

Teacher Creativity in Implementing Indonesian Language Learning Using Cursive Letter Writing

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Abstract

This qualitative research aims to explore the teacher's creativity in implementing Indonesian language learning through cursive letters at MI Nahdlatul Ulama 01 Purwosari Kudus and its impact. The study involved the school principal, the Class III Indonesian language teacher, and 28 Class III students. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The findings revealed that the teacher's creativity in teaching Indonesian language through cursive letters involved the use of a scientific approach and the alternating habituation method accompanied by ice-breaking activities. Media such as posters, whiteboards, and fine notepads were also employed. The positive impacts of this implementation included increased student enthusiasm, improved and neater student writing, and gradual enhancements in learning outcomes for cursive letter writing. However, negative impacts were observed in the prolonged time needed for the process and the perceived difficulty in writing cursive letters, posing a distinct obstacle for students.

Keywords: teacher's creativity, cursive letters, Indonesian language learning.

INTRODUCTION

Elementary education is a crucial developmental stage, serving as a sensitive period for children to establish foundations in intelligence, knowledge, personality, noble character, and independent living skills. Efforts are necessary to support children's growth through educational activities aligned with basic education goals (Yusuf, 2015). Writing is a process involving the translation of ideas into written language, manifested in stages that form a comprehensive system (Nafi'ah, 2018). Writing activities serve as expressive tools for students to communicate ideas effectively (Nurhayati, et al, 2021).

Learning, integral to school education, aids children's positive growth. It necessitates a directed approach with clear objectives, avoiding haphazard implementation without a defined learning system. In schools, children engage in learning activities with the goal of fostering positive changes and maturation (Ivantri, 2021). Learning management comprises three phases: planning, implementation, and evaluation (Hisbullah, 2020). The planning stage significantly influences the smooth running of the assessment process (Setiadi, 2016), while the evaluation stage determines the success of the learning process in alignment with expected goals (Ilyas, 2020).

Learning to write at the educational level is divided into two stages: initial writing (grades I and II) and advanced writing, comprising the first stage (grades III and IV) and the subsequent second stage (grades V and VI) (Agustina, 2017). In the early grades, the focus is on developing mechanical

writing skills, where students are trained to transform written symbols into meaningful content (Solchan, et al, 2008). One specific skill taught in elementary school is the art of writing cursive letters. Mastering cursive letters holds significant importance for students, not only enhancing the aesthetic quality of writing but also yielding various benefits. Cursive writing aids in stimulating children's motor development, promoting faster writing, and fostering creativity in their written expression (Choirun, et al, 2022). The acquisition of cursive writing skills commences in grades I and II and is further refined in grade III. Engaging in the activity of writing cursive letters contributes to the development of students' thinking and fine motor skills.

Cursive letters, characterized by connected upright writing, follow the guidelines outlined in the GBPP 1994 for Indonesian language learning in Elementary Schools (Tri, 2020). These activities aim to enhance thinking skills and refine students' fine motor skills, ultimately resulting in neater and more readable writing (Nur'aeni, 2019). According to Erdogan (2012), the process of writing cursive letters involves the repetition of forming letters one after another to create a unified letter, beginning from the letter plane and incorporating all the letters (Erdogan & Erdogan, 2012). Writing cursive letters is not merely about connecting individual letters; it also requires careful consideration of specific points.

Cursive letters writing teal also pay close attention to the totality, the following are the 3Ps in writing cursive letter (Cameron & Craig, 2018):

a. Attitude

Proper posture forms the foundation, enhancing the legibility of writing. Maintain a straight posture over the chair edge with feet flat on the floor. Lean slightly forward, positioning both hands on the table's hips.

b. Paper

Calibrate the paper slant by correctly placing it on the table, ensuring it rests in the corner.

c. Pencil/Pen

Achieve clean writing at a reasonable pace without straining the hand through precise pen strokes. Hold the pen with a tripod grip, whether one is right-handed, left-handed, or ambidextrous. The pen rests on the fulcrum of the middle finger, with the index finger positioned behind it. The ring and little fingers lightly rest on the palm.

