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**FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA, LETRAS Y CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN**

**CARRERA DE LENGUA Y LITERATURA INGLESA**

The Use of Crossword Puzzles to Build up Vocabulary of Fourth Graders of Basic Education at “Victor Manuel Albornoz Cabanilla” Elementary School

Trabajo Investigativo del Curso de Graduación previo a la obtención del Título de Licenciada en Ciencias de la Educación en la Especialización de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa

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### ABSTRACT

This work has been developed to determine the importance of the use of crossword puzzles to develop vocabulary in children in fourth grade in Basic Education. Crossword puzzles have been defined as tasks that help children to develop vocabulary and keep their minds active. When students use this kind of games, they have to work in order to complete the task. Crossword puzzles involve students' interaction, which facilitates language acquisition. Also, crossword puzzle activities remove teacher's domination, and students get a chance to participate in class, to open and close conversations, to interact naturally, to interrupt, and rise to the challenge.

The use of crossword puzzles requires learners to use the target language. They can develop their vocabulary, understanding, correct spelling, and writing skills. Without any doubt, crossword-puzzle activities constitute some of the best teacher's tools to develop vocabulary.

### Key words

Crosswords- motivation- children- games



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## RESUMEN

Este trabajo ha sido realizado para determinar la importancia del uso de los Crucigramas para desarrollar vocabulario en niños de cuarto grado de Educación Básica. Los crucigramas han sido definidos como tareas que ayuda a los niños a desarrollar vocabulario y mantener sus mentes activas. Cuando los estudiantes usan este tipo de juegos, ellos tienen que trabajar a fin de completar la tarea. Los crucigramas implican interacción por parte de los estudiantes, siendo esta interacción entre ellos lo cual facilita la adquisición del Idioma. El uso de los crucigramas ayuda a los estudiantes para participar en clases, para iniciar y finalizar conversaciones, para interactuar naturalmente, y para desafiarse entre estudiantes.

Finalmente, con el uso de los crucigramas los estudiantes tienen la oportunidad para usar el idioma extranjero. De esta manera ellos podrán desarrollar su vocabulario, significado, uso correcto de la ortografía y habilidades de escritura. Sin ninguna duda, el uso de los crucigramas constituye una de las mejores herramientas para desarrollar vocabulario en los estudiantes.

### Palabras claves

Crucigrama - motivación- niños- juegos



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### DEDICATION

I dedicate this work, first of all, to my beloved mother, Gladys, who was the person that proposed this challenge to me. Her sacrifice, perseverance, wisdom, absolute love and patience made it possible for me to achieve this goal. Also, I dedicate this work to my husband for his support and patience and to my whole family, especially to my father and sisters who were an important factor in achieving this goal. Finally, I want to dedicate this thesis to my beautiful daughter, Daniela, for being the most important person in my life. To all of them, I want to express my deep and eternal gratitude.

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## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English has become a very important tool for worldwide communication. On an individual level is also important to be successful in a competitive environment. Many students have problems when they are learning this language. From my personal experience, English is difficult to learn because teachers are still using the traditional ways to teach vocabulary to students, which is memorizing isolated words. In this way, English classes become boring and less motivating for the students.

This thesis work is divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, teachers can find the description of the problem, its justification and the general and specific objectives. In chapter two, interesting topics related to the teaching learning process are analyzed. Also, in this chapter you can find some crossword-puzzle activities to provide you with examples of these kinds of activities.

In chapter three, you can find the methodology used to perform this research. Chapter four is related to the results and analysis of the survey and interviews carried out to get more information for this research. Chapter five, deals with conclusions and recommendations.



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## CHAPTER I

### 1.1 Description of the problem.

Nowadays, students have great difficulty in developing the four skills of the English language. In my opinion, one of the causes for this is because they don't have enough vocabulary. That is why most of them have many problems while speaking, reading, writing, and listening in English. I think it is important to apply entertaining activities to help them to enrich their vocabulary. I think that the use of crossword-puzzle activities is a good way to learn more words because children can feel more motivated and encouraged to learn the target language. In this way, they enlarge their vocabulary in an easy and fun way.

### 1.2 Justification

This topic was chosen for two essential reasons. First, to investigate the importance and value of crossword puzzles and how they can help children to develop their vocabulary. Second, crossword puzzles create a better environment in the classroom, so students can feel more motivated and confident to learn the target language.

### Research Question

How do Crossword puzzles help to develop vocabulary in children?



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### 1.3 Objectives

#### General Objective

- To analyze the learning of vocabulary by using crossword puzzles in students in the fourth level of Basic Education.

#### Specific Objectives

- To describe the process of learning new vocabulary through the use of crossword-puzzle activities with children.
- To present the advantages of using crossword-puzzle activities to develop children`s vocabulary.
- To propose some examples of crossword-puzzle activities in the classroom to motivate students` learning of the target language.



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## Chapter II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 TEACHING AND WORKING WITH YOUNG LANGUAGE LEARNERS.

Children need to learn English in an amusing way because they retain knowledge better when they practice with fun activities, such as: games, role playing, puzzles, etc. Teachers can create books about these activities by themselves. For example, Susan Halliwell states in her book “Teaching English in the Primary Classroom”, that teaching English for beginners is about classrooms where children sometimes misbehave, but “Young children do not come to the language classroom empty-handed. They bring with them an already well-established set of instincts, skills and characteristics which help them to learn another language. We need to identify those and make the most of them.” (3)

According to Halliwell, children are able to grasp and interpret meaning without necessarily understanding the individual word. They enjoy and have fun in whatever they do, by using their imagination, and use language creatively (3).

“Intonation, gesture, facial expressions, actions and circumstances all help to tell them what the unknown words and phrases probably mean. By understanding the message in this way they start to understand the language. In later life we all maintain this first source of understanding alongside our knowledge of the language itself. It remains fundamental part of human communication” (3)



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Halliwell says the teacher's role is to develop the children's attitudes through fun activities so that students can understand the objective of learning. In this way, students are able to produce meaningful language, new sounds and words, and finally new structures. (3-4)

### 2.2 CHILDREN'S MOTIVATION

Children's motivation depends on a teacher's attitude; for example, the teacher has to be prepared to teach a good English class, that is to say, the teacher has to be encouraging, patient; also he/she has to have suitable material and fun activities. Most importantly, the teacher has to have a clear main objective, or the child gets bored and doesn't learn anything. In other words, teachers have to motivate students so that they can accomplish the task in a successful way.

In the book *"Motivation and Foreign Language Teaching-Strategies for Motivation"*, Sven Kost argues that motivation is "an inner state of need or desire that activates an individual to do something that will satisfy that need or desire." (3). Also, the author says that motivation and learning must be supported by educators, explorers and psychologists for a long period of time. Behaviorists have pointed out that motivation can be regarded as the crucial matter in language learning processes (3).

Moreover, Kost maintains: "motivation has to come from the learner or student themselves in the first place. If he is not able to motivate himself, the teacher has to "manipulate" the student in that way that he is motivated to learn." In this way the role of the teacher has become very important and crucial at the moment to teach the students since motivating to students leads a positive learning effect. A teacher has to have in mind good elements which play a part in student motivation, such as colorful visuals, music, animation, and game-like activities. (4).



