

# **IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY ACQUISITION THROUGH INTERACTIVE CROSSWORD PUZZLE GAME**

**SKRIPSI**



Present to  
IKIP PGRI BOJNEGORO  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Sarjana in English Education

**By:**  
**Deshinta Dewi Kurniawati**  
**NIM 21120054**

**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS EDUCATION  
IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO  
2025**

**IMPROVING STUDENTS VOCABULARY  
ACQUISITION THROUGH INTERACTIVE  
CROSSWORD PUZZLE GAME**

**SKRIPSI**

Present to

**IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO**

In partial fulfillment of requirements

For the degree of Sarjana in the English Education Department

By:

**Deshinta Dewi Kurniawati**

**NIM 21120054**

**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS EDUCATION  
IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO  
2025**

## APPROVAL SHEETS

The skripsi entitled **“IMPROVING STUDENTS VOCABULARY ACQUISITION THROUGH INTERACTIVE CROSSWORD PUZZLE GAME”** is compiled by:

Name : Deshinta Dewi Kurniawati

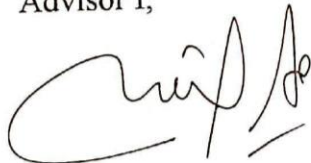
NIM : 21120054

Department : English Education

Has been approved by the advisors.

Bojonegoro, 07 July 2025

Advisor I,



Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd.  
NIDN.0725058403

Advisor II,



Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd.  
NIDN.0728017903

## LEGITIMATION

The skripsi entitled **"IMPROVING STUDENTS VOCABULARY ACQUISITION THROUGH INTERACTIVE CROSSWORD PUZZLE GAME "** is compiled by:

Name : Deshinta Dewi Kurniawati

NIM : 21120054

Department : English Education

This is to certify that this skripsi has been approved by the Board of Examiners as the requirement for the degree of Sarjana in English Education Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro on July 29th, 2025

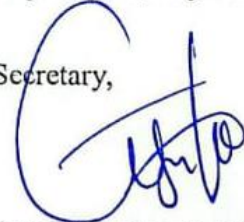
Bojonegoro, July 29th, 2025

Chairman,



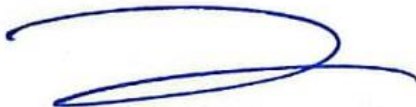
Dr. Cahyo Hasanudin, M.Pd.  
NIDN 0706058801

Secretary,



Ayu Fitrianiingsih, M.Pd.  
NIDN 0720049101

Examiner I,



Dr. Ima Isnaini Taufiqur Rohmah, M.Pd.  
NIDN. 0723058302

Examiner II,



Ayu Fitrianiingsih, M.Pd.  
NIDN. 0720049101

Rector,

Dr. Dra. Junarti, M.Pd.  
NIDN 0014016501

## **MOTTO AND DEDICATION**

### **MOTTO**

*“Do the best in silence, and let the results make the noise”*

*(The Researcher)*

*Allah will raise those who have believed and those given knowledge in degrees.*

*(QS Al-Mujadila: 11)*

### **DEDICATION**

There is no page more meaningful than this one. With deep appreciation and respect, I dedicate this work to:

1. My beloved parents, whose unconditional love, endless prayers, and unwavering support have been the foundation of my strength and perseverance.
2. Both of my brothers, who have always inspired and encouraged me in ways that words can hardly express.
3. My advisors, Mrs. Fitri Nurdianingsih, M.Pd., and Mr. Refi Ranto Rozak, M.Pd., for their patience, insightful guidance, and genuine support during the process of completing this skripsi.
4. Someone with NIM 21120027, for the quiet strength, motivation, and constant presence that helped me through difficult times.
5. Teletubbies, my closest friends, for sharing the laughter, tears, and unforgettable moments that made this journey meaningful and bearable.

