

**EXPLORING EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS IN
UTILIZING CROSSWORD PUZZLE GAMES FOR
ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' VOCABULARY ENRICHMENT**

Thesis

Presented as Fulfillment for the requirement to obtain a recommendation
to generate bachelor final project in English Education Program



Submitted by:

Khoirunnisa Nur Ishmatillah

2103046125

**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING
STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF WALISONGO
SEMARANG**

2025

THESIS STATEMENT

THESIS STATEMENT

I am a student with the following identity:

Name : Khoirunnisa Nur Ishmatillah
Student Number : 2103046125
Department : English Language Education

Certify that the thesis entitled:

**"EXPLORING TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS IN UTILIZING CROSSWORD
PUZZLE GAMES FOR STUDENT VOCABULARY ENRICHMENT"**

is purely my own work. I am responsible for the content of this thesis. The opinions and findings of other authors in this thesis are quoted or cited based on ethical standards.

Semarang, 23 Juni 2025

The Researcher,



Khoirunnisa Nur Ishmatillah
NIM. 2103046125

ADVISOR NOTE



**KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI WALISONGO SEMARANG
FAKULTAS ILMU TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN**

Jl. Prof. Dr. Hamka (Kampus II) Ngaliyan Telp. 024-7601295 Fax. 024-7615387 Semarang 50185

ADVISOR NOTE

To:

The Dean of Education and Teacher Training Faculty

Walisongo State Islamic University Semarang

Assalamu'alaikum, wr. wb.

I inform you that I have given guidance, briefing, and correction to whatever extent necessary for the following thesis:

Title : **EXPLORING TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS IN UTILIZING
CROSSWORD PUZZLE GAMES FOR STUDENT
VOCABULARY ENRICHMENT**

Name of Student : Khoirunnisa Nur Ishmatillah

Student Number : 2103046125

Department : English Language Education

I state that the thesis is ready to be submitted to the Education and Teacher Training Faculty of Walisongo State Islamic University to be examined at the Munasqosyah session.

Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.

Semarang, 23 Juni 2025

Advisor

Dr. Muhammad Nafi Annury, M.Pd.
NIP. 197807192005011007

RATIFICATION



**KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI WALISONGO SEMARANG
FAKULTAS ILMU TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN**

Jl. Prof. Dr. Hamka (Kampus II) Ngaliyan Telp. 024-7601295 Fax. 024-7615787 Semarang 50185

RATIFICATION

Thesis with following identify:

Title : EXPLORING EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS IN UTILIZING
CROSSWORD PUZZLE GAMES FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS'
VOCABULARY ENRICHMENT
Name : Khoirunnisa Nur Ismatillah
Student Number : 2101046125
Department : English Education Department

Had been ratified by the board of examiner of Education and Teacher Training Faculty of Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang and can be received as one of any requirements for gaining the Bachelor Degree in English Education Department.

Semarang, 7 July 2025

THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

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Lulut Widyaningrum, M.Pd
NIP. 198008032009012010



Examiner 2,

Azzahra Faridha Izza, M.Pd
NIP. 199303012020122005

Advisor,

Dr. Muhammad Nafi Annurs, M.Pd.
NIP. 197807192005011007

ABSTRACT

Title : Exploring Teachers' Perceptions in Utilizing Crossword Puzzle Games for Student Vocabulary Enrichment

Name : Khoirunnisa Nur Ishmatillah

Student's Number : 2103046125

This study aims to explore EFL teachers' perceptions in utilizing crossword puzzle games for vocabulary enrichment in English language teaching, particularly in the context of elementary education. The research was conducted at SDN 2 Bangunrejo, where students' English proficiency is considered below average and digital game-based learning is rarely implemented. In response to this challenge, the study seeks to examine how crossword puzzle games can serve as an innovative, engaging, and student-centered approach to vocabulary instruction. This research employed a qualitative descriptive method, using interviews, classroom observations, and documentation to gather data. The participants were two EFL teachers who integrated crossword puzzle games into their vocabulary lessons. The findings revealed that both teachers held positive perceptions toward the use of crossword puzzles, recognizing them as effective tools to foster student engagement, critical thinking, and vocabulary retention. From a constructivist perspective, crossword puzzles were seen as learning tools that support active knowledge construction. Additionally, based on Clark and Peterson's teacher decision-making theory, the study found that teachers' internal beliefs and planning significantly influenced their instructional strategies. In conclusion, crossword puzzle games can be an effective and enjoyable method for teaching vocabulary, particularly when integrated thoughtfully and aligned with instructional goals. The study suggests that this approach has potential to enrich vocabulary learning and promote a more dynamic and interactive classroom environment.

Keywords: *Crossword Puzzle, EFL Teachers, Game-Based Learning, Teacher Perception, Vocabulary Enrichment*

MOTTO

لَا تَحْزَنُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا

"Do not grieve; indeed, Allah is with us." (At-Taubah: 40)

"God has perfect timing, never early, never late. It takes a little patience and it takes a lot of faith, but it's a worth wait."

DEDICATION

The thesis is dedicated to:

1. My beloved campus, Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang especially Education and Teacher Training Faculty and English Education Department.
2. My respectable and beloved parents, Mr. Moch Masrup alm and Mrs. Suwarni.
3. My lovely sibling, Iffah Islam Arnita, Dzikrullah Zulkarnain and Ahmad Hatim Ashidiq.
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Semarang, 23 June 2025

The Writer,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Khoirunnisa', with a large checkmark-like flourish on the left and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Khoirunnisa Nur Ishmatillah

NIM: 2103040125

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an introduction to the research. It describes the researcher's rationale for choosing the topic. This chapter includes the research background, research questions, research objectives, significance of study, and research limitations.

A. Research Background

In this modern era games are increasingly being used in instructional science and higher education teaching to promote collaborative learning, inquiry, and discovery. This is partly due to the interactive technology' rapid rise in availability and price (Licorish et al., 2018). In the digital age, where technology and innovation are reshaping education, the need for engaging and effective teaching methods has become more critical than ever. Vocabulary acquisition is a fundamental aspect of English language learning, as it directly impacts students' ability to communicate, comprehend, and express themselves. However, traditional methods of vocabulary instruction, such as rote memorization, often fail to capture students' interest and fail to address the diverse learning needs of today's digital-native generation. As a result, educators are increasingly exploring

creative and interactive tools, such as game-based learning, to make vocabulary learning more engaging and effective.

The ability to use language effectively is essential to learning English. To learn and teach effectively, students must have extensive knowledge of the English language and understand its meaning. Students will be able to understand the verbal and written language if they have mastered vocabulary. Adjectives, verbs, and nouns are introduced to students. A good grasp of vocabulary will also improve language proficiency (Wefi et al., 2023). According to Zhang (L. Zhang, 2018), the success of learning vocabulary is not only determined by teaching techniques and learning materials but also influenced by motivation and learning strategies.

One such tool is the crossword game, a classic yet versatile educational game that combines problem-solving, critical thinking, and vocabulary enrichment. Crossword games are not only enjoyable but also encourage active participation, making them a promising alternative to conventional teaching methods (Hasyim, 2023). Despite their potential, the use of crossword games in English language learning remains underexplored, particularly from the perspective of teachers who play a crucial role in implementing these tools in the classroom. Understanding teachers' perspectives is essential, as their insights can shed light on the practicality, challenges, and benefits of using crossword

games to enhance vocabulary learning (Motamedynia & Nasrollahi Shahri, 2022).

According to previous research with the title Teaching English Vocabulary Using Crossword Puzzle Game at The Seventh Grade Students written by (Anwar & Efransyah, 2018), the finding research proved that crossword puzzle game could increase students' vocabulary. It can be observed from the improvement of the students score. The students' mean score of pre-test is 29.69. After the implementation of crossword puzzle game, the mean scores of post-test is 82.50. Sig. (2-tailed) value is minus than 0.05. The dissimilar among pretest and posttest score are significant. It means the implementation of the crossword puzzle game improved the students' vocabulary. Besides, improving the students' score, the implementation of crossword puzzle game got positive responses from students in their teaching learning process of vocabulary and it good to be applied in the process of teaching learning particularly in improving their vocabulary mastery. It is able to help teacher and student to achieve the goal in their study activity (Anwar & Efransyah, 2018).

The second research with the title The Effectiveness of Crossword Puzzle in Teaching Vocabulary of Fourth Grade Elementary Students by (Illiyin, 2023), this study suggested that games had a positive effect on student learning progress. In line

with previous studies, the researcher found various positive changes from the crossword puzzle game, both from the significant addition of vocabulary and increasing students' speaking skills. The results showed that there was an increase between the pre-test (46.67) and the post-test (61.24). The difference between the pre-test and the post-test was statistically significant ($0.00 < 0.05$). This indicates that crossword puzzle increased students' vocabulary achievement. Vocabulary regarding parts of human body got the highest increase (3.7) compared to the other two topics, things in the classroom (3.1) and fruits (2.5) respectively (Illiyin, 2023).

The findings from the research studies conducted by Yayang Taofik Anwar (Anwar & Efransyah, 2018) and Zainata Illiyin (Illiyin, 2023) provide compelling evidence for the effectiveness of crossword puzzle games in enhancing vocabulary acquisition among students. Anwar's study, which focused on seventh-grade students, demonstrated a significant improvement in vocabulary scores, with the mean score rising from 29.69 in the pre-test to 82.50 in the post-test. The statistical analysis indicated a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores, confirming that the implementation of crossword puzzle games effectively improved students' vocabulary mastery. Additionally, the positive feedback from students regarding their learning

experience further supports the notion that this method is engaging and beneficial in the educational context.

Similarly, Illiyin's research on fourth-grade elementary students highlighted the positive impact of crossword puzzles not only on vocabulary acquisition but also on students' speaking skills. The study reinforced the idea that game-based learning, particularly through crossword puzzles, fosters a more interactive and enjoyable learning environment, leading to enhanced student engagement and learning outcomes. Overall, both studies underscore the potential of crossword puzzle games as a valuable instructional tool in vocabulary teaching. The positive results indicate that such games can significantly contribute to achieving educational goals, making them a recommended practice for teachers aiming to improve vocabulary mastery in their students. The integration of crossword puzzles into the curriculum can thus be seen as an effective strategy to enhance language learning and promote a more dynamic classroom experience.

In the school where researcher conducted my research, SDN 2 Bangunrejo, the usage of learning media in digital media is still surprisingly underutilized. The teacher's handbook is frequently the only source for teaching and learning activities, and students only use the student worksheet.