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According to Zoltan Dörnyei in *Motivation and Foreign Language Learning*, motivation provides the principal stimulus to initiate learning in second language. In addition, he says that:

“Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, and neither appropriate curricula and good teaching enough on their own to ensure student achievement. On the other hand, high motivation can make up for considerable deficiencies both in one’s language aptitude and learning conditions.” (117)

In the book “*Teaching English to Children*”, Julia Khan says that games are a good way to motivate children to learn a foreign language because they offer children involvement and enthusiasm, which encourage them to have an authentic opportunity for language use. Meanwhile, with the games children will develop skills and ability to use the language. “A learner who is motivated is committed in some way to establishing closer links with the language community within which the language is used.” However, motivation derives from factors outside the classroom, such as parental and social attitudes. (143-144)

### 2.3 TEACHING VOCABULARY

Vocabulary is a very important area in childrens’ learning because it facilitates the development of the four skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. At the same time, children learn the English language little by little.

In the book “*Teaching and Developing Vocabulary*”, John J. Pikulski and Shane Templeton argue that “the greatest tools that teachers can give students for succeeding, not only in their education but more generally in life, is a large, rich vocabulary and the skills for using those words.” The vocabulary is very important in the English learning because through it we will be able to produce



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an understanding of language, and so we can communicate in an easy way with the rest of the world. (1)

Cynthia and Drew Johnson state in their article called “*Why Teach Vocabulary?*” that:

“Traditionally, vocabulary instruction has focused on having students look up word meanings and memorize them. This teaching approach, however, provides only superficial and short-term learning of words. Students who simply memorize word meanings frequently have trouble applying the information in definitions and often make mistakes about the meanings.

To know a word, students need to see it in context and learn how its meaning relates to the words around it. An approach that includes definitions as well as context can generate a full and flexible knowledge of word meanings.” (3)

For this reason, it is very important to show students how words work in different settings that use a word in different ways. Students begin to see how a word’s meaning can change and shift depending on its context. Also, another way to enrich our vocabulary is through the reading of tales, short stories, magazines, etc. Good readers often acquire much of their vocabulary through wide independent reading, also known as incidental learning. (3). Finally, do not forget that phrasal verbs and idioms are an important part in our vocabulary, and children obviously have to learn the more common ones, including get up, wake up, sooner or later ,call up, dress up among others.



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### 2.4 GAMES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING.

According to Andrew Wright, David Betteridge, and Michael Buckby the engaging nature of games stimulates sustained game play and enhance attention to learning outcomes among players. “Games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work and also help the teacher to create context in which the language is useful and meaningful.” Moreover games help to increase English to children since children will find them easier to remember and learn the material which is taught by the teacher. Thus, games help childhood to satisfy psychological needs and produce positive experiences. (1-2)

“Games are more effective than traditional methods in teaching vocabulary because through them you can create a fun situation and children increasing motivation to learn. In this way, the teachers fully engage students in the learning process and learning vocabulary becomes more enjoyable.” (Cameron, 84)

Wright, Betteridge, and Buckby say that games offer the key feature of ‘drill’ with the opportunity to sense the working on language as living communication. For that reason, it is important to incorporate games to teacher’s repertoire since they can provide intense and meaningful practice of language. Games provide a forum in which learning arises as a result of tasks stimulated by the content of the games, knowledge is developed through the content of the game, and skills are developed as a result of playing a game. Besides, games are useful tools to improve all the skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). (1-2)

In the book “*Teaching English to Children*”, Khan says “games are activities governed by rules, which set up clearly defined goals. The achievement of these goals signals the end of the game.” (142-143) this is true because when we want to play any game, we must know the rules since without





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them a game in a class is boring, noisy, etc. For example: Simon Says, if the children don't know the rules of this game, they get bored and make noise. Also Khan says:

“Games involve a contest either between the players or between the players and the goal, and games should lead to having fun. Games are for playing, and this element to play is crucial.” (143)

It means that children need to be involved and even excited in the classroom, in order to create opportunities for achievement and success, thus they will learn effectively. Khan says that games are activities that children naturally and universally engage in, and they usually lead to be social as well as intellectual involvement since players need to communicate in order to compete or co-operate, organize or argue. For that reason, it is important to set out situations where children can benefit from games and look for the reasons to practice speaking by using questions, talking about the rules, and challenges among players. (143-144)

Furthermore, Khan says is that “children may wish to play games for fun. Teachers, however, need more convincing reasons!” (145) It is really right, since teachers need to consider which game to use, when to use them, how to link them, etc. The teacher has to apply suitable games for teenagers and children; otherwise games for teenagers in a class for children do not make sense, which make the children to be bored. (146)

There are some ludic principles that are at the heart of many games which help a teacher to turn a textbook into a game. These principles are chance and skill, competition and co-operation and uncertainty. The first principle is about games that involve different combinations of the conflicting forces of chance and skill, the second one is about games that may be driven by competition between players; other games may require co-operation which



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encourages verbal negotiation in order for play to proceed. The last principle is about uncertainty which is present in some types of games that demands children's memory to fail at some stage. (148)

In summary, games can be used in many cases. Also, they can be a great tool for teachers to diagnose students' comprehension of the words. Definitely, the use of games in a classroom has become a good and effective methodology to teach children nowadays, since they help our kids to concentrate and develop their minds to acquire new vocabulary.

### **2.5 THE PROCESS OF TEACHING VOCABULARY BY USING GAMES AND SOME ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES**

In "Advantages and Disadvantages of using Games in Teaching Vocabulary", Diana Nova states that there are five steps to follow in the process of teaching vocabulary by using Games. These steps are:

#### **1. Motivating Strategies**

- Greetings

The teacher always greeted the students before starting the lesson. It is used to make the students familiar in expressing English greetings, for example:

Teacher: Good morning students.

Students: Good morning Ms. Nova

- b. Warming up

It is used to make the students interested in the lesson and it gives a chance for them to express their opinion. The teacher can use some asking questions related to the material which would be discussed in the lesson. For example, the topic of the material was about fruits. The writer gave the questions about fruits by using some clues like:



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Teacher: Okay students, now Ms. Nova will give you a description about a fruit, and please guess what fruit is it. Are you ready for that?

Students: I am ready Mrs. Nova

### 2. Presentation Strategy

In this step, the writer began to explain the material by giving some skills that must be mastered by students in learning English. They are:

- Teaching Listening and Speaking

In teaching listening the teacher can use some colored pictures. In addition, colored picture could make the students easier to imagine the real objects and more interested in learning the material. After that, the teacher has to pronounce the name of the picture and then students have to repeat after him.

- b. Teaching Reading and Writing

In this part, a book or handouts with colorful pictures are very useful material as the teaching media.

### 3. Skill Practice

The uses of simple games to make students enjoy doing their tasks are good activities to measure the student's memory and understanding of the lesson they learned before. These games could be completing the words and matching them with the pictures, crossword puzzles, and drawing a city map.

### 4. Assessment

This is used by the teacher to give homework to the students. The aim of this activity is to check the student's progress in learning the material.



