



Using Word Puzzle Media to Increase Student Interactivity Islamic Religious Education Learning

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ABSTRACT

Rapid technological advances require the integration of digital tools in educational practices to increase student involvement and understanding, therefore this research is important to increase student interaction in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning using word puzzle-based learning media at Tahfidz Al-Jamiel Elementary School, Palangka Raya. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Data was collected through participant observation of Islamic Religious Education teachers, in-depth interviews with PAI teachers and school principals, and students as research informants, and documentation. The research results show that word puzzle-based learning media effectively increases student interaction in learning PAI and the use of word puzzle media. Teachers report a marked increase in student engagement. Apart from that, students expressed their level of satisfaction with the word puzzle media on the grounds that they found it easy to understand the material, and found it interesting, thus making students feel happy studying Islamic Religious Education material in Tahfidz Al-jamiel Elementary School, Palangkaraya.

Keywords: *Islamic Religious Education, Word Puzzle, Interactive*

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a conscious and designed effort to create an atmosphere and learning process that allows students to actively grow their own abilities. Through education, it is hoped that students can have strong spiritual abilities, self-control skills, good behavior, intelligence, good morals, and also the competencies needed for students, the people, the nation and the country (Supaini, 2019). Among the subjects taught at school is Islamic Religious Education. Islamic Religious Education is a consciously planned effort to equip students to know, deepen, understand and believe in Islamic religious beliefs (Darmawati, 2018). Islamic religious education is also understood to be a learning process carried out by individuals and educational institutions, which intends to provide learning related to the Islamic religion to those who wish to deepen this teaching. This process includes academic understanding as well as applications that can be used in daily activities.

In learning there are several factors that influence the learning process, including a lack of interest in learning (Putri et al., 2017). This situation causes students to tend to pay less attention to the learning process, feel unhappy when learning activities take place, are dissatisfied, and are less likely to participate and be interested in taking part in lessons (P. H. Saputra, 2014). Interest is a feeling of liking and interest

that arises naturally towards an activity without any coercion. as happens to elementary school children At this age, children are usually still very enthusiastic about playing, so they often experience difficulties if they are faced with too serious learning at school. Interaction with classmates has an influential contribution to children's social growth at this stage, because through interacting with friends, they can learn and obtain information about the world outside the family environment (Nurkhoru et al., 2021)..

Word puzzle or what is known in Indonesian as a word puzzle, is a game or activity that involves searching for hidden words in a random arrangement of letters. Word puzzles are usually arranged in a grid or matrix form, where each letter is placed in a box that forms rows and columns. The words that must be found can be arranged horizontally, vertically, diagonally, or even upside down, which adds to the level of difficulty and challenge of this game. The meaning of word puzzles is not only in the entertainment aspect, but also in the educational benefits they contain. Through searching for hidden words, players, both children and adults, can expand their vocabulary, improve pattern recognition abilities, and hone cognitive skills such as concentration and problem solving.

In an educational context, word puzzles are often used as an effective learning tool. Teachers at various levels of education use word puzzles to teach new concepts, repeat lesson material, or simply to provide variety in teaching methods so that students don't get bored. For example, in language lessons, word puzzles can be used to introduce new words, strengthen understanding of spelling, and improve reading skills, no exception for Islamic religious education teachers. In this way, Word Puzzle not only makes it easier for students to capture learning material better, but also makes the learning method more enjoyable (A. D. Saputra, 2017).

Word puzzle is a digital form of traditional word puzzle games that utilizes internet technology to provide a more dynamic and interesting gaming experience. In word puzzles, players search for hidden words in a grid of letters, which can be accessed via various devices such as computers, tablets or smartphones. Word puzzles usually come with additional features not found in the printed version, such as a timer to challenge the game to complete the puzzle within a certain time, various levels of difficulty, interesting themes, and the ability to automatically track the player's progress. In addition, word puzzles often involve competing with other people in real life or sharing their achievements via social media, adding a social and competitive element that increases engagement and motivation (A. Arifin et al., 2023).

Word puzzle also provides flexibility in accessibility, allowing players to enjoy the game any time and anywhere they want as long as they have a network. This is especially useful in educational contexts, where teachers can easily integrate word puzzles into distance or hybrid learning activities. Word puzzle platforms often offer a variety of languages and topics, allowing users to choose a puzzle that suits their interests or educational needs. Additionally, word puzzles can be updated regularly with new content, keeping the game fresh and challenging for those who play.

Among other advantages of word puzzles is the ability to provide immediate feedback. When players find the correct word, the app automatically identifies and highlights the word, giving players immediate confirmation of their progress. This feature not only improves learning efficiency but also helps in correcting errors immediately. In addition, some word puzzle platforms provide statistics showing player performance, such as the time needed to complete the puzzle and the number of

words found, which can be used by teachers to measure student progress and identify which require further observation (Suswanto et al., 2021).

