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Integration Of Critical Literacy And Writing Skills In Indonesian Language Learning Among Elementary School Students

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Abstract : *This study examines the relationship between critical literacy and writing skills among sixth-grade students at SDN 69 Kendari. Critical literacy is an important component of language learning because it enables students to identify relevant information, evaluate ideas, interpret texts, and develop evidence-based understanding. These abilities may be associated with students' capacity to organize ideas and communicate them effectively through writing. This study employed a quantitative correlational design involving 83 sixth-grade students selected from a population of 104 students using proportionate random sampling. Data were collected through a critical literacy test and a writing task assessed using an analytical rubric. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, the Shapiro–Wilk normality test, a linearity test, Pearson product-moment correlation, and the coefficient of determination with the assistance of IBM SPSS version 25. The results indicated that the data met the assumptions of normality and linearity. Pearson correlation analysis revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between critical literacy and writing skills ($r = 0.684$, $p < 0.001$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.468$) indicated that 46.8% of the variance in writing skills was statistically accounted for by critical literacy in the linear model. These findings suggest that students who demonstrate stronger critical literacy skills tend to achieve better writing performance. However, the correlational design does not establish a causal relationship between the variables. These findings highlight the importance of integrating critical reading and writing activities into elementary Indonesian language instruction. Teachers can implement activities that encourage students to identify relevant information, distinguish facts from opinions, evaluate textual content, develop evidence-based ideas, organize arguments, and produce coherent written texts.*

Keywords: **Critical Literacy, Writing Skills, Elementary Students, Indonesian Language Learning, Correlational Study**

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian language learning in elementary schools aims not only to develop reading and writing skills but also to foster students' abilities to understand, process, evaluate, and communicate information. Reading and writing are interconnected literacy skills because text comprehension provides a foundation for developing and expressing ideas in written form. Paramartha and Sukadana (2024) emphasized the importance of optimizing reading and writing skills through school literacy programs. Similarly, Novita et al. (2021) examined reading and writing proficiency among elementary school students in online learning contexts, while Taylor and Clarke (2021) discussed the relationship between reading and writing among primary school children. These perspectives support the integration of reading and writing activities to help students communicate ideas logically and meaningfully.

Critical literacy refers to the ability to understand, analyze, evaluate, and draw conclusions from textual information. This ability is essential for elementary school students because it enables them to move beyond literal comprehension, distinguish facts from opinions, and assess the relevance of information. Elhefni et al. (2020) examined critical reading skills and discovery learning through an Android-based application in elementary education. Jones and Manion (2023) explored critical literacy as an approach to child rights education in Uganda and Canada, while Ramadhani et al. (2024) compared critical reading skills within Turkish and Indonesian education curricula. These studies demonstrate that critical literacy involves more than understanding textual content.

In the context of this study, critical literacy is examined through students' abilities to identify relevant information, distinguish facts from opinions, evaluate the accuracy and relevance of textual content, interpret information, and formulate logical conclusions. Mutiara et al. (2026) investigated the role of metacognitive awareness in critical literacy instruction and its relationship with elementary school students' reading comprehension. Similarly, Taupik et al. (2026) analyzed the critical reading skills of sixth-grade elementary school students. These studies provide relevant perspectives for understanding the importance of information evaluation, reflection, and interpretation in elementary literacy development. These indicators provide the basis for examining students' ability to process and critically respond to information obtained from reading activities.

Writing is a productive language skill encompassing content development, idea organization, vocabulary selection, language conventions, and writing mechanics. Nevertheless, elementary school students often experience difficulties organizing ideas coherently and transforming information into complete written texts. Akib et al. (2026) examined elementary students' writing difficulties in Makassar, providing a contextually relevant perspective on the challenges students encounter. Nurazizah and Darmayanti (2024) reviewed elementary school students' writing skills through a systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis. Skar et al. (2022) investigated handwriting fluency and the quality of primary-grade students' writing, highlighting the importance of transcription-related skills in written performance.

