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### THE WRITING SKILL STIMULATION OF CHILDREN AGED 5-6 YEARS

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#### Abstrak

Penelitian bertujuan mengkaji pelaksanaan stimulasi kemampuan menulis anak usia 5-6 tahun di TK Negeri Pembina Manahan Surakarta. Penelitian dilaksanakan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian studi etnometodologi. Subjek penelitian adalah guru dan anak yang berusia 5-6 tahun. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan yaitu wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Teknik uji validitas dengan triangulasi sumber dan triangulasi teknik. Teknik analisis data menggunakan model analisis interaktif Milles and Huberman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa TK Negeri Pembina Manahan melakukan stimulasi kemampuan menulis melalui kegiatan pembelajaran sesuai pedoman Kurikulum 2013 yang diterapkan. Stimulasi tersebut melalui kegiatan menulis dan kegiatan penguatan kemampuan menulis (menggambar, mewarnai, dan menggunting). Pembelajaran tematik dengan pendekatan saintifik mendukung stimulasi kemampuan menulis yang variatif. Kegiatan tersebut dapat mendukung perkembangan kemampuan menulis anak, antara lain: (1) anak mampu menjepit pensil; (2) menulis nama diri; dan (3) menulis kata dan angka.

#### Abstract

The purpose of this research was examined the implementation of writing skill stimulation at TK Negeri Pembina Manahan Surakarta. The research used a qualitative approach with ethnomethodology study. The subject of research were teachers and children aged 5-6 years. The data collecting techniques used interview, observation, and documentation. The techniques for testing the data validity by triangulation of technique and source. The data analysis technique used the interactive data model by Milles and Huberman. The research result showed that TK Negeri Pembina Manahan did the writing skill stimulation through the learning activity based on the Early Childhood Education Curriculum of 2013. The stimulation did through writing activity and writing skill reinforcement activity (drawing, coloring, and cutting). The thematic learning with scientific approach supports the varied writing skill stimulation. These activities are able to support the children's development of writing skill, including: (1) the children are able to grip the pencil; (2) writing the self-name; and (3) writing word and number.

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## INTRODUCTION

The golden age period of childhood is in the age range 0-6 years which is known as the critical period associated with the rapid development of the brain. Flexible brain conditions facilitate the absorption of information, thus contributing to the growth and development of children (Papalia, Olds, & Feldman, 2009). Every developmental aspect (spiritual and moral value, cognitive, social-emotional, language, and art) is interrelated to support the children's learning process to fulfill the developmental tasks. Language development is one of the aspects that develop naturally in an individual from birth.

Writing as language skill begins developed since the child did scribbling on the certain area (walls, book, paper, etc). That is the child's communication effort that encourages to experience the learning process. The writing stages that experienced by children until 6<sup>th</sup> years include *random scribbling*, *controlled scribbling*, *beginning sounds emerge*, *writing letters*, and *writing words*. The achievement of children's writing skill requires appropriate stimulation for the development stage, namely

Early Childhood Education (ECE) through Kindergarten. Playing used as the learning approach refers to the atmosphere and variety of activities that are fun and meaningful. This is useful in connecting the process of children's learning activities.

Early Childhood Education in Indonesia implements Curriculum 2013 (K-13) contained in the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation (Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan/ Permendikbud) Number 146 of 2014. The curriculum is a guideline of learning implementation to optimize the development of children learning through thematic learning-based scientific approach. International perspective related to ECE Curriculum reveal that curriculum setting in various countries generally have in common, namely the basic principles, areas that become the focus of learning, the role of playing, and the holistic approach in child learning (Oberhuemer, 2005). The philosophical equation still displays differences in implementation over time, namely the mastery of material knowledge and skills regarding letters and numbers such as reading, writing, and counting.

The writing skill hoped to master by the children after graduate from kinder-garten encourages the effort to create learning activities that supports the writing skill. Gradually process since the children aged 4 up to graduation from Kindergarten, children are able to master the writing skill. Balingit (2016) explained that if in 1990 about 30% of teachers believe that children should learn to read and write, then it increased to 80% in 2010.

