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IMPROVING LETTER WRITING SKILLS USING CONTEXTUAL APPROACH IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to improve skill in writing letter using contextual approach. The subject of this research is fourth-grade students of Aris 04 State Elementary School. The form of this research is descriptive research with classroom action research as the method. The means of this research is to investigate a condition, situation, or other things has been mentioned that the result is exposed in research report because the researcher does not change, add, or manipulate object or research area. The tools of data collecting IPKG I observation sheet, IPKG II observation sheet, Students' observation sheet. In the first cycle, the mean score of students who passed the evaluation test is 72.73% or eight students. In the second cycle, the mean score increase until 81.82% or nine students, and in the third cycle, the mean score is 90.91% or ten students. In conclusion, contextual approach can improve students' skill in writing letter.

Keywords: Improving, Writing Skill, Contextual Approach

Introduction

Indonesian language learning in primary schools is directed to improve the ability of students to communicate, both verbally and in writing. In addition, the Indonesian language learning is also expected to foster students' appreciation of the writing skills at school.

In accordance with the current Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP), Indonesian language learning at the elementary / MI level, including the components of language skills and literary abilities includes four aspects, namely Listening (Listening), Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The literary ability for elementary schools is appreciative. It is because with writing skills. In accordance with the current Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP), Indonesian language learning at the elementary / MI level, including the components of language skills and literary abilities includes four aspects, namely Listening (Listening), Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The literary ability for elementary schools is appreciative. It is due to the problem, but in reality during this time Indonesian language learning emphasizes on four aspects, namely listening (listening), speaking, reading, and writing, less directed at the process of thinking, and less directed towards meaningful and functioning learning for his life.

From the results of the reflections that have been made, in the author's learning process there are still shortcomings in personal letter writing skills found during teaching because it is based on experience during his assignment at Aris 04 State Elementary School in Capkala subdistrict. Learning conducted by students during learning activities is not yet in line with expectations. In other words, there is a gap between expectations and reality, namely learning activities that have not been optimal. In addition, it is based on the results of

reflection done on the writing skills of learning processes that are not optimal. It can be seen from writing letters given to students not yet achieving the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM), and this is evident from the average results below KKM student learning outcomes reaching 60 smaller than the KKM which is expected to reach 65.

The hope of the researcher at the time of the classroom action research on letter writing skills in class IV Aris 04 State Elementary School in Capkala subdistrict to be able to improve student's writing skills and learning objectives can be achieved.

Looking at the facts above, the writer wants to improve the learning of letter writing skills by giving examples of personal letters to peers (modeling). Therefore, it needs to be improved again by using contextual learning. By implementing contextual learning in learning to write letters, it is expected that changes in teaching patterns that were centered on the teacher (teacher centered) become centered on students (Student-Centered). It is also hoped that the creativity of teachers will increase so that teaching will not only focus on textbooks. Thus the learning process at school is undergoing renewal.

To overcome the gaps that occur, the letter writing skills are used using contextual learning in Indonesian language learning, the teacher can explore students' knowledge and abilities, make students active, improve letter writing skills and the teacher can find out whether students have understood and can understand the concepts of the material being taught through letter writing skills using the contextual approach taught to students.

Language has a central role in the intellectual, social and emotional development of students, as well as supporting the success in learning all fields of study. Language Learning is expected to help learners know themselves, their culture and the culture of others, express ideas and feelings, participate in a society that uses that language, and finds and use the analytical and imaginative abilities that are in them. Indonesian Language Learning is directed to improve the ability of students to communicate in Indonesian language properly and correctly, both verbally and in writing, as well as fostering appreciation of Indonesian human literary works (Depdiknas, 2006: 124). Indonesian Language Learning is directed to improve the ability of students to communicate in Indonesian language properly and correctly, both verbally and in writing, as well as fostering appreciation of Indonesian human literary works (Depdiknas, 2006: 124)

Writing is a complex language skill. Therefore it needs to be trained regularly and carefully since the initial grade of elementary school. Like writing a personal letter with neat and clear writing with attention to the purpose and variety of the reader, the use of spelling and punctuation, and the right vocabulary by using single sentences and compound sentences, and appreciating and expressing literature through writing literary results in the form of stories and poetry. Based on the scope of Indonesian language learning above, Indonesian language learning leads to an increase in communication skills, because the four language skills are interrelated and have an important role in communicating both orally and in writing.

