



Efforts of Early Childhood Education Teachers in Improving Writing Skills for Children Aged 3–4 Years at KB Mutiara Hathe Ngargoyoso

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Abstract. The research results at KB Mutiara Hati Ngargoyoso show that the writing skills of children aged 3–4 years have developed and increased according to the students' abilities. However, several factors still influence children's writing skills, both supporting and inhibiting factors. This type of research used was qualitative research. The subjects studied were PAUD teachers and students. Data collection techniques used were interviews and observation. Then the data were analyzed through correlation analysis. Data analysis in the study was inductive. The results of this research indicate that the efforts of early childhood education teachers in improving the beginning writing skills of children aged 3–4 years at KB Mutiara Hati Ngargoyoso are to stimulate writing through the stages of tapping numbers and alphabets (a, b, and 1, 2), singing the alphabet, tearing, squeezing, arranging things, stamping letters/patterns, thickening/shaping, cutting, sticking. At this stage, the children at KB Mutiara Hati have started to show interest in writing implements and have signs of using them to make scribbles of various shapes (zigzag, curved lines, tilted right/left, vertical, horizontal, and others). There are two factors consisting of supporting and inhibiting factors.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education Teacher · Beginning Writing Skills

1 Introduction

Early childhood is a child who experiences fundamental development. In this case, the current wave of development experienced by the child significantly influences the development that will come after it. Like a building, a solid foundation must be made with quality materials and reliable builders to create a solid and quality building. In order to produce a good and quality generation, there are varied and fun education, activities, and stimulation that can help children pass their developmental tasks and become learning that matches children's needs [1].

Early childhood is a golden age. This period of growth is relatively stable and has progress for children, both physical and non-physical growth outside the womb. The golden age is the age of 0–6 years. This period is marked by the rapid progress of physical, motor, intellectual, emotional, linguistic, and social development, which only occurs once every change in human life (Suyadi, 2013). Education for early childhood is

essential because, with education in the age range of 0–6 years, children can develop all aspects of development that exist in themselves according to the stage of development [2].

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a type of educational practice that emphasizes critical thinking in the context of physical growth and development (fine and gross motor coordination), intelligence (thinking power, creativity, emotional intelligence, and spiritual intelligence), social-emotional (attitude, behavior, and spirituality), language, and communication, following the principles and stages of development that children go through (Dana, 2009). Aspects of early childhood development consist of cognitive, motoric, social, linguistic, moral, and skills development aspects that can be developed in early childhood. One crucial factor in the development of children today is motor development, excellent motor skills that children must have. Fine motor skills help preschoolers carry out activities using fine muscles, such as writing and drawing [2].

Several indicators may be found in fine motor development, including folding, drawing, writing, holding, and others. Among these indicators, writing is one of the indicators that is a problem in family planning. Writing is a productive activity that can add insight. The writer must ensure that the grammar and punctuation in writing are good. These writing skills do not just come but must go through thorough training and practice [2].

Writing is an activity that can be done by anyone who has the desire to write. However, this skill requires perfect, regular, and thorough practice and exercise in writing properly and correctly.

Writing is essential because it involves language skills through writing, making it very important. Writing skills are not acquired instantly, so there must be training and guidance to develop writing skills properly. Writing activities are often carried out as part of daily activities to convey messages or information. Writing activities should be taught from an early age so that children can have these skills. One must practice and start early to have good writing skills [3].

According to KBBI (1997), writing is the process of making objects with pen and ink, such as numbers and other objects, using (pencils, paint, and others). Writing skill is seen as an ability in motor activity in using writing tools and producing writing. According to Montessori (in Susanto, 2011, p. 164), writing skills are described as tools used in motor activities when using writing tools and producing writing, as well as honing fine motor skills that require harmony between hands and eyes. Writing skill is essential because they cannot be possessed instantly. There must be writing practice and guidance so that writing skills develop [3].

