Improving Cursive Writing Skills Through a Project Based Learning Model for Grade 2 Elementary School Students in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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1.   Abstract

This research is motivated by the low ability of students in cursive writing. This was obtained based on the results of interviews with grade 2 teachers and the results of student writing in their respective assignment books. The purpose of this research is to improve the process and learning outcomes of cursive writing skills using the Project Based Learning model which consists of six steps, namely determining basic questions, designing project plans, compiling schedules, monitoring students and project progress, testing results, and evaluating student learning experiences. The research used was the Kemmis & Mc Taggart Classroom Action Research. The subjects of this study were 20 grade 2 students at SD Negeri Golo. Data collection techniques used observation, performance tests, and documentation. The analysis technique used, quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. The results of the research show that cursive writing skills can be improved with the Project Based Learning model. The results of observing the learning process in cycle I amounted to 67.5% increasing to 83.75% in cycle II. The pre-action performance test results achieved an average value of 67.37 and a success rate of 40%. In cycle I it achieved an average value of 74.97 and a success percentage of 55%. In cycle II it achieved an average value of 78.75 and a success percentage of 80%. The pre-action performance test results achieved an average value of 67.37 and a success rate of 40%. In cycle I it achieved an average value of 74.97 and a success percentage of 55%. In cycle II it achieved an average value of 78.75 and a success percentage of 80%. The pre-action performance test results achieved an average value

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Keywords: *writing skills, cursive, project based learning*

2. Introduction

Beginning writing skills for grade 2 students are very important to master, such as technical skills or how to write cursive letters. Because in low grades the focus of learning to write the beginning will end in grade 2. However, the reality on the ground is that there are still many grade 2 students who have not mastered this. Learning is also required to be student-centered, not the teacher anymore. Teachers are also not maximal in using the Project Based Learning model in learning to write. So it is necessary to maximize the application of the Project Based Learning model to be able to improve cursive writing skills. Besides that, the Project Based Learning model also has advantages such as making students active in learning, training students to be able to think creatively, and honing students' abilities both in practice and theory (Djamara, 2011: 83).

Indonesian is used as the language of instruction in the world of education (Suryaman, 2016: 5). Four skills are learned in learning Indonesian, namely listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills, and writing skills. All of these skills are of course taught since the child enters elementary school. Elementary school age is a time to develop children's interests and talents in the field of interest. So, the development of writing skills can certainly be one of the directions and goals of the child. In line with the opinion of Ngalimun & Alfulaila, (2013: 38) that the elementary school period is the right

time to develop the ability to use words and sentences completely both orally and in writing.

Writing skill is one of the skills that must be mastered. Because this greatly affects students' abilities, especially for cognitive aspects and psychomotor aspects (Hidayah, 2018: 60). If the ability to write in the low class is not

well, it is very possible when in the upper class the student's writing is not good either (Rikmasari, 2022:154). Writing is an activity of conveying messages in written form.There are 2 stages of learning writing skills at elementary school age, namely learning low grade writing skills (1, 2, 3) which is called beginning writing and learning high grade writing skills (4, 5, 6) which is called advanced writing (Gunawan, 2017: 226). Learning low grade writing skills is still in the form of practicing holding the correct writing instrument, recognizing letters and making and writing simple sentences. The learning of cursive writing skills begins when students enter the lower grades, taught at the beginner writing stage until they can make their own sentences using cursive letters.Failure to hone handwriting skills can negatively impact academic success and student self-esteem. Illread writing can also mean failure to communicate. Writing is said to be legible if it complies with the standardized writing rules (Intansari, 2021: 352).

The reality on the ground shows that there are still many problems or obstacles to be faced. Based on observations of the learning process in class 2B of SD Negeri Golo during the Field Introduction Practice II (PPL II) activities as well as interviews with the homeroom teacher, several problems were found in the lower grades related to learning to write, especially cursive writing which is summarized and presented below .

*First,*Some students found it difficult to write using loose letters according to the proportions of the letters. Second, some students are still incomplete in terms of composing words. Third, some students are known to have difficulty in writing down words dictated by the teacher. Fourth, some students found it difficult to write using cursive letters. The explanation of the problem is that students have difficulty in assembling between the letters. Some students also made mistakes in writing on the help lines provided. Then, some students were still wrong in writing the letters, students could not distinguish between the letters written to the top, bottom, or middle line. In addition, some students also did not understand the use of capital letters and punctuation in cursive writing. This can be known based on student writing in the assignment books collected. Grade 2 students should ideally be able to write independently properly and correctly without any of the above constraints.