The findings about the writing skill stimulation in the learning activity obtained through research at Wat Donmuang School Thailand on January 2017. The similar findings also found at TK Kristen Manahan and TK Negeri Pembina Manahan on November 2017. Most agree that writing ability will be useful throughout school years until adulthood (Kent, Wanzek, Petscher, Al Otaiba, & Kim, 2014). The stimulation plays a role for its success in the guidance of wise adults.

The learning setting should not be separated from the DAP (*Developmentally Appropriate Practices*) implementation. The child-centered learning activity by noticed the developmental stage produces the

optimal readiness for further education stage. That applies also to the writing skill stimulation for children aged 5-6 years. Therefore, proper stimulation will provide excellent results on child development, as well as writing stimulation that suits the needs of children will help them to master phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, and word reading (Jones, Reutzel, Fargo, & Fargo, 2010).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Writing Skill Stimulation for Children Aged 5-6 Years**

Writing undergone a process of development since individuals develop symbolic thought at the age of 2-4 years, which is when the transition to a period of pre-operational thinking. The children experience thinking process when doing writing activities that are symbolically realized through the presence of objects in the writing field (Scheuer, Cruz, Pozo, Huarte, & Sola, 2006). Writing begins from the early age with the exploration of scribbling that is a visualization of children's thought. That becomes important to encourage children to develop writing skill through stimulation that appropriates with the

developmental stages of children's writing skill.

The writing developmental stages begin when the child holds the pen then scrapes it on a certain base, soon the exploration becomes more complex which can be monitored through the writing stage. Eathorne (2016) argue about the writing stages, include:

(1) *Pre-phonemic stage*; (2) *Early phonemic stage*; (3) *Letter-name stage*; dan (4) *Writing words stage*.

The writing stage is a unique process that goes from simple to complex. *Pre-phonemic stage* starts when children process in the exploration of random scribbles became controlled with the pen in palm hand holds.

The pre-phonemic begins when the child process in the exploration of random scribbles become controlled with the pen grip on the hand. The phase happen at 15 month until 3 year and has increased to controlled scribbling when the child performs consistent repetitive scribbles. The skill develops until the children aged 3-4 years which are able to differentiate the writing and drawing. The children begin to develop letter-like symbol, which can form certain

letter, even though error writing still occur. That stages still continued until the stage of strings of letter, namely the children are able to write several letters with clear scribbles but the placement was not regular. This part is the learning period of the children writing name-self through the familiar letters.

The second writing stage called *early phonemic stages*, specifically when the children develop the knowledge of initial or phonemic that related to the printing of letter and sound. The children develop the understanding of hearing sounds, so that encourages children give label on the picture appropriates with the first sound.

The children develop the understanding of the sound heard, thus children are pushed to give label at the picture according to the first letter. For instance, the children are able to understand that "ikan" is a word for fish picture (ikan in Indonesia) with the letter i as the initial letter "ikan". The children experience an interest in the emergence awareness of all of print writings at their surrounding that encourages them writing. That refers the children experience the invented

spelling from a first letter which represents a word or can be understood that children write the first sound in the words.

The *letter-name stage* is the stage when the children start to develop the letter writing that forms a word. That stage occurs at the age of 4-5 years when the children experience the improvement skill, including: (1) writing the name-self; (2) writing the first letter which familiars; and (3) writing the letter that has the self-meaning. However, reverse letter writing is still common. Puranik, Petscher, & Lonigan (2014) agree for this stage is also called writing letters when the children experience increased writing skills by exploring familiar letters and developing a combination of letters.

*Writing words* are the stages experienced by children aged 5-6 years when children are able to use inventive spelling. Children experiment with grouping letters to write many words that come from their knowledge and experience. The children continue to process by experiencing the maturity in pen grip, both pencil and other stationery using the dominant hand. Writing letters

made by children with a combination of uppercase and lowercase letters is smoother by taking into account the distance or space. However, if there are irregular shape of the letter can be tolerated his mistakes. The children's writing can be read by themselves and others, so this writing stage meets the criteria for learning goals for Early Childhood Education in writing that are expected to be achieved by children aged 5-6 years.

