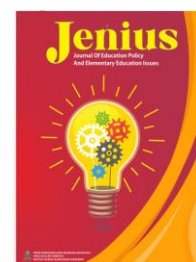




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### Teacher's Efforts in Practicing Beginning Writing Skills for Elementary Level Students Using the Drill Method

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<b>Article History</b> Received: 3 March 2022 Accepted: 20 December 2022 Published: 27 December 2022	The implementation of the drill method is a form of effort made by the teacher to train students' skills in learning initial writing skills. The low writing skills of first-grade students are a challenge for a teacher, so a learning innovation using the drill method is needed to train students in properly and correctly composing words or sentences. The purpose of this study was to determine the implementation of the drill method in learning this beginning writing skill for class 1C students at MI Al Islam, conducted from February to May 2021. This research used a qualitative descriptive type approach. The subjects of this study were class 1C teachers, and the informants of this study were class 1C students and the head of MI. Data was obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. The data validation technique uses source, technical, and theory triangulation. Meanwhile, analyse the data in this study using data collection, reduction, presentation, and conclusion. Implementing the drill method through repeated exercises can train students' initial writing skills, because it can stimulate their memory abilities.
<b>Keywords:</b> Drill Method; Learning Challenges; Learning Innovation; Writing skills	

#### INTRODUCTION

In the era of the 21st century, writing skills are essential to express ideas resulting from thought through written language (Zubaidah, 2016). Writing skill is the ability to express ideas in written language through sentences structured in a comprehensive, complete and precise manner so that these thoughts can be communicated to the reader. Almost all fields in the 21st century require good writing skills so that many parties can accept and utilise written information. Therefore, writing skills need to be empowered from an early age, one of which is through education. Educational efforts to optimise students' writing skills early on are to practice initial writing skills (Ningsih, 2019).

Beginning writing is the initial stage in mastering advanced writing skills and is a prerequisite for learning at a later stage (Christianti, 2015; Thomas et al., 2020). One of the subjects that can accommodate writing skills is Indonesian. Learning Indonesian in elementary schools consists of four aspects of skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Mulyati, 2015). Initial writing skills are learning basic Indonesian in grades 1-2 of elementary school. Beginning writing skills cannot be possessed by students quickly. However, several stages must be carried out to train grade 1 students to be fluent in composing words or sentences properly and correctly. The ability to write at the basic or beginning level is more oriented towards mechanical abilities. At this stage, students will be trained to write symbols with meaning. Apart from that, writing skills also train students to express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings in written form (Gunawan & Heryanto, 2019).

Beginning writing skills are basic skills that must be possessed by students, especially in grades 1 and 2 of elementary school, because initial writing will help students communicate in writing. (Gunawan & Heryanto, 2019). However, some elementary school students are still not skilled at properly and correctly composing words or sentences. There are still students who are not precise in making letters, or there are still writings that are difficult to read. This condition is one of the reasons they have not memorised letters properly. Therefore, teachers must use appropriate methods to train students' initial writing skills (Ningsih, 2019).

The Drill method is one of the appropriate learning methods to practice beginning writing skills. The Drill method is a method that encourages students to go through repeated exercises to form a specific skill. Through the drill method, students will have higher skills than previously learned (Nawi et al., 2019) and can improve memory (Ariyani, 2019). The Drill method is learning by providing continuous training so that students become accustomed to it, and then it will become a habit. The Drill method aims to improve students' thinking power, more organised and thorough in pushing their memory (Nurhasanah, 2020). In addition, this method can also increase speed, accuracy, and perfection in doing something (Almadiliana et al., 2021; Nurhasanah, 2020).

Based on previous research, the drill method can improve learning outcomes (Fahrurrozi et al., 2022), speaking ability (Elly et al., 2013), ability to write capital letters (Rahayu, 2021), digging information from fairy tales (Wulandari, 2020), and cursive writing skills (Utami, 2017). Research related to the effectiveness of the drill method on initial writing skills has previously been carried out (Gunawan & Heryanto, 2019).

In this study, the drill method was carried out through classroom action research which

consisted of 3 cycles, and there was an increase in students' writing skills in each cycle. The description of how to apply the drill method in the field has not yet been carried out, so it is necessary to do research related to the description of the implementation of the drill method in training students' writing skills.