Furthermore, The Indonesian Regulation of the Minister of Education has explained that Teacher Regulation Number 16

Years 2007 in Table 3 Number 5; "For the quality of teaching and learning, teachers need to be proficient in fundamental skills like using technology for information and communication" (Indonesian Regulation of Minister No. 16, Years 2007, Chap 3). Having an in-depth understanding of technology can assist teachers in offering different learning media options. There are still no supporting tools available at SDN 2 Bangunrejo and some teachers still have limited access to technology. Even if they already have access to the internet connection at school. As a consequence of this, the teachers frequently rely on the supplied textbooks. As it well known, the pandemic's effects have made e-learning increasingly important. Teachers must be more inventive and creative to boost and engage student enthusiasm. The technology used as a learning tool fosters participatory learning. It also encourages student participation in learning.

The reason for choosing this topic is based on the researcher's observation that students at SDN 2 Bangunrejo have limited exposure to digital game-based learning, and their English proficiency remains below average. This condition highlights the urgent need for diverse and engaging learning strategies to support vocabulary development. Given the school's limited access to technology and digital media unlike schools in urban areas with abundant internet access and advanced learning tools there is a need to explore alternative, low-tech methods that still promote

active learning. Therefore, the researcher is interested in exploring teachers' perceptions after utilizing crossword puzzle games as a tool to enrich students' vocabulary learning in English classes.

This study aims to explore teachers' perceptions on using crossword games to enrich vocabulary in English language learning, particularly in the context of current educational challenges. With the increasing integration of technology in education and the growing emphasis on student-centered learning, this research seeks to address how crossword games can be effectively utilized to meet the needs of 21st century learners. By examining teachers' experiences, attitudes, and recommendations, this study hopes to contribute to the development of innovative and sustainable teaching strategies that align with modern educational demands.

B. Research Question

1. How do EFL teachers implement crossword puzzle game in teaching vocabulary to elementary students?
2. What are the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding the utilization of crossword puzzle games for vocabulary enrichment in the classroom?

C. Research Objectives

1. This study aims to describe how EFL teachers implement crossword puzzle game in vocabulary teaching practice to elementary students in the classroom
2. This study aims to explore teachers' perceptions in utilizing crossword puzzle games as a tool for vocabulary enrichment in the classroom.

D. Significance of Study

This study is expected to give a valuable contribution to some parties theoretically, pedagogically, and practically:

1. Theoretically

This study is expected to contribute to the field of English language learning, particularly in supporting the integration of game-based learning approaches, such as crossword puzzle games, in vocabulary instruction. It can also serve as a reference, framework, or guidance for future researchers who are interested in exploring similar topics in language education and instructional strategies.

2. Pedagogically

The results of this study may offer insights for educators on how game-based learning, specifically through crossword puzzle games, can increase students' motivation and engagement in vocabulary learning. It can

also support teachers in designing more interactive and student-centered vocabulary activities.

3. Practically

The result of this study hopefully useful for:

a. For Students

The findings of this study would aid pupils in comprehending and assimilating into English and make it a strategy for boosting pupils' motivation to learn grammar, speaking, and new vocabulary in English learning.

b. For Teacher

The result of the study can be useful for teachers because it can provide enrichment classes by using game-based learning as the teaching strategy.

c. For Next Researcher

The result of this study can be used as additional information to conduct other researcher towards learning English using game-based learning.

d. For Reader

reading this study, the reader hopefully got more information and experience about the student motivation in using game through learning speaking, writing, reading and listening as media learning to understanding English as a foreign language.

E. Research Limitations

This study focuses on investigating teacher's preferences in using crossword puzzle game in learning English language. The research is limited to a single type of game and focuses on learning vocabulary.

CHAPTER II

THEORITICAL REVIEW

This chapter highlights three main points such as previous of the research, literature review, conceptual framework which ideally discussed digital game-based vocabulary learning.

A. Previous Research

In order to distinguish between current and earlier research, the researcher used a literature review that was gathered from multiple research journals. The investigation to determine this topic was motivated by a number of prominent periodicals.

To organize the previous research in a structured and focused manner, the discussion is divided into the following subtopics:

1. Crossword Puzzle Games in Vocabulary Learning

The first analysis, the “*Crossword Puzzle Game for Teaching Vocabulary*” written by (Zagoto & Laia, 2022). This study conduct process of teaching vocabulary in this research was done by applying crossword puzzle game. Crossword puzzle game was technique used in teaching vocabulary by asking the students to fill it based on the clues provided. This research aims to deeply discuss eight grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Telukdalam, that engaged in mobile vocabulary game play simply for the sake of the 'fun factor' to gain insights on what aspects of such games make

them effective at inducing a state of incidental vocabulary acquisition. The researcher used Classroom Action Research (CAR) which was done in two cycles which oriented to the implementation of actions with the aim of improving quality or solving problems on a group. This research was done in two cycles consisted four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The data were obtained through observation and test.

The second, this research was conducted by (Wefi et al., 2023) with the title “*The Effect of Crossword Puzzles on Learners' Vocabulary Development in EFL Context*”. This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of using crossword puzzles as a learning medium to enhance vocabulary development among 7th-grade students at SMP Annur Assalafy Pasuruan. The research was conducted using a quasi-experimental design with a quantitative approach. The participants included two classes: one experimental class that was taught using crossword puzzles and one control class that was taught using traditional methods. A total of 36 students were involved, and data were collected through pre-tests, treatment sessions, and post-tests using multiple-choice vocabulary questions.

The results showed a significant improvement in vocabulary mastery in the experimental group compared to the control group. Statistical analysis using SPSS revealed that the post-test average score for the experimental class (79.72) was

notably higher than its pre-test average (68.89), while the control class showed only a slight improvement (from 67.22 to 68.61). The paired t-test indicated that the results were statistically significant (sig. $0.000 < 0.05$), meaning that the crossword puzzle treatment had a positive and measurable impact on students' vocabulary acquisition. The study also confirmed that the data was valid, reliable, normally distributed, and homogeneous, strengthening the credibility of the findings. In conclusion, the study provided strong evidence that the use of crossword puzzles is an effective strategy for enhancing vocabulary in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context. Students not only improved their vocabulary scores significantly, but they also became more engaged and motivated in the learning process. This supports prior research and emphasizes the value of interactive learning tools in language education. The researchers recommend broader implementation of crossword puzzles in EFL classrooms to improve students' vocabulary skills in a fun and meaningful way.

The third, this research was conducted by (Saukah et al., 2020) entitled "*Crossword Puzzle Games As A Learning Tool For Improving Students' Vocabulary In Reading Comprehension*". The study aimed to investigate how the implementation of crossword puzzle games could improve students' vocabulary, particularly in the context of reading comprehension among tenth-grade students at SMKN 1 Blitar. In line with In line with "*The*

Effect of Crossword Puzzles on Learners' Vocabulary Development in EFL Context” written by (Wefi et al., 2023). This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of using crossword puzzles as a learning medium to enhance vocabulary. The researcher used Classroom Action Research (CAR), to investigate which factor increase in scores was observed Pre-test followed by three meetings involving crossword puzzle-based learning using texts (mainly recount texts) Instruments: Vocabulary tests, observation sheets, teacher interviews was applied. The research results show that the investigation indicates 'draw something' induces the motivational and cognitive aspects. Students became more active, motivated, and engaged, though they still tended to use Indonesian during discussions. This suggests that other digital games, when used under appropriate conditions, could also facilitate incidental vocabulary learning through gameplay.

2. Vocabulary Learning in Elementary School

The fourth study was written by (Ma & Lertlit, 2024) entitled “*an Impact of Game-Based Teaching on Vocabulary Learning of Third Grade Students in Shenzhen Qianhai Elementary School*” this study aimed to investigate the impact of game-based teaching on English vocabulary learning among third-grade students at Shenzhen Qianhai Elementary School and to assess the students’ satisfaction with the use of game-based teaching methods to improve their English learning. The

researchers used a mixed methods approach: Quantitative was developed by pre- and post-tests, and questionnaire responses were analyzed using SPSS 27.0 to compute mean and standard deviation. Qualitative was conducted by open-ended interviews with teachers were used to explore perceptions and challenges. Analysis was based on themes from responses. Both methods were combined to support triangulation and give a fuller picture of how game-based teaching works in real classrooms. The finding of this study was showed by Game-based teaching had a positive impact on students' vocabulary learning, with an overall average score of 3.66 (SD = 0.71). However, the implementation faced challenges, including: Teachers' limited understanding of game-based pedagogy, lack of variety and innovation in game materials, some students were less involved due to teaching time pressure or lack of individualized attention, students were generally satisfied, especially when teachers gave feedback and allowed interaction. The study recommends: Better planning and selection of games, improved teacher-student interaction during games, ongoing teacher training to enhance understanding of educational games.

In line with the previous study, the fifth study was conducted by (Dalimunthe et al., 2024) with the title "*The Impact of Game-Based Learning on English Vocabulary Acquisition in Elementary School Students*" The purpose of this study is to see how game-based learning impacts primary school students'

English vocabulary acquisition, where vocabulary acquisition is very important. The research employs a qualitative method with a documentation-based approach. Data were collected through document analysis, which included books, journals, and articles relevant to the topic. The data analysis technique used is content analysis, which involved organizing, categorizing, and critically analyzing the qualitative information to generate meaningful and detailed conclusions. The results of the study show that game-based learning has a positive effect on vocabulary acquisition. Students who learned vocabulary through educational games such as picture cards and puzzles demonstrated higher motivation, stronger engagement, and better retention of new words. The findings align with Vygotsky's social learning theory, which emphasizes the role of interaction in learning. However, the study also notes several challenges, including the need for more preparation time, teacher training, and appropriate game selection based on student needs. In conclusion, game-based learning is an effective and enjoyable method to support vocabulary learning in elementary schools.

The sixth study that in line with fourth and fifth study was written by (Khusaini & Fauziah, 2024) entitled "*The Implementation of Word Games to Improve Students' English Vocabulary Proficiency*" this study The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of using word games on improving the English

vocabulary proficiency of students. The researchers aimed to determine whether incorporating educational games into vocabulary instruction could lead to significant learning gains compared to conventional teaching methods.

The research applied a quasi-experimental design, involving two groups of sixth-semester students from the Primary School Teacher Education program. A total of 40 students were selected randomly and divided into: An experimental group that learned using word games and a control group that received traditional teaching. The main instrument used was a vocabulary comprehension test (pre-test and post-test with 20 multiple choice items). The implementation lasted one month. Pre- and post-test results were collected and analyzed using SPSS, including normality testing, homogeneity testing (ANOVA), and paired sample t-tests to compare results between the two groups.

In line with previous study by Khusaini & Fauziah, the seventh study was written by (Dwi et al., 2024) with the title “*The Implementation of Teaching Vocabulary Using Board-Game To The Third-Grade Students at SDN Sambirejo 1*” the purpose of this study was to describe how to implement a board-game (Spin Mini Zoo) in teaching vocabulary to third-grade students at SDN Sambirejo The research aims to demonstrate that using game-based learning strategies can improve vocabulary acquisition by engaging students in fun, interactive classroom activities.

