Improving Children's Short Story Writing Skills Through the BUHAR (Diary) Programme in Grade V Elementary School

Idammatussilmi*[1], Effi Wahyuningsih[2], Luluk Ifadah[3]
[1]Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia
[2,3]Institut Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Temanggung, Indonesia
e-mail: *[1]idammatussilmi96@gmail.com, [2]effi.widoyoqq@gmail.com,
[3]bundaqotrunnada@gmail.com

Abstract. Short story is one of the literary works that is poorly understood by students. This is due to the lack of ability of students in expressing ideas and composing sentences into a paragraph. The purpose of this study was to determine the improvement of children's short story writing skills through the BUHAR programme. This research is action research that applies the Kemis & Taggart model which consists of planning, action, observation and reflection. The research data included quantitative data obtained through questionnaires and written tests whose results were analysed through SPSS. While qualitative data obtained through observation, interviews (teachers, students, guardians), journals analysed by data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that the application of the BUHAR programme helped improve children's short story writing skills. This was achieved through several indicators that appeared in each cycle. These indicators include improvements in several ways: (1) the average score on each component of writing children's short stories, namely 45 in the initial test to 60.4 (post-test 1), and 78.3 (post-test 2); (2) the assessment category from ("sufficient") to ("good"); (3) the increase in learning outcomes from 0.28 (cycle 1) and 0.61 (cycle 2); (4) the number of existing students (100%) experienced an increase in the skill of writing children's short stories; (5) Increased motivation of students as seen from their participation and positive response during the BUHAR programme.
Keywords: diary; elementary school; short story; writing skills

INTRODUCTION

Literature learning in schools can achieve three main learning abilities which include affective abilities, cognitive abilities, and psychomotor abilities (Hidayat:221–30). Literature as a subject in schools has an important role in improving students' abilities, insights, and creativity. One of the literature lessons related to the creation of literary works is short story writing.

The implementation of the 2013 curriculum changed lessons to be text-based, although it emphasised the four language skills (Mulyanto 2013:6). Indonesian language skills include listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Tarigan 2015:2). Writing is one of the language skills that is important to be applied to learners from an early age because it is the most complicated language skill (Akhadiyah 1998:2). This is because writing involves other skills, namely the ability to string words according to Indonesian language procedures which are arranged into phrases, phrases into sentences, sentences into integrated paragraphs (Mardhotillah and Surya 2020). In

addition, writing skills are often one of the entry requirements in a wide variety of activities (Rosyidah, R, and Ermanto 2013:26). So it can be said that writing skills are very important in everyday life.

Writing skills are not only learning about the theory of writing but there is a need to explore self-potential. Self-potential can be a benchmark for mastery of a topic. The topic here must know how to think, explore knowledge, and experience stored in the subconscious (Akhadiyah 1998:1). According to Tarigan (2015:3–4) Writing is a productive and expressive activity, because writers must be skilled in utilising grammar, language structure, and vocabulary. Writing is the last language skill to be mastered. Thus, many assume that writing skills are difficult to master because writing skills require the assignment of various linguistic elements and elements outside the language itself (Nurgiyantoro 2001:296). Based on some of the above opinions, it can be concluded that writing is an activity that requires thinking power and creativity which aims to express opinions, feelings, thoughts that are owned.

Short story writing is one of the writing activities that requires clear instruction direction so that short story writing can be in accordance with what is expected. However, in reality, many students have not been able to express ideas and compose sentences with a good and correct structure. In addition, there are also many students who have not been able to express the right ideas so that here can hinder students in obtaining success in learning to write. So, teachers here can maximise practice because it can help learners write stories and literary literacy values (Riza et al. 2022).

Children's short stories are able to express the characteristics of children as a form of expression conveyed in writing. Writing children's literature uses the child's point of view, which is based on the daily experiences experienced by the child (Haryanto and Masurai 2022:466). The character in this children's short story can be anyone, but it must be a child who is the main character in the story. The language style is free according to the child's point of view and the language that the child understands. Children's themes are usually about family friends or other problems that are in accordance with the child's world. The setting here includes the place and time of the incident in dealing with the problem. The plot is still very simple, namely forward flow and backward flow. The mandate in children's short stories is in accordance with the problems in the story.

