



Urgency Analysis of Cursive Writing in Strengthening Literacy of Grade IV Students at Elementary School

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-04-19 Revised: 2026 04-22 Accepted: 2026 06-01	<i>This study investigates the urgency of teaching connected letter writing in strengthening literacy among Grade IV students at SD Negeri 2 Waisai, Raja Ampat. The problem arises from the decline of cursive writing, instruction due to the dominance of digital technology, which has reduced students' practice opportunities and weakened their ability to produce neat, legible writing. The research aims to examine the implementation of cursive writing instruction, assess students' proficiency, and evaluate its necessity in enhancing literacy. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving teachers and students. Analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model with triangulation to ensure validity. The findings reveal that while teachers consistently integrate cursive writing into lessons, methods remain conventional and media support is limited. Students show varied proficiency: some achieve neat and fluent writing, while others struggle with consistency due to insufficient prior practice. Despite these challenges, teachers emphasize the strategic importance of cursive writing in supporting literacy, as it fosters fine motor development, fluency, and readability—critical elements for effective communication. The study concludes that cursive writing is not merely a technical skill but a fundamental component of literacy development. However, limitations include the focus on a single school in a remote 3T area, restricting generalization.</i>
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1. Introduction

Students need to acquire reading skills to succeed in their 21st-century learning activities (Barus, 2024). Reading skills enable students to understand written material, while writing skills allow them to transmit their thoughts (Mubasir et al., 2025). Literacy serves as the foundation for high-quality educational programs because it is the fundamental skill required for primary education, laying the groundwork for future learning and enabling schools to meet national educational goals (Faizah et al., 2025). In this context, cursive writing contributes to fine motor skills, neatness, and readability, thereby strengthening students' writing literacy.

However, the rapid advancement of digital technology has shaped the instructional methods used by elementary school teachers. The use of cursive writing has significantly declined due to the dominance of digital devices. (Ghanamah, 2025; Mayer et al., 2020). The existing situation leads to decreased interest in learning cursive writing because people often see it as a traditional form of writing (Oliviasari et al., 2025; Weel & van der Meer, 2024). The requirement to teach cursive writing as a means to improve students' writing skills in elementary schools is an empirical issue that warrants further research (Baraud et al., 2018).

Dong & Yin (2023) emphasize that drawing cursive letters requires motor coordination, visual perception, and cognitive ability that support systematic writing skills. Semeraro et al. (2019) and Wright & Armann (2023) found that writing cursive letters helps pupils produce tidy, legible writing, which supports the development of writing literacy. But, contrasts with Mayer et al. (2020), who found digital tools can also support literacy. The research conducted by Pritami & Azizah (2023) and Rohman et al. (2022) found that teachers used traditional methods of instruction, including repetitive tasks that lacked interactive media support. This circumstance diminishes pupils' motivation and engagement in studying (Fauziyah & Kurniawan, 2020).

Many recent studies on literacy and written expression have emphasised the importance of what lies beneath the surface, particularly a better understanding of the elements or components of effective reading (*comprehension*) and writing (*composition*). However, almost all previous research has focused solely on the skill of cursive writing (Fauziyah & Kurniawan, 2020), that is, on the style of the practice: letter shapes/consistency of form/neatness. These studies have yet to examine the importance of cursive as a fundamental feature of written literacy—an aspect that enables students to think systematically and express ideas more deeply.

In addition, the constraints in practice teaching cursive writing, such as insufficient media and methods used, remain conventional, and the lack of motivation among students to learn writing is not well aligned with efforts to improve writing literacy in elementary schools (Candrawati & Purbani, 2025). Most prior studies focus on technical aspects such as letter shapes and neatness, while few examine cursive writing as a holistic literacy skill integrating motor, cognitive,

and communicative dimensions. This study addresses that gap.

This study addresses three primary questions based on the identified research gaps:

1. The execution of cursive writing instruction for fourth-grade students at Elementary School?
2. What is The status of students' cursive writing proficiency?
3. Is the necessity of cursive writing instruction in enhancing students' writing literacy?
4. This research aims to delineate the learning process, ascertain students' competencies and challenges, and evaluate the significance of cursive writing in enhancing writing literacy. This research's uniqueness is in its comprehensive examination of the necessity of cursive writing as a fundamental component of writing literacy among primary school kids, a topic that has not been thoroughly explored in other studies. It is anticipated to offer both theoretical and practical contributions.

2. Method

The primary method used is a qualitative descriptive type. This research employs a qualitative approach because it empirically addresses how to learn to form cursive letters and the urgent need to strengthen writing literacy from an early age for elementary school students. Using this method, the researchers could thoroughly investigate the experiences, perceptions and meanings constructed by the research participants within the actual learning context. The type of qualitative description itself is the systematic, factual and accurate description of conditions in the field (different physical, social, or psychological) that are real-if not manipulated. The researcher is the key instrument who directly involved in collecting data using observation, interviews and documents.