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method. Data were collected through classroom observations during the implementation of the board-game Spin Mini Zoo and supported by detailed field notes taken throughout the learning activities. The researchers used thematic analysis to examine the data, aiming to identify recurring patterns related to student engagement and vocabulary development. The analysis was conducted inductively, allowing themes to emerge naturally from the data without being shaped by pre-existing frameworks.

The study concludes that using the Spin Mini Zoo board-game in vocabulary instruction significantly improves students' vocabulary acquisition, particularly vocabulary related to zoo animals. It also enhances student motivation, engagement, and participation, creating a fun and interactive learning environment. The game encourages learners to be more involved and active during lessons, while also promoting social interaction and collaboration. Furthermore, through repeated exposure and peer communication, the method helps reinforce memory and supports more meaningful vocabulary retention. The researchers recommend that similar game-based approaches be applied to other language skills, such as listening and speaking, and be expanded to cover broader vocabulary themes in future applications.

The eighth study was conducted by (Njoroge et al., 2013) entitled “*The Use of Crossword Puzzles as a Vocabulary Learning Strategy: A Case of English as a Second Language in Kenyan Secondary Schools*”. The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using crossword puzzles as a vocabulary learning strategy among secondary school students learning English as a second language in Kenya. To explore this, the researchers employed a qualitative case study approach involving ESL (English as a second language) students in Kenyan secondary schools. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and document analysis. The crossword puzzle activities were integrated into classroom instruction to evaluate their impact on vocabulary learning. The findings revealed that students showed increased engagement and motivation when crossword puzzles were introduced as part of their learning. The puzzles facilitated better vocabulary retention and made the learning process more enjoyable and mentally stimulating. Furthermore, students developed more positive attitudes toward learning vocabulary, and their anxiety around English language learning decreased. Teachers also noted improved student participation and interaction during lessons.

The result of the study found that crossword puzzles are a highly effective tool for vocabulary acquisition in ESL classrooms. Not only do they help students expand their vocabulary, but they

also promote active learning, collaboration, and a positive classroom environment. The researchers recommend incorporating crossword puzzles more consistently into the ESL curriculum to enhance students' vocabulary learning experiences in an interactive and engaging way.

3. EFL Teacher Perception Towards Game-Based Learning

The ninth study was conducted by (A'yunin & Aminin, 2023) entitled "*Teachers' Voice Of Using Crossword Puzzle Games To Improve Students' Vocabulary*". This study aimed to explore English teachers' experiences and perspectives on using crossword puzzle games as a strategy to enhance students' vocabulary mastery. The researchers investigated how crossword puzzles were implemented in classrooms, the types of puzzles used, their perceived benefits, and the challenges faced during vocabulary instruction. A qualitative narrative approach was employed, involving five high school English teachers from Mojoagung and Mojokerto. Data were collected through open-ended questionnaires distributed via Google Forms and semi-structured interviews conducted through WhatsApp. Participants were selected purposively based on their experience in using crossword puzzles as part of their teaching strategies.

The findings revealed that teachers commonly used three types of crossword puzzles: oral, picture-based, and object-based. Each type was chosen according to students' needs and the

learning objectives of the lesson. Teachers agreed that crossword puzzles helped improve students' engagement, motivation, and vocabulary acquisition. The activities made learning more enjoyable, and students became more focused, enthusiastic, and better at recalling vocabulary related to the lesson. In addition, crossword puzzles were found to support students' critical thinking and reduce boredom during English lessons.

The study also identified several challenges. Internally, teachers faced time constraints and difficulties in designing puzzles that matched the curriculum. Externally, the lack of classroom facilities, such as laptops or projectors, and the time required to prepare materials were significant obstacles. Students' limited vocabulary also made puzzle-solving more time-consuming.

In conclusion, the study highlighted that crossword puzzle games are not only effective in enriching vocabulary but also contribute positively to classroom dynamics and learning motivation. Nevertheless, the successful implementation of this strategy depends on thoughtful planning, teacher readiness, and the availability of supporting resources.

The tenth study was written by (Sudrajat et al., 2018) with the title "*A Teacher's Perception Toward the Use of Vocabra Games in Mastering English Vocabulary for EYL*". This study aimed to explore English teacher's perception of using Vocabra

games as a teaching medium to improve vocabulary mastery for English Young Learners (EYL). Motivated by the core issue faced by young learners' difficulty in memorizing new words the research sought to understand how games could enhance vocabulary acquisition in a more enjoyable and effective way. Through a qualitative descriptive approach, the researcher conducted interviews with a purposively selected teacher to gain insight into the practical application, perceived benefits, and challenges of using Vocabra games in the classroom. The study also intended to identify how Vocabra games contribute to specific aspects of vocabulary development, such as pronunciation, spelling, meaning, and usage of words, and to uncover potential problems and solutions encountered during their implementation.

Based on several previous studies have focused on the effectiveness of crossword puzzle games as a tool to enhance students' vocabulary acquisition in English language learning contexts. Consistently highlight that crossword puzzles contribute positively to student engagement, motivation, and vocabulary retention. The findings indicate that this game-based strategy supports both intentional and incidental vocabulary learning across various educational levels.

Nevertheless, the existing research has largely concentrated on student outcomes such as vocabulary gains, test scores, or learner attitudes while neglecting the teacher's role in

the selection and implementation of crossword puzzles in the classroom. Very few studies, if any, have specifically explored teacher preferences, perceptions, or decision-making processes related to using crossword puzzles as a vocabulary teaching tool. Therefore, there exists a clear research gap in understanding: Why and how teachers choose to use crossword puzzles in their instruction, what factors influence their preferences (e.g., perceived effectiveness, classroom conditions, teaching experience), And how these preferences shape the use of such games in real classroom settings.

Despite many studies have focused on the effectiveness of crossword puzzles in improving vocabulary, fewer have delved into teachers' preferences, perceptions, and decision-making in choosing to use these games. This study aims to explore how and why EFL teachers perceive crossword puzzle games as a medium for vocabulary enrichment, particularly in diverse classroom settings. This is especially important in rural elementary schools such as SDN 2 Bangunrejo, where the study was conducted. In this school, access to technology and digital learning tools is very limited compared to urban schools, where internet connectivity and educational media are more readily available. Therefore, understanding how teachers utilize low-tech strategies like crossword puzzles becomes crucial in identifying alternative

solutions for effective vocabulary instruction in under-resourced environments.

B. Literature Review

1. Teacher Perception

Teacher perception refers to how educators interpret, understand, and respond to students, classroom dynamics, and their own teaching practices. These perceptions shape instructional decisions, student-teacher interactions, and classroom management strategies (Huizenga et al., 2017). Since teachers' views are subjective, they can be influenced by personal beliefs, past experiences, and external factors sometimes leading to biases that affect student outcomes.

According to Fang (Fang, 1996, Maggioni & Parkinson, 2008, Walls & Johnston, 2023), teachers' perceptions are closely tied to their beliefs and knowledge, which act as filters through which they interpret educational practices and make pedagogical decisions. These perceptions are not static; they evolve through professional development, reflection, and experience. Pajares (Pajares, 1992) also emphasizes that teachers' perceptions and beliefs play a critical role in shaping their behavior in the classroom, affecting how they plan

lessons, interact with students, and assess learning outcomes.

Recent studies underscore that teacher perceptions are shaped by a combination of personal beliefs, prior experiences, and contextual factors. For instance, a systematic review by Akram et al. (2022) highlights that teachers' attitudes toward technology integration are pivotal in determining the effectiveness of digital tools in education. Similarly, research by (Hernández Hernández & Izquierdo, 2023) indicates that teachers' perceptions play a crucial role in the adoption and implementation of educational reforms, particularly in English as an English foreign language (EFL) contexts.

2. Teacher Preferences and Decision Making

a. The definition of teacher preferences

Teacher preferences refer to the personal inclinations or choices teachers make regarding instructional strategies, tools, or materials (Borg, 2003; Hong et al., 2023). These preferences may stem from comfort, enjoyment, or practical experience. On the other hand, teacher beliefs are the deeper convictions about teaching and learning that influence instructional decisions. While preferences may shift depending on

classroom dynamics or resources, beliefs tend to remain more stable and are grounded in pedagogical knowledge and experience.

According to the Teacher Decision-Making Theory proposed by (Clark & Peterson, 1984), teachers' actions in the classroom are influenced by two main aspects: the teachers' thought processes outside the classroom (such as beliefs and preferences) and their actual behaviors within the classroom. This theory views teachers not merely as curriculum implementers, but as active decision-makers who consider various factors in determining the most effective strategies for their students. Teacher beliefs have been framed as suppositions such as attitudes, values, assumptions, images, intuitive screens, (pre-) conceptions, and personal teaching styles. Recent studies related to teachers' beliefs have explored various aspects of beliefs, such as belief about teaching, belief about learning, belief about subject matter etc. (Purwono et al., 12 2021).

Meanwhile, (Borg, 2003) added that teacher preferences are often based on personal beliefs and professional experiences, where teachers choose the approach that they think is most capable of helping students learn optimally. In other words, teacher

preferences are closely related to their perceptions of the effectiveness of a learning strategy.

Understanding teachers' preferences in using crossword puzzles provides valuable insight into how such strategies are adopted in real classroom contexts. A'yunin & Aminin (A'yunin & Aminin, 2023) explored teachers' voices in implementing crossword puzzles and found that while most teachers favored the tool due to its positive effect on students' vocabulary and motivation, they also faced challenges such as time constraints and resource limitations. Njoroge et al. (Njoroge et al., 2013) similarly noted that crossword puzzles can enrich ESL learning but require adequate teacher preparation and classroom support.

Although there have been numerous studies on the use of digital tools in language learning, (Sim & Ismail, 2023) has thoroughly examined specific research on teacher preferences regarding the use of games in vocabulary instruction, such as crossword puzzles, remains relatively limited. Therefore, further investigation is needed to understand how beliefs, teaching experience, training, and contextual factors influence teachers' decisions. This understanding is crucial, as teacher preferences are part of the thinking

process that determines whether an innovative strategy will actually be implemented in the classroom aligning with the concept of the teacher as both a thinker and practitioner in Clark and Peterson's theory.

b. Various factors that influenced of teacher preferences

Teacher preferences do not just appear, but are shaped by various factors, both internal and external. According to Kagan in Yan Yujie research (Yan, 2019) and (Kleinsasser et al., 1995), several factors that influence teacher preferences include:

1) Previous teaching experience

Teachers tend to prefer strategies that have been proven to work in their classrooms.

2) Comfort level and ease of use

Teachers prefer to use methods or media that they are familiar with and that are easy to implement.

3) Classroom conditions and student characteristics

Preferences can change depending on the ability level of students, the number of students, and the classroom atmosphere.

4) Availability of resources

Teachers may like certain media but not use them if the facilities do not support them.

