

## IMPROVING SHORT STORY WRITING SKILLS USING POP UP MEDIA IN GRADE IV STUDENTS OF STATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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**Abstract****ABSTRACT**

This study aims to improve the learning process and short story writing skills using pop-up media for fourth-grade students of SD Negeri 1 Bungi, Baubau City. This type of research is classroom action research with a collaborative form. The design in this study uses the Kemmis and Mc Taggart model which consists of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages. The subjects of this study were 20 fourth-grade students of SD Negeri 1 Bungi, Baubau City. The object of this study was short story writing skills. Data collection methods in this study used test, observation, and documentation methods. Data analysis techniques used were quantitative and qualitative techniques, namely by finding the average value of students' short stories. The results of the study showed that pop-up media can improve short story writing skills for fourth-grade students of SD Negeri 1 Bungi, Baubau City. The process of improving learning to write short stories using pop-up media is: 1) students learn the material of short story elements, 2) students learn linguistic material, 3) students learn how to compose a short story framework based on pop-up media, and 4) students write short stories using pop-up media. The increase in short story writing skills in cycle I was 19.7 from a pre-cycle average of 59.9 to 79.6. Meanwhile, the increase in short story writing skills in cycle II was 25.85 from a pre-cycle average of 59.9 to 85.75.

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## INTRODUCTION

Writing skills play a crucial role in education because they are inseparable from classroom learning. Writing is not merely about putting words into writing, but also reflects students' logical, critical, and creative thinking skills. Through writing, students are trained to organize ideas coherently, connect them, and convey them in language that readers can easily understand. Writing skills are often cited as a hallmark of an educated person or a cultured nation. However, limited access to education is considered to have a significant impact on the development of elementary school students' writing skills, one of which is the low ability to write short stories (Fitria, 2019). This indicates that many students still struggle to develop ideas and express them in coherent writing. This situation certainly poses a significant challenge in elementary education, as writing skills are essential for facing higher levels of education and for communicating effectively in society.

Writing is essentially a form of thinking directed at a specific audience (readers) for a specific purpose, situation, or reason. In other words, writing is a structured means of communication, connecting the writer and reader through written language symbols. In the process, a writer is required to master writing principles that can help them achieve their goals. These principles include invention, organization/composition, and style. Invention relates to the ability to explore the main ideas, themes, or messages that the writer wishes to convey. Organization emphasizes the skill of arranging these ideas in a logical sequence for easy comprehension by the reader, while style is the writer's unique way

of conveying a message that reflects their personality and creativity. These three principles are inseparable because they complement each other to produce a complete and meaningful piece of writing. By understanding these principles from an early age, elementary school students will be more focused in learning to write and will be able to develop the critical and systematic thinking skills they will need in the future.

Beyond being a means of thinking, writing is also an activity of conveying ideas, thoughts, and feelings in written form so that others can understand them (Guswita et al., 2022). Therefore, a writer needs to know what to write, its purpose, who the reader is, and how to write it. Understanding this context is crucial because each type of writing has different characteristics and purposes. One form of writing familiar to elementary school students is narrative. Narratives allow students to express their experiences, imaginations, and creative ideas in story form. One popular narrative form is the short story, which is structured to convey a single, dominant impression about a particular character or event (Chandra et al., 2024). As a literary work, short stories require strong cohesion to ensure the story line is uninterrupted and the message is fully understood by the reader. In other words, writing short stories teaches students not only language skills but also critical, imaginative, and communicative thinking skills. This aligns with the view that writing is a language skill used to communicate indirectly, not face-to-face, with others (Sirait et al., 2024).

To achieve optimal learning outcomes, particularly in improving writing skills, a learning approach that emphasizes active and creative learning activities is necessary. Teachers not only act as transmitters of information but also as facilitators, helping students explore ideas, organize their writing, and develop their writing styles. Proper planning of writing lessons will significantly determine students' success in mastering this skill. Teachers need to establish clear learning objectives, select appropriate methods, and design strategies that enable students to engage directly in the writing process. These strategies must facilitate students' repeated writing practice, receive feedback, and revise to improve the quality of their writing. Therefore, teachers are required to have a deep understanding of writing learning approaches, how to identify student difficulties, and strategies to overcome them. Therefore, writing learning in elementary schools focuses not only on the final result but also on the creative process students experience in developing writing skills.

In addition to learning approaches and strategies, successful mastery of writing skills is also significantly influenced by the use of learning media. Dynamic teaching requires media that are engaging, innovative, and tailored to students' needs. Learning media has proven effective in attracting interest in learning because it provides additional stimuli that enrich students' experiences (Tantri, 2020). Through media, students not only use their senses of sight or hearing but can also engage multiple senses simultaneously to understand the material. For example, using images, story cards, animated videos, or digital apps can help students find inspiration in writing short stories. Engaging multiple senses deepens students' understanding and optimizes learning outcomes. This demonstrates that writing skills cannot be developed solely through conventional practice but require the support of creative learning approaches and a variety of media. Therefore, teachers are required to continuously innovate so that writing lessons are not only informative but also inspiring and enjoyable for elementary school students.