The study was carried out in Elementary School, Raja Ampat Regency. This site was selected due to the persistence of cursive writing skills, its relevance to writing literacy, and its representation of the state of primary schools in the most remote and underdeveloped (3T) regions. The research will occur during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, from March 7 to April 20, 2026, encompassing preliminary observations, data collection, and comprehensive information acquisition through interviews and documentation.

The research subjects consisted of one fourth-grade class of 28 students as the main participants, and one teacher as the supporting informant. Teachers were selected due to their direct involvement in the preparation and execution of cursive writing classes, whereas students were picked for their direct participation.

Data was collected through three main techniques. First, non-participant observation to observe teaching methods, student engagement, and media usage. Second, semi-structured interviews with teachers and students to explore the implementation of learning, challenges faced, perceptions of the importance of

connecting letters, and their relation to writing literacy. Third, documentation in the form of student writing samples, activity photos, and teaching materials used. Supporting instruments in the form of observation and interview guidelines were prepared to ensure that the data obtained is focused and consistent. The interview guide contained 10 questions for teachers and 8 questions for students, while the observation guide included 5 indicators: planning, implementation, interaction, media, and evaluation.

Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, presentation of data in the form of descriptive narratives, and drawing conclusions based on patterns, relationships, and meanings found. The validity of the data is maintained through technique triangulation (observation, interviews, documentation) and source triangulation (teachers and students), member checking by confirming interview results with informants, and observation persistence through repeated observations.

Table 1. Observation Framework

No	Aspect	Indicator
1	Planning	Teacher Readiness
2	Implementation	Learning Methods
3	Interaction	Student Activity
4	Media	Media Usage
5	Evaluation	Assessment Forms

The research procedure is carried out in stages, starting with preparation in the form of proposal writing and location determination, followed by the implementation of observation, interviews, and documentation. The next stage is data analysis through reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. Finally, the research results are compiled into a systematic report or thesis.

3. Result and Discussion

The Urgency of Learning Connected Letters in Writing Literacy

The research results at Elementary School, Raja Ampat, reveal several important findings that can be summarised in narrative form. The findings are based on student responses and classroom observations, complemented by the teacher's perspective on the importance of cursive writing.

First, the condition of the school within the 3T area imposes limitations on learning facilities and infrastructure. This still causes the learning process to rely heavily on conventional methods, although teachers continue to strive to teach connected letters extensively, especially in the fourth grade. The teacher stated: "*We continue to teach cursive letters, even tho the media is limited.*" The children are enthusiastic, but the interaction is still not optimal.

Second, cursive letter learning is implemented integratively across various

subjects. Teachers still use the drill method, such as providing examples on the blackboard, then students copy them into their own notebooks. This practice method does indeed cultivate writing habits, but the interaction between the teacher and students is still limited, so direct feedback is not optimally provided. Observations show that 80% of students actively copy the writing, but only 40% receive direct feedback. The teacher also emphasised that the main focus remains on reading and understanding the material, although connected letters are still widely applied.



Figure 1. The student is writing cursive letters.

Third, students' skills in writing connected letters show substantial variation. Some are already able to write neatly and legibly, while others still struggle to maintain consistency in the shape, size, and connections of the letters. This difficulty is generally caused by a lack of practice in previous classes, so some students are not yet accustomed to using connected letters consistently.

Table 2. Table of Variation in Skills of 4th Grade Students at SDN 2 Waisai

Student Skill Level	Number of students	Percentage (%)	Main Characteristics
High (<i>Neat and Consistent</i>)	15	53,6%	The writing is neat, consistent font size, clear letter connections, easy to read.
Moderate (<i>Quite Neat, Lacking Consistency</i>)	8	28,6%	The writing is quite neat, but the font size is inconsistent, and the connections are sometimes broken.
Low (<i>Difficulty Connecting Letters</i>)	5	17,8%	The writing is messy, letters are often broken, the letter shapes are inconsistent, and the readability is low.

Based on the table above, it can be determined that Students with high skills have good fine motor coordination and are accustomed to practising. Meanwhile, students with moderate skills show potential but still require repetitive practice

and teacher feedback, whereas students with low skills need intensive guidance, media support, and fine motor stimulation to develop; thus, this table of student ability variation facilitates understanding of the class conditions and can serve as a basis for planning differentiated learning strategies.