5) Technological developments and training

According to Sim & Ismail (Sim & Ismail, 2023), digital readiness, training, and technical support also influence how teachers view and choose learning tools, including digital tools and educational games.

3. Vocabulary Teaching Strategies

Vocabulary is one of the fundamental components of language learning, as it provides the foundation for learners to develop their skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Nation (2001), a rich vocabulary is essential for language proficiency and communication. Therefore, selecting appropriate strategies for teaching vocabulary is crucial in helping students acquire and retain new words effectively.

The term "vocabulary" has traditionally been associated with a collection of words and is connected to any language worldwide, whether spoken or unspoken (Susanto et al., 2019). Therefore, vocabulary plays a crucial role in learning English, and determining the necessary amount of vocabulary remains a key topic for research and debate.

Vocabulary learning strategies fall under the broader category of language learning strategies, which themselves are a subset of general learning strategies (Nation, 2013). In this context, vocabulary can be understood as synonymous with

language. The concept of vocabulary learning strategies stems from broader language learning strategies (Catalán, 2003). These strategies refer to deliberate actions learners employ to comprehend, retain, and recall vocabulary acquired through language experiences (Nation, 2013). For her study, (Oxford, 2003) adopted a working definition of vocabulary learning strategies, framing them as the methods, processes, and techniques students use to: Decipher the meaning of unfamiliar words, Store them in long-term memory, Retrieve them when necessary, and Apply them effectively in both spoken and written communication.

Vocabulary acquisition presents significant challenges due to its inherent complexity. However, for effective language learning, students must develop comprehensive word knowledge that includes: Receptive and productive mastery Understanding of word forms Grasp of meanings Appropriate usage in context (Rasti-Behbahani & Shahbazi, 2022). Integrating academic vocabulary instruction into English language teaching for non-native speakers enables these learners to fully engage with curricular content. Implementing game-based learning methodologies may serve as a transformative approach to enhance academic achievement among English language (Benoit, 2017).

In EFL (English as a Foreign Language) settings, vocabulary instruction often becomes more challenging due to limited exposure to English outside the classroom. Therefore, teachers must select strategies that are motivating, accessible, and contextually relevant. The use of crossword puzzle games, for instance, provides both repetition and contextual clues that help reinforce vocabulary in a low-anxiety environment. As such, teachers' preferences for strategies like games can significantly impact students' vocabulary learning outcomes.

4. The Use of Crossword Puzzle in Language Learning

Crossword puzzle refers to a word game that was familiar to everyone. It required us to fill the empty squares provided both vertically and horizontally with the appropriate words so that every word in the squares is suitable with others. In teaching and learning process, additionally, crossword puzzle involves students' participation to be being active since learning activities begin (Zagoto & Laia, 2022). Students are invited to participate in all learning processes, not only mentally but also physically. Through this situation, students will feel a more pleasant atmosphere so that learning outcomes can be maximized.

In addition, the crossword puzzle can be used as well as a learning strategy to review the material that has been delivered. This review is useful to make it easier for students

to recall the material which has been delivered. So, students are able to achieve learning goals, namely cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects.

The crossword puzzle method is a form of crossword puzzle game (Rahmawati, 2023). The crossword puzzle method is also an active learning method. Active learning is learning that invites students to learn actively, using their brains, either to find the main idea of the subject matter, solve problems, or apply what they have just learned to problems that exist in real life, thus encouraging participants' learning motivation. students to conclude understanding of the lesson material (Arifin & Mujtahidah, 2023).

As noted earlier, many students report feeling bored during vocabulary lessons. Their learning approach often remains unchanged they simply identify unfamiliar words, ask the teacher for translations, and passively accept the answers. This method limits their engagement with new vocabulary, as they miss opportunities to actively process and internalize the words. Moreover, direct translation is not always the most effective way to teach new terms. To address this issue, the present study explores the use of an interactive tool the crossword puzzle game as a way to boost students' motivation in vocabulary learning. Before delving into the specifics of this

game, it is important to first understand its nature and mechanics.

In language classrooms, crossword puzzles can be used in multiple ways. They can serve as a warm-up activity to activate prior knowledge, as an in-class practice to reinforce vocabulary, or as a post-lesson review tool. As Rahayuningsih (Rahayuningsih et al., 2022) noted, crossword clues can include definitions, synonyms, antonyms, or sentence-based prompts. Additionally, picture-based or interactive digital crosswords are effective for both offline and online learning environments.

The benefits of crossword puzzles in language education are widely recognized. Research has shown that crossword puzzles enhance vocabulary recall, foster a fun and competitive learning environment (Gozcu & Caganaga, 2016) and increase learner motivation (Hidayat et al., 2023). They also reduce anxiety and promote collaboration among students (A'yunin & Aminin, 2023). A recent study by Wefi, Dzulfikri and Elfiyanto (Wefi et al., 2023) confirmed that students in the experimental group who learned vocabulary through crossword puzzles showed significantly higher post-test scores than those in the control group, indicating the positive impact of this media on vocabulary development.

5. Constructivism Theory as a Learning Foundation

Constructivist theory, as proposed by Piaget (1970) and expanded by Vygotsky (1978), emphasizes that learners construct knowledge through active engagement and social interaction. In this study, crossword puzzle games serve as tools that promote experiential and interactive vocabulary learning, aligning with the constructivist emphasis on meaning-making through real learning tasks.

In the context of language learning, constructivism suggests that students develop vocabulary more effectively when they are engaged in meaningful, interactive tasks that connect new words with prior knowledge and real-life contexts. This aligns with Piaget's cognitive constructivism, which focuses on individual knowledge construction, and Vygotsky's social constructivism, which highlights the role of social interaction and cultural tools in learning (Liu & Chen, 2021).

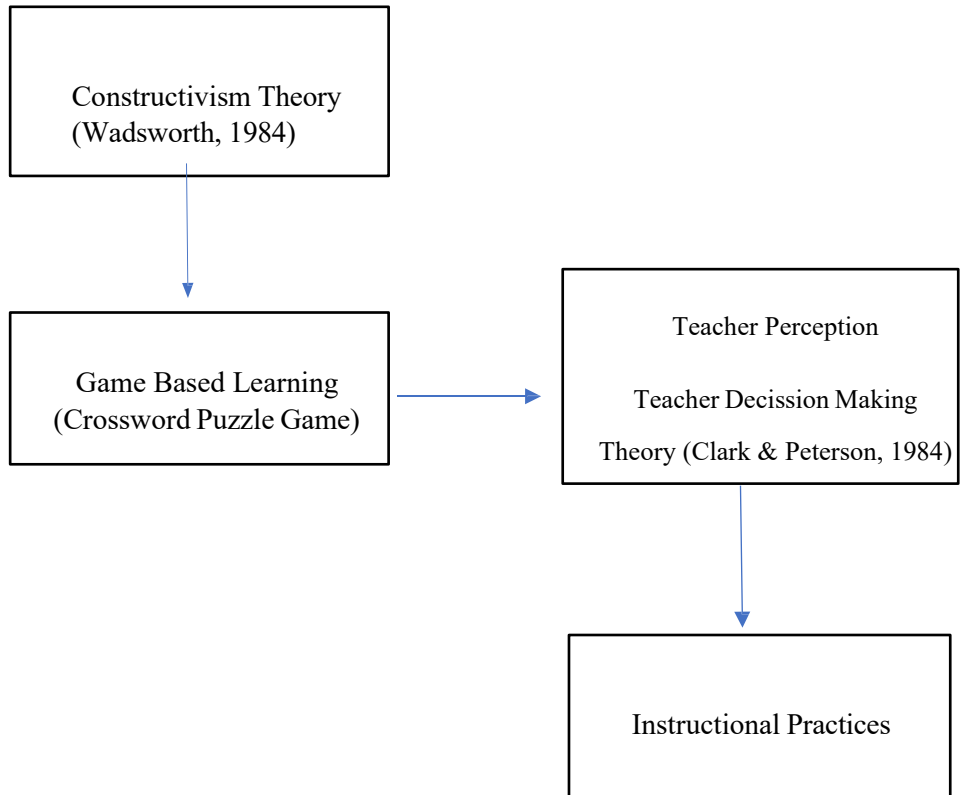
Game-based learning, including the use of crossword puzzle games, fits within the constructivist framework because it promotes student-centered learning, encourages problem-solving, and creates opportunities for active engagement. Crossword puzzles help learners discover and apply vocabulary in a meaningful way, allowing them to connect form, meaning, and usage through mental association and peer interaction (Camilleri & Camilleri, 2023). This approach not

only enhances vocabulary retention but also fosters motivation and enjoyment, two key components in constructivist learning environments.

In addition, technology-enhanced puzzle games can stimulate learners' curiosity and autonomy, which are important principles in modern constructivist learning theory (Koehler et al., 2020). Therefore, integrating crossword puzzle games into vocabulary instruction is consistent with constructivist principles and can contribute to deeper, more personalized learning outcomes.

C. Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Frame Work



The author aims to analyze Constructivism theory (Wadsworth, 1984) and Clark and Peterson's (Clark & Peterson, 1984) Teacher Decision-Making Theory as a conceptual framework because it supports the idea that what teachers choose to use in the classroom is greatly influenced by their

personal preferences, learning objectives, previous teaching experience, and student characteristics. This theory highlights the dual role of teachers as thinkers and practitioners who make pedagogical decisions based on both internal cognition and classroom realities. In relation to this, Constructivist Theory further reinforces the understanding that teachers do not passively apply methods, but actively construct their instructional choices based on their understanding of how students learn best. From a constructivist perspective, learning is seen as an active, contextualized process of building knowledge rather than acquiring it passively. Therefore, teachers' instructional decisions such as choosing to use crossword puzzle games for vocabulary teaching are shaped by their interpretation of how such tools can support meaningful and engaging learning experiences. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive lens to understand the complexity behind teacher choices and their role in creating effective learning environments.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter discussed about the research method. It played important roles in research since it affected the findings and discussion. Before conducting the data, the researcher represented a clear description research design, research approach, data source, data collection method and data.

A. Research Design

Data collection in this study uses qualitative techniques, Creswell describe qualitative research is typically used to establish the importance of the central idea and to explore the problem and develop an understanding of small individuals in social problem. With a specific research analysis design in the form of descriptive case-study, in order to describe the student's motivation in learning through game-based learning (Cresswell, 2018).

Specifically, this study adopts a descriptive case study design to explore and explain teachers' perceptions and preferences in using game-based learning media, particularly crossword puzzles, in vocabulary instruction. The case study design is considered appropriate because it allows the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of complex educational practices within real-world contexts.

Yin defines case study research as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. This definition highlights the method's utility in exploring complex social phenomena where traditional research methods may fall short (Daughtery, 2016).

