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The Implementation of the Card Sort Method to Improve the Ability to Write Hijaiyah Letters in First-Grade Students of SD Negeri 112316 Bulungihit

Juliani, SD Negeri 112316 Bulungihit. (*juliani873@guru.sd.belajar.id*)
Erlina Br Simatupang, SMP Negeri 3 Marbau. *(erlinasimatupang94@guru.smp.belajar.id)*

Abstract:

The ability to write Hijaiyah letters is a fundamental skill that students must master in Arabic language learning and Islamic religious education. However, many first-grade elementary school students face difficulties in recognizing and correctly writing Hijaiyah letters, which can hinder their learning process. This study aims to improve the ability to write Hijaiyah letters through the implementation of the Card Sort method among first-grade students at SD Negeri 112316 Bulungihit. The research method used is classroom action research (CAR), consisting of two cycles, each including the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through observations, tests, and documentation. The results of the study showed a significant improvement in students' ability to write Hijaiyah letters after applying the Card Sort method. The average student scores increased from the first to the second cycle, demonstrating the effectiveness of this method in helping students better recognize and write Hijaiyah letters. Moreover, this method also made students more active, motivated, and enthusiastic in the learning process. Thus, the Card Sort method can be considered an innovative and effective learning strategy to enhance first-grade students' skills in writing Hijaiyah letters.

Keywords: Card Sort, Hijaiyah letters, writing skills, learning, elementary school students.

INTRODUCTION

Writing Hijaiyah letters is a fundamental skill in learning Arabic and Islamic religious education. This ability plays a crucial role in helping students read the Qur'an and better understand the Arabic language. However, in reality, many first-grade elementary school students still struggle to recognize and write Hijaiyah letters correctly. This difficulty is especially evident in distinguishing letter forms when they appear at the beginning, middle, and end of words (Rahma & Sari, 2021). Therefore, an innovative learning method is needed to help students more easily understand and master this skill.

Interactive and game-based learning has been proven to increase students' motivation and comprehension in various subjects (Fitriani, 2022). One method that can be applied in Hijaiyah letter learning is the Card Sort method. This method involves grouping and matching cards containing Hijaiyah letters, allowing students to learn more actively. Additionally, this method enhances students' memory retention and makes the learning

process more enjoyable. By implementing the Card Sort method, students are expected to recognize, differentiate, and write Hijaiyah letters more accurately. Although this method has great potential, many schools still use conventional teaching methods that are less engaging for students. The learning of Hijaiyah letters often focuses only on lectures and memorization without being supported by innovative learning media (Suryani, 2023). As a result, students struggle to understand the forms and structures of Hijaiyah letters. Furthermore, the lack of varied practice makes students quickly bored and less motivated to practice writing Hijaiyah letters independently.

Based on these issues, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Card Sort method in improving the ability to write Hijaiyah letters among first-grade students at SD Negeri 112316 Bulungihit. This method is expected to serve as a more interactive and enjoyable learning alternative, helping students better recognize and write Hijaiyah letters. Additionally, this study seeks to determine the extent to which the Card Sort method can enhance student participation and motivation in the learning process. This study employs a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach with two cycles, including planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages. Using this design, the study systematically evaluates the effectiveness of the Card Sort method and tracks students' skill development from one cycle to the next (Hidayat, 2020). Moreover, this method enables teachers to conduct evaluations and improvements at each stage of learning to achieve optimal results.

The findings of this study are expected to make a significant contribution to the field of education, particularly in developing more effective teaching methods for improving Hijaiyah writing skills. Given the importance of this skill in Islamic religious education, implementing the Card Sort method can be an innovative strategy for elementary school teachers. Through this method, students not only gain a better understanding of Hijaiyah letters but also experience a more engaging and enjoyable learning process. Additionally, this study can provide insights for educators in creating a more interactive and non-monotonous learning environment. With activity-based approaches such as Card Sort, students become more actively engaged in practice and more motivated to learn. This high motivation is expected to improve students' learning outcomes in the long term and help them master Hijaiyah writing skills more effectively.