## METHOD

The type of research used in this study is classroom action research (CAR). According to Setiani et al. (2023), classroom action research can be understood as a systematic process carried out by teachers or researchers to examine learning problems in the classroom through self-reflection, with the goal of finding solutions to these problems. CAR is conducted in a real-life context so that researchers can directly observe the dynamics that occur and assess the effectiveness of the actions taken. This activity is not only experimental but also reflective because each action taken is based on a critical analysis of the problems faced by students in the learning process. Thus, CAR is not only aimed at improving learning practices but also at enhancing the professionalism of teachers as reflective practitioners capable of assessing, developing, and refining learning strategies based on empirical experience. Kemmis and Mc. Taggart, through Suharsimi Arikunto in Abdullah & Sitti (2021), emphasize that CAR consists of several repeated and continuous cycles, where each cycle includes three main components: (1) planning, (2) implementation of actions and observations, and (3) reflection. These cycles are carried out continuously until learning problems are optimally resolved.

In the implementation of Classroom Action Research (CAR), data collection techniques are a crucial element in ensuring the quality of research results. Data in this classroom action research were obtained through field notes in the form of observations of student activities and tests administered to measure skill achievement. The research instrument used served as a data collection aid, enabling researchers to obtain more accurate, comprehensive, and systematic information in accordance with the research objectives. As emphasized by Hanifia Sugira & Amelia (2022), a well-designed instrument will simplify the data collection process, increase the reliability of the results, and facilitate further analysis. In this study, the data analysis technique used a percentage formula combined with an assessment of students' short story writing skills. With this approach, researchers were able to obtain a quantitative picture of student skill improvement and assess the effectiveness of the learning activities provided in each CAR cycle. This analysis is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of short story writing learning strategies that are more effective, applicable, and tailored to the needs of elementary school students.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results:

The results of the pre-cycle assessment showed that the short story writing skills of fourth-grade students at SD Negeri 1 Bungi, Baubau City, were still low. The average score on the short story writing test was only 59.9, which was below the school's minimum passing grade. Of the 20 students, only 6 (30%) achieved a passing grade, while 14 (70%) students scored below the average and were therefore deemed to have failed. This condition indicated that most students still experienced difficulties in writing short stories, both in terms of idea development, story structure, and language use. This finding also aligned with the results of the pre-cycle observation which indicated low student participation and motivation in participating in writing lessons. Based on these findings, the researcher developed a learning improvement plan by implementing an intervention through the use of pop-up media. The purpose of this intervention was to motivate students, make it easier for them to express their ideas, and improve their short story writing skills so that they could meet the applicable minimum passing grade. As a result, after the intervention, the average score for students' short story writing increased significantly to meet the school's passing grade. Furthermore, the number of students achieving a passing grade increased to 75% of the total participants, indicating positive developments in short story writing skills.

During Cycle I, observations of student and teacher activity showed improvement compared to the pre-cycle phase, although they remained in the adequate category. The percentage of student activity was recorded at 70% (adequate), while the percentage of teacher activity observations was 77% (adequate). This indicates that students are beginning to demonstrate greater engagement in the learning process, although not yet fully optimal. Along with the increase in learning activity, the results of the short story writing skills test also improved. The average short story writing score in Cycle I increased to 79.6, a 19.7 point increase from the pre-cycle score (59.9). This improvement demonstrates that the use of pop-up media is effective in helping students develop story ideas, structure plots, and enhance the appeal of their writing. Therefore, it can be concluded that in Cycle I, the intervention provided had a positive impact on both the learning process and outcomes, although several aspects still need improvement to maximize students' writing skills.

Further improvements were made in Cycle II to enhance student engagement and the quality of learning that had taken place in Cycle I. Observations showed an increase in student activity to 77% (Sufficient) and teacher activity to 92% (Excellent). This indicates that the learning strategies implemented are increasingly effective, teachers are able to manage learning effectively, and students are more actively participating. The results of the short story writing test in Cycle II showed higher achievement compared to Cycle I. The average score for short story writing skills reached 85.75, an increase of 6.15 points from Cycle I. Based on the distribution of scores, 19 students (95%) achieved the excellent category, while 1 student (5%) was in the good category. This achievement demonstrates that almost all students were able to master short story writing skills very well after the learning intervention using pop-up media and confirms the effectiveness of the intervention in improving student writing quality.

Reviewing the overall development of teacher and student activities, consistent improvement was observed from the pre-cycle to Cycle II. In the pre-cycle, student activity was only 50% (Poor) and teacher activity was 60% (Poor). After the intervention in Cycle I, student activity increased to 70% (Fairly Good), while teacher activity rose to 77% (Fairly Good). This improvement continued in Cycle II, with student activity reaching 80% (Good) and teacher activity reaching 92% (Very Good). This demonstrates that the learning strategy successfully improved the quality of learning interactions, student motivation, and the effectiveness of the teacher's role as a facilitator. Thus, not only did short story writing skills improve, but the overall quality of the classroom learning process also improved, becoming more interactive, and more focused.