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### 5. Closing

The teacher must try to remind his students about the material learned the day before. The aim of this activity is to know whether the students really understood about the material that they had been learning before or not. (13-24)

In this same way Nova states some advantages and disadvantages in using of games in teaching vocabularies to young learners.

#### ➤ The advantages

- Students feel more interested in learning the material through games.
- Games encourage students to interact and communicate.
- Games can make students seek to solve problem in which they are intimately involved.
- Games usually involve friendly competition.
- Games can help the students learn and hang on to new words more easily.
- All the skills may be practiced by the use of games.

#### ➤ The disadvantages

- By attracting students' interest to games, learners may get excessively noisy.
- If games are already familiar or boring, students might not get equally involved.

### 2.6 THE CROSSWORD-PUZZLE APPROACH

The article about crossword puzzles states that crossword puzzles are considered to be the most popular word game in the world since they can be found in many newspapers and magazines for the general public. However, they possess a brief history. The first crosswords appeared in England during the 1913 and were created by Arthur Wynne who published his puzzle for the eight-



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page comics section of the *New York World* magazine. He drew a diamond-shaped grid (without black squares) and wrote the word "fun" (the name of the comics section) across the top of the square. In addition, there is a controversial anecdote about the use of crosswords puzzles during the height of the crossword craze in the 1920s; people lost their jobs and marriages were destroyed due to the addictive nature of these new puzzles. (Dave Fisher)



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The world's first crossword puzzle

**FUN'S Word-Cross Puzzle.**

**F** **U** **N**

**F** I L L in the small squares with words which agree with the following definitions:

2-3. What bargain hunters enjoy.	10-18. The fibre of the gomuti palm.
4-5. A written acknowledgement.	6-22. What we all should be.
6-7. Such and nothing more.	4-26. A day dream.
10-11. A bird.	2-11. A talon.
14-15. Opposed to less.	19-28. A pigeon.
18-19. What this puzzle is.	F-7. Part of your head.
22-23. An animal of prey.	23-30. A river in Russia.
26-27. The close of a day.	1-32. To govern.
28-29. To elude.	33-34. An aromatic plant.
30-31. The plural of is.	N-8. A fist.
8-9. To cultivate.	24-31. To agree with.
12-13. A bar of wood or iron.	3-12. Part of a ship.
16-17. What artists learn to do.	20-29. One.
20-21. Fastened.	5-27. Exchanging.
24-25. Found on the seashore.	9-25. Sunk in mud.
	13-21. A boy.

According to Fisher there are three different types of crossword puzzles in the English language: 1) freeform or criss-cross crossword puzzles, 2) standard crossword puzzles, 3) American-style crossword puzzles and cryptic crossword puzzles.



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### Freeform crossword puzzles

These puzzles are the most common and they are word puzzles. They are created from loosely interlocking grids with a set of words going across and another going down, sharing letters where the two intersect. Squares in which a word begins have numbers which correspond to a clue made up of words or a picture which must be figured out to deduce the word. These puzzles are often used in educational settings to build vocabulary or to reinforce concepts taught in class. See an example of this type of crossword.

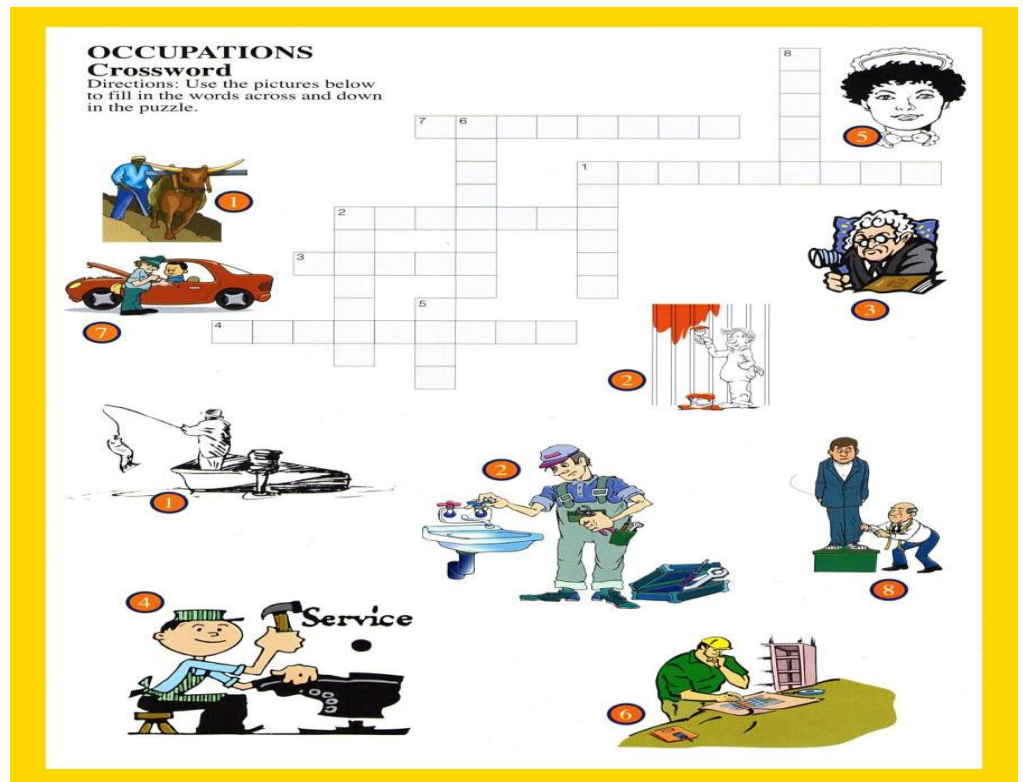
### OCCUPATIONS CROSSWORD

#### ACROSS

1. Fisherman
- 2.Painter
- 3.Judge
- 4.Shoemaker
- 7.Mechanic

#### DOWN

1. Farmer
- 2.Plumber
- 5.Maid
- 6.Enginner
- 8.Taylor



Source: image taken from: <http://www.grammarbank.com/crossword-and-wordsearch.html>



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### Standard crossword puzzles

These kind of puzzles are very common in the North American publications with solid areas of white squares and are generally square, though there have been exceptions. The pattern of black squares usually serves to separate each word from adjacent words. Here an example:

### Standard Pic Xword

**Across**

- 7 Interpretations
- 8 Not rough
- 9 Dwell
- 10 Blooms
- 12 Sharp
- 15 Animals
- 16 Going by
- 18 Thoroughfare
- 20 Fastener on a belt
- 22 Decide beforehand

**Down**

- 1 Models
- 2 As well
- 3 Devices for checking motion
- 4 Tale
- 5 Searches for small items
- 6 Employed
- 11 At whatever time
- 13 Jingling
- 14 One who is no longer popular
- 17 Precipitous
- 19 Summits
- 21 Item for grooming hair

© www.austrianwordgames.com.au 407

#### Solutions crossword 407

Across: 7 explanations, 8 smooth, 9 reside, 10 flowers, 12 acute, 15 asses, 16 passing, 18 street, 20 buckle, 22 predetermine.