In this case, the development of children's writing can be seen after they can write the actual letters. Usually, the first type of letter that often appears in childhood is doodling (scribble). Usually, several children in the age range of 4 years can write their names and/or copy the writing of adults. This indicates achievement in developing children's ability to write, providing writing tools to children as a form of support in developing writing skills. Children can use stationery such as pencils, pens, paper, colored pencils, books, and many others. With this encouragement, children's self-confidence in their writing abilities can further develop [4].

In addition, it is imperative to develop children's writing because the skills must be mastered early on. After all, the ability from an early age is needed so that children

will not experience significant complications when learning in the future. According to Tarigan, writing is making graffiti that describes a language to make it easier for someone to interpret the meaning conveyed so that someone can read the graffiti or symbols depicted [5].

According to Markam, writing is a language expression channeled through symbols. Writing is an activity that functions several body parts, including hands, arms, fingers, and eyes. In addition, writing has a link between language development and continuous speaking. For understanding the language itself, it has been prepared early on, which means expressing all expressions through the writing made [6].

Early childhood language development has an effect on writing beginnings which refers to how a child masters the technique of holding a pencil to make various scribbles of tangled threads. However, over time the child will experience developments in terms of concentration with his fingers while learning to write. Then, the next stage can develop the child's ability to be as expected. Therefore, his/her ability can be developed through beginning writing, taught in kindergarten. In Permendikbud Number 137 of 2014, Article 1 number 10 states that early childhood education is a coaching education effort taught by children from birth to the age of 6, which is done through rules regarding education to help physical and spiritual growth and development so that children have readiness for the next level of education. With some of the meanings previously defined, the ability to write at the beginning of early childhood is to write to make letter symbols that children already know randomly to express everything through a scribble which over time can develop adequately [6].

The ancients believed that children could write if they could read. However, this assumption is not justified because children start practicing writing before learning to read. Gibson defines that children aged 12–14 months can make a doodle. In this case, if the child in question is given paper and other writing tools, he/she can make scribbles using the tools used. At 18 months, children develop their imaginations by making abstract scribbles according to their wishes, such as scribbling on the house's wall. This activity will continue so that it becomes more apparent how different children's drawing and writing abilities are. If observed and compared, children begin to be able to write their names at the age of 30 months (2.5 years) [7]. From the previous opinion, writing is gathering information or collecting data in text documents, graphics, or other meaningful, tangible objects. Writing activities require creativity and logical systematization so readers can understand them.

Writing is an important skill to be taught, although it is not an aspect that must be emphasized at preschool age, so it does not mean this skill cannot be taught to children aged 3 to 4 years. The most crucial point is that the portion given is not inferior to their pre-academic abilities. Another critical point is that children must be happy and not upset or forced during learning to write [8]. Thus, it can be concluded that educating children in writing means educating them in language with good grammar and structure. Educating children to write is more than just teaching them to make certain written works or compositions; inviting children to collect vocabulary, including practicing identifying and using the vocabulary they have learned from things around them.

Before children can write correctly, the foundation of their writing skills must be built and developed first because writing skills are not always the same and are not used

consistently, and are not directly mastered by children. However, there are several steps that children will go through to ensure that their writing skills are used optimally and effectively without having to skip one or several steps related to writing skills. Several ways can be used to develop children's writing skills: developing abilities, strengthening smooth muscles, and providing various activities to encourage or stimulate their writing skills [9]. Beginning writing has a vital role and is related to fine motor development in making symbols in the early stages of beginning writing learning. The first thing taught to children is to hold a pencil and make oblique, straight, curved, broken lines, and angle lines [10]. In learning to write, children need to have two skills: the ability to write straight lines and the ability to use writing instruments. Writing also has many benefits for children, such as teaching children how to argue wisely and being a stress medium, alleviating children's anxiety, increasing knowledge, broadening horizons, and providing for the future [11].

