



An Analysis of Teacher Strategies in Influencing Students' Learning Motivation in Indonesian Language Instruction in Grade IV

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ABSTRACT

Writing ability is one of the fundamental skills that students at the elementary education level must acquire, as it serves as an essential foundation for academic success at higher stages of education. This study aims to analyze the level of early writing skills and to identify the factors influencing early writing ability among Grade I students at SD Muhammadiyah Malawili, Sorong Regency. A descriptive qualitative research method was employed, with Grade I students and the Grade I classroom teacher as research informants. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model comprising data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data credibility was verified through source, technique, and time triangulation. The findings indicate that the early writing ability of Grade I students at SD Muhammadiyah Malawili has developed well overall. Most students were able to read and write upon entering Grade I, having already acquired foundational literacy skills at kindergarten, facilitated by additional private tutoring in some cases. Students are generally able to write letters, words, and their own names with reasonable fluency, although individual guidance is still needed to improve neatness, letter-size

consistency, and writing independence. Two interacting categories of factors influence early writing development: internal factors, including fine motor readiness and learning motivation; and external factors, encompassing the teacher's role in individual guidance, parental support at home, and the availability of learning media such as letter cards and picture media. The combination and synergy of these factors is decisive in determining the optimal development of students' early writing competence.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental process through which individuals are prepared to face the challenges of an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world. Teachers, as primary agents of educational delivery, bear a critical responsibility not only for conveying subject content but also for inspiring and motivating learners, identifying their latent potential, and providing the consistent guidance that enables academic growth (Aditya et al., 2020). The quality of a teacher's instructional strategies directly shapes the quality of student learning, and no dimension of that quality is more foundational than a student's learning motivation.

Learning motivation is defined as the internal drive that compels an individual to pursue educational goals and to develop knowledge and skills (Salay, 2019; Sardiman, 2016). It is widely recognized in the educational psychology literature as the engine of learning: without adequate motivation, even high-ability students fail to engage productively with instruction, sustain effort across tasks, or achieve their potential (Darniyati & Saputra, 2021; Ghasiyah et al., 2024). The motivational role of the teacher has been shown, through a systematic review of Scopus-indexed studies, to be among the most significant determinants of students' academic motivation across all school levels, including teacher-related dimensions including instructional enthusiasm,

relatedness support, autonomy promotion, and use of reward systems are consistently identified as key motivational levers (Cuevas-Molano et al., 2025).

Indonesian Language instruction at the primary level poses particular motivational challenges. The subject encompasses reading comprehension, writing, listening, and speaking across a range of text types, with reading tasks in particular requiring sustained attention and cognitive effort from young learners (Iryanto, 2021). When content is perceived as lengthy, lexically complex, or repetitively delivered, students' attention wanes and their motivation to engage declines. These challenges are amplified in remote and geographically isolated school contexts, such as SD Inpres 54 in Sorong Regency, where limited infrastructure, restricted access to technology, and constrained teacher resources create additional barriers to motivationally stimulating instruction.

Prior Indonesian studies corroborate the importance of diversified teacher strategies in supporting student motivation. Rusmiati (2022) found that teachers at an integrated Islamic elementary school in Bengkulu employed a variety of methods and media choices to sustain student motivation in Indonesian Language. Mufatikhah and Rondli (2023) demonstrated that positive teacher feedback and verbal praise stimulate students' sense of being valued, thereby reinforcing motivation. Ghasiyah et al. (2024) confirmed that ice-breaking activities significantly improve motivation levels among elementary school students. Aditya et al. (2020) argued that teacher strategy quality, encompassing the ability to meet individual student needs, maintain an inclusive classroom environment, and apply diverse pedagogical methods, is a key determinant of learning effectiveness. Despite this growing body of research, systematic analyses of teacher motivational strategies in the specific contextual constraints of remote Indonesian primary schools, such as absence of daytime electricity and extremely small class sizes, remain underrepresented. This study addresses that gap.

