Innovative Use of Tangga Cerdas Media in Teaching Poetry Writing to Eleventh-Grade Students at MA Plus Nurul Ilmi

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Abstract:
Writing poetry often becomes a challenge for students because it requires linguistic sensitivity and imaginative creativity. Through the innovation of the *Tangga Cerdas* media, learning to write poetry has now transformed into an interactive, enjoyable, and language-explorative activity. The main issue that often arises is the limited poetic vocabulary. The aim of the research is to facilitate 11th-grade students at MA Nurul Ilmi in understanding and mastering poetry writing through the *Tangga Cerdas* media. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of this study indicate that this media encourages active student engagement through an enjoyable, collaborative, and hands-on approach, thereby increasing students' motivation to explore ideas and express them imaginatively and structurally in the form of poetry. The *Tangga Cerdas* Media is effectively used in poetry writing lessons because it creates an active, creative learning atmosphere and makes it easier for students to understand and apply the elements of poetry in an enjoyable way. As many as 80% of students are able to compose poems with complete structure. The main contribution of the *Tangga Cerdas* media lies in its ability to facilitate students in developing ideas, selecting poetic diction, and systematically composing lines and stanzas. Through structured stages, this media enables students to produce poetry that is expressive, imaginative, and adheres to the rules of poetry writing, thereby significantly supporting the overall improvement of poetry writing competence.

Keywords:
Smartstairs; Learning; Writing Poetry.

Abstrak:
Menulis puisi sering kali menjadi tantangan bagi siswa karena membutuhkan kepekaan bahasa dan kreativitas imajinatif. Melalui inovasi media *Tangga Cerdas*, pembelajaran menulis puisi kini berubah menjadi kegiatan yang interaktif, menyenangkan, dan penuh eksplorasi bahasa. Permasalahan utama yang kerap muncul adalah keterbatasan kosakata puitis. Tujuan penelitian memudahkan siswa kelas XI MA Nurul Ilmi memahami dan mahir menulis puisi melalui media *Tangga Cerdas*. Metode yang digunakan pada penelitian ini deskriptif kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data berupa observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Media ini mendorong keterlibatan aktif peserta didik melalui pendekatan yang menyenangkan, kolaboratif, dan berbasis pengalaman langsung, sehingga meningkatkan motivasi siswa dalam mengeksplorasi ide serta mengungkapkannya secara imajinatif dan terstruktur dalam bentuk puisi. Media *Tangga Cerdas* efektif digunakan dalam pembelajaran menulis puisi karena mampu menciptakan suasana belajar yang aktif, kreatif, dan memudahkan siswa memahami serta menerapkan unsur-unsur puisi secara menyenangkan. Sebanyak 80% siswa mampu menyusun puisi dengan struktur lengkap. Kontribusi utama media *Tangga Cerdas* terletak pada kemampuannya dalam memfasilitasi siswa untuk mengembangkan gagasan, memilih diksi yang puitis, serta menyusun larik dan bait secara sistematis. Melalui tahapan yang terstruktur,

media ini memungkinkan siswa menghasilkan puisi yang ekspresif, imajinatif, dan sesuai dengan kaidah penulisan puisi, sehingga secara signifikan mendukung peningkatan kompetensi menulis puisi secara menyeluruh.

INTRODUCTION

Students face various challenges in poetry writing skills, such as developing ideas, choosing poetic diction, and composing lines and stanzas in a structured and meaningful way. Therefore, an instructional medium is needed to support poetry writing skills. One interactive and effective medium that can be utilized is Snakes and Ladders.

The Snakes and Ladders medium is a board game-based learning aid modified from the traditional game. Wandini & Sinaga (2019) stated that Snakes and Ladders is a board game played by two or more players, each with a token and a chance to roll the dice. This medium presents lessons in an engaging and participatory way to enhance student motivation. Each square on the board can be filled with questions, prompts, or commands related to specific learning materials. When students land on a square, they must complete the task before continuing the game. The use of the Snakes and Ladders medium has proven to be effective in creating an enjoyable learning environment (Ardi & Desstya, 2023). It can increase active participation, foster teamwork, and minimize boredom during learning. One of the advantages of this medium is its flexibility. Teachers can easily adapt the game content to suit the learning objectives and core competencies. Such adaptation is essential, especially because poetry learning is an integral part of strengthening literacy in Indonesian language and literature subjects.