Thank you for all the time, energy, and support you have given. May this skripsi serve as a source of insight and benefit for others. Aamiin.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, all praise and gratitude be to Allah SWT, the Almighty God, for His endless grace and blessings, which have enabled the researcher to complete this skripsi entitled “Improving Students’ Vocabulary Acquisition Through Interactive Crossword Puzzle Game.” Peace and blessings are also upon Prophet Muhammad SAW, the last messenger, who has guided humanity from the darkness into the light of knowledge and truth. On this occasion, the researcher wishes to sincerely thank:

- a. Dr. Junarti, M.Pd., Rector of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.
- b. Dr. Cahyo Hasanudin, M.Pd., Dean of the Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.
- c. Ayu Fitrianiingsih, M.Pd., Head of the English Education Study Program, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.
- d. Mrs. Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd., as the First Advisor, for her invaluable assistance, guidance, and patience in supervising the completion of this skripsi.
- e. Mrs. Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd., as the Second Advisor, for her continuous direction, motivation, and patient guidance during the preparation of this skripsi.

May all the kindness and support given be rewarded with the best blessings by Allah SWT. With all humility, the researcher remains open to any constructive suggestions and criticisms for the improvement and refinement of this work in the future. Finally, the researcher extends deepest gratitude to beloved parents for their endless prayers, love, guidance, and both moral and financial support. The researcher also extends thanks to all family members, friends, and everyone who has contributed to the completion of this skripsi, whose names cannot all be mentioned individually. It is the researcher’s hope that this skripsi may bring benefit, not only for the researcher personally but also for readers and all concerned parties. The researcher fully entrusts all results and expectations of this work to Allah SWT.

Bojonegoro, July 7th 2025

The Researcher

Deshinta Dewi Kurniawati

## STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I, the undersigned below:

Name : Deshinta Dewi Kurniawati  
NIM : 21120054  
Department : English Education  
Faculty : Languages and Arts Education

In order to uphold academic integrity, sincerely and without coercion from any parties,  
I hereby declare that the skripsi entitled:

### IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY ACQUISITION THROUGH INTERACTIVE CROSSWORD PUZZLE GAME

Is the result of my own original work, and all sources of information used have been clearly cited in the reference list according to the scientific and academic code of ethics. I am aware that if any violations of scholarly ethics regarding to the authenticity of this work are found, **I personally** accept the consequences in accordance with the applicable regulations and am prepared to bear legal sanctions.

Bojonegoro, July 10th, 2025



Deshinta Dewi Kurniawati  
NIM. 21120054

## ABSTRACT

Kurniawati, Deshinta Dewi. 2025. Improving Students Vocabulary Acquisition Through Interactive Crossword Puzzle Game. Skripsi, English Education Department Faculty of Languages and Art Education IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, Lecturer: 1) Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd., 2) Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd.

**Keywords:** vocabulary acquisition, interactive game, crossword puzzle, classroom action research.

Vocabulary acquisition is a crucial component in learning a foreign language, as it serves as the foundation for developing reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Without sufficient vocabulary, students struggle to understand texts and express their ideas. However, many students at MTs Al-Munawwar, particularly in Grade 7A, face difficulties in acquiring English vocabulary due to monotonous teaching strategies and the absence of targeted vocabulary learning activities. This classroom action research aimed to investigate how the use of an interactive crossword puzzle game could enhance students' vocabulary acquisition. The study was conducted over one cycle consisting of four meetings and employed the Wordwall platform as a digital learning tool. Data were collected using vocabulary pre-tests and post-tests, classroom observations, and interviews with the English teacher. The results showed a significant improvement in students' vocabulary performance, with the average score increasing from 65.48 in the pre-test to 85.71 in the post-test. Additionally, the percentage of students achieving the minimum mastery criterion (KKM 75) increased from 14.29% to 94.29%. These findings suggest that integrating interactive crossword puzzle games into vocabulary instruction can improve students' vocabulary acquisition in a structured and measurable way.



## ABSTRAK

Kurniawati, Deshinta Dewi. 2025. Meningkatkan Penguasaan Kosakata Siswa Melalui Permainan Interaktif Crossword Puzzle. Skripsi, Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, Dosen: 1) Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd. 2) Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd.

