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The Use of Crossword Puzzles as Teaching Strategy to Enhance Students' Knowledge of Vocabulary

Case study: 1st year LMD Students of English at Chadli Bendjedid University, El-Tarf.

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DEDICATION

With sincere and special feeling of gratitude, I dedicate this work to my beloved **parents** who have stood by my side all this period and whose affection, encouragement, and push for tenacity still ring in my ears, to my sister **Manel** and my brother **Mohamed Islem** for all their helps. They are the reason behind my success and what I have become today.

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DEDICATION

To my Father

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ABSTRACT

Teaching-learning vocabulary at schools is still a problem for EFL teachers and students. The present research aims at investigating the use of a new teaching strategy which is crossword puzzles to develop the knowledge of new vocabulary items for the 1st LMD year of English at Chadli Bendjedid University, El-Tarf. To reach this target, we have adopted the mixed method to appraise the relationship between the use of crossword puzzles and the degree of students' familiarity of new vocabulary and exact spelling. Two main types of data gathering have been applied in this study. First, a questionnaire was administrated to English teachers to collect data about the strategies they incorporate when teaching new words in their classes, their perceptions towards the use of crossword puzzles in teaching vocabulary. Second, pre-test and post-test were organized. In the pre-test, students were supposed to fill three (03) crossword puzzles with the appropriate words. However, in the post-test, they were asked to write a paragraph about the theme mentioned in the previous puzzles. The obtained findings have proved our hypothesis which stipulates: "if students learn through using crossword puzzles, their level will be increased in terms of spelling, memorization and familiarity of new vocabulary". Thus, it is recommended that crossword puzzles should be incorporated in the teaching materials.

Key Words: crossword puzzles, the vocabulary knowledge.

ملخص

لا يزال تدريس وتعلم المفردات في المدارس يمثل مشكلة بالنسبة للمعلمين ولطلاب "أي، ا، ف، أل". يهدف البحث الحالي إلى التحقيق حول استخدام أَلغاز الكلمات المتقاطعة كإستراتيجية تعليمية لتطوير معرفة مفردات جديدة للسنة الأولى "أل، أم، دي" لغة الإنجليزية في جامعة الشاذلي بن جديد ، الطارف. للوصول إلي هذا الهدف تم استخدام في هذه الدراسة بيانات نوعية وكمية. أولاً، تم إرسال استبيان خاص بمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية، حيث يجمع هذا الاستبيان معطيات حول الاستراتيجيات التي يستعملونها لتدريس كلمات جديدة في فصولهم و كذا رأيهم حول استخدام أَلغاز الكلمات المتقاطعة في تعليم المفردات . ثانياً، تم تنظيم اختبار أولي (وهو عبارة عن 03 تصاميم من أَلغاز الكلمات المتقاطعة) و اختبار نهائي لمجموعة مكونة من سبعة عشر تلميذ . في الاختبار الأولي، من المفترض علي التلاميذ القيام بوضع أَلغاز الكلمات المتقاطعة في المكان المناسب . و في الاختبار النهائي، طلب من التلاميذ كتابة فقرة حول موضوع المذكور في أَلغاز الكلمات المتقاطعة السابقة ألا وهيا " السباحة والعطلة ". لقياس درجة تأثير استخدام أَلغاز الكلمات المتقاطعة كإستراتيجية لاكتساب مفردات جديدة. أظهرت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها من خلال الفرضية التي تنص: إذا تعلم الطلاب باستخدام أَلغاز الكلمات المتقاطعة، فسوف يرتفع مستواهم من حيث الإلماء والحفظ والمعرفة بالمفردات الجديدة. وبالتالي، يوصى بإدراج أَلغاز الكلمات المتقاطعة في المواد التعليمية.

كلمات مفتاحية: أَلغاز الكلمات المتقاطعة، معرفة المفردات.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EFL: English as Foreign Language

LMD: Licence/ Master /Doctorat

L1: First Language

Q: Question

D: Down

A: Across

%: Percentage

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Chapter One

Introductory Part to the Study

Introduction

This chapter is an introductory part to the study; it introduces the statement of the problem along with the aims of the study. It also presents the research questions, the hypotheses. In addition, it includes the research design which comprises methods and procedures, population, besides structure and limitations of the study.

Statement of the Problem

Vocabulary is an integral part in learning English as a foreign language, the reason why EFL learners have to master vocabulary in order to develop other skills such as: listening, reading, writing and speaking.

However, foreign learners, such as the Algerian Learners, face serious challenges concerning this component of language in which they mostly fail to achieve proficiency in the target language because of their poor vocabulary knowledge. Moreover, it is necessary to evolve a new way or strategy in order to teach vocabulary more effectively to the learners, such as using crossword puzzles.

Aims of the Study

This research aims at:

- Highlighting the importance of vocabulary in teaching foreign languages.
- Exploring the role of using crossword puzzles.
- Explaining the appropriate strategy to improve students' knowledge of vocabulary.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

In our study, we will try to answer the following questions:

- What are the common difficulties that students face while learning vocabulary?
- Would the use of crossword puzzles help learners to improve their vocabulary Knowledge?
- How could students' difficulties be lessened when using crossword puzzles?

In the light of the above raised questions, we hypothesize that:

- Students face more difficulties with the meaning and spelling of new words.
- If students learn vocabulary through using crossword puzzles, their level will be increased in terms of spelling, pronunciation and familiarity of new words.

Research Design

Method and Procedures

In order to answer the above questions, this research is carried out through the mixed method as an appropriate way to investigate our hypotheses which state that crossword puzzles would improve students' knowledge of vocabulary. In this study, both questionnaire, pre and post tests will be conducted. First, the questionnaire will be addressed to EFL teachers to investigate their perceptions regarding the use of crossword puzzles as a teaching strategy to enhance students' knowledge of new words. Second, an experiment which consists of pre and post tests will be administrated to students' in which they are supposed to fill three (03) crossword puzzles. Then, students' will be asked to write a short paragraph in which they are required to use the vocabulary used in the previous puzzles (the pre-test). Thus, the goal behind this experiment is to measure their improvements in vocabulary proficiency.

Population and Sampling

The sample population of the current study consists of two (02) kinds of participants: teachers' and students'. The first participants would be English Teachers' of Chadli Bendjedid University, El Tarf. The whole sample contains of seven (07) teachers' who have been teaching different modules such as: linguistics, written, oral expressions and civilization. The second kind of participants would be First Year Students' of English Department at Chadli Bendjedid University. This sample contains (17) students' who are chosen from one (01) group. The sample of this study is chosen randomly where no student or teacher has the chance to be selected.

Structure of the Study

This dissertation is basically divided into five (05) parts. The first chapter is about the introductory part that includes the statement of the problem, aims of the study, research questions and hypotheses, the research design, population, structure and limitations of the study.

The second chapter is devoted to the literature review which includes two (02) main sections. The first one deals with vocabulary acquisition that contains the definition of vocabulary, the importance of vocabulary and its' types, difficulties in learning vocabulary, as well as teaching vocabulary and different strategies that used in teaching this aspect. The second section is about the main concern of our study which is the use of crossword puzzles as teaching strategy.

The third chapter is concerned with the methodology and research design. Whereas the fourth chapter provides detailed information about the analysis of data gathered of both: the

teachers' questionnaire and students' test. The last chapter of this research also includes the discussion of the findings and recommendations.

Limitations of the Study

This research is limited regarding the Pandemic of Corona Virus that led to several obstacles and challenges. Finding sufficient resources for the research information was also challenging as all universities and libraries were closed during the period of the study. In addition, the lack of the direct contact with students' which also created a difficulty in collecting sufficient number of participants in order to conduct our experiment. Moreover, the psychological situation such as: stress had a great impact on the completeness of the research work.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced our study which is about the use of crossword puzzles as teaching strategy to enhance students' knowledge of vocabulary. Starting by submitting the statement of the problem and the different components of the research. Hence, the present part is of fundamental importance since it gives general description about the case being examined.

Chapter Two

Review of the Related Literature

Introduction

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part deals with vocabulary acquisition. It comprises some definitions of the term, its' importance and different types. It also identifies difficulties in learning vocabulary, how to teach it and common strategies that are used. The second part of this chapter includes the main element of the study which is crossword puzzles. It provides a brief overview of the history of this game, its' definition and types. Furthermore, it deals with how to teach crossword puzzles, the value of using this strategy in teaching and the role of teachers.

Part One

Vocabulary Acquisition

Definition of Vocabulary

It is taken for granted that vocabulary is one of the basic skills in language learning. The term vocabulary could be related to various views and defined in several ways. Experts have proposed some definitions about vocabulary. Websters' New Encyclopedia Dictionary (1995) defined vocabulary as: "a list or collection of words or words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or defined" (p.1166). Another definition for this term is provided by Hatch and Brown (1995) as a list or set of words for particular language or set of words that speakers of a language might use (p.1). Therefore, Alqahtani (2015) referred to vocabulary as the total number of words that are needed to communicate ideas and express the speakers' meaning. That is to say that the author wants to explain that vocabulary is all about words and expressions that are used for communication.

Todd (1987) argued that there are four of the most frequently implied meanings of “word”: the orthographic word, the morphological word, the lexical and the semantic word. The orthographic word has space on either sides of it. A morphological word considers only form and not meaning. A lexical word comprehends the various forms of items which are closely related by meaning. A semantic word considers the distinction between items that may be morphologically identical but differ in meanings.

Furthermore, Ur (2003, as cited in Akdogan, 2017) gave another definition about vocabulary as follow:

“Vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words we teach in the foreign language. However, a new item of vocabulary may be more than just a single word: for example, post office, and mother-in-law, which are made up of two or three words but express a single idea. A useful convention is to cover all such cases by talking about vocabulary, items rather than words.”

From the definitions above, we can conclude that vocabulary is the most important and meaningful part of language. Therefore, words are used to make phrases and sentences which are used for representing an idea, object, thought, information, action ...etc.

The Importance of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is fundamental aspect of foreign language learning. Any foreign language learner is always in need to enhance his vocabulary. Alqahtani (2005) emphasized that vocabulary knowledge is viewed as critical tool for second language learners because a limited vocabulary obstructs successful communication. Without adequate vocabulary, students cannot get the others and express their own thoughts.

Hatch and Brown (1995) went further to argue that: “communication signals form an important part of the vocabulary of language” (p.346). In language learning and teaching, vocabulary always plays an important role because learners need amount of words to communicate.

“Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”. This is how Wilkins (1972, as cited in Thornbury, 2002, p.13) summed up the importance of vocabulary learning. That is to say, learner who just learns grammar without the lexicon of the language will have difficulties to convey what he\she wants to say. Having a great amount of vocabulary is actually favorable since it assists learners to have a good influence on other people. The Linguist Wilkins (1972) gave also an advice to students from a recent course book:

“If you spend most of your time studying grammar, your English will not improve very much. You will see most improvement if you learn more words and expressions. You can say very little with grammar, but you can say almost anything with word.”

(Thornbury, 2002, p.13)

This means that vocabulary has a great role in language learning that enables students to enhance their language proficiency. However, they should acquire a sufficient words and expressions to communicate because learners can speak with an inadequate grammar structure, but they can convey nothing without using words.

Moreover, Nation (1994) noted that vocabulary is not an end in itself in which a rich vocabulary makes the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing easier to perform”. A strong vocabulary has a positive influence on students’ capacities to build up their language proficiency.

Types of Vocabulary

Most of researchers and scientists agreed to divide vocabulary knowledge within the scope of its use. Thus, Harmer (2001) has identified vocabulary knowledge into active and passive vocabulary. Active vocabulary in which students can use words orally; however, passive words are known by learners through recognition, but they cannot call and produce through writing (Harmer, 2001).

Nevertheless, Read (2000) has divided vocabulary knowledge into productive and receptive vocabulary. Hiebert and kamil (2005) argued that words come into oral and print, and also receptive and productive. Oral vocabulary is a set of words for which we know the meaning when we speak or read; while print vocabulary consists of those words for which the meaning is known when we write or read silently (Hiebert, kamil, 2005, p.3).

Productive vocabulary is the set of words that an individual can use when writing and speaking. They are words that are familiar and used frequently (Hiebert, kamil, 2005). Meanwhile, they referred to receptive or recognition vocabulary as the set of words in which individuals can assign meaning when listening or reading.

Henriksen (1999) has divided the knowledge of vocabulary into dimensions:

- A: A partial trend towards the right dimensions that reflects the level of meaning and understanding.
- B: The depth dimension: such as the construction of the system showing the relationship between words.
- C: Receptive-Productive dimension that shows the learner control and access to knowledge about the word.

Difficulties in Learning Vocabulary

Schmitt (2000) confirmed that “when teaching vocabulary, it is quite useful to have some ideas of what makes words relatively easy or difficult to learn (p.148). According to Thornbury (2002, p.27), anyone who has learned a second language will know that some words seem easier to learn than others. He states that there are factors that make words more difficult than others such as:

Pronunciation

Words that are difficult to pronounce are more difficult to learn. Potentially, words will typically be those that contain sounds that are unfamiliar to some groups of learners.

Spelling

Sound-spelling mismatches are the cause of errors either of pronunciation or of spelling. They can contribute to words difficulty, especially words that contain silent letters such as foreign, listen... etc.

Length and Complexity

Long words tend to be no more difficult to learn than short ones.

Grammar

The grammar associated with the word is also a major problem to foreign language learners, especially if this differs from that of its L1 equivalent. The grammar of phrasal verbs is particularly troublesome in which some phrasal verbs are separable like (she looked the word up), but others are not (she looked after the children).

Meaning

When two words overlap in meaning, learners are likely to confuse them. Words with multiple meaning, such as *since* and *still*, can also be troublesome for learners. Thus, unfamiliar concepts may make words difficult to learn.

Range

Words that can be used in a wide range of contexts will be perceived as easier than their synonyms with a narrow range. For example, the word “*put*” is very wide-ranging verb compared to *impose*, *place*, *position*...etc.

Connotation

The connotation of some words may cause problems for learners. For example, *Propaganda* has negative connotation in English, but its equivalent may simply mean publicity.

Idiomatcity

Words or expressions that are idiomatic will be more difficult than words whose meaning is transparent.

Teaching Vocabulary

Vocabulary is central to language teaching in which teachers give it a great concern in the teaching process. Particularly, teaching vocabulary is one of the ways to develop language competencies of a person who is learning a foreign language since it is considered as key of learning success. Additionally, it also includes the studying of foreign language because lexicon is the basic material to master other skills such as: speaking, listening, writing and reading.

Teaching vocabulary is a crucial aspect in learning a language since languages are based on words (Alqahtani, 2005). Therefore, it is considered as the most discussed part of teaching a foreign language. Either teachers or students agree that the acquisition of vocabulary is significant factor in teaching language (Walters, 2004). Language teachers should be aware that teaching vocabulary for foreign language learners is something new and different from students' native language. They have to take into account that teaching young learners differs from teaching adult. Moreover, they should also know individual differences of their students, for example, visual learners, aural learners, kinesthetic and tactile learners. Teachers then have to prepare the most appropriate techniques and methods to gain the target of language teaching.

Teaching Vocabulary Strategies

Experts, scientists and language teachers tried to understand the role of lexicon in language learning and communication. Accordingly, the increased attention to vocabulary teaching has become more significant. Thus, teachers are supposed to apply more strategies to teach students new words.

Here, there are some of strategies of teaching vocabulary as stated by Thornbury (2002); Lewis, Hill (1985); and Gairns, Redman (1986).

Using Objects

These include flashcards, wall charts, and regalia. They are used for conveying meaning and useful for teaching concrete items of vocabulary such as: food. They often lend themselves easily to practice. Additionally, using objects can help students to remember the words that they have learnt better.

Drawing or Sketch

Teachers do not need to be artistic to make simple sketches which illustrate meaning. Objects can be drawn on blackboards. They can help young learners easily to understand and realize the main points that they have learned in the classroom (Alqahtanii, 2015).

