

Running head: ROLE OF CROSSWORD PUZZLES TO INCREASE VOCABULARY

THE ROLE OF CROSSWORD PUZZLES FOR INCREASING VOCABULARY IN
TWELVE-YEAR OLD LEARNERS IN THE SECOND-LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
PROCESS AT INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA MUNICIPAL LICEO CENTRAL DE NARIÑO

Vanesa Sofía Timaná Hurtado and Diana Marcela Rojas Jácome

Submitted to the School of Human Sciences

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of B.A. in the Department of

Linguistics and Languages

English and French Program

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Nariño

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Nota De Aceptación:

Firma del jurado

Firma del jurado

RESUMEN

Generalmente, cuando se aprende un idioma, se dedica poco tiempo al aprendizaje de vocabulario, y generalmente es una parte del proceso incidental. Sin embargo, tener un rango limitado de vocabulario representa una carga para los estudiantes que desean comunicarse y comprender sus propias ideas, pensamientos, emociones y sentimientos de una manera efectiva. El vocabulario es la esencia del proceso de aprendizaje de un nuevo idioma, ya que ayuda a los alumnos a desarrollar sus habilidades para escuchar, hablar, leer y escribir.

El buen dominio del vocabulario es importante para hablar con fluidez y precisión, escribir con facilidad y comprender lo que significa. Además, las palabras pueden hacer comunicaciones exitosas en diferentes circunstancias porque los estudiantes usan la palabra exacta en la situación correcta. Enseñar a los estudiantes a desarrollar vocabulario significa proporcionar instrucción explícita sobre palabras importantes del texto y enseñar estrategias a los estudiantes para ayudarlos a aprender el significado de las palabras de forma independiente.

Sin embargo, es esencial saber cuál es la función de una palabra en una oración sin olvidar el contexto, ya que permite a los alumnos comprender el significado. Una forma excelente de aprender vocabulario podrían ser los crucigramas, dado que son herramientas didácticas que pueden ayudar a los alumnos a adquirir diferentes palabras y aumentar las habilidades de pensamiento y comprensión.

Los crucigramas pueden proporcionar a los estudiantes una experiencia de aprendizaje significativa ya que los estudiantes aprenden haciendo algo que podría ser divertido para ellos. Al participar en la solución de un rompecabezas, los estudiantes pueden desarrollar y mejorar su

vocabulario, así como establecer relaciones de forma y significado. Los crucigramas tienen en cuenta el contexto del mundo real en el que los alumnos se sienten motivados para aprender. Además, los estudiantes podrían retener palabras que son importantes en su contexto más fácilmente.

El uso de crucigramas puede proporcionar una forma simple y creativa de incorporar el aprendizaje activo porque esta herramienta gana la atención e interés de los alumnos dentro del aula. Los crucigramas pueden guiar a los estudiantes a descubrir los significados correctos de una palabra y aumentar el conocimiento de nuevas palabras o conceptos considerando el entorno con una técnica didáctica pensando en mejorar la creatividad y la comprensión en los alumnos de un segundo idioma.

Por estas razones, tenemos la intención de promover el uso de crucigramas en el aula con el fin de aumentar el vocabulario en los estudiantes de doce años.

ABSTRACT

Generally, when learning a language, little time is devoted to vocabulary learning, and it is usually a part of the incidental process. However, having a limited range of vocabulary represents a burden for students who wish to communicate and comprehend their own ideas, thoughts, emotions and feelings in an effective way. Vocabulary is the essence of the learning process of a new language as it helps learners to develop their skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Good mastery of vocabulary is important to speak fluently and accurately, write easily and understand what it means. Also, words can make successful communications in different circumstances because learners use the exact word in exactly the right situation. Teaching students to develop vocabulary means providing explicit instruction on important words from text and teaching students strategies to help them learn word meanings independently.

However, it is essential to know what the function of a word is in a sentence without forgetting the context since it allows learners to understand the meaning. An excellent way to learn vocabulary could be crossword puzzles given that they are didactic tools that may help learners to acquire different words and increase the thinking and comprehension skills.

Crossword puzzles can provide students with a meaningful learning experience since students learn by doing something that could be fun for them. By being engaged in solving a puzzle, learners may develop and improve their vocabulary as well as establish form-meaning relationships. Crossword puzzles take into account the context of the real world in which learners

feel motivated to learn. In addition, students could retain words that are important in their context more easily.

The use of crossword puzzles may supply a simple and creative way to incorporate active learning because this tool gains learners' attention and interest inside the classroom. Crossword puzzles can guide learners to discover the correct meanings of a word and increase the knowledge of new words or concepts considering the environment with a didactic technique thinking about improving creativity and comprehension in learners of a second language.

