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Implementation of Spelling Card Media for Writing Instruction in Grade II at Primary School

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the implementation of spelling card media in writing instruction for Grade II students at SD 7 Aitinyo, Maybrat Regency, West Papua Province. The research employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews with the principal and the Grade II classroom teacher, and documentation. Data analysis followed the qualitative interactive model comprising data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that the implementation of spelling card media in writing instruction unfolds across three interrelated stages: (1) the planning stage, in which the teacher prepared the syllabus, lesson plan *(RPP),* and the spelling card media prior to instruction; (2) the implementation stage, in which the teacher introduced and modelled the use of spelling cards during the three-phase Indonesian Language lesson (opening, core, and closing activities), progressively engaging all students in reading and writing activities using the cards; and (3) the evaluation stage, in which the teacher assessed students' writing performance through observation and formative assessment tasks. The findings confirm that the use of spelling card media is highly effective in improving students'

writing literacy and learning interest. Student enthusiasm during spelling card activities was markedly high, and progressive improvements in writing ability, letter recognition, and students' confidence in reading and writing were documented across the observation period. Spelling card media is characterised by its simplicity, low cost, ease of production by teachers, and strong alignment with the concrete operational characteristics of Grade II learners. This study contributes empirical evidence on innovative literacy media implementation in a geographically isolated primary school in eastern Indonesia.

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INTRODUCTION

Language competence encompasses four interrelated skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are mutually reinforcing, and a student's proficiency in one domain shapes their capacity to develop the others. Among these, writing is a particularly productive and complex literacy skill that requires the simultaneous coordination of graphomotor ability, orthographic knowledge, phonological awareness, and compositional competence (Maurer et al., 2023). In the lower primary grades (Grades 1–3), writing instruction focuses on the foundational dimensions of early writing, also known as menulis permulaan: letter formation, alphabetic knowledge, and the construction of simple words, phrases, and sentences using correct spelling (Mulyati, 2009; Tarigan, 2008).

Despite the centrality of writing in primary education, early writing instruction frequently remains underdeveloped in Indonesian primary schools, particularly in geographically remote and resource-limited settings. Common challenges include the predominance of passive instructional methods, limited instructional media variety, and insufficient student engagement with writing

tasks (Wahyuni, 2021). At the international level, research consistently affirms that early writing instruction is most effective when it incorporates concrete, visual, and multimodal media that provide scaffolding for letter-sound correspondence, word formation, and sentence construction (Gerde et al., 2024; Maurer et al., 2023). Gerde et al. (2024), writing in The Reading Teacher (an ILA-indexed Scopus journal), demonstrate that embedding early writing opportunities throughout the school day, supported by teacher modelling, scaffolding, and individualisation, leads to greater gains in early writing and reading development.

Spelling card media *(kartu ejaan)* represent a concrete, visual, and teacher-produced instructional tool for early writing and reading instruction. Each card contains a capital letter paired with its corresponding lowercase form, arranged to spell out words that students can practise reading and writing by spelling aloud each component letter in sequence. The media is physically handled by students, activating both visual and kinaesthetic learning pathways. Jannah and Hasmawati (2017) documented the positive effect of spelling card media on simple sentence writing skills in a secondary school context in Makassar, confirming the adaptability of this media type across educational levels. Wahyuni (2021) and Ermin Tri Wahyuni (2021) similarly affirmed the effectiveness of spelling card media in stimulating student enthusiasm, focus, and engagement in Indonesian Language literacy instruction. Waridah et al. (2023) confirmed significant improvements in early reading skills among Grade II elementary school students through letter card media implementation.

SD *Negeri* 7 Aitinyo, located in Maybrat Regency, West Papua Province, represents a geographically isolated primary school serving a small student population with limited access to educational resources. Preliminary observations revealed that Grade II students experienced difficulties with writing simple sentences due to limited letter recognition, poor graphomotor fluency, and low engagement with conventional writing instruction. The

classroom teacher, observing these difficulties, introduced spelling card media as an alternative instructional tool during Indonesian Language writing lessons. This study was conducted to systematically describe and analyse the implementation of spelling card media across three stages of instructional practice, documenting its effect on student writing literacy and engagement in this remote West Papua school context.

METHODS

This research employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. Qualitative descriptive research, as articulated by Wina Sanjaya (2013), seeks to describe phenomena in their natural conditions without data manipulation, providing a comprehensive and contextually rich account of the events and processes under investigation. This approach was selected because the study aimed to understand and describe the actual process of spelling card media implementation in the natural classroom context, as experienced by the teacher and students, rather than to measure quantitative outcomes.