Mime and Gestures

These are often used to supplement other ways of conveying meaning. Teachers might build a situation when teaching an item such as to “swerve” to illustrate.

The Use of Illustration

It is the most helpful strategy when items become more abstract. To ensure that students understand, teachers often make use of more than situation or contexts to check that learners have grasped the meaning. According to Hornby (1974), illustration is often more useful than definition for giving the meanings of words.

Synonyms

According to Hornby (1974), synonyms are words with the same meaning as another in the same language but often with different implications and associations. They are helpful particularly with unimportant words of passive vocabulary. Teachers often use synonyms with low level students, where they have to compromise and restrict the length and complexity of their explanations.

Contrasts and Opposites

Antonyms are words that have an opposite meaning of another word. Some words are easily explained to learners by contrasting it with its’ opposite. For example, the word “sour” is easily illustrated by contrasting it with the word “sweet” which is familiar to the majority of students.

Definitions

Definitions are often inadequate as means of conveying meaning. They are generally required to clarify the limits of the item.

The Dictionary

Hatch and Brown (1995) agreed that dictionaries are sources where new words can be encountered (p. 376). They seem to be the most appropriate mean for learning vocabulary. Thus, they also give students the meaning of words of language. Using a dictionary helps them to build their vocabulary. Therefore, individual student learn things outside the classroom, if not the teacher then asks them to look about new words in the dictionary. There are many types of dictionaries which are used to enhance students' vocabulary. The bilingual dictionary is used by learners at lower level and it translates a word from the target language into students' native language. The second type is the monolingual dictionary that is used at high level and directed for native language learners.

Drills

A drill is any repetition of a short chunk of language. The teacher who does the repeating, so as to accustom the learners to the phonological features of the word. For example, the teacher precede some sort of cue, such as 'listen', and repeat it two or three times to draw learners' attention. Thornbury (2002) emphasized that drilling should be clear and natural to make learners more familiar with the word.

Translation

Translation has been the most widely used means of presenting the meaning of a word in monolingual classes. It has the advantage of being the most direct route to a words' meaning assuming that there is close match between the target word and its' L1 equivalent. In addition,

it can save valuable time that might otherwise be spent on unsuccessful explanation. For monolingual groups, it is also a valid strategy to highlight the danger of false cognates. For example, the French word *sensible* would be translated as “sensitive” in English, and not *sensible*.

Scales

This strategy can be a useful way of revising the new items when students have learnt two contrasted or related gradable items (Alqahtani, 2005).

Games

Hadfield (1998, p. 4) said that “a game is an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun”. He also stated that games are divided into two main kinds: competitive games in which players race to be the first to reach the goal, and cooperative games in which teams work towards a common goal. In addition, many experts of language teaching agreed that games are a good tool to learn vocabularies that have various advantages on both teachers and students. Through the use of games, students will break the routine of traditional learning in which it makes them more motivated in the classroom, it could also facilitate the communication between students, provides a suitable atmosphere full of joy and entertainment and enables them to learn new words easily and rapidly. Furthermore, there are several types of games such as: magic tricks, caring and sharing, story games, picture games and word games like: crossword puzzles... etc.

Part two

Using Crossword Puzzles as Teaching Strategy

Crossword Puzzle

Teaching through games have been widely used in supporting learning in-side and out of the classroom as Sugar (1998) stated “ Today, learners are usually much more active in the classroom, and what better way to be more active than using new games strategies such Crossword Puzzle ” (p.3).

Among many strategies, crossword puzzle game seems to be more attractive than others. According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2009), crossword is defined as a vocabulary puzzle which contains an arranged number of squares. In order to complete the crossword puzzle task, the role of student here is to accurately fill in all the blank squares with letters those form words. Words are based on the clues provided, which can be: complete sentences, phrases, or words. Childers (1996) considered crossword puzzles as game, something to be enjoyed rather than slogged through, they tend to be fun and learner-friendly.

Based on Collins English Dictionary (2003), crossword puzzles are puzzles in which the solver deduces words that are suggested by numbered clues and writes them into corresponding boxes in a grid to form a vertical and horizontal pattern. Apart from encouraging student learning, these puzzles can help students to improve their vocabulary knowledge. Crosswords are versatile; it can be used to teach terminology, definitions, spelling, and pairing key concepts. Since students need to spell items correctly to complete the puzzle, they gain greater retention and memorization of vocabulary (Moore & Dettlaff, 2005).

The effectiveness of crossword puzzles has been explored in many studies such as: Tabtimsai (2003), who has employed crossword puzzles as “after reading” strategy to enhance students’ vocabulary growth. In another study, it was found that crossword puzzles could increase motivation and students’ interest in the topic (Franklin et al., 2003).

According to Augarde (1984 as cited in Mollica, 2008), crossword puzzles:

....Usually consists of chequered diagrams (normally rectangular) in which the solver has to write words guessed from clues. Words are separated by black squares or by thick bars between squares [. . .]. Now, crosswords are usually designed so that they look the same when they are turned upside down. But many early crosswords lacked this kind of pattern or were designed symmetrically, so that the left side as the mirror-image of the right side. (p.52)

Augarde described the form of crossword puzzles as a square or a rectangular grid of white- and black-shaded squares in which the shaded squares are used to separate words.

Researchers defined crossword puzzle as a confused situation which requires a solution. Moreover, according to Farlex’ (2009) definition, crossword puzzle is something: such as a game, toy, or problem that requires ingenuity and often persistence in solving or assembling.

Generally, a crossword puzzle is a helpful tool that identifies areas of understanding as well as lack of comprehension and areas of weakness (Franklin e al., 2003; Childers, 1996). As Hadfield (1990, quoted in Deesri, 2002) pointed out that crossword puzzles are regarded as very useful and important strategy to stimulate language acquisition. They are defined as shape or form of play concerning competition, rules and fun.

Also, according to Uberman (1998), “games such crossword encourage, entertain, teach, and promote fluency and communicative skills”.

The History of Crossword Puzzles

According to Arnot (1981), the history of crossword puzzles goes back over 100 year when the first crossword puzzle appeared in the Italian magazine 2 Secolo Illustrato Della Domenica under the title “Per Passare il Tempo” which means in English “To Pass the Time”. However, it was originated by Giuseppe Airoldi. Airoldi's puzzles contain horizontal and vertical clues but they were four by four grids without shaded square.

Arthur Wynne, who was a journalist from Liverpool, created first crossword puzzle in New York on December 21, 1913 that was initially called word-cross and was diamond-shaped (Mollica, 2008). Wynne called the puzzle "word-cross" because he positioned the words in the form of a cross. The name later switched to cross-word, and then as a result of an accidental type the hyphen was dropped and the name became “Crossword”. In the 1920, people started to notice the phenomenon of crosswords. After that crossword puzzles became a regular characteristic in “Fun” page of newspapers and spread on other newspapers. By the time, the crossword puzzles arrived in Britain eleven years later in February 1922 in Pearson's Magazine. While The Guardian claimed it was the Sunday Express in 1925. Beyond the abstract of crossword puzzle, England developed the Cryptic and Super Cryptic Puzzles (Bellis, 2020).

Based on the Guinness Book of Records, the first collection of crossword puzzle was published in USA in 1924 and named The Cross Word Puzzle Book. The first publication was by a new partnership formed by Dick Simon and Lincoln Schuster. The term crossword puzzles first appeared in dictionary in 1930 the New York Times (Bellis, 2020).

American-Style Grid Puzzle and British-Style Grid Puzzle

A crossword puzzle, normally, takes the form of a square or a rectangular grid of white and black shaded squares. However, there are two main types of grids: American style and British style in which both of them have a set of rules that setters have to follow: the grids need to be symmetrical and one two-letter words' aren't allowed (Sutherland, 2012).

American-Style Grid Puzzle

In North American style, a merely solid white grid with very few black squares is the most common. In other words, American square grid type is horizontal and vertical word with unique and list of numbers demonstrating the start of word in which each word has a clue connected with it that can be another word or an entire phrase (Griffith, 2012).

American crosswords often have two figures: a theme and a title which tool up a clue to the theme. Generally, three to five theme entries are longest words in the puzzle and they are placed symmetrically within the grid (Sutherland, 2012). As shown on **figure 2.1:**

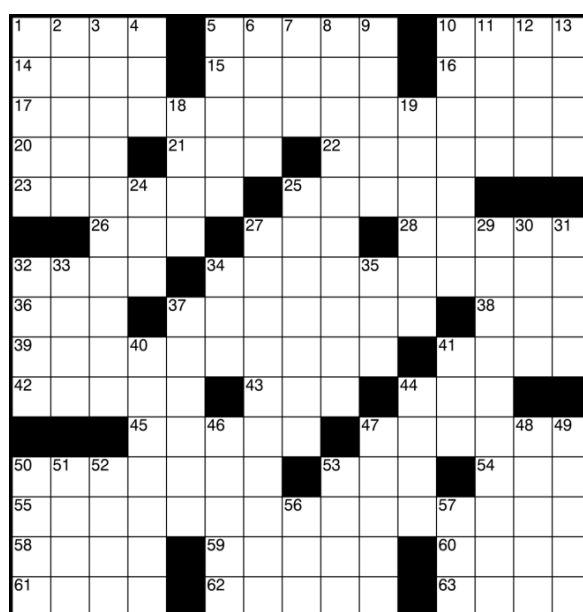


Figure 2.1: American-Style Grid Puzzle

British-Style Grid Puzzle

British style crossword grids are seen worldwide, especially in common wealth countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India and South Africa. (Sutherland, 2012)

British-style crossword grids also have a higher rate of black to white squares than American grids. In this style crossword have about 25 percent black squares, and cryptic have around 35 percent black squares and they called "keyed" or "checked". Half of the letters in each word are crossed over with another word. Mainly, based on a short squares board pattern with symmetrical grids. However, this is known as an alternate-letter grid (Sutherland, 2012).as shown on **figure 2.2:**

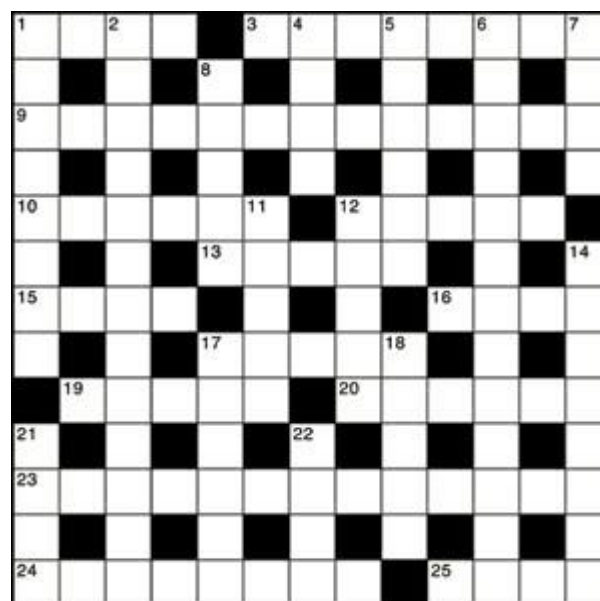


Figure 2.2: British-Style Grid Puzzle

The Major Variations of Crossword Puzzles

According to Babayemi (2018), there are six types of crossword puzzles: Cipher Crosswords, Fill-in Crosswords, Cross numbers, Acrostic Puzzle, Diagramless Crosswords, and Arrow-word Puzzle; in which each type is different from a regular shape grid puzzle. They need different clues and different solving.

Cipher Crossword

Code breakers and code crackers are other names for a kind of crossword called Cipher. Cipher Crosswords are very different from cryptic puzzles, a Cipher Crossword replaces the clues for each entry with clues for each white cell of the grid - an integer from 1 to 26 inclusive is printed in the corner of each. However, the objective, as any other crossword puzzles, numbers correspond to one letter for each cell (Babayemi, 2018).

Fill-in Crosswords

This type is also known as Crusadex or Cruzadex. The task consists of finding out the answers to the clues and at the same time the location where they will place the answers on the puzzle grid. In fill-in crossword, the clue numbers and black squares are not indicated. Fitting together several long words is easier than fitting together several short words because there are fewer possibilities for how the long words intersect together (Babayemi, 2018).

Cross Numbers

It is known as a Cross-figure and as the name imply, the clues and answers are related to numerical values in which the solutions to the clues are numbers instead of words. Clues are usually arithmetical expressions that refer to a year of an event or an important date. There are also numerical fill-in crosswords (Babayemi, 2018).

Acrostic Puzzle

It is known as Anacrostics or Crostics. An acrostic is a type of word puzzle that consists of two parts. The first is a set of lettered clues, each of which has numbered blanks representing the letters of the answer. The second part is a long series of numbered blanks and spaces, representing a quotation or other text, into which the answers for the clues fit (Babayemi, 2018).

Diagramless Crosswords

Diagramless Crosswords, or Diagramlesses, are blank and square grids that fill in the intersecting words without giving the usual diagram. A variation is the Blankout puzzle. Diagramlesses provided by black Square that tell the location where the words should and shouldn't go. The clues are not individually numbered, but given in terms of the rows and columns of the grid, which has rectangular symmetry (Babayemi, 2018).

Arrow-word

The Arrow-word is the most popular puzzle. This is the only type of a crossword that does not have as many black squares as a true crossword, but has arrows inside the grid, with clues preceding the arrows (Babayemi, 2018).

Crossword Puzzle Teaching in Classroom

Crossword puzzles have been a widely utilized form of study by students and teachers alike, across all age groups and areas of study. These methods are a desirable learning method, as they can make studying more enjoyable. (as cited in Davis, et al, 2009).

Crossword puzzle game is a teaching strategy that can be used to enhance several useful skills including vocabulary. In order to complete the task of crossword puzzle, students must identify the term being used, and often the result is requiring a new vocabulary or terminology. Teachers find that solving the puzzle is much less complicated and more like game to play because solving a puzzle is an active type of learning. It involves students with more material than just passive types of review method do (Jones, 2007).

The use of crossword puzzle in classroom is alternative techniques, as Wharton (1995, p.48) stated that "crossword puzzle for use in the language classroom is really quite easy to

create First, make a list of words with which your students should be familiar. Then, search for a letter common to two words and you are off’.

A crossword puzzle creates a discovery learning atmosphere. According to McKeachie (2002), puzzles are games and simulations that can be used because they require students to be more active participants in the class, make decisions about what is right and what is wrong to solve problems and difficulties, and react as a result of their decisions. A specially designed crossword puzzle is a type of games that also serves as a means for active learning of course material (as cited in Weisskirch, 2006).

There are several steps teachers should follow when using crossword puzzle in classroom (as cited in Puspita,& Sabiqoh, 2017):

Pre-teaching activity:

- 1. Teacher greets the students.
- 2. The teacher starts calling the students to check the attendance.
- 3. After checking students’ attendance, the teacher reminds the students about what they have tackled in the last meeting.
- 4. The teacher introduces the new topic to the students.

While-teaching activities:

- 1. The teacher asks students about the crossword puzzle.
- 2. The teacher gives an example of the crossword puzzle to the students.
- 3. The teacher gives tasks to the students.

- 4. After the teacher checks the answer of students, the teacher discusses with the students to make a sentence using the appropriate words as the crossword puzzle answer.

Post-teaching activities:

- The teacher asks the students about the crossword puzzle.

Students' Motivation

According to Harmer (2001), motivation is simply a kind of internal drive that pushes person to do things in order to achieve something. In addition, it is one of inner factors that can make students do something genuinely in arrange to they can achieve what they want.

The crossword puzzle game offers a challenge that will motivate the student to try to fulfill the puzzle (Widaningsih, 2009). Moreover, Dewi (2010, p.18) also stated that crossword puzzle can be used in teaching learning process to increase the students' interest, to motivate students in learning English, and then the students may feel more relax.

Depending on Weisskirch (2006) research, students enjoy using crossword puzzles as a way to review the material. He also stated that when students solve the answer of crossword correctly, they may experience an increase in self-confidence. This action can have a double effect. One can increase self-motivation in students to learn and study more. Plus, educational crossword puzzles can ease the anxiety produced by other assessments. Success breeds success by convincing students of their ability.