Fourth, teachers still consider the implementation of cursive writing instruction very important because it can help students improve their literacy skills. This ability is very important for maintaining the cleanliness, fluency, and readability of writing, which are directly related to the delivery of messages (requiring more effort) among students. A teacher explained: "*Students who are accustomed to writing in cursive usually have neater, more legible, and more orderly handwriting. They also write faster compared to students who are not used to it.*" This certainly helps them in completing written assignments at school. So, learning to write cursive letters is not only technically necessary but also strategically important for developing students' writing literacy at the elementary school level.



Figure 2. The teacher is using the drill method in teaching cursive writing.

4. Discussion

The instruction of cursive writing at Elementary School, which mostly employs the drill technique, may be associated with the writing skills hypothesis posited by Rofi (1999) which, underscores that writing is the ability to articulate thoughts and ideas via written language. While drill methods build habits, they limit engagement; integrating simple digital tools could enhance motivation. Repetitive practice aids in technical proficiency; nevertheless, as noted by Muharmah & Fauzan (2024), writing skills also demand language accuracy, vocabulary, and grammatical structure. This means that learning cursive should not only focus on mechanical aspects but also be directed toward the development of expression and written communication (Wittrock, 2017).

The disparity in pupils' abilities can be elucidated using the fine motor theory. As stated by Guillamón et al. (2021), fine motor abilities encompass synchronised hand motions, including writing and sketching. Students possessing proficient motor coordination have more ease in producing tidy writing; however those with weak motor abilities encounter challenges (Calixto et al., 2020). This aligns with Vilka (2025), which underscores that fine motor abilities encompass the capacity to utilise fingers and tools for self-expression in many forms. Besides that, this is

reinforced by also emphasising the importance of neuromuscular coordination and hand-eye coordination in writing skills (Carlson et al., 2013). Consequently, the instruction of cursive letters must include the physical developmental elements of kids, in addition to the cognitive ones.

Thus, students with good fine motor coordination find it easier to produce neat writing, while students with suboptimal motor development experience difficulties (Calero-Brito et al., 2024). This condition shows that the skill of writing cursive letters is not only influenced by cognitive aspects but also by the physical readiness of the students. Teachers need to provide intensive guidance and gradual practice so that writing skills develop according to the theory of fine motor development.

The significance of cursive writing is associated with literacy theory. Odi et al. (2025) posit that literacy serves as the foundation for cultivating successful learning, empowering pupils to adeptly seek and digest information. The Ministry of Education and Culture (2016) defines literacy as the capacity to access, comprehend, and utilise knowledge through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The ability to write cursive letters is not only a technical talent; it is a fundamental component of writing literacy that enhances pupils' critical thinking and communication skills. Because the study involved both students and one teacher, the analysis integrates learner perspectives with instructional insights, highlighting how teacher strategies and student practices interact in shaping literacy outcomes.

Moreover, mastering cursive letters establishes a basis for enduring literacy. This aligns with the directives of the School Literacy Movement (SLM), which underscore the necessity for literacy to evolve into a cultural norm within primary education. The amalgamation of cursive writing with additional literacy tasks, including narrative composition, summarisation, and the creation of basic reports, enhances the significance of these abilities.

The findings underscore the necessity for novel approaches to cursive writing instruction. Focusing on a single class and one teacher provides depth of understanding, but also limits the generalisation of findings to broader contexts. This aligns with the hypothesis stated by Fenuku (2024), which asserts that language acquisition should include all four linguistic competencies: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The incorporation of associated letters with additional literacy tasks, such as composing narratives or basic reports, fosters the comprehensive advancement of language abilities.

Furthermore, Arwinda et al. (2025) underscore the significance of appropriate stimulation in the advancement of children's fine motor abilities. Consequently, the instruction of cursive letters should be structured with a contextual and innovative methodology to effectively enhance both technical abilities and the motor and literacy development of kids.

5. Conclusion

This study's findings underscore the essential function of linked letter writing in enhancing literacy among Grade IV students at Elementary School. Notwithstanding infrastructural constraints in the 3T area, educators constantly incorporate cursive writing into their pedagogical practices, and pupils exhibit excitement for learning. Nonetheless, disparities in student competence indicate that although some attain clear and legible writing, others falter owing to inadequate prior practice and insufficient feedback. This highlights that cursive writing is not only a technical task but a strategic literacy skill that improves neatness, fluency, readability, and the capacity to communicate ideas effectively.

The study affirms that cursive writing enhances fine motor skills, cognitive coordination, and systematic thinking, consistent with literacy theory that regards writing as fundamental to communication and critical learning. However, dependence on traditional drilling techniques and insufficient media assistance diminishes student engagement and constrains the full potential of literacy advancement.

The study's limitations are its concentration on a solitary school in a distant location, perhaps lacking broader contextual representation. The qualitative descriptive methodology, however detailed, constrains the generalizability of findings to other schools with varying resources and pedagogical methods. Future studies should expand to multiple schools and teachers to capture diverse instructional approaches and student experiences.

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