

Team Game Tournament with Crossword Puzzle Media as a Pedagogical Tool for Balaghah Learning in Higher Education

Renni Hasibuan^{1*}, Mamluatul Hasanah², Faisol³, Siti Nur'ain Binti Ahmad Radzuanuddin⁴

^{1,2,3}Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

⁴Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysia

Received: 29 May 2025

Accepted: 1 August 2025

Published: 10 August 2025

Abstract

Using diverse methods enhances student interest and creativity, making learning more engaging. This research aimed to explore how the Team Game Tournament (TGT) method using crossword puzzles is applied in teaching Balaghah, focusing on three key activities: the preliminary activity, the main activity, and the final activity, and how students responded to the application of this method. This research used a descriptive qualitative method, with data collection techniques including observation and questionnaires. The results of this research are as follows: 1) The preliminary activity included greetings, opening the lesson with a prayer, and reminding students of previously learned concepts or knowledge. 2) In the main activity, five organized stages were applied: in-class presentation, group learning, the game, the tournament, and finally, the group reward. 3) In the final activity, the session's conclusions were presented, along with the ideas gained during the learning process, and the lesson was concluded with a prayer. 4) The students' response to the application of this method received a score of 82.2%, rated as "Good," indicating that the method successfully garnered a positive response from the respondents. Overall, these findings underscore the importance of integrating varied teaching methodologies to cater to diverse learning styles and needs, ultimately enriching the educational experience.

Keywords: Cooperative Learning; Team Game Tournament Method; Crossword Puzzle Tool; Balaghah Learning.

مستخلص البحث

إنَّ استخدام الأساليب المتنوعة يُسهم في زيادة اهتمام الطلاب وإبداعهم، ممَّا يجعل عملية التعلم أكثر تفاعلاً ومتعةً. وقد هدَفَ هذا البحثُ إلى استكشاف كيفية تطبيق طريقة "مباراة لعبة الفرق (TGT)" باستخدام كلمات المتقاطعة في تدريس مادة البلاغة، مع التركيز على ثلاث مراحل أساسية: النشاط التمهيدي، والنشاط الرئيسي، والنشاط الختامي، بالإضافة إلى رصد استجابات الطلاب تجاه تطبيق هذه الطريقة. وقد استخدم الباحث في هذا الدراسة المنهج الوصفي النوعي، مع الاعتماد على الملاحظة والاستبيان كأدوات لجمع البيانات. وتتمثل نتائج هذا البحث فيما يلي: (١) اشتمل النشاط التمهيدي على إلقاء التحية، وافتتاح الدرس بالدعاء، وتذكير الطلاب بالمفاهيم أو المعلومات السابقة. (٢) أمَّا في النشاط الرئيسي، فقد تمَّ تنفيذ خمس مراحل منظَّمة، وهي: العرض داخل الفصل، والتعلُّم الجماعي، واللُّعبة، والمنافسة (البطولة)، وأخيراً مكافأة المجموعة. (٣) في النشاط الختامي، تمَّ عرض خلاصة الجلسة، ومناقشة الأفكار المستفادة خلال التعلم، ثم

اختتم الدرس بالدعاء. ٤) وقد بلغ تقييم استجابة الطلاب لهذه الطريقة ٨٢,٢٪، وصنفت على أنها "جيدة"، مما يدل على أن الطريقة نالت استحسان المشاركين. وبشكل عام، تؤكد هذه النتائج على أهمية دمج أساليب التدريس المتنوعة لتلبية أنماط التعلم المختلفة واحتياجات الطلاب، مما يسهم في إثراء التجربة التعليمية وتحقيق أقصى استفادة منها.

كلمات أساسية: التعليم التعاوني؛ مباراة لعبة الفرق؛ الكلمات المتقاطعة؛ تعليم البلاغة.

Introduction

Balaghah has been an important aspect of Arabic language education (Ibrahim, 2013). It is often considered to be a complex subject and requires in-depth understanding (Wartiman & Agus, 2021). Hence, as in many similar educational institutions, students of the Department of Arabic Language Education at Imam Bonjol Islamic State University Padang face challenges in understanding complex rhetoric that requires deeper understanding. In the face of these challenges, traditional teaching methods are often insufficient to arouse students' interest and understanding of rhetoric topics (Muqit, 2019). Therefore, the use of different methods has a great impact to increase students' interest in the learning process and creativity to make the learning situation enjoyable. One teaching method that can be adapted for this activity is cooperative learning.

