

## **THE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILL OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS BY USING SNAKE AND LADDER GAME**

**Rini Widiastuti<sup>1</sup>, Nafisah Endahati<sup>2</sup>**

[<sup>1</sup>riniwidya874@gmail.com](mailto:riniwidya874@gmail.com)

Universitas PGRI Yogyakarta

[<sup>2</sup>nafisah@upy.ac.id](mailto:nafisah@upy.ac.id)

Universitas PGRI Yogyakarta

---

### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to know the process of improving the writing skill of eight grade students at SMPN 14 Yogyakarta by using snakes and ladders game. The subjects of the study were the students of grade VIII B. They found difficulty in writing skills. The participants consisted of 32 students. The study was conducted in a classroom action research methodology. The data were collected through field notes, observation, interview and documentation. They were analyzed using descriptive qualitative. The result of the study shows that the process of teaching and learning in each cycle ran well by using snakes and ladders game. The indicators of achievement are students achieve higher the minimum standard score, use correct English structure, adopt a variety of English vocabulary, use appropriate punctuation, and write recount text appropriately. Those indicators of achievement obtain a successful result within 3 cycles. Based on the data analyses, there is an improvement in cycle 2 as many as 43.12% or at an average of 69.99. In cycle 3, the result increases up to 82.49 or 82.49%.

---

**Keywords:** writing skill, recount text, snakes and ladders game

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Because of the significant use of English, the Indonesian government declared English as one of the subjects learned in schools. Students learn English in four skills named speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Those skills are integrated. One of the skills which should be required by students is writing. People write to send ideas to others. People use technology nowadays. Sending text messages through mobile phones is a simple example compared with the more complex as sending a business letter via email or fax. Students may not avoid technology. They must prepare themselves for the future.

---

They need to be able to write an application letter and to do administrative tasks when handling the job.

Writing is a productive skill (Nunan, 1989: 36). There are two different views on the nature of writing; the product approach and the process approach. The product approach focusses on the result of the act of composition, while the process approach is on the means to complete text that is created as on the end product itself.

Furthermore, writing is an intellectual activity of finding the ideas and thinking about the way to express and arrange them into a statement and paragraph that is clear to be understood by the people (Nunan, 2003: 88). It means that writing activity is a complex activity that purposes to express one's need and meaning to others by some arranged-sentences. Writing is functional communication, making students possible to create imagined worlds of their design. Some important aspects should be considered in writing skill are content, organization, purpose, vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling. Bram in Najmi (2004: 7) proposes some components which are involved in writing. Those are content, form, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Content deals with the substance of writing, the ideas expressed. The form is the organization of the content. Grammar is dealing with the employment of grammatical form syntactic patterns. Vocabulary is the choice of structure to give a particular style. The mechanic deals with the use of a graphic convention of the language.

Writing is a progressive activity. There are some stages in the writing process of discovering and organizing the idea, writing or putting on paper and revise the writing. In writing, there should be written in the form of a paragraph, a good paragraph concern with a topic, a sentence, unity, and coherence (Meyers, 2005: 2). It is stated that the process of writing is started from ideas, putting them into good sentences, combine the sentences into a paragraph, and resulting in a unity of coherence paragraphs.

There are various techniques and tasks of writing as proposed by Nunan (2003: 96). Those are describes as follows.

1. Invention techniques; brainstorming, word mapping, and quick writing.

In brainstorming, students list all relevant ideas to the topic individually or in pairs.

They are then creating word maps in a blank paper either begin at the top or center.

Quick writing is where students begin with a topic, but they rapidly write about it.

2. Writing; drafting, feedback, and revising

After deciding a topic, they must develop it into an organized paragraph with ample time. The development of the ideas should regard grammar and punctuation as well. In revising, the student is given time to exchange their work with others to improve the result of this step.

### 3. Proofreading and editing

Before the final draft, it is turned in for evaluation. Students should read for mistakes in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and so forth. Proofreading can be done with or without a teacher or assistant.