The Teachers' Role in Crossword Puzzle

The value of games in education takes supportive role rather than directive. The direct role of the teacher appears only before and after the gaming in introducing and assessing the crossword after it takes place.

According to Karavas-Dukas (1995), the role of teachers classified into four main types: a source of role expertise, management role, source of advice and facilitator of learning.

The role of the teacher in the classroom and how to organize the crossword puzzle is very important. To routinize games in the classrooms, the teacher must be open-minded toward games, but also must believe in the effectiveness of playful learning (Schiffler, 1992).

The role of teachers' listed as following: (Atar, 2018)

As Organizer

The teacher is an organizer and educational manager. Mainly, the teacher organizes the demand of games, and analyses their cost-benefit-ratio and ensures the game runs properly (Atar, 2018).

According to Harmer (2001), organizing learners for making an activity or practice involves doing a clear introduction, changing the classroom layout to the requirements of the game.

As Facilitator

The teacher has a role of facilitator of learning in which he/she prepares the appropriate learning materials and environments. Also, the teacher provides opportunities to students to enable them to interact with one another and to develop their understanding and language skills (Atar, 2018). In this regard, Harmer (2001) argued that the teacher can help his/her learners but with limits and conditions, and his/her responsibility is just supporting them to work on their own.

As Enthusiasm Generator

According to Brophy and Good (1994), the teachers' enthusiasm contains two basic sides which include a sincere interest in the subject and positive energy.

When teachers plan these qualities, they are likely to inspire and motivate their learners to learn more. For instance, while solving a crossword puzzle, the teachers' role would be encouraging the learners' curiosity of new knowledge by showing the advantages of the game.

Learning Styles to Present in Crossword Puzzle

There are a multitude of different learning styles. However, a learning style is a specific way that the mind receives and processes new information. Therefore, in any one class, we find different preferences for students (Shafeai & Nejati, 2009).

Several learning styles can be distinguished in crossword puzzle as Shafeai and Nejati (2009) confirmed that crossword puzzles have the advantage of appealing to different learning styles:

The first style is visual learners' style; they are often having strong puzzle-solving skills and feel great satisfaction when they complete one (Shafeai & Nejati, 2009).

The second style is auditory learners' styles who are that kind of learners that enjoy step-by-step reasoning, so they benefit from the sequential steps of completing a crossword. (Shafeai & Nejati, 2009)

The third style is kinesthetic learners' and they are kind of learners who enjoy the multi-task strategies required to solve a crossword (Shafeai & Nejati, 2009).

The Importance of Using Crossword Puzzle

Crosswords have been used successfully in many different disciplines (Childers, 1996). However, this approach engages several useful student skills including vocabulary, reasoning, and spelling. Further, Olivares et al. (2008) stated that crosswords are appropriate to reinforce self-esteem, motivation and develop professional skills. Jones (2007) emphasized that crossword puzzles have a great advantage in teaching EFL classroom.

Crossword puzzle is one of the interesting techniques for teaching vocabulary. Thus, Orawiwatnakul (2013, p.417) said that: “puzzles can help students to extend their vocabulary knowledge”. In addition, in the process of students solving puzzles, a learner must have the ability to identify and to understand the term that has been used. According to Alghani (2017), when students fill in the crossword puzzle in a group, each student contributes new vocabulary to each other. It proves that crossword puzzle is a facilitator to improve students’ vocabulary. The more students do exercises of crossword puzzle, the more they can memorize the vocabulary.

Acquiring new vocabulary by using crossword puzzle can also involve exact spelling which may mean for students practicing dictionary skills. Certainly, practicing pronunciation and even word identification (Shafeai & Nejati, 2009).

Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, we have reviewed the vocabulary acquisition and the use of crossword puzzles as teaching strategy. Teaching vocabulary becomes such important in the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) because learning a particular language cannot be achieved without knowing its lexis. Therefore, anyone should master a considerably sufficient amount of words to be able to communicate by using that particular language.

Thus, crossword puzzles are considered as a great tool to teach this aspect in which it helps teachers to maintain students' interest, motivation and immersion; also to make the learners involved in challenges and entertainments at the same time. Besides, crossword puzzles are an effective way to have fun while students build their vocabulary at the same time.

Chapter three

Research Methodology

Introduction

The current chapter sheds light on the methodology adopted while conducting this study. It discusses the research design that involves mixed method, the research institution which includes location and the frame work. It also gives detailed information about the sample of the study which consists of both teachers and students of Chadli Bendjedid University. Finally, this chapter deals with data collection tools which include a questionnaire for teachers, pre and post tests for students to gather the needed data which provide credibility to our work.

Research Design

Research design is defined as a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution, or implementation of the research strategy (Durrheim, 2004). Our study aims at investigating the use of crossword puzzle as teaching strategy to enhance students' knowledge of vocabulary.

To reach the research aims, a mixed method is adopted for being the most appropriate method.

Research Approaches

Generally speaking, there are three different types of research approaches which are: qualitative, quantitative and mixed approach. The choice of the research methods depends on the nature of the subject as well as the topic, research questions and the aim of the research. The research approach chosen for this research is: **Mixed Methods Approach**

Research Institution

The research was collected at university of Chadli Bendjedid, El-Tarf, in eastern Algeria during the academic year (2019/2020). This institution is the one that serves our research most because of its' sufficient number of teachers of English.

Sample

The sample of this study consists of two (02) kinds of participants: students and teachers. Therefore, the participants were randomly selected among teachers and students of Chadli Bendjedid University.

Sample One: Teachers

The first sample of the study is university EFL teachers at Chadli Bendjedid in El-Tarf. The number of these teachers is seven (7) teachers during the academic year (2019-2020). The majority of teachers have been teaching English from five to ten (5- 10) years which is sufficient enough to scrutinize common challenges and problems that teachers face while teaching the language.

Sample Two: Students

The second sample is first year students of English at Chadli Bendjedid University in El-Tarf. Seventeen (17) students were selected randomly from a group of forty (40) students during the academic year (2019-2020). Those students have been studying English for seven years (four in middle school and three in secondary school).

Research Instruments

To reach the aim of our research and ensure that the data collected are as much valid as possible, two (02) main instruments were used to conduct this study which is about the use of crossword puzzles as strategy for teaching vocabulary. For this purpose, a well formed

questionnaire was addressed to teachers, pre and post tests for students as the most appropriate tools for gathering data.

The Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire has been designed to English teachers at Chadli Bendjedid University in El-Tarf, during the academic year (2019/2020). It aims to answer the research questions and explore the teachers' opinions concerning the use of crossword puzzles in teaching English. The administration of the questionnaires and their collection was held on line. Thus, eleven (11) questionnaires were sent to teachers who have been teaching different modules via their emails. Only seven (07) teachers have answered the questionnaire and returned it back in almost one week.

Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire attempts to collect data about the interest of experienced teachers in teaching vocabulary, strategies of teaching vocabulary and the use of crossword puzzles as a teaching technique. The teachers were asked to answer the questions by ticking the appropriate box and making statement whenever required. This questionnaire consists of fourteen (14) questions mixed between open-ended and multiple-choice questions (see appendix 1). It is organized under three (3) sections which are divided as follows:

Section One: General Information (Q1-Q2)

The first section includes two (02) questions about the background information. Teachers were asked to specify the degree(s) held and mentioning the length of experience in teaching English as a foreign language.

Section Two: Vocabulary Acquisition (Q3-Q7)

This section provides information about teachers' perceptions towards teaching vocabulary. In other words, the most difficult aspects for teachers to teach: do teachers' introduce new vocabulary items?; do teachers consider vocabulary as important as other skills in teaching foreign languages?. In addition to the different strategies that used in teaching vocabulary and the difficulties that students face the most when learning new words.

Section Three: Crossword Puzzle as teaching Strategy (Q8-Q14)

The last section deals with the main element of the research which is crossword puzzle including the psychological side of learners under an important element which is called "motivation". It investigates the opinions of teachers about using crossword puzzles as teaching strategy and also its' effect on students' vocabulary knowledge.

Description of the Students' Test**The Pre-Test**

In the pre-test, learners are supposed to solve the crossword puzzles which are about "Holiday and Tourism". The pre-test consists of three (03) crossword puzzles that students will solve them. They are going to fill those puzzles with the appropriate words which are placed horizontally as well as vertically corresponding to the clues; the level of the learners is taken into consideration.

The First Crossword Puzzle

The crossword puzzle which is described in (Appendix 2) was given to students from one group. It was about "Holiday and Tourism". First, steps how the puzzle should be solved were given to students. The number of answers letters was shown in each clue. Thus, the use of dictionaries was allowed but no more than three times to help students to understand the

meaning of the clues. Meanwhile, students had the opportunity to ask any question whenever they did not understand the given clue or found it difficult.

The Second Crossword Puzzle

The second crossword puzzle as it is presented in (Appendix 3) was applied in the same way of the first crossword puzzle in which students were asked to find the answer of the clue. However, this crossword puzzle contains new statements and definitions. In addition to some clues which are repeated from the first crossword puzzle.

While solving the second puzzle, students were working seriously and asking questions. Thus, we told them that they can leave the square white whenever they find a problem to solve the clue or they did not get the meaning.

The Third Crossword Puzzle

The third crossword puzzle as it is shown in (Appendix 4) was given to students after one week from collecting and doing the second crossword puzzle. Thus, it consists new items that related to the same topic ‘Holiday and Tourism’. In addition to same previous clues from the first and the second crossword puzzles. The purpose behind using some words from the former puzzles is to make students memorize new words and check their familiarity with new vocabulary items. Students in this puzzle were enjoyed and interested in solving the clues.

The Post-Test

In the post-test, as it is shown in (Appendix 5), learners are supposed to write a short paragraph in which they will describe a holiday or a place and they are asked to use some of the words that they have learnt from the previous crossword puzzles.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodology undertaken in the research. It provided an overview about the research design, participants of the research work. It described where the study was conducted and also introduced research instruments that have been used in this work. In addition, the chapter offered detailed information about the administration and description of both: teachers' questionnaire and students' test.

Chapter Four

Analysis of the Results

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the empirical part of the research which serves evidence to our hypothesis. This work is provided to collect data from two perspectives. On one hand, the teachers' questionnaire serves to gather data about the strategies of teaching vocabulary and the use of crossword puzzles. On the other hand, it is about the investigation in which we have set an experiment to catch up empirical data about learners' application of crossword puzzles. A pre and post tests were organized in sessions. The goal behind this experiment is to measure learners' improvement vis-a-vis the acquisition of new words when using a crossword puzzle.

Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire.

Section One: General Information

Q1: What academic degree(s) do you have?

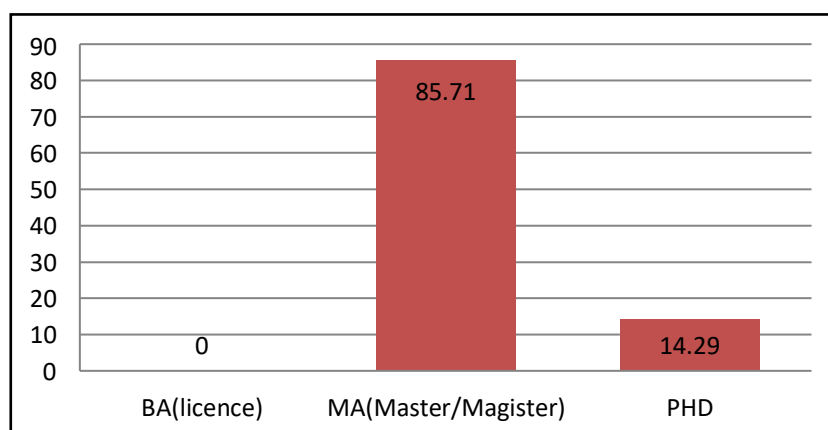


Figure 4.3: Teachers' Academic Degree(s) Held

The result shows that most of teachers (85.71%) held the master/magister degree. Only one teacher with the percentage of (14.29%) held the PHD degree, while BA (license) degree was (0%). These results led us to conclude that our sample consists of two different degrees.

Q2: How many years have you been teaching English?

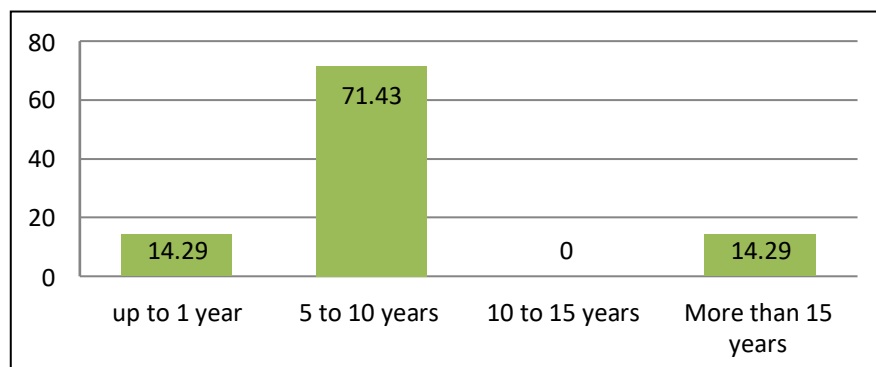


Figure 4.4: Teachers' Experience

As it is revealed clearly above, the majority of teachers (71.43%) have been teaching English from five to ten years. However, the rest of results were equally divided between the last two teachers in which one teacher corresponding to (14.29%) has the experience of up than one (1) year. The same rate is devoted to the teacher (14.29%) who has been teaching English more than fifteen (15 years). None of teachers has the experience of 10 to 15 years.

Section Two: Vocabulary Acquisition

Q3: Which one of the following aspects is the most difficult for you to teach?

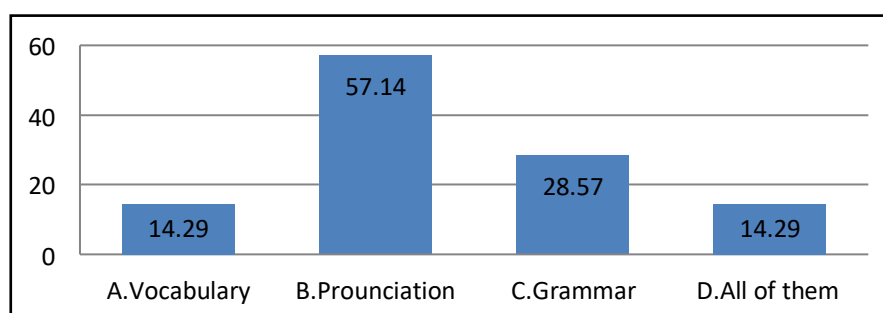


Figure 4.5: Difficult Aspects to Teach

This question is intended to figure out teachers' opinion concerning the most difficult aspect in teaching English. Results shown in the above figure show that (57.14%) of teachers considered pronunciation as the most difficult aspect for them to teach. Two teachers

(28.57%) confirmed that grammar is the most difficult for them. While another teacher corresponding to (14.29%) claimed that all aspects are difficult to be taught. However, the last teacher with the percentage of (14.29%) considered vocabulary as the most difficult aspects in teaching English.

Q4: Do you introduce new vocabulary in each lesson?

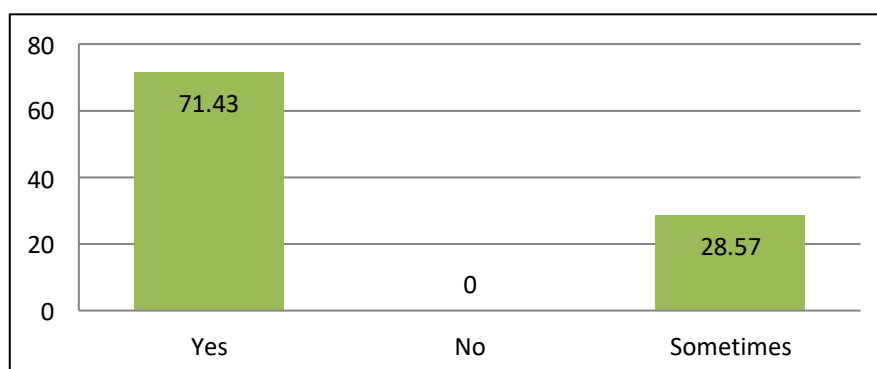


Figure 4.6: Teachers who Introduce New Vocabulary in Each Lesson

Based on the figure above, most of teachers (five teachers) corresponding to (71.43%) introduce new vocabulary items in each lesson. (28.57%) of the sample stated that they sometimes present new words in the classroom. This result informs that teachers want their students to have a sufficient amount of vocabulary items.

