

# Innovative Approach to Reading Skill Development: Jigsaw Strategy and Crossword Puzzle Media

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## ABSTRACT

This article aims to describe application of jigsaw learning strategy and crossword puzzle in *Maharah* qiraah learning, which includes three aspects: 1) planning, 2) implementation, and 3) evaluation. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive method. Data collection technique used observation, interviews and documentation. The research results are: 1) planning *Maharah* qiraah learning by applying jigsaw strategy and crossword puzzle media in form of preparing a lesson plan and preparing crossword puzzle questions related to social text material. 2) implementation of *Maharah* qiraah learning by applying jigsaw model and crossword puzzle media in form of opening activities namely class conditioning and delivery of learning objectives, and core activity is studying qiraah material with jigsaw model with the steps: instructing jigsaw model, forming original group, continuing to form expert group, after which each expert group presented the results of discussion related to paragraphs that had been discussed, evaluation from lecturer. 3) evaluation is carried out by distributing crossword puzzle worksheets to each student and then they are welcome to work on each one. The implications of this research can help improve the quality of *Maharah* qiraah learning and provide a more innovative and interesting approach for students in understanding Arabic texts.

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## Introduction

The general condition of learning Arabic experiences many obstacles that lead to low student motivation in learning, when compared to learning other foreign languages (Hasibuan, 2022). The possibility that what happened is that learning Arabic so far uses methods that are boring for students (Hamidah et al., 2022; Linur & Mubarak, 2022; Rosyidi & Machmudah, 2008). In addition, the condition of students who are active during learning activities has not

been created. This is because the interest and motivation of students is still relatively low, the learning methods used are less attractive, the lack of availability of learning media, the attitudes and behavior of teachers towards learning activities are not correct (Anggraini et al., 2021; Bower, 2019; Calafato & Tang, 2019; Hidayatullah, 2017).

Based on the data above, a teacher is required to be able to apply efficient learning strategies that are in accordance with the subject matter and learning objectives, as well as use visual aids that are in line with advances in information and communication technology. Along with advances in scientific fields, including linguistics, education, social sciences, and culture, the Arabic language learning model has undergone major changes. This requires the ability of an Arabic teacher to create and implement learning models, methods, and media for learning activities in class (Audina & Mubarak, 2021; Bahrudin et al., 2021; Umroh & Tamaji, 2022).

There are four skills that are important in teaching Arabic, namely *Maharah istima'*, *Kalam*, *qira'ah* and *Kitabah* and the four *Maharachs* are interconnected and one *Maharah* influences another *Maharah* (Mu'in, 2004). With good reading skills, one can find out the meaning contained in the text as writing material (Rahmiati et al., 2022). The development of *Maharah qira'ah* by educational institutions is considered to need more attention (Hasibuan & Siregar, 2023). A learner is very prone to making mistakes in understanding Arabic texts when reading skills are low. Therefore Mahmud 'Ali Saman said that one of the objectives of *Maharah qira'ah* learning is to increase understanding of language structure and improve ability to express meaning and thoughts that are read properly and correctly (Mahmud Ali Saman, 1996).

Therefore, in order to have a significant influence on the teaching and learning process, it is necessary to think of an appropriate strategy or model in learning Arabic, which can encourage active learners during learning activities, especially when studying *Maharah qira'ah* (Muhammad Effendi, 2013). The strategy that will be applied in this paper is a jigsaw learning strategy using crossword puzzle media.

The jigsaw learning strategy is part of the cooperative learning model basically cooperative learning adheres to a principle where learning is centered on groups of students whose changes in information become their own responsibility as encouragement to improve learning (Miftahul, 2015). So that in learning like this the interaction between students is the main focus in the learning process. Besides that, this model is an interesting model to use if the material to be studied can be divided into several parts. The advantages of this jigsaw strategy can involve all students in learning while teaching it to others, this strategy is usually suitable for learning *Maharah Kalam* and *qira'ah* (Rosyidi & Machmudah, 2008).