The benefits of writing arise as a result of the exercise in the form of stimulation that is developmentally appropriate child's writing. Benefits derived from writing activities and mastery of writing skills, include (1) spurring children's creativity, initiative and thinking (2) having the provision of learning readiness for the next level of education; and (3) supporting the development of reading skills (Slamet, 2014; Dinehart, 2015; James & Engelhardt, 2012). It shows that proper stimulation produces good results.

### **Kindergarten Learning Activity**

Early Childhood Education in the level of Kindergarten known as the formal line for the children aged 4-6 years which applies Curriculum 2013

(K-13). Included in The Regulation of Minister of Education and Culture (Permendikbud/ Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan) Number 146 the Year 2014, and supported by Permendikbud Number 137 the Year 2014. The curriculum is a reference that directs the teacher in designing, implementing, and evaluating learning activities. Each section is aligned with Core Competencies (KI/ Kompetensi Inti), Basic Competencies (KD/ Kompetensi Dasar), Standards of Child Development Achievement Level (STPPA/ Standar Tingkat Pencapaian Perkembangan Anak), and aspects of program development in order to support the potential development of each child according to age, individual characteristics and needs. This is carried out through learning experiences guided by the teacher to achieve a balance of attitudes, knowledge and skills of the child.

The learning activities in kindergarten implement with thematic learning based on scientific approach according to K-13. Thematic learning refers to the use of themes developed with the principles of attractiveness, closeness and simplicity. The

scientific approach relates to the development of structured thinking, from observing, asking questions, gathering information, reasoning, and communicating. Thematic learning based on a scientific approach is expected to accommodate children's curiosity and channel it through learning activities that support children's development. The language development specifically the written language is one of the aspects that is stimulated through learning activities to support children's writing skill.

Writing in the view of K-13 is part of language development at the point of literacy. This encourages the writing skill stimulation activities that are integrated with the kindergarten curriculum in each institution. The implementation through the learning activities with planning that has been organized by the teacher. It aims to support the development of children's writing skill according to the age and need of children.

Children aged 5-6 years are expected to be able to: (1) writing letters from their names; (2) making words in the form of words; and (3) writing numbers from counting.

The planning of learning is the main thing prepared by the teacher in the effort to stimulate writing skills. This is the design of the implementation of children's learning (Wahyuni, Yuliantina, & Rintayanti, 2015). Planning as a reference that directs the teacher's focus to the material that will be carried out in learning activity, requires periodic preparation including daily programs, Weekly Learning Implementation Plan (RPPM/ Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran Mingguan), and Daily Learning Implementation Plan (RPPH/ Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran Harian). The preparation of planning carried out by the teacher to stimulate writing skills tailored to the characteristics and needs of children. This is followed up by selecting activity that support the stimulation of writing skills.

Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014 on articles 12, 13, 14 and 15 describes the implementation of learning which is the implementation of learning planning. The section conducted through interactive, fun, direct and child-centered activity. The activity is expected to bring the children's active participation, as well as providing

flexibility for their thinking, creativity, and independence according to their talents, interests, and children's development. The implementation of learning is conducted according to RPPH as a reference for teachers and children in the one-day learning process, including opening activity, core activity, and closing activity. In connection with the writing skill stimulation carried out with meaningful activity in a pleasant atmosphere with various support to optimize it.

In connection with the writing skill stimulation carried out with meaningful activity in a pleasant atmosphere with various support to optimize it. Each stimulation contributes to the development of children's writing skills with attention to the activity implementation in a pleasant atmosphere. Pyle, Priolella, dan Poliszczuk (2017) suggested that writing-based play activity was influenced by several things, namely, (1) differences in teacher perspectives; (2) a play environment that is rich in written language; (3) adult involvement, and (4) curriculum regulation. This shows that writing skill stimulation is an interrelated

effort between learning guidelines and teachers as a model.

