USING FOUR SQUARE WRITING METHOD (FSWM) IN WRITING CLASS
Novia Diyah Nugrahaningsih
Slamet Riyadi University

Abstract
This research was aimed: (1) to find out whether the use of Four Square Writing Method can improve the writing skill of eighth grade students of SMP N 7 Surakarta in the academic year of 2015/2016. (2) to know how far the use of Four Square Writing Method improves the writing skill of eighth grade students of SMP N 7 Surakarta in academic year of 2015/2016. The research was a Classroom Action Research. It was conducted from April until May 2016. The subject of the research was VIII-G students of SMP N 7 Surakarta in the academic year of 2015/2016. In collecting data, the researcher used tests and non-tests. In tests, the students wrote recount text. Meanwhile, non-tests comprised observation, interview, documentation, and field notes. To analyze data, the researcher used qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Consisting of data reduction, display, conclusion drawing and verification. To analyze the quantitative data, the researcher used mean score and t-test formula. The results of the research show that Four Square Writing Method can improve students’ writing skill of the students of VIII-G of SMP N 7 Surakarta. The improvements of the students’ writing skill were on grammar, vocabulary, content, organization, and mechanics aspect. Besides that, the improvement of students’ writing skill can be seen from the students’ writing achievement. The results of mean scores are pre-test (48,3), post-test 1 (70,9), and post-test 2 (76,4). Then, the t-test value of cycle one is 17,12 and the t-test value of cycle two is 6,11. Based on the finding, the researcher concludes that Four Square Writing Method is an appropriate method to improve students’ writing skill.

Keywords: Writing Skill, Four Square Writing Method, Classroom Action Research.
One of languages which is used by people in the world is English. Nowadays, English is an essential part of human communication. Now, English is used broadly in the aspect of communication. Almost in the whole communication media use English as a language to deliver expressions and information, such as: in the social media, in the print media (newspaper or magazine), in the Television, in the radio, etc. As an International language, English is very beneficial to be learned. Because, it can ease the communication between people from the different countries in the world. It is in line with Patel & Jain (2008: 6) who state that the concept of English as International language caused by some reasons, those reasons are: it is used in the global communication of numerous dialects, it fulfills the international standard of language, it is used as mother tongue by majority people in the world, it is used to make international relation for the purpose of communication and exchange of views with different countries in the world.

In learning English, there are four skills needed to master. Those four skills are: listening, speaking, reading, and writing skill. All skills are integrated in learning but one of the skills that is very important to learn is writing skill. Writing is an essential skill of human language learning. Writing activity is used in the way of communication in more permanent form than speaking activity. A deep understanding of language ability is needed in mastering writing skill. Because, writing is the last stage for human in learning language. It is a productive skill, where to see the result the students must
produce a product of writing performance. Thus, the habit training is very
needed to obtain the good writing performance. High proficiency of language
is very needed for writing. It is in line with Patel & Jain (2008: 125) who state
that the essential features of learning writing are on the vocabulary, spelling
and grammatical structure pattern in constructing the good sentences of
paragraph. These language features need to be mastered by the students to
provide the readability of their writing product.

The researcher conducted the study by using Classroom Action Research.
According to Carr & Kemmis (2004: 162) action research is inquiry procedure
which is carried out by practitioners about the problems of teaching and
learning with the aim of improving certain aspects. Those improvements
carried out through acting followed by strategies. The result will be used to
evaluate or used as a reflection for the teacher about procedure which is used in
teaching and learning process. In the writing issues which was observed at
SMP N 7 Surakarta. The result shows that the problems of students’ writing
cconcerned on the grammar, vocabulary, ideas development, organization, and
mechanics aspect.

The Four Square Writing Method (FSWM) was used as a technique for
teaching writing because it is effective to solve the writing problems. Four
Square Writing Method (FSWM) or called often as Four Square Graphic
Organizer or Four-Square Strategy is a method developed by Judith S. Gould
and Evan Jay Gould in 1999. This is a helpful method of teaching basic writing
skill that is applicable grade levels and curriculum area. According to Gould
and Gould (2004: 61) Four Square Writing Method can help the students to focus on the topic, organize the ideas well, and support detail sentences for their writing result. FSWM provides beneficial and helpful graphic organizer/template that can be used in the planning stage of writing process. It provides much of the material that will be applied in the drafting stage of writing. The elaborate writing result can be produced by the students through doing some procedures of Four Square Writing Method, the steps are: brainstorming three supporting ideas and writing a concluding sentence, adding supporting details, adding connecting words to provide transition between thoughts, and incorporating vivid language into writing. The researcher used Four Square Writing Method that might encourage the students to improve their writing skill. By using Four Square Writing Method, the writers will get organized and detailed writing performance. After using four boxes to write down their idea, the writer can continue their writing in the next stage of writing process until they get a good writing result to be published.

The researcher focuses on two problems. The first problem is to find out whether the use of Four Square Writing Method can improve the students’ writing skill. The second problem is to know how far the use of Four Square Writing Method improves students’ writing skill.

METHODOLOGY

This study is Classroom Action Research. It was conducted at SMP N 7 Surakarta which is located at Jl. Mr. Sartono no. 34, Surakarta. The subject of
this study was students of class VIII-G at SMP N 7 Surakarta. It consisted of 31 students.