Regarding teaching writing, the teacher must apply appropriate strategy in improving students' writing skill because teaching purposes to show and help students to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in studying of something, providing with knowledge, and causing to know and understand (Brown, 2004:7). Lannang (2014: 5) proposes the implementation of teaching writing as follows.

1. Personal strategies; meaning a collection of models of various types of writing (grouping, expansion of knowledge about discourse); read silently.
2. Risk-taking; is the use of known vocabulary and structures that have been mastered.
3. Getting organized; it is organizing sources, material and time.

Teaching writing to junior high school is one of the most challenging teaching practices. Junior high school is part of primary education in Indonesia. Curriculum 2013 is adopted several years ago. The curriculum mentions five stages of learning named scientific method, those are observing, questioning, exploring, associating, and communicating. This scientific method suggests the students independently discover problems in learning along with the solutions that are mainly done through discussion. However, in learning to write, group discussion is not enough. The teacher should adopt challenging strategies to motivate students to write.

Some writing competencies must be accomplished by students based on the regulation of the ministry of national education. Those competencies are written in the standard of competence and basic competence. It is mentioned that writing in junior high school concerns with some genres of text. They must comprehend descriptive text, recount text, narrative text, and procedure text. Recount text is one of the text genres students must learn. It is written with the purpose to inform the readers about something that happened in the past. Recount text is written out to make a report about the experience of a series of related events. There are several methods in teaching recount text as using picture series,

---

diary or personal journal writing, guiding questioner technique, web blog, photograph, and game (Marpaung, 2016:3).

Teaching writing is not an easy thing to do. The teacher needs to conduct the appropriate technique to motivate students to write. The teacher needs media to facilitate in transferring the knowledge. Conducting game is one of the ways to motivate students in learning. Game is an activity to make the learning situation more interesting and challenging. To become more beneficial, there are some considerations in conducting games in learning. Those are which games to use when to use it, how to link up with the syllabus, the textbook and how it will benefit in different ways. In writing skills, different kinds of games can be applied as using flashcards, board games, pictures, and others. The efforts to enhance students' writing comprehension must be done comprehensively.

Game is an activity with the rule, a goal and an element of fun, it is considered that a game is perceived as a meaningful fun activity (Klimanova, 2015: 3). There are two classification of language games, named linguistic which are focused on accuracy, and communicative games which are mainly based on successful exchange of information. Incorporating game in the classroom can improve students' learning experience, makes materials more current and relevant. Games provide the students with a new and varied learning environment that meet the students' learning style. Game is an activity that is entertaining, engaging, challenging, and in which the students play and interact with others (Indariati, 2012: 33). By integrating games in learning activities, students are encouraged to interact and communicate in a fun atmosphere. The game also engages students' healthy activities that challenge the mind and teach a social skill.

The purpose of conducting the game in English learning activity is to practice as well as encourage some authentic response, natural language in an exciting communication. Aprina (2017: 30) states that game has two kinds characteristics; competitive and cooperative games. A competitive game is in which the players or teams race to the first to reach the goal. In a cooperative game, the players or teams work together to achieve the goal. Some games can be conducted in teaching English as an information gap, guessing game, search matching, exchanging, collecting,, combining, arranging card game, board game, problem-solving, puzzle, and role-playing.

It is believed that conducting the game in the language teaching process improves students' writing comprehension. The game provides clear term achievable for students and it will

solve students' difficulties in writing skills. One of the famous games to students is snakes and ladders game. The use of snakes and ladders game in teaching writing can create favorable conditions for students. Some benefits can be obtained in using snakes and ladders game, they are as follows (Aprina, 2017: 38).

1. Students can participate in the learning process directly,
2. Snakes and ladders game can be used for it is a fun activity,
3. Snakes and ladders game is believed to stimulate students to learn and solve simple matter unnoticed by them.