Q5: Do you consider vocabulary as important as other skills in teaching foreign languages?

Please, explain!

According to the results, all teachers (100%) argued that vocabulary is as important as other skills like: speaking and writing in teaching foreign languages. This means that vocabulary plays a great role in the learning of English as a foreign language.

The teachers explain their answers concerning the importance of vocabulary as follow:

- Through vocabulary, learners can communicate and express their ideas in different ways and without difficulties.
- We must focus on vocabulary because it is the way to learn the language.
- The more students learn lexical words and vocabularies, the more they can grasp and interpret others' ideas.

Q6: Which one of these strategies do you use when teaching vocabulary?

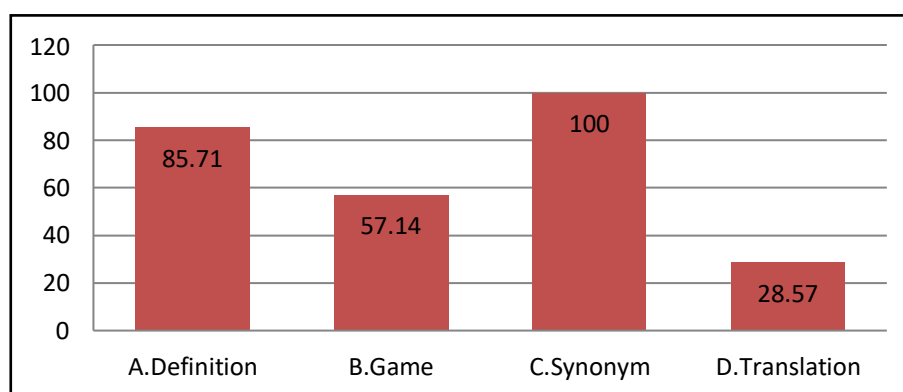


Figure 4.7: Strategies that Teachers Use when Teaching Vocabulary

The statistics in the figure above inform that teachers use more than one strategy when teaching vocabulary. All teachers (100%) confirmed that synonyms are considered to be the most used strategy to teach vocabulary. Whereas (85.71%) of them answered that definition is also considered among the most appropriate strategies to teach this aspect of language. (57.14%) of teachers claimed that they use games. However, the rest of them (28.57%) stated that they remain on translation as strategy for teaching vocabulary. These results led us to conclude that teachers use different strategies to make students acquire and memorize new words easily.

Q7: In which component of language your students face more difficulties while learning new Vocabulary?

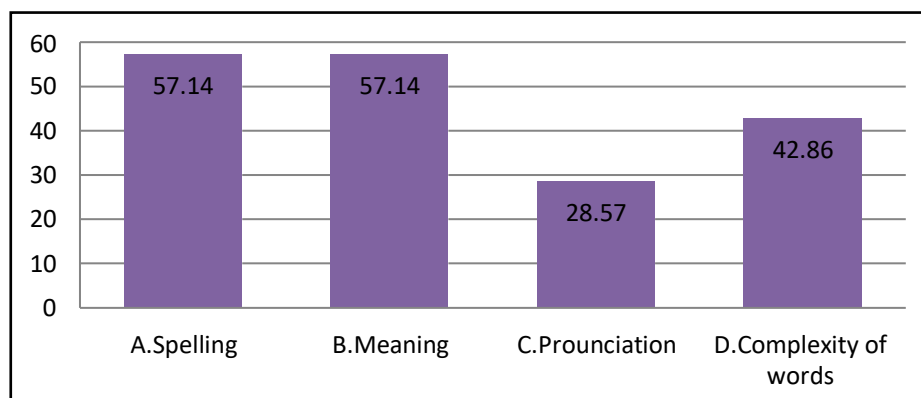


Figure 4.8: Component of Language that Students face more Difficulties while Learning New Vocabulary

This question is asked to investigate teachers' point of view about the most difficult component for students to master. The majority of teachers corresponding to (57.14%) answered that spelling and meaning are the most difficult components in which learners face more obstacles to learn them. Another three (03) teachers with the percentage of (42.86%) confirmed that complexity of words is also hard for students to master when learning vocabulary. Whereas, (28.57%) of them claimed that students have many problems with pronunciation.

Section Three: Crossword Puzzles as a Teaching Strategy

Q8: Do you think that your students are motivated to learn more?

Please, explain!

The results show that all teachers corresponding to (100%) confirmed that their students are motivated to learn more. This implies that students are aware about the role of psychological side in the learning process.

Teachers gave many explanations to this question:

- Some of them answered that they always take into consideration the learners' interests when designing a course that's why they are motivated.
- The students' motivation is more related to the extent that content is appealing to them and satisfies their needs.
- This depends on the way or teaching method and approach used by the teacher.

Q9: which one of the following strategies do you use for motivating your students?

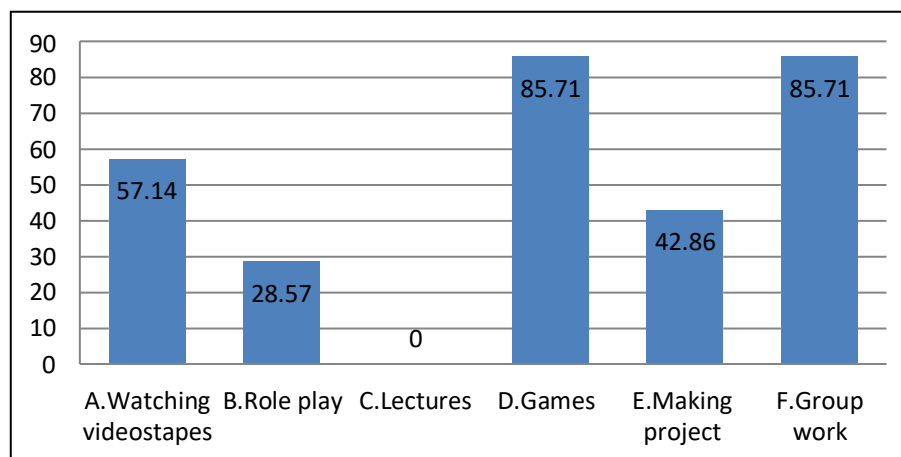


Figure 4.9: Teachers' Strategies for Motivating Students.

The figure above indicates that teachers prefer different strategies for motivating their students. (85.71%) of the sample stated that they use games and Group work. Moreover, (57.14%) of teacher use video tapes to inspire students to learn more. Another three (03) teachers with the percentage of (42.86%) answered that making projects is the appropriate strategy for motivating their learners. However, (28.57%) of them prefer to use role plays.

Q10: Do you use educational games in teaching?

The results show that all teachers corresponding to (100%) use the language game in teaching. This means that teachers are aware about the importance and benefits of using language games.

Q11: If, yes. How often do you use educational games?

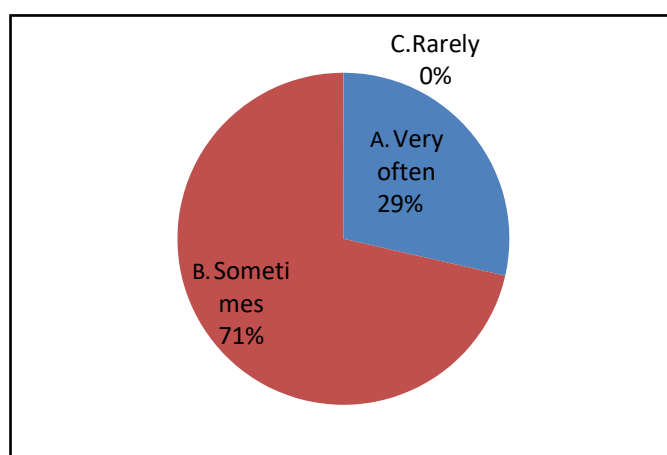


Figure 4.10: How often Teachers Use Educational Games

Most of teachers (five teachers) corresponding to (71.43%) answered that they sometimes use educational games when teaching. However, the last two teachers (28.57%) use educational games very often. While responses for the rarely option were (0%).

Q12: According to you, what are teachers supposed to be while using games such crossword puzzle?

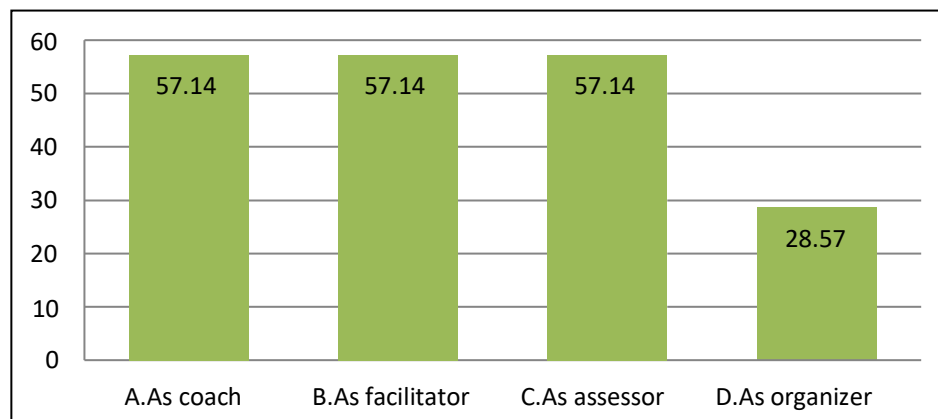


Figure 4.11: Teachers' Role when Using Games such Crossword Puzzle

According to teachers' responses for this question, we noticed that (57.14%) of teachers answered that teachers are supposed to be as a coach and as facilitator as well as assessor when using crossword puzzles. Only two teachers (28.57%) who considered teacher as an organizer. These results inform that teachers play different roles when teaching or using games as teaching strategies.

Q13: What can students improve more when using crossword puzzle?

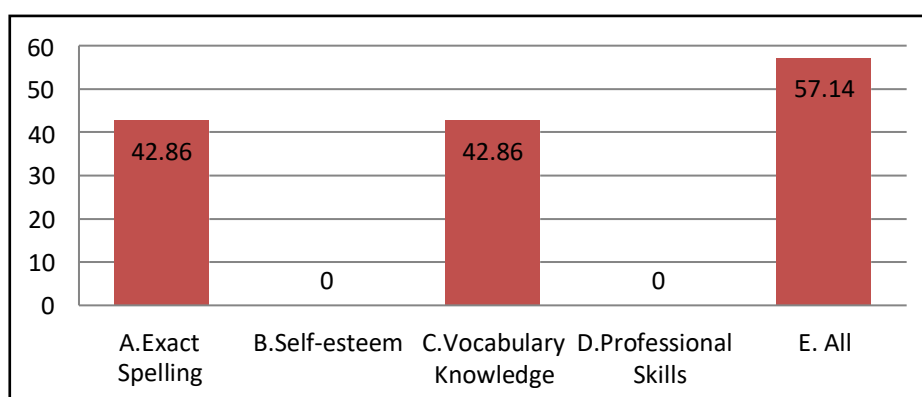


Figure 4.12: According to Teachers what can Students Improve more when Using Crossword Puzzle

On the basis of the figures' findings, the majority of teachers corresponding to (57.14%) agreed that students who use crossword puzzles can improve all elements above which are exact spelling, self esteem, vocabulary knowledge and professional skills. Teachers with the percentage of (42.86%) claimed that students can improve more exact spelling and vocabulary knowledge while using crossword puzzles. In other words, teachers agree that using crossword puzzles can facilitate learning better.

Q14: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “crossword puzzle can be used in course current syllabus, as one of the main strategies in teaching”?

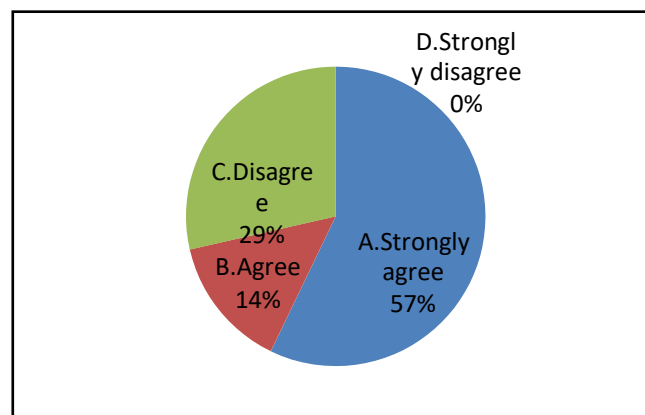


Figure 4.13: To what extent the teachers agree with the statement “crossword puzzle can be used in course current syllabus, as one of the main strategies in teaching”

The results reveal that most of teachers corresponding to (57.14%) were strongly agree with the statement that crossword puzzles can be one of the main strategies in teaching. Only one teacher (14.29%) said that he agrees. The other teachers with the percentage of (28.57%) informed that they disagree with the statement as they cannot consider crossword puzzles as a teaching strategy.

Analysis of the Test

Analysis of the pre-test

Analysis of the Students' First Crossword Puzzle

1. Another word means “to swap”.

The first clue was a model to show students how to solve a crossword puzzle. Students were asked to give synonym to the verb “to swap”. Hence, all students with the percentage of (100%) got the right answer as “exchange”.

2. Foreign or unusual.

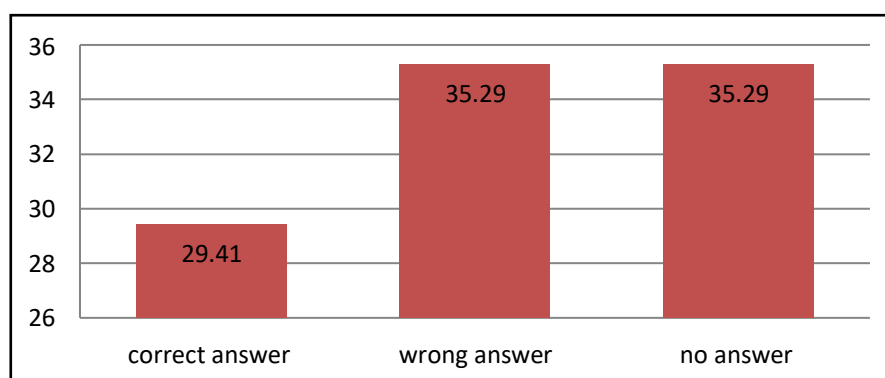


Figure 4.14: Students' Answer of the Clue A2 First Crossword

The above results show that the majority of students did not understand the meaning of the clue **A2**. Only few students (five learners) corresponding to (29.41%) got the correct answer which is “exotic”. However, (35.29 %) of students answered wrongly, and the rest of students (six students) left the squares white because they did not get the meaning of the clue. Many students asked a lot of questions when solving this clue and they were having no idea about this adjective.