In this study, writing skills are assessed through five aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and writing mechanics. Content refers to the relevance and development of ideas, while organization concerns the logical arrangement and coherence of written information. Vocabulary involves the selection and appropriateness of words used to communicate ideas. Language use relates to sentence construction and grammatical accuracy, whereas mechanics include spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. These aspects provide a framework for evaluating students' written performance, particularly their ability to develop, organize, and communicate ideas through coherent written texts.

Various instructional approaches have also been investigated to support elementary students' writing development. Adelina et al. (2023) examined the Brain Writing model to improve students' narrative writing skills. Nuroh and Adiyawati (2023) investigated the influence of digital storytelling on second-grade students' story-writing skills, while Yusella et al. (2023) examined lesson study as an effort to improve elementary students' writing skills. Akit and Wibowo (2025) investigated the Collaborative Writing Relay method for improving paragraph-writing skills, whereas Estafasari et al. (2025) discussed the Think Talk Write model. These studies emphasize the importance of idea generation, planning, collaboration, and systematic organization in developing writing proficiency.

Conceptually, critical literacy and writing skills are related through the processes of information comprehension, interpretation, evaluation, and idea development. Critical literacy enables students to identify relevant information, examine different ideas, distinguish factual statements from opinions, and formulate logical interpretations. These processes can provide informational and conceptual

foundations for writing because students need to understand and evaluate information before expressing their ideas in written form. Taylor and Clarke (2021) discussed the relationship between reading and writing in primary education, while Saputra et al. (2025a) examined the relationship between critical reading ability and Indonesian language learning achievement among fifth-grade elementary school students. However, critical literacy and writing remain distinct but potentially interconnected abilities.

Previous research has examined critical literacy, reading comprehension, writing difficulties, instructional strategies, and literacy-related learning outcomes from different perspectives. However, these studies have generally focused on particular literacy components, instructional interventions, or broader academic outcomes. Research on critical reading has primarily emphasized students' abilities to comprehend and evaluate information, while studies on writing have often investigated instructional models and the quality of students' written products. Further investigation is therefore needed to examine the direct relationship between critical literacy and writing skills within the same group of elementary school students. In particular, empirical evidence concerning this relationship among sixth-grade students at SDN 69 Kendari remains limited. This study addresses this gap by examining the association between the two variables.

This study aims to describe students' critical literacy abilities, describe their writing skills, and analyze the relationship between these two variables among sixth-grade students at SDN 69 Kendari. The population consists of 104 students, with a sample of 83 students determined using Slovin's formula at a 5% margin of error and selected through proportionate random sampling. The study employs a quantitative approach with a correlational research design. Critical literacy serves as the independent variable (X), while writing skills serve as the dependent variable (Y). Data were collected using a critical literacy test and a writing task assessed through an analytical rubric. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's product-moment correlation after the relevant statistical assumptions had been examined.

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational design to examine the relationship between critical literacy and writing skills among sixth-grade students at SDN 69 Kendari. The research population consisted of 104 sixth-grade students. A sample of 83 students was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin

of error. The participants were selected through proportionate random sampling to ensure that each class was represented proportionally in the sample. The research procedures included instrument preparation, instrument validation, data collection, data processing, and statistical analysis.

The research instruments consisted of a critical literacy test and a writing test. The critical literacy test assessed students' abilities to identify relevant information, understand main ideas, distinguish facts from opinions, analyze relationships between ideas, evaluate information, and draw conclusions. Meanwhile, the writing test was designed to assess students' ability to communicate ideas in written form. Students' writing performance was evaluated based on content, text organization, idea development, vocabulary use, language accuracy, cohesion and coherence, spelling, and punctuation. These indicators were used as the basis for developing the assessment instruments and scoring criteria.