For these reasons, we intend to promote the use of crossword puzzles in the classroom in order to increase vocabulary in twelve-year old students.

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The Role of Crossword Puzzles for Increasing Vocabulary in Twelve-Year Old Learners in the Second-Language Acquisition Process

Generally, when learning a language, little time is devoted to vocabulary learning, and it is usually a part of the incidental process. However, having a limited range of vocabulary represents a burden for students who wish to communicate and comprehend their own ideas, thoughts, emotions and feelings in an effective way. Vocabulary is the essence of the learning process of a new language as it helps learners to develop their skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Good mastery of vocabulary is important to speak fluently and accurately, write easily and understand what it means. Also, words can make successful communications in different circumstances because learners use the exact word in exactly the right situation. Teaching students to develop vocabulary means providing explicit instruction on important words from text and teaching students strategies to help them learn word meanings independently.

However, it is essential to know what the function of a word is in a sentence without forgetting the context since it allows learners to understand the meaning. An excellent way to learn vocabulary could be crossword puzzles given that they are didactic tools that may help learners to acquire different words and increase the thinking and comprehension skills.

Crossword puzzles can provide students with a meaningful learning experience since students learn by doing something that could be fun for them. By being engaged in solving a puzzle, learners may develop and improve their vocabulary as well as establish form-meaning relationships. Crossword puzzles take into account the context of the real world in which learners feel motivated to learn. In addition, students could retain words that are important in their context more easily.

The use of crossword puzzles may supply a simple and creative way to incorporate active learning because this tool gains learners' attention and interest inside the classroom. Crossword puzzles can guide learners to discover the correct meanings of a word and increase the knowledge of new words or concepts considering the environment with a didactic technique thinking about improving creativity and comprehension in learners of a second language.

For these reasons, we intend to promote the use of crossword puzzles in the classroom in order to increase vocabulary in twelve-year old students.

Problem Delimitation

This project focuses on encouraging the acquisition of vocabulary in English through the use of crossword puzzles inside the class, which will be implemented as an educational tool by both teachers and students to teach and learn a foreign language with the purpose of increasing vocabulary in a didactic way. On the other hand, this work intends that students recognize the use of the words in different contexts in which they are involved. In the same line, seventh graders in this case can fill the gap of knowledge that they have.

As evidenced in the theoretical framework, vocabulary represents the foundation of communicative competence, as a result a potential increase in the learners' vocabulary would go hand in hand with the improvement in their overall competence in meaningful contexts.

Also, this educational tool can be used to increase the level of engagement in learners inside the classroom since they can be an active part in solving the task.

It is possible to find some aspects as the voids of vocabulary that students at Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño, especially students of seventh grade have in spite of having attended English lesson for over 6 years, and according to the Colombian Ministry of Education, they would be expected to have an A2 level. In this level learners will be able to

comprehend the ideas and details in a short text, write short and simple sentences using vocabulary about people, places, objects, actions and events in familiar contexts, participate in very basic dialogues and communicate their thoughts about a specific topic taking into account the context.

For that reason, one of the objectives of this project is to identify if crossword puzzles can increase the ability to comprehend the use of words depending on the context and finally to design activities based on crossword puzzles in order to be implemented during the lesson to increase English vocabulary in learners.

Problem Description

According to The National Bilingual Colombia Program (2004) its central focus is to enable students to develop their communicative skills in a foreign language. The Colombian Government has established some parameters to be met in each school year. Such parameters are based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in which seventh graders should be able to understand and express sentences using basic vocabulary according to familiar situations. However, we have witnessed that those parameters are not met in the lesson class. Learners in seventh grade can not communicate their ideas due to the lack of vocabulary getting that they hesitate, combine their maternal language with the foreign language and repeat the same idea and words. Learners cannot differentiate the meaning of a word based on the context, much less spell it correctly in some written compositions made by them, in which we could find that students were only limited to use correct grammatical structures, leaving aside the use of new words. For that reason, it has implemented different strategies as the formulation of Foreign Language Proficiency Standards, the updating of pedagogical practices and plans of support to the institutional improvement. Through the plans of support of certain educational

institutions, it is evident that elementary and secondary students still have a low level in English. One of the reasons could be that vocabulary teaching is neglected or it does not receive the attention it should.

Besides, in the public schools of Colombia, it is common to observe aspects such as the teacher implementing just a guide-book as support material to teach English until it becomes over used, monotonous and does not allow room for participation. It is common to find that a textbook is the only resource used to explain grammatical structures leaving aside the teaching of vocabulary which is the main step in learning a new language. In this sense, due to the lack of vocabulary students cannot develop their cognitive abilities, creativity and easily lose interest in learning.