Based on those considerations, this study is conducted to improve students' writing skill comprehension by using snakes and ladders game. This study is intended to solve the problems as follows;

1. Students are less motivation in writing skill,
2. Students are lack of English vocabularies,
3. There are no available media in writing teaching and learning process,
4. Students are lack comprehension in English structure,
5. Students' writing score is below the minimum standard score.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study was conducted in classroom action research. The subject of the study was the students of grade VIII B of SMPN 14 Yogyakarta. The class consisted of 32 students. They were facing difficulties in writing skills as known from the result of the writing score and the writer's observation. As mentioned before, this study aims to know the process of improving writing comprehension of grade VIII B students at SMPN 14 Yogyakarta by using snakes and ladders game. Classroom action research purposes to evaluate and change something to improve educational practice (Arikunto, 2013:24). Furthermore, it is explained that classroom action research has specific considerations, as the following; it is the activity to observe an object with certain methodology to get data or information which useful into developing quality about something interesting by the researcher; the action is activity which intentional to conduct with certain provide; and the class is group of students receive the lesson and taught by teacher in certain time and place.

This action research was focusing on improving students writing skills in recount text. The model of the action referred to the model developed by Kemmis and Taggart. The

---

researcher conducted the study collaboratively with a collaborator, the English teacher, and students. The procedure of the study is as follows.

a. Preliminary Research

The goal of the preliminary research is to identify the students' characteristics and problems happened. The researcher began the action research by interviewing the English teacher for finding out the students' characteristics and their problems, then is followed by the observation. The researcher observed the learning process in the classroom.

b. Planning

Planning is the step for the researcher to conduct and formulate the treatment and procedural act in doing the action research which is written in the lesson plan.

c. Action

The researcher applied snakes and ladders game during the learning process as the plan in the cycle.

d. Observation

It is the step of observing the teaching-learning process, to collect data from the result of an action, to take notes and to discuss the result of observation with the collaborator.

e. Reflection

Reflection is used to evaluate the progress or improvement of the students during the learning process. Reflection is used as the main data for the researcher and collaborator to conduct the next cycle. The researcher with the help of collaborator decide the result of the reflection.

The data of this action research is collected qualitatively. They are collected through field notes, observation, interview and documentation. Field note is written to describe what students do at the learning process which consists of opening, whilst teaching, and closing. The field notes are made to know whether the technique works or not and to know the situation in the learning process. Observation is conducted by the researcher and collaborator and considered to know the teacher's performance and students' response concerning the implementation of the game. The interview is done to find out the students' difficulties in writing and their response to the action. Documentation

used in this research is taken by the recording of the data during the interview and photos during the process of teaching-learning writing.

To measure the result of the action, the researcher decides the indicator of achievement.

The indicator of achievement can be stated as follows.

1. Students achieve a score of more than 75 (minimum standard score),
2. Students use correct English structure,
3. Students use a variety of vocabulary,
4. Students use correct punctuation,
5. Students write a recount text incorrect structure.

### **3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

Preliminary research was conducted to students grade VIII B SMPN 14 Yogyakarta. Based on the observation and the interview guided to the English teacher, it is underlined that the problems faced by students in writing skills are feeling bored, less motivation, lack of English structure comprehension, lack of vocabulary, and those affect the low score of writing skill.

#### **a. Cycle 1**

The implementation of the snake and ladder game faces some constraints. Some students did not attend the lesson because they had to go to an extracurricular activity. In the process of the action, the researcher found that students did not pay attention to the explanation and they were lazy to do the task for not bringing a dictionary. They found difficulties in deciding verbs in past or present tenses.

After conducting the action, the researcher, teacher, and collaborator discussed the result of the action. They listed the indicator of achievement as follows.

- a. The indicator of students' writing score had not achieved criteria minimum score.
- b. The indicator of correct English grammar was not achieved.
- c. The indicator of varied vocabulary was not achieved.
- d. The indicator of correct punctuation was not achieved.
- e. The indicator of correct English structure in writing recount text was not achieved.

#### **b. Cycle 2**

The researcher, teacher, and collaborator did the next action in cycle 2. The first thing to do was the plan. Based on the result and reflection of cycle 1, the researcher conducted the action to more specific to the problems. Regarding all indicators of

---

achievement that were not achieved, the researcher must try hard to do focus on those aspects. Those were grammar, a variety of vocabulary, and punctuation. The plan was preparing a lesson plan, making simple tasks in the snake and ladder game which is focusing on incorrect grammar and punctuation. The researcher also focused on the use of varied vocabularies both written and orally while explaining the material. The topic of the lesson was about the holiday.