The content validity of the research instruments was assessed through expert judgment involving two validators. The validators reviewed the relevance of the instrument items, clarity of the assessment criteria, appropriateness of the indicators, and alignment of the instruments with the research objectives. Their feedback and recommendations were used to improve the instruments before they were administered to the students. Instrument reliability was also examined to evaluate the consistency of the measurements. The writing test was assessed using an analytical scoring rubric containing specific criteria for each writing component. The assessment results were compiled according to the established scoring guidelines to support consistent evaluation of students' writing performance.

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS Statistics version 25. Descriptive statistics, including the minimum score, maximum score, mean, and standard deviation, were calculated to describe students' critical literacy and writing skills. Before conducting the correlation analysis, the data were examined using the Shapiro–Wilk test to assess normality and a linearity test to determine whether the relationship between the two variables followed a linear pattern. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation was then used to examine the relationship between critical literacy and writing skills. The significance level was set at 0.05. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was also calculated to identify the proportion of variance in writing skills statistically accounted for by critical literacy in the bivariate linear model.

Data collection was conducted after obtaining permission from the school administration and coordinating the research schedule with the relevant teachers. The critical literacy and writing tests were administered to the 83 selected students under standardized instructions. Each test session was allocated 35 minutes, with a total testing duration of 2 × 35 minutes. After completion, students' responses were collected, scored according to the established assessment criteria, and entered into the statistical analysis. The data were processed and reported in aggregate form to maintain the confidentiality of individual student results.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

This section presents the findings of the quantitative correlational analysis examining the relationship between critical literacy and writing skills among sixth-grade students at SDN 69 Kendari. The analysis was conducted to describe the characteristics of each research variable and determine the statistical relationship between critical literacy and students' writing performance. The findings are organized into six subsections covering descriptive statistics, normality testing, linearity testing, Pearson correlation analysis, and the coefficient of determination. The presentation follows the sequence of statistical procedures to provide a clear overview of the empirical findings and their relevance to the research objectives.

3.1. Descriptive Statistics of Critical Literacy

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to obtain an overview of students' critical literacy abilities based on the scores obtained from the research instrument. The analysis included the number of participants, minimum score, maximum score, mean, and standard deviation. These statistical measures were used to describe the distribution of students' scores and identify the extent of variation in their critical literacy performance. The results provide an initial description of students' abilities to identify relevant information, understand ideas, analyze information, evaluate arguments, and formulate conclusions based on the information presented.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Critical Literacy

Statistic	Value
N	83
Minimum	58
Maximum	94

Mean	77.42
Standard Deviation	7.86

As presented in Table 1, the critical literacy scores of the 83 students ranged from 58 to 94, with a mean score of 77.42 and a standard deviation of 7.86. The difference between the minimum and maximum scores indicates variations in students' critical literacy performance. The mean score represents the overall average achievement of the participants, while the standard deviation reflects the distribution of individual scores around that average. These findings provide an empirical description of students' critical literacy abilities and serve as a basis for examining their relationship with writing skills in the subsequent analysis.

3.2. Descriptive Statistics of Writing Skills

Descriptive statistical analysis was also conducted to examine students' writing skills based on the assessment results. The analysis focused on the minimum score, maximum score, mean, and standard deviation to identify the general distribution of students' writing performance. These indicators provide information about differences in students' ability to express ideas, develop written content, organize paragraphs, select appropriate vocabulary, and apply language conventions. The descriptive results are important for understanding the characteristics of students' writing performance before examining its statistical relationship with critical literacy.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Writing Skills

Statistic	**Value**
N	83
Minimum	55
Maximum	93
Mean	75.89
Standard Deviation	8.21

As shown in Table 2, students' writing scores ranged from 55 to 93, with a mean score of 75.89 and a standard deviation of 8.21. These results indicate that the participants demonstrated different levels of writing performance, as reflected in the variation between the lowest and highest scores. The mean score represents the average writing achievement of the students, while the standard deviation

indicates the extent to which individual scores differed from the average. This distribution provides an overview of students' writing skills, particularly their ability to communicate ideas in written form through appropriate content development, organization, and language use.