**Kata kunci:** penguasaan kosakata, permainan interaktif, teka-teki silang, penelitian tindakan kelas.

Penguasaan kosakata merupakan aspek penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa asing karena menjadi dasar bagi pengembangan keterampilan membaca, menulis, berbicara, dan menyimak. Tanpa kosakata yang memadai, peserta didik akan kesulitan dalam memahami teks maupun menyampaikan ide secara efektif. Namun, banyak siswa kelas 7A di MTs Al-Munawwar mengalami kendala dalam menguasai kosakata bahasa Inggris akibat metode pengajaran yang monoton dan tidak adanya kegiatan khusus yang menargetkan penguasaan kosakata. Penelitian tindakan kelas ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki sejauh mana penggunaan permainan teka-teki silang interaktif dapat meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa. Penelitian dilaksanakan dalam satu siklus yang terdiri dari empat pertemuan dan menggunakan platform digital Wordwall sebagai media pembelajaran. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes kosakata (pre-test dan post-test), observasi kelas, serta wawancara dengan guru bahasa Inggris. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya peningkatan yang signifikan dalam penguasaan kosakata siswa, ditunjukkan dengan peningkatan skor rata-rata dari 65,48 pada pre-test menjadi 85,71 pada post-test. Selain itu, persentase siswa yang mencapai Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM 75) juga meningkat dari 14,29% menjadi 94,29%. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa integrasi teka-teki silang interaktif dalam pengajaran kosakata dapat membantu meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa dengan cara yang terstruktur dan terukur.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>APPROVAL SHEETS .....</b>	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<b>LEGITIMATION .....</b>	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<b>MOTTO AND DEDICATION .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY .....</b>	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>ABSTRAK .....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES .....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>CHAPTER I .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A. Background of the Study .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>B. Formulation of the Problem .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>C. Objective of the Study .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>D. Significances of the Study .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1. Theoretical Significance .....	5
2. Practical Significance .....	6
<b>E. Definition of Terminologies .....</b>	<b>6</b>
1. Vocabulary .....	6
2. Interactive Crossword Puzzle .....	7
<b>CHAPTER II .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A. Review of Previous Study .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>B. Theoretical Review .....</b>	<b>9</b>
1. Vocabulary .....	9
2. Interactive Game .....	13
3. Crossword Puzzle .....	15
<b>C. Theoretical Framework .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>CHAPTER III .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>CHAPTER IV .....</b>	<b>34</b>

<b>RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>CHAPTER V.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>A. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>B. Suggestions .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>52</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Students individual score.....	31
Table 3.2 Mean scores .....	31

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework .....	20
Figure 3.2 The Cycle of Action Research Kemmis and McTaggart .....	22
Figure 4.3 The Result of Students Pre-Test .....	34
Figure 4.4 The Result of Students Post-Test.....	35
Figure 4.5 The Result of Observation.....	36
Figure 4.6 Students Responses of Pre-Questionnaire .....	37
Figure 4.7 The Result of Students Post-Questionnaire .....	38
Figure 4.8 Students Scores in the Pre-Test .....	43
Figure 4.9 Students Scores in the Post-Test .....	44
Figure 4.10 Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Result .....	45

## LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Teacher Interview - Preliminary Study .....	53
Appendix 2a Observation Checklist .....	55
Appendix 2b The Result of Observation Checklist .....	56
Appendix 3a Pre-Questionnaire Sheet .....	58
Appendix 3b Students Pre-Questionnaire Result .....	59
Appendix 4a Post-Questionnaire Sheet .....	60
Appendix 4b Students Post-Questionnaire Result .....	61
Appendix 5a Pre-Test Sheet .....	62
Appendix 5b Students Result of Pre-Test .....	64
Appendix 6a Post-Test Sheet .....	66
Appendix 6b Students Result of Post-Test .....	68
Appendix 6c The Results of Pre-Test and Post-Test .....	70
Appendix 7 Lesson Plan 1st-4th Meeting .....	71
Appendix 8a Crossword Puzzle Group Treatment 1 Sheet .....	76
Appendix 8b Result of Crossword Puzzle Group Treatment 1 .....	77
Appendix 9a Individual Crossword Puzzle Treatment 2 Sheet .....	78
Appendix 9b Result of Individual Crossword Puzzle Treatment 2 .....	79
Appendix 10 Documentations .....	80
Appendix 11a Kartu Bimbingan Skripssi .....	81
Appendix 11b Kartu Bimbingan Skripsi .....	82
Appendix 12 Surat Keterangan Selesai Bimbingan.....	83
Appendix 13 Surat Izin Pencarian Data .....	84
Appendix 14 Surat Bukti Penelitian .....	85

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Vocabulary plays a fundamental role in language learning, serving as the foundation for the development of the four major language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Without sufficient vocabulary, learners struggle to construct sentences, understand spoken or written language, and express their thoughts effectively. Vocabulary is considered a prerequisite for meaningful communication. As Steensel et al., 2016 highlight, a well-developed vocabulary enhances students' ability to process and comprehend academic texts and contributes to their overall success in language learning. Especially at the secondary school level, students are expected to comprehend more complex and abstract texts, which demands a greater range of vocabulary knowledge.

In the context of foreign language acquisition, vocabulary plays a pivotal role because it enables learners to access the target language in practical situations. It serves not only as a building block for grammatical structures but also as the medium through which meaning is conveyed. Vocabulary is the most essential element in learning a foreign language, acting as the starting point for acquiring communication (Rifai, 2023). Vocabulary acquisition is not simply a matter of memorizing isolated words; it involves understanding word meanings, recognizing word forms, and being able to apply them in appropriate contexts. Learners with strong vocabulary

knowledge are better equipped to develop reading fluency, improve their writing, and comprehend spoken language with greater ease.

However, in many educational settings, vocabulary learning remains underemphasized and often integrated passively within other language components such as reading comprehension or grammar. In such contexts, vocabulary is treated as a supplementary aspect rather than a core component that needs focused instruction. This leads to a lack of structured vocabulary development and insufficient exposure to varied word forms and contexts. As a result, students often struggle to recall and apply new vocabulary effectively.

A similar situation is observed at MTs Al-Munawwar, where vocabulary instruction is still heavily reliant on traditional methods such as rote memorization and textbook-based exercises. Based on an interview with the English teacher, Grade 7A students face limitations in vocabulary acquisition, with many of them struggling to understand and use new words in daily learning. The vocabulary materials provided are typically drawn from workbooks (LKS) and are not supported by additional strategies to reinforce vocabulary learning. The current classroom instruction lacks dedicated sessions or activities specifically designed to strengthen vocabulary acquisition. Students are expected to learn new words through reading passages or grammar-focused exercises, without opportunities to practice or apply them in interactive ways.

These issues are further compounded by the lack of variation in teaching strategies. The teacher-centered approach and limited use of media reduce the



effectiveness of vocabulary instruction. Kaboocha & Elyas, (2018) explain that a lack of contextual and meaningful vocabulary practice contributes to poor vocabulary retention among language learners. In the absence of innovative methods, students may fail to grasp the meaning and function of words in real-life situations. Therefore, there is a pressing need for vocabulary instruction that is not only systematic but also contextualized and adaptive to students' learning needs.

