The Influence of the Mastery Learning Method on the Writing Skills of Fifth-Grade Students at Sidrap Elementary School

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A R T I C L E I N F O

A B S T R A C T

This study examines the impact of the Mastery Learning method on the writing skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 6 Sidrap. Writing is a critical skill that allows students to articulate their imagination through written expression. However, students often face challenges in connecting ideas coherently within a text. This classroom action research, conducted in three cycles, aims to improve students' performance in writing and assess the influence of the method on their motivation to learn. Each cycle consisted of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through formative tests and observation sheets. The results showed a significant improvement in student achievement, with learning completeness increasing from 65.22% in the first cycle to 91.13% in the third cycle. The findings indicate that the Mastery Learning method positively influences students' motivation and writing skills. This method can serve as an effective alternative for enhancing writing instruction in elementary schools.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a crucial skill that allows students to express their imagination and communicate ideas in both written and spoken forms. However, in elementary schools, many students face challenges in writing, such as difficulties in connecting ideas cohesively and expressing thoughts clearly. Writing activities, which involve cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, play an essential role in developing these skills comprehensively.Indonesian language education aims to enhance students' abilities to use the language actively and creatively. However, pre-research observations at SDN 6 Sidrap revealed that many fifth-grade students struggled to meet the minimum competency standards (KKM) in writing. This was particularly evident in their inability to create coherent texts with well-structured sentences and paragraphs.

Teachers often face challenges in teaching writing, especially with limited instructional time and large class sizes. These constraints lead to less frequent writing practice, which negatively impacts students' writing proficiency. In many cases, writing is taught sporadically, focusing on theoretical aspects rather than practical exercises that foster creativity and coherence.The Mastery Learning method offers a potential solution to address these challenges. This method emphasizes the importance of structured, repetitive learning, ensuring that students achieve mastery in a particular skill before moving on to the next. By integrating this method into writing instruction, teachers can provide a more effective and engaging learning experience.Previous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of the Mastery Learning method in improving students' academic performance in various subjects. For instance, research by Kartini (2016) demonstrated how the use of creative learning media could enhance writing skills. However, there is a lack of research focusing specifically on the application of the Mastery Learning method in improving elementary students' writing skills.

This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the impact of the Mastery Learning method on the writing skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 6 Sidrap. The research focuses on assessing students' progress in writing after the implementation of the method and analyzing its influence on their learning motivation.The study uses a classroom action research approach, consisting of three cycles with four stages in each cycle: planning, action, observation, and reflection. This systematic approach allows for continuous improvement in teaching strategies and learning outcomes. Data were collected through formative tests and observation sheets, providing both qualitative and quantitative insights into the effectiveness of the method.The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the field of Indonesian language education by offering practical strategies for enhancing writing instruction in elementary schools. Moreover, the study aims to provide teachers with insights into how the Mastery Learning method can be applied effectively to foster students' creativity and motivation.
Ultimately, this research seeks to address the broader goal of improving students' ability to communicate effectively through writing, thereby preparing them for future academic and professional challenges. By adopting innovative teaching methods such as Mastery Learning, schools can create a more supportive and engaging learning environment for all students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing, as one of the core language skills, plays a significant role in fostering students' ability to express their ideas and creativity. According to Fathurrahman (2018), writing is not only about transferring thoughts onto paper but also about organizing ideas cohesively and engaging the audience effectively. Writing activities require a balance of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor elements, encompassing knowledge, emotional engagement, and practical application. Despite its importance, writing often receives less emphasis in elementary education due to a lack of instructional time and focus on theoretical aspects rather than practice.Mastery Learning is a teaching approach developed by Benjamin Bloom in the 1960s that emphasizes structured, step-by-step learning processes to achieve mastery before progressing. This method has been shown to improve students' academic outcomes across various subjects, including language learning. The principles of Mastery Learning revolve around formative assessments, corrective feedback, and repetitive practice, which ensure that students fully understand a concept or skill before advancing. When applied to writing instruction, the method allows students to develop their skills systematically, addressing gaps in their understanding and practice.

Several studies highlight the effectiveness of Mastery Learning in language education. Research by Akhmad Yazidi (2014) emphasizes that structured and iterative learning approaches, such as Mastery Learning, align well with the goals of the 2013 Indonesian curriculum, which prioritizes active learning and student-centered pedagogy. Similarly, Mulyono Sumardi (2012) underscores that writing instruction should provide ample opportunities for practice and feedback, which Mastery Learning inherently supports. These findings suggest that the method is well-suited for addressing challenges in writing education, particularly in elementary schools.Writing challenges in elementary education often stem from students' limited exposure to meaningful writing activities. Kartini (2016) found that integrating creative media, such as comics, can improve students' writing engagement and outcomes. While this approach enhances motivation, it lacks the systematic structure that Mastery Learning offers. On the other hand, Yasmin and Erni (2017) explored imaginative teaching methods to foster creativity in writing but did not incorporate a clear framework for skill development. These studies indicate a need for a structured yet engaging approach, such as Mastery Learning, to address the multifaceted nature of writing education.

