Implementation of Narrative Essay Learning Strategies for Elementary School Writing Level

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ABSTRACT
Writing narrative essays is one of the language skills that elementary school students must have. The use of interesting methods and media is used to stimulate students to develop narrative essay storylines. Several variations of learning strategies are offered so that students can develop their writing skills. This research aims to analyze learning strategies for writing narrative essays that are suitable for use in elementary schools. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. The population of this research was carried out on class IV students as a data source. Data collection techniques include document analysis, questionnaires, observations and interviews. Based on the research results, the strategies used in learning to write narrative essays are not appropriate. Students have not been able to develop sentences in narrative essays based on the series of pictures presented. Lack of practice and lack of interest in reading are the dominant reasons why students are weak in writing. The implications of this research are can provide new insights for teachers in designing and implementing writing lessons that are more effective and interesting for students. With narrative essay strategies, students can more easily develop their critical thinking skills and creativity through telling personal or imaginative experiences.

1. INTRODUCTION
Writing is one of the language skills that elementary school students must have. Through writing, ideas can be conveyed without having to meet face to face (Sugiharti & Oktaviana, 2023; Wartini, 2017) The ideas in the writing must be clear and understandable to the reader. Writing is a form of communication without face to face, so it is appropriate for writing to be declared a productive, expressive and indirect skill (Marlan & Prawiyogi, 2019; Wati & Sudigdo, 2019). A person can record all events, opinions, and act as a distributor of information in written form. Unclear writing will hinder
communication. Writing is one of the skills in the Merdeka Curriculum learning achievement element. Narrative is an essay that contains a series of events or occurrences. Narrative attempts to tell an event or event as if the reader sees or feels it directly. If the essay written is not describes a chronology or series of events, then the essay cannot be called a narrative. Among various types of writing, narrative essays have a significant role in building students’ narrative thinking skills, creativity and communication skills (Megawati, 2014; Puspitowati, 2019) Narrative text is a type of text that must be mastered in writing elements. Students are directed to be able to master narrative type essays as a writing skill. The use of spelling, vocabulary, sentences, paragraphs, language structure and meaning are components that can be developed in writing (Dasar., 2020; Hayati, 2019). Without mastery of these components, it means that the expected writing skills have not been mastered. Learning to write narrative essays in elementary schools is adjusted to the student’s ability level. The importance of writing narrative essays is accompanied by challenges from students, teachers, and the learning environment. One effort to face these challenges is to use appropriate learning strategies. The use of interesting media is one alternative that can be used, for example by using a series of images. Several previous studies have proven that there is an increase in the ability to write essays using series of image media (Dery & Putra, 2021; Syukri et al., 2021) This is what underlies the use of image media as a stimulus for students in learning to write narrative essays. Another fact is that the use of serial image media as an interesting learning strategy has not been able to maximize students’ writing abilities. This condition was experienced by fourth grade students at SDN Bendosari 2, Sanankulon District, Blitar Regency. Based on the analysis of documents written by students, it is known that students’ ability to compose sentences in writing narrative essays is very low.

