



Improving Students' Mastery of Sequence Words in Recount Text through Creative Dance Strategy

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ABSTRACT

Writing recount texts can be challenging for junior high school students, particularly when they need to generate ideas and use sequence words appropriately. This study aimed to improve students' mastery of sequence words in recount texts through the implementation of Creative Dance Strategy, with particular attention to students' ability to generate ideas for writing. The study employed Classroom Action Research based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model, consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The research was conducted in Class VIII-A of SMP Negeri 1 Hiliduho during the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year and involved 29 students. Data were collected through a preliminary writing test, writing tests at the end of each cycle, observation sheets, field notes, and documentation. Quantitative data were analyzed using mean scores and the percentage of students achieving the *Kriteria Ketercapaian Tujuan Pembelajaran (KKTP)*, while qualitative data were analyzed descriptively. The results showed an improvement in students' writing achievement, with the mean score increasing from 53.31 in the preliminary test to 64.66 in Cycle I and 83.45 in Cycle II. The percentage of students achieving the *KKTP* score of 75 also increased from 13.79% in Cycle I to 100% in Cycle II. The findings indicate that Creative Dance Strategy supported students in generating ideas and using sequence words more appropriately when writing recount texts. Therefore, the strategy may serve as an alternative movement-based pre-writing strategy for supporting students' recount text writing.

Creative Dance Strategy, Mastery of Sequence Words, Recount Text.

<https://pusdikra-publishing.com/index.php/jetl>



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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received

20 August 2026

Revised

17 September 2026

Accepted

05 October 2026

Key Word

How to cite

INTRODUCTION

According to Riadil (2023), writing is an important skill in English learning. Sartika (2022) states that writing involves generating and organizing ideas using appropriate language, while Rusmiati (2025) points out that writing supports students in developing and expressing ideas. Therefore, regular writing practice is needed to help students communicate their ideas in English.

In the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, Grade VIII students learn recount text, which retells past experiences Ariani (2023). A recount text generally consists of orientation, events, and re-orientation. Muliadi (2022) explains that these parts introduce the experience, present its events, and conclude the text. The use of past tense and action verbs is also important in recount writing Ariani (2023). In addition, sequence words help connect the writer's ideas and make the events easier to follow Aprilina (2023). Iriana (2018) explains that sequence words such as *first*, *then*, *next*, *after that*, and *finally* can help students represent experiences when generating ideas for writing. Thus, students need to develop ideas before writing and use sequence words appropriately to connect those ideas in recount texts.

The Kriteria Ketercapaian Tujuan Pembelajaran (KKTP) for English at SMP Negeri 1 Hiliduho is 75. However, classroom observations showed that many Grade VIII students had difficulties generating ideas and using sequence words in recount writing. Learning was largely dominated by teacher explanations, providing limited opportunities for students to recall experiences, develop ideas, and express them in written form. As a result, students often struggled to use sequence words such as *first*, *then*, *next*, *after that*, and *finally* effectively in their recount texts.

The preliminary writing test confirmed these difficulties. Of the 29 students, most did not achieve the KKTP of 75, with a mean score of 53.31, a highest score of 70, a lowest score of 20, and a mode of 65. These findings indicated the need to improve students' ability to generate ideas and use sequence words in recount writing.

Several studies have examined strategies for improving students' writing ability. Rusmiati (2025) found that journaling provided regular writing practice, while Amalia (2021) reported that engaging instructional tools could support students in overcoming writing difficulties. In recount writing, Gayatri & Gaffar (2023) used picture series to organize ideas visually, Fitri (2023) applied mind mapping to connect ideas, and Baidhowi & Pamungkas (2020) used digital storytelling with Think-Talk-Write to encourage creative expression. (Pratiwi, 2021) used brainstorming to stimulate idea generation and discussion, while Milawati (2016) applied STAD cooperative learning to support vocabulary development and collaboration.

These studies demonstrate that visual, discussion-based, brainstorming, and collaborative strategies can support writing development. However, limited attention has been given to bodily experiences as sources for generating ideas and using sequence words, indicating the need for a strategy that connects movement, experience, and writing.