In addition, this problem was studied in a bilingual school in Barranquilla. In this study, researchers confirm that vocabulary has little attention. In this way, learners have problems in comprehension and communication of ideas. Their vocabulary management is poor and students do not relate the words with their context due to the lack of practice in real-life situations or boring activities in which learners do not incorporate the words to their lexicon.

In other words, we could notice that students do not have a rich lexicon, they just use basic words in their compositions and therefore these compositions lose their original meanings eventually causing inability to communicate.

Research Question

General Question

- How can vocabulary learning be fostered by implementing crossword puzzles as a reinforcement tool in English lessons in seventh graders at Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño?

General Objective

- To foster vocabulary learning by implementing crossword puzzles as a reinforcement tool in seventh graders at Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño.

Specific Objectives

- To design some activities based on crossword puzzles as a reinforcement tool for increasing English vocabulary in seventh graders at Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño.
- To apply the designed activities based on crossword puzzles as a reinforcement tool for increasing English vocabulary in seventh graders at Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño.

Significance of the Study

It is a fact that vocabulary is vital in the acquisition of any language, and given that English is learned as a foreign language in our context, it is necessary to include vocabulary teaching in English lessons at any level. Additionally, considering that one of our tasks as teachers is to implement different strategies that may facilitate learning, it is worth considering crossword puzzles as one of them when dealing with teaching vocabulary. Crossword puzzles enhance thinking skills because doing crossword puzzles daily helps to develop mental skills. By reading the clues and looking at the corresponding slots, students already know how many letters the answer has. For each letter filled in, they have an additional clue as to what the answer may be. This will make learners want to brainstorm for possible words that are synonymous with the given clue. Solving a crossword puzzle helps to improve vocabulary. All puzzles contain one-word clues that call for another word meaning the same thing. Learners just learned the meaning

of a new word. After doing numerous puzzles students will become familiar with words they never knew about before.

For these reasons, this work allows knowing the role of crossword puzzles inside the classroom as an educational tool to improve and increase the knowledge of vocabulary in students of seventh grade to achieve a good comprehension in the use of the words bringing real world context to the classroom. In other words, with the development of this study, we as future teachers will know the benefits that crossword puzzles have for the learning and acquisition of new vocabulary since this kind of technique is very useful to introduce the topics to the students and they feel motivated. It has also been seen that this type of material helps to generate interest in students and allow them to interact in a more effective.

Through the development of the activities focused on crossword puzzles, it is expected that learners in seventh grade of the Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño acquire new vocabulary getting a higher academic performance since lessons will incorporate didactic and engaging tools so that students of this grade could be more interested in learning vocabulary in the target language, setting, in this way, the path to develop the other skills and ultimately communicative competence. By doing so, learners could also improve their social and interactional skills since they may be able to keep an understandable communication due to their lexical improvement.

Considering the above, this work aims to determine the use of crossword puzzles inside the classroom as a learning technique for acquiring and increasing new vocabulary.

Limitations

By implementing the crossword puzzles for increasing vocabulary, it is possible to find some unavoidable limitations or restrictions, such as the lack of attention. Children just want to play

and not to work. For that reason, the teacher needs to be careful at the moment of selecting an appropriate crossword puzzle activity for his or her class. The use of crossword puzzles can disrupt nearby classes due to the fact that some students could take the class as game and not as a normal class. For that reason, it is necessary that the teacher shows a serious attitude toward students and demonstrates that his or her class is not a game.

Another possible important limitation could be the fidelity and accuracy of data since this project has a subjective component which is probably complex to analyze especially with a large population.

Previous Research

Limited vocabulary knowledge can negatively impact the development of a student's comprehension skills. Bearing this in mind, crossword puzzles are tools to improve vocabulary because they help learners to retain words and use them in a meaningful way in daily situations.

Crossword solving involves several useful skills including vocabulary, reasoning and comprehension. Crossword puzzles allow learners to acquire new words in an active way. The effectiveness of crossword puzzles has been proved in some research studies. One research study is developed by Njoroge, Ndung'u and Gathigia in Ngorano Secondary School, an institution, in Nyeri County, Kenya with seventy learners who were exposed to the crossword puzzles as part of the teaching practice. Its purpose is to indicate the use the crossword puzzles as an effective strategy to teach vocabulary in English as a second language.

The study emphasizes that vocabulary mastery should be the first priority in English language teaching and learning since crossword puzzles give learners the opportunity to increase, practice and repeat the words in order to memorize and use them in real life situations.

Also, good mastery of vocabulary is important in the process of vocabulary instruction since it allows learners to communicate and interact with others. In this way, crossword puzzles give learners the opportunity to learn while participating in an engaging and fun activity.

