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Using Cross Puzzles to Improve *Maharah Kitab* on Students at the Al-Ihsan Foundation, Medan

Yushinta Novia Nur Fatikah^{1✉}, Akmal Walad Ahkas²

State Islamic University of North Sumatra Medan, Indonesia^{1,2}

E-mail : yushintanovianurfatikah@gmail.com¹, akmalwaladahkas@uinsu.ac.id²

Abstrak

Penelitian ini disusun dengan tujuan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menulis peserta didik menggunakan media Teka Teki Silang (TTS) pada peserta didik kelas VIII Di Yayasan Al-Ihsan Medan, Sumatera Utara Tahun Ajaran 2021/2022. Jenis penelitian ini adalah Penelitian Tindak Kelas (PTK). Penelitian ini dilaksanakan pada semester genap Tahun Ajaran 2021/2022, yaitu pada bulan April-Mei. Subjek penelitian adalah peserta didik kelas VIII Yayasan Al-Ihsan yang terdiri dari 33 peserta didik. Objek penelitian adalah kemampuan menulis Peserta didik. Data penelitian dikumpulkan menggunakan tes yang diberikan kepadang masing-masing siswa. Berdasarkan hasil persentase tes belajar siswa pada siklus I ialah 76,96% dan pada siklus II meningkat menjadi 88,03%. Dari perbandingan kedua siklus tersebut terdapat peningkatan sebesar 11,07%. Dari perbandingan kedua siklus tersebut, terdapat peningkatan, hal ini berarti keterampilan menulis (*maharah kitabah*) menggunakan media Teka-Teki Silang (TTS) sudah meningkat.

Kata Kunci: Hasil Belajar, Maharah Kitabah, Media Teka-Teki Silang.

Abstract

This study was structured to improve students' writing skills using Crossword Puzzle (TTS) media for class VIII students at the Al-Ihsan Foundation, Medan, North Sumatra for the 2021/2022 academic year. This type of research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). This research was conducted in the even semester of the 2021/2022 Academic Year, namely in April-May. The research subjects were students of class VIII of the Al-Ihsan Foundation which consisted of 33 students. The object of research is the students' writing ability. Research data were collected using a test given to each student. Based on the results the percentage of student learning tests in the first cycle was 76.96% and in the second cycle increased to 88.03%. From the comparison of the two cycles, there was an increase of 11.07%. From the comparison of the two cycles, there is an increase, this means that writing skills (*maharah kitabah*) using the Crossword Puzzle (TTS) media have increased.

Keywords: Learning Outcomes, Maharah Kitabah, Media Crosswords.

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✉ Corresponding author:

Email : yushintanovianurfatikah@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

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Learning is the essence of the educational process. The interaction between students and educators and learning resources occurs in the learning process (Fahri & Qusyairi, 2019: 149-166). In practice, students gain direct experience with various learning resources during the implementation of the learning process (Inah, 2015: 150-167). On this basis, educators as learning facilitators for students must be able to provide appropriate media to convey learning information to students.

The utilization of learning media is an effort made by educators in engineering the learning environment (Azis, 2019: 308-318). In this context, the collaboration between educators and students is needed to be directly involved (pro-actively) in the learning process. The active involvement of students can be supported by the selection of learning media that has an impact on student motivation. The use of diverse learning media will make the presence of the class missed by students (Susanto, *et.al.*, 2020: 125-138). In this context, educators need media in the learning process to attract the attention of students and make learning activities more interesting and effective.

The use of media in the teaching and learning process is no stranger to hearing. Many educators know that the use of media will be very helpful (Ekayani, 2017: 1-11). For this reason, it takes the ability of educators to choose the right media for the student learning process, because different conditions require different media, even with the same learning material. An effective learning model in the learning process can foster student creativity. Students are happy in the form of games and matches, so educators can use learning models that have game elements (Maimunah, 2016). Learning using the crossword puzzle game is an alternative that can be used by educators because this learning is in line with the character of students who like games.

Indeed, the meaning of learning media has been put forward by education experts from various points of view, including learning media is defined as everything that can stimulate the development of students (Aurora & Effendi, 2019: 11-16). Based on this meaning, Fitria (2014) argues that elementary education level students need media that can present a comfortable and exciting feeling during learning, such as crossword puzzles. Furthermore, Moto (2019: 20-28) added that the media of crossword puzzles is very appropriate to use to train students' thinking skills while playing. That is, the essence of learning is still conveyed, and students feel comfortable in the learning process.