Cooperative learning is learning that takes place by forming small groups whose members are heterogeneous to work as a team in solving problems, tasks, or doing something to achieve common goals (Gillies, 2020). Cooperative learning is learning that uses small groups so that students work together to maximize the learning activities of themselves as well as other members. One method of cooperative learning is the team game tournament method. It was implemented to make learning fun and does not tend to be boring (Hasibuan, Hasanah, et al., 2024).

The Team Game Tournament (TGT) method is a cooperative learning strategy that incorporates several distinctive features aimed at enhancing the learning experience. One of its key characteristics is the use of academic games as a medium for delivering educational content, making the learning process more engaging and enjoyable for students (De Vries & Slavin, 1978). In addition to games, the method includes quizzes designed to assess understanding and retention of the material, as well as an individual progress recording system that tracks each student's development over time. This structured approach allows for continuous monitoring of student growth and improvement. The TGT method is particularly effective because games can significantly boost students' motivation and enthusiasm, transforming the learning environment into one where students are eager to participate (Hasibuan, Jundi, et al., 2024). Furthermore, the competitive yet collaborative nature of these games encourages students to interact with one another more freely, fostering a supportive and dynamic classroom atmosphere.

Besides, the use of educational tools has proven to have a positive impact on motivating students and aiding in the comprehension of complex material. Crossword puzzles, in particular, are a popular game among both teenagers and adults (Ritonga et al., 2021). In a crossword puzzle, players are challenged to fill in the empty squares with letters, creating meaningful words by connecting both horizontal and vertical clues (Hasibuan & Fitriani, 2023). This simple yet effective tool is commonly used in educational settings. The crossword puzzle was selected as an instructional tool in this study because it merges elements of gaming and problem-solving with rhetorical content. Solving a crossword puzzle requires creative thinking, mastery of vocabulary, and an understanding of rhetoric. Additionally, the use of interactive media like this can enhance students' motivation and engagement in the learning process (Nur et al., 2024).

Several previous studies have been compiled on similar topics. Firstly, a research on the team game model in teaching writing skill at university which reveals that applying the team game model can improve writing skill and make students active and enthusiastic in the learning process (Naseha, 2022). Secondly, a research on the crossword game in teaching Arabic reading and writing, which reveals that the application of the crossword game has three stages, namely: Preparation, implementation, and evaluation (Umroh & Tamaji, 2022). Thirdly, a research on the application of the crossword game method to enhance student's motivation in teaching the history of Islamic culture, which reveals that the application of the crossword game method is effective in enhancing students' motivation in teaching the history of Islamic culture (Milchan, 2019).

The similarity between this research and previous studies is that this research attempts to apply the TGT method using crossword puzzles in Balaghah learning to the students of Imam Bonjol Padang Islamic State University. In the crossword design process, this research integrates technology through the use of the web application 'Crossword Labs'. Unlike previous studies that dealt with the TGT model in teaching writing skills and the use of crosswords in learning Arabic, this research focuses more on the application of TGT with crosswords, especially in the context of learning rhetoric. At the same time, previous studies have focused on improving students' writing, reading, and motivation skills in teaching the history of Islamic culture. Therefore, it is hoped that this research will make a new contribution regarding the effectiveness of using TGT with crosswords in increasing students' understanding of rhetoric grammar in Arabic.

Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the application of the Team Game Tournament method using crossword puzzles as a tool for teaching rhetoric to fifth-semester students in the Arabic Language

Education Department at Imam Bonjol State Islamic University, Padang. Data were collected through observation and questionnaires, with observations focusing on how rhetoric was taught using this method and tool, while the questionnaires gathered students' perspectives on its implementation. The data were then simplified by removing irrelevant information, summarized, and analyzed in greater depth. The next step involved analyzing the questionnaire data and calculating the final results using a predetermined formula. Conclusions were drawn based on the total scores obtained, classified using the Likert scale to assess the respondents' level of achievement.

Result and Discussion

Team Game Tournament method using crossword puzzles in teaching Balaghah is applied through three key activities: the preliminary activity, the main activity, and the closing activity. These three educational activities are carried out according to the following specifications:

Preliminary Activity

The researcher entered the classroom by greeting the students and inquiring about their well-being, followed by reciting a prayer. After that, the researcher began the lesson by asking questions related to rhetoric. Following a brief introduction to the material to be studied, the researcher explained the new teaching method that would be applied during the next three sessions. The students were then divided into groups, with each group consisting of five students of varying intelligence levels, including beginners, intermediates, and advanced learners.