The latest editions of Yin's book include practical exercises, tips, and examples from various fields, making it accessible for researchers across disciplines. This approach aims to equip scholars with the necessary tools to conduct high-quality case study research that can withstand scrutiny regarding validity and reliability (Robert K, 2009). The data collection methods in this study include observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. These techniques are considered relevant for addressing the research questions, which focus on what teachers perceive and practice, rather than on how or why certain outcomes occur. The main objective is to provide an in-depth descriptive account of the use of crossword puzzle games in vocabulary instruction from the teachers' perspectives.

This research concerns what rather than how or why something has happened. Therefore, observation, interview and documentation are used to collect data.

B. Research Setting

The author chose the research location in SDN 2 Bangunrejo Pamotan, Rembang to obtain the data in this study which is located on JL BANGUNREJO Village, Pamotan District, Rembang Regency. The research was held for 2 months from March 15th to June 11th in the academic year 2025. The researcher selected this location due to several reasons, such as; the informants of this research are teaching at SDN 2 Bnagunrejo, the location is easy to be accessed by the researcher so that the research can be conducted well without any obstacles, based on the researcher's analysis, the location is suitable to be conducted research and the problem studied exists in this location, in this school, all English teachers are invited to be active in using game based laerning, this school has A acreditation.

C. Research Participants

The informants of this research were Elementary School English Teachers who have teaching experience in EFL classes. The total number of informants is 2 English teachers at SDN 2 Bangunrejo. They have taught at SDN 2 Bangunrejo which means they have experience teaching EFL for more than 6 years. This research involved conducting semi structured interviews with the teachers for those who were willing to participate and all informants fully agreed to take part in this research about their

perceptions and experiences in utilizing crossword puzzle game in learning English vocabulary.

Convenience sampling, known as Haphazard sampling or Accidental sampling, is a sampling method that does not rely on probability or randomness. Instead, it selects individuals from the target group based on practical factors, such as easy access, availability at a specific time, geographical proximity, and willingness to participate in this study (Etikan, 2016). This sampling is chosen because it is easily organized and the subjects are readily available.

D. Data Source

According to Lofland and Lofland, as quoted in Moleong (Moleong, 2007), data sources are classified based on their nature in relation to research objectives into two categories: primary sources and additional (or secondary) sources.

a. Primary Data Source

It is the main source that can provide information, facts, and descriptions of the desired events in the study. This means that the first source of data is generated. In qualitative research, the main data sources are the words and actions of observed or interviewed people.

b. Additional Data Sources

All forms of documents, both in written forms and pictures. It means the second data source after primary data. Although referred to as a secondary (additional) source, documents cannot be ignored in a study, especially written documents such as books, scientific magazines, archives, personal documents, and official documents.

E. Data Collection Method

The data collection method is used to obtain the necessary data, both related to the study of literature or literature as well as data generated from the field. The data collection methods used by the author are:

a. Interview Method

This interview is conducted to answer the first research question about teachers' perceptions in utilizing crossword puzzle game in teaching vocabulary enrichment. The researcher probed whether EFL teachers' perceptions matched their actual practices in the classroom. The interview was conducted after the informants did the practices in the classroom Interviews are one of the favorite methodological tools for qualitative Researchers.

The interview, according to is a conversation with a specific purpose, involving two parties: the interviewer

who asks questions and the interviewee who answers the question (Moleong, 2007). The author uses semi-structural interview. The semi-structured interview employs a blend of closed and open-ended questions, often accompanied by follow-up why or how questions. Semi-structural interview is the question that had been prepared and can appear new questions during the question and answer. 2 participant teachers were chosen in this interview. The interview questions (**see Appendix 1**) were developed according to existing literature by (Moleong, 2007) and (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

b. Observation Method

The researcher utilized classroom observation in order to answer the second research question concerning the informants' practices in teaching vocabulary using crossword puzzle game. The researcher conducted observation by 31 attending the observation guide to get reliable and valid data based on real practices in the classroom. (See Appendix) The observation guide was developed by referring to the literature by (Lyster & Ranta, 1997) and (Bungin, 2009).

Terminologically, observation comes from the English term observation which means observation, view, supervision. According to Bungin (2009), observation is a

human daily activity using the five senses of the eye as the main tool, in addition to other senses such as ears, nose, mouth, and skin. In this research, the researcher observed the situation enrichment class and the game-based learning process. It is aiming to answer the first research question that how the implementation of using game-based learning in learning English. The researcher used observation guidelines to observe the assessment process in the classroom and take a field note to gain the data.

Observation aimed to observe how EFL teachers corrected students' errors during learning activities. Classroom observation was conducted in EFL teachers' class consisting of 2 meetings for one informant. The researcher acted as an observer where they simply observed by sitting at the back of the class so the informants could not easily notice the researcher's presence during the teaching-learning activities. Moreover, the researcher conducted observation using field notes to write any data, and the video recording was set up to help the researcher saving the data.

c. Documentation

In this research, the researcher used documentation to get some pictures as evidence to support the data. These pictures were taken during the classroom

observation sessions when teachers implemented crossword puzzle games in vocabulary teaching. The documentation includes photos of teaching materials, classroom activities, students' responses during the game, and the layout of the crossword puzzles used in the lessons. The purpose of this documentation is to provide visual support for the descriptive data collected through interviews and observations. It helps to strengthen the validity of the findings by showing real classroom practices and how the crossword puzzle games were integrated into vocabulary learning. In addition, the documentation also captures the atmosphere of the classroom, students' engagement, and the creative strategies used by teachers to facilitate game-based learning (L. J. Zhang, 2009).

4. Interview as the Triangulation Data

The interview was used as the triangulation data to answer the first research question. This interview is used as triangulation data to complete the data of classroom observation. In the observation, the researcher gained data related to the teachers' perceptions in utilizing crossword puzzle game in teaching vocabulary. Meanwhile, in this interview, the researcher validated the data from observation. The researcher conducted this

interview after the observation session. The interview questions (see **Appendix 1**) were developed concerning the existing literature by Bungin (2009), (Moleong, 2007), and (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). To ensure that all informants understand, the researcher provides some examples of errors and asks the informants to identify how, in general terms, they would respond to them.

F. Data Analysis Method

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze the data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. The data analysis process aimed to systematically interpret and understand the meaning behind the participants' responses and classroom practices related to the use of crossword puzzle games in vocabulary instruction.

The analysis process was carried out using the qualitative data analysis model proposed by (Cresswell, 2018), which includes the following six stages:

1. Transcribing the Data

The researcher transcribed the interview recordings and organized the data according to the source of information (e.g., Teacher A, Teacher B, field notes, and documentation).

2. Reading and Familiarizing with the Data

The researcher read through all the collected data to gain a general understanding and reflect on the overall meaning of the responses and classroom activities.

3. Coding the Data

In this stage, the researcher segmented the transcribed data into meaningful units by assigning labels or codes to specific parts of the text. This involved identifying keywords, phrases, or sentences that represented emerging themes relevant to the research questions.

4. Developing Categories and Descriptions

The researcher grouped similar codes into broader categories and constructed detailed descriptions that represent the teachers' perceptions and practices in using crossword puzzle games.

5. Representing the Findings

The results of the analysis were presented in the form of qualitative narrative passages, supported by direct quotations from the participants and observational data to illustrate key themes.

6. Interpreting the Data

The final stage involved interpreting the findings by connecting them with relevant theories, such as Constructivism Theory and Clark and Peterson's

Teacher Decision-Making Model, to provide deeper insights and answer the research questions.

Through this systematic and reflective process, the researcher was able to derive meaningful conclusions from the collected data and highlight the role of crossword puzzle games as a tool for vocabulary enrichment in the EFL classroom

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the findings of this study and the discussion. The research findings, which consist of the result of data analysis and data interpretation, answer the research questions formulated in the previous chapter. The researcher also elaborates the findings of this study with existing theory.

A. Research Findings

In the research finding, the researcher presents the analysis of research data by categorizing it into two points, i.e. teachers' perceptions on the crossword puzzle game in teaching vocabulary, and teachers' practices in utilizing crossword puzzle games for student vocabulary enrichment in the classroom.

1. Teachers Implement Crossword Puzzle Game In Vocabulary Teaching Practice In The Classroom.

The researcher conducted the observation on April 15th – June 11th 2025. It was aimed to gain any data regarding the EFL teachers' practices on the implementation of crossword puzzle game in teaching vocabulary enrichment. The observation was done by the researcher two times for each teacher. Observations were made by direct researchers using student observation sheets with the data obtained as follows:

Table 4.1 Observations Checklist for Teacher A

No	Indicators	Observed	
		Yes	No
A. Constructivism Theory			
1.	Teacher uses crossword puzzles as part of vocabulary instruction	✓	
2.	Crossword puzzle activity allows students to interact or collaborate	✓	
3.	Students are actively engaged during the activity (enthusiastic, asking questions, etc.)	✓	
4.	Crossword puzzle tasks promote problem-solving or critical thinking	✓	
5	Teacher guides students to construct meaning from vocabulary through the puzzle	✓	
B. Teacher Thought Processes			
6.	Teacher explains the purpose or learning goal of using crossword puzzles	✓	
7.	Crossword puzzle is clearly aligned with lesson objectives	✓	

8.	Teacher adapts the puzzle content to match student level or needs	✓	
C. Teacher Actions and Behaviors			
9.	Teacher provides clear instructions for the activity	✓	
10.	Teacher monitors or supports students while completing the crossword puzzle	✓	
11.	Teacher evaluates or discusses the results of the crossword activity with students	✓	
12.	Teacher manages classroom interaction and ensures participation from all students	✓	

From the results of observations, the researcher stated that Teacher A used crossword puzzle game to teach English vocabulary. Before learning begins the teacher has prepared a puzzle chain on white board that will be used as a learning medium. When the lesson begins the teacher opens the lesson with an English greeting, When the lesson begins the teacher opens the lesson with an English greeting *“Good Morning Students, How’s your day? Before we start our lesson today, please reciting Bismillah together. Now I will check your*

attendance first”, after that the teacher repeats the lesson to remind the students about the past learning “*Anyone remember last week's lesson?*”, then the teacher begins to convey learning about vocabulary such as apple, watermelon, grape, mango, banana, papaya and so on. The teacher writes “Things in the Classroom” on the whiteboard, and invites students to mention various objects they can find around them. As students respond, the teacher writes their answers on the board to create a vocabulary list. After collecting enough words, the teacher explains that these words will be used in a crossword puzzle activity. The students are given a crossword puzzle worksheet based on the vocabulary they just discussed. Through this activity, the teacher encourages students to collaborate, recall vocabulary, and use clues to complete the puzzle, thereby reinforcing their understanding of classroom-related terms in a fun and interactive way.

Figure 4.1

Teacher A invited students to complete the puzzle



From Figure 4.1 above, it can be identified that Teacher A invited students to complete the empty puzzles about “Things in the Classroom”. There were several students who actively participated by trying to answer the clues aloud and filling in the puzzle collaboratively with their peers. These students showed enthusiasm and interest during the activity, often discussing the possible answers among themselves.