Based on pre-observation and interviews with fifth grade teachers at MI Daruttutab, Botoputih, Tembarak on 1 February 2020, it turns out that there are still many obstacles faced by students and teachers regarding short story writing literature. The researcher took grade V as the subject of the study, because it already has quite a lot of language skills and can develop its imagination into writing. Indeed, literature learning is taught in grade IV but, due to the conditions at MI Daruttulab Botoputih, there are still some students who cannot read and write so the school directs them to grade V. The learning of literature is poorly understood by students, because they consider literary works difficult to understand, and also many teachers do not understand literature. Teachers think that literature has a difficult stigma so many teachers only teach the theory.

Literature learning is divided into several types, but in MI Darutthulab Botoputih, literature learning is still lacking, namely learning short story writing literature.

Learning to write short stories is dominated by teaching the introduction of intrinsic elements contained in it, for the practice of writing here is also very minimal. The creation of literature requires contemplation of time and requires a variety of time readiness in making literary works beautifully created (Ali Azizi and Wijaya Kusuma 2017:319). Therefore, if educators are lacking in providing short story writing practice, it is clear that students experience difficulties. Learners are less accustomed and also need contemplation in the process of making it.

According to Ibda, educators and basic education institutions must strengthen several aspects ranging from curriculum, systems, management, models, strategies and learning approaches with 21st century strengthening (Ibda 2018:4). Many educators do not understand this, resulting in many students still experiencing difficulties in writing short stories. The school literacy programme is one of the important things in encouraging students to increase the spirit of literacy. As in the previous research, namely applying the Sambel Tukar strategy (one learning one work) to improve children's literacy (Idammatussilmi and Wijanarko 2021:76). Research from Citra, Marta, and Fadhilaturrahmi (2023:1) using the round table learning model in helping to develop learners to write children's short stories.

In this study, the author applies the BUHAR (Daily Book) programme as a way for students to improve their short story writing skills. Learners here, are still confused in determining ideas and how to develop them, lacking language mastery. After observation by the researcher, it can be seen that the BUHAR (Daily Book) programme can train students in habits and train their writing skills.

A diary or often called a daily record (diary) is a record of events experienced daily written by a person about various problems of daily problems (Utami 2018: 960). The Liang argues that one of the most interesting forms of writing from the past to modern times is the diary, which is written personally to capture various forms of ideas, activities, events, and experiences experienced in daily life (GIE 2002:161). Diary writing has been practised for centuries as a personal growth tool to showcase one's creative abilities (Safitri, Ratna 2011:6) (Elg, M., Witell et al. 2011) (Boubertekh and Boubertekh 2022). This diary is also a means of outpouring one's heart in response to a problem.

Based on the description above, the author can conclude that diaries can be used as a learning process for writing short stories. This diary, as a tool for learners to determine ideas in making short stories based on their own or other people's stories. Learners can develop their stories and learners can also take ideas that have been written in their diaries. Thus, this BUHAR programme can improve students' skills in literacy by writing short stories. As in the research from Sriwijayanti et al. (2022:368) Writing picture stories and short stories in primary schools can improve literary literacy by providing a positive impact on students' lives. These life values are then packaged into interesting stories full of conflict so that they can become the centre of attention of readers (Sari, N., M. and Suparsa, I 2013) (Nugraha et al. 2021:2).

Based on the identification of problems in learning to write short stories, the question arises how students can improve their skills in writing children's short stories. Therefore, the author applies the BUHAR (Daily Book) programme as one of the

programmes to improve the skills of writing children's short stories in class V MI Darutthulab Botoputih.

METHODS

This research is a type of action research using a combined quantitative and qualitative approach. This action research aims to solve real problems and seek scientific answers as to why they can be solved through action. This research was conducted by the teacher as a researcher and also as a resource person. This problem is obtained from the teacher's daily observations and then the teacher solves the problem by preparing the right action.

This action research in each activity is designed by carrying out several stages, which include: planning, action, observation, and reflection. This is in line with the opinion of Kemmis and M.C Tanggart in Arikunto who suggest that action research is a spiral-shaped self-reflection cycle in carrying out a process of improving conditions in proposing new, better and effective ways to achieve optimal learning outcomes. (Arikunto 2006:97).

This action research, using two cycles, each cycle was carried out for 5 meetings. Each cycle consists of four stages which include; planning, action, observation, and reflection. Cycle I aim to determine the short story writing skills of grade V students. The results of cycle I were used as a reflection to implement cycle II. The implementation of cycle II here aims to determine the improvement of students' short story writing skills through the BUHAR programme after the improvement of the implementation of the teaching and learning process carried out in cycle I.