Word puzzle also supports collaboration, where multiple players can work together to solve the same puzzle, both in a virtual classroom setting and as part of a group activity in face-to-face learning. This can help develop cooperation, communication, and problem-solving skills. In addition, variations in word puzzle design and format, such as crosswords or anagrams, provide different challenges that can help improve players' linguistic and cognitive skills holistically (Kasi, 2022).

In an increasingly digital world, word puzzles offer an engaging and effective way to combine entertainment with education. With its ability to be adapted to a variety of needs and preferences, as well as its broad accessibility, word puzzles have become a valuable tool for educators and students around the world. Through the use of technology, word puzzles not only enrich the playing experience but also expand the learning potential, making them a relevant and useful tool in today's digital era (Puspita, 2022)

Interactive learning is a learning method that makes students enthusiastic. In the interactive learning process, students are not just passive recipients of stories, but participate in discussions, collaboration and solving difficulties. The aim of interactive learning is to realize active learning and involve students in learning methods (Suswanto et al., 2021). Interactive learning uses various interactive media and technologies to stimulate students' active participation. Interactive learning media can be in the form of digital technology, such as web-based learning applications, which allow students to learn independently and adapt to their own learning styles.

Interactive learning also requires an active role from the teacher by creating interesting conditions. Teachers must provide education to students, provide teaching media that students can observe, and provide opportunities for students to ask questions, write and respond. In this way, a dialogue conversation is formed which indicates interactive learning. Interactive teaching can also be carried out using various interactive technologies and tools, such as web-based learning applications, which facilitate students' active participation in the learning process (Sarifah et al., 2025).

In conclusion, the interactive learning process is a learning technique that involves enthusiastic students in the learning process. The goal is to create effective learning, involving students in discussion, collaboration and problem solving. Interactive learning uses various interactive media and technologies to stimulate students' active participation and increase their learning motivation. Based on the information above, it can be summarized that interactive media is a type of media that can provide feedback to users, especially from an academic environment.

The PAI teacher at SD Tahfidz Al-Jamiel stated that the use of correct learning media is very necessary for learning activities because it can encourage students to be more enthusiastic and encouraged in learning. From the data obtained, so far the teaching and learning process that has been running has been carried out by teachers only conducting conventional learning, namely focusing on lectures and questions and answers only. There is a lack of innovation by teachers in creating interesting learning media to support the learning process. Innovation regarding learning media is really needed, especially in educating students in elementary schools, which essentially require learning that is fun, interesting and motivating so that they are enthusiastic about learning. Therefore, word puzzle media was chosen to support and create interesting, motivating and interactive learning conditions.

METHOD

The approach used by researchers is a qualitative research approach that produces descriptive data. This research aims to explore the meaning or values behind the observed phenomena, then describe them using words and sentences without using statistical formulas (Ahmad & Muslimah, 2021). Next, the data that has been collected is processed, namely processing and analyzing, the method applied in qualitative analysis is by describing it in words, not in the form of numbers. This data was obtained through in-depth observation techniques, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, observation, centralized discussions, which were recorded in field notes. Also a form that can be used for photography or video recording (Sugiono, 2019). The subjects in this research were fifth grade students and PAI teachers. The informants in this research were the school principal and homeroom teacher. The data collection techniques used by researchers are interviews, observation, and documentation regarding the use of word puzzle media. The data analysis used by researchers is the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model which includes four stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

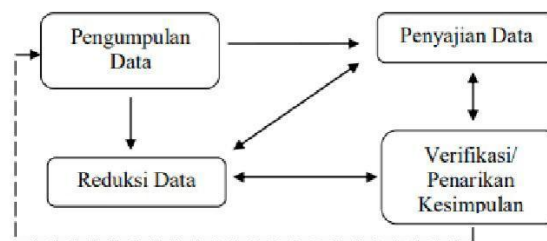


Figure 1. Data analysis mode flow

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the results of interviews with PAI teachers, "the use of this puzzle media is quite increasing their understanding, because they are enthusiastic, increasing understanding with this word puzzle media is quite increasing their understanding with indications that they are enthusiastic" (PAI teacher interview). Being enthusiastic about learning is very important, if they are enthusiastic about participating in learning then understanding will quickly come in and stick, especially as this media increases their enthusiasm for learning. Because if students are not enthusiastic they are less enthusiastic and don't understand, but when using media they are more enthusiastic, indirectly students understand by themselves.

Word puzzle media can be accessed anywhere and at any time. Researcher's interview with the school principal "We think the word puzzle media is varied, we really support it because students are more enthusiastic and don't get bored of listening to the teacher explain. This word puzzle media can also be used in several lessons" (school principal interview).

Observation results showed that class V students showed quite good interaction. One of the students said. "I felt very happy and interested when learning to use word puzzle media in PAI learning. This media makes it easier for me to understand the lesson and doesn't make me bored (student interviews). Word puzzle media is an interesting medium that can teach students to sharpen their accuracy in constructing sentences, while increasing their thinking speed (Saifara, 2020).