3. Person who visits new places.

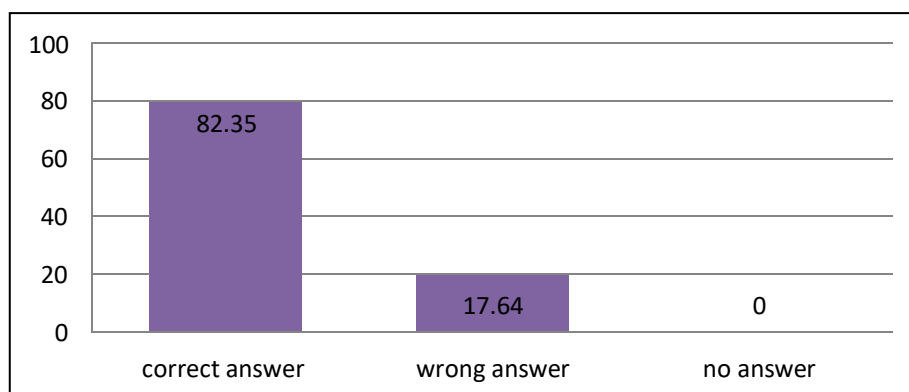


Figure 4.15: Students' Answer of the Clue D3 First Crossword

This result shows that most of students with the percentage of (82.35%) answered correctly this clue and they were able to understand the meaning which is “tourist”. Only three (03) students with the percentage of (17.64 %) got the wrong answer of this clue.

4. Another name for luggage.

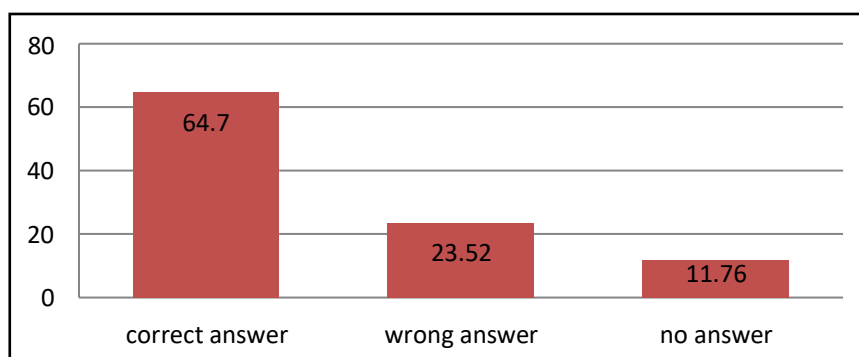


Figure 4.16: Students' Answer of the Clue A4 First Crossword

As it is indicated in figure, the majority of learners (64.70 %) were able to guess the meaning of the clue which is “baggage”. Moreover, four (04) students corresponding to (23.52%) answered wrongly this clue, while only two (02) students left the squares white in which they were not able to guess the meaning.

5. A system of communication used in a particular country.

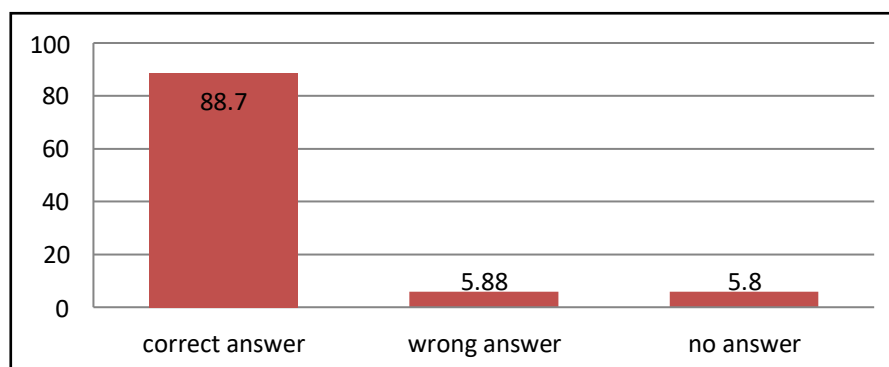


Figure 4.17: Students' Answer of the Clue D5 First Crossword

The results shown graph informed that (88.70%) of respondents were able to guess the correct answer of the clue which is “language”. Only one student with the percentage of (5.88%) got the wrong answer in which he answered as dialect, and the last one left the square white.

6. Another name for house.

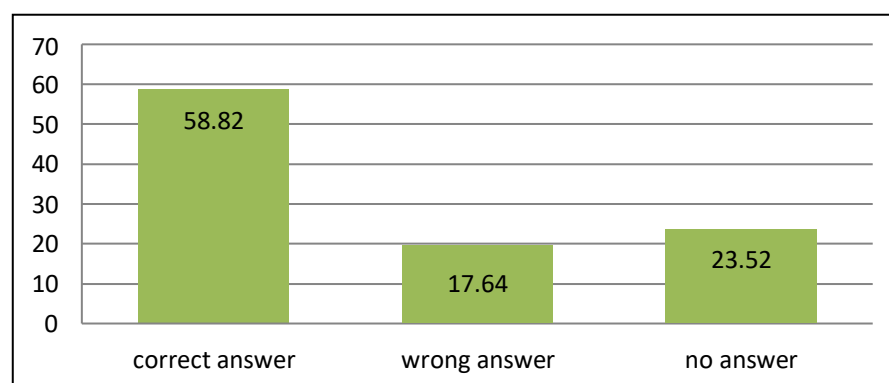


Figure 4.18: Students' Answer of the Clue D6 First Crossword

Based on **the Figure 4.18** above, the majority of students (58.82%) were able to solve the clue which is “villa”. However, three (03) students with the percentage of (17.64%) answered wrongly while the rest of them (04 students) were not able to fill the gap of this clue.

7. A document issued to citizens for travelling abroad.

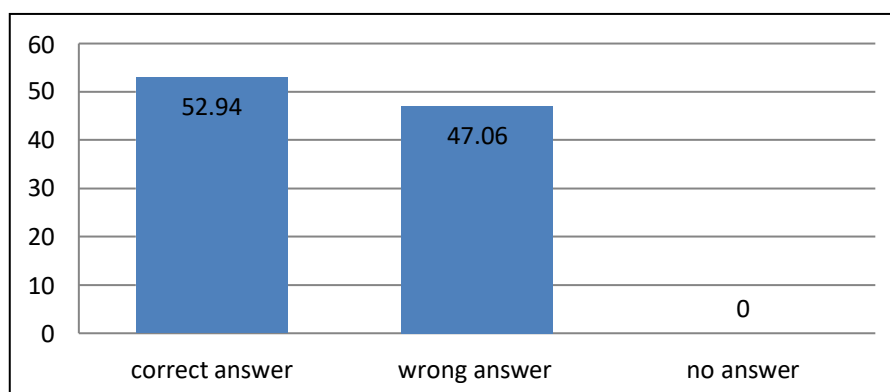


Figure 4.19: Students' Answer of the Clue D7 First Crossword

The results show that students were somehow confused while answering this clue in which (52.94%) of students were able to solve it. Whereas, the rest of students (08) with the percentage of (47.06%) got a wrong answer and all of them answered 'visa card' as the correct answer. Hence, the correct answer is "passport".

8. Place to which someone or something is going or being sent.

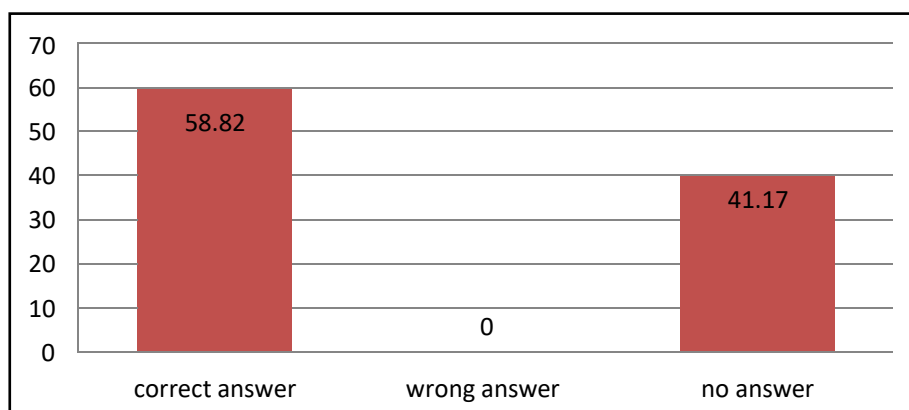


Figure 4.20: Students' Answer of the Clue A8 First Crossword

The results reveal that most of learners corresponding to (58.82%) were able to guess the right meaning of the clue which is "destination". The rest of students (41.17%) left the squares white so they claimed that the clue was difficult for them to understand it.

9. An establishment that provides accommodation and other services to travelers or tourists.

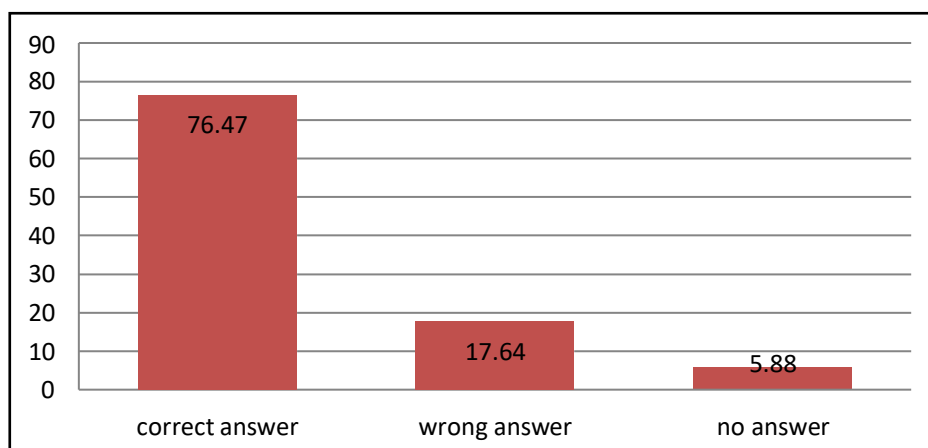


Figure 4.21: Students' Answer of the Clue A9 First Crossword

The figure 4.21 shows that the majority of students (76.47 %) were able to solve the clue. Moreover, three (03) students got a wrong answer and only one student (5.88 %) left the square while. The result of this clue was not as it was expected. It was surprising since students did not get the meaning and there were many questions especially about the word “accommodation”. Hence, the correct answer of the clue A9 is “hotel”.

10. Wildlife tour.

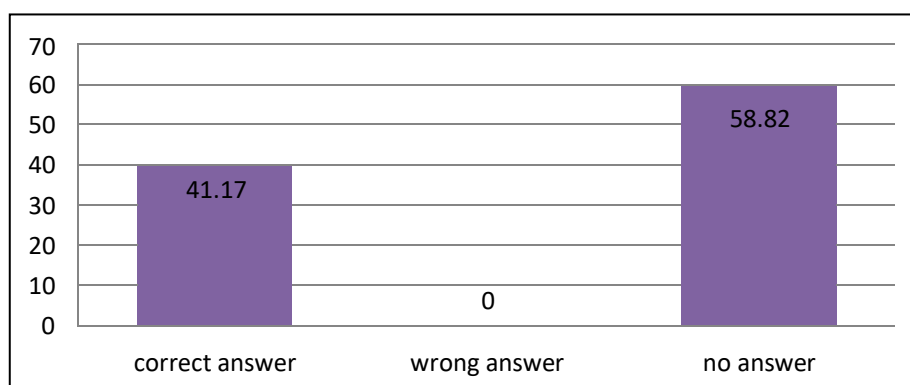


Figure 4.22: Students' Answer of the Clue A10 First Crossword

The results shown above were totally unexpected. Most of students (10 students) with the percentage of (58.82 %) did not guess the meaning of the clue A10 which is about “wildlife tour” and left the squares blank. Meanwhile, the rest of learners (07) were able to answer the clue rightly. While solving this clue, students asked many questions and many explanations

were given to students but almost of them did not understand it. Thus, the correct answer is “safari”.

Analysis of the Students' Second Crossword Puzzle

1. Papers that show you can use a type of transport or enter a place.

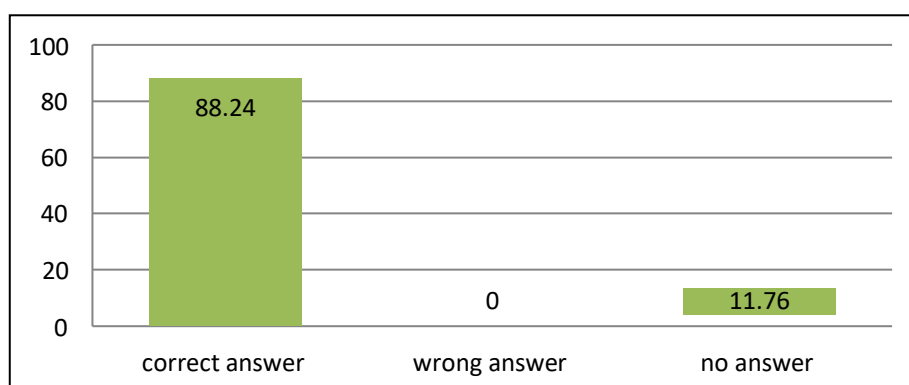


Figure 4.23: Students' Answer of the Clue D1 Second Crossword

The figure above shows that the majority of students (15) with the percentage of (88.24%) were able to solve the clue correctly which is “tickets”. However, two students corresponding to (11.76 %) did not answered at all.

2. Type of transport for land.

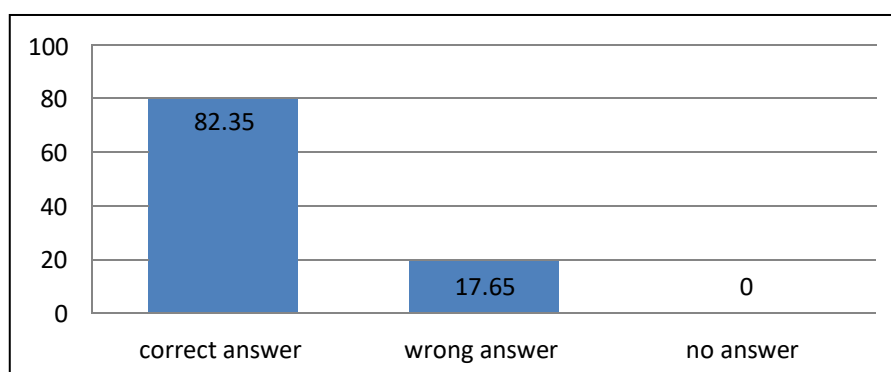


Figure 4.24: Students' Answer of the Clue A2 Second Crossword

From the figure above, we revealed that (82.35%) of students answered correctly which is “train”; few students (03) with the percentage of (17.65%) answered wrongly and they were not able to get the right meaning in which they answered “taxi”.

3. A book that gives tourist information.

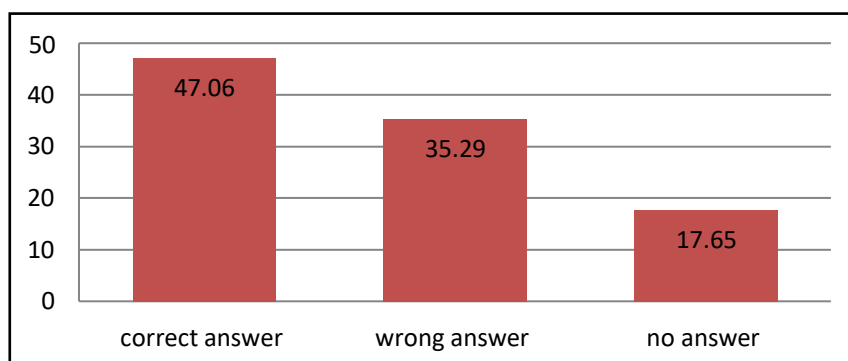


Figure 4.25: Students' Answer of the Clue A3 Second Crossword

As it is indicated in the figure, many students (08) corresponding to (47.06%) were able to solve the clue correctly which is “guide book”. However, (06) students with the percentage of (35.29%) answered wrongly, and the rest of the students (17.65%) left the squares white

4. Type of transport for water.

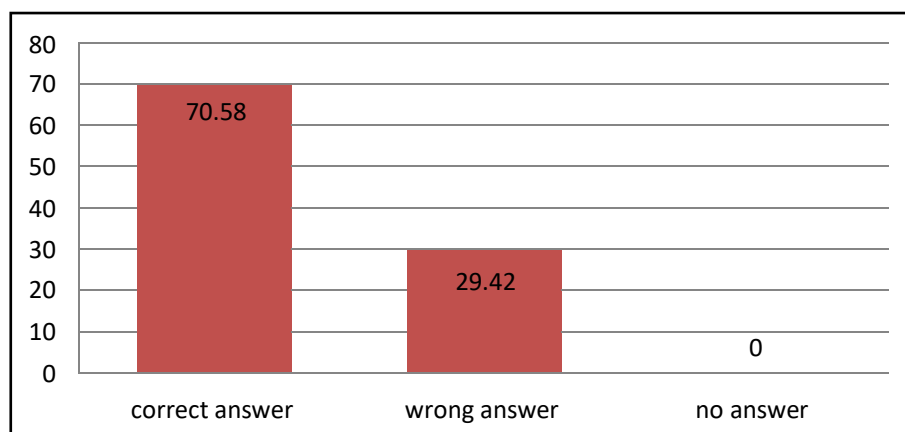


Figure 4.26: Students' Answer of the Clue D4 Second Crossword

The results reveal that the majority of students (12) with the percentage of (70.58%) were able to understand the meaning of the clue which is “boat”. However, (29.42%) were unable to answer correctly because they thought the answer is “ship”.