The basic competencies that must be mastered by students in grade IV Semester 1 Elementary School in SD / MI Education Unit Level Curriculum (BSNP, 2006: 324) are writing letters to peers about experiences or ideals with good language and correct and pay attention to the use of spelling (uppercase, dots, commas, etc). According to Marwanto (in Dalman, 2015: 6), writing is the expression of ideas or ideas freely expressed in essays.

According to Suparno and Mohammad Yunus (2008: 1.3), "Writing can be defined as an act of delivering messages (communication) using written language as a tool or medium." Further in the opinion of Dalman (2016: 4), "Writing can also be said as an act of arranging letters into words or sentences to be conveyed to others so that they can understand." Then according to Elina Syarif et al. (2009: 5), stated that "Writing is a creative process of expressing ideas, feelings, ideas, and opinions in the form of written language for the purpose, for

example, telling, convincing, entertaining." From these opinions, it can be concluded that writing is an act of delivering messages (communication) by pouring ideas in the form of written language to be conveyed to others so that they can understand it. The writing skills referred to in this study are the students' ability to express ideas or ideas whose idea is an experience they have experienced and then pour it into written form.

The purpose of writing according to Elina Syarif et al. (2009: 6-7) is as follows: (a) informing one thing, both facts, data and information including opinions and views on facts, data and events such as the assertion of knowing and understanding about what can happen or what happened in this forum, (b) persuading; through writing a writer hopes that the reader can determine the attitude, whether he approves or supports what is stated. The writer must be able to persuade and convince the recipient to use a persuasive language. Therefore, the function of the ability of a piece of writing can represent an interesting, familiar, friendly, and easily digestible language, (c) educating is one of the goals of communication, while writing. Through reading the results of a written insight, someone's knowledge will continue to increase, the intelligence will continue to be, which in turn determines a person's behavior. Educated people, for example, tend to be more tolerable and full of tolerance, more valuable to others, and tend to be more rational, (d) entertaining; the function of the purpose of entertaining in communication, not the monopoly of the mass media, radio, television, but the print media can play a role in entertaining the readers. Writings or "light" readings that are rich in anecdotes, stories, and experience of the test also become readings from the text or to release tension after a day of activity.

According to Daeng Nurjamal et al. (2014: 120), "The letter is a means of written communication between one party and another party that has mutual interests." The further opinion of Dalman (2016: 273), states that "Letter is a means to convey thoughts, hearts, intentions, or will to others through written language using paper as the medium." According to Dalman (2016: 287), "basically the type of letter consists of two types, namely personal letters, and official letters." Further, in the opinion of Daeng Nurjamal, et al. (2014: 122), "Letters based on origin are divided into four; name comes from personal/individual, official, social and commercial."

Assessment of writing skills according to Burhan Nurgiyantoro (2010: 437) is adjusted to the contents of the written letter, namely a personal letter, the assessment used by the model. Writing a letter should be trained and assigned to students in school. Some teachers may pay less attention to the task. For writing official letters, such as job application letters, offers, notices, invitations, and other participants, the participant is introduced to choosing his model, and does not always have to follow the usual model, assessment of the results of writing letters should also use a rubric that is deliberately prepared for the intended evaluation score.

Elaine B. Johnson (History, 2008: 187) says contextual learning is a system that stimulates the brain to compose patterns that embody meaning. Furthermore, Elaine said that contextual learning is a learning system that matches the brain that produces meaning by connecting academic content with the context of students' daily lives.