One potential solution to address this issue is the integration of game-based learning, particularly through word games that directly target vocabulary acquisition. Crossword puzzles have long been recognized as an educational tool with the potential to enhance vocabulary retention. They provide a structured way for students to recall previously learned words and discover new ones through clues and definitions. According to Rochmadhoni et al., (2022)., crossword puzzles encourage cognitive engagement by prompting learners to actively retrieve word meanings and associations. This retrieval practice supports long-term retention, which is a critical aspect of vocabulary acquisition. Several previous studies have explored the effectiveness of crossword puzzles in language education. Orawiwatnakul, (2017) found that crossword puzzles not only help reinforce spelling and word recognition but also enhance students' familiarity with word forms and definitions. Likewise, Khasanah et al., (2023) noted that crossword puzzles stimulate deeper cognitive processing, which contributes to more effective vocabulary learning. However, these studies often used paper-based or printed crossword puzzles, which lack adaptability and are not easily integrated into

dynamic classroom settings. Additionally, there is limited exploration of digital media in this area, particularly media that offer interactive features and real-time feedback.

To address this gap, the researcher introduces an interactive crossword puzzle game that utilizes the Wordwall platform. Unlike traditional crossword puzzles, this platform allows for customization, instant feedback, and varied item types. It also supports different devices, making it accessible and easy to implement in modern classrooms. This approach maintains the educational value of crossword puzzles while enhancing the interactivity and appeal for students. Through repeated practice and meaningful exposure to vocabulary items, students are expected to build stronger word recognition, recall, and usage. Putri & Rambe, (2023) stated that learners who used crossword puzzles in vocabulary instruction demonstrated significant improvements in vocabulary knowledge compared to those taught using conventional techniques. Such findings underscore the potential of crossword puzzles as a strategic tool for vocabulary acquisition.

Therefore, this study focuses on utilizing interactive crossword puzzles to improve the vocabulary acquisition of seventh-grade students at MTs Al-Munawwar. By examining the impact of this method, the research aims to offer a practical and measurable contribution to vocabulary instruction in secondary schools.

## **B. Formulation of the Problem**

Based on the research background, the research problem is formulated as follow: How can interactive crossword puzzle game improve vocabulary acquisition among the seventh graders at MTs Al-Munawwar?

## **C. Objective of the Study**

This study aims to investigate how interactive crossword puzzle game can improve vocabulary acquisition among seventh grade students at MTs Al-Munawwar.

## **D. Significances of the Study**

This study holds theoretical and practical significance in supporting strategy to enhance students' vocabulary acquisition. It offers valuable insights to help teachers develop better teaching methods and serves as a useful reference for researchers conducting future related studies.

### **1. Theoretical Significance**

Theoretically, this study contributes to the field of language education by providing evidence on the use of interactive crossword puzzles in vocabulary acquisition. The study extends the existing literature on vocabulary learning strategies by highlighting the role of engaging activities in improving language skills.

## **2. Practical Significance**

### **a. To Teachers**

This study provides practical insights for English teachers, especially at the secondary school level. This research highlights the use of crossword puzzles as an alternative method to enhance vocabulary learning. By using interactive crosswords, teachers can create a more engaging learning process, encourage active participation and better word retention. This method can also complement the existing curriculum to improve language teaching outcomes.

### **b. To Researchers**

This study can be a reference to further explore the use of crossword puzzles in improving vocabulary acquisition. It opens up opportunities to research its use in different contexts, such as different educational levels, specific types of vocabulary, or integration with digital tools. This can broaden the understanding of innovative methods for teaching vocabulary.

## **E. Definition of Terminologies**

### **1. Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is often linked to the number of words a person has, and a person's vocabulary is often defined by the number of words they know (Amri, 2016). Besides that, Gultom et al. (2021) stated that the vocabulary contains a collection of words, which are known not only as individual words but also as groups of meaningful words. In this study, vocabulary

refers to receptive vocabulary about nouns and verbs related to things in the classroom and school activities.

## 2. Interactive Crossword Puzzle

Interactive games are tools that make learning more engaging by incorporating fun activities and involving student participation (Khasanah et al., 2023). Crossword puzzle is a type of word game, consist of boxes filled with words based on clues, thus aiding vocabulary enrichment through word discovery in context (Tambaritji & Atmawidjaja, 2020). This study used interactive crossword puzzle to improve vocabulary about classroom objects and school activities through the wordwall platform. The puzzle are designed to help students learn and remember nouns or verbs related to school activities.