5. An official document for travelling with your photo and your nationality.

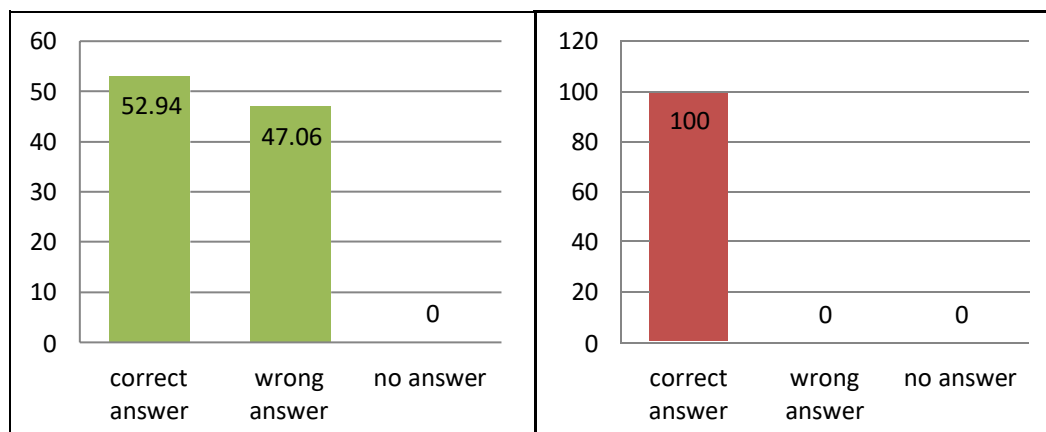


Figure 4.27: Students' Answer of the Clue D7 in the First Crossword Puzzle and Clue A5 in Second Crossword Puzzle.

The results show that a total progress has been observed from the first to the second crossword puzzle. This change can be seen (from 52.94% to 100%) in the number of right answers, also there is a positive decrease in the wrong answers (from 47.06% to 0%).

6. A journey in which you go somewhere, usually for a short time, and come back again.

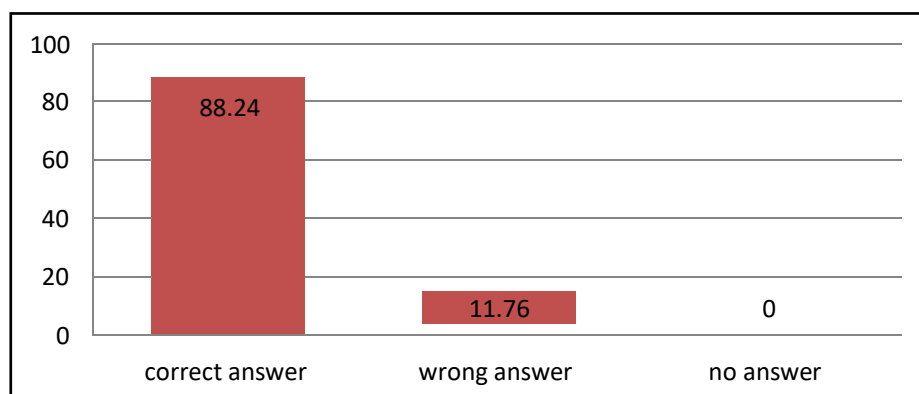


Figure 4.28: Students' Answer of the Clue D6 Second Crossword

As it is indicated in figure above, the majority of students (15) with the percentage of (88.24%) found this clue easy to solve it and they were able to guess the right answer which is “trip”. However, two students (11.75 %) answered wrongly since they thought it is the word “tour”.

7. Type of transport for air.

The results of the clue D7 were as expected because all students with the percentage of (100 %) were able to answer this clue which is “plane” (the only air transportation with five letters).

8. A holiday where everything is included - the transport, hotel, etc.

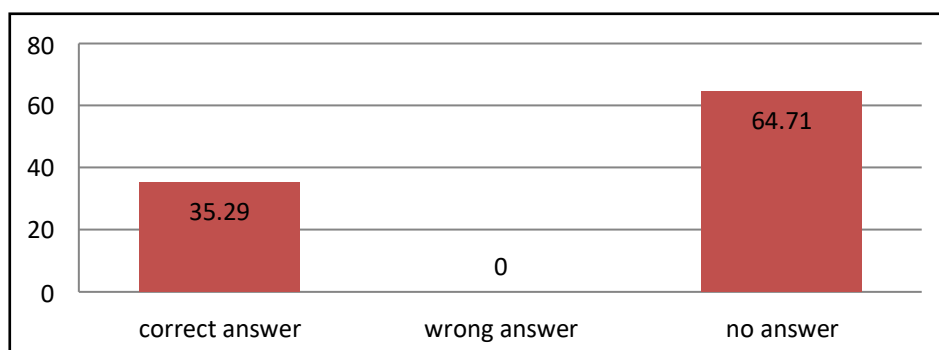


Figure 4.29: Students' Answer of the Clue A8 Second Crossword

The figure shows that few students (6) with the percentage of (35.29%) got the right answer which is “package holiday”, and most of students (64.71%) left the squares white. This means that this clue was difficult for students to solve it; however, simple words were used and many explanations were given to them.

9. A building where you pay to stay in a room.

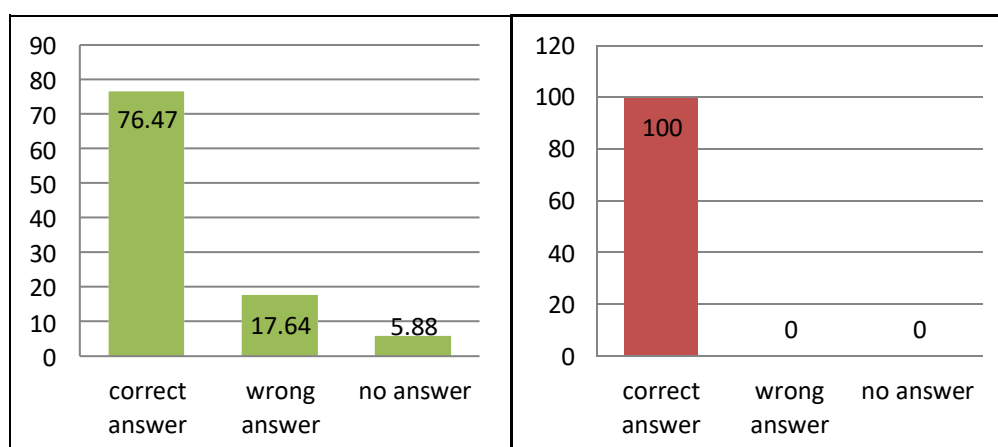


Figure 4.30: Students' Answer of the Clue A9 in the First Crossword Puzzle and Clue D9 in Second Crossword Puzzle

The results strikingly change from the first puzzle to the second one. In the first Puzzle, (76.47%) of students got the right answer and (17.64%) of them answered wrongly. Only one student with the percentage of (5.88%) left the square white. However, in second puzzle, all students corresponding to (100%) have rightly answered the clue. This implies that students' problem of memorizing words can be removed through practicing crossword puzzles.

10. Travelling around to visit monuments and other interesting sights.

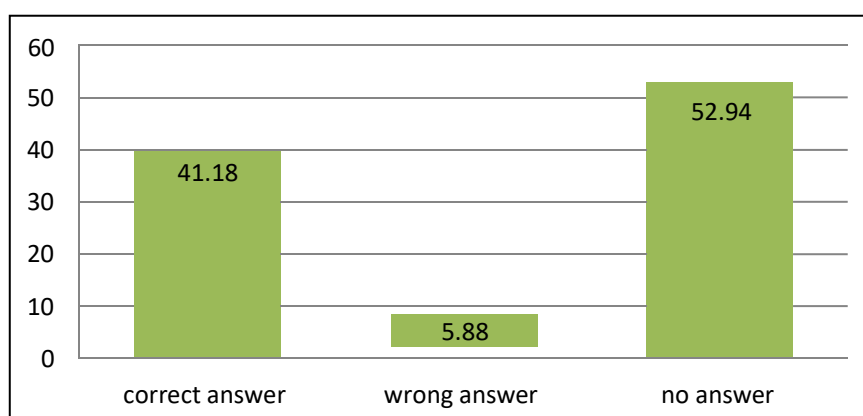


Figure 4.31: Students' Answer of the Clue A10 Second Crossword

From figures' results, we have observed that the majority of students (52.94%) were not able to solve this clue and they found it difficult to guess the meaning. The appropriate answer of this clue is "sightseeing". This indicates that this word was not familiar for some of them. Therefore, (07) students with the percentage of (41.18%) got the right answer and only one student with the percentage of (5.88%) answered the clue wrongly.

Analysis of the Students' Third Crossword Puzzle

1. People aim to get to their place.

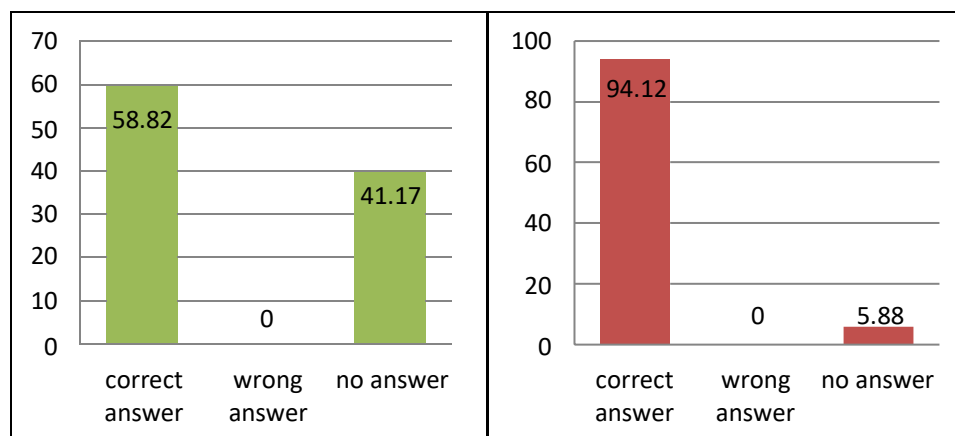


Figure 4.32: Students' Answer of the Clue A8 in the First Crossword Puzzle and Clue D1 in the Third Crossword Puzzle

As it is shown in this figure, there is a total change in the answers. In first crossword puzzle, students were able to solve the puzzle; students with the percentage of (58.82%) and (41.17%) left the squares white. However, in the third crossword puzzle, (94.12%) of students answered the clue correctly and only one student with the percentage of (5.88%) left the clue without any answer.

2. A small book that contains useful words and phrases in a particular foreign language, used especially by tourist.

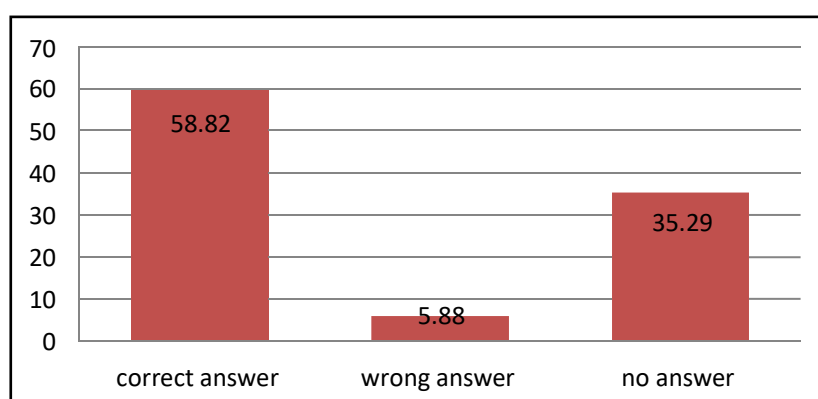


Figure 4.33: Students' Answer of the Clue D2 Third Crossword

According to the results shown in the figure above, (58.82%) of the students got the correct answer which is “phrasebook”; whereas, (35.29%) of students did not answer, they left the squares white and the reason behind that they did not understand the clue. However, (5.88%) of students answered wrongly.

3. Someone whose job is to look after a group of people who are visiting a place and give them information about it .

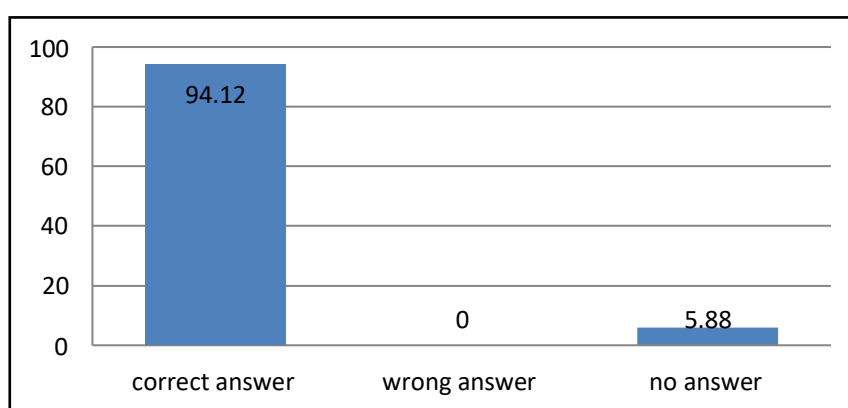


Figure 4.34: Students' Answer of the Clue D3 Third Crossword

From the **Figure 4.34**, we can notice that the majority of students (16) with the percentage of (94.12%) got the correct answer which is “guide”. Only one student with the percentage of (5.88%) left the squares white; this led us to say that this clue was easy for students to solve it.

4. That special route made by the tourist to find a place or thing.

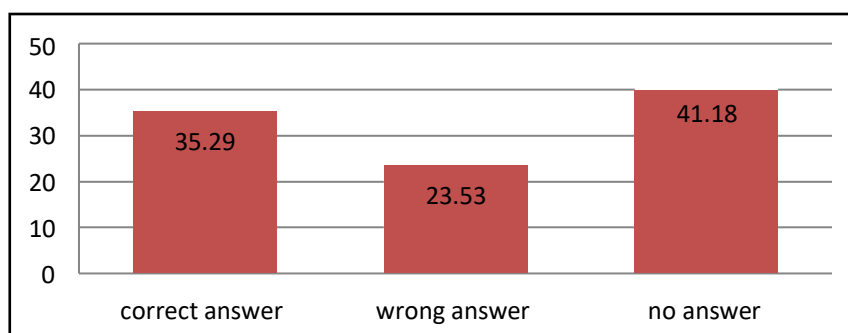


Figure 4.35: Students' Answer of the Clue A4 Third Crossword

As it is shown in the figure above, many students (41.18%) were not able to solve this clue. Thus, they found it difficult to guess the word from its' definition and statement. However, only (06) students with the percentage of (35.29%) got the correct answer which is “journey”, and (04) students corresponding to (23.53%) answered the clue wrongly.