One theoretical foundation supporting this approach is Experiential Learning. Kolb (2015) defines experiential learning as knowledge creation through the transformation of experience. Supporting this view, Chan (2022) and Perrone (2025) emphasize that active involvement in meaningful experiential tasks allows students to experience and reflect on learning. Skulmowski (2024) explains that learning develops through interaction with the environment and active engagement, while Kuroljõva (2021) notes that movement can support students in remembering sequences and understanding concepts. Thus, experiential learning provides a basis for involving students directly in learning activities before expressing their experiences through writing.

The principle of learning by doing is also relevant because students actively perform movements rather than only receive explanations. Vail (2024) suggests that active exploration can stimulate curiosity and deeper learning. However, Skulmowski (2024) notes that overly complex movement may increase cognitive load; therefore, activities should remain simple and connected to the learning objectives. In this study, manageable movement sequences were connected to students' ideas and sequence words before being developed into recount texts. Liu (2025) define embodied learning as an approach in which interaction among the learner's body, environment, and learning materials supports understanding and engagement. Sani (2021) emphasize the role of bodily and emotional experiences in learning, while Markula & Frantsi (2024) explain that embodied writing uses lived bodily experiences for reflection and meaning-making. These perspectives support using students' bodily experiences as sources for generating and expressing ideas through writing.

Creative Dance allows learners to express thoughts, emotions, and ideas through bodily actions Ørbæk & Engelsrud (2021). As a learning strategy, it can guide students toward specific learning goals through organized activities Kühl (2024) and Annisa (2024). Payne & Costas (2021) explain that Creative Dance can transform physical activity into meaningful learning through reflection, collaboration, and creative expression, while Zhang (2021) highlight its potential to support language learning through embodied experiences. E. Balato (2022) further associate Creative Dance with creativity, social-emotional learning, and embodied cognitive abilities. Previous research also supports its educational use. Payne & Costas (2021) found that Creative Dance can be adapted to educational goals through experiential learning, while Jusslin & Höglund (2022) reported its contribution to meaning-making in reading and writing instruction.

Based on these perspectives, Creative Dance provides direct experiences that students can transform into writing ideas. By performing and discussing simple movements while practicing sequence words such as *first*, *then*, *next*, *after*

that, and *finally*, students connect bodily experience with idea generation and sequence-word use in recount writing.

Therefore, this Classroom Action Research (CAR), entitled “Improving Students’ Mastery of Sequence Words in Recount Text through Creative Dance Strategy” aimed to improve students’ ability to generate ideas and use sequence words in recount writing. The study was considered successful when at least 75% of students achieved the *Kriteria Ketercapaian Tujuan Pembelajaran (KKTP)* score of 75 or above.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) based on the Kemmis & McTaggart (2014) model, consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection. Sari (2023), Lase (2026) and Meesuk (2020) states that CAR aims to improve classroom teaching and learning through repeated cycles of instructional action and reflection. The study used quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were obtained from students’ preliminary and cycle writing tests, while qualitative data came from observation sheets and field notes. Photographs and teaching materials served as supporting documentation.

The participants were 29 students of Class VIII-A at SMP Negeri 1 Hiliduhlo who experienced difficulties in generating ideas and using sequence words in recount writing. The researcher collaborated with the English teacher as an observer. The study consisted of two cycles, each with two meetings, preceded by a preliminary writing test. Each cycle followed four stages: planning, action through the Creative Dance Strategy, observation, and reflection to improve the subsequent cycle.

Kolb (2015) and Liu (2025) states that Creative Dance Strategy was designed based on Experiential Learning and Embodied Learning, which emphasize learning through experience and bodily interaction. Students performed simple movements, including standing, jumping, spinning, clapping, bending, kicking forward, and pointing left or right, individually and in groups. They discussed the meaning of the movements and practiced sequence words such as *first*, *then*, *next*, *after that*, and *finally*. The movements were kept simple to support learning without unnecessary cognitive load Skulmowski (2024).