The research was conducted at SD *Negeri* 7 Aitinyo, Maybrat Regency, West Papua Province, from 11 to 15 August 2025. Research informants comprised the school principal and the Grade II classroom teacher (Ibu Yustince Way, S.Pd.), with Grade II students serving as observation subjects. Data were collected through three complementary techniques: (1) structured observation of classroom learning activities, focusing on the three stages of spelling card media implementation (planning, implementation, and evaluation); (2) semi-structured interviews with the principal and the Grade II classroom teacher, addressing the rationale for media selection, instructional planning processes, implementation challenges, and observed student outcomes; and (3) documentation comprising lesson plans (RPP), syllabi, spelling card materials, and photographic records of classroom activities.

Data were analysed using the qualitative interactive model as described by Sugiyono (2012) and Gunawan Imam (2017), comprising three concurrent

stages: data reduction (selecting and focusing relevant data from observation notes and transcripts), data presentation (organising condensed data into structured narrative and tabular accounts), and conclusion drawing (identifying patterns and formulating validated conclusions supported by triangulation of observation, interview, and documentation data).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Spelling Card Media: Three-Stage Analysis

Based on observation, interview, and documentation data collected at SD Negeri 7 Aitinyo from 11 to 15 August 2025, the implementation of spelling card media in Grade II Indonesian Language writing instruction unfolds across three identifiable and interconnected stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation. The key features, teacher activities, and observed outcomes at each stage are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Three-Stage Implementation of Spelling Card Media in Grade II Writing Instruction

Stage	Teacher Activities & Media Use	Observed Outcomes
Planning Stage	Teacher prepared the syllabus (kompetensi inti, kompetensi dasar, indicators, materials, assessment); developed the RPP (Curriculum 2013) specifying learning objectives, materials (capital and lowercase letter use), media, and assessment; prepared spelling card media (manila paper strips, 5 × 10 cm, handwritten or printed, containing capital letters paired with lowercase letters).	Systematic pre-lesson preparation ensures instructional alignment and clarity of learning objectives, reduces improvisation during instruction, and increases the likelihood of effective media use (Anggraeni & Akbar, 2025).
Implementation Stage	Three-phase lesson structure (opening, core, closing) followed. Core activities: teacher introduced spelling card media; explained and modelled how to read words by spelling each letter; all students	Student enthusiasm increased progressively across sessions; passive students became more willing to attempt reading; card-based activities activated five media functions (Wahyudi):

	took turns reading aloud using the cards; teacher monitored, provided individual guidance, and progressively increased student active participation. Students at first influenced by off-task peers, but engagement increased progressively.	attention (atensi), affective (afektif), cognitive (kognitif), imaginative (imajinatif), and motivational (motivasi) functions.
Evaluation Stage	End-of-lesson formative assessment; teacher used observation checklists to assess students' letter recognition, word reading, and early writing performance; post-lesson reflective feedback provided to students; progress in reading and writing monitored across sessions.	Continuous formative evaluation enabled responsive instructional adaptation; students' writing skill gains and increased literacy engagement were documented across the observation period.

Stage 1: Planning

The planning stage, as confirmed by interview with the Grade II teacher (*Ibu* Yustince Way, S.Pd.), encompasses the preparation of the syllabus, the Lesson Plan (RPP) based on the 2013 Curriculum, and the spelling card media itself. The RPP for Indonesian Language in Grade II at SD Negeri 7 Aitinyo specifies the learning objective of enabling students to read and write correctly using capital and lowercase letters, aligned with the Curriculum 2013 competency standards. Ibu Yustince explains the centrality of the RPP in her practice: "In every lesson I always follow the RPP, because the RPP specifies the learning activities from beginning to end. With the RPP, the learning process is well-structured." The spelling card media is produced from strips of manila paper or cardboard (5 × 10 cm), handwritten or printed, displaying capital letters alongside their corresponding lowercase forms, assembled to spell simple target words. This low-cost, teacher-produced medium aligns with the characteristics identified as ideal for early literacy media in remote school settings: accessibility, ease of production, adaptability, and strong visual clarity (Ermin Tri Wahyuni, 2021).

Stage 2: Implementation

The implementation stage follows a three-phase lesson structure *(kegiatan awal/pembuka, kegiatan inti, kegiatan akhir/penutup)* as prescribed by the RPP. The instructional session observed was conducted on Tuesday, 12 August 2025, from 08.00 to 09.10. In the core activities phase, the teacher introduced the spelling card media, explained and modelled the process of spelling words by sounding out each letter in sequence from the card, and then called students forward one by one to practise reading aloud using the cards. The teacher identified early that some students were initially distracted by peers outside the classroom, but observed that the novelty and visual appeal of the spelling cards progressively redirected attention and motivated formerly passive students to engage.

Ibu Yustince's characterisation of the instructional process is revealing: "Spelling cards are an instructional aid containing words made from manila paper. I can make them by hand or by printing. We use spelling cards here to improve students' reading and writing ability. Not only during the lesson itself but also at the beginning or end of the session, because they help students with reading difficulties." This flexibility, enabling the media to be used at different points in the lesson to serve diverse instructional functions, reflects the multi-functional character of spelling card media as described by Wahyudi's five-function framework: attention, affective, cognitive, imaginative, and motivational functions (as cited in the teacher's reflective account).