This research highlights the benefit of crossword puzzles as an effective tool of vocabulary acquisition. Besides, this tool is used to create a good learning environment which helps to improve the knowledge of words. Crossword puzzles are strategies that make the teaching-learning process appealing since they engage learners in solving crossword puzzles in an educational way (Bressan 1970). Moreover, crossword puzzles contribute to the improvement of performance as an active technique of vocabulary instruction because learners are involved in their own learning process gaining interest and attention (Widaningsih, (2009).

In the same line, a study regarding the use of crossword puzzles was done by Orawiwatnakul in Thailand at Bangkok University in 2013 with sixty-eight students in an English course. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of crossword puzzles on students' vocabulary knowledge. In this study, students got a high level in acquisition of vocabulary. Similarly, they showed favorable attitudes such as interest and engagement in the topic because crossword puzzles make learning more enjoyable.

Crossword puzzles allow students to learn new words and definitions since they help to gain greater memorization of vocabulary. Students can retain the vocabulary they find useful and relevant to their subject matter (Moore & Dettlaff, 2005). In addition, the context is essential because students understand the true meaning and function of a word inside the sentences using it in oral or written compositions. Also, it states that the lack of context makes vocabulary learning difficult causing learners to forget the learned words easily. Vocabulary development

focuses on helping students learn the meaning of new words and concepts in various contexts (Nation, 1987).

In addition, crossword puzzles are fun activities in which learning becomes more effective since the environment inside the classroom is enjoyable as well as it contributes to the students' improvement of vocabulary. Finally, the evidence suggests that crossword puzzles are an effective educational tool to increase vocabulary, gain students' attention and improve engagement and interest (Franklin et al., 2003).

Theoretical Framework

Importance of Vocabulary in Language Learning

Vocabulary is the key to communicate or express ideas and thoughts since it allows interaction in the process of second language acquisition. It can help learners to understand what another person is saying. It also means that they can express their own needs and concerns.

Vocabulary development is a process of acquiring new words to use them in daily life, and more specifically, the basis for learning any language. In fact, acquiring meaningful vocabulary helps students to develop their skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

For this reason, it is significant to mention some authors to support this idea. Wilkins (1972) wrote that:

While without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. (p.11 - 112)

In this quotation, Wilkins confirms the importance of having a considerable range of vocabulary since it facilitates the fluent communication with the others. Besides, good mastery of vocabulary is required for being competent in a foreign language.

A person can communicate with some useful words and expressions even without grammar but it is difficult to establish communication without vocabulary since vocabulary is essential to convey a message. Also, it is essential the relation between vocabulary acquisition and the meanings of the words in order to communicate effectively.

McCarthy (1990) said:

Without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way. (p.8)

This author expresses the necessity of vocabulary acquisition in the second language. The correct grammar has sense when learners know how to use the words in the sentence but if learners do not know the words with the meaning that they want to express, the knowledge of the grammar is worthless.

In the same line, Nation (2001) stated that meaning, function and use of a word are aspects that work together allowing a deeper association and comprehension of the context. The author describes the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language use as complementary: knowledge of vocabulary enables language use and, conversely, language use leads to an increase in vocabulary knowledge. The importance of vocabulary is demonstrated daily in and out the school. In classroom, the achieving students possess the most sufficient vocabulary.

In this sense, Lewis (2002) argued “vocabulary is more fundamental than grammar” (p. 115) many students focus more on lexical learning than grammar learning because certainly the majority of students use words and simple expressions to communicate more than structured sentences.

What Learning Vocabulary Entails

A word is a unit of a language that carries a meaning and they are used to create phrases or sentences. Taking this into account, knowing of a word means knowing its meaning and its form. Words are classified into different categories and for this reason it is important to know the use that a word can have inside the sentence to be able to use correctly later. It means to know the relationship between the use of a word and its meaning giving the necessary importance to the contextualization.

Word consciousness is discussed in depth by Scott and Nagy (2004), and involves an awareness of words and an interest in their meanings, as well as recognition of the importance of word choice and the communicative power of words. In addition, learning vocabulary needs awareness to know how the words work and the different way that they can be used as tool for communication since each word or each sentence must have at least one meaning.

Learning Strategies

Ellis and Sinclair (1989) provide a model with three cognitive strategies. The first strategy is *personal strategies* which are focused on the strategies that students use to learn vocabulary and improve knowledge. In this category, the students group collectively the words according to topic and deduce the meaning within the context. And the second strategies are *risk taking* which are used by students to engage themselves enthusiastically in the learning process. With these strategies the students use synonyms and paraphrasing to substitute the meaning.

