

Improving Fourth Grade Students' Procedural Text Writing Skills Through Problem Based Learning at SD Negeri 4 Buntok

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-01-06 Revised: 2026-05-15 Accepted: 2026-06-14	<i>This classroom action research examined the use of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) to improve procedural text writing among 26 fourth-grade students at SD Negeri 4 Buntok. The study followed two cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through observation, writing tests, and documentation and analyzed descriptively. Success was defined as active participation by at least 80% of the class and a score of 70 or higher for at least 75% of the students. The findings indicate improvement in classroom participation and writing quality. Students became more active in problem analysis, group discussion, drafting, presentation, and revision. Their later texts showed clearer goals, materials, and ordered steps, together with more appropriate imperative sentences, action verbs, temporal conjunctions, spelling, and punctuation. The source manuscript also reports increased mean scores and classical mastery across the cycles, but the final values require author verification because the original abstract and conclusion contain conflicting figures. Overall, contextual problem solving, collaboration, and teacher feedback supported more coherent and functional procedural texts.</i>
Keywords: procedural text writing; Problem-Based Learning; classroom action research; elementary school; writing instruction	
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1. Introduction

Language competence is fundamental to students' communication, thinking, expression, and knowledge construction. Within the Merdeka Curriculum, literacy is treated as a central learning priority because students are expected to understand, evaluate, and produce information in meaningful contexts (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia, 2022). Writing is therefore not merely a mechanical language exercise; it requires students to organize ideas, select appropriate vocabulary, construct effective sentences, and communicate meaning to a reader (Tarigan, 2021).

Writing is a complex activity that combines linguistic, cognitive, and metacognitive processes. At the elementary level, students encounter several genres, including narrative, descriptive, expository, and procedural texts (Kosasih, 2021). Each genre has a specific communicative purpose, organization, and set of

language features. Procedural texts are particularly important because they teach students to present a goal, identify required tools or materials, and explain a sequence of actions clearly and logically. The genre consequently supports both functional literacy and systematic reasoning (Nuryani, 2021).

The preliminary classroom observation at SD Negeri 4 Buntok indicated that many fourth-grade students had difficulty producing complete and coherent procedural texts. More than 60% reportedly could not organize the text according to its expected structure. Their writing frequently omitted the goal or the tools and materials, presented steps in an unclear order, and used imperative language inconsistently. Student interest was also limited because instruction was described as teacher-centered and largely based on copying model texts. These conditions showed the need for a learning design that would provide a meaningful reason to write and opportunities to plan, discuss, draft, and revise.

Challenges in student writing have also been documented in other Indonesian educational contexts. Masruddin and Nasriandi (2022), for example, identified lexical and syntactic problems in students' descriptive writing, demonstrating the importance of focused instruction and corrective support. Collaborative prewriting and discussion can also assist learners in organizing ideas; Masruddin, Furwana, and Jafar (2021) reported improved writing performance after the use of a think-talk-write strategy. Although these studies involved different participants and text types, they support the broader view that writing development benefits from explicit scaffolding, interaction, and opportunities to refine language.

Problem-Based Learning is relevant to this need because it begins with a contextual problem and positions students as active participants in investigating and communicating a solution. In procedural text instruction, the problem can require students to determine how an everyday task should be performed and then express the solution as an ordered written procedure. PBL can therefore integrate problem analysis, collaboration, sequencing, drafting, presentation, and reflection within a single learning process. Comparable active and contextual approaches have supported engagement and learning in different settings. Contextual treasure-hunt activities have been associated with improved learning in elementary and language classrooms (Masruddin & Munawir, 2022; Munawir, 2020), while attractive literacy media have encouraged children's active participation in reading and writing activities (Marwiyah et al., 2023).

Previous studies cited in the source manuscript reported positive outcomes from PBL in science learning and expository writing (Lestari, 2022; Rahayu, 2021). Nevertheless, the application of PBL specifically to procedural text writing in an elementary classroom has received less attention in the manuscript's reviewed literature. The contribution of the present study lies not simply in its location but in the adaptation of PBL stages to the demands of procedural writing: students identify a practical problem, discuss possible solutions, organize the tools and steps, draft the procedure, present it, and revise it using feedback. This classroom action

research was therefore conducted to examine whether the adapted PBL process could improve (1) the quality of classroom participation during procedural text instruction and (2) the quality of fourth-grade students' procedural text writing at SD Negeri 4 Buntok.