Teacher A facilitated the activity by guiding the students through the clues, giving additional hints when necessary, and encouraging less active students to contribute. This created a supportive learning environment where students felt comfortable engaging with the material. The activity also

helped students recall vocabulary they had learned previously and apply it in a meaningful and enjoyable context.

Overall, the implementation of the crossword puzzle in this session demonstrated student-centered learning and aligned with the principles of constructivism, where knowledge is built through interaction, collaboration, and active participation.

Table 4.2 Observations Checklist for Teacher B

No	Indicators	Observed	
		Yes	No
A. Constructivism Theory			
1.	Teacher uses crossword puzzles as part of vocabulary instruction	✓	
2.	Crossword puzzle activity allows students to interact or collaborate	✓	
3.	Students are actively engaged during the activity (enthusiastic, asking questions, etc.)	✓	
4.	Crossword puzzle tasks promote problem-solving or critical thinking	✓	

5	Teacher guides students to construct meaning from vocabulary through the puzzle	✓	
B. Teacher Thought Processes			
6.	Teacher explains the purpose or learning goal of using crossword puzzles	✓	
7.	Crossword puzzle is clearly aligned with lesson objectives	✓	
8.	Teacher adapts the puzzle content to match student level or needs	✓	
C. Teacher Actions and Behaviors			
9.	Teacher provides clear instructions for the activity	✓	
10.	Teacher monitors or supports students while completing the crossword puzzle	✓	
11.	Teacher evaluates or discusses the results of the crossword activity with students	✓	
12.	Teacher manages classroom interaction and ensures participation from all students	✓	

Teacher B used a crossword puzzle game to teach English vocabulary. Before the learning activity began, the teacher had already prepared a crossword puzzle on the whiteboard that would serve as a learning medium. When the class started, the teacher greeted the students warmly using English: *“Good morning, students! How are you today? Before we start our lesson, let’s recite Bismillah together. Now I will check your attendance first.”*

After that, the teacher briefly reviewed the previous lesson by asking, *“Can anyone tell me what we learned last week?”* This question encouraged students to recall prior vocabulary and engaged them from the beginning of the session.

The teacher then introduced the topic *“Animal Around Us”* and wrote it clearly on the whiteboard. Students were invited to mention various objects they could see around them. As they responded with words like *chicken, cow, bird, duck, horse and etc.* the teacher gives the students a worksheet.

Figure 4.2
The Students' Worksheet about Animal Around Us



From figure 4.2 above it can be seen that the students were focused and actively engaged in solving the crossword puzzle. The activity was not only intended to reinforce vocabulary but also to create a more interactive and enjoyable learning experience. Students showed genuine interest and enthusiasm, especially when they realized that the words they had previously mentioned were now part of the puzzle they were working on. This connection between their input and the task appeared to increase their motivation and sense of involvement in the lesson.

In both observed sessions, Teacher A actively integrated the crossword puzzle game into the vocabulary learning process. The lesson began with a warm-up activity where the teacher introduced the topic by writing “Things in the Classroom” on the whiteboard and inviting students to mention objects they could see around them. The teacher then guided the students to review the vocabulary list before distributing the crossword puzzle worksheets.

Students worked in pairs, which allowed collaboration and peer discussion. Teacher A walked around the classroom, giving hints, answering questions, and motivating students who struggled. The teacher encouraged students to refer to their notebooks or dictionaries if they needed help. After completing the puzzle, the teacher led a short reflection session where answers were discussed, and difficult words were reviewed.

It was observed that students were engaged and motivated throughout the activity. Most students showed enthusiasm, especially those who preferred interactive learning. The activity was well-aligned with the learning objectives, and the teacher managed the time effectively to ensure that the puzzle could be completed and reviewed within the session.

Teacher B began the lesson by reviewing previously taught vocabulary and asking students to brainstorm related

words. The crossword puzzle was used as a reinforcement activity at the end of the session. Unlike Teacher A, Teacher B allowed students to work individually first and then compare answers in groups. This method encouraged individual accountability followed by collaborative verification.

During the activity, Teacher B facilitated learning by walking around and providing support when necessary. The teacher provided clues in simpler language when students had difficulty understanding the original ones. The teacher also reminded students to pay attention to spelling and to check their answers carefully. In both sessions, students participated actively and demonstrated curiosity when solving the puzzles.

However, time management appeared to be a slight challenge in Teacher B's session, as some students needed more time to complete the puzzle. Despite this, the teacher extended the activity as homework and planned to discuss the answers in the following lesson, demonstrating flexibility in instructional planning.

From both classroom observations, it was evident that crossword puzzles were implemented effectively as tools for vocabulary reinforcement. The teachers used different strategies based on their teaching style and student needs. In line with constructivist theory, students were given the opportunity to actively construct meaning through interaction,

reflection, and exploration. Furthermore, consistent with Clark and Peterson's model, the teachers' thought processes (beliefs, goals, planning) were reflected in their classroom behavior and instructional choices.

In summary, the findings suggest that teachers perceive crossword puzzles as an effective and enjoyable tool for vocabulary instruction. Their perceptions are shaped by accumulated teaching experience, belief in the benefits of active learning, and thoughtful instructional decision-making. These perceptions influence how and when they choose to incorporate crossword puzzles into their classroom practice.

2. EFL Teachers' Perceptions Regarding the Utilization of Crossword Puzzle Games in Vocabulary Instruction.

This sub chapter will analyze results and factors that influence teachers' perceptions in utilizing crossword puzzle game in vocabulary instructions, The interview data analysis revealed three primary categories regarding teachers' perceptions based on experience, perceptions of game-based learning in constructivism oriented, and teacher thinking and decision making.

a. Experience-Based Perceptions

Both Teacher A and Teacher B expressed that their teaching experiences significantly shape their

perceptions of using crossword puzzles. They shared that through years of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), they have come to realize the importance of incorporating creative and engaging methods into vocabulary instruction. Teacher A, with five years of experience, stated that traditional methods often lead to student boredom, while games like crossword puzzles bring a fresh and enjoyable approach. Similarly, Teacher B, who has seven years of experience, highlighted that students are more responsive and motivated when vocabulary is taught through games.

b. Perceptions of Game-Based Learning in Constructivism-Oriented Instruction

In line with constructivist theory, both teachers perceive crossword puzzles as a medium that supports active learning and knowledge construction. Teacher A emphasized that puzzles require students to think critically, make connections between words and meanings, and collaborate with peer elements central to constructivist learning. Teacher B echoed this view, noting that crossword puzzles stimulate student engagement and make the learning process more meaningful. From a constructivist perspective, these

games enable students to build vocabulary knowledge through experience, context, and interaction, rather than passive memorization.

c. Teacher Thinking and Decision-Making

Grounded in Clark and Peterson's theory, the teachers' perceptions are also shaped by their internal thought processes, including beliefs, goals, and instructional planning. Both teachers indicated that they deliberately choose to use crossword puzzles because they align with their goal to foster student motivation and vocabulary retention. For example, Teacher A mentioned planning the use of puzzles only when the vocabulary topic suits the format and learning objectives. Teacher B emphasized the importance of adapting the puzzle content to student proficiency levels and ensuring that the activity fits within the time constraints of the lesson. These reflections highlight the connection between teacher cognition and instructional behavior.

The representation of data is provided by referring to indicators in interview guidelines (**see Appendix 1**). The detailed interview transcripts can be seen in appendix

1 the interview findings below (see Table 4.2) have been filtered and analyzed based on appropriate indicators.

Table 4.3 Teachers' Perception regarding Constructivism Theory and Teacher Decision Making Theory

Participant	Indicator	Representation of teachers' perceptions according theory
Teacher A	Constructivism Theory (Student learning Process) - Perception of crossword puzzle game as a tool for game-based learning	- Believe that Crossword Puzzle Game can make vocabulary learning more fun and challenging for students. In addition, crossword puzzles can also help students develop

	their critical and analytical thinking skills. (direct interview on 26th May 2025) Teacher thinking and decision-making -Thought processes	- Chose to use Crossword Puzzle Game because as a teacher, crossword puzzles as a potential and flexible tool in game-based learning. However, their use must be planned and contextual, taking into account learning objectives,
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		student characteristics, and expected outcomes. direct interview on 26 th May 2025)
Teacher B	Constructivism Theory (Student learning Process) -Perception of crossword puzzle game as a tool for game-based learning	- Believes crossword puzzles can be used for all subjects including English vocabulary instructions. - Believes Crossword puzzles can be combined with other learning method. direct

	Teacher thinking and decision-making - Thought processes	interview on 28th May 2025) -The use of crossword puzzles increases student participation in vocabulary enrichment. - Crosswords can be a very useful game-based learning tool if used with clear goals and careful planning. As a teacher, He plays a role in designing learning experiences that are fun but still meaningful. direct
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		interview on 28 th May 2025)
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The presentation of teachers' interview data above shows that all informants have positive views concerning Crossword Puzzle Game in teaching vocabulary enrichment. They consider that crossword puzzle games are not only effective tools for engaging students in vocabulary learning, but also support a more interactive and student-centered learning environment. Both Teacher A and Teacher B recognize that crossword puzzles foster active participation, critical thinking, and motivation among students. From a constructivist perspective, they view crossword puzzles as a medium through which students can construct their own understanding of vocabulary through problem-solving and meaningful interaction.

Several reasons were conveyed by all informants during the interview. For example, Teacher A said:

“Most of my students are excited when I bring crossword puzzles. It feels like a break from regular learning, but

they don't realize they're actually reviewing and practicing vocabulary at the same time. Some students struggle at first, but when they work in pairs or groups, it becomes easier and more enjoyable for them." **(Teacher A, Direct Interview, May 27th, 2025).**

Meanwhile, another informant states an argument on the necessity of feedback correction for students' long-term learning. When students' errors are immediately corrected, the students consciously respond and remember the experience of what is being learned from the mistakes. He explained that giving the correction makes students more focused on the context errors. Subsequently, they directly realize their errors and correct them immediately. *"I believe that giving feedback to students is very important. Because through feedback, students realize their mistakes, they can fix their mistakes, then they wouldn't repeat the same mistake in the next occasion."* **(Teacher B, Direct Interview, May 28th, 2025).**

Aligned with Clark and Peterson's theory, the teachers' thought processes such as their planning, goals, and pedagogical beliefs clearly influence their classroom practices. Their decision to implement crossword puzzle games is based on careful consideration of student needs, learning objectives, and the desire to create a balance

between enjoyment and educational value. In terms of observable actions, both teachers demonstrate an intentional and reflective use of crossword puzzles, ensuring that these games are well-integrated into lesson plans to optimize student vocabulary enrichment.

B. Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that both Teacher A and Teacher B perceive the use of crossword puzzle games as an effective and engaging strategy to enhance vocabulary learning among elementary students. This aligns with the Constructivism Theory, which emphasizes that knowledge is actively constructed by learners through meaningful experiences, interaction, and problem-solving. In both observed classrooms, students were encouraged to participate actively, collaborate with peers, and recall vocabulary in context, fulfilling the characteristics of constructivist learning environments.

Moreover, based on Clark and Peterson's Teacher Decision-Making Model, the study also illustrates how teachers' internal thoughts such as beliefs, planning, and instructional goals are reflected in their classroom practices. Both teachers made deliberate decisions to use crossword puzzles when the lesson content matched the activity, and they adjusted the difficulty level of the puzzle to suit student proficiency. This shows that the

integration of games was not incidental but rooted in reflective and goal-oriented teaching.

In addition, the study is particularly relevant because it was conducted at SDN 2 Bangunrejo, a school located in a rural area with limited access to digital technology and learning media. Unlike schools in urban areas where digital game-based tools are more accessible, teachers in this context must rely on low-tech, creative strategies to make vocabulary learning engaging. The crossword puzzle game emerged as a flexible and practical alternative that supports student-centered learning without requiring advanced technology.

Despite the positive results, both teachers also acknowledged challenges, such as time constraints in preparing puzzles, the need to align games with the curriculum, and varying levels of student vocabulary knowledge. These findings suggest that while crossword puzzles offer significant pedagogical benefits, their effective use requires thoughtful planning, adaptation to classroom conditions, and teacher commitment.

In summary, this study confirms that crossword puzzle games are not only applicable but also highly valuable in under-resourced educational settings. They promote active learning, support vocabulary retention, and enhance classroom interaction

especially when used intentionally by teachers who understand their students' needs and learning goals.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSSION AND SUGGESTION

In this section, the researcher provides conclusion and suggestion based on the discussions in the previous chapter.

A. Conclusion

This research aimed to explore teachers' perceptions and classroom practices in utilizing crossword puzzle games for vocabulary enrichment in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) settings. Based on the analysis of interview and observation data, several conclusions can be drawn:

1. Teachers' Positive Perceptions Toward Crossword Puzzle Games

The findings revealed that both Teacher A and Teacher B held positive perceptions toward the use of crossword puzzle games in vocabulary instruction. They believed that the game is an effective, engaging, and student-centered tool that can increase motivation and enhance vocabulary retention. These perceptions were shaped by their teaching experiences, belief in active learning (in line with constructivist principles), and thoughtful instructional decision-making.

2. Crossword Puzzles Support Constructivist Learning

Teachers recognized that crossword puzzles promote active learning, encourage collaboration, and allow students to

construct their own understanding of vocabulary through problem-solving and contextual thinking. This aligns with the principles of constructivism, where learners are viewed as active participants in their own knowledge development.

3. Teacher Decision-Making Plays a Crucial Role

The implementation of crossword puzzles was strongly influenced by teachers' thought processes, including planning, beliefs, learning goals, and awareness of student needs. According to Clark and Peterson's theory, these internal decisions were evident in observable classroom behavior, such as how the activity was structured, how students were grouped, and how time and materials were managed.

4. Practical Implementation Varied by Teacher

While both teachers used crossword puzzles for vocabulary reinforcement, their approaches varied. Teacher A emphasized pair work and in-class reflection, while Teacher B combined individual and group work, sometimes extending the activity as homework. Despite these differences, both successfully facilitated learning through guided support and flexibility.

5. Crossword Puzzles Enhance Engagement and Motivation

Observational data confirmed that students were more motivated and actively engaged during crossword puzzle activities compared to traditional vocabulary drills. The

interactive nature of the game contributed to a more dynamic classroom environment.

In conclusion, crossword puzzle games can be considered a valuable instructional strategy for vocabulary enrichment in EFL classrooms, especially when thoughtfully designed and aligned with learning objectives.

B. Suggestion

According to the findings and conclusion of this study, the researcher offers several suggestions for future investigation of this issue. The suggestions are given for the teachers and the further research as listed below:

1. For English Teachers

Teachers are encouraged to incorporate game-based learning strategies, such as crossword puzzle games, in vocabulary instruction. These activities not only help in reinforcing vocabulary but also promote student engagement and motivation. Teachers should consider students' language proficiency, available time, and learning objectives when planning such activities. Moreover, it is important to provide guidance and scaffolding, especially for students who are not yet familiar with this type of task.

2. For Schools or Educational Institutions

Schools should support teachers in implementing innovative teaching methods by providing training, resources, and time for lesson preparation. Including game-based learning as part of school-wide teaching strategies can create a more student-centered and interactive learning environment. Additionally, collaboration among teachers in designing and evaluating such activities can improve their effectiveness.

3. For Future Researchers

This research focused on a small number of teachers and observations in a limited time frame. Future studies are recommended to involve a larger sample size and explore the impact of crossword puzzle games on students' vocabulary acquisition in more depth. Further research may also investigate student perceptions, challenges in digital crossword tools, or comparisons with other types of vocabulary games.

4. For Curriculum Developers

Curriculum designers may consider integrating game-based elements like crossword puzzles into vocabulary learning modules or textbooks. When combined with appropriate pedagogical approaches, these games can make vocabulary learning more effective and enjoyable for EFL learners.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Observations guidelines on teachers' implementation about crossword puzzle game in teaching vocabulary enrichment

Student Learning Process, teachers thought process, teacher actions based on (Clark & Peterson, 1984), (Clark & Peterson, 2016), (Bada & Olusegun, 2015)

Table 4.1 Observations Guidelines

No	Indicators	Check Mark	
		Yes	No
A. Constructivism Theory			
1.	Teacher uses crossword puzzles as part of vocabulary instruction		
2.	Crossword puzzle activity allows students to interact or collaborate		
3.	Students are actively engaged during the activity (enthusiastic, asking questions, etc.)		
4.	Crossword puzzle tasks promote problem-solving or critical thinking		
5	Teacher guides students to construct meaning from vocabulary through the puzzle		
B. Teacher Thought Processes			
6.	Teacher explains the purpose or learning goal of using crossword puzzles		

7.	Crossword puzzle is clearly aligned with lesson objectives		
8.	Teacher adapts the puzzle content to match student level or needs		
C. Teacher Actions and Behaviors			
9.	Teacher provides clear instructions for the activity		
10.	Teacher monitors or supports students while completing the crossword puzzle		
11.	Teacher evaluates or discusses the results of the crossword activity with students		
12.	Teacher manages classroom interaction and ensures participation from all students		

Appendix 2. Observation Result on Teachers' Implementation

1. Participant: Teacher A

Table 4.1 Observations Checklist

No	Indicators	Observed	
		Yes	No
A. Constructivism Theory			
1.	Teacher uses crossword puzzles as part of vocabulary instruction	✓	

2.	Crossword puzzle activity allows students to interact or collaborate	✓	
3.	Students are actively engaged during the activity (enthusiastic, asking questions, etc.)	✓	
4.	Crossword puzzle tasks promote problem-solving or critical thinking	✓	
5	Teacher guides students to construct meaning from vocabulary through the puzzle	✓	
B. Teacher Thought Processes			
6.	Teacher explains the purpose or learning goal of using crossword puzzles	✓	
7.	Crossword puzzle is clearly aligned with lesson objectives	✓	
8.	Teacher adapts the puzzle content to match student level or needs	✓	
C. Teacher Actions and Behaviors			
9.	Teacher provides clear instructions for the activity	✓	

10.	Teacher monitors or supports students while completing the crossword puzzle	✓	
11.	Teacher evaluates or discusses the results of the crossword activity with students	✓	
12.	Teacher manages classroom interaction and ensures participation from all students	✓	

2. Participant: Teacher B

Table 4.2 Observations Checklist

No	Indicators	Observed	
		Yes	No
A. Constructivism Theory			
1.	Teacher uses crossword puzzles as part of vocabulary instruction	✓	
2.	Crossword puzzle activity allows students to interact or collaborate	✓	
3.	Students are actively engaged during the activity (enthusiastic, asking questions, etc.)	✓	

4.	Crossword puzzle tasks promote problem-solving or critical thinking	✓	
5	Teacher guides students to construct meaning from vocabulary through the puzzle	✓	
B. Teacher Thought Processes			
6.	Teacher explains the purpose or learning goal of using crossword puzzles	✓	
7.	Crossword puzzle is clearly aligned with lesson objectives	✓	
8.	Teacher adapts the puzzle content to match student level or needs	✓	
C. Teacher Actions and Behaviors			
9.	Teacher provides clear instructions for the activity	✓	
10.	Teacher monitors or supports students while completing the crossword puzzle	✓	
11.	Teacher evaluates or discusses the results of the crossword activity with students	✓	

12.	Teacher manages classroom interaction and ensures participation from all students	✓	
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Appendix 3. Interview questions on teachers' perceptions in utilizing crossword puzzle game for student vocabulary enrichment

The interview questions were developed with references to the existing literature (Clark & Peterson, 1984) and (Bada & Olusegun, 2015)

Table 4.2. Teachers' perception regarding Constructivism Theory and Teacher Decision Making Theory

Participant	Indicator	Representation of teachers' perceptions according theory
Teacher A	Constructivism Theory (Student learning Process) - Perception of crossword puzzle game as a tool for game-based learning	Question number 4,5,6,7,8

1.	Can you briefly describe your teaching experience and the grade levels or ages you currently teach?
2.	How long have you been teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?
3.	Have you ever used games, especially crossword puzzles, in vocabulary instruction?
Section B: Perceptions of Game-Based Learning (Constructivism-Oriented)	
4.	What is your general opinion about using games in language learning?
5.	In your experience, how do students respond to learning vocabulary through crossword puzzles?
6.	Do you think crossword puzzle games help students construct their own understanding of vocabulary? Why or why not?
7.	How do crossword puzzles influence student engagement and motivation?
8.	How do you facilitate learning while using crossword puzzles in class?
Section C: Teacher Thinking and Decision-Making	
9.	What motivates you to choose crossword puzzles (or other games) over traditional methods for vocabulary teaching?
10.	How do your beliefs or past experiences influence your choice of teaching strategies?

11.	When deciding to use crossword puzzles, what classroom factors do you consider (e.g., time, student level, learning objectives)?
12.	What challenges or limitations have you faced when implementing crossword puzzles in class?
13.	How do your teaching goals align with your choice to use or not use crossword puzzles?