Down: 1 examples, 2 also, 3 anchors, 4 story, 5 fossicks, 6 used, 11 whenever, 13 tinkling, 14 has-been, 17 steep, 19 tops, 21 comb.

Source: image taken from

[http://auspacmedia.com.au/listing/758/Standard\\_Pic\\_Crossword\\_13x13](http://auspacmedia.com.au/listing/758/Standard_Pic_Crossword_13x13)

**Autora:** Mayra Gladys Guanoliقة Minchala.





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### Cryptic crossword puzzles

These puzzles possess clues that can be read as a sensible sentence. They consist of two parts. One part gives the definition, as in the standard crossword puzzle, the other uses some form of wordplay that hints at the answer. This wordplay may come in the form of anagrams, charades, container words, deletions, double definitions, hidden words, or list.

### CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

*By Emily Cox and Henry Rathvon*

<p><b>ACROSS</b></p> <p>1 We howl wildly, "Cook some sort of bread" (5,5)</p> <p>6 Cook having a fight (4)</p> <p>9 Linen he put in matching group (5)</p> <p>10 Persian prophet and wizard brought back chicken to cook (10)</p> <p>12 Name for a girl that's a huge pain (7)</p> <p>13 Crooked visor on Mira or Paul (7)</p> <p>14 U.S. president's free veto on holding cook over the coals (7,5)</p> <p>19 Hold up veggie split by cook and French author (5-7)</p> <p>22 Someone reciting text from Clinton Era (7)</p> <p>23 Guard's ID badge written backwards (7)</p> <p>25 Guevara's cook, and strategic players (5,4)</p> <p>26 Note repeated about a Florida hub (5)</p> <p>27 Extent of small cook's vessel (4)</p> <p>28 Old-fashioned flight attendant and cook with a torn dress (10)</p>	<p><b>DOWN</b></p> <p>1 Wire case confused know-it-all (8)</p> <p>2 Gained serenity, we hear, with swimsuit (3-5)</p> <p>3 Bit player mad at Rex (5)</p> <p>4 Brownish smoggy air left (5)</p> <p>5 Collaring others in a criminal gang (9)</p> <p>7 Keep movie alien inside shower (6)</p> <p>8 Herb and Ray backed fight (6)</p> <p>11 Logical term for a monk and myself (1,6)</p> <p>15 Teems while keeping tied (7)</p> <p>16 Prohibition ban termed wrong (9)</p> <p>17 Meat put in loaf for cookout (8)</p> <p>18 Soloist and instruments embracing replacements (5-3)</p> <p>20 Endlessly talk over Olympic event (6)</p> <p>21 Face of Artemis, at that time a goddess (6)</p> <p>23 Leg that hurts physicist George (5)</p> <p>24 Back pay for a stopwatch holder (5)</p>
--	---

Last Saturday's Puzzle Solved

C	H	A	R	T	R	E	U	S	E	C	H	I	C
A	S	W	C	A	O	E							
S	A	P	S	A	G	O	C	H	E	R	V	I	L
C	A	I	L	K	M	E	E						
A	P	R	O	N	O	L	I	V	E	D	R	A	B
D	A	G	N	R	E								
F	A	G	E	R	L	Y	G	R	A	M	M	Y	S
U	O												
P	O	S	T	M	A	N	P	E	D	D	L	E	D
T	A	I	U	A	E								
V	E	R	D	I	G	R	I	S	S	O	C	K	S
O	E	N	V	H	A	H	C						
T	E	M	P	E	R	A	K	E	Y	L	I	M	E
E	U	N	I	S	T	N							
D	A	S	H	R	A	I	N	F	O	R	E	S	T

Source: image taken from:

<http://natpostcryptic.blogspot.com/2013/03/saturday-march-23-2013-lets-get-cooking.html>

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“Crossword puzzle is a word game that the answers have to be guessed based on the clue and be written into numbered squares that go across and down.” (Cambridge Dictionary). Meanwhile, Alkok Joharian and Meutia Pebriani states that:

“To play crossword game, student must fill the grids with letters based on the clue. So they have to find out the answer of each clue. If they could answer one clue correctly, this easier for them to fill other grids and answer other clues because the grids are connected each other. So, the students learned how to recognize their mistake and fix it.”  
(Joharian, Pebriani)

In the same way the authors argue that crossword puzzle games, at a very basic level, can be a fun way to introduce word skills to children because they motivate learners and provide a source of relaxation to avoid boredom and monotonous teaching. However, it helps to practice words in a sentence in addition to know the meaning. In playing a crossword puzzle game, the students not only enjoy the game, but also there is a competition between them. “In this way, students tend to be active and worked harder to win the competition.” So, through the use of crosswords puzzles the students get relax and learn the subject easily. It is an activity that will give fun. (253)

According to Paul Nation the characteristics of a good game are (24):

1. Game should be appropriate to student’s level.
2. Game should encourage students to enlarge their vocabulary.
3. The materials of the game should be a challenge for the students.

In this way the crossword-puzzle game is suitable with three steps in teaching vocabulary because:

The teacher is able to teach the spelling and the pronunciation of the word by writing the answer on the grid.

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While, in teaching pronunciation, the teacher is able to pronounce the word loudly in front of the class, and then asks the students to repeat after the teacher. Secondly, teaching the meaning of the word as the clues of crossword puzzle or a sentence that can describe the meaning of the content. And the last, teaching the use of the word. In teaching use of the word, the teacher also makes the exercise as the follow up after finishing the crossword puzzle game. So, by using our creation and watching to the student's need, crossword puzzle game can be a good technique in teaching vocabulary. (Nation 24-25)

Alkok Joharian and Meutia Pebriani declare that crossword-puzzle games can be helpful in the educational fields because it develops some of these skills:

### 1. Vocabulary building

The students identify and understand the terms being used, in order to solve any crossword-puzzle game. This often involves acquiring new vocabulary or terminology. It enables the students to form the letters one by one to build vocabulary.

### 2. Spelling skill

While the teacher is writing the answer on the grid, he/she is able to teach the spelling and the pronunciation of the word. It trains the students about the exact spelling of the words.

### 3. Reading skills

The clues and answers in the crossword puzzles engage the students to improve the reading skill.



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### 4. Word comprehension skills

While the students answer the clues, they will understand the use and the meaning of the words. The students must use word clues to determine the correct word to fit into the crossword, either across the puzzle or up and down.

### 5. Reasoning skills

To solve any crossword puzzle, the students must be able to identify and understand the terms being used. They will not choose the answer which is not appropriate for the clues. The student will try to think rationally here while doing the crossword puzzle game.

In summary, I can say that a crossword-puzzle game is a technique which will make the students more active to pay attention to the material that is presented by the teacher. This kind of game usually attracts us to try to answer it and in answering the puzzle, we learn vocabulary and the correct spelling of many words. Thus, the use of crossword puzzles can provide a positive effect or result in learning English vocabulary.



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### Crossword puzzles activities to use in an EFL Classroom.

#### CROSSWORD-PUZZLE ACTIVITY 1

##### THE PARTS OF THE BODY

AIM: At the end of class, students will be able to talk about the parts of the body.