The students were divided into groups. It made them easier to conduct the game and interact with each other. They did better communication with each other and solve the problems in writing the recount text. A video lesson was played in the classroom to direct students' attention. The whole situation in action 2 especially the learning process and the implementation of snake and ladder game was running better than cycle 1. The result of the action in cycle 2 can be reflected as follows.

- a. The indicator of students' writing scores improved. It was shown on the result of the writing task that indicated a 10% improvement.
- b. The indicator of correct English grammar did not gain improvement because students had difficulty in arranging sentences. They also were afraid to decide the correct tenses in the sentence.
- c. The indicator of using varied English vocabulary improved. It was determined by the use of vocabulary in their writing tasks. They also used vocabularies when conducting snake and ladder game orally.
- d. The indicator of correct punctuation indicated improvement. By giving attention to the material through video lessons, students improved their understanding of punctuation. They were more careful in writing sentences incorrect punctuation.
- e. The indicator of correct English grammar in recount text improved but not maximally. It was shown that students organized the sentences better than the previous cycle. They started to think orderly and combine the word into more meaningful sentences. They were able to combine sentences into a more meaningful paragraph.

### **c. Cycle 3**

Based on the result and reflection of cycle 2, the action research continued to cycle

3. The action in cycle 3 focused on solving the problem of grammar comprehension.



The researcher, teacher, and collaborator discussed the plan that would be conducted in cycle 3. The process of action was the same as cycle 2, but the material was intended to train students to comprehend the past tense sentences. The topic was about the student's experience. The action still conducted a snake and ladder game as the media to improve students' writing skills. In the learning process, the students identified the text given by the teacher. The text was about one's experience. They also implemented snake and ladder game enthusiastically. Grammar comprehension could be achieved in completing the task. The researcher, teacher and collaborator measure the improvement of students' grammar comprehension. The task was focused on the simple past tense. It demanded students to make past time sentences. The result of cycle 3 can be summarized that all indicators gained successful results.

Based on the result of the action research conducted to improve students' writing skills for grade VIII B students at SMPN 14 Yogyakarta, it can be analyzed the complete result of cycles 1, 2, and 3. It can be seen in the following chart.

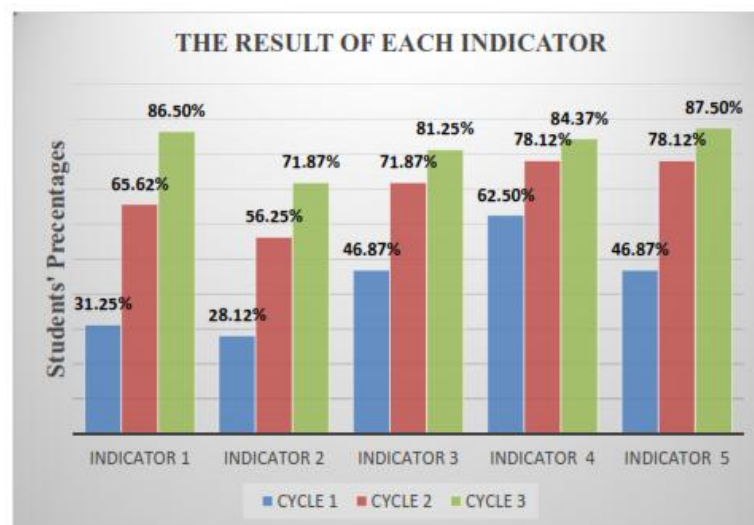


Figure 1. The Result of Each Indicator

The figure describes the percentage of the improvement of each cycle. It is strengthened by the result of the observation done by the researcher. The result shows the improvement from cycle 1 to cycle 2 and cycle 3 are 31.25% to 65.62% and 80.50%. The indicator of using correct grammar, the percentage shows improvement from cycle 1 to 2 and 3 which are 28.12% to 56.25%, to 71.87%.