Appendix 3. Interview results on teachers' perceptions

1. Interview 1

Informant : Teacher A

Date : May 26th, 2025

Researcher	Assalamualaikum wr. Wb. Good morning, Miss. I am Khoirunnisa Nur Ishmatillah who has texted you yesterday to kindly participate in my research. Thank you very much for the time and for your participation. Can I start the interview, Mom?
Teacher A	Waalaikumsalam wr. Wb. Sure!
Researcher	My research discusses about teachers' perceptions in utilizing crossword puzzle game in teaching vocabulary enrichment. So, my question is Can you briefly describe your teaching experience and the grade levels or ages you currently teach?
Teacher A	Yes, I've been teaching English for about 5 years now. Currently, I teach 6th and 5th grade students at an Elementary School. So most of my students are between 10 to 12 years old

Researcher	How long have you been teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?
Teacher A	I started teaching English right after I graduated from university, so it's been around 5 years. All of my teaching experience has been in EFL settings.
Researcher	Have you ever used games, especially crossword puzzles, in vocabulary instruction?
Teacher A	Yes, I have. I sometimes use crossword puzzles to help students remember new vocabulary in a fun way. I usually give it after a vocabulary lesson as a kind of review activity. The students seem to enjoy it because it feels like a game, but at the same time, they are still learning.
Researcher	What is your general opinion about using games in language learning?
Teacher A	I think games are a great way to make language learning more enjoyable. They can break the routine and reduce anxiety, especially for students who are not confident with English. Games also encourage interaction and participation.
Researcher	In your experience, how do students respond to learning vocabulary through crossword puzzles?
Teacher A	Most of my students are excited when I bring crossword puzzles. It feels like a break from regular learning, but they don't realize they're actually reviewing and practicing vocabulary at the same time. Some students struggle at first, but when they work in pairs or groups, it becomes easier and more enjoyable for them.
Researcher	Do you think crossword puzzle games help students construct their own understanding of vocabulary? Why or why not?

Teacher A	Yes, definitely. When students try to solve clues, they have to recall the meaning of words, their spelling, and how they connect with the context. That process really helps them understand and remember the vocabulary better than just memorizing a list of words.
Researcher	How do crossword puzzles influence student engagement and motivation?
Teacher A	They make students more involved. Even those who are usually passive become more active because they want to finish the puzzle or compete with their friends. It also gives them a sense of achievement when they complete it correctly.
Researcher	How do you facilitate learning while using crossword puzzles in class?
Teacher A	Before starting, I usually explain the topic and introduce some of the keywords. I also walk around the classroom during the activity to help students who are confused and give hints if needed. After they finish, we check the answers together and discuss any difficult words.
Researcher	What motivates you to choose crossword puzzles (or other games) over traditional methods for vocabulary teaching?
Teacher A	What motivates me is seeing how students enjoy learning more when it's interactive. Traditional methods like memorizing word lists can get boring for them, especially at the junior high level. Crossword puzzles make learning fun and at the same time help reinforce the vocabulary we've learned in a more engaging way.

Researcher	How do your beliefs or past experiences influence your choice of teaching strategies?
Teacher A	I believe students learn better when they're involved actively in the learning process. From my experience, when I used only textbook-based methods, students were less motivated. But when I started using games like crossword puzzles, their attention and interest increased. That really shaped how I plan my lessons today.
Researcher	When deciding to use crossword puzzles, what classroom factors do you consider (e.g., time, student level, learning objectives)?
Teacher A	Definitely. I consider the students' vocabulary level, the time I have in a session, and also the learning objectives. If the topic has enough vocabulary items that can be turned into clues, and if I have at least 20–30 minutes to do the activity, then I go for it. I also think about whether the class is more independent or if they need more guidance.
Researcher	What challenges or limitations have you faced when implementing crossword puzzles in class?
Teacher A	Some challenges are time constraints and the varying ability levels of students. Sometimes stronger students finish early, while others are still struggling. Also, creating the puzzles takes preparation time. To deal with that, I either group students strategically or prepare different levels of puzzles.
Researcher	How do your teaching goals align with your choice to use or not use crossword puzzles?
Teacher A	My goal is to help students learn vocabulary in a way that's meaningful and memorable. Crossword

	puzzles support that because they require students to recall word meanings, spell them correctly, and think critically. So, as long as the puzzle fits with the lesson objectives, I feel it's a useful tool.
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2. Interview 2

Informant : Teacher B

Date : May 28th, 2025

Researcher	Aassalamualaikum wr. Wb. Good morning, Miss. I am Khoirunnisa Nur Ishmatillah who has texted you yesterday to kindly participate in my research. Thank you very much for the time and for your participation. Can I start the interview, Sir?
Teacher B	Waalaikumsalam wr. Wb. Sure!
Researcher	My research discusses about teachers' perceptions in utilizing crossword puzzle game in teaching vocabulary enrichment. So, my question is Can you briefly describe your teaching experience and the grade levels or ages you currently teach?
Teacher B	Yes, I've been teaching English for about 8 years now. Currently, I teach 6th and 5th grade students at an Elementary School. So most of my students are between 10 to 12 years old

Researcher	How long have you been teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?
Teacher B	I started teaching English right after I graduated from university, so it's been around 8 years. From the beginning of my career, I've always taught English as a foreign language.
Researcher	Have you ever used games, especially crossword puzzles, in vocabulary instruction?
Teacher B	Yes, I like using games in the classroom, and crossword puzzles are one of my favorites. They help make vocabulary learning less stressful and more interactive. Sometimes I create my own puzzles using vocabulary from the lesson. It's also a good way to check students' understanding in a more relaxed setting.
Researcher	What is your general opinion about using games in language learning?
Teacher B	Games are an effective method to make learning more fun and interactive. They help students relax and enjoy the learning process, which is important, especially in language classes.
Researcher	In your experience, how do students respond to learning vocabulary through crossword puzzles?
Teacher B	They love it! I've noticed that when I use crossword puzzles, students are more enthusiastic. They enjoy the challenge, and it's also a good way to encourage teamwork.

Researcher	Do you think crossword puzzle games help students construct their own understanding of vocabulary? Why or why not?
Teacher B	Yes, because the activity pushes them to think. They don't just memorize—they try to understand clues, connect them with what they've learned, and figure out the right word. It helps deepen their understanding.
Researcher	How do crossword puzzles influence student engagement and motivation?
Teacher B	It increases both. Crossword puzzles are like mini-challenges. Students get curious and want to complete the puzzle. That makes them more focused and motivated to participate.
Researcher	How do you facilitate learning while using crossword puzzles in class?
Teacher B	I make sure to guide them during the activity. Sometimes I give hints or explain difficult clues. I also use this opportunity to reinforce the correct spelling and pronunciation of the vocabulary they're learning.
Researcher	What motivates you to choose crossword puzzles (or other games) over traditional methods for vocabulary teaching?
Teacher B	The motivation comes from the students. When I see that they are more motivated and excited to learn, I know I've chosen the right strategy. Games, including crosswords, reduce pressure

	and make vocabulary learning less intimidating for many students.
Researcher	How do your beliefs or past experiences influence your choice of teaching strategies?
Teacher B	I believe in making learning enjoyable and practical. In the past, I've tried many methods, and I noticed that students remember words better when they are part of an interactive activity. I always reflect on what worked well in previous classes and adjust accordingly.
Researcher	When deciding to use crossword puzzles, what classroom factors do you consider (e.g., time, student level, learning objectives)?
Teacher B	I consider the topic first if it includes enough concrete vocabulary. Then, I think about time, class size, and student motivation. For larger or lower-level classes, I may simplify the puzzle or do it as a guided activity rather than an individual task. And I believe that giving feedback to students is very important. Because through feedback, students realize their mistakes, they can fix their mistakes, then they wouldn't repeat the same mistake in the next occasion."
Researcher	What challenges or limitations have you faced when implementing crossword puzzles in class?
Teacher B	A major challenge is keeping all students engaged, especially those who finish early or those who find it difficult. Another limitation is making sure the puzzle really supports the

	vocabulary goal and isn't just a filler. So, I try to link each clue with what we've studied in class.
Researcher	How do your teaching goals align with your choice to use or not use crossword puzzles?
Teacher B	One of my main goals is to build vocabulary retention and student confidence. Crossword puzzles help reinforce what they've learned in a different format. If the game helps students practice while having fun, I consider it aligned with my teaching goals.

Appendix 5. Proof of Research



**PEMERINTAH KABUPATEN REMBANG
DINAS PENDIDIKAN PEMUDA DAN OLAHRAGA
SD NEGERI 2 BANGUNREJO**

Alamat : Jalan Ukir Desa Bangunrejo Kec. Pamotan Kode Pos 59261

Email : sdnegeribangunrejo2@gmail.com

SURAT KETERANGAN TELAH MELAKUKAN PENELITIAN

Nomor : 421.2/102/2025

Yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini :

Nama : Tulus Setiyono, S.Pd.

Jabatan : Kepala Sekolah SD Negeri 2 Bangunrejo

Dengan ini menyatakan bahwa mahasiswa yang beridentitas :

Nama : Khoirunnisa Nur Ismatillah

NIM : 2103046125

Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

Universitas : Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo

Telah melakukan penelitian dan pengambilan data penelitian di Sekolah Dasar Negeri 2 Bangunrejo, Kecamatan Pamotan, Kabupaten Rembang terhitung mulai tanggal 15 April s.d 10 Juni 2025 untuk memperoleh data penelitian dalam rangka penyusunan skripsi yang berjudul "Exploring Teachers' Perceptions in Utilizing Crossword Puzzle Games for Student Vocabulary Enrichment".

Demikian surat keterangan ini dibuat dan diberikan kepada yang bersangkutan untuk digunakan sepenuhnya.

Rembang, 10 Juni 2025
Kepala Sekolah SDN 2 Bangunrejo

TULUS SETIYONO, S.Pd.
NIP. 19670105200212 1 004

DOCUMENTATION



Figure 4.3 Interview Session with Teacher A



Figure 4.4 Interview Session with Teacher B



Figure 4.5 Classroom Observation at 6th Grade in SDN 2 Bangunrejo



Figure 4.6 Classroom Observation at 5th Grade in SDN 2 Bangunrejo

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name : Khoirunnisa Nur Ishmatillah
Place, and Date of Birth : January 20th 2003, Rembang
Student Number : 2103046125
E-mail : ishmakhoirunnisa@gmail.com
Number Phone : 081334824588
Address : Ds. Pamotan Rt. 03/ Rw. 06, Kec.
Pamotan, Kab. Rembang

Academic Background

a. Formal Education

- 1) TK Pembina Pamotan, Rembang
- 2) SDN 4 Pamotan, Rembang
- 3) SMP Plus Al-Muhibbin Jatirogo, Tuban
- 4) MAN 2 Rembang
- 5) English Language Education Department of Education and
Teacher Training Faculty State Islamic University (UIN)
Walisongo Semarang

b. Informal Education

- 1) PP Modern 4 Bahasa Al-Muhibbin Jatirogo, Tuban
- 2) PP Putri Kuttatul Banat Lasem, Rembang
- 3) PP Progresif Fathimah Al-Amin Semarang