

**THE USE OF FOUR SQUARE WRITING METHOD TO  
IMPROVE VII STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY AT  
SMP MUHAMMADIYAH 3 RAMBIPUJI  
IN 2015/2016 ACADEMIC YEAR  
EAST JAVA INDONESIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Keywords:** Writing Ability and Four Square Writing Method.

In studying English, the students should master the four skills, those are reading, listening, speaking, and writing. The four skills are supported by the learning of language elements. Unfortunately, writing is one that most complex, structural, and more elaborate. Bored learning it, but teachers must try to find other alternative method of teaching English to make students interested. One of them is through Four Square Writing Method. Four Square Writing Method is a simplified graphic organizer for teaching writing to children in school. It means that this method can help the students in writing activity by creating a simple graphic organization to arrange and construct a good paragraph. Using the Four Square in writing process is to help the students' organize their thought and ideas in writing and the students can complete a variety of fun writing task.

In this research, the problem is "How can the use of Four Square Writing Method improve students' writing ability at the seventh grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Rambipuji in 2015/2016 academic year?". The hypothesis of this research is the use of Four Square Writing method can improve the seventh grade students' writing ability at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Rambipuji in 2015/2016 Academic Year. Classroom action research with the cycle model was applied in this research. The action research was carried out to improve the students' writing ability of seventh grade at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Rambipuji. This classroom action research was done with sequence of steps, namely planning, implementing, observing and reflecting of the action.

The result from this research showed that Four Square Writing Method is very effective to use in improving the students' writing ability. At beginning, only 21 of 38 students (55%) passed in writing test. After that, in cycle 2, got 29 of 38 students (76%) passed in writing test.

It can be concluded that Four Square Writing Method can improve seventh grade students' writing ability at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Rambipuji in 2015/2016 academic year by brainstorming the students using a graphic organizer to construct ideas to minimizes that the students had difficulties in constructing ideas,

giving more guidance in using connecting words to the students in teaching and learning process, making sure that the students fill connecting word in box 2, 3, and 4 to bridge the gap between ideas and giving difficulty words or vocabularies related to the topic sentence to solve the students' lack of vocabularies before going to create Four Square Writing and develop it into a text.

## ABSTRAK

**Kata Kunci:** *kemampuan menulis, Metode Four Square Writing*

Didalam belajar bahasa inggris, murid sebaiknya menguasai empat keahlian, yaitu membaca, mendengarkan, berbicara, dan menulis. Empat keahlian itu didukung oleh pembelajaran tentang unsur-unsur bahasa. Tidak untungnya, menulis adalah salah satu keahlian yang sangat kompleks, terstruktur, dan lebih rumit. Membosankan dalam mempelajarinya, tetapi guru harus mencoba untuk menemukan metode lain dalam pembelajaran bahasa inggris, agar murid tertarik. Salah satu metode itu adalah metode Four Square Writing. Metode Four Square Writing adalah sebuah grafik yang sangat sederhana untuk pembelajaran menulis untuk murid di sekolah. Ini maksudnya adalah, bahwa metode ini dapat membantu murid dalam aktivitas menulis dengan membuat sebuah grafik sederhana untuk menyusun dan menyampaikan sebuah paragraf yang bagus. Penggunaan Four Square Writing dalam proses menulis membantu murid dalam mengatur pemikiran dan juga ide mereka dalam menulis dan murid dapat menyelesaikan sebuah tugas menulis yang menyenangkan.

Di penelitian ini, permasalahannya “Bagaimana penggunaan metode Four Square Writing dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis murid di kelas VII SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Rambipuji tahun ajaran 2015/2016?”. Hipotesis dari penelitian ini adalah penggunaan metode Four Square Writing dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis murid di kelas VII SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Rambipuji tahun ajaran 2015/2016. Penelitian tindakan kelas diaplikasikan di penelitian ini. Penelitian tindakan dilaksanakan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulis murid di kelas VII SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Rambipuji. Penelitian tindakan kelas ini dikerjakan dalam rangkaian langkah, yaitu planning, implementing, observing dan reflecting.

Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa metode Four Square Writing sangat efektif untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulis murid. Awalnya, hanya 21 dari 38 murid (55%) yang dapat melewati tes menulis. Setelah itu, di siklus kedua, 29 dari 38 murid (76%) yang melewati tes menulis.

Ini dapat disimpulkan bahwa metode Four Square Writing dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis murid di kelas VII SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Rambipuji tahun ajaran 2015/2016 dengan murid menggunakan sebuah grafik untuk menyampaikan ide untuk mengurangi kesulitan murid dalam menyampaikan ide, memberi bimbingan lebih kepada murid dalam penggunaan kata penghubung dalam proses pembelajaran, memastikan bahwa murid telah mengisi kata penghubung di kotak 2,3 dan 4 untuk memisahkan antara ide dan memberi kata-kata sulit sebelum murid membuat Four Square Writing dan mengembangkannya dalam teks.

## INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the language skills that is taught at Junior High School/Islamic Junior High School (SMP/MTS). The teaching of writing aims at enabling students to master the functional and monologue texts or paragraphs in the form of descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure, and report. In addition, School Based Curriculum (KTSP) states that the seventh year students are expected to be able to express meaningful ideas in terms of functional text and simple short essay in form of descriptive to interact with people in their nearest environment.

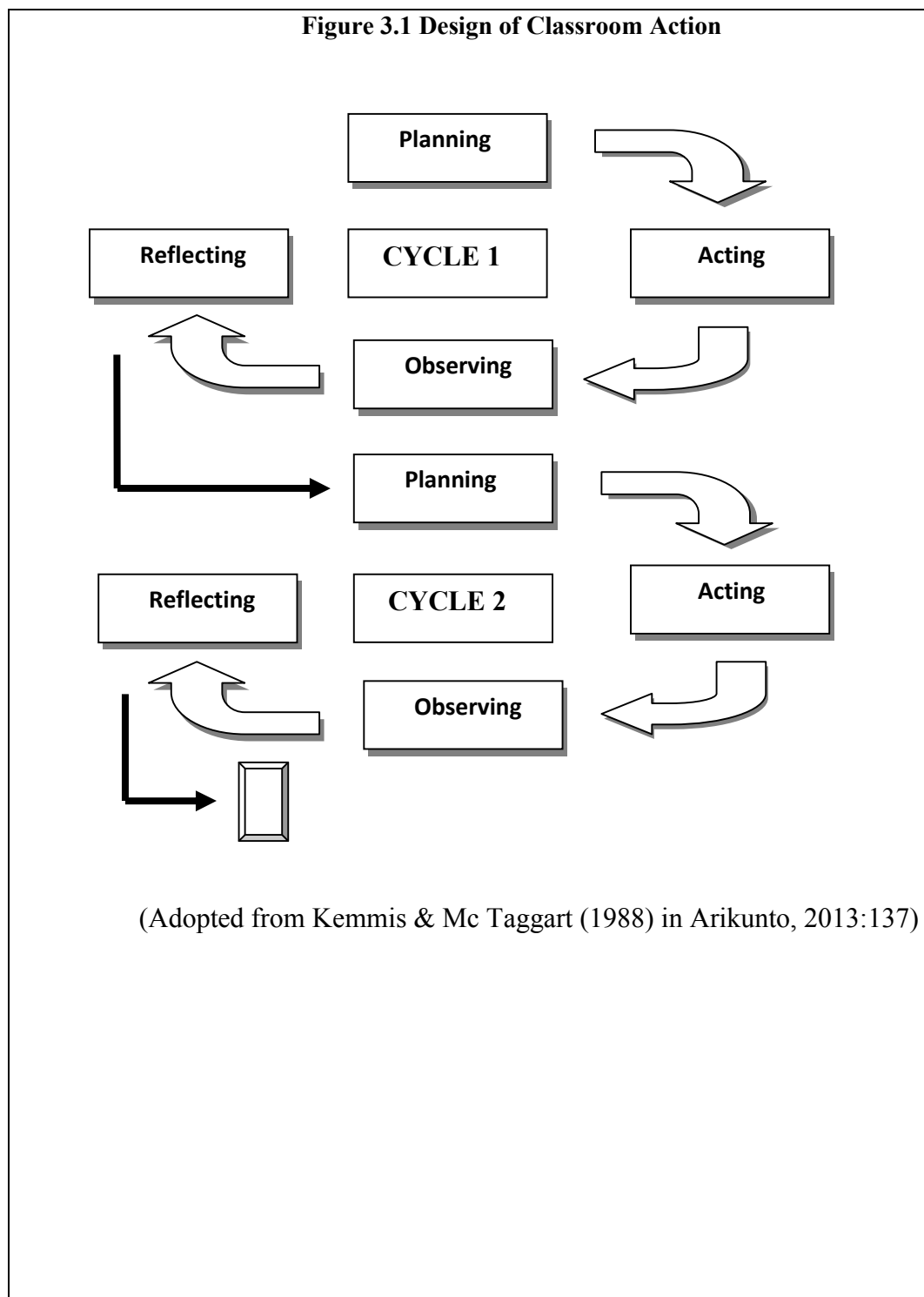
Descriptive writing is one of text types that are taught at the seventh grade. According to Siahaan (2008:119), in composition a description is also considered as a text which a writer tries to picture out an object to his readers. The object can be anything. It can be a concrete object such as a person, or an animal, or a plan, or a car etc. Meanwhile, before asking the students to write, the teacher has to apply several processes of writing. Thus, most teachers have to pay attention with the steps of writing. But, most teachers do not apply all of the processes, because of that many students do not understand how to arrange a simple paragraph.