Data were collected through writing tests, observation sheets, field notes, and documentation. Students’ writing was assessed using a recount text rubric adapted from Rochimah (2023), covering orientation, events, re-orientation, proper nouns, descriptive words, past tense, and sequence words, with particular attention to idea generation and sequence-word use. Quantitative data were analyzed using mean scores and the percentage of students achieving the *Kriteria*

Ketercapaian Tujuan Pembelajaran (KKTP) of 75, while qualitative data were analyzed descriptively. The study was considered successful when at least 75% of students achieved a score of 75 or above and demonstrated improvement in generating ideas and using sequence words.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to improve students' ability in writing recount texts through the implementation of Creative Dance Strategy. The study particularly focused on students' ability to generate ideas and use sequence words to organize events in recount texts. The research was conducted through two cycles, with each cycle consisting of two meetings. The participants were 29 students of Grade VIII at SMP Negeri 1 Hiliduho. The data were obtained from students' writing tests, students' activity observation sheets, researcher's activity observation sheets, and field notes.

Research Results

The research results consisted of students' writing achievement and participation during the implementation of the Creative Dance Strategy. Writing ability was measured through writing tests at the end of each cycle, while participation was observed during each meeting.

In Cycle I, students' writing scores ranged from 50 to 75, with a total score of 1,875 and a mean of 64.66. Only four of the 29 students achieved the *Kriteria Ketercapaian Tujuan Pembelajaran (KKTP)* score of 75, resulting in a mastery percentage of 13.79%. In Cycle II, scores ranged from 75 to 95, with a total of 2,420 and a mean of 83.45. All 29 students achieved the *KKTP*, resulting in 100% mastery.

Students' participation also improved, from 85.40% and 82.57% in Cycle I Meetings 1 and 2 to 87.36% and 92.15% in Cycle II Meetings 1 and 2. The researcher's activities also improved across the cycles. The researcher completed 17 of 17 activities in Cycle I Meeting 1, 15 of 17 in Meeting 2, 16 of 18 in Cycle II Meeting 1, and 18 of 18 in Meeting 2. The improvement indicated more consistent implementation following reflection on previous weaknesses.

The improvement in writing achievement was evident between Cycle I and Cycle II. In Cycle I, many students had difficulty developing ideas into complete recount texts, resulting in short texts with limited details. Although some students used sequence words, they still needed guidance to connect them with their ideas. In Cycle II, students demonstrated better ability to generate and develop ideas. The movement sequences provided concrete experiences that students could recall when writing

The results indicate a positive relationship between students' participation in Creative Dance activities and their writing development. The increase in classroom participation was accompanied by an improvement in students' writing achievement.

Table 1.
Students' Activity and Writing Achievement

Indicator	Cycle I	Cycle II
Mean writing score	64.66	83.45
Students achieving <i>KKTP</i>	4 (13.79%)	29 (100%)
Students' activity – Meeting 1	85.40%	87.36%
Students' activity – Meeting 2	85.19%	92.15%
Researcher's activity – Meeting 1	88.24%	88.89%
Researcher's activity – Meeting 2	88.24%	100%

The table shows an increase in the mean writing score from 64.66 in Cycle I to 83.45 in Cycle II, an improvement of 18.79 points. The percentage of students achieving the **KKTP** also increased from 13.79% to 100%. Students' participation increased from 87.36% to 92.15% between the first and second meetings of Cycle II, indicating greater familiarity with the Creative Dance Strategy and engagement in learning. Detailed students' activity results are presented below.