Suprijono further explained that the cooperative learning model is a clearer pattern covering all types of group work including concepts that are more controlled by the teacher or led by the teacher (Suprijono, 2015). The characteristics of cooperative learning include; Interdependence, Individual responsibility, Face-to-face, Communication between Members, and Grouping Diversity (Jamal, 2016).

Furthermore, one game that is popular among teenagers and adults is the crossword puzzle. From its name, crossword puzzle is a simple alternative that can be used to hone thinking and reasoning skills. In a crossword puzzle a person will be challenged to fill in the empty boxes with letters, both horizontal and descending boxes so as to form a meaningful word. This simple game is very commonly used in the world of education (Apri Wardana Ritonga, 2020). Nia Hidayati stated that the use of crossword puzzles as learning media is effective because it emphasizes similarities and differences in vocabulary, so that the use of crossword puzzles is expected to reduce the boredom of students who are always faced with only standard questions (Nia Hidayati, 2010).

In Arabic, the term crossword puzzle is known as *al kalimah al muta'otit'ah*. This crossword puzzle is very easy to make and easy for teachers and students to use, both at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. However, the thing that must be considered when using crossword puzzles as learning media is that the media must be in line with the material to be taught. Khailullah said that the questions contained in the crossword puzzle must be sourced from the material being studied to facilitate the achievement of the learning objectives of *Maharah qira'ah* (Khailullah, 2014).

In line with the writing of this research, there are several studies that were used as researchers as preliminary studies, including research conducted by Apri Wardana Ritonga regarding the effectiveness of crossword puzzle media in learning *Maharah qiraah*. The results of the study show that there is an effect of using crossword puzzles in *Maharah qiraah* learning. The difference between this article and this research is that first, in this study, the researcher combined the jigsaw model with crossword puzzle media, while the article only used crossword puzzle media. Furthermore, on the research subject, the article was for class XII high school students while this research was for college level students (Apri Wardana Ritonga, 2020).

In addition to the articles above, this research is also supported by several relevant research results, namely research conducted by Rahmiati regarding the effectiveness of puzzle game-based jigsaw learning strategies in improving *Maharah qiraah*. The results showed that the application of puzzle game-based jigsaw learning strategies proved effective in increasing students' *Maharah qiraah*. The article is almost the same as this study, but the

position of the crossword puzzle in this study is as an evaluation tool, while the article above the puzzle is applied as one of the language games.

Similar research was also conducted by Ida Latifatul Umrah regarding crossword games in learning to read and write Arabic. The results of this study contain a description of the theory related to the use of crossword puzzles in learning *Maharah* qiraah and *Kitabah*, so that this article can be a reference for researchers regarding the application of crossword puzzles in *Maharah* qiraah.

With regard to the previous research above, the researcher intends to continue the steps of previous authors, by conducting research related to the application of the jigsaw model and crossword puzzle media in learning *Maharah* qiraah students of Arabic Language and Literature at the State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, which focuses on three aspects, namely planning, implementation, and evaluation.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

The type of research used in this study is a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. Zef Risal explained that the purpose of qualitative research is to describe complex realities, to gain an understanding of the meaning of the research (Zef Risal, Rachman hakim, 2022). In this study, researchers attempted to describe the application of *Maharah qira'ah* learning with a jigsaw strategy and crossword puzzle media for students of the Arabic Language and Literature Study Program, State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. In line with Creswell, in this type of research the researcher relies on information from participants or objects, namely in the form of general questions, by collecting data in the form of text or words from the participants, then analyzing data in the form of text and conducting research subjectively (Creswell, 2008).