The types of data in this study used qualitative and quantitative data. The source of data in this study is that the researcher collects in the form of primary and secondary data. Data collection techniques in action research into two types which include observation and non-observation techniques (A Burns 1999:78–151). Observation techniques include observations, daily notes and journals, audio and video recordings, and photographs. Meanwhile, non-observation includes interviews, surveys and questionnaires, curriculum vitae, documents, and metaphor development. To obtain data more quickly in this study, researchers combined observation and non-observation techniques consisting of observation, questionnaires, interviews, journals, and writing tests. photos, audio recordings, and videos were also used to complement the observation results.

Data collection instruments use test and non-test instruments. This research instrument can take the form of questionnaires, journals, interview guidelines, observation guidelines, test questions and others. The validity of the instrument in this study is content validity, which means paying attention to the suitability of the contents of the instrument. This research first consulted the instrument with experts before using it in action. The validators in this study were two senior people who mastered the field of language and writing, namely, first, the supervisor of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tembarak sub-district, Mrs Musrinah, M.Pd.I and the head of PSBB (Centre for Language Literature and Culture) INISNU Temanggung, Mrs Effi Wahyuningsih, M.Pd. The assessors ensured that all instruments could be used. The assessors ensured that all instruments were applicable and could be used to achieve the objectives

Data analysis techniques used in this study are quantitative data analysis and quantitative data analysis. Quantitative data in this study were obtained from test and non-test assessments in cycle I or cycle II. In analysing the researchers used SPSS to make it easier to calculate the score recap, cumulative score, average and percentage. Based on this, on the increase in pre-test and post-test scores in each cycle, researchers and collaborators applied the formula proposed by Meltzer. If the result is negative zero, it means that the students' writing ability has not improved. On the other hand, a positive result shows the improvement obtained by the learners (Meltzer 2002:1259–68). In addition, the data obtained from the questionnaire results were interpreted using simple percentages. Data analysis of the writing test scores and questionnaires were also presented in graphical form.

Qualitative analysis was used to analyse the results of observations, interviews and journals. This was done based on the steps proposed by Miles and Huberman which include; data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Arikunto 2013:4). This technique suggests that activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and take place continuously until completion. This research uses data triangulation as a tool to help reduce concerns about the validity and reliability of the data.

This action research was conducted in the fifth grade of MI Daruttulab Botoputih, Tembarak, Temanggung. This research was conducted at the end of even semester in the 2020/2021 academic year. This research was carried out from February - May 2021 covering all activities from determining the problem to reporting the research results. Activities for preparing proposals to making instruments were carried out in February-March 2021. The action was carried out at the end of April-May 2021 by adjusting the educational calendar for the 2020-2021 academic year.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research results presented in this chapter include test and nontest results. Test results were obtained from students' ability to write short stories through the BUHAR (Daily Book) programme in cycle I and cycle II. Non-test results were obtained from observation, questionnaires, interviews, journals and documentation. As explained in the previous chapter, this collaborative action research was designed to prepare fifth grade students of MI Darutthulab Botoputih, Tembarak in improving their skills in writing children's short stories through the BUHAR (Daily Book) programme. This research was conducted by adapting a series of steps proposed by Kemmis and Taggart in Arikunto which includes planning, action, observation, and reflection. (Arikunto 2010:1).

Implementation of Pre Cycle Action

This pre-cycle action is an effort to find out the students' skills in writing short stories. Researchers used the students' short story writing results, which were obtained from the pre-test as an initial condition. The implementation of pre-cycle action was carried out through the planning stage, namely the teacher prepared the class before the lesson began. The implementation stage of the teacher makes apperception by asking students' readiness to take part in learning. The teacher carries out activities in

accordance with the lesson plan guidelines using conventional methods. After the core stage of the jam the teacher conducts a test of student learning outcomes. The results of the pre-test of class V MI Darutthulab Botoputih, totalling 20 students, can be seen from the table below:

Table 1.
Children's Short Story Writing Pre-Test Results

No	Category	Interval Values	Frequency	Total Value	Percentage (%)	Average
1	Sangat baik	84-100	0	0	0%	896
2	Baik	67-83	0	0	0%	20
3	Cukup	50-66	4	224	25%	= 44,8
4	Kurang	0-49	16	672	75%	
	Jumlah		20	896	100%	44,8