Poetry learning plays a crucial role in developing literacy in Indonesian language and literature. Poetry possesses a strong expressive power as it combines linguistic elements, rhythm, imagination, and emotion artistically (Al-Ma'ruf & Nugrahani, 2017). Poetry serves as an effective tool to train students' language skills both orally and in writing (Wiseman, 2011). The process of poetry learning also offers potential to instill human values, build empathy, and enhance social and environmental awareness. Poems often reflect inner feelings and surrounding social conditions (Izzah, dkk., 2024). The urgency of poetry instruction lies in its strategic role in shaping character, empathy, and students' aesthetic sensitivity. Through exploring life values embodied in poetic

diction and profound meanings, students can develop inner awareness and sensitivity toward their social and cultural environments (Tabarok, dkk., 2024). Poetry learning is highly relevant in supporting literary literacy, as emphasized in the *Merdeka Curriculum*, which promotes education as a humanistic, contextual, and self-expression-based process.

Poetry writing is often perceived as a difficult and tedious activity by some students, especially when taught through monotonous methods (Khotimah, dkk., 2025). This perception can be altered through creative and enjoyable approaches, such as using the Snakes and Ladders game. This medium not only stimulates a playful spirit but also incorporates learning methods that encourage imagination and creativity in arranging words into poetic lines. As a literacy medium, Snakes and Ladders make the writing process livelier and more interactive. In this game, each square on the board contains a challenge or keyword that students must use to construct their poems. Landing on a ladder square might give a bonus such as choosing their own word, while landing on a snake square may require them to revise a previous line or replace it with a new rhyme. This process makes learning less rigid and cultivates student enthusiasm to engage actively.

Through the Snakes and Ladders medium, students not only learn about poetic elements such as diction, imagery, and rhyme but also develop creative and collaborative thinking skills (Rohmah, dkk., 2024). This activity can be conducted in groups, thereby nurturing teamwork and respect for others' ideas. As students discuss the most suitable word to continue their poem, they are indirectly building communicative and aesthetic language skills (Widodo, 2023). Poetry thus becomes less abstract and more accessible through enjoyable play. Moreover, using the Snakes and Ladders medium in poetry writing can create meaningful and memorable learning experiences. Students will remember that they once learned poetry in an unconventional way that blended games and literature. This approach is particularly relevant in the *Merdeka Curriculum* era, which emphasizes contextual, joyful, and student-centered learning. Poetry is no longer just a school assignment but a joyful and meaningful form of self-expression. The objective of this study is to improve the understanding and poetry writing skills of Grade XI students at MA Nurul Ilmi using the Snakes and Ladders medium.

This study aligns with previous research by (Hapsari, dkk., 2023) titled "The Use of Snakes and Ladders Learning Media with Question Cards and Answer Stickers on Soil and Sustainability of Life Materials." The results indicated that the use of Snakes

and Ladders learning media supported by question cards and answer stickers could boost children's learning enthusiasm. In a related study, (Winarni, Hasibuan, & Izzati, 2023) conducted research titled "Implementation of Educational Snakes and Ladders Game Media to Improve Word Recognition Skills." Their findings revealed that the use of this medium effectively improved word recognition among preschool children. Further research was conducted by Setiawati & Istiqamah, (2020) titled "The Use of Snakes and Ladders Media as a Literature Learning Tool in High School." The study showed that the use of Snakes and Ladders in literature education was effective in helping students understand literary concepts and apply them. Although previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the Snakes and Ladders game medium in enhancing motivation and concept understanding across various educational levels and subjects, there is still limited research specifically examining its use in improving poetry writing skills at the Madrasah Aliyah level. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by focusing on the innovation of the *Tangga Cerdas* medium an adaptation of the Snakes and Ladders game as a learning strategy designed to systematically, enjoyably, and contextually develop students' poetry writing skills.

This research is expected to provide insights into the use of Snakes and Ladders media in poetry writing instruction and serve as a reference for further development of the medium. Practically, the study offers an alternative innovative learning strategy for educators seeking to improve students' poetry writing skills. Theoretically, it enriches the body of scientific literature on the integration of game-based media in literature instruction at the secondary education level.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at describing the use of the Snakes and Ladders medium in poetry writing instruction. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to explore and describe in depth the dynamics of the learning process, student responses, and the effectiveness of the medium in a natural and contextual classroom setting. Primary data were obtained from eight Grade XI students at MA Nurul Ilmi Pamekasan, who participated in poetry writing lessons using the *Tangga Cerdas* medium. In addition, one Indonesian language teacher served as a supporting informant.