#### NEW VOCABULARY

hair	leg	head	face	
nose	knee	mouth	eye	
arm	ear	feet	teeth	hand

#### WARM UP

##### Cat and Mouse

Players form a circle and hold hands. Two are selected to be the cat and the mouse. The cat stands outside the circle while the Mouse stands inside. The cat tries to catch the Mouse. Other children protect the mouse, letting him pass under their arms, but not the cat. The objective is that the cat doesn't catch the mouse, so children have to protect it. If the cat gets to catch the mouse, the game is over.

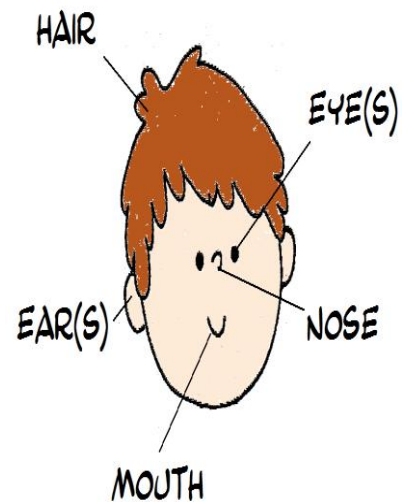
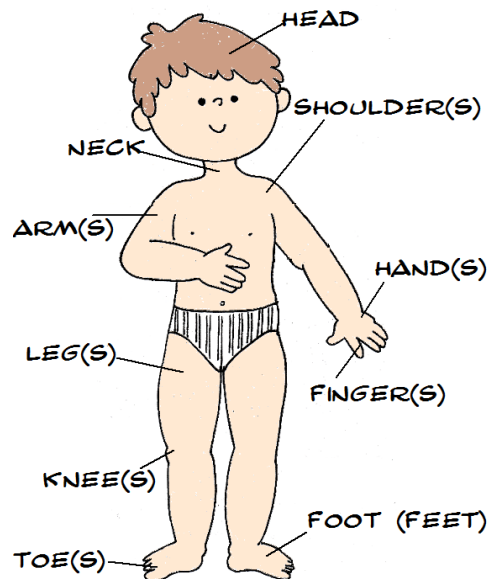


## PRE TASK

### Introducing the topic and task

- The teacher sticks a picture on the board and asks the students to look at it.
- Then the teacher asks “What do you see? The students pay attention to the picture and identify the parts of the body. So student’s interaction begins.
- The teacher says, “Today we are going to learn about the parts of the body”, so the students have the purpose and a clear outcome.
- The teacher pronounces the words many times and asks the students to repeat them too.

### PICTURE





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## SKILL PRACTICE

The teacher uses a crossword puzzle to measure the student's ability in memorizing and understanding the lesson that they have learned before.

**Body Parts - Crossword**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

**Across**

- 1.
- 4.
- 7.
- 8.
- 10.
- 11.
- 13.

**Down**

- 2.
- 3.
- 5.
- 6.
- 9.
- 12.



## SOLUTION

**Body Parts - Crossword**

**Answer Sheet**



Source: image taken from:

<http://www.grammarbank.com/crossword-and-wordsearch.html>

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**CROSSWORD-PUZZLE ACTIVITY 2**  
**OCCUPATIONS**

AIM: At the end of class, students will be able to talk about occupations.

**NEW VOCABULARY**

Fisherman	painter	judge	
Farmer	shoemaker	mechanic	
Engineer	Taylor	maid	plumber

**WARM UP**

**Simon Says**

The teacher explains how to play the game. One player takes the role of Simon and he starts to give some commands, like Simon says: “jump”, Simon says: “sit down”, etc. Players are eliminated from the game when they follow instructions that are not immediately preceded by the phrase “Simon says”.

**PRE TASK**

**Introducing the topic and task**

- The teacher shows his/her students some flashcards and asks them to look at it.
- The teacher says, “Today we are going to learn about occupations”, so the students have the purpose and a clear outcome.
- The teacher pronounces the words many times and asks the students to repeat them too.





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### FLASHCARDS



Fisherman



Painter



Judge



Shoemaker



Mechanic



Farmer



Plumber



Maid



Engineer



Taylor

### SKILL PRACTICE

The teacher uses a crossword puzzle to measure the students' ability in memorizing and understanding the lesson that they have learned before.



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ACROSS

- 1. Fisherman
- 2.Painter
- 3.Judge
- 4.Shoemaker
- 7.Mechanic

DOWN

- 1.Farmer
- 2.Plumber
- 5..Maid
- 6.Engineer
- 8.Taylor

**OCCUPATIONS Crossword**  
 Directions: Use the pictures below to fill in the words across and down in the puzzle.

Source: image taken from:

<http://www.grammarbank.com/crossword-and-wordsearch.html>



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**CROSSWORD-PUZZLE ACTIVITY 3**  
**FRUITS**

AIM: At the end of class, students will be able to talk about fruits.

**NEW VOCABULARY**

Grapes	strawberry	lemon	
Mango	pineapple	banana	
Watermelon	pear	orange	peach

**WARM UP**

The Broken Telephone



First, the teacher says “Today we are going to play a funny game; it is called the broken telephone. All of you have to participate”. Second, the teacher chooses a phrase, for example: “Peter has a very big house”. Third, the teacher whispers the sentence in the student’s ear. the student then has to whisper the message to the next student and so on. The game finishes when the sentence reaches the last student, and he/she has to say the message aloud. Sometimes the end sentence is not the same as the original.

**PRE TASK**

**Introducing the topic and task**

- The teacher shows students some flashcards about fruits.
- The teacher says, “Today we are going to learn about fruits”, so the students have the purpose and a clear outcome.

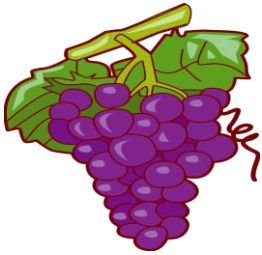
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- The teacher pronounces the words many times and asks the students to repeat them too.

### FLASHCARDS



grapes



strawberry



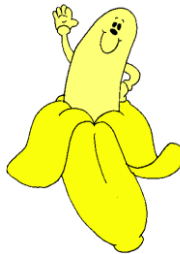
lemon



mango



pineapple



banana



watermelon



pear



Orange



Peach

### SKILL PRACTICE


The teacher uses a crossword puzzle to measure the students' ability in memorizing and understanding the lesson that they learned before.





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**Fruits Crossword**


**Across**


3. g \_ \_ \_ \_ 

5. st \_ \_ w \_ e \_ y 


6. l \_ \_ \_ 


7. m \_ \_ g \_ 


8. p \_ n \_ ap \_ \_ 


9. b \_ n \_ n \_ 

**Down**

1. w \_ t \_ r \_ m \_ l \_ n 

2. p \_ \_ r 

4. or \_ \_ \_ \_ 

8. p \_ \_ \_ 

English-Kids.com

Source: image taken from: <http://www.grammarbank.com/crossword-and-wordsearch.html>



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**CROSSWORD PUZZLE-ACTIVITY 4**  
**TRANSPORTATIONS**

AIM: At the end of class, students will be able to talk about kinds of transportation.

