

The Use of 'Snakes And Ladders' Game As A Medium to Improve the Students' Mastery of Past Form of Irregular Verbs

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ABSTRACT

This study is about the use of „Snakes and Ladders“ game toward the students“ mastery of past form of irregular verbs. The study is aimed to (1) find out whether teaching the past form of irregular verbs by using „Snakes and Ladders“ game is effective to improve the students“ achievement in learning the verbs, and (2) find out the students“ attitude and feeling toward the use of „Snakes and Ladders“ game. The subjects of this study were the students of IX D of SMP N 5 Tambusai Utara. The selection of the class was based on the suggestion of the English teacher. The researcher used an action research design. There were two cycles in this study. Every cycle consisted of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Before conducting the cyclical activities, the researcher gave the students an Initial Pre-test. After that, she gave the treatments to the students. In Cycle 1, she used group work without classical problem solving and showing the spelling of the verbs. However, the result was not satisfying enough. In Cycle 2, she used classical problem solving and also showing the spelling of the verbs. In this cycle, the result was very satisfying. After the cycle 2 was finished, she gave a Final Post-test and also questionnaire to the students. Based on the data analysis, there was a significant improvement of the students“ achievement after the use of „Snakes and Ladders“ game was given. This improvement was proved by the comparison between the result of Initial Pre-test (68.14) and that of Final Post-test (88.80). After being showed the spelling of the verbs, their understanding toward the verbs was better. The classical problem solving that the researcher used in Cycle 2 successfully helped students learn the verbs from their friends“ incorrect answers. The results of the observation checklists showed that the students“ attitude in Cycle 2 was better than that in Cycle 1. Based on the result of questionnaire, the students also supported the use of „Snakes and Ladders“ game in the teaching of grammar, especially the past form of irregular verbs. It was proved by their positive responses in relation to the use of that medium. Based on the results of the analysis above, it can be concluded that the use of „Snakes and Ladders“ game successfully improves the students“ mastery of past form of irregular verbs in the teaching of grammar.

Keywords: : *Snakes And Ladders' Game, Students' Mastery, Irregular Verbs*

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INTRODUCTION

Junior high school“s curriculum, that is KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan), expects students to understand and produce texts either spoken or written. Moreover, the students are expected to learn many kinds of texts. They are descriptive, recount, narrative, spoof, news items, etc. which cannot be separated from tenses. For examples, descriptive text deals with present tense; narrative and recount texts deal with past tense.

According to the curriculum for the ninth grades of junior high school, the students are expected to learn some kinds of texts. The texts are descriptive text, narrative text and recount text. This condition forces them to learn also about present tense and past tense. For the present tense, it seems easier for them since there are no complex conjugation changes. However, for the past tense, the students need an extra effort since they deal with special words. The words are verbs which have several forms whenever they are used in past form. For examples, the word “study”, it changes into “studied” or the word “bring” changes into “brought”. In the grammar terminology, we call this as the use of past form of regular and irregular verbs. When the researcher had a teaching practice (PPL), she found that the students did not comprehend the past form of irregular verbs. They often had difficulty in comprehending a text that uses the past form of irregular verbs. As experienced by the researcher as a private teacher, she also found that her students had difficulties in mastering those kinds of verbs although the verbs had been learnt before. For examples, the words “visit,” “put”, etc. The students had difficulty in memorizing the past form of the verbs. This problem seems to be experienced by nowadays students so that it seems that they need a new treatment to relearn the verbs.

To make sure whether or not students in SMP N 5 Tambusai Utara experience the same problem, the researcher conducted an Initial Pre-test. The results of the test showed that the students also had the same problem. This was proved by the mean of the test (68.14) which was still below the standard of English that the set by the school (75).

The problems come because the teachers still use conventional methods. She only asks the students to read texts and ask them whether or not they have problems with the vocabulary used. Moreover, when the teachers teach tenses to the students, especially past tense, they do not give them a special technique or medium to master the past form of irregular verbs or sometimes the techniques they use are not interesting. This condition forces the students to learn the verbs themselves. Actually, there are many medium that can be used to teach the past form of irregular verbs to students. One of them is by using games.