This study was conducted into two cycles. Each cycle consisted of several stages of Classroom Action Research procedure, they are: Planning, Acting, Observing, and Reflecting. In planning, the researcher prepared lesson plans, teaching materials, and teaching media to be taught to the students. In acting, the researcher implemented the lesson plans by using Four Square Writing Method in writing class. In observing, the researcher observed the weaknesses and strengths during teaching and learning process by using FSWM. In the last step of reflection, the researcher evaluated the use of FSWM in writing class to improve students’ writing skill. Thus, the researcher could continue study to the afterward point.

In collecting data, the students were given tests of pre-test, post-test 1 and post-test 2. In pre-test the students were given test to write recount text based on the pictures series. In post-test 1, the students were given test of free writing according to their experience by using FSWM. The last, in post-test 2 the students were asked to make a recount text according to the pictures series with certain topic by using FSWM.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The pre-test was held on Monday, 25th April 2016. The pre-test was consisted of one test item. The students were asked to order pictures series and to make a recount text based on the ordered pictures. The mean of students’ pre-test result was 48, 3. The students’ writing was assessed by using writing
scoring rubric. The whole students did not achieve KKM yet. Many aspects of students’ writing needed to be repaired and improved. The aspects of students’ writing that needed to be improved were: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics.

Post Test-1 was held on May, 6th 2016. Post-Test 1 was done to know the improvement of students’ writing ability after the FSWM was implemented in cycle 1. In Post-Test 1, the students were free to write according to their experience by using FSWM. The topics could be chosen by students were “My Holiday” and “The Greatest Place I Ever Visited”. The mean of Post-Test 1 was 70.9 higher than the mean pre-test that was only 48.3. The improvement of students’ writing was assessed by using writing scoring rubric. There were significant improvements of content and organization aspects. The students were able to develop ideas aligned with topic. The paragraphs of recount text were organized in correct generic structures and good coherence. In cycle one, the researcher found some weaknesses and strengths during the study. There were some weaknesses in cycle 1, such as: the students faced difficulty to apply FSWM to write a recount text, the students needed too much time to finish their writing, the students’ vocabulary mastery was lack; they depended on dictionary too much, and the students did not use correct grammatical structure; they faced difficulty in differentiating between verb-1 and verb-2 form to write sentences. The strengths were: the students could enjoy the lesson when the researcher applied FSWM with media for teaching writing, the students could organize paragraphs easier by using FSWM in writing recount
text, the students discussed in pairs enthusiastically, and the students’ score of writing increased significantly. Then, the researcher conducted cycle 2 to solve the problems appeared in cycle 1.

For the cycle 2, the researcher revised the plan to solve the students’ problem in understanding grammar, spending too much time to write and depending on dictionary excessively. The researcher and the teacher revised the lesson plans for cycle 2, the revised lesson plans were emphasized more on teaching grammatical structure. The revised lesson plans provided a new strategy to solve the students’ problem of taking too much time and using dictionary too much in writing activity. After cycle 2 had been completed, the researcher conducted post-test 2. The Post-Test 2 was held on May, 23rd 2016. In Post-Test 2, the students were asked to make a recount text according to the pictures series of “Visiting Jogja” by using FSWM. The mean score of Post-Test 2 was 76.4. The improvement of students’ writing was assessed by using writing scoring rubric. There were significant improvements of students’ grammar and vocabulary aspect based on the post-test 2 result. After the cycle 2 was completed, the researcher did a reflection. Many improvements were showed in cycle 2. Those improvements were: the students became more active during the lesson, the students could write in shorten time and use dictionary sufficiently, the students had understood how to apply the FSWM technique well and they also enjoyed to learn.

Based on the result of observation, the Four Square Writing Method can improve students’ writing skill. The FSWM improves on the students’ process
and achievement in writing. The improvement of students’ score of pre-test, post-test 1 and post-test 2 can be seen from the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Test</th>
<th>Post-Test 1</th>
<th>Post-Test 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48,3</td>
<td>70,9</td>
<td>76,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean score of Post-Test 1 was 70,9 higher than the mean of pre-test that was only 48,3. Then, the students’ mean score increased up to 76,4 in cycle two. Besides analyzing quantitative data by using mean score, the researcher also used t-test formula to know the difference before and after the Four Square Writing Method was applied by the students in writing class. The t-test result of cycle one was 17,121. And the t-test result of cycle two was 6,11. After the use of FSWM as a technique for teaching writing, there were 24 students could achieve the KKM. The implementation of Four Square Writing Method in teaching writing was successfully done to solve the students’ writing problems. Thus, can be concluded that the FSWM is an effective and beneficial method for teaching writing.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the study, can be concluded that:

1. The use of FSWM can improve the students’ writing ability. The improvement can be seen from the achievement of students’ writing. The mean score of students’ pre-test (48,3) improved significantly in post-test 1 (70,9), and increased up to (76,4) in post-test 2.
2. The use of FSWM can improve both of the students’ process and achievement in writing. The improvement of the students’ process can be seen from their behavior that getting better and better after using FSWM. Their problems of opening dictionary in many times could be solved in this study. They could manage opening the dictionary sufficiently. They were also able to produce good writing in shorten time. And the important thing is they could enjoy the lesson.

REFERENCE


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