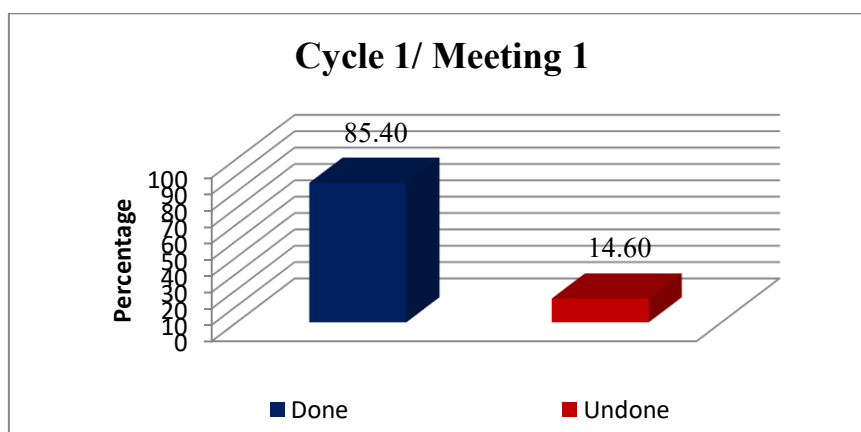


Figure 1.
Students' Activity in Cycle I Meeting 1

Figure 1 shows that students' activity in Cycle I Meeting 1 reached 85.40%. Students generally participated actively in the Creative Dance activities, although some still needed guidance to remember the movements and connect them with writing ideas.

The students’ activity in Cycle I Meeting 2 is presented in Figure 2.

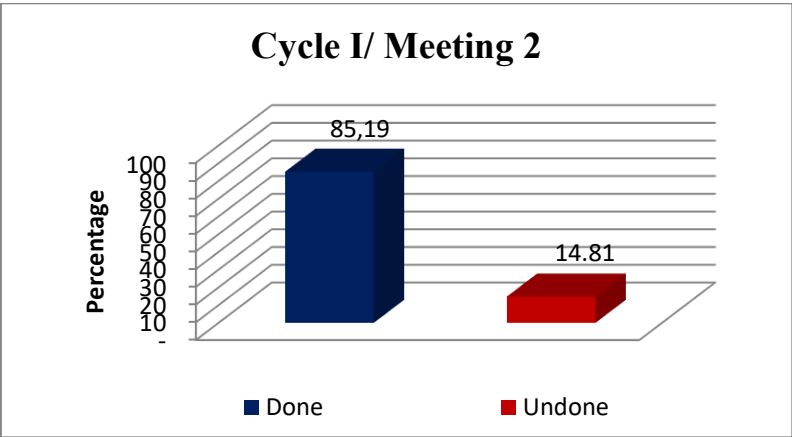


Figure 2.
Students’ Activity in Cycle I Meeting 2

Figure 2 shows that students’ activity slightly decreased to 85.19% in Cycle I Meeting 2 but remained in the High category. Some students still had difficulty remembering the movements and developing ideas for recount writing, informing the improvements implemented in Cycle II.

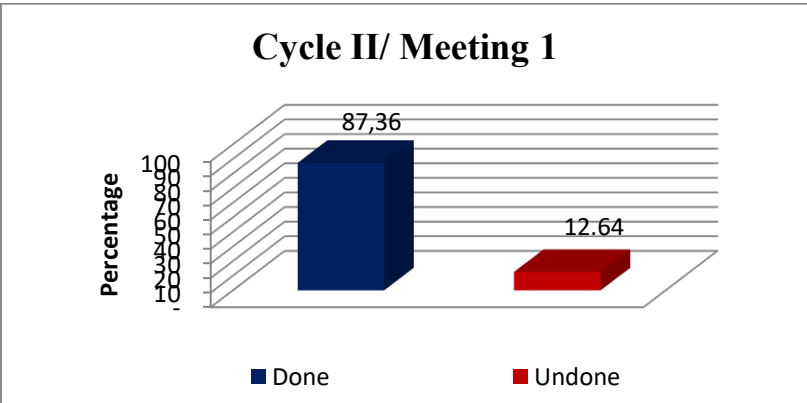


Figure 3.
Students’ Activity in Cycle II Meeting 1

Figure 3 shows that students’ activity increased to 87.36%, indicating greater familiarity with the Creative Dance Strategy, although some students still needed guidance in remembering movements and collaborating in groups.