Data collection techniques included classroom observation, interviews, and documentation. The first step involved direct observation during the implementation of the Snakes and Ladders medium in the poetry writing lesson. The goal of the

observation was to gather data on teacher-student interactions and to identify how the instructional medium was integrated into teaching and learning activities. This was followed by in-depth interviews with the teacher and several students to explore their responses to the use of the Snakes and Ladders medium, particularly in terms of its effectiveness and the level of student engagement. The final stage involved documentation, which entailed collecting the students' poetry products. These were analyzed to assess creativity, diction selection, and poem structure as indicators of learning outcomes.

Data analysis employed Huberman's (1994) interactive model, which consists of three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Observational data were compared with data from interviews and documentation of students' poetry to gain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the implementation process and the impact of the Snakes and Ladders medium on poetry writing instruction. A triangulation approach was used to enhance data validity and strengthen the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Description of the Implementation of Snakes and Ladders Media in Poetry Writing Instruction

Step 1 Preparation of Media and Lesson Planning

In the initial stage, the teacher prepared a specially modified Snakes and Ladders game tailored for poetry writing instruction. Each square on the game board was filled with prompts or challenges related to poetic elements, such as diction, figurative language, rhyme, theme, tone, and style. The teacher also developed a Lesson Plan (RPP) aligning the learning objectives with the use of this instructional medium. Additionally, student worksheets, tokens, and dice were prepared. The teacher introduced the objectives and flow of the game to the students and linked the activity to the basic competencies of poetry writing. Careful preparation was essential to ensure a smooth and goal-oriented implementation of the lesson.

Step 2 Game-Based Learning Implementation

Students were divided into small groups (two students per group), with each group taking turns to play the Snakes and Ladders game using the provided tokens and dice. When a token landed on a square, the students had to read and respond to the prompt, for example: "Write two lines of poetry on the theme of love using a metaphor." The students collaborated to construct and write poetic lines on their worksheets. The

activity took place in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere while maintaining strong elements of literacy and creativity. The teacher acted as an active facilitator, guiding students, answering questions, and providing support when difficulties arose.

Step 3 Composition, Presentation, and Evaluation of Poetry

After the game concluded, each group was instructed to compile the lines they had created into a coherent and meaningful full poem. They were required to pay attention to thematic consistency, appropriate diction, and stanza cohesion. Each group then presented their poem to the class. This was followed by an appreciation session, where peers gave comments, suggestions, or praise for each other's work. The teacher provided constructive feedback, highlighting strengths and suggesting areas for improvement. Students revised their poems based on the feedback, and the final drafts were submitted. Selected poems were displayed in the classroom as a form of recognition for students' creativity.

Addressing Classroom Challenges Through Innovation Poetry writing activities in Grade XI often encounter various challenges, such as low student interest, limited vocabulary, and difficulty in applying distinctive poetic styles. Many students struggle to express their ideas and emotions in poetic form due to their lack of experience in literary expression. Acknowledging these issues, the Indonesian language teacher at MA Nurul Ilmi implemented an innovative approach by using a game-based learning medium—Snakes and Ladders—modified for educational purposes in poetry writing.

The Snakes and Ladders medium used in this context was no longer just a source of entertainment but had been fully integrated with components of poetry instruction. Each square on the board contained instructions or challenges related to poetry elements, such as writing lines using specific diction, composing stanzas with figurative language, or creating titles based on predetermined themes. This innovation transformed the Snakes and Ladders game into an engaging, challenging, and literacy-rich learning tool. Before beginning the activity, the teacher explained the learning objectives to the students, specifically focusing on developing their ability to compose poetry with attention to both structure and aesthetics. Students were then grouped in pairs and provided with a Snakes and Ladders board, dice, tokens, and worksheets to record their responses to the challenges encountered during the game.

Figure 1. Snakes and Ladders Game for Poetry Writing Instruction

The game begins with each group taking turns to roll the dice and move their token according to the number rolled. When the token lands on a square, students must read and collaboratively complete the instruction written in that square. For example, if they land on a square with the prompt, *"Write two lines of poetry on the theme of love using personification,"* the group will discuss and compose appropriate poetic lines. The game continues until all groups reach the finish line.