Overall, the results of this study indicate significant improvements in the short story writing skills of fourth-grade students at SD Negeri 1 Bungi, Baubau City, after learning using pop-up media. In the pre-cycle phase, most students were not yet able to write short stories effectively, and only a small number achieved completion. However, after two cycles of intervention, students' writing skills showed consistent improvement. This change is evident from the average student score, which rose from 59.9 in the pre-cycle to 79.6 in Cycle I, and finally reached 85.75 in Cycle II. In terms of score distribution, in the pre-cycle only 30% of students obtained good scores, while in Cycle II as many as 95% of students obtained excellent scores. These data indicate that learning to write short stories using pop-up media is effective in motivating students, strengthening their imagination, and helping them express their ideas in written form. Thus, it can be concluded that learning interventions through creative media not only improve writing skills but also foster students' interest, participation, and enthusiasm for learning in developing literacy skills in elementary schools.

## Discussion:

During the pre-cycle phase, the short story writing skills of fourth-grade students at SD Negeri 1 Bungi, Baubau City, were still relatively low. This low level of skill was evident in the students' lack of interest and motivation in participating in writing lessons (Utari & Rambe, 2023). Many students ignored the teacher's explanations, some were busy talking with their classmates, and some simply daydreamed without showing any involvement in the learning process. When the teacher assigned them a short story writing assignment, most students expressed reservations, lacked enthusiasm, and complained. Furthermore, students also struggled to express their ideas in written form. This situation was exacerbated by the learning process still dominated by conventional methods, where teachers failed to utilize engaging learning media and provided insufficient intensive guidance to students struggling with writing (Williams & Beam, 2019). This situation indicated the need for learning innovations that could foster interest and motivation, while simultaneously assisting students in developing their short story writing skills.

Based on the pre-cycle observations, pop-up media was chosen as an alternative to improve the learning environment. The use of pop-up media was based on the consideration that interactive and engaging visual displays can capture students' attention, spark curiosity, and help them develop story ideas more creatively (Salim et al., 2023). Through this media, it is hoped that students will no longer view writing as a burdensome task, but rather as a fun activity. In the first cycle, despite the teacher's efforts to explain the material and motivate students, the results were not optimal. Student interest and motivation remained relatively low; they continued to appear unenthusiastic and struggled to write short stories. Some students were only able to write a few sentences and were unable to complete the assignment on time. This indicates that despite the introduction of pop-up media, teacher guidance in assisting students experiencing difficulties was not optimal, resulting in learning outcomes not meeting the established success indicators.

In the second cycle, there was a significant improvement in both student motivation and skills. Students appeared more enthusiastic in participating in the learning process, actively asked questions when experiencing difficulties, and expressed their opinions in class. Student activity also showed positive changes, as they were no longer reluctant to write short stories but instead appeared enthusiastic and serious about completing the assignment. Their interest grew when observing the pop-up window, which directly helped them develop a storyline. Students' technical writing skills also improved, such as the use of capital letters, punctuation, and more coherent sentence structure. Nearly all students completed their short stories on time, and they also demonstrated confidence by reading their work aloud to the class.

Teacher activity in the learning process also improved in Cycle II. Teachers were more consistent in utilizing pop-up media, providing more intensive guidance, and promptly reprimanding students who were not focused, creating a conducive classroom atmosphere. Teachers successfully positioned themselves not only as presenters of material but also as facilitators, encouraging active student engagement. This strategy has been proven to improve the quality of the learning process and student learning outcomes. Thus, teaching short story writing through pop-up media demonstrated its effectiveness in improving student skills, both in terms of the process and the resulting written product.

Based on the research results, indicators of success were achieved when more than 75% of students scored above the minimum completion criteria ( $\geq 70$ ). This demonstrates that the use of pop-up media can significantly improve the quality of short story writing learning and students' writing skills. These findings align with Anwar (2024) dan Salim et al. (2024), who emphasized the important role of instructional media in improving the learning process and student learning outcomes. Furthermore, Andreansyah and Sari (2024) and Salsabilah et al. (2023) explained that pop-up books with three-dimensional elements and interactive visualizations can facilitate students' idea development and stimulate their imagination. Because the success indicators had been achieved in cycle II, this research was discontinued. Thus, this study confirms that the integration of innovative media such as pop-ups is very effective in improving short story writing skills in elementary school students.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the classroom action research activities that have been carried out, it can be concluded that there is an increase in short story writing skills using pop-up media in fourth grade students of SD Negeri 1 Bungi, Baubau City. The process of improving learning to write short stories using pop-up media is: (1) Students study the material on the elements of short stories; (2) Students study linguistic material; (3) Students learn how to compose a short story framework based on pop-up media; (4) Students write short stories using pop-up media. The increase in short story writing skills is indicated by the average value of students' short story writing skills in the pre-cycle of 59.9. In cycle I it increased to 79.6 so that it experienced an increase of 19.7 and in cycle II it increased to 85.75 so that it experienced an increase of 25.85.

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