Chen (2005) said that games have nine benefits. Some of them are: games can increase students’ learning motivation; they construct a cooperative learning environment; they can reduce learning anxiety of the students and encourage creative and spontaneous language use. Games also do not make the students get bored since games can encourage students to participate actively in teaching and learning activities. They can also improve their language skills through games. „Snakes and Ladders” game is one of interesting games that can be applied easily in the class. It is the same with other games that this game can stimulate the students to be active in their class. Hopefully, through the game, students can easily learn and memorize the past form of irregular verbs. They can also develop their language skill through the communication and interaction during the game.

That is the background of the study which is the background why the researcher intends to conduct this research.

There are reasons for choosing the topic. The curriculum of Indonesia that is KTSP requires the students to produce texts. The students are introduced to many kinds of texts. For the ninth grades students, the curriculum requires them to learn and produce text such as descriptive text, narrative text and recount text. When they deal with narrative and recount text, they should master past tense. They also need to master the past form of irregular verbs.

Whereas, the fact is the students still have difficulty in mastering the verbs. That is because the teachers still use the old techniques so that it seems that the students need to be taught with a new technique. Based on the explanation above, she thinks a research should be conducted to know to what extent the improvement can be measured.

„Snakes and Ladders“ game is interesting game which will help students learn the verbs easily. Therefore, the students“ motivation in learning and memorizing the verbs may be increased. The game is also applicable to be applied in the class.

METHOD

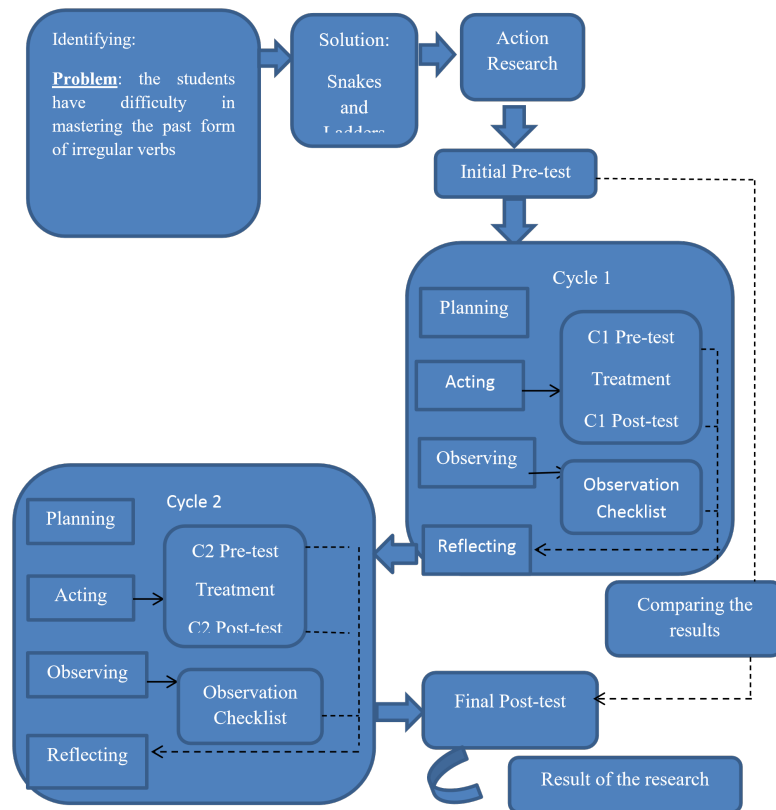
The study was conducted in SMP N 5 Tambusai Utara in the academic year of 2021. There were six classes in the ninth grade. The subjects of the study were chosen based on the teacher“s suggestion. She suggested the IX D as the subjects of the study because the students in the IX D had low scores in mastering the past form of irregular verbs, and English in general, and they were very noisy so that it was appropriate for teaching using games media. Finally, the students in IX D were chosen as the subjects of the study. It consists of 36 students; 21 were female and 15 were male students. The list of the students is available in Appendix 1. Below are the additional information related to the subject of the study.