## **METHOD**

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The research period starts in February 2021 until May 2021 and takes place at MI Al Islam Dibal, Ngemplak, Boyolali, for the 2021/2022 academic year. The subject of this research is the teacher of class 1C. Data collection techniques through interviews, observation and documentation. In the first stage of obtaining the data, the researcher observed how the drill method was applied in the field. Then the researcher conducted in-depth interviews regarding the application of the drill method, as well as conducted document analysis. Data analysis techniques are carried out by collecting, reducing, presenting, and drawing conclusions. The validity of the data using triangulation techniques.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Beginning writing is a basic ability that must be considered carefully, especially at the basic education level. Students who are not proficient in writing and are still spelling letters and distinguishing letters require special attention. Beginning writing skills are a provision for students to learn other basic competencies in Indonesian and other subjects (Sukirman, 2020). Beginning writing ability will also help students in mastering other subjects through writing. Therefore, it takes the role of the teacher at MI Al Islam Dibal in training students' writing skills, one of which is choosing the right learning innovation, namely the drill method.

Based on data collection through observation, interviews, and documentation, the teacher's steps in implementing the drill method in practising initial writing skills can be described as follows:

1. The teacher determines the exercise strategy in the learning process

Based on the results of the interview regarding the urgency of choosing the training strategy used by the teacher:

*"The importance of determining exercises before learning begins is that learning activities can run smoothly. Determining the type of exercise can be adjusted to basic competencies and learning materials. Writing exercises ask students to copy the teacher's writing on the blackboard or in textbooks".*

Based on research data, writing skill activities at MI Al Islam Dibal are done by copying the teacher's writing on the blackboard or in textbooks. First graders of elementary school have imitative properties. Students will imitate what the teacher writes and how the writing forms (Ningsih, 2019).

However, it will be more effective if you practice writing with the facilitation of pictures to make it easier for students to remember and understand. Learning will become more meaningful because writing activities are carried out in real contexts (Nuryamah et al., 2016). Besides that, the teacher can also use letter cards (Ningsih, 2019). Through the media of letter cards, many students can understand letters and their shapes so that students more easily assemble syllables, words and sentences (Alvita & Airlanda, 2021). This statement is in line with the opinion of Yarmi (2017), strategies that can be used to train students' writing skills are playing with language and writing, quizzes, giving or changing endings, writing imitating models, strategies for writing diaries, organising wall magazines, writing alphabets, writing activities, writing a diary/diary, writing fun toys, writing pictures, writing stories with the help of an accordion, writing posters/ billboards, and writing postal items.

## 2. The teacher trains students repeatedly

The teacher gives exercises repeatedly so students can become skilled in writing more quickly. With continuous practice, students will get used to writing so that the initial writing skills of grade 1 students can develop properly.

*"The Drill method gives directions to arrange random letters into a meaningful word or sentence. These activities are guided directly, and students can imitate the words arranged in the textbook. This activity through the drill method is a strategy to introduce students to letters and train students to compose words or sentences properly and correctly".*

The teacher's statement is in line with the research Herliana et al. (2019), which shows that the drill method can improve students' initial writing skills. However, initial learning activities are not enough to copy but start with tracing, copying, completing, and making simple sentences.

Learning to write is a process. If students make mistakes in writing, it is normal. The teacher must pay attention to the types of mistakes made by students related to their writing skills. This activity is important because the brain abilities of each student are different, so innovation is needed from the drill method, which is not just copying on the blackboard. However, the teacher can make pictures that match the words to be written to students

(Utami, 2017).

3. The teacher gives targets to students

Based on the results of the interview with the teacher it was related to the target of the drill method activities being carried out:

*"The target for grade 1 students is that students can write words or sentences properly and correctly. Therefore, to achieve this target, students must continue practising writing with the teacher's guidance or by studying independently".*

From what the teacher has done by applying the drill method, there is no provision for the number of exercises or repetition of words on the blackboard/book. This result is not following the opinion Astuti (2018) states that the drill method needs to be repeated, and day by day the amount of training load is increasing to have higher dexterity and skills.

4. The teacher determines the time allocation

The time used by the teacher to train students to repeatedly write words according to what is on the blackboard and books is around 30-60 minutes. This result follows the results of interviews with class teachers:

*"It is important to determine the allocation so that the writing practice is not too long and short. If it is too long, students will feel bored and reluctant to practice writing again. Of course, this will hinder the development of students in learning to write. However, if it is too short, it is feared that students' practice in writing will not be optimal. Students take longer to master the initial writing skills material, and student development becomes late. The allocation for writing practice is around 30 to 60 minutes a day".*

Based on research Fauziah (2018), factors that hinder the teacher's efforts to develop students' writing skills using the drill method are the less conducive learning environment and the limitations of textbooks. So, if students are only asked to rewrite for a long time, it will cause the learning atmosphere to become boring. Repetitive exercises without motivation/ice breaking will cause students to become bored (Rahmawati, 2018).

5. The teacher conducts discussions with students

The teacher and students carry out important discussion activities. When the teacher holds discussions with students, the teacher will know how far each student has progressed in writing activities. The teacher will know what students understand and do not understand. The teacher can conclude something that students like and dislike during the teaching and learning activities. In this way, the teacher can take action to improve the way of teaching that students like with the hope that students can be more active in the classroom.