The research question guiding this study is: what strategies do teachers at SD Inpres 54, Sorong Regency, employ to influence learning motivation in

Grade IV Indonesian Language instruction, and what factors constrain and enable those strategies in the specific context of a remote primary school?

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research approach. Qualitative research, as defined by Moleong (2017), is intended to understand phenomena as experienced by research subjects, including behaviour, perceptions, motivations, and actions, in a holistic and contextual manner. Sugiyono (2019) further emphasises that qualitative research is conducted in natural conditions with the researcher as the primary instrument, and that data collection is carried out through triangulation techniques, with analysis conducted inductively. The descriptive qualitative design was selected because the study sought to describe, interpret, and understand the natural conditions of early writing development in the Grade I classroom without experimental manipulation of variables.

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design. The primary aim of descriptive qualitative research is to describe and document the facts and characteristics of the research object systematically and accurately (Salim, 2019; Sugiyono, 2018). A qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to understand, interpret, and document the natural conditions of teacher motivational strategy use in the classroom, without experimental manipulation, and to capture the rich contextual dimensions of teaching in a geographically isolated primary school. The research was conducted from 6 to 13 August 2024 in Grade IV at SD Inpres 54, Sorong Regency, during regular Indonesian Language instructional sessions in the first semester of the 2024 academic year.

Participants and Research Context

The research subjects comprised the Grade IV classroom teacher at SD Inpres 54, Sorong Regency, and the Grade IV students involved in the instructional

process. SD Inpres 54 is located in a remote village in Sorong Regency, West Papua Province, with very limited infrastructure, including the absence of a daytime electricity supply. Grade IV enrollment at the time of data collection was 4 students, a small class size that enabled close teacher-student interaction but also presented distinctive pedagogical challenges. The small class size is characteristic of many remote primary schools in eastern Indonesia and directly shaped the types of media and methods accessible to the classroom teacher.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection was conducted through two techniques: (1) observation, involving direct and systematic observation of classroom activities during Indonesian language instructional sessions, with field notes documenting teacher-student interactions, instructional methods, media use, and student responses; and (2) semi-structured interviews with the Grade IV classroom teacher and selected students, covering teacher strategy implementation, student motivation responses, and perceived constraints and enablers. Documentation in the form of photographs and observational records was also collected to support data triangulation.

Data analysis followed the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive model (2014), comprising three iterative stages: data condensation (selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming data from transcripts and field notes); data display (organizing condensed data into structured narrative and tabular form); and conclusion drawing and verification (drawing and verifying conclusions progressively against the collected evidence). Trustworthiness was ensured through source triangulation (cross-referencing teacher and student interview data with observation records) and prolonged engagement in the research setting across the full data collection period.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Early Writing Skills of Grade I Students at SD Muhammadiyah Malawili

Based on observation and interview data collected at SD Muhammadiyah

Malawili, Sorong Regency, the early writing skills of Grade I students show a positive and developing pattern overall. Most students entered Grade I with prior literacy experience from kindergarten and, in some cases, supplemented by private tutoring, which has facilitated their adaptation to formal writing instruction in primary school. The results across eight dimensions of early writing skills are summarized in Table 1.

Teacher Strategies in Influencing Students' Learning Motivation in Indonesian Language Instruction

Based on observation and interview data collected at SD Inpres 54, Sorong Regency, the Grade IV teacher implements a multi-dimensional set of motivational strategies in Indonesian language instruction. Despite significant contextual constraints, including the absence of daytime electricity and limited teaching resources, the observed strategies have demonstrably positive effects on student attention, participation, and learning enthusiasm. The strategies identified and documented are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Teacher Motivational Strategies Observed and Documented in Grade IV Indonesian Language Instruction