Chamot and O'Malley (1990) said that learning strategies are useful to learning process depending on the needs of each student. The student that needs to learn vocabulary can use cognitive strategies to identify unknown words and understand and remember the words.

Oxford (1990) proposes grouping strategy like an easy way to acquire vocabulary. The student can categorize the new words according grammar (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) or concept.

Strategies to Teach Vocabulary

To implement crossword puzzles as a tool to increase vocabulary it is important to know that close relationship in this project since one of the specific objectives of this work is to teach and foster vocabulary acquisition, so that learners are able to use the new vocabulary according to the context, and for that it is necessary that students know the meaning according to lexical semantic and pragmatics.

In the learning process of a second language, there are several techniques that are used inside the classroom to improve the vocabulary knowledge. The effectiveness and the positive impact of these techniques help learners to retain the information in a good environment since they engage and stimulate their curiosity.

Naiman (1998) suggests creativity as an active process in which students connect their ideas with the real world getting a meaningful learning. Students learn through authentic materials or real-life situations getting an improvement in their vocabulary learning.

Nation (1974) states that teachers must teach words with their different meaning and the context since the use of these words change according to the situation. Learners are interested in this learning, when they are exposed to creative activities in which they feel enthusiasm, confidence and interest. For Nation (1974), one activity to implement inside the classroom considering form of a word is scrambling the letters since learners must organize and write the correct word.

Regarding meaning, Nation considers the use of short passages with the purpose of matching the words with their definitions or pictures. Other ways to teach meaning is with synonyms or opposites or with a multiple-choice test in which the students must match the column A (words) with the column B (meaning).

In addition, there is another technique to learn vocabulary. This technique requires to tell a story using the words that teacher teach in the class.

In order to remember the word, teachers use flashcard so learners retain the words relating the word and the picture. This type of technique helps learners keep interested in learning vocabulary and understand the meanings.

Taking this aspect into account, there is another activity that allows learners to improve their vocabulary and meaning. It is the use of crossword puzzles. Crossword puzzles develop the learners' reasoning and interpretative skills since they force them to guess the answer and follow the instruction in order to obtain the correct answer.

According to Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), it is better to give an activity in which the students can associate the meaning with the form than a repetition activity since this way the learner can learn a new word y not only repeat it. For that reason, the crossword puzzles offer the possibility of associating the meaning of word with the form allowing students remember the word and its meaning.

Crossman (1983) highlights the role of crossword puzzles as a positive technique to use inside the classroom because they are useful to examine and evaluate the learning process of vocabulary. Also, solving this type of tool gives students the opportunity to enjoy learning and develop their confidence.

For Childers (1996), crossword puzzles are an interesting learning tool to use because these encourage learners to learn vocabulary or definitions in an easy and interactive way. They allow learners to improve the understanding and knowledge of many words.

In the same line, Weisskirch (2006) found that students are engaged in learning through crossword puzzles because these are useful techniques to memorize words and make learning with meaning more effective.

According to Whisenand and Dunphy (2010), crossword puzzles are a tool to accelerate learning vocabulary since learners have the opportunity to identify and understand the words that they are using.

When learners use crossword puzzles as part of the learning process, they are memorizing words and meanings since learners read several times the word and its meaning.

Solving a crossword puzzle can help students build a vocabulary knowledge, improve their understanding and stimulate more students' curiosity and interest about their subjects.

Crossword puzzles are useful for reviewing and reinforcing concepts, expanding student's vocabulary and stimulating their minds since a crossword is a type of brain exercise.

In conclusion, crosswords puzzles can be a useful educational tool for enriching the vocabulary acquisition of a second language. Using crossword puzzles give students the opportunity to develop and reinforce their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Crossword puzzles are very helpful with vocabulary retention for any subject getting that learners try to retain new words in a foreign language. Filling in a crossword puzzle encourages independence, creativity, and active learning. Moreover, providing definitions in the crossword puzzles, learners can think about their experiences, recall learned information and manipulate several words in order to find the correct word.

Research Method

This research is focused on gaining knowledge and encouraging the use of crossword puzzles as an educational tool in the acquisition of vocabulary.

Research Paradigm

Given the characteristics of this study, the research paradigm chosen is positivist. A positivist paradigm deals with data collected in an experiment to be later objectively analyzed, in this specific case, the data will be drawn from the implementation of crossword puzzles as a facilitating tool for vocabulary learning. In terms of methodology, this study is deemed as a quantitative research as it will allow us to identify and assess a phenomenon from a more objective point but considering the context in which this takes place. This research intends to explain why a phenomenon occurs based on the theories and the previous experience in order to carry out a deeper understanding that provides a solution to the problem. A quantitative research may be used to generate hypothesis and guide quantitative measures using statistical methods, which will allow us to prove the different theoretical foundations. In the same line, it gives the opportunity to understand the importance about how crossword puzzles could help in the process of vocabulary acquisition in twelve-year old learners as a very useful tool inside the classroom.