**NEW VOCABULARY**

Helicopter	motorcycle	lorry
Bicycle	Car	boat
	Sail boat	train

**Warm up**

- The teacher gives students a handout and says, “There are seven differences among the two pictures; can you find them?”



**PRE TASK**

**Introducing the topic and task**

- The teacher shows students some flashcards about different modes of transportation and asks the students to look at it.

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- The teacher says, "Today we are going to learn about methods of transportation", so the students have the purpose and a clear outcome.
- The teacher pronounces the words many times and asks the students to repeat them.

### FLASHCARDS



Helicopter



train



airplane



motorcycle



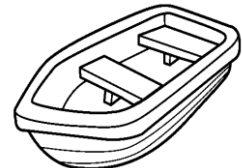
lorry



car



bicycle



boat



sail boat

### SKILL PRACTICE

The teacher uses a crossword puzzle to measure the students' ability in memorizing and understanding the lesson that they have learned before.



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**TRANSPORTATION**

**Directions:** Use the clues below to fill in the words across and down in the puzzle.

**Across**

**Down**

The crossword puzzle grid consists of 10 numbered squares. The clues are as follows:

- 1. Helicopter
- 2. Bicycle
- 3. Delivery truck
- 4. Boat
- 5. Car
- 6. Sailboat
- 7. Airplane
- 8. Motorcycle
- 9. Jet airplane
- 10. High-speed train

Source: image taken from: <http://www.grammarbank.com/crossword-and-wordsearch.html>





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### CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The methodology used to carry out this investigation was literature review and field research. I collected and analyzed bibliographic material to support the use of crossword puzzles to develop vocabulary in children. On the other hand, the field research was conducted through the use of an interview of an expert and a survey of ten classmates at the University of Cuenca. The purpose of the interview and survey was to get more information about the topic and find out about the use of crossword puzzles in the classroom.

#### 3.1 Interview

I interviewed to Mr. Patricio Calle. He is an English teacher at the Fray Vicente Solano High School and the School of Medicine at the University of Cuenca. A questionnaire of eight questions was used in this interview (see annex #1). The interview lasted 35 minutes.

#### 3.2 Survey

The survey was conducted with 10 of my classmates from the University of Cuenca. They range in age from 22 to 30 years old. For the survey, a questionnaire of 5 statements was used (see annex #2). The survey lasted 30 minutes.



## CHAPTER IV

### Results and Analysis

The results of the survey are based on the quantitative analysis.

#### 4.1 Interview

The purpose of the interview was to get more information about the topic, clarify my doubts, and answer the research questions.

Mr. Calle explained to me that a crossword puzzle is a great tool to enhance pupils' vocabulary and skills. Moreover, children like to work with crossword puzzles because they have fun and share nice moments with their partners. The crossword puzzle becomes a challenge for them. Furthermore, Mr. Calle says that he has learned to design his own crossword puzzles and that he really likes to solve them. First, he draws the puzzle and then he uses a crossword maker to create the words. According to Mr. Calle, it is very important to use crossword puzzles because the teacher keeps his/her learners working, in this way they improve their vocabulary. He also states that crossword solving involves several useful skills, such as reasoning and spelling. The interviewee says that all the skills (writing, reading, listening, and speaking) can be put into practice through the use of crossword puzzles. He also gave some tips to solve them:

- First, the key words have to be understandable, according to the students' level.
- Second, we should encourage pupils to solve them through pictures.
- Third, the crossword puzzles need to have pictures to attract students' attention.



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- Fourth, the vocabulary must be in accordance with each pupil's competence. If it is possible, a teacher can use a crossword puzzle with each part of the class. It could be at the beginning as a warm up, as a grammar presentation, or as homework. It depends on the purpose, states Mr. Calle.

The interview was very significant because I obtained a lot of information for the investigation of my topic. Mr. Calle confirmed my doubts about the topic by answering the question: "What is a crossword puzzle?" Also, the interview answered the research questions: "Do crossword-puzzle activities help to develop vocabulary in children?", "What is the benefit of using crossword puzzles?", and "When do you use crossword puzzles in an English class?"

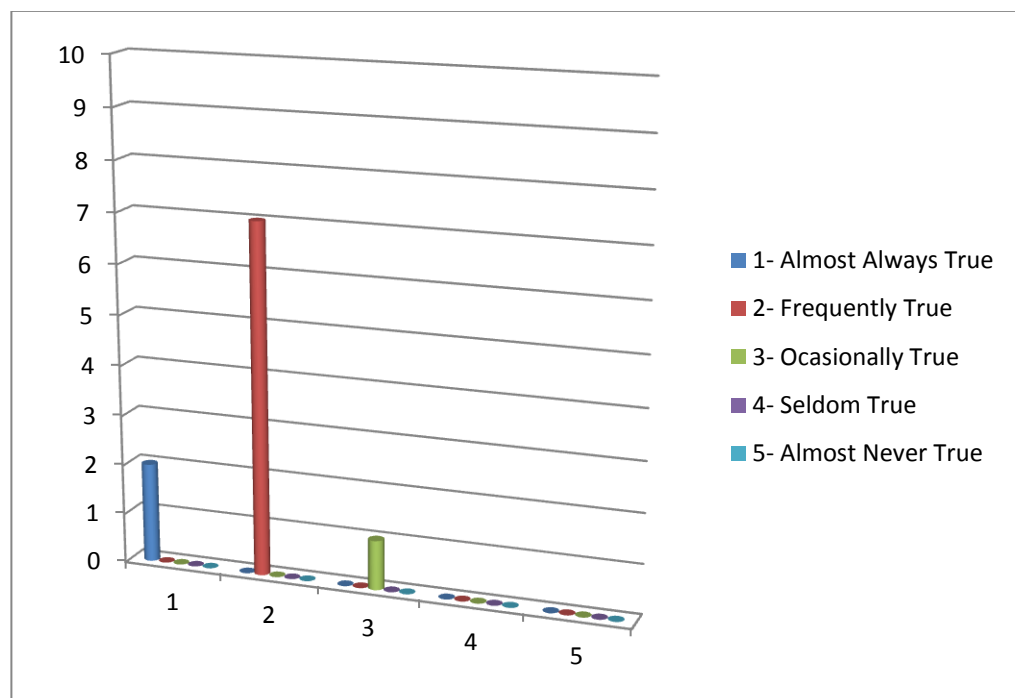


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## 4.2 GRAPHS

### Question 1

- Game activities must be based on the goals and objectives that a teacher wants to accomplish.