According to (Agung, 2010), teacher creativity in learning encompasses various aspects, including designing teaching materials, class management, time utilization, learning methods, the use of learning media, and the development of evaluation tools. It is also important to take teachers' creativity into consideration. Teachers are individuals vested with authority and responsibility, tasked with guiding and nurturing students (Kamal, 2018). A proficient teacher must excel as a disseminator of knowledge, necessitating the application of creativity in its delivery. The challenge lies in ensuring that students readily comprehend and remain

engaged, particularly in the context of composing cursive letters. Several factors contribute to students encountering difficulties in mastering cursive writing, including uninteresting learning experiences, insufficient habituation, or a lack of student interest in honing writing skills.

This issue has been identified at MI Nahdlatul Ulama 01 Purwosari Kudus, where Indonesian language instruction for third-grade students is conducted by teachers with an educational background in English. Despite the disparity between their expertise and the subject matter, these teachers exhibit innovation in their instructional strategies. The specific difficulty faced by Grade III students is evident in their struggles to construct sentences using cursive letters. In the classroom, teachers do not consistently mandate cursive writing due to its perceived complexity and the considerable time investment required.

The rationale behind selecting the third-grade level for investigation is rooted in the fact that students in the preceding grade are introduced to the basics of cursive letter writing. Consequently, it is anticipated that students in the subsequent grade should possess the ability to proficiently write in cursive.

However, the researcher has observed instances where certain students encounter challenges when tasked with employing cursive letters in their written assignments. Given that, in class III, the teacher continues to utilize cursive writing, the researcher seeks to explore the innovative strategies employed by the teacher to enhance students' cursive writing skills in the context of Indonesian language instruction.

According to Fajar (Choirun, et al, 2022), students encounter challenges in learning to write cursive letters, manifested in errors such as incomplete words, inaccurately written capital letters, omission of punctuation marks, inconsistent alignment with provided lines, and a lack of fluency in cursive writing. Conversely, teachers face difficulties in teaching cursive writing, particularly in effectively conveying the intricacies of this skill to students. A commonality between prior research and the current study is the examination of cursive letter writing in its cursive form. However, the point of departure lies in the research focus: previous studies concentrated on students' learning difficulties, whereas the present researchers are specifically exploring the innovative strategies employed by teachers in teaching Indonesian language through cursive letters.

METHOD

This research employed a type of field research, a methodology commonly utilized by social scientists and economists to conduct investigations in various locations within a specific area or research group (Rahman, 2018). Qualitative research was chosen for this study. The study was conducted in a third-grade classroom at MI Nahdlatul Ulama 01 Purwosari Kudus, located at Jl. Niti Semito No. 645, Purwosari, Kec. Kota, Kudus Regency, Central Java. The research subjects included the school principal of MI Nahdlatul Ulama 01 Purwosari, the third-grade Indonesian language teacher, and the third-grade students.

Data sources comprised both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources directly provided data to the data collectors (Sugiyono, 2015), with interviews being conducted with the school principal, Indonesian language teacher, and third-grade students. Observations were carried out during Indonesian language learning sessions. On the other hand, secondary sources, which do not directly provide data to data collectors (Sugiyono, 2015), included books, Indonesian language textbooks, literature, notes, several archives, third-grade Indonesian lesson plans, and photos of Indonesian language learning activities.