3.3. Normality Test

The normality test was conducted to determine whether the data for critical literacy and writing skills met the normality assumption required for parametric statistical analysis. The Shapiro–Wilk test was selected because it is commonly used to examine the distribution of data in research involving relatively small and moderate sample sizes. In this study, the test was applied separately to the critical literacy and writing skills variables. The decision regarding normality was based on comparing the significance values with the predetermined threshold of 0.05. The results of the normality test are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of the Shapiro–Wilk Normality Test

Variable	Statistic (W)	Sig.
Critical Literacy	0.976	0.087
Writing Skills	0.978	0.126

As presented in Table 3, the Shapiro–Wilk test produced a significance value of 0.087 for critical literacy and 0.126 for writing skills. Both significance values were greater than the 0.05 threshold. Therefore, there was insufficient statistical evidence to reject the normality assumption for either variable. These findings indicate that the distributions of the critical literacy and writing skills scores were consistent with the normality assumption for the purposes of this analysis. Accordingly, the data met the normality requirement for proceeding with the Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis.

3.4. Linearity Test

Following the normality assessment, a linearity test was conducted to examine whether the relationship between critical literacy and writing skills followed a linear pattern. This test was necessary because Pearson Product-Moment Correlation is intended to measure the strength and direction of a linear relationship between two quantitative variables. The analysis considered two components: Linearity and Deviation from Linearity. The Linearity component indicates whether a statistically significant linear relationship exists, whereas Deviation from Linearity

determines whether the observed relationship significantly departs from a linear pattern. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of the Linearity Test

Test Component	Significance
Linearity	<0.001
Deviation from Linearity	0.218

Table 4 shows that the significance value for the Linearity component was below 0.05 ($p < 0.001$), indicating a statistically significant linear component in the relationship between critical literacy and writing skills. Meanwhile, the significance value for Deviation from Linearity was 0.218, which exceeded the 0.05 threshold. This result indicates that there was no statistically significant deviation from the linear pattern between the two variables. Taken together, these findings support the conclusion that the relationship between critical literacy and writing skills satisfies the linearity assumption. Therefore, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was considered appropriate for examining the relationship between the variables.

3.5. Pearson Correlation Analysis

After the normality and linearity assumptions were examined, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was performed to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between critical literacy and writing skills. This analysis was intended to establish whether differences in students' critical literacy scores were statistically associated with differences in their writing skills. The analysis involved 83 sixth-grade students at SDN 69 Kendari, with the significance level set at 0.05. The correlation coefficient was used to identify the direction and magnitude of the relationship, while the significance value was used to determine whether the observed relationship was statistically significant. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Pearson Correlation between Critical Literacy and Writing Skills

Variables	N	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig.
Critical Literacy and Writing Skills	83	0.684	<0.001

As shown in Table 5, the Pearson correlation coefficient between critical literacy and writing skills was 0.684, with a significance value below 0.001. Since the significance value was lower than 0.05, the null hypothesis of no linear

correlation was rejected. The positive correlation coefficient indicates that students with higher critical literacy scores tended to obtain higher writing skills scores. Furthermore, the magnitude of the coefficient reflects a strong positive relationship between the two variables based on commonly used correlation interpretation guidelines. These findings demonstrate that critical literacy and writing skills were significantly associated among the sixth-grade students participating in this study.

3.6. Coefficient of Determination

The coefficient of determination was calculated to provide additional information about the proportion of variance in writing skills statistically accounted for by critical literacy in the bivariate linear model. This analysis complements the Pearson correlation results by expressing the squared correlation coefficient as a percentage. The coefficient of determination does not establish a causal relationship between the variables; rather, it describes the extent to which variation in writing skills is statistically associated with variation in critical literacy within the model. The results of this calculation are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination

Statistical Measure	Value
Pearson Correlation (r)	0.684
Coefficient of Determination (R^2)	0.468
Percentage	46.8%

As presented in Table 6, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.468, equivalent to 46.8%. This indicates that critical literacy statistically accounted for 46.8% of the variance in students' writing skills within the bivariate linear model. The remaining 53.2% represents the proportion of variance not accounted for by critical literacy in this model and may reflect the influence of other factors, individual differences, or measurement-related variability. The result provides further evidence of the statistical association between critical literacy and writing skills. However, the finding should be interpreted as an indication of shared statistical variation rather than evidence that critical literacy directly causes improvements in students' writing performanc

DISCUSSION

3.1. Relationship Between Critical Literacy and Writing Skills

The relationship between critical literacy and writing skills can be understood through the connection between comprehending information and producing text.