Based on the description above, the preliminary activity included greeting the students, opening the lesson with a prayer, and reminding them of previously learned concepts or knowledge. As Shafrill mentioned in his book, an effective introduction in the context of learning is a crucial first step in the educational process. There are three main aspects that should be implemented during the preliminary activities: greeting the students, opening the lesson with a prayer, and reminding them of previously learned concepts or knowledge (Stage et al., 1998).

Additionally, preliminary activities serve as an initial step to capture students' interest and attention, often through questions, topic descriptions, or activities that encourage their engagement (Fernandez-Rio et al., 2020). Moreover, the greeting fosters a warm and familiar atmosphere between the teacher and students, allowing for the establishment of positive relationships that support effective learning. At the same time, opening the learning session with a prayer introduces a spiritual dimension and deep values into the teaching and learning process. Lastly, reminding students of previously learned concepts or knowledge helps build a strong foundation for further learning, linking new knowledge to existing understanding. Therefore, this introduction not only involves initial greetings but also creates

emotional connections, spiritual dimensions, and continuity in the overall learning process.

Main Activity

The main teaching activity involves applying the Team Game Tournament method using crossword puzzles in teaching rhetoric, specifically following these steps:

1. Presentation of the Topic

The first step in implementing this method is the presentation of the topic. One group presents a pre-prepared article related to the subject to be learned, which in this case is simile and its scope. This article serves as a rich source of information and ideas related to the specific topic. The aim of the presentation is to provide a strong starting point for the lesson and to pique the students' curiosity about the material they are going to study. The article includes examples and details that clarify the core concepts and essential information that the students need to understand. While one group presents, the other groups act as listeners to the explanation provided by the presenting group.

The combination of article presentation and the TGT method serves a clear purpose: to encourage students to be more active in the learning process. In addition to gaining a deep understanding of the material during the classroom presentation, students are also invited to actively participate by presenting their own articles. This gives them the opportunity to share their understanding with team members and practice their rhetorical skills. Thus, this approach not only fosters collaboration and competition within teams but also allows students to develop their public speaking abilities, an important aspect of learning rhetoric (Slavin, 1980). Overall, the integration of article presentation and the TGT method creates a more inclusive learning environment and supports the holistic development of the students.

After the article presentation, a Q&A session is held, allowing students from other groups to ask questions or provide feedback. Following the Q&A session, the instructor continues with additional explanations of the material to ensure comprehensive understanding by the entire class. Through this approach, students can develop their understanding through various levels of intelligence and actively participate in the collaborative learning process (Lee Manning & Lucking, 1991).

2. Group Learning

After the instructor presents the material, the next step is for students to continue learning in groups. In this stage, each group is tasked with reviewing the material that was previously discussed. The main goal of this activity is to prepare the group to answer the questions in the crossword puzzle they will encounter during the next game session. Group learning has been a learning strategy implemented across various levels of education, with educational theories suggesting that group study offers many significant benefits.

When students are organized into teams, they are given the opportunity to work together to understand the educational material (Fauziah et al., 2023) This aligns with constructivist learning theory, which states that students effectively build their knowledge through interaction with the presented information (Zajda, 2021) In the context of TGT, group study allows for the exchange of ideas and explanations among peers, which can deepen their understanding of the material. Therefore, group collaboration also encourages peer support, fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment (Hasibuan & Fitriani, 2023) The division of tasks and cooperation among group members becomes the key to mastering the material and facing the challenge of the next game session. Through this method, it is hoped that students' understanding of the material will be deeper and that the groups will be ready to achieve victory in the upcoming game session.

3. The Game session

The format of the game involved filling out a crossword puzzle on the studied topic. Before the game began, the researcher explained the rules to all the groups. Each group was prepared by putting away their mobile phones and books containing the studied materials, ensuring they could not access additional resources. The researcher then distributed crossword puzzle sheets containing 15 questions related to simile and its scope. Each group was given 5 minutes to solve the crossword puzzle together.