### **Data Collection Tehnique**

The theoretical basis that researchers use in explaining the results of this study is a general approach that has developed over time and is widely used by educational practitioners and experts in various contexts. This approach refers to Vygotsky's theory of learning (DeVries, 2000). The data in this study is in the form of information collected by researchers directly, both from interviews, observations and documentation sourced from semester 2 students in class A majoring in Arabic Language and Literature, State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. One of the data collection processes is carried out by recording information that can support or support this research which is obtained by direct observation of the application of learning in class. Furthermore, data in the form of information

through observation will be strengthened by interview techniques with students and documentation carried out by researchers.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Furthermore, data analysis techniques were carried out, researchers used the theory of Miles and Huberman. The steps of data analysis include: first, the researcher collects data from observations during class learning; second, data reduction was carried out by researchers, namely selecting and sorting from the results of the necessary observations and interviews; After the data is reduced, the data relevant to the application of *Maharah qiraah* learning with the jigsaw model and crossword puzzle media are presented by grouping according to their respective points in the research objectives to be given meaning in accordance with the existing theory; third, data display, namely the researcher processes the data that has been classified based on the planning approach pattern and finally concludes from the research results based on the categories and meaning of the findings (Miles, B. M., Huberman, 2014).

## **Result and Discussion**

### **Planning**

Before carrying out the learning, the researcher first prepares a learning plan so that the learning that will be carried out can be achieved effectively and efficiently. The form of planning is in the form of preparing a Learning Implementation Plan based on the Semester Learning Plan prepared by the lecturer in the *al-Qira'ah al-Mukatssafah* course. The planning includes learning outcomes for courses, materials, resources, learning methods, media and assessments. The learning achievement in this course is that the researcher adjusts to the achievement indicators in the *al-Qira'ah al-Mukatssafah* course, namely being able to understand and analyze grammatical texts that do not speak correctly. Furthermore, the learning material taught is material about social texts, using a jigsaw strategy and crossword puzzle media, with a written assessment technique.

Carefully structured lesson planning is a crucial step in ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of learning (Hasibuan & Rosyidi, 2023). In this context, the social constructivist theory of learning can support the findings above. This theory emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and the joint construction of knowledge. In the development of the Lesson Implementation Plan, this approach encourages the use of active and collaborative teaching methods, such as the jigsaw strategy, which creates situations where students work together to achieve better understanding (Firdaus et al., 2023). Additionally, the use of media, such as crossword puzzles, can enhance student engagement and aid in comprehending the

material (Apri Wardana Ritonga, 2020). With a focus on specific learning outcomes, appropriate teaching methods, and suitable assessment, the social constructivist theory serves as a solid foundation for planning effective learning in the subject of *al-Qira'ah al-Mukatssafah*.

For the learning material to be studied, namely material about social texts contained in teaching materials compiled by the team of lecturers for the *al-Qira'ah al-mukatssafah* course, as follows:

### النص الاجتماعي

تشكل قضايا الشباب الجزء الأكبر من قضايا المجتمعات المعاصرة على اختلاف أنظمتها واتجاهاتها ومستوياتها، ومشكلات الشباب تستأثر باهتمام المربين وعلماء النفس والاجتماع والمفكرين على تنوع انتماءاتهم، وهذا بسبب ما يعاني الشباب من متاعب وهموم واضطرابات اجتماعية ونفسية خطيرة. فالشباب يشكلون نسبة عالية من السكان في المجتمعات العربية والإسلامية والدول النامية، هو أكثر الفئات الاجتماعية تأثرا بالواقع متغيراته ومعطيات البيئة الحياتية المادية والمعنوية من فكر وقيم ومشاعر وسلوك. والحقيقة أن الشباب أكثر انفعالا وتفاعلا في المجتمع، وأكثر استعدادا للأنجرار وراء مغريات الحياة والانحراف والشذوذ والإصابة بالاضطرابات النفسية والتأثر بالاتجاهات الجديدة والتقليد الأعمى.

وقد بيت الدراسات الاجتماعية والنفسية وجود علاقة جدلية بين ارتفاع نسبة الانحراف في أوساط الشباب وبين طبيعة البنية الاجتماعية والاقتصادية والثقافية للمجتمع، كما نلاحظ في المجتمعات المتقدمة صناعيا مثلا. وبالعكس نلاحظ انخفاض هذه الظاهرة في المجتمعات التي تسمى (محافظة) التي نسودها المبادئ الدينية والقيم والأخلاق والفضيلة كما في المجتمعات الإسلامية.