Stage 3: Evaluation

The evaluation stage was conducted through ongoing formative assessment integrated into the lesson. The teacher monitored each student's letter recognition accuracy, oral reading fluency (using the card), and simple sentence writing performance through direct observation and task-based assessment. The teacher provided individual feedback, identified students requiring additional support, and adjusted the pacing of subsequent sessions based on observed student progress. The integration of formative evaluation within and

following each lesson allowed the teacher to document progressive gains in students' writing literacy across the five-day observation period.

Effectiveness of Spelling Card Media: Observed Outcomes

The findings of this study confirm that the implementation of spelling card media has a markedly positive effect on students' writing literacy development and learning engagement at SD *Negeri* 7 Aitinyo. Across the five days of observation, the following outcomes were documented: (1) students' enthusiasm for Indonesian Language writing lessons increased substantially compared to pre-media instruction sessions; (2) students who had previously been passive or reluctant to engage with writing tasks progressively demonstrated greater willingness to attempt reading and writing activities using the cards; (3) letter recognition and the ability to distinguish visually similar letters (e.g. b/d, n/m, p/q) improved noticeably across the observation period; and (4) students' confidence in reading aloud and in completing simple sentence writing tasks was documented to increase.

These findings are consistent with the established literature on visual card media for early literacy instruction. Waridah et al. (2023), in a Thematic: Journal of Elementary Education Research study, confirmed that letter card media significantly improved early reading skills among Grade II elementary school students, with all students achieving improvement on post-observation assessments. Jannah and Hasmawati (2017) documented comparable positive outcomes in the use of spelling card media for writing instruction in a secondary context, validating the cross-level effectiveness of this media type. At the international level, Gerde et al. (2024) demonstrate that structured early writing opportunities supported by teacher modelling, scaffolding, and individualised feedback produce robust gains in early writing and literacy development, an instructional framework that aligns precisely with the three-stage implementation approach documented at SD *Negeri* 7 Aitinyo.

The effectiveness of spelling card media in the present study is explicable through Piaget's theory of cognitive development: Grade II students

(approximately 7–8 years of age) are in the concrete operational stage and benefit most from physical, visual, and interactive representations of abstract concepts such as letters and letter combinations. The spelling card provides exactly this type of concrete representation, enabling students to associate the abstract symbol of a letter with its visual form and phonological sound through hands-on card manipulation and group spelling activities. This mechanism is corroborated by Maurer et al.'s (2023) Scopus-indexed longitudinal study in Children (MDPI), which confirmed that motivation to handwrite (directly activated by engaging, concrete writing media) is a significant predictor of both graphomotor skills and spelling performance in early primary grades.

The advantages of spelling card media, as identified in this study, align closely with those documented in the broader literature. Spelling card media is: (1) simple and easy for teachers to produce from locally available materials (manila paper, cardboard, markers); (2) portable, storable, and adaptable to various lesson phases; (3) visually engaging, stimulating student curiosity through card-based activities; (4) flexible, usable for individual reading practice, group activities, and competitive spelling games; and (5) directly aligned with the literacy goals of the 2013 Curriculum for Grade II Indonesian Language, specifically the development of capital letter usage, letter recognition, and simple sentence writing. These characteristics render spelling card media particularly appropriate for use in geographically remote, resource-limited primary schools in eastern Indonesia, where access to expensive or technology-dependent instructional media is constrained.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of spelling card media at SD Negeri 7 Aitinyo, Maybrat Regency, is conducted systematically across three interrelated stages of instructional practice: planning (preparation of syllabus, RPP, and spelling card media), implementation (three-phase Indonesian Language lesson with progressive student engagement in spelling card reading

and writing activities), and evaluation (integrated formative assessment of letter recognition, reading fluency, and simple sentence writing). The implementation of spelling card media is highly effective in improving students' writing literacy competence and learning interest in Indonesian Language at the Grade II level. Student enthusiasm, active participation, letter recognition accuracy, and confidence in reading and writing tasks all demonstrated progressive improvement across the observation period. Spelling card media is characterised by its low cost, ease of teacher production, visual engagement, and strong alignment with the concrete operational developmental characteristics of Grade II learners, making it a particularly appropriate and accessible instructional medium for remote primary schools in Maybrat Regency and comparable settings in West Papua Province. It is recommended that Grade II teachers at SD Negeri 7 Aitinyo and comparable schools continue to integrate and refine spelling card media as a core component of Indonesian Language writing instruction. Future research should investigate the long-term effects of sustained spelling card media use on students' writing skill development, compare its effectiveness with digital or augmented literacy media, and explore the applicability of this approach across different grade levels and school contexts in remote eastern Indonesia.

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