The game phase reflects a teaching approach that incorporates key aspects of active learning, which emphasizes that students learn best when they are actively engaged in learning experiences involving problem-solving, observation, and concept application (Huang et al., 2020) These games were specifically designed to create challenges that require creative thinking and practical application of rhetorical concepts. The use of crossword puzzles during the game phase aims to give students the opportunity to think about the relationships between concepts in a particular topic. They can visually express these connections by solving the crossword puzzle. This strategy offers the dual benefit of allowing students to actively think about the connections between concepts while also creating a more concrete representation of a topic that might initially seem abstract (Hasibuan et al., 2023) In other words, crossword puzzles become a valuable tool in facilitating deeper understanding and practical application of the concepts learned during the game phase.

After five minutes, the researcher collected the worksheets from each group. Following that, she proceeded to correct them together and calculate the points each group earned. The points they accumulated in this game are added to the points they will earn in the next session. Thus, this game serves not only as a means to assess understanding of the material related to simile and its scope but also as a way to

foster a competitive and collaborative spirit among the groups in the learning process. The game results for each group are summarized in the following table:

Table 1. Game Results for Each Group

Group Name	Score		
	<i>First Session</i>	<i>Second Session</i>	<i>Total Score</i>
Group 1	70	90	140
Group 2	80	70	150
Group 3	60	80	140
Group 4	90	90	180
Group 5	90	100	190

Based on the previous table, the researcher found that Groups 5, 4, and 2 achieved the highest scores. This outcome indicates their strong performance during the sessions, showcasing their understanding of the material. The success of these groups reflects their effective collaboration and engagement in the learning process. As a result, they will continue to compete in the next session, which adds an element of excitement to the tournament. This competitive spirit is likely to motivate all groups to improve and strive for better results in future games.

4. The Competition

The academic competition took place in the final session after a series of educational activities. Following the distribution of materials and the group teaching session, it was time for the academic competition attended by the top three groups. These groups had succeeded in achieving the highest scores in the previous rounds and were ready to test their knowledge at this stage of the competition. As before, this competition followed almost the same rules and implementation as the previous game, focusing on understanding the material related to similes. Each group was given a crossword puzzle to complete within five minutes, consisting of fourteen questions about similes and related topics. After time was up, the answer sheets were collected to calculate the scores and determine the winner. The competition results for the groups are as follows: Group 2 achieved a score of 125, while Group 4 scored 120. Group 5 secured the highest score of 130, indicating their success in the competition.

Based on the previous competition result, the researcher found that the group with the highest score was Group 5, indicating that they were the winners of this competition. This competition reflects what is known as "formative assessment" in learning, aiming to evaluate students' understanding and abilities while providing constructive feedback (Duss, 2020). The academic contest provides the top three groups with the opportunity to test the practical application of the concepts they have learned, particularly concerning similes. Additionally, the competitive element in education can motivate students to actively engage in learning and improve their understanding (Fauzi et al., 2019). However, it is crucial to remember that the

importance of deep learning should always be the primary focus. Therefore, the results of this competition can offer insights into how well students understand the concepts taught through a series of educational activities. By focusing on completing crossword puzzles in a short time, the competition also enhances quick thinking and the application of concepts in real-life situations, which are invaluable skills for students in their learning and daily lives.

5. Group Awards

The final stage in the TGT method culminates in awarding prizes to the groups. After calculating the scores from the assessment results, the winner of the competition is determined based on the highest scores achieved. The score is calculated by summing the results obtained by each group in the previous competitions. The group with the highest score will receive a gift prepared by the researcher. According to Slavin, in the award stage, successful groups receive prizes in recognition of their achievements, which fosters a spirit of healthy competition and rewards the hard work of the groups (De Vries & Slavin, 1978)

This award not only serves as a form of recognition for the winning group but also acts as motivation for all participants in the competition. By granting awards to the winning group, the TGT method creates a deep and meaningful educational experience for all participants, encouraging them to continue growing and achieving. This aligns with Slavin's theory, which suggests that group awards are a crucial element that motivates students and encourages collaboration within groups. This theory is based on the concept of healthy competition among groups in the classroom. Furthermore, Slavin believes that by granting group awards, such as recognition or incentives, to the entire group that achieves certain learning outcomes, students will feel interdependent on each other. They will be more inclined to help each other learn and strive together to achieve group goals (Slavin, 1989) This creates strong social bonds in the classroom and motivates students to study harder. The five previous steps take place across three sessions, as detailed in the following table:

Table 2. Implementing Elements of the Team Game Tournament in Teaching Balaghah

Meeting		Five Elements of the Team Game Tournament
First Meeting	Class Presentation	One group presented an article regarding simile and its scope, followed by a discussion among the students.
	Group Learning	All groups engaged in learning and reviewing the material to prepare for answering the questions in the upcoming crossword puzzle.
	Game	The game was conducted by answering the questions created by the researcher in the crossword puzzle, which included topics that they studied.
Second Meeting	Class Presentation	One group presented an article about the elements of simile, followed by a discussion among the students.