The data above shows that the short story writing skills of grade V students of MI Daruttulab Botoputih are still very poor. This can be seen from the average score achieved by students in the pre-cycle test of 44.8 in the category ("less"). These details are obtained from all 20 students. In the very good category with a value interval of 84-100 no learners reached so that the percentage was 0%. The good category with the interval 67-83, no learners achieved it so that the percentage was 0%, the sufficient category was obtained by 4 learners with a percentage value of 25%, then for the category less was obtained by 16 learners with a percentage value of 75%. The values above are obtained based on the scores of each aspect which include; (1) character portrayal, (2) use of plot, (3) description of setting, (4) suitability of theme, (5) use of language style, (6) use of point of view. Thus, learning outcomes tend to be unsatisfactory. Based on this reflection, the teacher designed the implementation of the BUHAR (Daily Book) programme in the next meeting. It is hoped that through this BUHAR programme, students can improve their skills in writing children's short stories.

Implementation of Cycle I Action

Cycle I became the initial action of the research by using the BUHAR (Daily Book) programme in improving children's short story writing skills. The research process in this cycle is reported through a sequence of steps namely planning, action, and observation, and ends with reflection.

Based on the results of observations and interviews, the post-cycle I questionnaire analysis showed an increase in the number of learners who made progress. The progress achieved by learners in writing short stories based on the BUHAR (Daily Book) programme, namely short story writing skills improved. In relation to knowledge about writing short stories based on diaries, the number of learners who did not know short stories decreased from 90% to 35%. In the writing aspect, 50% of learners no

longer experienced difficulties in writing short stories, especially in organising the sentences into integrated paragraphs. In this case, the number of learners who had difficulty in determining ideas decreased from 100% to 60%. Learners' perceptions of their difficulties in writing have also changed. Before the action, learners who stated that writing a good short story was difficult decreased from 95% to 50% after the action in cycle 1.

Table 2.
Average Improvement of Grade Acquisition in Cycle I

Component	Average score	
	Pre-test	*Post-tes* I
Character portrayal	2	2,5
Use of grooves	1,8	2,4
Description of the setting	1,9	2,5
Theme suitability	1,9	2,5
Use of language style	1,8	2,8
Use of point of view	1,4	1,8
Total	10,8	14,5
Test scores	45	60,4

The average score in cycle I also increased by 15.4 points compared to the pre-test. While the other components, namely character portrayal, use of plot, description of setting, use of point of view, use of language style, each increased by 0.5 points; 0.6 points; 0.6 points; 0.6 points; 1 point; 0.4 points. The data above shows that the average score in the first cycle post-test is 14.5, an increase of 3.7 points from the pre-test score of 10.8. If calculated based on the assessment formula used, the average value of the value in the post-test obtained 60.4 from the original 45. From these results, it shows that the acquisition of the average value has increased.

A paired sample t-test was applied to determine the significance level of the improvement in test scores. It is shown that the sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.000 which is smaller than 0.05. It can be concluded that learners' writing skills made statistically significant progress in this cycle. A more detailed analysis illustrates the improvement in terms of assessment categories and learners' learning gains. It can be seen that the category of using language style in short stories through the BUHAR programme increased from the average category ("less") to the category ("good"). In contrast, four other components were still in the ("fair") category, and one component of the use of point of view was still the same as in the pre-test results, which was still in the ("poor") category. Although the average score in cycle I has increased, there are 3 students who have decreased. This can be seen from the following graph.

The results of the first cycle post-test showed that the learning outcomes of students were 60.4 points, which means that there was an increase in short story writing skills from the pre-test acquisition of 44.8 points. In addition, the short story writing skills of 18 learners (90%) improved. With regard to the use of the BUHAR programme,

learners showed the ability to apply it in the form of short stories. The analysis of the BUHAR programme used in writing children's short stories (post-test 1) is that learners tend to use notes written in a diary in writing short stories.

Implementation of Cycle II Action

This cycle was structured to accommodate the recommendations resulting from the cycle I reflection stage. The reporting process in this cycle is described through the same steps as in the previous cycle consisting of planning, action and observation, and reflection

Table 3.
Improvement of Children's Short Story Writing Score

Component	Average score		
	Pre-test	*Post-tes* I	*Post-tes II*
Character portrayal	2	2,5	3,2
Use of grooves	1,8	2,4	3,1
Description of the setting	1,9	2,5	3,2
Theme suitability	1,9	2,5	3,8
Use of language style	1,8	2,8	3,1
Use of point of view	1,4	1,8	2,4
Total	10,8	14,5	18,8
Test scores	45	60,4	78,3