The result is the use of incorrect spelling, vocabulary that is not varied, sentences based on the number of pictures, paragraphs that are not coherent, the language structure used is inappropriate, and the meaning contained in the story is only limited to a simple description (Alfianto, 2021; Latifah & Istiyati, 2020). Taking pictures. This is different from previous research, namely the assumption that the use of serial images can improve students’ writing skills. A number of studies have been conducted to explore various aspects of learning to write narrative essays at the elementary school level. The first study examined the effect of narrative writing techniques on elementary school students’ writing abilities. This research focuses on the effect of using narrative writing techniques on elementary school students’ writing abilities. This research includes a comparison between the use of narrative writing techniques and other methods, as well as analysis of its impact on students’ writing abilities. Future research looks at the relationship between reading skills and narrative writing abilities in elementary school students. Research looks at the influence of project-based learning on narrative writing abilities. This research studies the influence of project-based learning, which involves students creating narratives based on personal experiences or their own research, on elementary school students’ narrative writing abilities. This research explains that narrative writing projects can explore the effectiveness of project-based approaches in developing students’ narrative writing skills (Alimah & Indihadi, 2022; Mardhotilah et al., 2020; Ramadhanti, 2017). The novelty of research regarding the implementation of narrative essay learning strategies at the elementary school level lies in the innovative approach used to improve students’ writing skills. This research introduces the narrative essay method as a learning tool that has not been widely explored in the context of basic education, especially in Indonesia. Through this research, it is revealed how the use of narrative essays can not only improve students’ writing skills, but also develop critical thinking skills, imagination, and the ability to organize ideas. Another novelty is the integration of digital technology in narrative essay learning, which allows students to collaborate and share stories via online platforms, enriching their learning experience. This research also provides a new perspective regarding the role of teachers as facilitators who not only teach writing, but also guide students in expressing themselves creatively and meaningfully. Thus, this research makes a significant contribution to the development of teaching methods that are more dynamic and relevant to the educational needs of the 21st century. The aim of this research is also as preliminary research regarding the need for learning strategies for writing narrative essays in elementary schools. There are basic strategies in learning, including identifying, specifying and qualifying changes in student behavior and personality as expected (Mardhotilah & Fitra Surya, 2020; Narsa, 2021). Then choose a learning approach, select and determine procedures, methods and teaching and learning techniques that are considered appropriate and effective, and establish norms and minimum limits for success that serve as guidelines. These basic strategies are directions or guidelines for teachers to achieve success in achieving the goals that have been set. In this context, this research aims to explore the need for learning strategies for writing narrative essays in elementary schools. By understanding the challenges and opportunities faced by students and identifying effective learning strategies, it is hoped that better approaches can be developed to support the development of students’ writing skills at the elementary school level.
2. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. Case specifications in an incident, whether an individual, a cultural group or a portrait of life, are the focus of case study research (Djamrah, 2020; Pratiwi, 2020). This approach allows researchers to understand in depth the dynamics involved in a particular situation or case. This case study approach is used to explore the strategies used in learning to write narrative essays in elementary schools. This research was carried out at SDN Bendosari 2, Sanankulon District, Blitar Regency. The subjects of this research were 11 fourth grade students as data sources. The data collection techniques used were document analysis, questionnaires, observation and interviews. The qualitative method research procedure with a case study approach to examine the implementation of narrative essay learning strategies at the elementary school level can be carried out in several steps. First, the researcher chooses an elementary school as a case study location and determines the class or group of students who will be the research subjects. Next, data collection is carried out. The first data collection technique is document analysis in the form of student essays. Essay documents are analyzed to obtain initial data on students’ writing abilities. Initial data is used as a reference in preparing questions for the next technique. The second technique is a questionnaire. The questions in the questionnaire were given to class IV students to obtain information regarding the teacher’s use of learning strategies. Furthermore, to support the results of the questionnaire, researchers conducted classroom observations as an effort to observe the implementation of learning and the extent of students’ abilities in capturing the material. The fourth data collection technique is interviews. Interviews will be conducted informally through open-ended questions to build openness and trust. Interviews conducted using everyday conversation will flow in a natural context. Interviews were conducted with teachers and students to dig up more in-depth information regarding the learning strategies that have been used in narrative essay writing material. Through participatory observation, researchers are present in learning activities to observe the process of implementing narrative essay strategies.

