	90	147
10	5	25	17	83	145
11	3	27	10	90	147
12	6	24	20	80	144
13	7	23	23	77	143
14	4	26	13	87	146
15	4	26	13	87	146
Total					2188
Mean					146
Effectiveness					97.24%
Category					Very effective

From the data analysis obtained from 15 question items using a Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, less agree, disagree, and strongly disagree), the respondents' answers were broadly in agree and in strongly agree, with the following details; In the implementation of learning using crossword puzzle media on *mufradat* (vocabulary) material in Arabic subjects that went smoothly, five respondents agreed, and the remaining 25 stated strongly agree, with percentages of 17% and 83%. Three respondents agreed that the implementation of learning using crossword puzzles could encourage students to be more enthusiastic, and 27 respondents strongly agreed, with percentages of 10% and 90%.

Regarding the implementation of learning using crossword puzzle media to encourage students to have more fun, three respondents agreed, and 27 respondents strongly agreed, with percentages of 10% and 90%. In the implementation of learning using crossword puzzle media to master vocabulary, five respondents agreed, and 25 respondents strongly agreed, with a percentage of 17% and 83%. Three respondents agreed that the implementation of learning using crossword puzzle media was more critical in thinking and 27 respondents stated strongly agree, with percentages of 10% and 90%. In the implementation of learning using crossword puzzle media more creatively, four respondents agreed, and 26 respondents strongly agreed, with percentages of 13% and 87%. Three respondents agreed on the implementation of learning using crossword puzzles as more challenging media, and 27 respondents strongly agreed, with a percentage of 10% and 90%. Four respondents agreed that the

implementation of learning using crossword puzzles was easier to solve problems in an encouraging atmosphere, and 26 respondents strongly agreed, with percentages of 13% and 87%.

Three respondents agreed, and 27 respondents strongly agreed that the implementation of learning using crossword puzzle media required more reasoning, with a percentage of 10% and 90%. The implementation of learning using crossword puzzle media further improved brain function, in which five respondents agreed, and 25 respondents strongly agreed, with a percentage of 17% and 83%. Concerning the implementation of learning using crossword puzzles, they were more satisfied, in which three respondents agreed, and 27 respondents strongly agreed, with a percentage of 10% and 90%. Six respondents agreed, and 24 respondents strongly agreed that in the implementation of learning using crossword puzzles, the time to complete them was quite effective, with percentages of 20% and 80%.

In the implementation of learning using crossword puzzle media, the teacher provided guidance, and guides were optimal with clear instructions; seven respondents agreed, and 23 respondents strongly agreed, with the percentages of 23% and 77%. In the implementation of learning using crossword puzzle media, the columns were considered sufficient, and the questions were very clear, where four respondents agreed, and 26 respondents strongly agreed, with percentages of 13% and 87%. Four respondents agreed on the implementation of learning using crossword puzzles to increase vocabulary mastery, and 26 respondents strongly agreed, with percentages of 13% and 87%.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A crossword puzzle is a game that sharpens the brain. Therefore, crossword puzzles can be used as special learning media in Arabic learning (mufradat), seeing the function of crossword puzzles, including awakening the brain nerves, which gives a refreshing effect on memory, so that brain function returns optimally as it is accustomed to continuing to learn casually. In the process of learning Arabic in a relaxed state, the material taught by the teacher will enter the brain more so that learning is more effective.

There are several suggestions formulated to be followed up in this research. a) For Arabic teachers, especially classroom teachers who become Arabic teachers, it is hoped that they can use this crossword puzzle media in the learning process so that student learning outcomes become more effective, fun, and better. b) Teachers should provide space for students to develop cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in writing and orally because, in crossword puzzle media, the learning outcomes they achieve can benefit learning success. Finally, c) the research results on the use of crossword puzzles can be used as research studies in improving student learning outcomes.

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