لذلك، نجد أن طبيعة الواقع الاجتماعي الاقتصادي والفكري والنفسي والتربوي والبيئي تلعب دورا أساسيا في تحديد طبيعة الأزمات والمشكلات التي يعاني منها الشباب. فهذه العوامل تؤثر بفعالية في تكوين

أنماط السلوك واتجاهات الفكر وسقف المعاناة النفسية والمادية للغالبية العظمى من الشباب، وهذا يبين لنا أن معالجة قضايا الشباب لا يمكن أن تتم إلا عبر المعالجة الشاملة لقضايا المجتمع التي تشمل مشكلات وواقع الأسر

والمؤسسات التعليمية التي تلعب دوراً أساسياً في تنشئة الشباب ورعايتهم وتكوينهم العقلي والنفسي والجسمي عبر دراسات علمية ورؤية واعية وعميقة لقضايا المجتمع ومشكلات الشباب (العلم والعمل والصحة والأمراض النفسية والتدخين والمخدرات والجرائم وغيرها من القضايا التي تواجه المجتمعات المعاصرة عامة والإسلامية خاصة بسبب ما تخلفه من آثار سلبية نفسية وعاطفية في نفوس الشباب، وصعوبات في تنمية والتطور في المجتمع).

The next planning stage is compiling Arabic crossword puzzle questions according to the text being studied, namely social text. Researchers provide as many as 15 questions to be answered in the crossword puzzle. In making the crossword puzzle, the researcher utilizes a web-based application, namely Puzzle Maker, with the following steps:

1. Open chrome then click "puzzle maker"
2. After the display appears, then continue to select Criss-cross puzzle
3. Enter a title in the "enter a title for your puzzle" column
4. Then enter the answers and crossword puzzle questions in the "enter your words and clue" column
5. Then click "create my puzzle"
6. After the crossword puzzle form appears, the last step is to copy the crossword puzzle to Microsoft Word.

The method of creating crossword puzzles using a web application as described in the research reflects the use of technology in education, especially in Arabic language learning. Educational technology, known as technology-enhanced learning, emphasizes the utilization of digital tools and online platforms to enhance students' learning experiences (Ritonga et al., 2020). In this context, the use of the Puzzle Maker application is a tangible example of applying educational technology to create interactive and engaging learning resources. Moreover, this method allows for personalized learning by crafting crossword puzzle questions based on the studied text, enabling students to better understand the context of social texts through relevant crossword puzzle solving. With this technology, Arabic language learning

becomes more dynamic and aligned with the demands of the modern era (Norkhafifah & Syahabuddin, 2022).

### **Implementation**

At the implementation stage of *Maharah* qiraah learning with a jigsaw strategy and crossword puzzle media the researcher divides into 3 activities:

#### **Opening activity**

In the opening activity, first do class conditioning and check student attendance. Next, convey the learning objectives that will be achieved in the course. After that, conveying related to the learning strategy that will be implemented, namely the jigsaw strategy, explaining the steps for implementing learning using the jigsaw strategy.

The approach to opening a class with room conditioning and announcing the goals and learning strategies to be used reflects the principles of effective classroom management and lesson planning (Maman Sulaeman, 2020). Effective classroom management theory emphasizes the importance of creating an environment that is structured and conducive to learning (Anwar, 2023). By starting class with room conditioning and checking student attendance, lecturers create a clear and disciplined framework that helps in maintaining student focus and engagement. In addition, the announcement of learning objectives and strategies to be used helps students to understand learning expectations and plan themselves more effectively (Saputro & Pakpahan, 2021). Thus, this approach creates a strong foundation for structured and directed learning in the classroom.