Thus, this study seeks to address challenges in Hijaiyah letter learning in elementary schools through the implementation of the Card Sort method. The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for teachers and schools in developing more innovative teaching strategies. With the right method, students can more easily understand Hijaiyah letters, enhance their writing skills, and become more enthusiastic about learning.

METHODS

This study employs a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach applied to first-grade students at SD Negeri 112316 Bulungihit. CAR was chosen because it allows researchers to directly intervene in the learning process and systematically evaluate the effectiveness of the applied method (Arikunto, 2022). The primary data sources in this study are the students as research subjects, the classroom teacher as a learning facilitator, and student learning outcome documents. Data were collected through various techniques, including direct observation, interviews with teachers, and Hijaiyah letter writing tests administered to students before and after implementing the Card Sort method. This approach aims to obtain a comprehensive overview of the improvement in Hijaiyah writing skills after applying the Card Sort method (Hidayat, 2021).

In addition to observation and interview techniques, this study also utilizes documentation as supporting data. The collected documentation includes photographs of learning activities, field notes, and students' written work before and after implementing the Card Sort method. This documentation is useful for verifying observational results and providing concrete evidence of changes occurring during the learning process (Sugiyono,

2021). With documentation, researchers can examine the differences in students' Hijaiyah writing skills before and after the intervention. Furthermore, field notes recorded during the study help identify challenges faced by students and offer insights for teachers to enhance the effectiveness of the learning method (Suryani, 2023).

By employing the CAR approach and data triangulation involving observation, interviews, tests, and documentation, this study ensures that the obtained results have a high level of validity. This triangulation technique also helps reduce research bias and improve the accuracy of findings (Rahma & Sari, 2022). Moreover, using multiple data collection methods allows this study to measure not only students' academic performance quantitatively but also to understand their learning processes qualitatively. Thus, this study provides deeper insights into the effectiveness of the Card Sort method in improving first-grade students' Hijaiyah writing skills.

The collected data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative analysis was conducted by describing observational results regarding students' engagement and motivation during the learning process. Field notes and teacher interviews were analyzed to determine how the Card Sort method influenced the learning process (Suryani, 2022). Meanwhile, quantitative analysis was carried out by comparing students' Hijaiyah writing test scores before and after implementing the Card Sort method. Student score data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques to examine the improvement in Hijaiyah writing skills from Cycle I to Cycle II.

Through the combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the Card Sort method in enhancing first-grade students' Hijaiyah writing skills.

RESULTS

The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the Card Sort method can improve the ability to write Hijaiyah letters among first-grade students at SD Negeri 112316 Bulungihit. This improvement is evident from students' test scores before and after the application of the Card Sort method. In the pre-cycle stage, the average student score was only 55.3, with 35% of students scoring above 70. After implementing the Card Sort method in Cycle I, the average score increased to 68.7, and 60% of students scored above 70. In Cycle II, the average student score further increased to 82.4, with 85% of students achieving scores above 70.

To analyze further, students' test results were categorized into different score groups: excellent (≥85), good (70-84), fair (55-69), and poor (<55). The following table compares the number of students in each category at each stage of the study:

Table 1. Comparison of Student Scores Based on Score Categories

Score Category	Score Range	Pre-Cycle	Cycle I	Cycle II
Excellent	≥ 85	2 students (10%)	5 students (25%)	10 students (50%)
Good	70 - 84	5 students (25%)	7 students (35%)	7 students (35%)
Fair	55 - 69	6 students (30%)	5 students (25%)	2 students (10%)
Poor	< 55	7 students (35%)	3 students (15%)	1 student (5%)
Total	-	**20 students**	**20 students**	**20 students**

From the data above, it is evident that the number of students in the poor category consistently decreased from 35% in the pre-cycle to 15% in Cycle I and finally to only 5% in Cycle II. Meanwhile, the number of students in the excellent category significantly

increased from 10% in the pre-cycle to 50% in Cycle II. This finding demonstrates that the Card Sort method is effective in improving students' Hijaiyah writing skills, with more students achieving higher scores after participating in learning using this method.