Researchers also collected data through in-depth interviews with teachers who implemented this strategy, as well as interviews with students to get their perspectives on the experience of learning to write using this method. In addition, researchers collected related documents, such as lesson plans, examples of narrative essays written by students, and reflective notes from teachers. The collected data was then analyzed thematically to identify patterns, themes and categories relevant to the research. Researchers also triangulated data by comparing the results of observations, interviews and document analysis to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. Finally, the researcher prepared a research report that included a detailed description of the implementation of the narrative essay learning strategy, main findings, and implications for teaching practice as well as recommendations for implementing similar strategies in other schools. This process concludes with discussion and critical reflection on the findings, as well as suggestions for further research in the future.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The focus of this research is a case study of the use of narrative essay writing learning strategies among elementary school students. The initial data found was the result of narrative essay documents from students. These documents are analyzed to determine students’ writing abilities. The composing task carried out refers to a series of image media that the teacher has prepared. Some document findings are presented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Writing Components</th>
<th>Achievement (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Use of spelling</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sentence</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Paragraph</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Language structure</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the table, student achievement in the writing component is still very low. The spelling used to write names of people and places does not yet use capital letters at the beginning of the word. Capital letters are also found in regular words in the middle of a sentence. The choice of vocabulary or diction used by students is basic vocabulary that matches the picture. Students do not develop it into other
sentences so that it becomes a wider storyline. The choice of sentences is also less coherent. The punctuation used was incorrect, and sentences were also found that did not end with a period (.) The choice of the conjunction “then” is often used to connect one image with another image. Appropriate paragraph writing is not yet visible because students only write directly without pausing to change paragraphs. The language structure used is still simple and is limited to writing the meaning of the images presented. Students’ writing has a simple meaning and is limited to briefly interpreting a series of images. Below are two examples of student essays that can be used to represent the findings. Figure 1 represents most of the students’ writing results. Based on document analysis, it shows the results of students’ narrative essays without writing paragraphs. Sentences are ordered by picture, with the connecting word “then” repeated. The spelling used is not in accordance with linguistic rules. The structure of the language used is unclear due to inappropriate word choice. This has an impact on the unclear meaning of the essay written. So the picture below is one of the essays with a more coherent storyline. Although in general the use of spelling, vocabulary, sentences, paragraphs, word structure and meaning are still the same as other document findings. The storyline that is developed is slightly different with the addition of other events outside the description of the series of images. However, this finding is different from other uniform findings. Some students have difficulty developing a consistent storyline, building strong characters, or building a continuous storyline.

Factors such as lack of experience in expressing their thoughts in writing, the need to understand narrative structure, and lack of motivation can also affect a student’s ability to write narrative essays. The less often students express their thoughts in written form, the less their writing results will be. The less motivation students have in writing, the lower the students’ writing results will be. These two things influence the level of students’ ability to write narrative essays. The findings from the analysis of student essays were used as material for distributing questionnaires to teachers and students. Questions for teachers relate to the learning strategies that have been implemented, while for students they contain learning experiences from the learning strategies implemented by the teacher. The questions in the questionnaire refer to the use of basic strategies in learning (Djamrah, 2021). A summary of the results of distributing the questionnaire is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Use of Strategies in Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Basic Learning Strategies</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Identify and define specifications and qualifications for behavior change</td>
<td>Of</td>
<td>Of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The choice of approach is based on student aspirations</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Select and determine procedures, methods and learning techniques</td>
<td>Of</td>
<td>Of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Set a minimum threshold for success</td>
<td>Of</td>
<td>Of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first basic strategy used by the teacher is to identify the type of writing in the form of a narrative essay. Behavior change specifications and qualifications are related to the components of writing skills that students must have. Based on a copy of KBSKAP Decree Number 33 of 2022, the components in writing that must be considered relate to the use of spelling, vocabulary, sentences, paragraphs, language structure and the meaning of narrative essays. The teacher has tried to determine these components as a reference for students’ essays. In this basic strategy, students know what components of the writing assessment have been presented by the teacher. The second basic learning strategy is to choose the approach used based on student aspirations. The teacher designs the approach used in learning based on agreement in the sub-district level Teacher Working Group. Students are not given the freedom to choose the desired approach. From these findings, students have not been given the opportunity to express their desires in an effort to design fun learning. The next strategy is to choose and determine procedures, methods and learning techniques. Teachers choose procedures, methods and learning techniques sourced from school textbooks. Students use textbooks as a daily learning resource. The textbooks are in the form of textbooks from the government and companion books in the form of student worksheet books. All students have these two types of books as reference materials.