Here the researcher will conduct research on grade 2 students of SD Negeri Golo for the 2022/2023 academic year, where there are indeed some problems in writing ability. This is because students are not optimal in recognizing the characteristics of cursive letters from a to z, students do not really understand the shape of the letters per letter in small or capital forms. So it is not uncommon for students to make mistakes in writing. In this case the teacher has also tried to use various ways to overcome this problem, but the results have not been seen significantly. While the teacher also has to do other jobs.

Starting from this problem, we need a solution to deal with the problem. Cursive writing can also develop the nature or character of the student. One solution to improve cursive writing skills in learning Indonesian is to use the right model in learning cursive writing skills. Of course, it is adjusted to the conditions and characteristics of the child,

which according to Mustadi (2018: 70) class II elementary school students are still in the concrete operational stage, that is, they are still aged 7-11 years. At this time the child still needs help with concrete matters such as real guidance from a teacher. So that the use of the Project Based Learning model is the right step in teaching students to write cursive,

Project Based Learning is a project-based learning model that can develop students' thinking power and make students focus on carrying out learning (Mulyasa, 2014: 145). The characteristics of the Project Based Learning model are learning models that can provide opportunities for educators to be able to process learning in class using project assignments (Melinda, 2020: 1527). This model uses a contextual approach and fosters students' skills in critical thinking (Anggraini, 2021: 294). ModelProject Based LearningThis is expected to make students active in learning because the syntax or steps in Project Based Learning are detailed and can guide students in making projects (Daswita, 2020: 11). The project here is in the form of writing in cursive letters. Teachers will also work more closely withstudent. So, in other words, children's cursive writing skills can be improved by using modelsProject Based Learning.

3. Method

3.1. Participants and context

The research was conducted in the even semester or second semester of the 2022/2023 academic year. The research was conducted in class 2B of SD Negeri Golo, which consisted of 20 children. This research uses the type of Classroom Action Research which is divided into two cycles, each cycle consisting of two meetings. Each cycle consists of planning, action & observation, and reflection. Termination of the cycle is

carried out if the research results are in accordance with predetermined success indicators.

3.2. Material

The action research design used is the Kemmis & Mc Taggart model. This model consists of three stages, namely planning, action & observation, and reflection. Data collection techniques and instruments used in this study were observations using observation sheet instruments, tests using performance tests, and documentation.
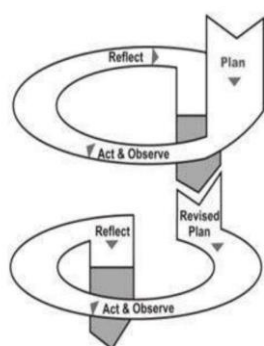
Information:

Cycle I:

1. Planning I
2. Actions and Observations I
3. Reflection I

Cycle II:

1. Revision and Planning II
2. Actions and Observations II
3. Reflection II

3.3. Data Collection and analysis

The data collection techniques used were 1) Observation, the things that were observed were in the form of activities of teachers who had not used the Project Based Learning model and problems with students' difficulties in cursive writing. 2) Tests, in this study were cursive writing assignments, with the aim of knowing the ability students in cursive writing. 3) Documentation, in this study the documentation used was in the form of pictures or photographs of learning activities for cursive writing skills in class 2 students of SD Negeri Golo.

While the data analysis techniques used are qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. Qualitative data analysis was used to analyze data in the form of descriptive text when learning cursive writing skills using the Project Based Learning model in grade 2 of SD Negeri Golo. For quantitative data analysis in the form of an analysis of the results of observations and results of performance tests. The following is the formula for calculating the observational analysis of the learning process using the Project Based Learning model.

$$P=F/Nx100\%$$

Information:

P : that percentagewill be searched

F : total score obtained

N : total score (maximum score)

100% : fixed number

Meanwhile, to calculate the results of student performance tests using the following formula.

$$KI=T/Ttx100\%$$

Information:

KI : individual completeness

Q : the number of scores obtained by students

Tt : total score (Somadyo, 2013: 71)

Meanwhile, the formula used to see classical student learning completeness is:

$$KS=ST/Nx100\%$$

Information:

KS : classical completeness

st : the number of students who complete

N : number of students in class (Arikunto, 2007: 284-285)

Each student is said to have completed his studies (individual completeness) if the proportion of students' correct answers is ≥ 70% and a class is said to have completed his studies (classical completeness) if in that class there are ≥ 75% of students who have completed their studies. The KKM value (minimum completeness criteria) applied is ≥ 70.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

The results of this reflection are used aslearning planning material in the next cycle. If the expected results have not achieved, improvements will be made in cycle II until the indicator is reached.This is done to determine the strengths and weaknesses observed in cycle 1, namely learning with the Project Based Learning model and students' cursive writing skills.