Data collection involved the application of observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. Observations were conducted from March 7 to April 7, 2023. Interview questions focused on the implementation of Indonesian language learning using cursive letters, encompassing inquiries about teacher creativity in implementing the learning process, the impact of teacher creativity, and the students' response to such creativity.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Teacher Creativity in Implementing Indonesian Language Learning Using Write Cursive Letters in Class III MI Nahdlatul Ulama 01 Purwosari Kudus

Teacher creativity is defined as the ability of educators to introduce novel elements into their teaching, thereby incorporating variety into the instructional process and encouraging greater student engagement and creativity (Oktavia, 2014). During the course of instruction, teachers are

expected to demonstrate creative proficiency in delivering lessons through established teaching methods. Furthermore, teacher creativity can be cultivated by enhancing instructional media and student learning materials (Fitriani, 2021). To effectively implement teacher creativity, educators must engage in thorough preparation, encompassing planning, execution, and evaluation of the learning process. In the planning phase, teachers are required to develop lesson plans, create conducive learning environments, and assemble the necessary resources for teaching and learning activities (Hisbullah, 2020)

Agung (2010) identifies several facets of teacher creativity in the learning context, including the design and preparation of teaching or learning materials, effective class management, efficient time utilization, utilization of diverse learning methods, incorporation of varied learning media, and the development of comprehensive evaluation tools.

The subsequent section details the stages of the Indonesian language learning process utilizing cursive letters in the third-grade classroom of MI Nahdlatul Ulama 01 Purwosari Kudus.

Planning Stage

During the planning stage, the Indonesian language teacher undertakes several essential preparations. This includes the formulation of detailed lesson plans and the selection of instructional media such as soft notebooks and posters. Learning resources encompass textbooks and online materials. The instructional approach involves a scientific

methodology, coupled with habituation techniques and ice-breaking methods.

Implementation Stage

The implementation stage comprises preliminary, core, and closing activities. The preliminary activities commence with a prayer, followed by the teacher offering an apperception to introduce the upcoming lesson. Subsequently, the teacher displays a poster featuring national symbols on the blackboard, serving as a visual aid.

Moving on to core activities, the learning process adopts a scientific approach, encompassing observation, questioning, experimentation, reasoning, and communication. In the initial phase, students are prompted to observe the national symbols presented on posters and in textbooks. The teacher facilitates discussions by posing questions related to the components of these symbols. Transitioning to the exploration stage, students are directed to observe the Garuda Pancasila song in the textbook and subsequently write it in cursive letters. The teacher circulates, inspecting students' writing, and offers assistance to those encountering difficulties. Students are then encouraged to sing the Garuda Pancasila song, fostering a dynamic cursive learning experience. Entering the reasoning stage, students engage with questions in the textbook, with the teacher providing correct and appropriate answers. This is followed by the communication stage, where students and the teacher review the material, allowing students to pose questions and culminating in a quiz on national symbols.

In the closing activities, feedback is provided to students, and conclusions are drawn regarding the lessons learned. The session concludes with a prayer.

Evaluation Stage

The culmination of the Indonesian language learning process is the evaluation stage. Assessment takes place through assignments administered after the presentation of the material.

The results are subsequently collected and discussed in the following meeting. The observations made by researchers reveal that teachers acquaint students with cursive letter writing using tailored strategies and methods aligned with the presented material. An effective learning process is characterized by the implementation of strategies and methods in delivery, ensuring students grasp and comprehend the lesson without experiencing boredom. Given the inherent difficulty students face in learning cursive letters, teacher creativity is crucial in providing guidance. In the context of class III at MI Nahdlatul Ulama 01 Purwosari, where writing cursive letters is a challenging lesson, many students lack interest or proficiency in this skill. The teacher's creativity in this setting involves the use of stimuli such as songs to rejuvenate students' enthusiasm and the application of habituation methods to foster familiarity with cursive letter writing. The incorporation of habituation methods in teaching Indonesian cursive writing in class III at MI Nahdlatul Ulama 01 Purwosari represents the Indonesian assistant teachers' endeavor to enhance students' writing skills. The process of writing upright letters in the Indonesian language occurs post

the learning stages—planning, implementation, and evaluation—executed by the teacher according to the pre-established plan.