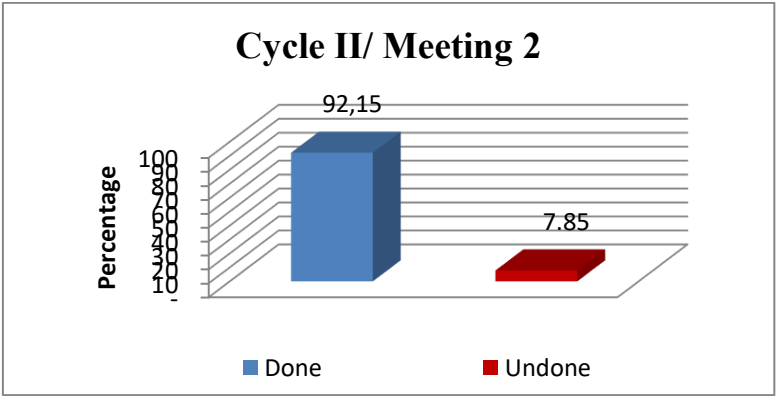


Figure 4.
Students’ Activity in Cycle II Meeting 2

Figure 4 shows that students’ activity increased to 92.15%, the highest percentage recorded, indicating greater confidence and engagement following the improvements made after previous reflections.

The researcher’s activities were also observed to evaluate the implementation of the Creative Dance Strategy from Cycle I to Cycle II.

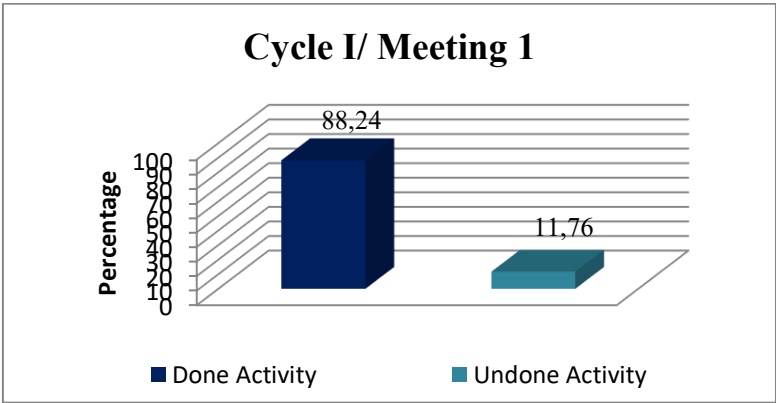


Figure 5.
Researcher’s Activity in Cycle I Meeting 1

Figure 5 shows that the researcher completed 15 of 17 planned activities in Cycle I Meeting 1, resulting in 88.24%. Two activities were not fully implemented, indicating aspects of the teaching implementation that required improvement.

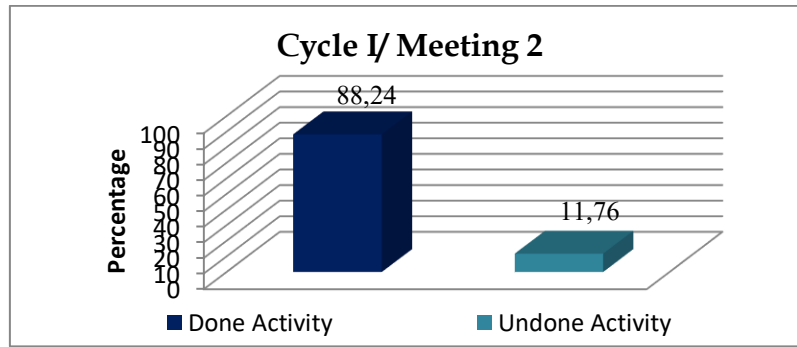


Figure 6.
Researcher's Activity in Cycle I Meeting 2

Figure 6 shows that the researcher's activity decreased to 88.24%, with 15 of 17 planned activities implemented. The result indicates that some activities were not fully implemented and that improvements in learning management were still needed.