Meeting	<i>Five Elements of the Team Game Tournament</i>	
	Group Learning	All groups engaged in the same activities as in the first meeting.
	Game	The game was conducted by answering the questions created by the researcher in the crossword puzzle, which included topics that they studied
Third Meeting	Class Presentation	One group presented an article about representational simile, followed by a discussion among the students.
	Group Learning	All groups engaged in the same activities as in the first and second meetings.
	Competition	The competition took place during the final meeting, involving the three groups that achieved the highest scores in the previous games. They answered the questions in the crossword puzzle within five minutes.
	Group Award	After calculating the scores from the evaluations, the winner of the competition will be determined based on the highest scores achieved. The group that received the highest score was given gifts.

Final Activity

In the final activity, the instructor and students collaborate to summarize the texts they have studied together. Afterward, they share the key conclusions reached during the lesson. This conclusion includes the important points discussed and the understanding gained by the students. Following this, the instructor outlines the next learning plan, providing students with an overview of the materials and activities that will be carried out in the upcoming session. Thus, the collaboration between instructors and students in summarizing the materials and formulating future learning plans is a crucial step in the educational process, helping students to better grasp the concepts being taught and offering insight into their progress toward achieving learning goals.

After the instructor and students have completed the study of the text, the next step is to convey the learning outcomes. In this session, the instructor summarizes the results with the students, discusses the main points, and emphasizes the key aspects that were studied. This process ensures that all parties have a unified understanding of the material that has been taught.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher concluded that the implementation of the Team Game Tournament (TGT) in this study showed differences from the existing theory. The researcher described these differences as follows:

1. In-Class Presentation: This study highlights that the in-class presentation is not solely the responsibility of the instructor but involves an active role for both the students and the instructor. This is achieved through collaborative article presentations, where students play a significant role in presenting the

material, followed by an explanation from the instructor. Additionally, a question-and-answer session is conducted between the students and the instructor after the article presentation, leading to active discussions among the students before proceeding to the tournament stage. This difference reflects a more participatory role for the students in the learning process, in contrast to the current theory, which emphasizes that the in-class presentation is entirely the teacher's responsibility, while students remain passive.

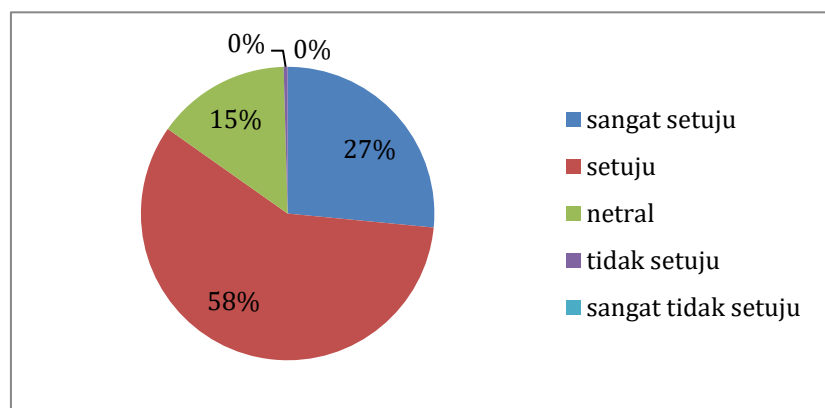
2. Game and Tournament Phases: In this study, the games and tournaments applied were not as structured as in the TGT theory. Here, students do not compete as team representatives with other team members who have similar prior academic performance. Instead, the games and tournaments involve all group members, who work together and hold each other accountable for improving their team's score in every match. This illustrates a different collaborative approach in applying TGT in this research.
3. Overall Conclusion: The researcher concluded that the TGT model implemented in this study had simpler and distinct characteristics in terms of student roles, interactions between group members, and the methods of the games and tournaments. These differences form the basis for understanding how the application of TGT in the context of this study underwent significant modifications compared to the existing theory.