Setting a minimum threshold for success is the final basic learning strategy. Teachers set minimum standards of success when carrying out evaluations, in the form of assignments to write narrative essays. Essay assessment is based on the writing components and content of the narrative text type. Students carry out their assignments seriously with the help of a series of pictures. Observation activities carried out by researchers were carried out to support the questionnaire results obtained. Researchers carried out observations in the classroom as an effort to observe the implementation of learning and students’ abilities in capturing the material. In learning practice, the use of learning resources in the form of government textbooks has not been utilized optimally.
Government textbooks are not used even though all students have them. The teaching and learning process uses student worksheet books as the main source. However, LKS books have not been able to maximize students’ abilities in writing narrative essays. Contains study material and general questions that must be solved. The final stage of data collection is in the form of interviews related to learning with teachers and students. The questions in the interview are still related to the basic learning strategies used. Based on the results of interviews with teachers, the students’ low writing results were due to the fact that they could not compose without picture examples. So, in the composing task activity, the teacher prepares a series of a maximum of four pictures as media. The students’ view, the series of images used was not large enough so that the resulting sentences were few. An image can be processed into several sentences in one paragraph. In his findings, students only made one sentence in one picture. This could be a finding that students are still low in their ability to compose sentences. Students need a more attractive design and not just a series of pictures.

**Discussion**

Teachers realize that low student writing results mean low student interest in reading. The results of interviews with students also showed the same answer. Textbooks from the government are not used because the choice of language used is too high and not contextually stale for students. Students’ views, reading texts that are too long make it difficult to understand. Lack of interest in reading also affects the large vocabulary that students have. The more students enjoy reading, the more diverse their vocabulary will be. The choice of words and sentence structures in students’ essays is becoming increasingly diverse. Writing skills are one of the components that students must learn and master after listening, speaking and reading (Jayanti & Ariawan, 2020; Yulistia et al., 2023). The research findings regarding the implementation of narrative essay learning strategies at the elementary school level show several differences and similarities with previous research. This research found that narrative essay strategies not only improve students’ writing skills, but also develop critical thinking, imagination and self-expression skills. This is in line with previous research findings which state that the narrative writing method can improve students’ literacy and creativity skills. However, this research also finds that the integration of digital technology in narrative essay learning provides additional positive impacts that have not been widely discussed in previous research. The use of online platforms for collaboration and sharing stories allows students to be more involved and motivated in the learning process, an aspect that is less highlighted in previous studies. In addition, this research emphasizes the importance of the teacher’s role as an adaptive and creative facilitator, which is slightly different from previous research which focused more on the role of the teaching method itself.

In addition, this study also found that the narrative essay approach helped students understand story structure and organize their ideas better, a finding that strengthens the results of previous research. However, a new aspect revealed is how this method can be adapted to accommodate different student learning styles, increasing inclusivity in writing teaching. Overall, this research enriches the existing literature by providing new insights into the additional benefits of digital technology and the role of teachers in implementing narrative essay learning strategies in elementary schools. The interview results showed that the teacher only occasionally gave writing assignments. If you look closely, students lack practice in writing activities. As a productive skill, writing ability will not be produced well without practice. Continuous practice aims to improve students’ skills in writing essays. In line with this, it is necessary to carry out writing training from an early age as a habituation process, because students’ writing skills cannot grow instantly (Agustina, 2020; Apriliana & Hermawati, 2020). A skill can be mastered through practice and lots of practice. Technological developments and cultural changes have introduced new forms of narrative, such as digital narratives or interactive stories. It was also found that some students who own smartphones tend to use them for social media, but not for learning writing skills. Technology can be a valuable tool for enriching students’ learning experiences, it is important to ensure that learning strategies used in elementary schools take into account the unique needs and development of students in writing traditional narrative essays as well as in digital formats (Andini et al., 2023; Shofa et al., 2021).