To improve their writing ability, the teacher may change the way of teaching method in teaching learning of writing. There are several methods that can be used by the teacher in teaching learning of writing, one of them is using Four Square Writing Method. According to Gould and Gould (1999:1), four square writing is a great way to learn to write any type of writing and it is easy to use, it lets the students to be creative and it is also helpful to them when they write. It is a simple open-ended graphic organization method that is designed to help students focus, organize and support their writing with detail. It is named method because it has several steps which can be followed, the steps are brainstorming three supporting ideas and writing a concluding sentence, adding supporting details, adding connecting words, the last is incorporating vivid language into writing. Through these steps, the students will be guided to use specific instructions to write and organize their ideas before finally writing the draft.

## RESEARCH METHOD

Research design of this research is Classroom Action Research

The design of this action research is illustrated in the following diagram



Subject in this research is the students of VII at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Rambipuji in 2015/2016 academic year by the number of 38 students consist of 23 male students and 15 female students. The seventh students are used because they have difficulties in writing and low score.

The instrument used in this research were test and observation checklist. The form of the test was subjective test. Regarding with the validity, the researcher used content/logical validity which meant that the researcher made the test based on School Based Curriculum 2006 for Junior High School. While the reliability of test was analyzed by using Alpha Cronbarch. The research found that the reliabilty of the test was 0.97.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

In general, administering test and observing the application of the action were done to collect the data of the research in both cycle, cycle 1 and cycle 2. The result of test and observation checklist can be described with the table below.

**Table: the result of test and observation checklist in cycle 1 and cycle 2**

<b>Cycle</b>	<b>The percentage score of students' writing test</b>	<b>The percentage of students' active participation</b>
Cycle I	55 %	53 %
Cycle II	76%	76 %

Concerning with the description above, the result showed that the percentage of students' writing ability was increased from 55% in cycle 1 to 76% in cylce 2. Besides that, students' active participation was increased as well from 53% in cycle 1 to 76% in cycle 2. It can be concluded that Four Square Writing Method can improve students' writing ability at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Rambipuji.

Before the actions in the second cycle were carried out, the students' writing ability had not achieved yet the action. Therefore, the researcher investigated the cause of this matter. In the first cycle, a lot of students still had difficulties in constructing ideas, they still confuse in using connecting words to

bridge the gap between the ideas and they lack of vocabularies, so they had difficulties in arranging correct words. From the reasons above, the action in the second cycle needs to be improved.

Since the first cycle had not fulfilled the criteria of the successful action, the second cycle was implemented with some revisions made to obtain better results. Fortunately, there were some factors of why the improvement of the second cycle was so significant from the first cycle. Firstly, the researcher explained about connecting words and make sure that the students fill connecting word in box 2, 3, and 4 to bridge the gap between ideas. According to Gould and Gould (1999:42), this method has built in a good self checking mechanism for sentence building, for example like using connecting words in a sentence. Secondly, the researcher brainstormed the students using a graphic organizer to construct three ideas. By that, the students had minimized that the students had difficulties in constructing ideas in the second cycle. Gould and Burke (2005:1) state that this method uses graphic organization as a tool to lead students' idea and it makes them able to arrange their idea into a good paragraph, useful and helpful for the students to organize their thought and ideas. A graphic organizer also promotes the students' independence in developing a systematic plan for revising their writing and creating a strong visual picture, graphic organizers support students by enabling them to literally see connections and relationships between facts, information, and terms (McKnight, 2010:196). The researcher also gave difficulty words or vocabularies related to the topic sentence to solve the students' lack of vocabularies before going to create four square writing and develop it into a text. Gould and Gould (1999:41) state that this method can help the students to build their vocabulary while writing the paragraph.

Based on the observation checklist, it could be seen that the students' active involvement in the second cycle was higher than the first cycle. Moreover, the result of the reflection of the teaching and learning process in terms of the students' participation during the teaching and learning process showed that the students' active participation during the teaching and learning process was improved from Cycle I to Cycle II. They could give positive response during teaching learning process.

From the result of improvement from cycle I to cycle II, it was proven that Four Square Writing could improve students' writing ability. Gould and Burke (2005:1) state that Four Square Writing is a teaching method that can help the teacher in teaching learning process of writing.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **Conclusion**

Based on the result of the research and discussion, It can be concluded that Four Square Writing Method can improve seventh grade students' writing ability at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Rambipuji in 2015/2016 academic year by brainstorming the students using a graphic organizer to construct ideas to minimize that the students had difficulties in constructing ideas, giving more guidance in using connecting words to the students in teaching and learning process, making sure that the students fill connecting word in box 2, 3, and 4 to bridge the gap between ideas and giving difficulty words or vocabularies related to the topic sentence to solve the students' lack of vocabularies before going to create four square writing and develop it into a text.

### **Suggestion**

In order to improve students' writing ability. It is better for the teacher to apply Four Square Writing Method in teaching and learning process. This research suggests the students also do the exercises outside the classroom, especially to improve their writing ability by using Four Square Writing. The other researchers who experienced similar problems in teaching writing are suggested to use this method as information or a reference to conduct a further research dealing with a similar topic by using different research design, such as, an experimental research to see the effectiveness of using Four Square Writing Method on the students' writing ability or other types of writing which have not investigated in this research.

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