The researcher identified one of the key advantages of this study, which is the use of crossword puzzles. In this process, the researcher successfully utilized existing technology to design the crossword puzzles, demonstrating the innovation of the Arabic language teacher in creating engaging teaching tools, particularly for advanced learners. This illustrates that in today's technological era, there is no reason for teachers not to use educational tools to facilitate students' understanding of the material being studied. This becomes especially significant in the context of rhetoric, a subject in Arabic language studies often considered challenging due to its high-level language. This highlights the crucial role of technology in enhancing the Arabic language learning process and emphasizes the importance of innovation in education.

In order to obtain information, data, and facts regarding the actual field application of the Team Game Tournament method with crossword puzzles in teaching rhetoric to students of the Arabic Language Education Department, the researcher conducted a questionnaire that required responses from the research sample. The questionnaire consisted of ten questions and was presented to the experimental group of students in the Arabic Language Education Department to gather their opinions on the application of the method used. In this study, the

researcher used a Likert scale, and below is a chart of the total data summary for the item results:

Figure 1. Student Response Presentation



Based on the data from the previous table, the researcher inferred that most of the respondents answered "Strongly Agree," with 27% of the responses for the items. Meanwhile, the "Agree" response accounted for 58% of the results, and "Slightly Agree" received 15%. The responses for "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" did not yield any results. The achievement levels of the respondents from this questionnaire are illustrated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{The highest score} &= \text{Total questions} \times \text{Highest Likert score} \times \text{Total respondents} \\ &= 10 \times 5 \times 23 = 1150\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\text{The lowest score} &= \text{Total questions} \times \text{Lowest Likert score} \times \text{Total respondents} \\ &= 10 \times 1 \times 23 = 529\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Respondents' achievement level} &= (\text{Total score} / \text{Highest score}) \times 100\% \\ &= 945/1150 \times 100\% \\ &= 82.2\%\end{aligned}$$

Based on the above calculation, the respondents' achievement level was 82.2%. According to the Likert scale table, this result corresponds to the rating of "Good." This indicates that the method was successful in receiving a positive response from the respondents. This achievement shows that the majority of participants felt engaged and active in the learning process using this method. The success not only reflects the quality of the TGT method itself but also demonstrates that the use of crossword puzzles as a learning aid had a positive impact. With a "Good" rating based on the Likert scale, it can be concluded that the TGT method using crossword puzzles is a suitable option, especially in the context of teaching rhetoric.

Given the previously presented results, this should encourage teachers and researchers to continue developing and improving the approach. The positive responses from participants can also serve as a foundation for introducing the TGT method using crossword puzzles into a broader educational setting. It is important

to continue monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this method, as well as paying attention to participants' feedback to further enhance the quality of learning. Therefore, the TGT method using crossword puzzles can be an effective tool in improving the quality of teaching and learning outcomes.

This finding aligns with the theory proposed by Slavin (1995) regarding cooperative learning, where TGT is deemed effective in improving learning outcomes through group competition and collaboration among team members. Slavin explains that when students work in groups and are responsible for their team's learning outcomes, they tend to be more motivated to understand the material in depth (De Vries & Slavin, 1978). In the context of Arabic language learning, particularly in rhetoric, which is often considered difficult, the use of innovative media like crossword puzzles can alleviate students' cognitive load and make the learning process more interactive and enjoyable.

This research is also relevant to the findings of Holbrey, which state that learning methods involving games can enhance active student participation and increase their enthusiasm for learning (Holbrey, 2020). The use of crossword puzzles as a learning medium here serves not only as a tool for memorizing and understanding rhetorical concepts but also as a means to boost social interaction among students during the learning process. In the constructivist theory popularized by Vygotsky (1978), social interaction is a crucial component of learning, where students can learn from each other through discussions and collaboration. In this regard, crossword games provide space for students to collaborate and assist one another, making the learning process cooperative rather than individualistic (Pass, 2004).