The role of motivation in learning, particularly in writing, is another critical factor discussed in the literature. According to Alidawati (2019), students are more likely to excel in tasks when they are motivated by engaging and relevant learning activities. Mastery Learning not only addresses the technical aspects of writing but also fosters a sense of achievement and confidence in students, thereby enhancing their motivation. The positive reinforcement inherent in the method encourages students to persist in their learning, even when faced with challenges. Classroom Action Research (CAR) has been widely used as a methodology to implement and evaluate teaching strategies, including Mastery Learning. Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon (2013) propose a cyclical framework of planning, action, observation, and reflection to continuously improve teaching practices. This approach is particularly effective in addressing specific classroom challenges, such as writing difficulties, as it allows for iterative refinements based on real-time feedback. Studies utilizing CAR in writing instruction have demonstrated significant improvements in students' skills, particularly when coupled with

innovative teaching methods.

The application of Mastery Learning in Indonesian language education is still relatively underexplored, particularly in the context of elementary school writing instruction. Most existing studies focus on secondary or higher education, leaving a gap in the literature regarding its impact on younger learners. Research by Salbiah (2019) and Nugraha et al. (2019) suggests that younger students can greatly benefit from structured, repetitive learning processes, as these align with their developmental needs. This further supports the relevance of investigating the Mastery Learning method for elementary writing education.In summary, the literature indicates that writing education in elementary schools requires a balance of creativity, structure, and engagement. The Mastery Learning method, with its emphasis on repetition, feedback, and student-centered learning, offers a promising solution to the challenges faced in writing instruction. By integrating this method into classroom practices, teachers can enhance both the technical and motivational aspects of writing education. However, further research is needed to explore its specific application in elementary schools, particularly in the Indonesian context, to validate its effectiveness and provide practical recommendations for educators.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach to investigate the impact of the Mastery Learning method on the writing skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 6 Sidrap. CAR was chosen because it allows educators to identify and address specific problems within their classrooms systematically. Following the framework proposed by Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon (2013), this research was conducted in iterative cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection, ensuring continuous improvement in teaching practices and learning outcomes.

The study was carried out over three cycles, with each cycle consisting of four stages: (1) Planning, which involved developing instructional materials and strategies; (2) Action, where the planned activities were implemented in the classroom; (3) Observation, during which data on student performance and engagement were collected; and (4) Reflection, where the researcher analyzed the outcomes and identified areas for improvement in subsequent cycles. The research site was SDN 6 Sidrap, an elementary school selected based on the identified challenges in writing instruction among fifth-grade students. The sample consisted of 23 fifth-grade students who participated actively throughout the study. These students were chosen as the research subjects due to their demonstrated struggles with writing skills, particularly in constructing coherent and creative compositions.

The intervention applied in this study was the Mastery Learning method, which focuses on structured and repetitive learning. The teaching activities included explicit instruction on writing techniques, collaborative writing exercises, and individual practice. Formative assessments were integrated into each cycle to evaluate student progress and provide feedback for improvement. Writing tasks were designed to align with students' interests and experiences, ensuring relevance and engagement. Data collection was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were obtained from formative test

scores administered at the end of each cycle to measure improvements in students' writing skills. The tests assessed key aspects of writing, such as coherence, sentence structure, and creativity. Qualitative data were gathered through observation sheets and field notes, documenting student participation, engagement, and teacher reflections during the learning process. To ensure the reliability and validity of the data, a triangulation method was employed. The test results were compared with observation findings and peer feedback to provide a comprehensive understanding of the learning process and its outcomes. Additionally, the researcher collaborated with a colleague who acted as an observer to minimize bias in data collection and analysis.