Teacher creativity manifests in the application of diverse learning methods, including those designed to stimulate creativity or integrate various instructional approaches

- a. One effective method that fosters creativity is the brainstorming method, which encourages students to generate creative ideas, exchange thoughts, or express personal opinions (Fitriani, 2021). In this context, the teacher has employed a creativity-stimulating method by incorporating scientific learning methods. Scientific learning, encompassing observation, questioning, experimentation, thinking, and communication, serves to stimulate students' creativity, particularly when grappling with challenges in writing cursive letters. The teacher provides instructions using illustrative examples to facilitate comprehension.
- b. Teacher creativity extends to the strategic combination or modification of existing methods, with a keen focus on the learning objectives (Fitriani, 2021). This innovative approach involves combining the habituation method with ice-breaking activities such as playing, guessing, or singing, alongside the assignment of tasks. The habituation method, rooted in experiential repetition (Yaqin, 2009), was observed as employed by the teacher to enhance students' recall and familiarity with writing cursive letters. Through this method, the initially

perceived difficulty of writing cursive letters gradually becomes commonplace and manageable.

Additionally, teacher creativity is evident in the development of instructional media and student learning resources, further enriching the learning environment.

- a. The utility and significance of learning media as instruments and information sources contribute significantly to student learning. Employing diverse media tailored to teaching and learning activities facilitates the acquisition of information and the attainment of learning objectives (Fitriani, 2021). In the research findings, the teacher utilized posters and fine notebooks as learning media for instructing cursive letter writing.
- b. Creating learning resources involves leveraging the environment, familiar objects, and students' experiences (Fitriani, 2021). As per interviews conducted by researchers, the teacher assigned tasks requiring students to narrate personal experiences using cursive letters.

The teacher primarily employed the habituation method for upright letter writing, incorporating alternating habituation cycles to prevent student disinterest and complaints arising from the complexity of cursive letters (Yaqin, 2009). Despite the acknowledged difficulty in writing intricate cursive letters, the teacher persisted in fostering students' skills, opting for the alternating habituation method.

This reflects the teacher's creativity in employing various learning methods, including those that stimulate creativity, combining learning methods, and developing media and student learning resources in Indonesian language instruction for cursive writing. The teacher's approach aims to maintain students' enthusiasm, preventing boredom due to the perceived difficulty of writing cursive letters. The teacher's consideration of students' sentiments ensures a positive perception of cursive letter writing. The combination of the alternating habituation method with playful and musical elements contributes to sustaining student enthusiasm and engagement in the learning process. Assessment involves individual written tests, focusing on refining students' ability to write cursive letters accurately. This comprehensive approach aligns with the standards, validating the efficacy of the Indonesian language learning process for cursive writing using the habituation method at MI Nahdlatul Ulama 01 Purwosari Kudus.

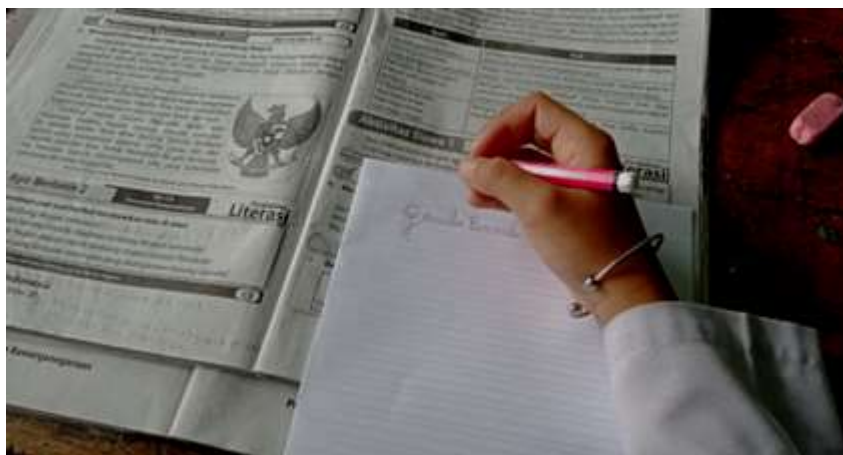


Figure 2. Cursive Writing Activity

The Impact of Teacher Creativity in Teaching Indonesian Language Learning to Write Cursive Letters in Class III MI Nahdlatul Ulama 01 Purwosari Kudus