Moreover, we can observe if the improvement of vocabulary in twelve-year old learners can be changed owing to the use of the crossword puzzles. In other words, we can notice if students are increasing or improving their vocabulary in a real situations.

Design and Type of Research

Given the particularities of this research study and considering the objective previously stated, it can be said that it perfectly fits into the experimental design since it defines what it intends to test through an experiment. With an experimental design it seeks to determine the effectiveness

of a treatment, in this case a strategy intended to examine the effectiveness of crosswords puzzles as a tool to foster vocabulary in seventh graders.

The researchers will carry out an experiment in two groups of students, which will be labeled as control and an experimental group, such groups are intact groups. The crossword puzzles will be used as tool to foster vocabulary in the experimental group while in the control group the lesson class will be conducted as Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño generally does, not directly tackling vocabulary learning. The researchers will need to prepare instruments, which will be the support in teaching-learning vocabulary process; they will prepare the material according to level of the students and the topics established by the school such as professions, adjectives and animals. The material is focused on vocabulary teaching.

Research Context

The study area of research will be done at Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño in San Juan de Pasto, which is an academic and technical institution since it is focus on different abilities and competences that students can develop in their daily life. The Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño is located at Carrera 22F No 11 - 62, Santiago neighborhood. This institution corresponds to the Comuna 1, which is conformed by different neighborhoods such as Caracha, San José Obrero and Las Americas. They belong to a low social stratum, in which children do not have access to the education due to the scarcity of economic resources. Moreover, it seeks to educate children and young people with quality based on a human development and a cognitive education. The Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño frames education as a dynamic process in the integral formation of the person and the teaching of values which are indispensable in social life for labor and productive performance. The main mission of this institution is to educate for life as it focuses on the

formation of competences taking into account the needs and interests of students. In addition, this institution promotes values, creativity and efficiency with the purpose of achieving excellence and being one of the best schools in academic performance.

Population and Sample

This project will be developed at Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño with girls and boys in seventh grade, whose average age is twelve years old. This age is adequate to acquire, reinforce vocabulary and develop their communicative competence since the learners are motivated to learn new words that they can use in their daily situations. Also, students at this institution, in a large percentage are people who come from families whose parents have a low educational level. The families face a series of problems such as unemployment, family violence and lack medical service. According to the socio-economic aspect, they belong to levels 0, 1, and 2. Moreover, learners come from different neighborhoods such as San Vicente, Panorámico, Agualongo, Altamira and others.

Data Collection Procedure

In our process of teaching practice, which lasted for four months at Institución Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño, we noticed that learners in seventh grade have a low communicative proficiency level which means that they are unable to establish an adequate communication with others. Based on the theories explained previously, one of the reasons that may account for such low communicative proficiency could be the lack of vocabulary. Taking this situation into account, this study tries to test the effectiveness of crossword puzzles as a tool to foster vocabulary learning in an experimental group belonging to the context mentioned above. In order to meet the purpose of this research, the students in the experimental and control groups will be evaluated through a pre-test including a variety of vocabulary items, which will

help us to establish the initial conditions and determine the level of vocabulary that students have.

Subsequently, we will implement a series of crossword puzzles that are designed to increase vocabulary in a foreign language only in the experimental group. In each class, students will be explained the main topic and new vocabulary using worksheets with crosswords. As for the control group, the lessons will be developed without the use of crossword puzzles. At the end of one school term around sixteen weeks, a pot-test will be administered with the purpose of examining whether crossword puzzles are an effective technique to implement in the learning process of vocabulary. With pre and post-test, it will be possible to make a comparison between the level of initial vocabulary and the level of vocabulary acquired with the use of crossword puzzles.

Techniques used to analyze and interpret the results

To analyze the data, it will be necessary to use a statistical technique. Statistical technique consists of examining numerically the data collection mainly in the field statistic with an exhaustive and controlled measurement to know if there is a relationship between the use of crossword puzzles and the increase in the student's vocabulary.

Taking this into account, we will have in mind two different variables; dependent variable and independent variable. The dependent variable will be the vocabulary that seventh graders at Institucion Educativa Municipal Liceo Central de Nariño handle. The independent variable will be the crossword puzzles as a reinforcement tool to foster new vocabulary.