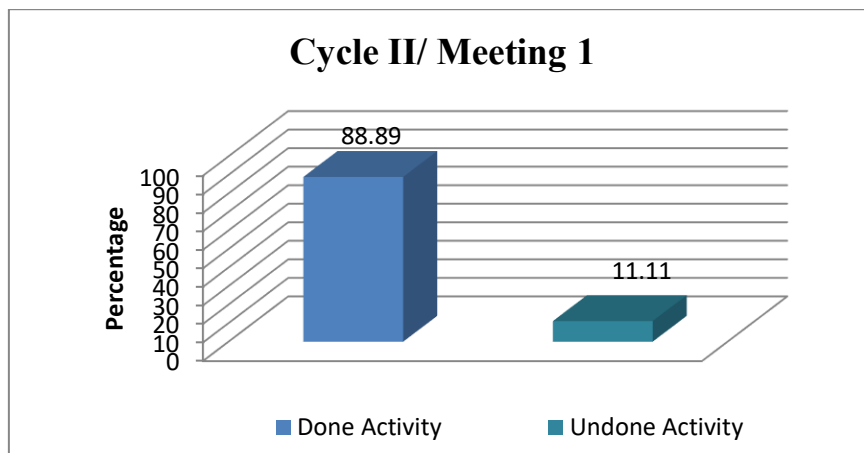


Figure 7.
Researcher's Activity in Cycle II Meeting 1

Figure 7 shows that the researcher completed 16 of 18 planned activities in Cycle II Meeting 1, achieving 88.89%. Two activities were not fully implemented.

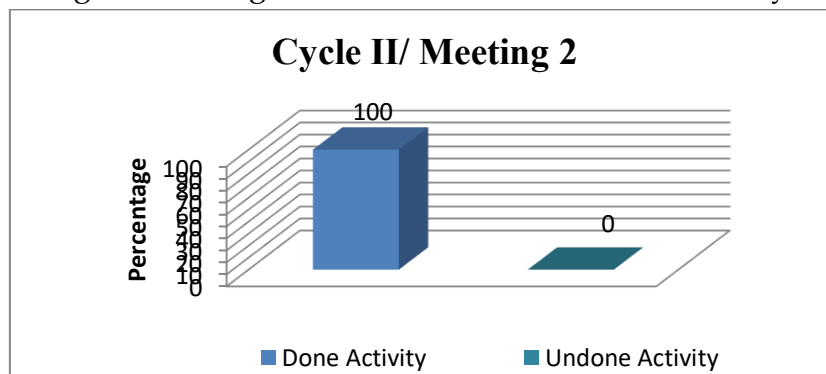


Figure 8.
Researcher's Activity in Cycle II Meeting 2

Figure 8 shows that the researcher implemented all 18 planned activities in Cycle II Meeting 2, achieving 100%. This indicates that the weaknesses identified in the previous meeting were addressed through clearer explanations of the learning objectives, more effective monitoring of group collaboration, and consistent implementation of the planned activities.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the implementation of Creative Dance Strategy improved students' ability to write recount texts. The improvement was reflected not only in students' writing scores but also in their classroom participation. In Cycle I, the students' mean writing score was 64.66, and only four students achieved the KKTP score of 75. Students' writing difficulties were mainly related to generating ideas, developing events, and organizing those events chronologically using appropriate sequence words.

After improvements were implemented in Cycle II, the students' mean score increased to 83.45, and all 29 students achieved the KKTP. At the same time, students' activity increased and reached the Very High category. These findings indicate that Creative Dance Strategy was effective in supporting students' preparation for writing recount texts. The findings of this study are consistent with previous studies concerning the use of experiential and pre-writing activities to improve students' writing ability.

The findings support Rusmiati (2025) who reported that providing students with opportunities to express and organize their experiences could support writing development. Similarly, in the present study, students were provided with direct experiences through Creative Dance activities and subsequently transformed those experiences into recount texts.

The findings are also in line with Gayatri & Gaffar (2023), who found that sequential learning media could help students organize events in recount texts. In the present study, movement sequences functioned similarly by providing students with a clear chronological framework. Each movement represented an event, while sequence words such as first, then, next, after that, and finally helped students connect the events in order. Furthermore, the findings are consistent with Fitri (2023), who emphasized the role of pre-writing activities in helping students organize and develop ideas. Creative Dance activities in this study served as a pre-writing activity because students experienced, recalled, discussed, and organized events before transforming them into written language.