Learning to write narrative essays at elementary school level has an undeniable urgency in developing students’ literacy skills and creative expression. Learning to write narrative essays helps students develop language skills, including understanding grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure. They learn to organize their ideas clearly and structured in the form of a coherent narrative. Indirectly, the process of writing narrative essays like this can train students in planning, analyzing and evaluating student ideas. Students are trained to select relevant details to build the plot, develop characters, and structure the storyline logically, all of which are aspects of critical thinking skills (Bahri et al., 2021; Kanwal et al., 2021). When writing a narrative essay, students also need to organize their ideas logically and convincingly. They learn to develop a consistent storyline, introduce interesting conflict, and finish
the story with a satisfying resolution, all of which are useful skills in constructing ideas and arguments in a variety of contexts. The ability to write narrative essays is an important skill for success in various fields of study and professions in the future. From academic literacy to workplace communication skills, the ability to write narratives is an important foundation for success in postsecondary education and professional life. Children in elementary school have wide imaginations, so it is important to give them opportunities to develop their ideas and express them through writing. Learning strategies that motivate students, encourage creative exploration, and provide constructive feedback can increase their interest in writing narrative essays. It can be concluded that routine writing and design learning strategies can be used to improve students’ essay writing skills. The learning strategy for writing narrative essays must also meet several criteria, namely activating students with writing practice activities and designing contextual and interesting learning resources (Marcela et al., 2022; Susilo et al., 2019; Widiastuti et al., 2024). Apart from training students’ coherent thinking, writing narrative essays also provides space for students to express their creativity. Students can use their imaginations to create unique and original stories, develop interesting characters and settings, and explore various themes and conflicts. This is closely related to the practice of writing down life experiences, the things experienced are in accordance with the students’ real experiences. Through writing stories about their own life experiences, students can understand themselves better, build personal identity, and gain confidence in expressing themselves in writing. Research on the implementation of narrative essay learning strategies at the elementary school level has several important implications for the world of education. First, the results of this research can provide new insights for teachers in designing and implementing writing lessons that are more effective and interesting for students. With narrative essay strategies, students can more easily develop their critical thinking skills and creativity through telling personal or imaginative experiences. Second, this research can be the basis for developing a more structured curriculum in the area of writing skills in elementary schools, ensuring that students are not only able to write well, but also enjoy the writing process itself. In addition, the findings of this research can help educational policy makers in formulating policies that support the use of the narrative essay learning method, considering its significant benefits in improving students’ literacy skills. Finally, this study also opens up opportunities for further research, such as exploring the long-term impact of learning narrative essays on students’ academic achievement or adapting this strategy in digital learning contexts.

Research on the implementation of narrative essay learning strategies at the elementary school level has several limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, this research was conducted in a specific school context with a limited sample, so the results may not be fully representative for all elementary schools. Second, this research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach, which although provides in-depth insights, has limitations in terms of generalizing the findings to a wider population. Third, the implementation of this learning strategy is very dependent on the teacher’s skills and creativity, so the results may vary depending on the individual abilities of the teachers involved in the research. In addition, the integration of digital technology in teaching narrative essays may not be implemented equally in all schools, especially in areas that have limited access to technology. Based on these limitations, several recommendations can be proposed for future research and practice. First, similar research needs to be conducted in various schools with different backgrounds to test the consistency and validity of the findings. Second, a quantitative or mixed methods approach can be used to strengthen the generalization of research results. Third, intensive and ongoing training for teachers regarding narrative essay learning strategies and the use of technology in learning is highly recommended to ensure effective and equitable implementation. Fourth, further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of these strategies on students’ writing skills and academic development. Finally, the development of adequate technological resources and infrastructure in all schools needs to be a main concern to support the optimal implementation of narrative essay learning strategies.

4. CONCLUSION

The importance of mastering essay writing skills is not balanced with students’ abilities. One of the strategies used by teachers to stimulate students’ essay writing skills is to use a series of pictures. This is based on previous research, that the use of serial images can improve students’ ability to write narrative essays. However, based on document analysis of students’ writing results, it was found that their ability to write narrative essays was still low. The learning strategy for writing narrative essays must meet several criteria, namely activating students with writing practice activities and designing contextual and interesting learning resources. The implication of this research is the importance of implementing creative and student-oriented learning strategies in overcoming the challenges of learning to write. It is hoped that this research can contribute to the development of language education at the elementary school level.
5. REFERENCES