After the pre-test and post-test application, the effect of crossword puzzles as an educative tool will be determined using the mean of the correct answers obtained in the pre ad post-test in both groups; the control group and the experimental group. For this, an ANOVA test will be

performed, which will help to determine if the difference between groups is statistically significant or if, on the contrary, there is no difference between the control and experiment groups, in that case, we would assume that for this particular study crossword puzzles do not represent an enhancing tool for vocabulary learning. The ANOVA test can be performed with a statistical analysis program called SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions). For Field (2009), SPSS is an ample and flexible system of numerical analysis and information management. It is able to work with data from different formats, generating from simple graphs of distributions and descriptive statistics to complex numerical analysis that will serve to discover relations of dependence and independence and establish classifications of variables.

Moreover, its fundamental application is oriented to the analysis of experimental data that allows to see if that difference is statistically significant or not. In this way, it will help us to know if learner's vocabulary mastery improves after applying crossword puzzles.

GENERAL BUDGET FOR FIELD WORK PROPOSAL

	ÍTEM	COST
1	Inscription cost	\$ 41.700
2	Transportation and field trips	\$ 350.000
3	Materials and supplies	\$ 91.900
	Payment of equipment	\$ 78.000
5	Total	\$ 561.600

SPECIFIC BUDGET OF MATERIAL AND SUPPLIES

	ÍTEM	COST
1	Ream of bond paper 8.5" x 11" (US letter)	\$ 11.900
2	Folders	\$ 40.000
3	Photocopies and printed material	\$ 80.000
4	Sub-total	\$ 131.900

CONCLUSIONS

In our experience as teachers, we have realized that students in seventh grade of high school do not have knowledge about vocabulary according to their level. Taking this into account, the idea of this study is to examine whether crossword puzzles play a facilitating role in the process of acquiring vocabulary in English as a foreign language. In addition, our intention is to promote the use of crossword puzzles in the classroom in order to increase vocabulary in students of twelve years old who are in seventh grade of high school in the Institución Educativa Municipal Central de Nariño.

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APPENDIX A

PRE-TEST


INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA MUNICIPAL LICEO CENTRAL DE NARIÑO

TEST
PROFESSIONS AND OCCUPATIONS


NAME _____
COURSE _____
DATE _____

• Answer the correct option.


A person that acts in a play or movie
Accountant
Pharmacist
Taxi driver
Actor or actress



They defend people in court and gives legal advice
Lawyer
Judge
Newsreader
Electrician




They write books or novels
Author
Farmer
Soldier
Painter




Someone who works in a restaurant, looking after customers and serving food
Window cleaner
Traffic warden
Waiter or waitress
Tailor

Someone who works in a shop or store selling products
Postman
Shop assistant
Mechanic
Politician

A person that collects trash or rubbish from bins in the streets
Carpenter
Bricklayer
Nurse
Refuse collector




They save lives where people swim at a beach or swimming pool
Plumber
Receptionist
Pilot
Lifeguard




They paint pictures or the interior or exterior of buildings
Soldier
Tailor
Painter
Butcher

They can fix problems you have with your teeth
Dentist
Model
Florist
Doctor




A qualified person that decides cases in a law court
Baker
Judge
Lawyer
Pilot




A person that passes knowledge to students at school
Nurse
Politician
Teacher
Designer

They work in the science industry. They do many experiments
Dentist
Lecturer
Scientist
Journalist


Someone who designs buildings and houses
Fisherman
Receptionist
Engineer
Architect



A person that makes things from wood including houses and furniture
Gardener
Photographer
Carpenter
Cook



They organize and sell holidays and flights for others
Translator
Travel agent
Gardener
Firefighter



APPENDIX B

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

PROFESSIONS

• Complete the crossword puzzle below.

Created with TheTeachersCorner.net Crossword Puzzle Generator

Across

2. A person that fixes cars when they broke down.
4. Someone who works for the army.
5. This person makes clothes for others, many times producing exclusive items of clothing.
7. Someone that makes new reports in writing or through television.
9. A person who develops solutions to technical problems. They sometimes design, build, or maintain machines.
10. A qualified person that decides cases in a law court.
11. Someone trained to help a doctor look after the sick or injured.
12. This person designs building and houses.
13. A person that delivers mail to the houses.
16. This is a person who works in an office typing letters and answering the phone.
17. A person that works with the money and accounts of a company.
18. Someone that can fix problems you have with your teeth.

Down

1. Someone that saves lives where people swim, usually at a beach or swimming pool.
3. Someone that passes knowledge to students, usually at school.
5. A person that patrols areas to check that people do not park in the wrong place.
6. A woman that works in a food outlet, looking after customers and serving food.
8. This man collects trash or rubbish from bins in the street.
14. A person that keeps gardens clean and tidy. They take care of the plants in the garden.
15. This person works with meat. They cut the meat and sell it in their shop.