5. A place where a lot of people go on holiday, usually one with a lot of hotels and restaurants.

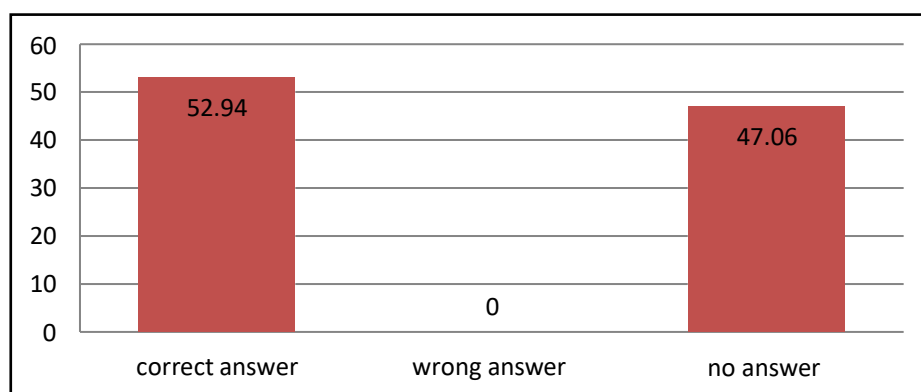


Figure 4.36: Students' Answer of the Clue D5 Third Crossword

As it is indicated in the above figure, the majority of students (59.94%) were able to solve the clue. At the first time, they did not understand the meaning but latter with more explanations, students were able to guess the correct word. (08) students with the percentage of (47.06%) left the clue white. Hence, the correct answer is “holiday resort”.

6. The action of providing or being provided with amusement or enjoyment.



Figure 4.37: Students' Answer of the Clue A6 Third Crossword

The **Figure 4.37** reveals that most of students (47.06%) were able to guess the right meaning of the clue which is “entertainment”; however, three (03) students with the percentage of (17.65%) answered wrongly because they thought that the correct answer is “gratification”. (35.29%) of students left the squares white.

7. A book that gives information about the place they are visiting.

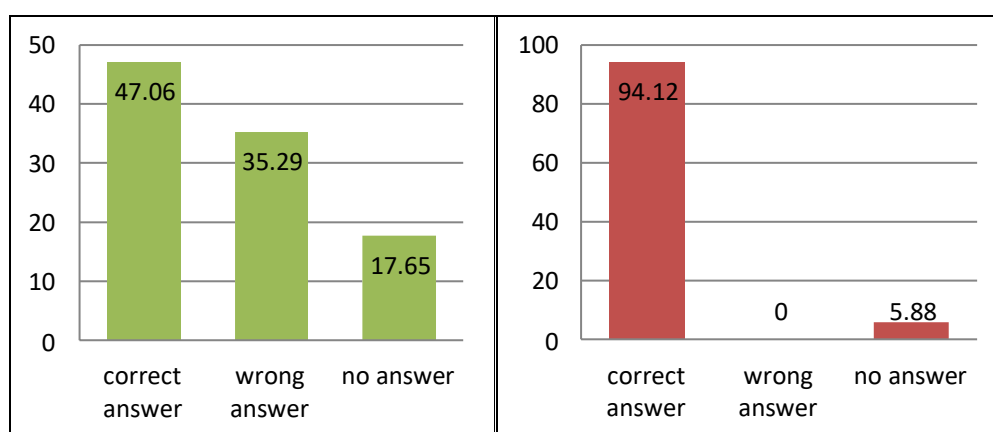


Figure 4.38: Students’ Answer of the Clue A3 in Second Crossword Puzzle and Clue A7 in Third Crossword Puzzle

The figure shows that results change from second to third crossword puzzle. In the second crossword puzzle, (47.06%) of the students got the correct answer; (35.29%) of students answered wrongly and (17.65%) of the them left the squares white. However, in the third crossword puzzle, the majority of students corresponding to (94.12%) were able to answer the clue easily and only one student with the percentage of (5.88%) did not answer. As a result, the problem of vocabulary misunderstanding can be solved through solving crossword puzzles.

8. A special time when people go on holiday every year.

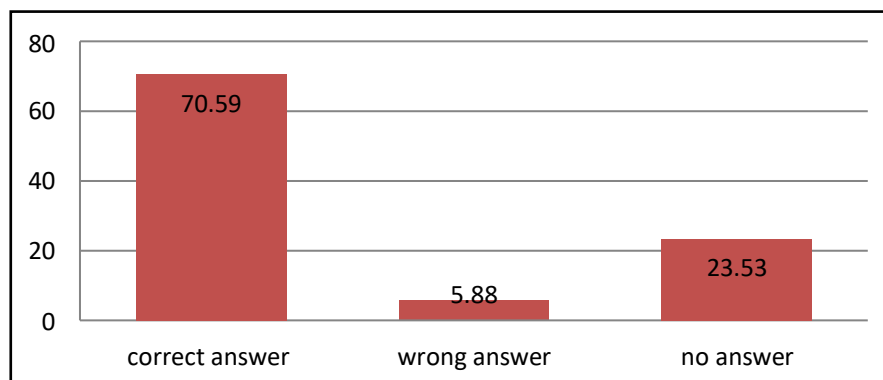


Figure 4.39: Students' Answer of the Clue A8 Third Crossword

The results show that the majority of students (12) with the percentage of (70.59 %) were able to guess the right answer which is “season”. Meanwhile, four (04) students with the percentage of (23.53%) did not answer; (5.88%) of students answered this clue wrongly.

9. Someone who goes on holiday seeing the wonders of the world.

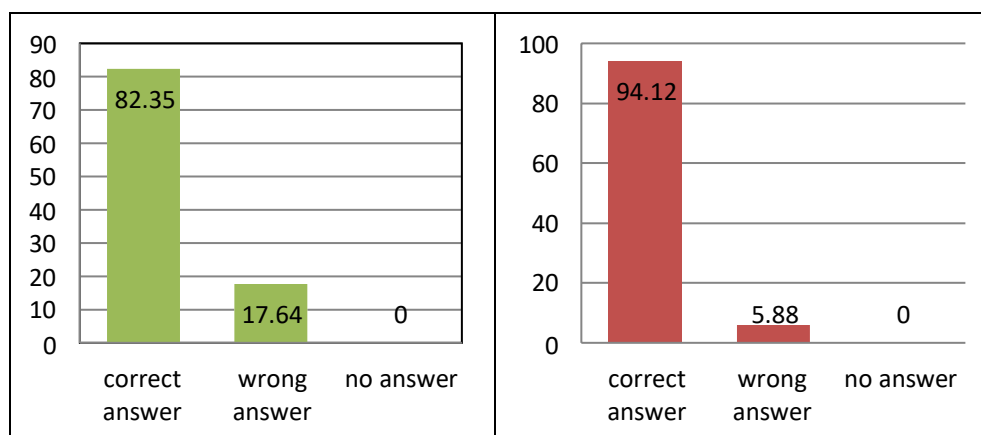


Figure 4.40: Students' Answer of the Clue D3 in the First Crossword Puzzle and the Clue A9 in Third Crossword Puzzle

The results show that there is a change in students' answers and this because they were familiar with the same clue before. Students show a progress (from 82.35% to 94.12%) concerning the correct answers and there is also a decrease in the number of wrong answers (from 17.64% to 5.88%). This improvement shows that students when they were solving the

first crossword puzzle, they didn't get the meaning of the word but after practicing crossword puzzles the memorization of words is asserted.

10. Interesting places that people go to see.

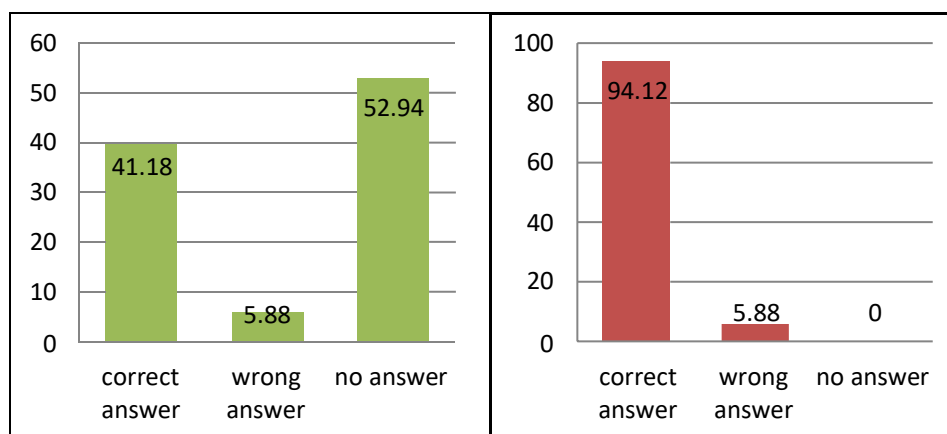


Figure 4.41: Students' Answer of the Clue A10 in the Second and the Third Crossword Puzzles

From the figure above, we can say that there is a total change between the second and the third crossword puzzles. So, there is improvements in the correct answers from (41.18% to 94.12%) and there is equivalent in wrong answers (5.88%), also the number of students who left the squares white decrease from (52.94% to 0%). As a result, practicing crossword puzzle helps students to memorize and be familiar with new vocabulary items.

11. An unusual and exciting or daring experience.

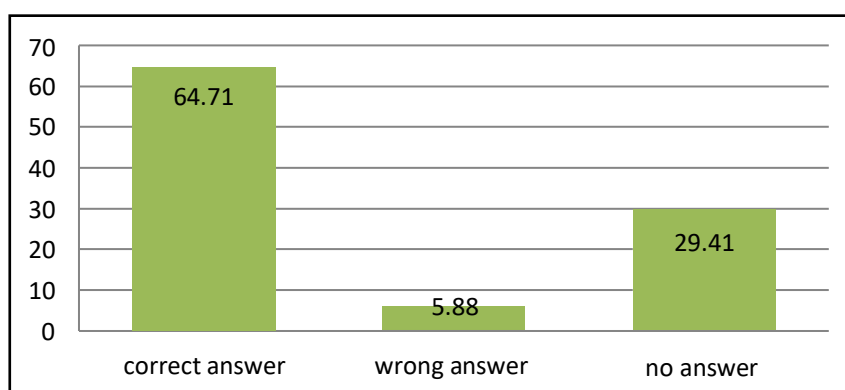


Figure 4.42: Students' Answer of the Clue A11 Third Crossword

According to the above results, most of students (11) with the percentage of (64.71%) got the correct answer which is “adventure”. A few students (05) corresponding to (29.41%) left the squares white because the statement of the clue was unfamiliar for them. However, they were informed that they can use dictionaries. Moreover, only one student with the percentage of (5.88%) answered the clue wrongly.

Analysis of the post-test

All English teachers claimed that their students are much more motivated to learn new vocabularies and this is clearly appeared in the previous stages when they were solving the puzzles. However, first year students of English were extremely not motivated to do the post test since it was about writing a paragraph. There are many reasons behind this such as: students’ lack of vocabulary, the fear of committing grammatical or spelling mistakes and the misuse of pronunciation. We stated in the second chapter that motivation has a very important role in achieving successful learning. So, before starting our post-test, we should first motivate our participants in order to complete the experiment. It was not easy at all to convince them that it is only a game which has nothing to do with grades, or it is not a sin to make mistakes especially, our contact was behind screens and not face to face contact. Finally, they accepted to write the paragraph; thus, we were able to complete our experiment.

When we started the post-test, students were asked to write a short paragraph in which they describe a holiday or place that they want to visit. The results show that students dealt with the most appropriate words that they learnt before. In addition, they focused on the detail of each word use.

As results of this experiment, students have used almost all words that they learnt in the previous stages because they all fit with the context. The most used vocabularies that we have found in most students’ written compositions in which they were mentioned from 07 to 15

paragraphs as follows: **“hotel (15), tourist (15), trip (13), destination (11), plane (11), Sightseeing (10), passport (09), baggage (08), guide (07), tickets (07), train (07) and entertainment (07)”**. In addition, some words were used in few paragraphs from 02 to 06 such as: **“guidebook (06), journey (06), boat (05), season (05), adventure (05), language (03), holiday resort (02), and the word safari (02)”**. Moreover, students did not use words like: **exchange, exotic, villa and package holiday** because they think that they did not fit with the context of the paragraph.

In fact, the post-test result was not as it was expected since students have achieved more than they really expected to do. Students used nearly all words that they have memorized from solving previous puzzles. Although they were not motivated and they found many difficulties to do this test, they used appropriate and correct words in both meaning and spelling. As a conclusion, the results shown reveal that crossword puzzles are said to be a good tool or mean that helps students to improve their vocabulary knowledge and memorize new vocabulary items. Thus, language teachers should take into consideration the incorporation of this new strategy in the domain of teaching foreign languages.

Conclusion

This chapter dealt with data-collection about the use of crossword puzzle as teaching strategy. Data were collected through administrating a questionnaire for teachers and examination for students. Moreover, this chapter covered the different results that we have obtained from both questionnaire and examination which serve as a pavement for the next chapter; Discussion.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Recommendations

Introduction

The current chapter discusses the results obtained from this study as an attempt to check the validity of the already stated hypotheses and to answer the research questions. It includes the discussion of results gathered from teachers' questionnaire as well as students' test. Finally, recommendations and solutions to the research problem were organized in this chapter.

Discussion of Teachers Questionnaire Results

The main objective of this study is to investigate the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding the use of crossword puzzles as one of the teaching strategies to teach vocabulary and its' effects on the improvement of students' knowledge. Section one of teachers' questionnaire was devoted to the background information of teachers. The results show that most of teachers held the master/magister degree and had sufficient experience in teaching foreign languages.

The second section of the questionnaire dealt with vocabulary acquisition. The results revealed that the majority of teachers argued that pronunciation is the most difficult for them to teach more than vocabulary. In fact, almost all teachers introduce new vocabulary items in each lesson; this, implies that they give a great importance to teaching vocabulary and consider it an interesting component of language as the other skills.

Results showed that teachers use more than one strategy to teach this aspect. Therefore, the most used strategies are definitions, synonyms. The reason behind this answer is that teachers found that these two strategies make their learners memorize new words easily. Overall, teachers stated that they also use games and translation if it is necessary. Nevertheless, teachers claimed that students face various challenges and difficulties while learning new vocabulary .The results showed that

spelling is said to be the hardest component for students as well as meaning and complexity of words. In addition, some other teachers considered pronunciation as a difficult aspect for learners to master the knowledge of vocabulary.

The last section was concerned with the use of crossword puzzles as a teaching strategy including the psychological side of learners under an important element which is called motivation. Based on the results revealed from this section, all teachers confirmed that their students are motivated to learn more. This implies that students are aware about the role of psychological side in the learning process. Besides, teachers had variety of ways for motivating their students and make them well involved in learning. Among those techniques, most of teachers answered that games and group work are the most used tools for motivating students.

All teachers confirmed that they use educational games in teaching. This implies that they are aware about the benefits of using games while teaching foreign language in which the majority of them answered they sometime use educational games. The majority of English teachers admit that they are supposed to be coach, facilitator and Assessor while using games such crossword puzzles; in addition, few of them mentioned the teachers' role as organizer. Hence, the majority of teachers recognize that students can benefit from using crossword puzzles in which they can improve many skills when using this strategy, most of teachers (04) answered that students can improve: exact spelling, self esteem, vocabulary knowledge and professional skills. However, the rest of teachers considered exact spelling and vocabulary knowledge are the most components that students can develop when using crossword puzzle games. Meanwhile, the results of the last question revealed that the majority of teachers are strongly agree with the use crossword puzzles in current course syllabus as one of the main strategies in teaching foreign languages.

Discussion of Students' Test

Based on the results acquired from the pre-test and post-test results, we can deduce that there was an intelligible improvement in vocabulary level of the first year students of English at Chadli Bendjedid University after the implementation of crossword puzzles.

After analyzing the students' pre-test, the results revealed that students benefit a lot from practicing crossword puzzles. Additionally, they can develop the acquisition of words in terms of meaning and exact spelling, and increase their familiarity with words that they were not familiar with them before.