The learning group teachers in kindergarten personally have learning perspectives and strategies (Roskos, Christie, Richgels, & Dickens, 2003). This gives impact on making decisions regarding the creation of an atmosphere and variety of learning activity, especially the writing skill stimulation. The setting of playing and learning environment, both inside and outside the classroom, is within the teacher's responsibility. Teachers are expected to design learning that supports the development of writing skills according to the stages of child development. Children aged 5-6 years who have understood the alphabet can be created by copying words.

## **METHODS**

The purpose of the research was to examine the stimulation of writing skill for children aged 5-6 years at TK Negeri Pembina Manahan Surakarta. The research was carried out using a qualitative research approach with ethnomethodology study. Ethnomethodology used to explore the relation between people in a certain social circle that happens everyday

(Saracho, 2015). People interact and conceive the ideal understanding about writing stimulation for children. Then they engage in the collective task to do the stimulation.

The subject of this research were teachers and children aged 5-6 years. The technique of data collection used were interviews, observations, and documentation with prepared guidelines. The data validity checked by the technique of the validity test, namely the triangulation of data source and technic. The technique of data analysis used the interactive analysis model according to Milles & Huberman (2014).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Kindergarten as formal line of ECE has a role in stimulating the children development through the learning process. The children development includes aspects of language, specifically the written language or literacy which are represent by writing. Writing skills deserve attention, because their gradual development requires proper stimulation. The research result carried out at TK Negeri Pembina Manahan shows that the writing skill



stimulation for children aged 5-6 years can be implemented through the learning activity.

### **1. The Learning Activity at TK Negeri Pembina Manahan**

Sumirah, Nugraha, Yusuf, & Puspita (2015) state that K-13 aims to encourage children's development through meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences, so that children achieve a balance of attitudes, knowledge, and skills for further education readiness. The learning activities carried out in TK Negeri Pembina Manahan are guided by K-13.

The excellence of education that characterizes the kindergarten is the character education and the national culture. This is expected to balance the attainment of attitudes, knowledge, and skills as children's readiness towards primary school education. Each learning activity implementation will be arranged in advance by the teacher, in the form of RPPM (Weekly Learning Implementation Plan) and RPPH (Daily Learning Implementation Plan). In line with the opinion of Jackman, Baever, & Wyatt, (2015); Sibireva (2015), the section is implemented in thematic learning

based on a scientific approach that encourages the development of children's thinking abilities through the development of themes that notice to the principles of attractiveness, closeness, and simplicity.

Learning planning makes teaching and learning activities more effective as it is the guideline for teachers in managing learning activities. Teachers are expected to design, develop, and implement learning in accordance with the characteristics and needs of children (Wahyuni dkk., 2015). Children aged 5-6 years who have been at the end of kindergarten education want challenging activities according to the increasing curiosity of children. The awareness of the continuation of kindergarten education encourages children to engage in activities, such as reading, writing, and counting. The scope of kindergarten education packs these activities with fun and meaningful activities, so as not to burden the child.

The learning activities implementation is related to the area learning model that is applied in TK Negeri Pembina. Area models can facilitate learning activities according

to children's interests, which include areas of religion, art, mathematics, science, reading and writing, drama, music, blocks, and water sand. Daily learning activities only use 3 areas with reading and writing areas and art as the area which is often used. This is a strategy used to stimulate children's writing skills, especially ages 5-6 years. Learning activities that are a means of developing writing skills consist of opening activity, core activity, and closing activity

The opening activity consisted of habituation activities carried out by children and teachers in the classroom every morning. Teachers have wide opportunities at the opening activity to attract children's attention by apperception. Apperception aims to find out the knowledge possessed by the child which is then associated with learning material (Ummi, 2017). The teachers do apperception with a conversation about the sub-themes or topics, followed by writing the learning topic on the board. Observable letter exposure helps the children thinking process about the letters that form words on the learning topic.