Creativity serves as the linchpin for generating innovative ideas and actions aimed at enhancing the quality of education. Devoid of creativity, teachers may grapple with mental stagnation, fostering a learning environment characterized by monotony, conservatism, and lack of engagement, subsequently diminishing students' interest in the learning process (Agung, 2010). Teachers are entrusted with the responsibility of cultivating and enhancing their creativity actively. This involves staying abreast of scientific advancements, reflecting on personal strengths and weaknesses, pioneering breakthroughs, conducting experiments, engaging in critical and productive discussions, and disseminating results to the public. Recognizing that creativity is characterized by fluidity, flexibility, determination, and originality is crucial in this pursuit (Nur, 2002). The impact of teacher creativity, manifested through the utilization of scientific approaches, poster-based learning media, blackboards, soft notebooks, and innovative ice-breaking methods such as singing, is multifaceted, encompassing both positive and negative outcomes.

a. Positive impact

- 1) The teacher's application of the habituation method aims to refine students' writing skills, particularly in the challenging task of writing cursive letters. In practice, the teacher employs stimuli

such as enjoyable singing or interactive activities, fostering a more enthusiastic and engaged classroom atmosphere.

- 2) The positive impact of the habituation method is evident in the improved legibility and organization of students' writing, especially in the case of previously erratic cursive letters.
- 3) Over time, there is a gradual enhancement in student learning outcomes related to cursive letter writing.

b. Negative impact

- 1) the difficulty inherent in writing cursive letters, particularly for lower-grade students unaccustomed to this form, may lead to boredom.
- 2) The prolonged time required for writing in cursive may also pose challenges in keeping up with the pace of subsequent material.

It is evident that the teacher's creativity in teaching Indonesian yields diverse effects, contingent on the chosen methods. Each method, including the habituation approach, presents its own set of advantages and disadvantages. Teachers must carefully select and adapt their creative approaches based on the specific class context and conditions.

In the case of teaching cursive letters, a mere lecture method is insufficient; instead, teachers must provide targeted guidance to help students grasp the intricacies of writing cursive letters accurately and proficiently.

The research conducted by Fajar (Choirun, et al, 2022) has demonstrated the limitations of relying solely on the lecture method, as

observed in instances where teachers merely displayed cursive letter posters without providing additional support to students. This approach resulted in students facing difficulty and confusion in letter formation. In contrast, the researchers introduced the dictation method, which proved to be more effective.

Parallel findings in the author's research indicate a similar pattern. While habituation was not consistently applied, adjustments were made based on the material being taught. For instance, habituation was implemented selectively, particularly when the subject matter involved diverse topics or narratives. This approach prevented student boredom and had a positive impact on their writing, encouraging careful and neat writing

CONCLUSION

Each creativity in implementing Indonesian language learning through cursive letters in class III at MI Nahdlatul Ulama 01 Purwosari is seamlessly integrated across the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. This creativity is exemplified through the application of methods that stimulate creativity, the strategic combination of learning approaches, and the development of diverse media and learning resources.

- a. The chosen method, the alternate habituation method coupled with ice-breaking activities like playing or singing, is complemented by the use of posters, soft notebooks, and blackboards as visual aids for teaching cursive letter writing.

- b. Learning sources include textbooks and the internet, with assignments provided to encourage students to narrate personal experiences using cursive letters.

The positive impacts of this teacher creativity are manifold. Students display increased enthusiasm, enhanced writing skills in cursive letters, improved neatness and organization in their writing, and gradual advancements in learning outcomes. However, negative impacts are also observed, particularly in the perception of cursive letters as challenging for lower-grade students unaccustomed to this form, leading to feelings of boredom. The extended time required for writing in cursive further complicates the learning process. The perceived difficulty of cursive letters poses a challenge for teachers in providing effective guidance to students.

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