Furthermore, these research results support the study conducted by Ulwan which found that the use of technology in Arabic language learning enhances students' understanding of the material being taught (Said & Ulwan, 2023). In this research, the use of technology to design crossword puzzles demonstrates that innovation in utilizing learning media is vital in capturing students' interest, especially in complex subjects like rhetoric. Moreover, these findings emphasize the importance of the teacher's role in designing learning materials that meet students' needs. In this digital age, teachers are expected to be more creative and innovative in leveraging available technology to support the learning process, as outlined by Bates (2015) in his book "Teaching in a Digital Age" (Bates, 2015). Thus, the TGT method combined with crossword puzzles can be regarded as an effective strategy for improving the quality of Arabic language education.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the use of the TGT (Teams Games Tournament) method with crossword puzzles significantly contributed to increasing student engagement

and fostering a positive learning atmosphere, as evidenced by an 82.2% positive response rate. This indicates that integrating cooperative learning and game-based elements enhances not only motivation but also active participation in the classroom. The study advances current pedagogical knowledge by demonstrating how structured, interactive approaches can make learning more meaningful and enjoyable for students. This method holds practical implications for educators seeking to improve classroom dynamics and student outcomes. Future research could explore the long-term effects of TGT on academic performance across different subjects, as well as compare its impact with other cooperative learning models. Experimental studies involving varied age groups and educational contexts would also help to generalize the findings and refine the method's implementation.

Acknowledgment

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to all the students who participated in this study and contributed valuable feedback. Special thanks are extended to the Balaghah lecturers at Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Imam Bonjol Padang for their support and cooperation throughout the implementation of the TGT method using crossword puzzles. Appreciation is also given to colleagues and academic advisors whose insights and suggestions greatly enhanced the quality of this research.

Author Contribution Statement

RH was responsible for designing and conducting the research, collecting and analyzing the data, and drafting the manuscript. MH provided guidance in the development of the research framework, methodology, and critical revisions of the manuscript. FA and SNBAR contributed to the refinement of the research analysis and provided valuable feedback to improve the overall quality of the study. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

References

- Bates, A. W. (Tony). (2015). *Teaching in a Digital Age: Guidelines for Designing Teaching and Learning*. BCcampus. <https://openlibrary-repo.ecampusontario.ca/jspui/handle/123456789/276>
- De Vries, D. L., & Slavin, R. E. (1978). Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT): Review of Ten Classroom Experiments. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 12(1), 28–38.
- Duss, K. (2020). Theoretical Background. In K. Duss (Ed.), *Formative Assessment and Feedback Tool: Design and Evaluation of a Web-based Application to Foster Student Performance* (pp. 5–26). Springer Fachmedien. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-29144-0_2

- Fauzi, M. F., Buhun, M. F., & Purwadi, A. (2019). The Influence of Teams Games Tournament (TGT) toward Students' Interest in Arabic Language Learning. *Izdihar : Journal of Arabic Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature*, 2(2), 135–148. <https://doi.org/10.22219/jiz.v2i2.9986>
- Fauziah, S. N., Abdurahman, M., & Zein, Z. M. (2023). The Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Method as a Solution to Problems in Learning Arabic at SMA Pasundan 2 Bandung. *ALSUNIYAT: Jurnal Penelitian Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya Arab*, 6(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.17509/alsuniyat.v6i2.61596>
- Fernandez-Rio, J., de las Heras, E., González, T., Trillo, V., & Palomares, J. (2020). Gamification and physical education. Viability and preliminary views from students and teachers. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 25(5), 509–524. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17408989.2020.1743253>
- Gillies, R. M. (2020). Cooperative learning: Review of research and practice. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education (Online)*, 41(3), 39–54. <https://doi.org/10.3316/informit.977489802155242>
- Hasibuan, R., & Fitriani, L. (2023). Innovative Approach to Reading Skill Development: Jigsaw Strategy and Crossword Puzzle Media. *Journal of Arabic Language Learning and Teaching (JALLT)*, 1(2). <https://doi.org/10.23971/jallt.v1i2.98>
- Hasibuan, R., Fitriani, L., & Aziz, A. (2023). Application of Jigsaw Strategy with Crossword Puzzle Media in Reading Skill Learning. *Al-Uslub: Journal of Arabic Linguistic and Literature*, 7(02), 207–218. <https://doi.org/10.30631/al-uslub.v7i02.152>
- Hasibuan, R., Hasanah, M., & Faisol. (2024). Improving Balaghah Mastery Through Teams Games Tournaments with Crossword Puzzle Media in Higher Education. *Al-Lisan: Jurnal Bahasa (e-Journal)*, 9(1), 33–50. <https://doi.org/10.30603/al.v9i1.4520>
- Hasibuan, R., Jundi, M., Ali, I., Febriani, S. R., & Bedra, K. G. (2024). Game-Based Language Learning: Implementing Arabic Speaking Proficiency through Truth or Dare with Spin Wheel. *Lughawiyah: Journal of Arabic Education and Linguistics*, 6(1), 16–33. <https://doi.org/10.31958/lughawiyah.v6i1.12224>
- Holbrey, C. E. (2020). Kahoot! Using a game-based approach to blended learning to support effective learning environments and student engagement in traditional lecture theatres. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1475939X.2020.1737568>
- Huang, R., Ritzhaupt, A. D., Sommer, M., Zhu, J., Stephen, A., Valle, N., Hampton, J., & Li, J. (2020). The impact of gamification in educational settings on student learning outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 68(4), 1875–1901. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-020-09807-z>
- Ibrahim, K. A. A. (2013). *البلاغة الميسرة لغير الناطقين بالعربية*. Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali. <https://e-ilami.unissa.edu.bn:8443/handle/20.500.14275/1083>
- Lee Manning, M., & Lucking, R. (1991). The What, Why, and How of Cooperative Learning. *The Social Studies*, 82(3), 120–124. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00377996.1991.9958320>