According to Hakim & Kartikasari (2021: 29-36), crossword puzzles are media that can hone students' memory sharpness, even anti-senile therapy. In addition, Sulfia & Habibati (2017: 6-15) mention that crossword puzzles are included in educational games that are effectively used to convey or communicate learning. As for the uniqueness of this type of educational game (crossword puzzles), it can be created with various types of questions. Maryanti & Kurniawan (2017: 124-138) added that crossword puzzles also help students to be skilled at writing through the process of forming the alphabet and spelling letters.

Writing skill (*maharah al-Kitabah*) as one of the 4 language skills, has the highest points than listening skills (*maharah al-Istima'*), speaking (*maharah al-Kalam*), and reading (*maharah al-Qiro'ah*). This is based on the meaning of writing as an activity that is closely related to the thinking process and the ability to express thoughts. In the context of Arabic, Setiawan (2019) explains that writing skills include two main aspects, namely (1) proficiency in forming letters and spelling them, and (2) skills in generating thoughts (ideas) and feelings in Arabic written form.

Furthermore, Puspitasari & Widiyanto (2016: 39-45) argue that writing is an activity to express the contents of thoughts in written form which aims to be understood by readers who are certainly not dealing with or not in the same period by the author. Writing skill is the skill with the highest level of difficulty. In addition to requiring mastery of all existing skills, writing skills also require mastery in all aspects of language such as *qawa'id*, vocabulary (*mufrod*at), literature (*balaghah*), and good choice of diction (*ikhtiyar al-kalimah*) (Sujana, 2014).

Doing crossword puzzles in language learning by choosing a specific topic will increase vocabulary in a variety of different themes, such as plants, food, and the environment. So far, Arabic learning tends to be boring among students, this is due to the monotonous learning without anything interesting in Arabic learning itself (Fathan, 2021: 40-49). Therefore, there is no harm in trying something new in learning Arabic, namely by using this game media.

Indeed, academic studies relevant to crossword puzzles in learning have been discussed from various aspects. Among them are the media theme of honing students' abilities in memorizing mufradat (Khalilullah, 2012: 15-26; Setyawan, 2015: 289-295; Amalia & Hidayat, 2018: 119-134), learning motivation on student achievement (Rakhmadhani, *et.al.*, 2013: 190-197; Astrissi, *et.al.*, 2014: 22-27), student learning outcomes (Laksmi, *et.al.*, 2014; Permana, 2018: 101-106; Zulfajri & Amelia, 2016: 12-18; Atiyah, *et.al.*, 2019: 46-52; Mustofa & Abdullah, 2017: 1491-1500), train language skills that are fun for students (Syofiani, *et.al.*, 2019: 87-98), interest student learning (Sababalat, *et.al.*, 2021: 207-218), character education (Wulan, *et.al.*, 2019: 66-74), and the level of student learning activity (Agustin, *et.al.*, 2021: 166-176; Maharani, *et.al.*, 2019: 151-158).

Carrying from the background that has been described, the researcher wants to provide an innovation in learning Arabic in the field of *maharah kitabah* by using crossword puzzles, summarized in the research title, "*Using Crosswords Media to Improve Maharah Kitabah for Students at the Foundation Al-Ihsan Medan*". Where this media is used so that students do not feel bored with monotonous learning. This media can be used as a reference for educators in creating variations of learning in the classroom.

METHOD

This type of research is Classroom Action Research (CAR) using a research design model of Kemmis and Mc. Taggart. This research was carried out in the even semester of the 2021/2022 Academic Year, namely in April-May. The subjects of the research were students of class VIII A & VIII B at the Al-Ihsan Foundation which consisted of 33 students. The object of research is the students' writing ability. Data collection techniques using the results of observations and interviews. Data were analyzed descriptively and presented in tabular form. Classroom Action Research (CAR) is a type of research that describes both the process and results to improve the quality of learning in the classroom (Assingkily, 2021). In English literature, CAR is known as Classroom Action Research, which is abbreviated as CAR. Classroom Action Research (CAR) is action research carried out by teachers in the classroom. Action Research is essentially a series of "action-research-action-research" carried out in cycles, in order to solve problems, until the problem is solved.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research was conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah, Al-Ihsan College Education Foundation, Medan. The subjects of this research were students of class VIII, totaling 33 people. The action taken by the researcher is learning Arabic using Crossword Puzzle (TTS) media to improve writing skills (*maharah kitabah*) in the Even semester of the 2021/2022 Academic Year. This is based on the highest level of language skills, namely writing skills (Wana, 2021: 100-107).