2. Method

The study employed classroom action research using the cyclical structure of planning, action, observation, and reflection associated with Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon (2014). This design was selected because the study sought to address an identified instructional problem within a specific classroom and to refine the intervention through reflection after each cycle. The participants were 26 fourth-grade students. The study retained the intact class because the purpose of classroom action research was to improve the ongoing teaching and learning process in that setting rather than to compare independently assigned groups.

The intervention was implemented in two cycles, and each cycle comprised two meetings of 2×35 minutes. Planning included the preparation of a PBL-based lesson plan, student worksheets, learning media, observation sheets, writing tasks, and an assessment rubric. During the first meeting of each cycle, the teacher introduced a contextual problem and guided students in identifying the task, discussing possible solutions, and investigating the sequence needed to complete it. During the second meeting, students organized their ideas, wrote a procedural text, and presented the result. Observation was conducted during the learning process, and reflection was used to identify weaknesses and determine revisions for the following cycle. The source manuscript does not provide a detailed cycle-by-cycle account of the specific revisions made after Cycle I; this information should be added by the author before publication.

Data were collected through observation, writing tests, and documentation. The observation sheet was used to record student participation during problem orientation, discussion, investigation, drafting, and presentation. The writing test required students to produce a procedural text. The rubric evaluated four reported dimensions: text structure, language use, coherence of ideas, and presentation or neatness. The original manuscript states that the rubric was based on Hyland, but it does not identify the exact publication, score range, weighting, or adaptation procedure. These details require author confirmation. Documentation included lesson materials, field records, and examples of student writing.

The process criterion was achieved when at least 80% of the students were actively involved in PBL activities. The outcome criterion was achieved when at least 75% of the students obtained a score of 70 or higher. Writing scores were analyzed descriptively to identify changes across the pre-action stage and the two cycles. Observation data were analyzed qualitatively through data reduction, organization, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. The manuscript also mentions triangulation and teacher validation; however, the observer's identity,

validation procedure, and scoring-consistency process are not specified and should be clarified by the author.

3. Results

The classroom observations indicated that the PBL activities changed the instructional process from predominantly teacher-directed work to more active student participation. Students discussed the assigned problems, exchanged ideas, and considered how an everyday activity could be represented as a sequence of written instructions. The contextual tasks included familiar activities such as preparing food, planting, and completing simple household procedures. These topics gave students a concrete basis for deciding the goal, required materials, and order of steps.

Participation also became more collaborative. Students contributed ideas within groups, compared possible sequences, and presented their texts to the class. The teacher acted primarily as a facilitator by posing guiding questions, keeping discussion focused, and providing feedback. The presentation stage gave students an opportunity to explain their choices and respond to comments from peers and the teacher. The source manuscript states that most students eventually reached the “Very Good” activity category, but it does not provide cycle-by-cycle counts or percentages. Those observation data should be supplied to demonstrate whether the stated process criterion of 80% was achieved.

The learning process also encouraged more systematic attention to sequence and clarity. During group discussion, students had to determine which action should occur first, which materials were necessary, and how one step connected to the next. This reasoning was then transferred to the written text. The observed changes suggest that PBL provided an instructional bridge between practical problem solving and the organizational demands of procedural writing.

Students’ written work showed progressive improvement in completeness, sequence, and language use. In the later cycle, more texts included the expected components of a title or goal, tools or materials, and ordered steps. Students also used imperative sentences, action verbs, and temporal conjunctions such as “then,” “after that,” and “next” more consistently. Spelling, capitalization, punctuation, legibility, and overall presentation were also described as improving after repeated feedback and revision.

Table 1. Provisional quantitative results reported in the source manuscript

Stage	Mean score	Classical mastery	Reporting location and editorial status
Pre-action	73.8	65.4%	Reported only in the original conclusion; requires confirmation.
Cycle I	71.8	65.38%	Reported in the original abstract; requires confirmation.
Cycle II	84.6 / 95.6	92.3% / 100%	Conflicting values in the original abstract and conclusion; author must identify the correct figures.

The progression described for student A.S. illustrates changes in text organization. In the initial writing sample, the text “How to Make Orange Juice” consisted of two short sentences and omitted the tools and materials. In Cycle I, the student began to include the goal, tools and materials, and procedural steps, although repetition and sequencing problems remained. In Cycle II, the text contained five logically ordered steps connected by temporal expressions and used imperative sentences such as “Peel the oranges carefully” and “Add enough water to the blender.” The source manuscript initially labels the first sample as Cycle I and then refers to another Cycle I sample after the intervention; the chronological relabeling used here should be confirmed by the author.