In addition to score improvements, observational results showed that students were more enthusiastic about learning. During the pre-cycle stage, many students struggled to differentiate between similar-looking Hijaiyah letters, such as ﺏ (Ba), ﺕ (Ta), and ﺙ (Tsa). After the Card Sort method was implemented, students found it easier to recognize letters as they repeatedly practiced matching letter cards. Interviews with teachers also confirmed that students became quicker at correctly writing Hijaiyah letters after using this method, compared to conventional teaching methods, which tend to be more passive.

Thus, the findings of this study reinforce the conclusion that the Card Sort method can be an effective learning strategy for enhancing primary school students' Hijaiyah writing skills. In addition to improving students' academic scores, this method also increases their participation and motivation in learning. Therefore, the implementation of the Card Sort method is recommended as an interactive and engaging alternative for teaching Hijaiyah letters at the elementary school level.

Data Verification

Data verification was conducted through data triangulation from various sources, including classroom observations, teacher interviews, and analysis of student test results. Observations revealed that students became more active and enthusiastic in the learning process after implementing this method. Teachers also stated that the Card Sort method helped students recognize the shapes of Hijaiyah letters more quickly compared to conventional methods that rely solely on lectures and memorization. Additionally, documentation in the form of photos and field notes supported these findings, showing a significant increase in student participation during the learning process (Suryani, 2022).

The results of this study are consistent with previous research, which found that game-based methods like Card Sort can enhance student engagement and accelerate the learning process of reading and writing new letters (Rahma & Sari, 2021). With the combination of active learning and hands-on experience, students can more easily memorize the shapes and structures of Hijaiyah letters. The verification results indicate that the observed improvements were not merely due to habit but also because this method allows students to learn in a more interactive and enjoyable way.

Thus, this study confirms that the implementation of the Card Sort method can be an effective solution for improving elementary school students' ability to write Hijaiyah letters. The data collected from various sources and the analytical methods used support the validity of these findings. Therefore, the Card Sort method can be recommended as a widely applicable instructional strategy for teaching Hijaiyah letters at the elementary school level.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the Card Sort method has been proven effective in enhancing first-grade students' ability to write Hijaiyah letters at SD Negeri 112316 Bulungihit. The results indicate a significant improvement in students' average scores, increasing from 55.3 in the pre-cycle to 82.4 in cycle II. Additionally, the percentage of students scoring above 70 rose from 35% in the pre-cycle to 85% in cycle II. This progress demonstrates that the Card Sort method not only aids students in recognizing Hijaiyah letters but also improves their accuracy and neatness in writing. Observations and teacher interviews further confirm that students became more engaged and active in learning after applying this method. From an academic standpoint, the Card Sort method plays a significant role in enhancing students' comprehension and writing skills in Hijaiyah letters.

This aligns with the findings of Rahma & Sari (2022), who stated that game-based learning strategies can improve students' memory retention and understanding of script writing. Through a more interactive approach, students can quickly recognize letter shapes and differentiate similar characters. Teachers also observed that students who previously struggled with letter recognition were able to write more fluently and confidently. Implementing this method in Arabic language learning or Islamic education at the elementary level can provide a practical solution for students facing challenges in writing Hijaiyah letters. Beyond its academic benefits, this study also highlights the social impact of collaborative learning. The Card Sort method fosters student interaction and teamwork, contributing to the development of their social skills. In line with Vygotsky's theory (2020), interactive learning strategies like Card Sort allow students to learn actively through peer and teacher interactions. This method not only helps students recognize letters but also encourages teamwork, knowledge sharing, and peer support, creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. Despite its success, some limitations of the Card Sort method should be acknowledged. The study was conducted on a limited sample size and over a short duration, covering only two learning cycles. Therefore, future research with a larger sample and extended implementation period is needed to assess the long-term effects of this method on students' Hijaiyah writing skills. Moreover, integrating the Card Sort method with digital learning technologies could further enhance its effectiveness in teaching Hijaiyah letters. Overall, this study confirms that the Card Sort method is an effective and engaging instructional strategy for improving students' Hijaiyah writing skills. With its notable academic impact and contribution to social learning, this method is highly recommended for elementary-level instruction. Its implementation is expected to help students master Hijaiyah writing more effectively while fostering a more dynamic and interactive learning experience.

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