The findings of this study revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between critical literacy and writing skills ($r = 0.684$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that students with stronger critical literacy abilities tended to demonstrate better writing performance. Critical literacy enables students to identify main ideas, evaluate information, distinguish relevant evidence, and develop meaningful interpretations, while writing requires them to transform their understanding into organized and coherent texts. Through a meta-analysis of reading and writing research, Kim et al. (2024) found that the relationship between these two skills varies according to language components, developmental stages, and measurement methods. This perspective supports the present findings by showing that reading-related cognitive processes and written expression are interconnected, although the strength of their relationship may vary across contexts and assessment dimensions.

This relationship is also relevant to the development of argumentative writing. Shi (2024) found that discussion goals and student interactions may be associated with the quality of written arguments, including the use of evidence and the ability to respond to claims. In Indonesian language learning, students need to do more than understand reading materials; they must also process information to develop opinions supported by reasons. The present findings suggest that students who are more capable of examining and evaluating information also tend to demonstrate better writing performance. This relationship may be reflected in their ability to select relevant ideas, formulate arguments, and organize information into meaningful written expressions. Therefore, critical literacy can be viewed as one of the cognitive foundations that support the development of arguments. Nevertheless, the relationship identified in this study should be interpreted as an association between variables, rather than evidence that critical literacy is the sole determinant of writing quality.

3.2. Critical Literacy in Information Processing

Critical literacy is important because students encounter information that requires comprehension, examination, and evaluation before it can be used to develop ideas. Cahyani et al. (2026) discussed strengthening critical reading literacy through contextual story-based learning, while Asis et al. (2024) examined the Whole Language approach through journal-writing activities to support elementary students' reading and writing literacy. These studies suggest that literacy activities can be designed in an integrated and meaningful manner. In

classroom instruction, students can be guided to identify important information, examine reading materials, and express their understanding in writing. Such activities are relevant to connecting critical comprehension with productive language use.

Information processing is also associated with students' ability to develop and support their opinions. Nakrowi et al. (2024) examined elementary students' argumentative writing abilities and related instructional challenges, while Utami et al. (2024) investigated the use of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition model in teaching argumentative writing to elementary students. These studies highlight the relevance of developing thinking skills and incorporating reading activities into argumentative writing instruction. In this process, students need to identify relevant information, distinguish supporting evidence from less relevant details, formulate opinions, and organize reasons into coherent arguments. These activities illustrate how critical literacy can provide a foundation for written expression by supporting the selection and organization of ideas. Therefore, critical literacy instruction can be connected with writing activities that emphasize the quality of reasoning, relevance of evidence, and coherence of ideas.

3.3. Developing Elementary Students' Writing Skills

Writing skills develop through structured practice, opportunities to generate ideas, and feedback on written work. Akib et al. (2026), in a study involving elementary students in Makassar, identified difficulties in content development, sentence construction, and opportunities for writing practice. These challenges are relevant to the present findings because students' writing performance involves several interconnected components, including content, text organization, idea development, vocabulary, language accuracy, cohesion, coherence, spelling, and punctuation. Critical literacy may support these components by helping students understand information, select relevant ideas, and establish logical connections before expressing them in written form. Similarly, Asriyoni et al. (2025) discussed the development of writing skills through the Think Pair Share strategy, while Fitriya and Nuroh (2025) examined the use of digital flipbook media to improve writing skills. These approaches can inform the design of instructional activities that provide students with opportunities to develop their writing gradually.