Student D.N. showed a similar development. The earlier text used a narrative style and did not present an ordered procedure. In the following cycle, the student produced a clearer sequence but did not yet use action verbs consistently. By Cycle II, the writing included concise procedural sentences such as “Prepare the ingredients, including flour and eggs” and “Stir the mixture until evenly combined.” Field notes described the student as becoming more active in group discussion and more confident when presenting the text.

Student R.L. demonstrated improvement in language mechanics and presentation. Earlier writing contained frequent errors in spelling and punctuation, whereas the Cycle II text was described as more legible and more accurate in capitalization, full stops, and commas. The student also used a wider range of action verbs, including forms equivalent to “mix,” “cut,” and “boil.” These examples support the general pattern of improvement reported across the class, although the photographs and Appendix 7 mentioned in the source manuscript were not included in the submitted file.

4. Discussion

The findings suggest that PBL supported procedural writing by connecting the genre to a practical problem that students could understand and discuss. Instead of beginning with an abstract request to produce a text, students first

considered how an activity should be completed. This sequence gave them content to write about and required them to organize actions logically. The problem-solving phase therefore functioned as structured prewriting, while the presentation and feedback stages provided opportunities for clarification and revision.

The collaborative character of the intervention also appears relevant. The original observations describe students exchanging ideas, negotiating the order of steps, and improving texts after receiving peer and teacher feedback. This pattern is consistent with Masruddin et al. (2021), whose think-talk-write study emphasizes the value of discussion before written production. It also addresses some of the language difficulties highlighted by Masruddin and Nasriandi (2022), because students received repeated opportunities to notice and correct problems in vocabulary, sentence form, and text organization. The present study differs in age group, language, genre, and research design, so these comparisons should be understood as pedagogical parallels rather than direct replications.

Contextualization may have further increased participation. Familiar problems involving food preparation, planting, or household activities allowed students to draw on everyday knowledge. Research by Munawir (2020) and Masruddin and Munawir (2022) likewise shows that activity-based and contextual tasks can support learning when students interact with meaningful content. Rustan and Munawir (2020) argue that culturally familiar activities can be integrated into learning as methods and media, while Munawir et al. (2024) emphasize the need for educational materials that connect elementary students with their local context. Although the present intervention did not formally examine local wisdom, these studies support the broader principle that contextual relevance can make classroom tasks more accessible and engaging.

The reported increase in interest and participation is also compatible with evidence that attractive and concrete literacy experiences can encourage children to take a more active role in language learning (Marwiyah et al., 2023). Within this study, PBL gave students a degree of choice in discussing solutions, a visible goal in producing a usable text, and social support through group work. These features may help explain the increased willingness to participate. The interpretation is also broadly consistent with the autonomy, competence, and relatedness dimensions discussed in self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2020), although the study did not directly measure these motivational constructs.

The findings are consistent with the studies cited in the source manuscript that reported benefits of PBL for analytical learning and expository writing (Lestari, 2022; Rahayu, 2021). The present study extends that classroom-level evidence to procedural text writing by showing how the PBL stages can be aligned with the genre's communicative demands. However, the evidence remains context-specific. The study involved one class, lasted two cycles, and relied mainly on descriptive analysis. No control class was used, and the source manuscript does not report inter-rater agreement for writing scores. In addition, incomplete observation

frequencies and conflicting score summaries prevent a definitive numerical interpretation. The study's contribution should therefore be presented as evidence of classroom improvement rather than as proof of general causal effectiveness.

5. Conclusion

The implementation of Problem-Based Learning was associated with improvement in the process and outcomes of procedural text writing instruction in the fourth-grade class at SD Negeri 4 Buntok. Contextual problems encouraged students to discuss possible solutions, organize actions, draft a procedure, present their work, and revise it using feedback. The later writing samples were described as more complete, logically sequenced, and accurate in the use of imperative sentences, action verbs, temporal conjunctions, spelling, and punctuation. The classroom evidence therefore indicates that PBL can provide a practical structure for teaching procedural writing in this setting. Nevertheless, the exact mean scores and classical mastery percentages must be confirmed against the original assessment records because the source manuscript contains conflicting figures. The conclusion should remain limited to the investigated class and should not be generalized beyond comparable contexts without further evidence.

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