In teaching and learning at school, every teacher makes special efforts to ensure that every child can achieve satisfactory learning outcomes. However, sometimes some children show that their learning results are not as expected. Some children who are currently unable to learn well have usually been given maximum special attention by the teacher. Teachers often encounter students who cannot participate in learning effectively during the learning process. On the other hand, teachers often face students who have learning difficulties [12]. Thus, the researchers researched "Efforts of Early Childhood Education Teachers in Improving the Writing Skills of Children Aged 3–4 Years at KB Mutiara Hati Ngarogoyoso".

2 Method

The type of research used was field research, a study in which the method of collecting data is carried out systematically by making observations of a phenomenon in a scientific situation in the field [13]. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach, namely the approach used to describe an event or event both individually and in groups [14], in order to obtain information on KB Mutiara Hati as needed.

The approach used in this study was phenomenological. The phenomenological approach attempts to explain something that happened following the existing conditions and reality [15]. The data source used in this study was the subject of the data obtained at KB Mutiara Hati Ngarogoyoso with PAUD teachers as respondents, and the supporting data sources used secondary data sources taken from the thesis and the journal concerned. In this study, the research subject was the Early Childhood Education teacher at Mutiara Hati Ngarogoyoso KB, especially in improving students' fine motor skills.

The data was analyzed continuously after finding what is important to learn to decide what should be told to informants. Then the data was analyzed using the techniques stated by Miles and Huberman [16]: data reduction, data presentation, and making conclusions or verification. Data reduction is summarizing, selecting, and sorting out the main things and focusing on the essential things to look for themes and patterns. Thus, reduced data can provide a clear picture and make it easier for researchers to collect further data and look for it when needed [17].

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The research results on the Efforts of Early Childhood Education Teachers in Improving the Writing Skills of Children Aged 3–4 Years at KB Mutiara Hati Ngargoyoso show that the teacher stimulates writing through the following stages: tap the numbers and letters (a, b and 1, 2), sing the letters, tear, crumple, arrange, stamp letters/patterns, thicken/shape, cut, and stick. At this stage, the children at KB Mutiara Hati have started to show interest in writing implements and have signs of using them to make scribbles of various shapes (zigzag, curved lines, tilted right/left, vertical, horizontal, and others).

Children at KB Mutiara Hati are starting to imitate horizontal writing (straight from left to right).

It follows the Standards for Developmental Achievement Levels for Children aged 3–4 years to develop their fine motoric abilities. Stimulation of writing for children aged 3–4 years is presented in Table 1.

Factors influencing the initial writing skill of children aged 3–4 years at KB Mutiara Hati Ngargoyoso are as follows. Supporting factors include a) the development of fine motor skills, b) students are accustomed to learning to make scribbles, vertical lines, straight lines, curved lines, oblique lines, and others. So that the habituation of children's writing skills will increase, c) mastery of concepts and the application of writing techniques such as holding a pencil. Inhibiting factors include a) some children still cannot distinguish letters such as letters between b and d, p and q, b) the child's lack of concentration, and c) the child suffers from dysgraphia (disorder or difficulty in writing skills).

It is the same as what was conveyed by [18], who identifies that several factors influence children's writing skills, as follows.

- a. Letter recognition ability (visual attention/recognition).
- b. Fine motor skills in the flexibility of the fingers in mastering pencil-holding techniques

Table 1. Writing Stimulation

Writing	Simulation	Enchosi
3–4 years old	applause and alphabets (a, b and 1,2)	phenomenal awareness
	alphabetical singing	symbol recognition (shape and name)
	tear	fine motor skills
	squeeze	fine motor skills
	arrange	fine motor skills
	stamp letters/patterns	fine motor skills/ patterns
	thicken/shape	fine motor skills/ patterns
	cut and stick	fine motor skills, getting to know shapes and ideas

- c. The ability to align hand movements with the sense of sight (visual motor sensors)
- d. The ability to trace and remember letters seen and heard (visual, auditory memory)
- e. The ability to concentrate, sit, and hold writing implements in a comfortable position (visual-spatial).