This play-based learning method creates a more dynamic and enjoyable classroom atmosphere. It encourages students to think creatively, engage in active discussion, and collaborate to overcome the challenges (Wardani, 2023). Students also learn to recognize and apply various poetic elements such as rhyme, diction, figurative language, theme, and emotional tone. The teacher acts as a facilitator, offering guidance when students face difficulties (Hidayat, dkk., 2024). After the game is completed, each group is asked to revise and compile the poetic lines they wrote during the activity into a complete and coherent poem. Students are expected to ensure stanza continuity, thematic consistency, and the presence of poetic elements. This process helps students understand that poetry writing is not merely free expression, but a structured process that requires systematic composition.

The activity proceeds with a presentation session. Student groups read their composed poems aloud in front of the class. This is followed by an appreciation and response session, where peers provide comments on diction, figurative language, and creativity in the poems. The teacher offers detailed and constructive feedback on each work and relates it to the poetry concepts previously taught. The next stage is revision. Based on the feedback received, students are asked to improve their poems in terms of structure and meaning. This revision process aims to instill an open-minded attitude toward critique and highlight the importance of refinement in writing. Once revised, the

poems are submitted as final products, and selected poems are displayed on the classroom bulletin board as a form of recognition for student creativity.

The implementation of Snakes and Ladders as a medium in poetry writing instruction is strongly aligned with constructivist theory, which holds that knowledge is acquired through learners' active engagement in authentic experiences. The use of the *Tangga Cerdas* medium allows students to experience contextual, enjoyable, and meaningful learning. This engagement enables them to construct their understanding of poetic elements through direct involvement. In line with Vygotsky (1978) perspective, learning becomes more effective when it occurs within the zone of proximal development through social interaction, where group collaboration plays a vital role. This educational game provides a space that promotes cooperation and idea exchange among students, especially in the creative process of writing poetry.

Poetry Writing Learning Outcomes Using the Snakes and Ladders Medium
Aspect 1 Thematic Consistency and Poem Structure

The use of the snakes and ladders medium has had a positive impact in helping students produce poems with consistent themes and well-organized structure. Through game-based challenges, students were guided to compose poetic lines based on specific themes such as nature, friendship, or emotions. This process trained them to develop stanzas progressively—from the opening, content development, to the conclusion. The final results showed that the students' poems had coherent ideas and a well-arranged flow. This structural order was achieved because students followed a step-by-step writing process embedded in the game.

Aspect 2 Use of Diction, Figurative Language, Rhyme, and Rhythm

During the game, students were encouraged to choose poetic words and use figurative language such as personification, metaphor, or hyperbole. These challenges broadened their understanding of stylistic language, which they had previously explored less frequently. Additionally, students were trained to write lines with certain rhyme patterns, sharpening their sense of rhythm and musicality in poetry. The final works revealed increased creativity in using expressive vocabulary and composing aesthetically rich poetic lines.

Aspect 3 Punctuation Accuracy and Depth of Meaning

In the evaluation and revision stages, students began to realize the importance of punctuation in poetry—such as periods, commas, and exclamation or question marks. They understood that punctuation is not merely decorative but influences the rhythm and meaning of each poetic line. The fun and interactive learning process also helped students better grasp and convey deep messages through poetry (Kusuma at al, 2023). Some works even demonstrated strong emotional and reflective depth, such as depictions of nature, loneliness, or hope—indicating the students' growing expressive abilities in writing.

The implementation of the *Tangga Cerdas* medium in poetry writing lessons for Grade XI students at MA Nurul Ilmi proved to yield significant outcomes, not only in terms of knowledge, but also in student attitudes and writing skills. This innovative learning medium transformed the classroom atmosphere from rigid and passive into a more active, enjoyable, and literacy-rich environment. One of the most noticeable effects was the increased enthusiasm of students in engaging in learning. The game-based activity made poetry writing no longer feel burdensome. Students became more motivated as each square in the game presented challenges that sparked curiosity.

This group-based learning design also fostered a spirit of healthy competition and collaboration, which contributed to greater student engagement during the learning process. One of the strengths of game-based learning lies in the more relaxed and enjoyable learning environment it creates. Students no longer felt pressured by writing assignments but instead experienced the learning process joyfully. This helped reduce students' anxiety toward poetry writing, which had often been seen as difficult. Learning became more relaxed and dialogic, encouraging open and healthy interaction.

Each challenge in the game was based on poetic elements such as diction, figurative language, rhyme, and message. Students not only learned these concepts theoretically but immediately applied them by composing poetic lines. This process fostered deeper understanding as students experienced firsthand how to use these elements to create meaningful poems. The activity also encouraged them to explore their imagination and creativity. The varied challenges invited students to experiment with different poetic expressions. They learned to interpret themes, select captivating words, and craft harmonious lines. Ultimately, many of their works reflect emotional depth and unique thought.