The subjects of this study were the students in class IX D. According to the teacher“s explanation, the students in class IX D are the noisiest students among other students in different classes. Unfortunately, sometimes their noisy behavior causes them to lack of concentration in studying. This situation causes the teaching and learning process in the class is unable to run maximally.

Academically, this class has low scores in English. For the mastery of past form of irregular verbs, this class has the lowest scores. That is why the teacher suggested the researcher to choose the class as the subject of this research.

This study was an action research dealing with the use of „Snakes and Ladders game“ to improve students“ mastery of the past form of irregular verbs. Because this is an action research, the research design was illustrated in the following figure.

Figure 3.1 Research Diagram



FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In doing this action research, the researcher conducted two cycles. The differences between those two cycles could be seen below.

Table 4.10 The Comparison between Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
Media	Snakes and Ladders Game	Snakes and Ladders Game
Strategy	Group work without classical problem solving and without spelling	Group work with classical problem solving and spelling
Focus	The first fifteen verbs (easy verbs)	The second fifteen verbs (Difficult)
Result	Not satisfying enough. Although classically the mean score (79.26) could reach the minimum standard (75) but individually, there were 10 students could not pass it.	Very satisfying (90.37) because classically, the students could pass the minimum score. Moreover, Individually, all of the students could also reach the minimum score.

In Cycle 1, the researcher used „Snakes and Ladders“ game. She used group work without classical problem solving. Moreover, she did not write the spelling of the verbs. The focus materials of this cycle were the first fifteen verbs. the verbs that categorized into easy verbs. In Cycle 2, the researcher used „Snakes and Ladders“ game and group work also. However, in this cycle, she wrote the spelling of the verbs in the whiteboard so that all of the students could understand the verbs better. Moreover, she used classical problem solving so that all of the students could differentiate the correct and incorrect answers. The description of the activities in both cycles could be seen in this following table.

Table 4.11 The Description of the Activities in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
Planning	„Snakes and Ladders“ game	„Snakes and Ladders“ game
Acting	- Explanation about simple past tense and past form of irregular verbs. - Using group work without showing the spelling of the verbs	- Explanation about simple past tense and past form of irregular verbs. - More explanation about some irregular verbs and their past form
	and classical problem solving.	completed with the examples in some sentences.
Observing	Students were still confused with the form of the verbs. They still had difficulty in memorizing them. Sometimes they lose their attention in the class. They did not show their maximum response.	Students showed their enthusiastic in joining the game. They could enjoy the activities. They gave their good response.
Reflecting	Students still had difficulty with the spelling of the verbs.	Students could write the correct spelling of the verbs.

	Revised the lesson plan.	
Results	Classically, the class could achieve the learning objectives. However, individually, there were 10 students who could not achieve the targeted score..	All of the students could achieve the targeted score.

As explained before, before conducting the cyclical activities, the researcher gave the students an Initial Pre-test. The purpose of the test was to know the initial ability of the students in mastering the past form of irregular verbs. At the end of the Cycle 1, the researcher gave the students the Cycle 1 Post-test. The purpose of the test was to know the students ability after they were given the first treatment. After giving the test, the researcher compared the results of both tests. During the treatment, the researcher and an observer observed the students' attitude through an observation checklist. In Cycle 2, mostly, the activities were the same as those in Cycle 1. At the end of the cycle, the students were given a post-test. After all of the cyclical activities were done, the researcher gave the students a Final Post-test. Then, she compared the result with the result of the Initial Pre-test.

According to the result of the Initial Pre-test, the students' mastery of past form of irregular verbs was very poor. It proved by their mean score which was only 68.14.