#### **Core activities**

In the core activities, 1) the researcher directly distributed social text material to each student, 2) after the material was distributed, students were formed into 4 groups consisting of 5 people as the original group, 3) each person in the group was asked to count 1-5, divide those who get number 1 will discuss paragraph 1 as well as the next with numbers 2 to 5, then form groups of experts according to their respective numbers, 4) each group is given 15 minutes to translate and read the social text which is distributed according to the correct rules based on the paragraphs respectively, 5) after 15 minutes, everyone in the expert group returns to their respective groups as the original group and then explains the paragraphs discussed to their original group friends, 6) each expert team is welcome to present the results of the discussion starting from paragraph 1, 7) after that continue the improvements from the lecturer by reading and translating again related to social texts according to the correct rules.

based on the statement above, the learning approach applied in this research reflects the application of group-based learning strategies, which have a theoretical basis in the concept of collaborative learning. Collaborative learning theory emphasizes the importance of

social interaction and cooperation between students in enhancing their understanding (Huda, 2011). In this context, the formation of groups, where each member has a different role in analyzing and translating social texts, illustrates the principles of collaboration in learning. The jigsaw learning strategy used allows students to become experts in a particular part of the material and share their knowledge with other group members (Robert, 2005). This creates an interactive learning experience, motivates students' active participation, and allows them to learn together through discussions and presentations (Johnson et al., 1998). Thus, this approach is in accordance with the principles of collaborative learning theory in the context of Arabic language learning.

### **Final Activities**

At the end of the lesson the researcher indirectly carried out the evaluation verbally, namely by displaying the social text again on the screen and instructing one of the students to read it again with the correct rules. If there is still material that has not been understood related to social texts, then the researcher invites them to ask questions. After the lesson is finished, it ends with a prayer and greetings.

The oral evaluation approach used by researchers at the end of the lesson reflects the concept of formative measurement in an educational context. Formative measurement theory emphasizes the importance of providing direct feedback to students during the learning process to help them understand their progress, identify areas that need improvement, and increase their understanding of learning material (M. Ainin et al., 2006). In this case, re-enacting a social text and asking a student to read it in the correct order is a way to provide immediate feedback, allow students to check their own understanding, and stimulate reflection. Furthermore, providing opportunities for students to ask questions if there is material that has not been understood is a step that supports efforts to overcome students' understanding difficulties in a timely manner (Asrori et al., 2012). By ending the lesson with prayer and greetings, this study also integrates religious and ethical values into the learning experience, creating a holistic and oriented experience towards developing student character (Anah, 2021). As such, this approach conforms to the principles of formative measurement which aims to improve student learning and understanding in a sustainable manner (Hanafiah, 2020).

### **Evaluation**

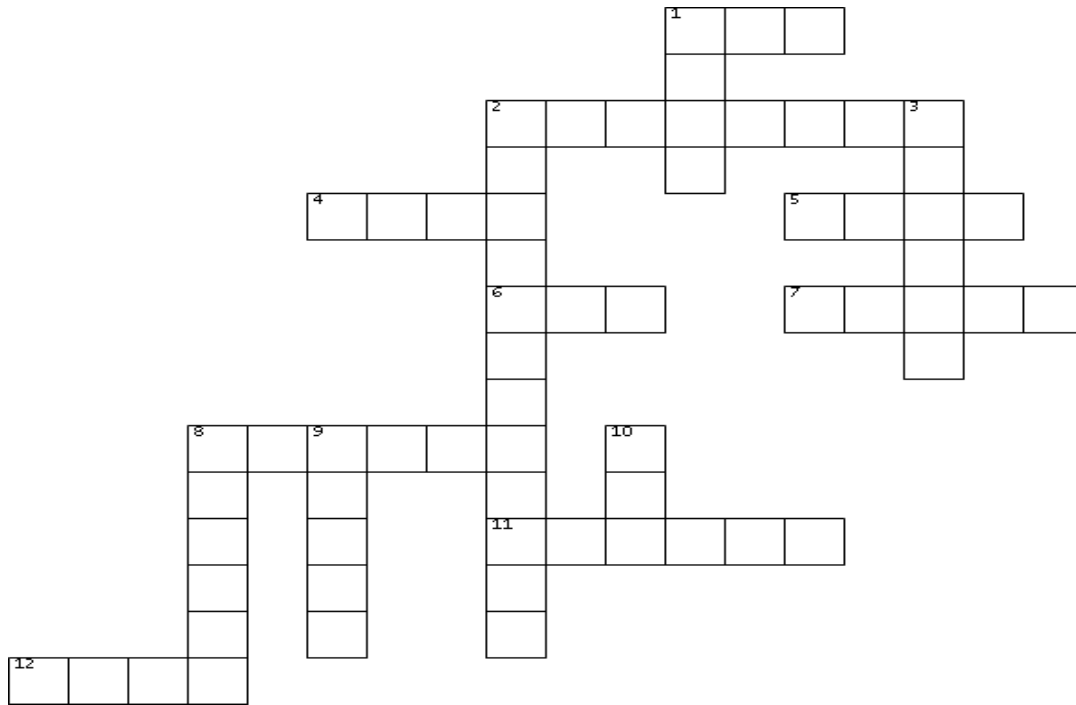
After the *Maharah* qiraah learning is applied with the jigsaw strategy then proceed to the evaluation stage, to evaluate students' understanding of the text being studied, the researcher uses crossword puzzle media with the following steps:

1. Introducing the crossword puzzle first to students in front of the class and showing the crossword puzzle media to students

2. Distribute crossword puzzle worksheets to each student
3. Explain that the questions contained in the crossword puzzle are related to the social text that has been studied
4. Give examples of how to answer the questions contained in the crossword puzzle
5. After understanding the flow of doing this crossword puzzle, they are welcome to do it independently.

The following is a crossword puzzle sheet along with the questions:

picture 1.  
crossword puzzle about social text



| أفقيّ                            | سفليّ                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ١. قضايا الشباب. ما موقع الإعراب | ١. "عبر" كيف تقرأ الشكل الأخير للكلمة |
| الكلمة الشباب                    | السابقة التي توجد في الفقرة الأخيرة   |
| ٢. معنى علماء النفس              | ٢. معنى الانحراف                      |

|                                              |                                             |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| ٣. ضد من كلمة انخفاض                         | ٤. فالشباب يشكلون.....عالية من السكان       |
| ٨. مرادف للكلمة حماية                        | ٥. من متاعب. كيف تقرأ الشكل الأخير للكلمة   |
| ٩. هو أكثر الفئات الاجتماع.....بالواقع       | التي تحتها الخط                             |
| ١٠. ماموقع الإعراب "الاجتماعي" في موضوع النص | ٦. peran                                    |
|                                              | ٧. فهذه العوامل .....بفعالية في تكوين أنماط |
|                                              | السلوك                                      |
|                                              | ٨. مرادف لكلمة صعوبات                       |
|                                              | ١١. ضد من كلمة إيجابية                      |
|                                              | ١٢. من الذي أكثر انفعالا وتفاعلا في المجتمع |

The use of crossword puzzle media as an evaluation tool in learning *Maharah qiraah* with a jigsaw approach reflects a formative evaluation approach that supports students' in-depth understanding of the material they have studied. Formative evaluation theory emphasizes the importance of continuous measurement during learning to provide feedback to students and help them respond to their understanding (Koehler, M. J., & Mishra, 2006). In this context, crossword puzzles are a tool that can check students' understanding of social texts in an interactive and interesting way. Introducing crossword puzzles at the beginning of the session and providing examples of answering questions allows students to understand how the tool works, so they can work independently. Furthermore, explaining that crossword puzzle questions relate to texts that have been studied creates a direct connection between the learning material and the evaluation tool, which is an important aspect of formative evaluation. Then, this approach is in accordance with the principles of formative evaluation in assessing student understanding holistically and is closely related to the learning process that has been carried out.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of this research has been described, the conclusions of this study are: 1) planning *Maharah qiraah* learning by applying the jigsaw model and crossword puzzle media in the form of preparing an implementation plan in advance and preparing crossword

puzzle questions related to social text material. 2) implementation of *Maharah* qiraah learning by applying the jigsaw model and crossword puzzle media in the form of: opening activities namely class conditioning and delivery of learning objectives, and the core activity is studying qiraah material using the jigsaw model with the steps previously described. 3) evaluation is carried out by distributing crossword puzzle worksheets to each student and then they are welcome to work on each one. In addition to crossword puzzles, further research can consider other variations of learning media that are suitable for *Maharah* qiraah learning, such as quizizz media, or other interactive platforms.

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