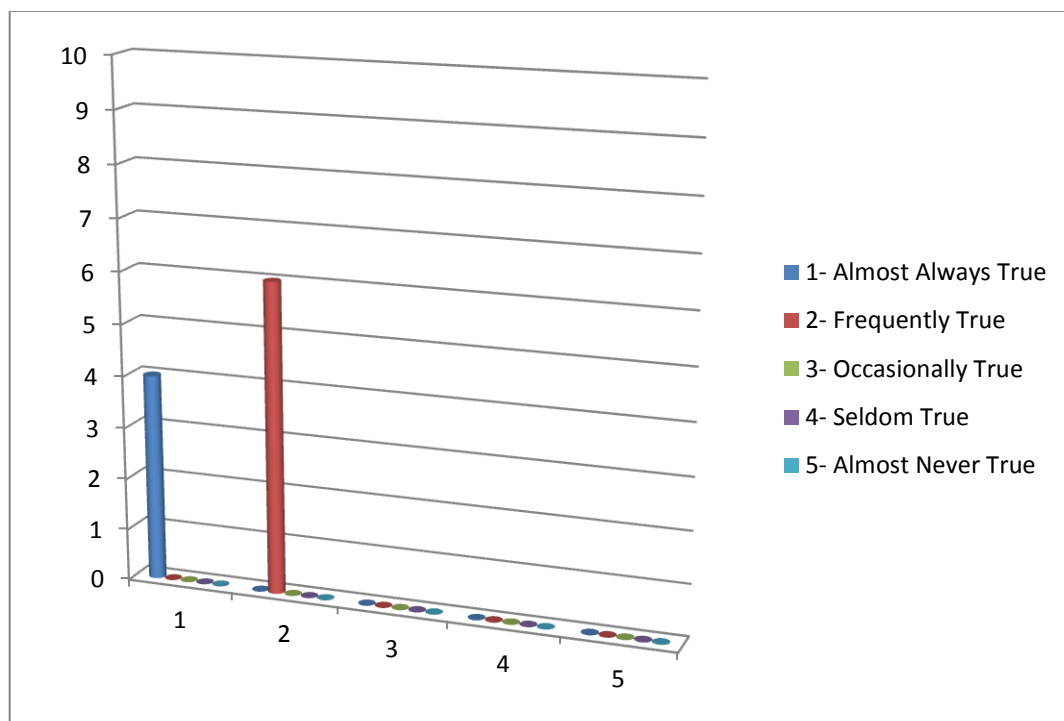




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### Question 2

-Teachers are able to achieve positive results through the use of games in the learning process due to planning, proper organization of games, and delegation of the tasks to students.

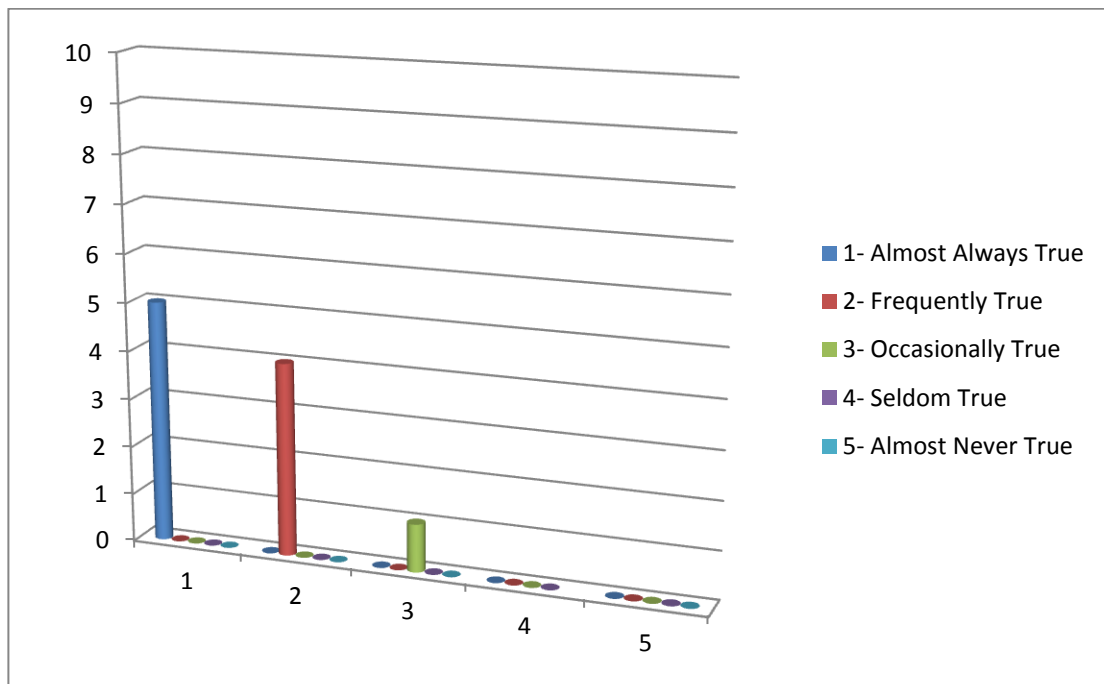




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### Question 3

- Game activities are carried out, in order to facilitate the understanding of the target language.

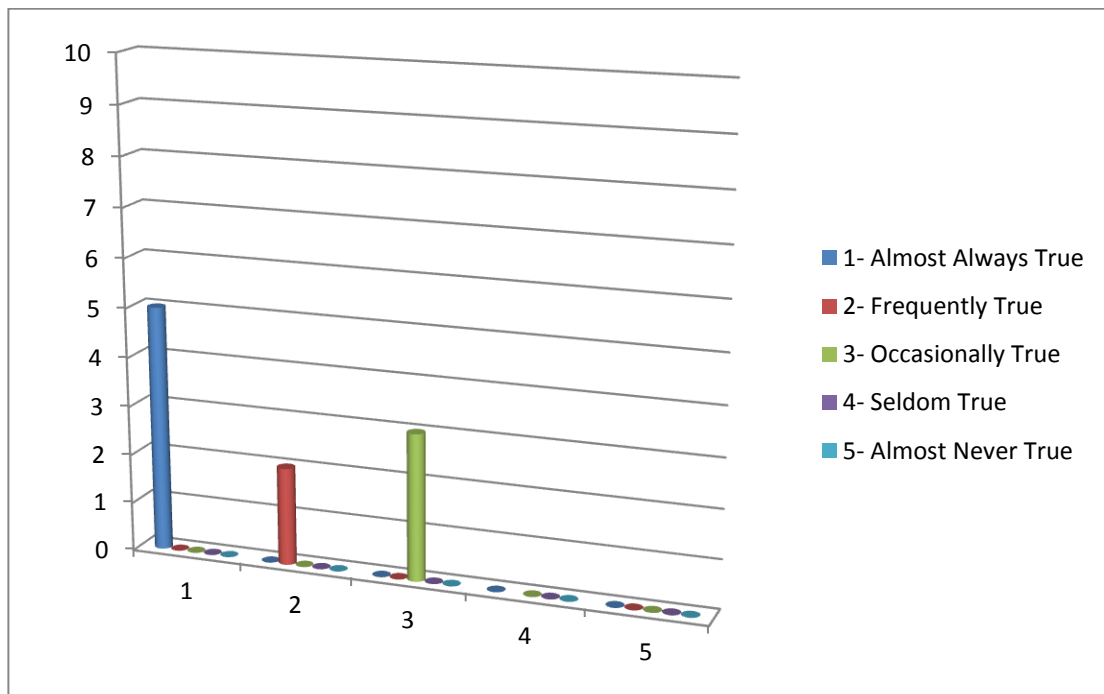




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### Question 4

- The use of a variety of games in language teaching is said to make teaching more fun and, as a result, more communicative.