No.	Strategy Dimension	Description of Implementation
1	Lesson planning (RPP)	Structured lesson plans prepared before each session; learning objectives, materials, and methods documented; session opened with attendance, readiness check, and statement of learning objectives.
2	Pedagogical methods	Lecture, discussion, Q&A, role-play, assignment, cooperative group work (small groups of approx. 4 students), and practice-based tasks; demonstration method used for homonyms (prefix words).
3	Personal student engagement	The teacher familiarizes herself with individual student characteristics and learning styles before selecting instructional approaches; students requiring extra support receive individual attention.
4	Ice-breaking activities	Ice-breaking sessions introduced mid-lesson when concentration declines include brief games, riddles, and simple physical activities to restore attention and engagement.
5	Reward system	Praise, positive verbal feedback, and tangible gifts or high marks provided for completed tasks; positive reinforcement used both for strong performers and for students who make effort.
6	Inspirational storytelling	Contextually relevant and motivating short

7	Media use	narratives integrated to sustain student interest in reading-heavy or vocabulary-dense lesson content. Simple printed images were used as the primary visual media, and laptop video content was shown for a class of 4 students; the projector was not available due to the absence of daytime electricity.
8	Evaluation & reflective closure	End-of-lesson evaluation: Students summarize the lesson's key message or moral lesson; post-tests and teacher learning journals are maintained regularly.

As shown in Table 1, the teacher employs eight interrelated strategy dimensions spanning lesson preparation, pedagogical method diversification, interpersonal engagement, attention restoration (ice-breaking), recognition systems, inspirational content, media adaptation, and reflective evaluation. The integration of these strategies reflects a pedagogically responsive teaching practice that prioritizes student engagement within the constraints of the available resources.

The interview with the Grade IV teacher revealed that when students display signs of boredom or disengagement, particularly when encountering lengthy texts or lexically complex content in the Indonesian language, the teacher immediately intervenes by introducing an ice-breaking activity or shifting the instructional method to role-play or a competitive game format. This approach aligns with findings by Ghasiyah et al. (2024), who confirmed that ice-breaking activities significantly improve elementary school students' learning motivation by reducing cognitive and emotional tension, and with Wana et al. (2024), who documented the positive effect of ice-breaking on elementary school students' motivation levels.

Factors Constraining and Enabling Motivational Strategy Implementation

The analysis of observation and interview data identifies a set of interacting constraints and teacher adaptive responses that characterize the motivational strategy landscape at SD Inpres 54. These are organized by constraint category in Table 2.

Table 2. Constraints Influencing Motivational Strategy Implementation and Teacher Adaptive Responses

Constraint Category	Specific Constraints Identified	Teacher Adaptive Responses
Student factors	Low reading interest in long-text Indonesian language content; varying concentration spans; influence of peer groups; tendency to shift attention to play activities.	Diversified methods (role-play, games, ice-breaking) to re-engage attention; individual pacing and guidance.
Infrastructure factors	No daytime electricity, limiting projector use; minimal teaching aids and manipulative materials; limited printed reference materials.	Laptop-based video content used for small-group (4 students) instruction; printed images as primary visual media; locally available materials incorporated.
Family and environment factors	Limited parental monitoring of home study, low parental engagement in motivating academic activities, and community environments may not consistently reinforce learning behavior.	Teacher-maintained learning journals and regular post-tests; consistent positive reinforcement; inspirational content to build student aspiration.
Instructional time	Constrained lesson time limits depth of content coverage and practice opportunities.	Concise lesson delivery focused on core concepts; reflective closure to reinforce key learning.

The most contextually distinctive constraint documented in this study is the absence of daytime electricity at SD Inpres 54. The classroom teacher's adaptive response to this constraint is pedagogically instructive: rather than abandoning technology-enhanced instruction, she uses a laptop as a portable and self-powered media delivery device for a class of four students, enabling video-based content delivery as an alternative to projector-dependent display. This adaptive resourcefulness exemplifies the kind of contextual pedagogical creativity that Lamb et al. (2016) identify as characteristic of effective motivational practice in resource-constrained Indonesian school settings.