The data analysis followed both descriptive and statistical approaches. Quantitative data from test scores were analyzed using percentages to determine the level of learning completeness achieved by the students. Descriptive analysis was applied to qualitative data to identify patterns and themes in student behavior and teacher practices. The findings from each cycle were used to refine the instructional strategies and enhance the effectiveness of the Mastery Learning method.The ethical considerations of the study included obtaining permission from the school administration and ensuring the confidentiality of student data. The researcher also ensured that students participated voluntarily and that the intervention did not disrupt the regular teaching schedule. By adhering to these ethical principles, the study aimed to maintain a supportive and respectful learning environment for all participants.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate a significant improvement in the writing skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 6 Sidrap after the implementation of the Mastery Learning method. The data collected from formative tests, classroom observations, and teacher reflections demonstrate the positive effects of the method on both the students' writing abilities and their motivation to engage in writing activities. The results were analyzed across three cycles, with each cycle showing incremental improvements in students' writing performance.In the first cycle, the students' overall writing proficiency was relatively low, with only 65.22% achieving the desired learning completeness. The formative test results revealed that many students struggled with sentence structure, coherence, and connecting ideas between paragraphs. Observations indicated that students had difficulty focusing during the initial stages of learning, often requiring additional guidance and encouragement to stay engaged in the writing activities. This outcome highlighted the need for further refinement of teaching strategies, particularly in terms of student motivation and classroom management.

Following the reflection and revision of the first cycle, the second cycle showed noticeable improvements in both student engagement and writing performance. The learning completeness increased to 82.6%, and students demonstrated better understanding in structuring their writing. The formative test results revealed that more students were able to produce coherent paragraphs with logical progression. This improvement can be attributed to the changes implemented in the second cycle, including more interactive writing activities, clearer instructions, and increased opportunities for peer feedback.

During the second cycle, classroom observations also indicated a more positive learning environment, with students actively participating in group discussions

and writing exercises. Motivation levels appeared to be higher, as evidenced by students' increased willingness to share their work with peers and their active involvement in the revision process. This aligns with previous research, such as that of Dewi (2016), which emphasized that active involvement in the learning process enhances student motivation and improves academic outcomes.The third and final cycle demonstrated the most significant progress, with 91.3% of students achieving the learning completeness criteria. In this cycle, students were able to write more complex and well-organized compositions, demonstrating clear logical flow and creativity in their work. The positive outcomes in this cycle can be attributed to the continued use of the Mastery Learning method, which provided students with repetitive opportunities to practice and refine their writing skills until mastery was achieved.

Qualitative data collected through classroom observations further support these quantitative findings. Throughout the cycles, students exhibited a gradual increase in confidence when writing. Initially, many students were reluctant to participate in writing activities, fearing they could not produce quality work. However, by the third cycle, students were more willing to attempt complex writing tasks, asking for less guidance and showing greater independence. This change highlights the impact of the Mastery Learning method on fostering a growth mindset, where students began to believe in their ability to improve through persistent effort.The improvements observed in student performance are consistent with previous studies on the effectiveness of Mastery Learning. For instance, research by Mulyono Sumardi (2012) and Yasmin and Erni (2017) highlighted the method's ability to significantly enhance students' academic performance by focusing on mastery before moving on to more advanced content. In this study, the Mastery Learning method was particularly effective in addressing individual students' weaknesses in writing, allowing them to progress at their own pace and ensuring that they fully understood each aspect of writing before advancing.

The positive impact of the Mastery Learning method on student motivation was another important finding. Observations and student feedback indicated that students found the process of repeated practice and feedback rewarding. By being able to see their progress over time, students became more confident and motivated to continue improving. This finding aligns with research by Alidawati (2019), who suggested that student motivation is strongly influenced by a sense of achievement and self-efficacy, both of which were fostered by the iterative nature of the Mastery Learning approach.In conclusion, the results of this study support the hypothesis that the Mastery Learning method can effectively improve students' writing skills and motivation. The significant improvements in student performance across the three cycles demonstrate the method's ability to address the challenges faced in writing instruction. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on Mastery Learning and provides practical insights for educators seeking to enhance writing instruction in elementary schools. Future research could further explore the long-term effects of Mastery Learning on students' academic development and its application to other subjects.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Mastery Learning method significantly improves the writing skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 6 Sidrap. The iterative nature of the method, with its focus on repetitive practice, feedback, and mastery before moving on to new content, allowed students to progressively enhance their writing abilities. Through three cycles of action research, students showed marked improvements in coherence, sentence structure, and creativity in their writing, with learning completeness increasing from 65.22% in the first cycle to 91.3% in the third cycle.In addition to academic improvements, the Mastery Learning method also had a positive effect on student motivation. As students repeatedly practiced and received feedback, they gained confidence in their writing abilities, which in turn encouraged greater participation and enthusiasm in the learning process. This increase in motivation aligns with previous research that emphasizes the role of mastery and self-efficacy in fostering student engagement and achievement.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the Mastery Learning method is a highly effective strategy for improving writing skills in elementary school students. It provides a structured and supportive learning environment that ensures all students can achieve mastery in writing, thereby enhancing both their academic performance and their intrinsic motivation to learn. Future studies may explore the long-term effects of this method and its application in other subjects or educational contexts.

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