The core activity contains activities that must be done by children in accordance with the teacher's instructions delivered at the opening activity. The core activities that support the children's writing skill stimulation aged 5-6 years are conducted by utilizing reading and writing areas and art areas. The activities include (1) copying writing (2) drawing; (3) coloring; (4) cutting; and (5) sticking. Generally these activities are adjusted to the topic or sub-themes of RPPH. The activity of text copying is done by copying the word exemplified by the teacher on the blackboard, while the children do it on a small square book. Drawing activity organized on a drawing book with drawing tools in the form of pencils and crayons, while coloring using a coloring sheet with colored pencils. Cutting and sticking is done independently by the children with scissors and glue available at each child's locker.

The core activity performs require teachers monitoring, but monitoring is still very minimal. This needs to be considered, because the closeness of the relationship between teachers and children is warmly able to support

children's writing skills (White, 2013). The closeness between teacher and child facilitates the child to submit a complaint if the child has not been able to write down the assigned letter. The portion of teachers working on additional tasks in the classroom can be rearranged to build relationships with children during learning activities. The classrooms become a rich place to explore writing activities and the arrangement of the learning environment is also part of optimizing children's writing skills (Gerde, Bingham, & Wasik, 2012; Feder & Majnemer, 2007). This can affect the writing produced, namely (a) sitting position; (b) the height of a chair or table, (c) stationery, type of paper, and placement on a table; (d) lighting; and (e) the type of writing expected of the child.

The closing activity is the time to review learning material and do habituation activities during the day. Nevertheless, the activity review learning materials at the end of activities are rarely executed by teachers. Reviewing learning material is useful for knowing children's understanding of learning activities. Especially for the development of

children's writing skill through activities that have been conducted and received the review. It is really crucial because it can be referred to as provision for children, especially children will continue their education. These abilities contribute to the readiness of kindergarten-aged children who transition to elementary school (Dinehart, 2015).

## **2. The Writing Skill of Children Aged 5-6 Years**

The development of the children's writing skill aged 5-6 years in TK Negeri Pembina Manahan varies greatly according to the stimulation received. These skills include (1) gripping's stability of pencil; (2) writing a name; (3) copying the letters they saw; and (4) writing numbers from counting results. Children aged 5-6 years are ideally at the stage of being able to write words according to their pronunciation, using spaces, and punctuation, and the stability of pens' grip. This is as expressed by Eathorne (2016) regarding the stages of writing, namely writing letters dan writing words. Nonetheless, the children have not paid attention to the punctuation

placement, because only one word is written. Some children show writing different font sizes, such as large and small letters, and mixing capital letters and small letters

The results of the study on the writing skill stimulation of children aged 5-6 years in TK Negeri Pembina Manahan concluded that writing activities were conducted following the K-13 guidelines. The kindergarten provides stimulation that guides children to achieve the ideal writing skills for children aged 5-6 years. Writing activities implement on core learning activity that include in the reading and writing area. Writing activities have been designed in learning planning, both in RPPM and RPPH. Its implementation in learning is divided into writing activities and writing skills strengthening activities based on daily sub-themes. This includes: (1) copying text; (2) drawing; (3) coloring; and (4) cutting. The writing skills of children are at the levels of children are able to: (1) gripping the pencil with the dominant hand; (2) writing your name; and (3) writing words and numbers.

Children's writing skill come from the accumulation of writing

knowledge and experience. Knowledge of phonological awareness and the alphabet principle helps children identify the arrangement of letters they meet. The experience of writing is able to enrich children through the exercises carried out, so the child can correct the writing of letters that are less precise. However, when learning takes place, children who write experience a thought process but are not complex, such as children not rereading and revising (Scheuer et al., 2006).

## **CONCLUSION**

Children aged 5-6 years at the end of kindergarten education need attention and stimulation as preparation for the transition to elementary school. Children are expected to have mental readiness, knowledge, and skills according to the age. TK Negeri Pembina Manahan works on this preparation by stimulating education through learning, habituation and self-development activities. K-13 is applied to guide learning for teachers to stimulate writing skills. The stimulation is organized on the learning activity with writing activities and activities to strengthen writing

skills (drawing, coloring, and cutting). Thematic learning based scientific approach supports stimulation of varied writing skill, namely (1) children are able to grip the pencil; (2) writing self-name; (3) writing words and numbers.

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