The pattern of constraints identified in this study, encompassing infrastructure deficits, geographic isolation, parental disengagement, and limited instructional time, is consistent with the broader literature on teaching and motivation in remote rural school contexts. Cuevas-Molano et al. (2025), in a Scopus-indexed systematic review of the motivational role of teachers

published in the *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, found that teacher relatedness support, structure provision, and autonomy promotion are the teacher-related dimensions most consistently associated with positive student motivation outcomes. These dimensions are precisely what the Grade IV teacher at SD Inpres 54 operationalizes through her personal engagement approach, lesson planning framework, positive feedback system, and ice-breaking practices, demonstrating that effective motivational strategy implementation is not contingent upon infrastructure quality but upon instructional intentionality and adaptive pedagogical competence.

The reward system, comprising verbal praise, positive comments, and tangible recognition, identified in this study as a key motivational strategy, is well-supported in the educational psychology literature. Mufatikhah and Rondli (2023) document that teachers who consistently provide positive comments on student work, both for high achievers and for students who struggle but make effort, create an emotionally safe and motivationally supportive learning environment. Sardiman (2016) further affirms that evaluation feedback functions not merely as assessment but as a motivational tool, stimulating students to sustain and improve their academic performance. These insights are borne out in the classroom observation data from this study, which show students displaying heightened enthusiasm and attentiveness following praise and recognition from the teacher.

This study contributes empirical evidence from an underrepresented educational context in eastern Indonesia. The findings demonstrate that contextual constraints such as infrastructure deficits, remote location, and small class size do not preclude effective motivational practice but do require adaptive and contextually responsive strategy implementation. The implications for teacher professional development are clear: training programmes for primary school teachers in Sorong Regency and similar Settings should prioritize the development of contextually appropriate motivational strategies, ice-breaking facilitation skills, cooperative learning

facilitation, and adaptive media use, rather than assuming infrastructure-dependent approaches.

Table 1. Summary of Early Writing Skill Dimensions: Strengths and Areas for Development

Writing Skill Dimension	Strengths Observed	Areas Requiring Further Development
Letter formation	Most students form legible letters with recognizable shapes.	Variation in neatness and proportionality across students; some inconsistency in letter size.
Sound-letter correspondence	Most students understand the relationship between letters and their phonemic representations.	Some errors in writing specific letters; phonetic and visual reinforcement still needed.
Writing one's own name	Nearly all students can write their name independently.	In formal contexts (tests), some students need visual cues or models.
Copying words/sentences	Students copy from the board adequately.	Some students copy letter-by-letter rather than word-by-word; speed and fluency vary.
Line adherence	Many students write within the lines.	Some have difficulty maintaining consistent letter alignment and position.
Meaningful marks	Students produce recognizable letters rather than random marks; symbolic understanding is emerging.	Letter forms not yet fully consistent or independent.
Simple word writing	Students can write simple words if modeled on the board.	Dictation-based writing (without visual cues) remains challenging.
Pencil use	All students hold and use pencils without major difficulty.	A small number of tires quickly, indicative of developing fine motor stamina.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Grade IV classroom teacher at SD Inpres 54, Sorong Regency, implements a diverse and contextually adaptive set of motivational strategies in Indonesian language instruction. The strategies identified encompass structured lesson planning, diversified pedagogical methods (lecture, discussion, role-play, cooperative group work, practice tasks), personal student engagement, ice-breaking activities, a reward and positive reinforcement system, inspirational storytelling, adaptive media use, and

reflective evaluative closure. These strategies have been observed to effectively improve student attention, participation, and enthusiasm for Indonesian language learning.

The primary constraining factors include the absence of daytime electricity limiting technology use, limited teaching materials and infrastructure, diverse and fluctuating student motivation levels, minimal parental engagement, and the geographic isolation of the school. The teacher's response to these constraints is characterized by adaptive resourcefulness: laptop-based video instruction for small groups, locally available printed media, consistent positive reinforcement, and interpersonal relatedness strategies. It is recommended that schools in remote areas of eastern Indonesia receive dedicated support for teacher professional development in innovative and contextually adapted motivational strategy design and that facility provision be prioritized to reduce structural barriers to effective instruction. Future research should examine the longitudinal effects of specific motivational strategies on Indonesian language achievement outcomes in comparable remote school settings and explore the role of parental engagement programs in strengthening the motivational ecosystem for primary students.

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