Almost all students were able to solve different clues of the first puzzle in which few of them were a victim of wrong spelling. The second crossword puzzle revealed total progress in solving the clues in which the results showed a striking improvement in terms of comprehension of words' meaning such as: the word tickets, trip, train and plane. In addition to some previous words used in the first puzzle such: hotel, passport. This led us to deduce that practicing crossword puzzles helps to increase students' memorization and familiarity with word.

Results of the third puzzle also showed a positive progress in students' knowledge of words from the first crossword puzzle to the third one. This change appeared clearly in words such: entertainment, guidebook, sightseeing and destination. Thus, students who made spelling mistakes in the first puzzle have recognized their mistakes and corrected them.

In the post test, results were unexpected since students have used almost all words that they learnt in the previous stages. Consequently, they used 20 words from 25 words in the three puzzles in which the most used vocabularies are: destination, guide, phrasebook, adventure, holiday resort, season, tourist, tickets and boat. Moreover, words that they did not use are: exchange, exotic, villa and package holiday. Surprisingly, students show positive improvement of being able to solve the

puzzle. In fact, the post-test result was a surprise because we were expecting that students would use only few of the 25 given words.

As a conclusion, the results have proved that English teachers agree that crossword puzzles could be a great way to teach vocabulary. Thus, the results of the students' test also proved that it is a good mean in the field of teaching foreign languages.

Recommendations

Referring to the findings, this study suggests a list of solutions to overcome the challenges that teachers face while teaching language/ the use of crossword puzzle as a teaching strategy. A set of recommendations were established to help teachers avoiding these challenges and obstacles for the enhancement of students' knowledge of vocabulary by using crossword puzzles.

Recommendations:

Throughout this investigation, it is clearly apparent that crossword puzzles help students to enrich their vocabulary and to express their ideas with confidence. Actually, the pre and post tests were much more helpful and feasible to figure out students' enhancement of new items towards using crossword puzzle as an activity. In other terms, whether students learn vocabulary through crossword puzzles.

Accordingly, throughout the examination, practicing crossword puzzles can be beneficial to the students in the educational and the psychological side. Thus, the use of this type of activities in foreign language teaching/learning is a good tool not only in the improvement of the language but also in practicing their skills.

On the whole, crossword puzzles proved to have good effects on helping learners' level of motivation in which this strategy provides great challenges between them. However, practicing

crossword puzzles helps in acquiring new vocabulary items in an interesting way as well as increase students' familiarity with them as far as spelling and meaning are concerned.

Conclusively, according to the achieved results, we can absolutely deduce that this type of activities plays a strong role in the improvements of students' knowledge of vocabulary. In the light of our analysis and findings, we recommend the following:

- Teachers should try to change the classical techniques and add new strategies to get better results in which a touch of entertainment should be implemented.
- Teachers should plan a specific rhythm for the application of educational games in the syllabus.
- Learner centered method should be the most used in the teaching process as students' needs would be taken into consideration while planning the syllabus.
- Teachers and syllabus designers should implement crossword puzzles in a syllabus for first year English students at the university level.
- Should be embedded in instructional programs that include debriefing and feedback so the students understand what happened in the game exactly.

Conclusion

The last chapter covered the whole discussion of the results obtained through the teachers' questionnaire and students' test at Chadli Bendjedid University El-Tarf. In addition, this chapter gave some remedial recommendations and instructions for future researches regarding the use of crossword puzzles as teaching strategy for the enhancement of students' knowledge of vocabulary.

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Appendices

Appendix 01: Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

The following questionnaire is a part of research work that deals with the use of crossword puzzle as teaching strategy to enhance students' knowledge of vocabulary.

Your cooperation in answering the following questions honestly and frankly would be greatly appreciated. You are kindly asked to tick the appropriate box and make statements whenever required.

Thank you in advance

Section One: General Information

Q1: What Academic degree(s) do you have?

BA (Licence)

☐

MA (Master/ Magister)

☐

PHD (Doctorate)

☐

Q2: How many years have you been teaching English?

Up to 1 year ☐

5 to 10 years ☐

10 to 15 years ☐

More than 15 years ☐

Section Two: Vocabulary Acquisition

Q3: Which one of the following aspects is the most difficult for you to teach?

a. Vocabulary ☐

b. Pronunciation ☐

c. Grammar ☐

d. All of them ☐

Q4: Do you introduce new vocabulary in each lesson?

Yes ☐

No ☐

sometimes ☐

Q5: Do you consider vocabulary as important as other skills in teaching foreign languages?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Q6: Please, explain!

.....

.....

Q7: Which one of these strategies do you use when teaching vocabulary?

a. Definition ☐

b. Games ☐

c. Synonym ☐

d. Translation ☐

Q8: In which aspect of language your students face more difficulties while learning new Vocabulary?

a. Spelling ☐

b. Meaning ☐

c. Pronunciation ☐

d. Complexity of words ☐

Section Three: Crossword Puzzles as a Teaching Strategy

Q9: Do you think that your students are motivated to learn more?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Q10: please explain!

.....

.....

Q11: which of the following strategies you use for motivating your students:

- a. watching videos tapes ☐
- b. Role play ☐
- c. Lectures ☐
- d. Games ☐
- e. Making project ☐
- f. Group work ☐

Q12: Do you use educational games in teaching?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes.

Q13: How often do you use educational games?

- a. Very Often ☐
- b. Sometimes ☐
- c. Rarely ☐

Q14: According to you, in games such Crossword puzzle, the teacher is supposed to be:

- a. As Coach ☐
- b. As Facilitator ☐
- c. As Assessor ☐
- d. As Organizer ☐

Q15: What do you think students can improve more when using crossword puzzle?

- a. Exact spelling ☐
- b. Self-esteem ☐
- c. Vocabulary knowledge ☐
- d. Professional skills ☐
- e. All ☐

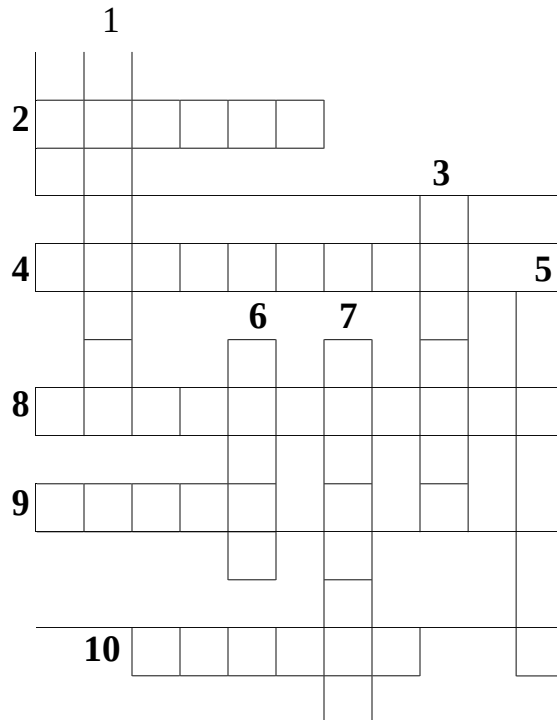
Q16: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “crossword puzzle can be used in course current syllabus, as one of the main strategy in teaching”?

- a. Strongly agree ☐
- b. Agree ☐
- c. Disagree ☐
- d. Strongly disagree ☐

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix 02: First Crossword Puzzle

Complete the following crossword puzzle with the appropriate word corresponding to the clues:



Crossword Puzzle «Holiday and Tourism»

Across

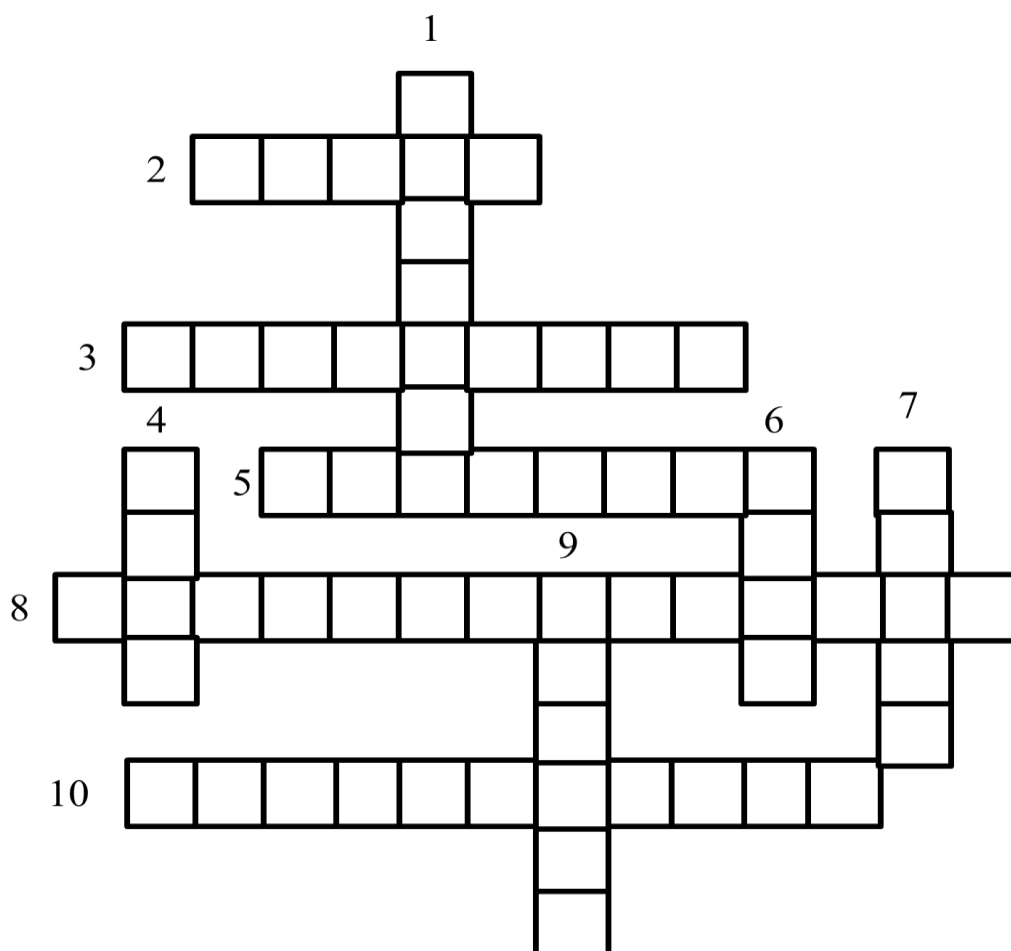
- 2. Foreign or unusual.
- 4. Another name for luggage.
- 8. Place to which someone or something is going or being sent.
- 9. An establishment that provides accommodation and other services to travelers or tourists.
- 10. Wildlife tour.

Down

- 1. Another word meaning to swap.
- 3. Person who visits new places.
- 5. A system of communication used in a particular country.
- 6. Another name for house.
- 7. A document issued to citizens for travelling abroad.

Appendix 03: Second Crossword Puzzle

Complete the following crossword puzzle with the appropriate word corresponding to the clues:



Crossword Puzzle «Holiday and Tourism»

Across

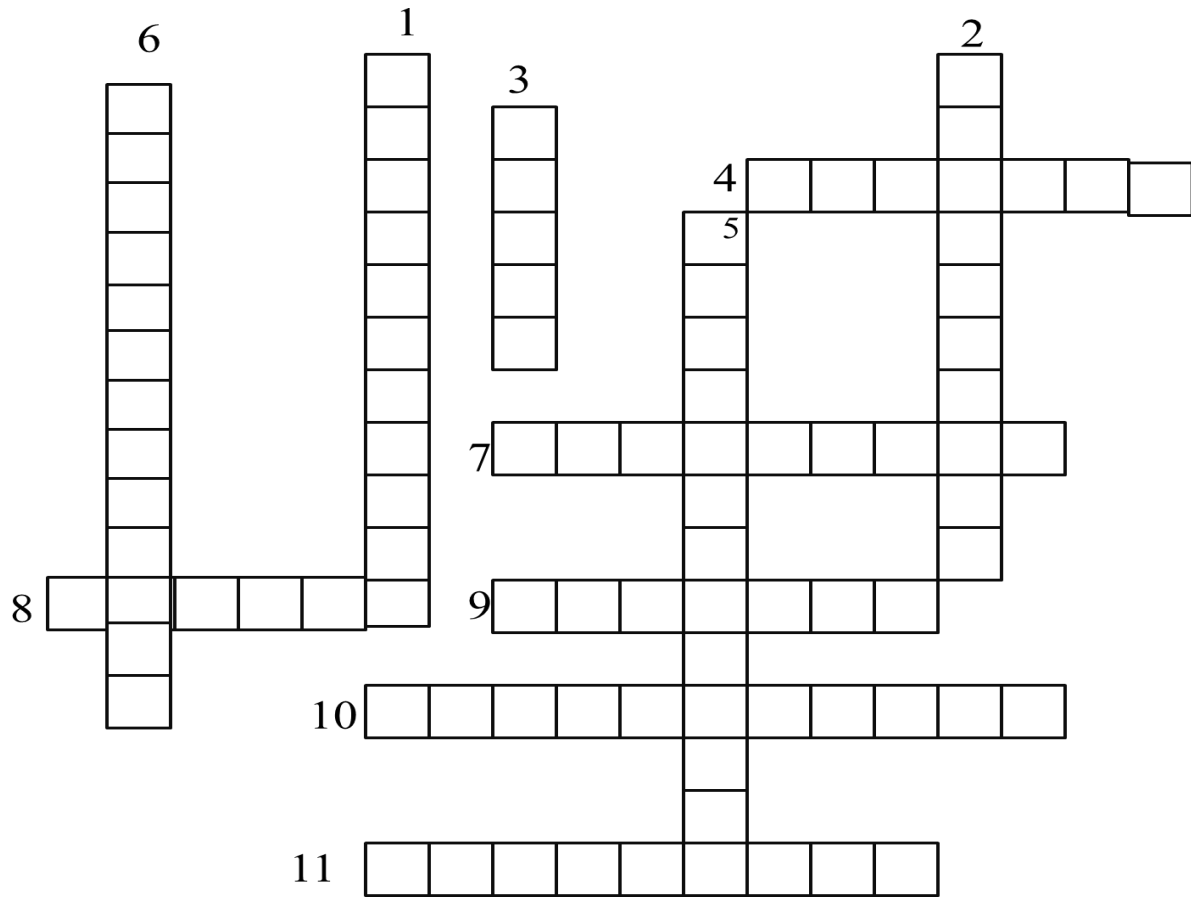
- 2. Type of transport for land
- 3. A book that gives tourist information
- 5. An official document for travelling with your photo and your nationality
- 8. A holiday where everything is included - the transport, hotel, etc.
- 10. Travelling around to visit monuments and other interesting sights.

Down

- 1. Papers that show you can use a type of transport or enter a place
- 4. Type of transport for water
- 6. A journey in which you go somewhere , usually for a short time, and come back again .
- 7. Type of transport for air
- 9. A building where you pay to stay in a room

Appendix 04: Third Crossword Puzzle

Complete the following crossword puzzle with the appropriate word corresponding to the clues :



Crossword Puzzle «Holiday and Tourism»

Down

1. People aim to get to their place
2. A small book that contains useful words and phrases in a particular foreign language, used especially by tourist
3. Someone whose job is to look after a group of people who are visiting a place and give them information about it
5. A place where a lot of people go on holiday, usually one with a lot of hotels, and restaurants

Across

4. That special route made by the tourist to find a place or thing
6. The action of providing or being provided with amusement or enjoyment
7. A book that gives information about the place they are visiting

- 8.** A special time when people go on holiday every year
- 9.** Someone who goes on holiday seeing the wonders of the world
- 10.** Interesting places that people go to see
- 11.** An unusual and exciting or daring experience

Appendix 05

- By using some of words that you have learnt from the previous crossword puzzles, write a short paragraph in which you describe a holiday or a place that you want to visit.

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dashed lines, typical of primary-ruled notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.