According to Blanchard (2001: 1), Berns and Erickson (2001: 2) argue, "Contextual teaching and learning is a conception of teaching and learning that helps teachers relate subject matters to real-world situations; and motivate students to make connections between knowledge and applications to their lives members, citizens, and workers and engage in hard work that learning teams. "

Thus contextual learning is the concept of learning and teaching that helps teachers associate material taught with the real-world situation of students and encourage students to make connections between the knowledge they have with their application in their lives as family members, citizens, countries, and workers. It shows that in a contextual approach,

students find meaningful relationships between ideas abstract with practical application in discovery, reinforcement, and connectedness. Contextual learning requires work in a team, both in the classroom, laboratory. Contextual learning requires the teacher to design a learning environment which is a combination of several forms of experience to achieve the desired results.

The contextual learning component includes: (1) establishing meaningful relationships, (2) doing work which means (3) doing a self-regulated learning process; (4) collaborating (5) critical and creative thinking, (6) providing services individually (7) striving to achieve high standards (8) using authentic assessments The application of the CTL approach to writing personal letters is: (1) Teachers do apperception to students and asking; (2); the teacher associates learning with the real world about personal letters (constructivism), (3) provides examples of personal letters (modeling); (4) students observe the letter and determine the contents of the letter (Find), (4) the students group create a letter framework (Learning community), (5) students determine and develop a framework of letters for peers (Reflection), (6) correct spelling and punctuation of student letters together with teacher guidance (Actual assessment).

Research Method

The method used in this research is descriptive method is research that is intended to investigate the circumstances, conditions or other things that have been mentioned, the results of which are presented in the form of research reports, because in this study researchers did not change, add or make manipulations of objects or research area. In this research activity, researchers only photograph what happens to the object or region under study, then explain what happened in the form of research used in this study is Classroom Action Research (CAR) conducted at Aris 04 State Elementary School in Capkala subdistrict of Bengkayang Regency. According to Suharsimi Arikunto, et al. (2014: 3), "Classroom action research is a reflection of learning activities in the form of an action that is deliberately raised and occurs in a class together." The implementation of class actions according to Suharsimi Arikunto (2012: 16) can be seen in the picture below:

Planning phase

The stages in planning that need to be prepared by researchers are as follows: (a) determine the time of research, (b) establish the subject matter; (c) making RPP, (d) preparing learning materials and student worksheets; (e) preparing learning media; (f) making observation sheets and final evaluation sheets (g) making agreements with collaborator teachers to prepare learning activities with contextual learning

Implementation Phase

This research will be conducted in the odd semester by collaborating with Ridwan, S.Pd.SD as Indonesian language subject teachers in class IV.

Observation Phase

Observations carried out during the learning process take place by using observation sheets to measure how much learning activities are carried out by students, and teacher observation sheets to determine the percentage of improvement in learning implementation and tests to measure how many students learning outcomes.

Reflection Stage

After carrying out the learning process can be seen the advantages and disadvantages that arise in the learning process and make it as a reference to proceed to the next cycle.

In this study, the data taken came from the letter writing skills using a contextual approach in class IV Aris 04 State Elementary School in Capkala subdistrict of Bengkayang Regency as follows. (1) IPKG I and IPKG II observation sheets, and document inspection sheets. Data analysis techniques in this study adjust to the following sub-problems:

To analyze data about the ability of teachers to design and implement learning using a contextual approach that can improve personal letter writing skills. The formula used for calculating the mean as follows

$$(X)^{-} = (\Sigma x) / N \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Information:

X^{-} = Average (mean)

Σx = Number of all scores

N = Number of subjects

To determine the category, a benchmark is used according to the source: FKIP UNTAN (Guidelines for Implementation of PPL PGSD, 2017).