The table above shows that the use of short story elements has increased by 8 points; compared to the results of the pre-test and 4.3 points; with the post test I. The depiction of characters increased 1.2 points compared to the pre-test and 0.7 points; with post test I, the use of plot 1.3 points; compared to the pre-test and 0.7 points; with post test I, the description of the setting 1.2 points; compared to the pre-test and 0.7 points; with post test I, theme suitability 1.9 points; compared to pre test and 1.3 points; with post test I, the use of language style 1.4 points; compared to pre test and 0.3 points; with post test I, the use of point of view 1point; compared to pre test and 0.6 points; with post test I. The data above shows that the average score in the post-test of cycle II is 18.8, an increase of 8 points; from the pre-test of 10.6 and an increase of 4.3 points; from post test I. If calculated based on the assessment formula used, the average score in the post-test is 78.3 from the original 45 This shows that the average score has increased.

The paired sample analysis t-test shows that the sig. (2-tailed) value is 0 which is less than 0.05. This means that the post-test results of cycle II increased significantly compared to the pre-test. An increase in the score category and learner learning outcomes is another thing that was achieved in this cycle. In general, the number of learners who scored still in the ("less") category was 1 learner (5%) from 15 learners (75%), who scored in the ("sufficient") category increased from 3 learners (25%) to 8 learners (40%). An increase in learners who get a category score ("good") from 2 learners (10%) to 5 learners (25%), who can reach the category ("very good") on the average

value of the post-test cycle II increased to 6 learners (30%) from originally no learners who obtained this category score.
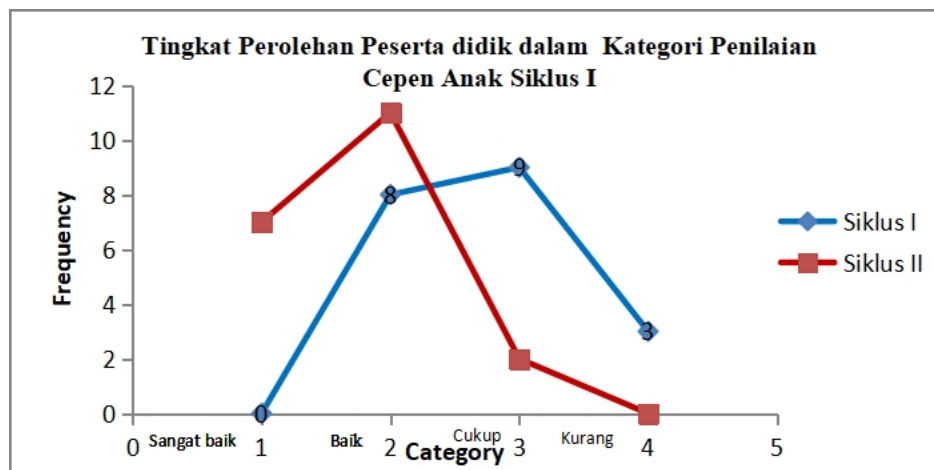

Diagram 1.
Number of Learners in the Children's Short Story Assessment Category Cycle II

Normalised learning gain analysis results (Meltzer: 2002) Based on the diagram above, it shows that the learning gain of students increased from 0.28 (cycle I) to 0.61 (cycle II). It can also be concluded that the increase in learners' writing skills in cycle II is 0.33 points. Furthermore, it can be said to be very significant when 20 learners (100%) progressed in the skill of writing children's short stories. The data presented above proves that the implementation of the BUHAR (Daily Book) Programme can improve learners' short story writing skills. This is supported by previous relevant research conducted by Satna Dewi Safitri (2011) and research Novia Dwi Tranwanti (2019). The study shows that there is a significant relationship between the application of diaries and students' short story writing skills.

CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of the BUHAR (Daily Book) programme can improve children's short story writing skills in fifth grade students of MI Darutthulab Botoputih. There is a positive change in students towards the meeting of the BUHAR program to improve children's short story writing skills. The improvement is seen from the learners' response to the skills of writing short stories through the BUHAR programme. The improvement in writing short stories through the BUHAR (Daily Book) program can be seen from the results of the post-cycle II questionnaire which shows an increase in the number of learners who have progressed in writing. The average value of writing short stories after the first cycle action was 57.1 with the category still sufficient. In cycle II, the average value of children's short story writing increased to 78.3. Learners can express their ideas based on stories experienced every day in the diary.

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