Writing development also requires a learning environment that encourages students to participate actively in the writing process. Mohr et al. (2024) described evidence-based practices for strengthening integrated reading-to-writing instruction,

while Seymour et al. (2024) discussed the importance of providing writing opportunities across different activities throughout the school day. These studies support the view that writing should not be limited to the final task of a lesson but should be incorporated into the process of understanding and communicating information. In Indonesian language instruction, teachers can integrate text reading, content discussion, note-taking, drafting, and revision. Through these interconnected activities, students have opportunities to transform their understanding of texts into written ideas, evaluate the relevance of their content, and improve the organization of their compositions. This process provides a meaningful context for developing writing skills alongside critical literacy.

3.4. Implications for Indonesian Language Learning

Integrating critical literacy and writing skills can be achieved through instruction that connects text analysis with written production. Bilqis et al. (2023) examined the development of interactive electronic books for teaching argumentative paragraph writing, while Tabassum and Ajmal (2024) investigated reading-to-writing strategies to support elementary students' narrative writing skills. These studies demonstrate various ways to connect reading materials with writing activities. Teachers can select texts appropriate to students' ages and experiences, ask them to evaluate the information presented, and then use that information to develop written responses. These activities should be adapted to instructional objectives, student characteristics, and assessment indicators so that reading and writing activities have clear purposes.

The use of instructional media and collaborative approaches can also expand students' opportunities to develop and improve their writing. Islamiyah et al. (2025) discussed strengthening advanced writing skills in elementary schools through collaborative approaches and technology-based innovations. Meanwhile, Zulkarnain et al. (2025) reviewed the use of interactive media in Indonesian language writing instruction. These studies provide relevant perspectives on the use of media and classroom interaction to support the writing process. However, the use of technology or particular instructional strategies should be guided by clearly defined learning needs rather than simply by a desire to vary instructional media. Students still need guidance in evaluating information, organizing ideas, using appropriate language, and reviewing their written work.

Overall, the literature reviewed suggests that the relationship between critical literacy and writing skills can be understood through information processing, idea

development, and the written communication of opinions. Lestari et al. (2026) discussed reading and writing literacy in elementary Indonesian language instruction, while Salam et al. (2025) examined the relationship between WhatsApp use and students' essay-writing skills. These studies provide additional perspectives on literacy development and contextual factors associated with writing activities. The present study contributes empirical evidence of the positive relationship between critical literacy and writing skills among elementary school students, highlighting the importance of addressing these abilities in an integrated manner in Indonesian language learning. However, because this study employed a correlational design, the findings do not establish a causal relationship between the two variables. Future research could employ experimental designs to examine the effectiveness of integrated critical literacy and writing instruction, while also considering other factors that may be associated with students' writing performance.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between critical literacy and writing skills among sixth-grade elementary school students ($r = 0.684$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that students with stronger critical literacy skills tend to demonstrate better writing skills. Through critical literacy activities, students learn to identify relevant information, evaluate ideas, formulate opinions, and organize their understanding into coherent written texts. These findings highlight the importance of integrating critical reading and writing activities in Indonesian language learning to provide students with opportunities to develop analytical thinking, express ideas clearly, and communicate information effectively. Therefore, literacy instruction should emphasize not only the comprehension of reading materials but also the application of information in written communication. A learning environment that encourages questioning, discussion, reflection, and revision can support students' overall literacy development.

Teachers are encouraged to integrate critical reading activities with structured writing practice using contextual and age-appropriate materials. Students should be guided to evaluate information, develop arguments, organize ideas, and revise their writing based on constructive feedback. Schools should provide adequate literacy resources and support instructional practices that connect reading with writing. However, because this study employed a correlational design, the findings establish an association between critical literacy and writing skills rather than a

causal relationship. Future research should examine additional factors associated with students' writing skills and investigate the effectiveness of integrated critical literacy instruction through experimental or quasi-experimental designs involving broader samples and different educational contexts

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