*"I provide opportunities for students to interact with each other. Thus, students who do not understand the material know because they see their peers can complete the assignments given".*

Discussion activities will reduce the awkwardness of students because they are embarrassed to ask the teacher. Discussions with peers will help and motivate students to be more skilled. However, the discussion method also has drawbacks. Teachers who are careless in supervising the learning process will make students not focus on learning, interested in telling other things outside of learning objectives, and not all students dare to express their opinions (Suhandi et al., 2013).

#### 6. The teacher evaluates

The teacher does the evaluation by doing writing exercises and copying all the writing that the teacher has demonstrated on the blackboard. After students complete the writing, the teacher can conduct an assessment directly or at that time. Thus students will know the extent of their ability to write.

*"I provide opportunities for students to learn independently by giving homework to students. From the homework, the teacher will find out whether students can be responsible for completing their assignments. At the same time, at home, someone accompanies learning or helps complete student assignments at home. With the provision of homework, students will get used to writing and be more trained in writing, so that students' initial writing skills will improve more easily".*

According to Khoirunisa et al. (2021), it would be better before learning to be given the word/sentence recognition and good language according to EYD (Indonesian enhanced spelling). The training period is carried out with a short duration and interspersed with joyful learning so that students do not feel bored. As for the steps for the drill method activities: (1) The teacher gives an explanation to students regarding the learning objectives that students must achieve; (2) The teacher gives examples to students; (3) The teacher intersperses by turning around and giving questions to students if no one dares to ask to stimulate students to ask questions; (4) The teacher allows students to ask questions if something is not understood; (5) The teacher gives questions to train students; (6) Teachers provide opportunities for students independently; (7) The teacher guides students in working on their practice questions; (8) The teacher checks student work then gives corrections and re-explanations in the wrong parts; (9) the teacher provides consistent and directed rehearsals (Duhaniar, 2020).

Based on the data obtained, it shows that in learning, they carry out training activities repeatedly and continuously, intending to master memory abilities or particular skills so that

learning objectives related to students' writing skills will be achieved. From the drill method that has been implemented, there are several advantages.

The advantages of the drill method, according to Afrianti (2017), the drill method can improve; (1) motor skills, such as writing, pronouncing letters, words or sentences, making tools, using tools (machines, games, athletics), and being skilled at using sports equipment; (2) mental skills, such as signs and symbols; (3) skills in the form of associations made, such as the relationship of using symbols, and reading maps; (4) habits that are formed because they are often done and increase the accuracy and speed of implementation; (5) the use of habits that do not require concentration in its implementation; (6) the formation of habits makes complex movements more automatic. According to Nurhasanah, (2020), The advantages of this method will instil student study habits, so students are used to studying regularly and with discipline. Through the drill method, students acquire skills according to what they learn, and students will be more confident because they already have special skills that will be useful in the future (Partini, 2019).

Besides having advantages, this method also has some disadvantages. The Drill method is considered to hinder the development of students' initiative abilities. As a result, students cannot develop because they are always directed to carry out learning activities according to the teacher's lesson plan (Afrianti, 2017; Natalita et al., 2019; Nurhasanah, 2020). This condition is in line with Duhaniar's research (2020) regarding the drawbacks of the drill method, including namely; (1) Can hinder the development of students' initiative; (2) Forming automatic and rigid habits; and (3) Can lead to verbalism, especially in rote teaching where students are trained to be able to master the subject matter by rote and will automatically answer questions according to their memorisation without going through a logical thought process; (4) Each cycle in this method is very influential on the development of student's abilities. So students who often miss several meetings will slow their progress (Duhaniar, 2020). In addition, learning things that are done repeatedly will make activities boring. Such as obstacles found in Rahmawati's research (2018) concerning the obstacles with the drill method in learning mathematics, students feel bored when given exercises repeatedly (Rahmawati, 2018).

The Drill method is suitable for material that aims to equip students with knowledge and skills, such as the pronunciation of letters, numbers and languages. This is in line with what Khoirunisa et al. (2021) said: the language Drill and Practice method and increasing vocabulary (number of vocabulary owned). The Drill method can also train skills in memorising formulas or numbers in mathematics (Redasi, 2021; Suardiana, 2021).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the exposure obtained from the field, the teacher's role is very influential in training students' initial writing skills. Through the drill method, it can train students repeatedly so that it helps students memorise letters to compose sentences. However, the drill method alone is not enough without the teacher's skills in managing the class well. Students who are only given training for a certain period will quickly get bored. There is a need for innovation, such as teaching materials and visual media, so that students are more interested and learning is more contextual. Limitations in the study were the lack of exploration of statements from students regarding the drill method applied and the need to measure students' initial writing skills.

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