To analyze students' writing skills in grade IV in contextual learning, an assessment rubric is used. The formula used for calculating the mean as follows

$$(X)^{-} = (\Sigma x) / N \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Information:

X^{-} = Average (mean)

Σx = Number of all scores

N = Number of students

Result and Discussion

A. Result

This research was conducted at Aris 04 State Elementary School in Capkala subdistrict of Bengkayang Regency. There are four stages of this research, namely the planning stage, implementation phase, observation phase, and reflection stage. The data obtained in this study is the ability of the teacher in planning the learning process and the ability of the teacher in carrying out learning. The results of this study were obtained from the results of observations of teachers who teach Indonesian language subject writing material using a contextual approach method.

The results of this study are based on observations of IPKG I observation sheets, IPKG II, and documents in the form of personal letters made by students. This research was carried out in three cycles, where cycles I, II, and III.

Table I
The Ability of Teachers to Design Learning Cycles I

No.	Aspects Observed	Score
1	Formulation of Learning Objectives	3
2	Selection and Organization of Teaching Materials	3
3	Selection of Learning Resources / Learning Media	2
4	Scenario / Learning Activities	2,62
5	Learning Outcomes Assessment	2,67
Total Score A + B + C + D + E =		13,29
Average Score IPKG I		2,66

From the data, the ability of the teacher to design learning personal letter writing skills in the implementation of learning using a contextual approach with an average score in the first cycle is 2.66 and categorized as sufficient.

Table II
Teacher's Ability to Implement Cycle I Learning

No	Aspects Observed	Score
I	Pre Learning	3
II	Opening Activities	3
III	Core Learning Activities	2,59
IV	Closing Activities	3
Total Score I+II+III+IV		11,59
Average Score		2,90

From the data from the implementation of teacher learning, in the process of learning personal letter writing skills using a contextual approach with an average score in the first cycle of 2.72 and categorized as Enough.

The results of personal letter writing skills using a contextual approach are adopted based on data collection tools in the form of personal letter writing skills and are calculated based on the assessment rubric in the form of the average of cycle I. From the observation of personal letter writing skills using a contextual approach in class IV which amounted to 11 people in cycle I obtained an average score of 71.82.

Cycle II Research Results

The second cycle was held on Monday, November 13, 2017, for 105 minutes, namely the 1st and 3rd hours at 07.30 - 10.30 WIB. The teacher phase describes examples of writing experiences using a contextual approach. Students are also taught to use words that are simple and easy to understand and use Indonesian language that is good and right.

Data from the teacher's ability to design learning (RPP) using a data collection tool in the form of IPKG 1 which has been adopted from the program implementation guide (PPL) of FKIP UNTAN students.

Table III
Teacher's Ability to Design Cycle II Learning

No.	Aspects Observed	Score
A.	Formulation of Learning Objectives	3
B.	Selection and Organization of Teaching Materials	3
C.	Selection of Learning Resources / Learning Media	3
D.	Scenario / Learning Activities	3
E.	Learning Outcomes Assessment	3
Total Score A + B + C + D + E =		15
Average Score IPKG I		3

From the results of the teacher's ability to design learning, there are 5 aspects, namely the formulation of learning objectives, selection and organization of teaching materials, selection of learning resources or learning media, scenarios or learning activities, and assessment of learning outcomes of personal letter writing skills that influence the implementation of learning using a contextual approach with the average score in cycle 2 of 3 is categorized as good.

Table IV
Teacher's Ability to Implement Cycle II Learning

No	Aspects Observed	Score
I	Pre Learning	3,5
II	Opening Activities	3
III	Core Learning Activities	3
IV	Closing Activities	3
Total Score I+II+III+IV		12,5
Average Score		3,13

From the results of the implementation of learning data in the learning process of personal letter writing skills using a contextual approach with an average score in the second cycle of 3.13 is categorized as good.

The results of personal letter writing skills using a contextual approach are adopted based on data collection tools in the form of personal letter writing skills and are calculated based on the rubric in the average form of cycle II. From the observation of personal letter writing skills using a contextual approach in the fourth grade totaling 11 people in cycle II obtained an average score of 73.82.