3.5. Research Limitations

The limitation of the research conducted in grade 2 of SD Negeri Golo is that all grade 2 students of SD Negeri Golo have not followed it because there are other factors. The number of students who took part in the study were 20 students from 21 students, so that the observation in the observation aspect was carried out classically. Another limitation is that the research was carried out when the time was nearing the end of the learning year so that the study hours had to be divided up with other material. Even

though it is supposed to teach motor skills such as cursive writing, this certainly requires time or a long process.

4.   Results and Discussion

The results of applying the Project Based Learning model show an increase in the learning process and students' writing skills. This is in line with research conducted by Sumiyati in 2022 which states that the Project Based Learning model can improve writing skills. The results of observing the learning process from the first meeting to the second meeting have increased. All steps in the Project Based Learning model run smoothly and in sequence. At the first meeting the total score of learning observations was 32 with a percentage of 80%, while at the second meeting the total score was 36 with a percentage of 90%. So that the average perspective score is 33.5 with a percentage of 83.75%. In cycle II, the results of observations of the learning process of students' cursive writing skills with the mode; Project Based Learning has fulfilled the research success criteria.

Meanwhile, the results of students' cursive writing skills also increased. This can be seen from the results of the student's cursive writing skill test which includes nine aspects of assessment namely letter components, letter shape and size, spacing, slope, alignment, line quality, use of capital letters, use of punctuation marks, and neatness of writing.

In the aspect of the letter component, in the pre-action activities the average score reached 10.76, increased in cycle I to 12.46 and increased again in cycle II to 12.93. In the aspect of shape and size of letters, this aspect experienced an increase from pre-action activities to cycle II. In pre-action activities the average score reached 9.86,

increased in cycle I to 11.3 and increased again in cycle II to 12.16. In the aspect of distance, in the pre-action activities the average score reached 10.06, increased in cycle I to 11.6 and increased again in cycle II to 12.06. In the aspect of slope, in pre-action activities the average score reached 9.6, increased in cycle I to 11.36 and increased again in cycle II to 11.56. In the aspect of alignment, in the pre-action activities the average score reached 9, 5 increased in cycle I to 11.73 and during cycle II to 11.7. In the aspect of line quality, in the pre-action activities the average score reached 6, increasing in cycle I to 7.26 and increasing again in cycle II to 7.73. For the aspect of using capital letters, in pre-action activities the average score reached 0.6, increased in cycle I to 2.2 and increased again in cycle II to 3.67. For the use of punctuation marks, in the pre-action activities the average score reached 1.66, increased in cycle I to 2.26 and increased again in cycle II to 4. in pre-action activities the average score reached 0.6 increased in cycle I to 2.2 and increased again in cycle II to 3.67. For the use of punctuation marks, in the pre-action activities the average score reached 1.66, increased in cycle I to 2.26 and increased again in cycle II to 4. in pre-action activities the average score reached 0.6 increased in cycle I to 2.2 and increased again in cycle II to 3.67. For the use of punctuation marks, in the pre-action activities the average score reached 1.66, increased in cycle I to 2.26 and increased again in cycle II to 4.

The following table presents the improvement in cursive writing skill test results in the pre-action activities, cycle I, and cycle II.

Table 1. Improvement of Pre-action Results with Cycle I and Cycle II

No.	Aspect	Preaction	Cycle I	Cycle II
1.	Total value	1347,5	1499.5	1575
2.	Average value	67,37	74.97	78.75
3.	Success percentage	40%	55%	80%

Based on the improvement table, it can be seen that the results of the cursive writing skills test in cycle II have increased in accordance with the objectives previously set. The pre-action test results which were attended by 20 students achieved an average score of 67.37 with a success percentage of 40%. Then it increased in cycle I to 74.97 with a success percentage of 53.33%, and increased again in cycle II to 78.75 with a success percentage of 80%.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion of research results on the use of the Project Based Learning model can improve the learning process and cursive writing skills of Grade 2 students of SD Negeri Golo, it can be concluded that the process of learning cursive writing skills for Grade 2 students of SD Negeri Golo using the Project Based Learning model has experienced an increase. This is indicated by students being able to arrange letters using cursive letters, students being able to write auxiliary lines correctly, students being able to distinguish between cursive letters, students being able to use punctuation marks and capital letters correctly, students being able to determine fundamental questions, students were able to arrange project plans and project schedules, students were able to create projects, students were able to test results,

The improvement of cursive writing skills can be seen from the results of the cursive writing skills test, which contains nine aspects of cursive writing skills assessment. These aspects are letter components, letter shape and size, spacing, slope, alignment, line quality, use of capital letters, use of punctuation marks, and neatness of writing.

6. Acknowledgments

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