NAME _____
 COURSE _____
 DATE _____

APPENDIX C







POST-TEST

INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA MUNICIPAL LICEO CENTRAL DE NARIÑO

TEST: MATCH THEM UP!

NAME _____
COURSE _____
DATE _____

• Match the people and the job descriptions.

<p>Tailor</p> <p>Doctor</p> <p>Farmer</p> <p>Babysitter</p> <p>Teacher</p> <p>Plumber</p> <p>Dentist</p> <p>Firefighter</p> <p>Salesperson</p> <p>Veterinarian</p> <p>Pilot</p> <p>Mailman</p> <p>Police officer</p> <p>Hairdresser</p> <p>Lawyer</p> <p>Journalist</p> <p>Butcher</p> <p>Judge</p> <p>Travel agent</p> <p>Lifeguard</p> <p>Dustman or refuse collector</p> <p>Architect</p>	<p>Work in a shop or store selling products.</p> <p>Cut the meat and sell it in the shop.</p> <p>Deliver letters and packages to your home. </p> <p>Design building and houses.</p> <p>Collect trash or rubbish from bins in the street.</p> <p>Save lives where people swim. </p> <p>Organize and sells holidays and flights for others.</p> <p>Decide cases in a law court.</p> <p>Makes new reports in writing or through television.</p> <p>Have got cows and pigs and sheep. </p> <p>Make trousers, suits and shirts.</p> <p>Call him when you have got a leak.</p> <p>Keep your teeth both clean and white.</p> <p>Come when there is a fire to fight. </p> <p>Mind the kids when they are asleep.</p> <p>Work in a hospital and take care of sick people.</p> <p>Work in a school and help people learn.</p> <p>Take care of sick animals. </p> <p>Wear a uniform. I help keep your neighborhood safe.</p> <p>Fly planes and helicopters too.</p> <p>Defend people in court and gives legal advice.</p> <p>Cut your hair or give it a new style. </p>
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Note: A green line is drawn from the word 'Doctor' in the left column to the description 'Work in a hospital and take care of sick people.' in the right column.

APPENDIX D

PRE-TEST

INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA MUNICIPAL LICEO CENTRAL DE NARIÑO

ENGLISH TEST

NAME: _____ CONCEPT: _____

LEVEL: _____ DATE: _____

DESCRIBING PEOPLE ADJECTIVES

I. Choose the correct answer.

1. He hates spending money. He is very **generous/mean**.
2. The children never do their homework. They are very **lazy/hardworking**.
3. Peter never goes to parties. He is very **sociable/shy**.
4. Sabrina never gets angry with the children. She is very **impatient/patient**.



II. Match the descriptions with the correct word.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. You avoid work if you can | A. Considerate |
| 2. You are always happy | B. Honest |
| 3. You don't like spending money | C. Cheerful |
| 4. You always tell the truth | D. Lazy |
| 5. You understand the needs of others | E. Mean |



III. Draw a line to match each word to its opposite.

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Kind | A. Generous |
| 2. Cheerful | B. Sociable |
| 3. Shy | C. Sad |
| 4. Mean | D. Unkind |



APPENDIX E

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

DESCRIBING PEOPLE ADJECTIVES

- Complete the crossword below.

Created with TheTeachersCorner.net [Crossword Puzzle Generator](#)

Across

2. You always go to parties.
4. You avoid work if you can.
6. You understand the needs of others.
9. You always tell the truth.

Down

1. You like spending money.
2. You never go to parties.
3. You always wait or continue doing something, despite difficulties.
5. You always work if you can.
7. You never wait or continue doing something despite difficulties.
8. You don't like spending money.

NAME _____
 COURSE _____
 DATE _____

APPENDIX F**POST-TEST**

INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA MUNICIPAL LICEO CENTRAL DE NARIÑO	
ENGLISH TEST	
NAME: _____	CONCEPT: _____
LEVEL: _____	DATE: _____
DESCRIBING PEOPLE ADJECTIVES	
Choose the correct answer.	
I. He hates spending money. He is very _____	
A) Generous	
B) Mean	
C) Happy	
II. The children never do their homework. They are very _____	
A) Hardworking	
B) Sad	
C) Lazy	
III. Peter never goes to parties. He is very _____	
A) Sociable	
B) Shy	
C) Cheerful	

IV. Sabrina never gets angry with the children, she is very _____

- A) impatient
- B) patient
- C) patience

Match the adjectives with the correct picture.

1. Kind



2. Cheerful



3. Shy



4. Sad



5. Unkind



6. Mean



7. Sociable



8. Lazy