The indicator of using a variety of vocabulary gains result from 46.87% in cycle 1 to 71.87% in cycle 2, and 81.25 % in cycle 3. The indicator of using correct punctuation shows improvement to 78.12% in cycle 2, and 84.37% in cycle 3. The final indicator which is students can write recount text also improves from 46.87% in cycle 1 to 78.12% in cycle 2, and 87.50% in cycle 3. All participants in this action research agree that all indicators gain a successful result. The average in each cycle can be seen in the following chart.

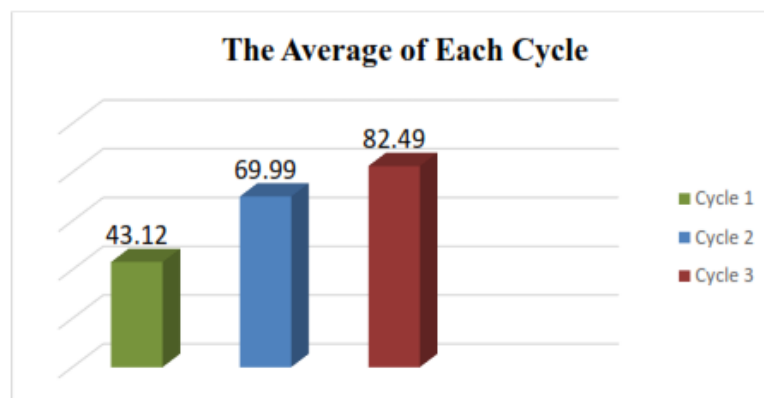


Figure 2. The Average of Each Cycle

#### 4. CONCLUSION

After conducting the classroom action research, it can be concluded that snake and ladder game is successful to improve students' writing skill of grade VIIIIB at SMPN 14 Yogyakarta. The result shows the process of teaching-learning in each cycle lead the students more enthusiastic and enjoyed learning the English language. There are five indicators of achievement conducted in this action research. All indicators gain successful results in the third cycle. The average of indicators in cycle 2 increases to 69.99 and 82.49 in cycle 3.

#### REFERENCES

- Aprina, Heni. 2017. *The Influence of Using Snake and Ladder Game Toward Students' Writing Ability in Recount Text at the First Semester of the Tenth Grade of Sman 1 Ngambur Pesisir Barat in 2017/2018 Academic Year*. Thesis. Lampung: Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty Raden Intan State Islamic University Lampung.
- Arikunto, Suharsimi. 2013. *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktek*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.

- Brown, Douglas. 2004. *Language Assessment Principle and Classroom Practice*. United State: Longman.
- Indariati, Dwi. 2012. *Improving Students' Writing Competence Using Game (Bouncing Stories)*. Thesis. Surakarta: English Language Education Department Graduate Program SebelasMaret University Surakarta.
- Klimanuva, Blanka Frydrychov. 2015. "Games in the Teaching of English". *Journal (Online), Volume 191, No 1157-1160*, (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042815025720>, accessed on October 14<sup>th</sup> 2018).
- Lannang, 2014. *The Implementation of Guided Writing Strategy to Improve Formal Letter Writing Skill of Class VI Students at SDN 3 Masepe in Tellu Limpoe Sub District In Sidenreng Rappang District*. Thesis. Makassar. Program Pasca Sarjana Universitas Negeri Makassar.
- Marpaung, 2016. *Teaching Writing Recount Text Through Personal Journal Writing*. *Jurnal Pendidikan online*. Vol. 5. No. 06. <http://jurnal.untan.ac.id/index.php/jdpdp/article/view/15558>, accessed on November 10<sup>th</sup> 2018).
- Meyers, Alan. 2005. *Get ways Academic Writing, Effective Sentence Paragraph, and Essays*. New York: Longman. P 2.
- Najmi, Alfa. 2004. <http://alfanajmi19.blogspot.com/2014/03/contoh-proposal-skripsi-bahasa-inggris.html>, Accessed on October 6<sup>th</sup> 2018).
- Nunan, David. 1989. *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Nunan, David. 2003. *Practical English Language Teaching, First Edition*. New York: Mc.Graw-Hill Companies.
-