The use of word puzzle media can increase student interaction, this was conveyed by the homeroom teacher, "In my opinion, word puzzle media can increase student interaction to be more interactive, both between each other or between students and teachers. Then they also responded well to this media, I am sure their understanding will improve, (classroom teacher interview). In interactive learning, students participate in critical thinking, exchange ideas, and collaborate with their classmates. This learning process can foster students' enthusiasm and interest in learning, so that students feel more involved and have control over the ongoing learning methods. (Hafid Muslih, 2021). Learning media is a tool or means used to provide information as teaching material. His presence plays an important role in motivating students to undergo the learning process in order to achieve the desired goals. The aim of learning media is to convey information effectively to the audience, so that the learning process can run well and the stated desires can be carried out (Zahwa & Syafi'i, 2022). Based on the results of observations and interviews, the use of word puzzle media increases student interaction in learning. The following are data mining instruments.

Table 1. Table of Observation and Interview Instruments

No	Indicator	Data Mining Instruments	Data Collection Techniques			
			Observation		Interview	
			Of	No	Of	No
1	Process of Using Word Puzzle Learning Media at SD Tahfidz Al-Jamiel Palangka Raya	The teacher divides the class into several groups	✓		✓	
		Students sit according to their groups	✓		✓	
		The teacher distributes questions containing word puzzles	✓		✓	
		Students work on word puzzles in groups	✓		✓	
		The teacher gives an evaluation	✓		✓	
2	Results of Using Word Puzzle Media in Increasing Student Interactivity in PAI Learning at Tahfidz Al-Jamiel Elementary School, Palangka Raya	Delivery of learning materials can be uniform	✓		✓	
		The learning process is more interesting	✓		✓	
		The learning process is more interactive	✓		✓	
		The quality of learning can be improved	✓		✓	
		The learning process can take place anytime and anywhere.	✓		✓	

The results of the research show that the use of word puzzle media can increase student interaction in learning Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in class V of SD Tahfidz Al-Jamiel Palangkaraya. Among the factors that influence the success of teaching and learning activities in the classroom is the use of word puzzle media. With this method, students become enthusiastic about the learning process. The involvement of students during the learning process helps encourage their motivation to learn more actively.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that learning using word puzzle media is very influential in student interactivity. The word puzzle media is designed in an interesting way, so that students feel interested and enthusiastic about learning. This media is in the form of a game consisting of boxes or letters arranged in a game form, which ultimately forms vocabulary. This makes students motivated to complete word puzzles well and precisely (Astuti & Istiarini, 2020). Puzzle media helps students understand the explanations given by teachers when teaching learning material. (Maulidah & Aslam, 2021). Students who respond quickly to the material tend to be more focused and have more fun, because the tasks distributed by the teacher are related to the games that students play every day. This makes the learning process fun for them so that students are more enthusiastic and increasingly interactive (M. B. Arifin & Wardani, 2020).

The research results show that the use of word puzzle media is very supportive in managing the class during the learning process. Using word puzzle media, students are more enthusiastic, feel happy, and are also enthusiastic and active in the learning process. The advantages of word puzzle media for students include the main focus being on improving thinking abilities related to learning skills and also being able to solve problems. Playing activities through the use of word puzzles also encourage cooperation between children, so that they are able to explore various things according to their respective abilities and interests. Thus, word puzzle media has the potential to increase student interactivity. This finding is strengthened by previous research which shows that puzzle learning media can improve the quality of memorizing the Al-Qur'an at the Tahfiz Bunayya House (Sari, 2021). Application of puzzle media in an effort to increase student learning motivation in PAI Islamic Religious Education subjects (I. S. Malichah, 2023). The use of puzzle media in social studies learning to foster collaboration between class VII students at MTs Darul Ulum (T. I. Wahyudi, 2022). The use of learning media in the form of puzzles has proven effective in improving the learning outcomes of fifth grade students in Mathematics (T. A. Suriani, 2024). The impact of using computer-based learning media such as word puzzle games on student learning motivation. (Triyani, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Word puzzle media helps teachers to divide the class into several groups, so that students can work together and collaborate in solving word puzzles. This can improve students' abilities in communicating, collaborating and thinking critically. Teachers can also distribute questions containing word puzzles, so that students can work on the puzzles in groups. Word puzzle media provides effective evaluation. Thus, students can understand the progress they have made and hone their abilities. This will contribute to improving the quality of learning and make the learning process more effective. so that students know the lesson better and increase their strengths making learning more effective.

The use of word puzzle media also helps deliver learning material in a more uniform manner, thus, students will be able to know better and optimize students' strengths in knowing complex ideas and improve the quality of their learning. With word puzzles, the learning process is more fun and interactive, so students become enthusiastic and involved in the learning process and also increase student motivation, making the learning process more enjoyable. The learning process has now become easier, students can study whenever and wherever they want. In conclusion, the use of word puzzle media in classroom learning can bring several uses that are also relevant during the learning process. This media can improve students' abilities in communicating, collaborating and thinking critically, as well as making the learning experience more interesting, interactive and effective.

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