Cycle III Research Results

The third cycle was held on Monday, November 27, 2017, for 105 minutes, namely the 1st and 3rd hours at 07.30 - 10.30 WIB. The teacher phase describes examples of the most memorable experiences for students using a contextual approach. Students are also taught to use words that are simple and easy to understand and use Indonesian language that is good and right.

Table V
The Teacher's Ability to Design Cycle III Learning

No.	Aspects Observed	Score
A.	Formulation of Learning Objectives	3
B.	Selection and Organization of Teaching Materials	3
C.	Selection of Learning Resources / Learning Media	4
D.	Scenario / Learning Activities	3
E.	Learning Outcomes Assessment	3
Total Score A + B + C + D + E =		19
Average Score IPKG I = $\frac{\text{Total Score}}{5}$		3,2

From the data of the teacher's ability to design learning, learn personal letter writing skills that affect the implementation of learning by using a contextual approach with an average score in the third cycle of 3.2 and categorized as Good.

From observations on the ability of teachers to carry out learning, observers are carried out directly by peers using data collection tools in the form of IPKG 2 which has been adopted from the guide to the implementation of the field experience learning program (PPL) of FKIP UNTAN students.

Table VI
Teacher's Ability to Implement Cycle III Learning

No	Aspects Observed	Score
I	Pre Learning	4
II	Opening Activities	3,5
III	Core Learning Activities	3.13
IV	Closing Activities	3
Average Score IV		3
Total Score I+II+III+IV		13,63
Average Score		3,41

From the results of the implementation of the study of personal letter writing skills using a contextual approach with an average score in the third cycle of 3.41 and categorized as Enough.

The results of personal letter writing skills using a contextual approach are adopted based on data collection tools in the form of personal letter writing skills. From the observation of personal letter writing skills using a contextual approach in class IV totaling 11 people in cycle III obtained an average score of 74.73

B. Discussion

After doing three research cycles on learning personal writing skills using Contextual learning classes in grade IV, Aris 04 State Elementary School increased from cycle I, II, III, thus the ability of the teacher to carry out learning increases from each cycle so that it is categorized as good. But the teacher's ability is expected to provide students with a value in writing letters, both regarding neat writing letters and language skills. Used in writing letters (Sabri, T; 2017).

Based on table 12 the results of the cycle I, II and III recapitulation of the learning method increased by 0.38 with an initial 2.62 enough categories. In cycle II it becomes good actuarial, while the assessment of learning outcomes increases by 0.33 with an initial 2.67 to 3 in cycle II categorized as good.

The ability of teachers to carry out learning using the contextual approach in class IV Aris 04 State Elementary School in Capkala subdistrict has increased from each cycle so that it is categorized as good.

Based on the data recapitulation table of student learning outcomes above, From each cycle I, cycle II and cycle III experience an improvement from the ability to understand personal letters, the ability of students to link letters to the real world for peers, students can develop a framework of personal letters to friends peer, and each group is skilled in writing personal letters according to the letter framework and components of personal letters.

Conclusions

Based on the results of the research that has been done and the discussion that has been described there is an increase in student learning outcomes in letter writing skills using a contextual approach in class IV State Aris 04 State Elementary School, (1) The ability of teachers to design learning and implement learning with a contextual approach.

Suggestions

Based on the results of the research and conclusions in this study can be suggested as follows: (1) by using a contextual approach can improve students' skills in writing personal letters in class IV Aris 04 State Elementary School, an alternative to improve personal letter writing skills; (2) besides that contextual approach is not only to improve writing skills, but also to improve listening, speaking and reading skills in learning Indonesian so that optimal learning outcomes for students in primary schools' (3) to achieve the right goals in skills improvement writing student's letter, required learning planning skills in the form of RPP, as

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well as in the implementation of learning towards the achievement of optimal learning outcomes for elementary school students.

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