The implementation of the action was divided into 2 cycles, the first cycle was held on April 25, 2022, and April 27, 2022, then continued with the cognitive learning outcomes test at the level of student understanding Cycle I was held on May 10, 2022. The second cycle was on May 12, 2022, and May 13, 2022, then continued with a cognitive learning outcome test at the level of student understanding in Cycle II which was carried out on May 16, 2022. For observation activities, the researcher acted as a teacher and was assisted by one observer, namely Mrs. Nasya Danulita S.Pd (Arabic teacher class VIII). as an observer who observes the learning process of teachers and students.

In the first cycle, observations were made for each meeting, namely the first meeting of the provision of learning materials to be tested. Then students record the material that has been delivered, after that students memorize the material that has been given. At the end of the cycle, a learning outcome test is given in the form of an assessment. From the results of observer analysis, research on learning activities shows that the learning carried out by researchers is not going well and it is felt that the implementation of learning is not optimal. So it is necessary to make observations in Cycle II. In the second cycle of observation, the researcher carried out the same activities as in the first cycle. This observation data was obtained through the student learning test result sheet which was carried out at the end of the cycle. This data is used to see the process of developing activities that occur during the learning process.

Table 1
Comparison of Student Learning Test Results Cycle I & Cycle II using crossword puzzle media

| Student Learning Test Results Using Media Crosswords to Improve <i>Maharah al-Kitabah</i> | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Cycle I | Cycle II |
| 76,96% | 88,03% |
| Good | Very Good |

Based on the table above, the presentation of student observations on the use of crossword puzzles to improve *Maharah Kitabah* in the first cycle was still 76.96% in the good category, while in the second cycle it reached 88.03% in the very good category. From the results of observations, the use of Crossword Puzzle Media in increasing students' *maharah kitabah* increased from cycle I and cycle II by 11.07%. The increase in the acquisition of student test results can be seen from the results of student evaluations in cycles I and II as follows:

Table 2
Data on Student Evaluation Results Cycle I and Cycle II

| Information | Score | |
|-------------------|---------|----------|
| | Cycle I | Cycle II |
| Total | 2.540 | 2.905 |
| Average | 79,3 | 90,7 |
| The Highest Score | 100 | 100 |
| Completed KKM | 22 | 28 |
| KKM Not Completed | 11 | 5 |
| KKM Percentage | 66,6 % | 84,8% |

Based on the research that has been carried out, it is known that the results of student learning tests using the media of crossword puzzles in improving writing skills (*maharah kitabah*) have increased. The average value of students in the first cycle was 79.3 to 90.7 in the second cycle. From the data above, students who passed the KKM (Minimum Completeness Criteria) in the first cycle were 22 students from the total number of students with a percentage of 66.6%. In the second cycle, there was an increase of 84.8% consisting of 28 people who passed the KKM. Achievement Learning outcomes in cycle II have reached indicators of success because students experience individual learning mastery of 80. The results of teacher observations in the use of crossword puzzles in increasing the *maharah* of the book in cycle I and cycle II are presented in table 3 below.

Table 3

Comparison of Observation Results of Teacher Activities in the Use of Crossword Puzzle Media in Improving Students' *Maharah Kitabah*

| Teacher Activities in Using TTS Media in Boost Student's <i>Maharah Kitabah</i> | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Cycle I | Cycle II |
| 82% | 99% |

The results of Observation of Teacher Activities in the first cycle obtained a percentage of 82% with good criteria. That is, it has increased in the second cycle with a percentage of 99% with very good criteria. The results of observations have increased because the teacher has experienced completeness in providing learning to students and students can understand the learning delivered.

The use of crossword puzzle media to improve students' *Maharah Kitabah* in learning Arabic makes learning Arabic more meaningful, and fun and raises student activity because the use of this crossword puzzle media involves students playing an active role in finding answers to questions that have been made interactively. When viewed from the results of observations, the activities of students in learning Arabic through the media of crossword puzzles on writing skills (*maharah kitabah*) have increased in each cycle. In the first cycle, the average score of students was 79.3 which is included in the good category. Then in the second cycle, the average value of students is 90.7 which is included in the very good category.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, the researchers can conclude that the use of crossword puzzles (TTS) media in increasing the *maharah kitabah* in Arabic Language Learning in Class VIII at Madrasah Tsanawiyah, Al-Ihsan Education Foundation, Medan, has increased. The average percentage obtained in the first cycle was 76.96% (good category) and increased to 88.03% (very good category) in the second cycle. The use of Crossword Puzzles (TTS) media in increasing the student's *maharah kitabah* in Cycle I, there are several shortcomings so improvements need to be made in Cycle II. The improvements made were in the form of providing learning related to writing skills in Arabic so that students were able to write Arabic properly and correctly. After the repair was carried out, there was an increase from cycle I to Cycle II by 11.07%.

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