- Milchan, M. (2019). *Penerapan Model Pembelajaran Team Games Tournament (TGT) Menggunakan Media Crossword Puzzle (Teka-Teki Silang) untuk Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Pada Mata Pelajaran SKI di MTs NU Hasyim Asy'ari 3 Kudus* [Skripsi, IAIN KUDUS]. <https://doi.org/10.3%20DAFTAR%20ISI.pdf>
- Muqit, A. (2019). *تعليم البلاغة في شعبة تعليم اللغة العربية (المشكلات والحلول)*. <http://digilib.uinkhas.ac.id/3002/>
- Naseha, S. D. (2022). Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Team Games Tournament dalam Pembelajaran Mahārah Kitābah di Perguruan Tinggi. *Aphorisme: Journal of Arabic Language, Literature, and Education*, 3(2), 52–68. <https://doi.org/10.37680/aphorisme.v3i2.1968>
- Nur, I. R., Allafiony, B., & Rizqia, A. S. (2024). The Use of Kahoot! As an Arabic Teaching Media for Senior High School Students. *Tsaqofiya : Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab*, 6(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.21154/tsaqofiya.v6i2.394>
- Pass, S. (2004). *Parallel Paths to Constructivism: Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky*. IAP.
- Ritonga, A. W., Ritonga, M., Septiana, V. W., & Mahmud. (2021). Crossword puzzle as a learning media during the covid-19 pandemic: HOTS, MOTS or LOTS? *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1933(1), 012126. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1933/1/012126>
- Said, S. A., & Ulwan, A. H. (2023). Integration of Technology in Learning Arabic Language: Mumtaz Method Textbook with Interactive Power Point Features. *ALSUNIYAT: Jurnal Penelitian Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya Arab*, 6(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.17509/alsuniyat.v6i2.63881>
- Slavin, R. E. (1980). Cooperative Learning. *Review of Educational Research*, 50(2), 315–342. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543050002315>
- Slavin, R. E. (1989). Research on Cooperative Learning: An international perspective. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 33(4), 231–243. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0031383890330401>
- Stage, F. K., Muller, P., Kinzie, J., & Simmons, A. (1998). *Creating Learning Centered Classrooms. What Does Learning Theory Have To Say? ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report, Volume 26, No. 4*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, One Dupont Circle, N. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED422778>
- Umroh, I. L., & Tamaji, S. T. (2022). Permainan Teka-Teki Silang Dalam Pembelajaran Membaca Dan Menulis Bahasa Arab. *Al-Fakkaar*, 3(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.52166/alf.v3i2.3273>
- Wartiman, M. B., & Agus, A. (2021). *الميسرة البلاغة - Ilmu Bayan (teori dan praktik)*. https://scholar.google.com/citations?view_op=view_citation&hl=id&user=O6ec1OoAAAAJ&citation_for_view=O6ec1OoAAAAJ:WF5omc3nYNoC
- Zajda, J. (2021). Constructivist Learning Theory and Creating Effective Learning Environments. In J. Zajda (Ed.), *Globalisation and Education Reforms: Creating Effective Learning Environments* (pp. 35–50). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-71575-5_3