Two factors influence writing skills: external and internal factors. External factors include facilities that still need to be improved in the form of limited facilities and infrastructure. Internal factors include two factors, namely psychological and technical factors [19].

Psychological factors are factors of habits or experiences that children have. The more often children practice writing, the better the development of their writing skills. Technical factors include the application of techniques and mastery of writing concepts. This concept is related to children's limited mastery of theory, which also influences the development of children's writing.

Writing skill is related to reading skill. So, everyone with the drive and ability to write is advised to make reading a habit. Factors affecting writing skills are closely related to language and literacy, which distinguish almost the same letterforms.

4 Discussion

Based on the results of research on the teacher's efforts to improve the beginning writing skills of children aged 3–4 years at KB Mutiara Hati Ngargoyoso, there has been an increase, both in the mastery of writing techniques and concentration. Writing is a medium used to communicate and convey information to others, as His word in QS. Al-Alaq: 1–5 [20]. In addition, writing is an activity that involves changing letters into words or phrases that can be communicated to others so that they can understand and accept them well and that positive communication interactions occur between readers and writers.

This proves that the beginning writing skill of children aged 3–4 years at KB Mutiara Hati Ngargoyoso also follows the standard of developmental achievement for children aged 3–4 years to develop fine motoric abilities, as shown in Table 2.

Regarding the principles of writing development, Hajani argues that principles that can be applied to beginning writing skills in early childhood include the following [11].

- a. Use of signs or symbols. The teacher provides opportunities and stimulates children's fine motor skills, especially the flexibility of the hands and fingers.
- b. Repetition. The teacher gives writing exercises repeatedly, consistently, and continuously.
- c. Flexibility. The teacher introduces symbols, letters, and words to the child so that it is easy for the child to recognize them in everyday life.
- d. Disclosure. The teacher is allowed to talk about the experience of writing that has been made to express feelings.
- e. Imitate. The teacher gives examples of writing letters, symbols, and words repeatedly.

Table 2. The Standard of Level of Achievement of Child Development

Scope of Development	Child Development Achievement Level	Activity
fine motor skills	Cross out with various shapes (zigzagging, curved line, slanting right or left, vertical, horizontal, etc)	
	<i>arrange beads that are not too small with floss that are not too rigid</i>	
	<i>making a paper-cutting gesture</i>	
	<i>thickening or typing</i>	

- f. Strengthening. The teacher gives rewards in appreciation and praise for students' writing results as reinforcement so that children feel that their work has been appreciated. In addition, parents also have a role in paying particular attention to practicing the abilities that children have learned to be practiced again at home.

As stated, the role of parents and teachers, or adult support, is very much needed in learning to write at the beginning. This research concludes that writing learning for early childhood includes introducing letters and positioning letters. Usually, children aged 3 to 4 years still study at PAUD. Learning activities are based on "learning while playing" or "playing while learning." This basis is often used in discussions about teaching early childhood nowadays [21].

5 Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that: 1) the efforts made by PAUD teachers in improving the early reading skills of children aged 3–4 years at KB Mutiara Hati Ngargoyoso are by stimulating writing; 2) supporting factors include the development of fine motor skills, students are accustomed to learning to make scribbles, vertical lines, straight lines, curved lines, oblique lines, and others. This habit increases children's writing skills, mastery of concepts, and applying writing techniques such as pencil holding. Inhibiting factors include 1) some children still cannot distinguish between letters such as letters *b* and *d*, *p* and *q*, 2) lack of concentration in children, and 3) children suffering from dysgraphia (interference or difficulty in writing skills). Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that the beginning writing skill of children aged 3–4 years at KB Mutiara Hati Ngargoyoso has increased.

Author's Contribution. Warni conducted data analysis and wrote the article to improve the beginning writing skills of children aged 2–3 years. Choiriyah Widyasari supervised and reviewed the article.

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