Therefore, the researcher used „Snakes and Ladders“ game as the medium to improve their mastery of past form of irregular verbs. She also gave them some sentences as the examples of the use of the verbs. The students also asked to make their own sentences as an exercise. In Cycle 1, the researcher used group work without classical problem solving. She also did not show the students the spelling of the verbs.

The results of Cycle 1 Post-test showed a good achievement. It was proved by their score which was 79.26. They could pass the English minimum score. However, they still had difficulty with the spelling of the verbs. Therefore, in Cycle 2, she planned to add the technique in the activities.

In Cycle 2, the researcher modified the activities. The result was very satisfying. After being showed the spelling of the verbs, the students could understand more about the verbs. Moreover, the classical problem solving that the researcher gave made all of the students memorize easily because they could learn from their friends' incorrect answers. Based on the results of each cycle and also the results of the Initial Pre-test and

Final Post-test, it could be concluded that the use of „Snakes and Ladders“ game successfully helped students in mastering the past form of irregular verbs.

4.6 Analysis of Questionnaire

After two treatments were given to the students, the questionnaire was given to them. The complete result is available in Appendix 28. The result of the questionnaire is summarized below:

Table 4.12 The Result of Questionnaire

Students' Code	Questions				
	1	2	3	4	5
S-1	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
...	...	...	...	...	...
S-35	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
S-36	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Σ Positive Answer and Percentage	35	27	36	35	27
	97.22%	75%	100%	97.22%	75%
Σ Negative Answer and percentage	1	9	-	1	9
	2.78%	25%	-	2.78%	25%

A questionnaire was given to the students after all the cyclical activities were done. It was to gain information about the students' feeling toward the use of „Snakes and Ladders“ game in both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2.

Question number 1 asked the students whether or not they like the use of Snakes and Ladders game in teaching and learning. The students gave positive response toward this question. It was proved by the percentage of the positive answer of this question which was 97.22%.

Question number 2 asked whether the students have difficulties in using the game. The researcher got 75% of the positive answers from the students. It means that the game was applicable although there were 9 students who had difficulty in using the game.

Question number 3; this question asked whether or not the game help students in mastering the past form of irregular verbs. In this question, the students also gave their positive answers. It was proved by the percentage which was 100%. All of the students felt that the game helped them in mastering the verbs.

Question number 4; this question asked the students whether or not the game is needed in the teaching and learning process. In this question, the researcher got 97.22% positive answer. It means that almost all of the students needed the game to help them master the verbs. There was only 1 student who thought that the game was not needed.

Question number 5; this question asked the students whether or not the game was efficient and time consuming to be used. In this question, the researcher got 75% positive answers. There were 9 students who gave negative answers.

After all the data were analyzed and reflected, the researcher can give some conclusions and give some suggestions which will be explained in the next chapter

CONCLUSION

Before the researcher conducted this study, she observed the students of IX D. She found that they had problems in mastering the past form of irregular verbs. It was proved also by their score of the Initial Pre-test which was 68.14.

The students needed a medium to help them master the verbs. Because of that, the researcher used „Snakes and Ladders“ game as a medium to help them solved their problem. In this study, the use of the game was able to help the students in mastering the past form of irregular verbs. It was proved by the positive improvement of their mastery, attitude and feeling.

The improvement of the students“ mastery was proved significant. It was proved by the increase of the mean score of Post-test and Pre-test in every cycle. The classical problem solving had successfully helped students in learning and memorizing the verbs. Moreover, by showing the spelling of the verbs the students could understand the verbs better. Their achievement well improved after they were taught by this medium and classical problem solving and also by showing them the spelling of the verbs. Besides that, the students“ attitude during the treatments was also recorded by the observation checklist and it was well improved. During the treatment, all of the students“ response, attention, participation and interest also increased after they were taught by using Snakes and Ladders game. In addition, based on the result of the questionnaire analysis, by the use of Snakes and Ladders game, this study recorded that the students“ mastery was better. The students showed their positive responses toward the use of the game in teaching past form of irregular verbs.

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