These medium also indirectly taught students the importance of collaboration and effective communication. Students discussed, exchanged ideas, and negotiated as they

composed poetic lines. These interactions strengthened their social skills, including respecting others' opinions, being open-minded, and solving problems together (Bar-Tal & Soli Vered, 2021). After the writing phase, students presented their poems, received feedback from both teacher and peers, and then revised their work. This process provided them with real experience in self-evaluation and artistic refinement. Through revision, students learned how to improve the quality of their poems in terms of structure, language, and depth of message.

The final visible outcome was an increase in the quality of poetry produced. The students' work demonstrated stronger understanding of poetic form and content. They were able to write poems with powerful themes, beautiful language, and touching messages (Fazri & Abror, 2025). Some poems even conveyed authentic emotions, drawn from personal experiences skillfully transformed into literary works. *Below is an example of a poem written by one of the students:*
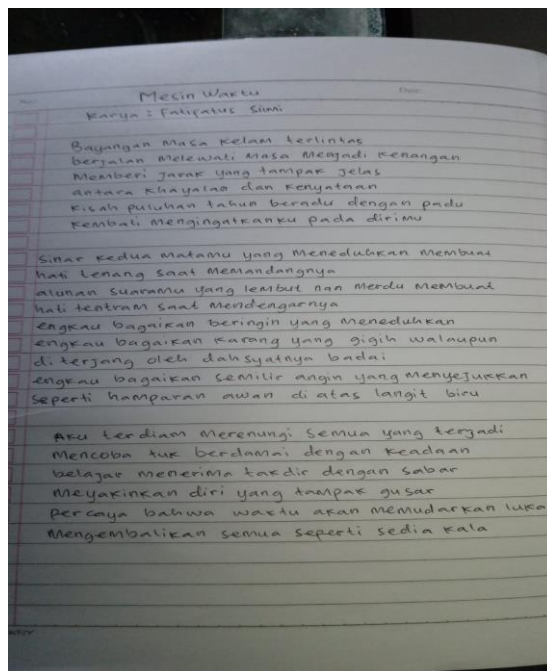

Figure 2. Students' Writing Results

This learning activity demonstrates that the use of the Snakes and Ladders media has proven effective in promoting student engagement and interactivity. Students were not only able to write poems proficiently but also succeeded in compiling an anthology of poetry. Those with the best-written works were recommended to participate in poetry writing competitions. This indicates that the learning objectives were successfully achieved. Notably, one student from MA Nurul Ilmi won a competition after applying to the Snakes and Ladders media in poetry writing lessons. The

implementation of this medium has made a significant contribution to sustainable learning practices.

The findings of this study suggest that the use of Snakes and Ladders media in poetry writing instruction is strongly aligned with literacy theory. According to Street (1984), literacy should not be understood merely as a technical skill of reading and writing, but rather as an activity embedded within the learners' social and cultural contexts. Through the Snakes and Ladders game, the poetry writing process becomes an active, collaborative, and contextual learning experience. Students are not only writing individually, but also engaging and cooperating in an enjoyable atmosphere. This demonstrates that the literacy practices involved are socially situated and oriented toward learners' authentic experiences. Based on observations, 80% of students were able to compose poems with a complete structure.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the utilization of *Tangga Cerdas*—an adaptation of the traditional *snakes and ladders* game—proved effective in enhancing the poetry writing skills of eleventh-grade students at MA Plus Nurul Ilmi. This medium not only fostered an enjoyable learning atmosphere but also encouraged active student participation in the process of poetry creation, both individually and collaboratively. By integrating elements of challenge and play, students were supported in understanding poetic structure, selecting aesthetic diction, employing figurative language, and expressing profound meanings. These results affirm that a contextual, interactive, and experience-based learning approach can optimize the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains in mastering literary literacy.

The implementation of *Tangga Cerdas* aligns with the perspective of literacy as a social practice, emphasizing that writing activities are not solely product-oriented, but also process-driven—engaging students in social interaction and cooperative learning. This medium significantly contributes to fostering a comprehensive appreciation and competence in literary literacy. Furthermore, *Tangga Cerdas* holds potential for adaptation into digital formats or interactive applications to support online or blended learning models. Its use can be extended to other literary texts, such as short stories and traditional poems (*pantun*), and tailored to various educational levels according to students' literacy needs and competencies.

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