The findings also support Pratiwi (2021), who found that opportunities to explore and discuss ideas before writing could improve students' writing performance. In the present study, students explored their ideas through

movement, group practice, and teacher-guided questioning before completing the writing task. However, this study differs from those previous studies because Creative Dance Strategy combines physical movement, chronological sequencing, and writing preparation.

The findings indicate that Creative Dance Strategy can function as a pre-writing strategy that helps students generate ideas and use sequence words in recount writing. The movement sequences provided concrete experiences that students could recall and transform into writing content. The strategy also gave students opportunities to use sequence words such as *first*, *then*, *next*, *after that*, and *finally* in connection with their own experiences rather than learning them only through verbal explanation.

This finding supports Kolb (2015) Experiential Learning Theory, which emphasizes learning through experience, reflection, and application. It also supports the concept of Embodied Cognition by showing how bodily experiences can contribute to students' understanding and recall during the writing process. Thus, Creative Dance connects physical experience with idea generation and language use in recount writing.

The findings have implications for English language teaching, particularly recount text writing. For teachers, Creative Dance can be used as an alternative pre-writing strategy by introducing simple movements and connecting them with sequence words and possible writing ideas. For students, the strategy provides direct experiences that can serve as sources for writing and may make idea generation more accessible. For schools, the findings suggest that movement-based activities can be incorporated into English learning when appropriately planned and aligned with learning objectives.

The improvement in students' writing ability was supported by several factors. Creative Dance provided concrete experiences that students could recall when generating ideas, while movement sequences helped them use sequence words such as **first, next,** and **finally** in recount writing. Repeated practice and guiding questions also helped students transform movement experiences into written ideas. In addition, reflection enabled the researcher to improve guidance, group monitoring, and idea development. Thus, the improvement resulted from the combination of movement-based experiences, guidance, reflection, and writing practice.

Teachers should clearly explain the learning objectives and the connection between movement and writing before Creative Dance activities. Movements should be simple and meaningful, while guiding questions should support students in recalling experiences and developing ideas. Sequence words should also be practiced in context. Future researchers may apply Creative Dance with

different groups, longer implementation periods, or other language skills such as speaking and vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

The most important finding of this study is that the Creative Dance Strategy improved eighth-grade students' recount text writing ability, particularly in generating ideas and using sequence words. The preliminary writing test showed a mean score of 53.31, below the *Kriteria Ketercapaian Tujuan Pembelajaran (KKTP)* of 75. The mean score increased to 64.66 in Cycle I, with 4 of 29 students (13.79%) achieving the *KKTP*, and to 83.45 in Cycle II, when all 29 students (100%) achieved the *KKTP*. The improvement followed more intensive guidance, repeated movement practice, guiding questions, and opportunities to connect movement experiences with writing. Students' participation also increased during the implementation. These findings suggest that Creative Dance provided concrete experiences that supported idea generation and the use of sequence words such as *first*, *then*, *next*, *after that*, and *finally*.

The added value of this study lies in using Creative Dance as an experiential, movement-based pre-writing strategy. Students performed movements, reflected on their experiences, responded to guiding questions, generated sentence ideas, and practiced sequence words before writing. Thus, the strategy connects bodily experience with idea generation and language use in recount writing, particularly for students who experience difficulty beginning a writing task.

This study was limited to 29 eighth-grade students in one class at SMP Negeri 1 Hiliduho and was conducted over two cycles. The findings therefore reflect the specific characteristics and context of the participants and should not be directly generalized to other settings. The study also focused on recount writing, particularly idea generation and sequence words. Future research may involve larger and more diverse groups, longer implementation periods, and other educational settings. Further studies may also examine the use of Creative Dance in other English language skills, such as speaking, reading, vocabulary, grammar, or other aspects of writing.

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