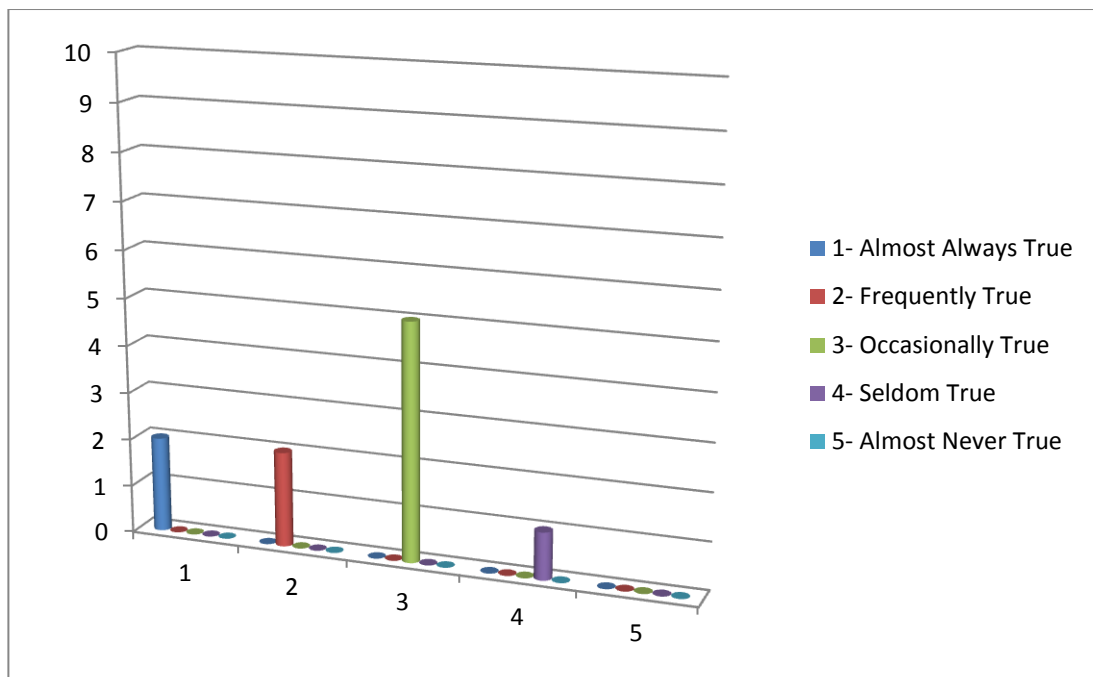




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### Question 5

- Teachers have access to the necessary learning and development programs that allow them to stay up to date with the current job needs, in addition to learning new things.



After analyzing the graphs we can reach the following conclusions:

1. Most participants say that frequent game activities must be based on the goals and objectives that a teacher must achieve.
2. Most participants are happier with the use of games in the learning process.
3. Most participants say that game activities are carried out in order to facilitate the understanding of the target language.
4. Most participants prefer the use of a variety of games in language teaching because they make teaching more fun and communicative.





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5. Most participants say that teachers frequently have access to programs that allow them to stay up to date with the current job needs, in addition to learning new things.

### 4.3 Survey

The purpose of the survey was to analyze the use game activities in the classroom and to show how they can contribute to the learning process to develop vocabulary in children.

As it is said on pages 34- 35 during the interview to Mr. Calle, there are advantages of using crossword puzzles to teach vocabulary to children:

1. Crossword puzzles are great tools to enhance pupils' vocabulary and other language skills.
2. Crossword puzzles help to keep students engaged in working.
3. Crossword solving enhances reasoning and spelling.
4. The four language skills can be put into practice by solving crossword puzzles.
5. However, some specific steps must be taken into account to make the puzzles meaningful:
  - a) Words must be understandable.
  - b) Pictures are very important.
  - c) The vocabulary must be related to the students' level.
  - d) The purpose of using a crossword puzzle must be clearly determined.



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### 4.4 Analysis of the Design

Two classes were given during the process of the application of the use of crossword puzzles games with the students of fourth level of Basic Education of “Victor Manuel Albornoz Cabanilla” Elementary school. It is important to mention that the students were very active and motivated for that kind of game activity. It has been possible to appreciate that crossword puzzles encourage to students to learn English. The use of these kinds of games in English classroom was one of the most useful and favorite tools for students in EFL classes. The classes were about the parts of the body and occupations, where colorful pictures helped in a significant way in order to for the students to engage their interest on the topics and the material.

Finally, I can say that the use of crossword puzzles help substantially in the increase of vocabulary in children, which is very entertaining and positive to teach the English language



## Chapter V

### Conclusions and Recommendations

As the conclusion of my thesis, I can say that the main objective of this work is providing crossword-puzzle activities to children, in order to enrich their vocabulary. In short, the use of crossword puzzles is highly motivating and keeps the students' attention because of the colorful material, pictures, and handouts. It was interesting to notice how students like to solve crossword puzzles; making English learning is easier for them.

As a result, I can suggest teachers to keep motivation by providing students crossword-puzzles activities.

I recommend the use of easy words in a crossword puzzles, depending on each student' level, so that they don't become bored.

Finally, I advise teachers to involve the four skills (speaking, reading, writing, and listening) in each crossword puzzle, in order to improve the English language.



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# *Appendices*



## UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA

### Appendix 1: Interview

#### TOPIC: CROSSWORD PUZZLES TO DEVELOP VOCABULARY IN BEGINNERS

#### INTERVIEW

- 1- What is a crossword puzzle?
- 2- Where did you learn to use crossword puzzles?
- 3- What is the benefit using crossword puzzle?
- 4- What are the skills enhanced by solving puzzles?
- 5- Can you say some tips for using crossword puzzles?
- 6- What are the problems to solve a crossword puzzle?
- 7- When do you use crossword puzzle in an English class?
- 8- How do you challenge your pupils to solve a crossword puzzle?



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### Appendix 2: Survey

TOPIC: CROSSWORD PUZZLES TO DEVELOP VOCABULARY IN BEGINNERS

SURVEY TO ANALIZE THE USE OF CROSSWORD PUZZLES ACTIVITIES IN THE CLASSROOM

Name of the institution: \_\_\_\_\_

This survey contains statements about the use of crossword puzzles activities in class. Next to each statement, circle the number that represents how strongly you feel about the statement by using the following scoring system:

- Almost Always True — 5
- Frequently True — 4
- Occasionally True — 3
- Seldom True — 2
- Almost Never True — 1

Be honest about your choices.

<b>Internal Task Functions</b>						
1.	Game activities must be based on the goals and objectives that a teacher must achieve.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	Teachers are able to achieve positive results through the use of games in the learning process due to planning, proper organization of games, and delegation of the tasks to students.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	Games activities are carried out in order to facilitate the understanding of the target language.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	The use of a variety of games in language teaching is said to make teaching more fun and, as a result more communicative.	5	4	3	2	1
5.	Teachers have access to the necessary learning and development programs that allow them to stay up to date with the current job needs, in addition to learning new things.	5	4	3	2	1