

# Spirit in Child's Poem during Pandemic

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## ABSTRACT

There are many ways that people have done in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and one of them is through poetry, such as Tangguh Langit Mahajuna (7 years old). His poem entitled Corona Virus was posted by the Governor of West Java, Indonesia, Ridwan Kamil on April 2, 2020 with 182,200 likes. And it makes this poem interesting to analyse. This study aims to describe rhythm, rhyme, sound pattern, repetition, and imagery. The study will also be seeking the semantic development in creating a poem in elementary students. The research method used is qualitative. This research is conducted by analysing, because the data itself doesn't contain or need a numerical technique in reaching fully interpretations. The grand theory used in this paper is Norton (1983) looking the children elements in children's literature. The results show that rhythm, rhyme, sound pattern, repetition, and imagery in poem show the feeling of what they face during pandemic situations, but also offering a positive spirit for all of the people in facing this moment. The conclusion shows us that poetry in children's poems can be used as a medium to encourage and emphasize readers in this pandemic situation.

**Keywords:** *Child's poem, elements in poetry, pandemic, spirit.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

There are so many things to do in responding Covid-19 pandemic, especially when most of the country in the worlds enforce lockdown regulations. Most of the people having an awkward feeling. It caused by the situations that they never been experienced before. These situations forced people to search and conduct some activities which can help them to reduce the feeling that they have. In the study of literature, we can find several societies reacted to the covid-19 pandemic era. Some of them made some poems and try to reveal some ideas, feel, or even reactions. The poems usually talking about fear, paranoid, and hope. Also, there were several research conducted by the researcher regarding to the respond of the covid-19 pandemic, related to the study of poetry. According to Dean (2021) and Dera (2021) most of the readers of poem during pandemic in Netherlands and Belgium consist of negative attitude. But it's quite different with the research that conducted by Acim (2021) he says that through poetry some of the societies making a poem during pandemic lockdown, and they try to recollection and introspection to decrease the panic and anxiety. This article also described with poems the societies build a network, because of the sameness feeling, and also, they made a poem governed with verse also they made a rhythmical prose.

The research about the poem related to covid-19 pandemic also has been done by Herwan and Devi (2020). They analyzed and given metaphors images in poetry with covid 19 themes by elementary students. The result of the research described those metaphors used by children's poem are anthropomorphic metaphors because they consider comparing something like what they have been experienced.

In Indonesia, there were several news related to productions of poems related to pandemic covid-19, especially a poem has been made by a child in elementary class. Commonly a characteristic of children's work is they only write about everything which has closed to them.

Writers found some of children's poems response in the pandemic situations. One of them is children's organizations, *Save the Children* is published a poetry book made by children's in Nusa Tenggara Timur. entitled *Buku Kumpulan Puisi Hasil Lomba Literasi 2020*. Thus, poems as a part of children's literature discuss about what they feel about this situation and try to adapt with current situation that has never experienced. one of the poems on that book is made by Ora that described about changes situations rapidly, the poems try to compare about pre-pandemic with current pandemic situations side by side. Pre-pandemic situations portrays

the happy situations with the family, friends, and teachers. The setting is taken in home, school, and during holidays. In the end of the poem is consist of a conclusion which talked about the hope for a better situation with using a religious aspect, asking the God to erase the virus in the rest of the world.

The writers also found a children poem in South Bontang that talked about Covid-19 pandemic. The poem also uses the comparative techniques, comparing the current situation with past situation. What makes this poem is different with the previous one is the poems likely to knock the human being to wake up from their mistake in facing the worlds. After reading this poem, we conclude that this poem is closed with the religious theme. Another poem describes about pandemic situations by Prameswhari, she is the winner of festival in making a poem. This event is held in celebrating of National Childrens Days in the years 2020. Interestingly, this poem having a bold in using rhyme and rhythm, like in her first line *“di awal tahun, saat bulan ketiga baru menyapa, sebuah berita dating menerpa”* (in the early years, when on the month of third, there is a sudden news). Same with the other poems, it also described about the current situations versus the past situations, and she uses the techniques of comparative also. And in the end of the poem is talking about the conclusions, what we supposed to do in facing the pandemic situations.

There is a poem also another poem made by Tangguh Langit Mahajuana (7 years old) with making poems. His poem entitled *Virus Corona*. Same with other poems, talking about the pandemic situations caused by the corona virus. This poem become one of a children’s poems that has a unique treat because was posted by the governors of West Java, Indonesia, Ridwan Kamil on his Instagram by April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020. As we know the Governors is one of the leaders that has 13,8 million followers, and one of the politicians that has a biggest follower in Indonesia. The post of the poem has 182.200 likes (Aunulloh, 2020; Fa’izah, 2020; Hidayat, 2020; Komarudin, 2020; Yusuf, 2020). In his post, the governors write a caption *“Puisi Penyemangat dari anak SD”* (Spirit Poem from an elementary student).

The poem portrayed about the social condition in the view of a child and written in the form of a poem. The poem also talking about the same thing with other children’s poem in facing the pandemic situations. The poem consists of hope, judgment, and feeling of a child in facing social conditions during the covid-19 pandemic with using a simple and natural language. Here is the poem.

#### *PUISI PENYEMANGAT DARI ANAK SD.*

*Waktu tahun 2019, kita nyaman.  
Dan 2018, Kita nyaman.*

*Tapi sekarang susah.  
Semua dewasa tidak bekerja.  
Dan semua anak tidak boleh sekolah.*

*Sekarang tidak boleh jalan-jalan, tidak boleh bersentuh.  
Dan kalau salam tidak boleh dekat.*

*Tapi kita tidak boleh menyerah.  
Kita tidak boleh putus asa.*

*Untuk negara kita Indonesia.  
Kita harus bergabung, untuk berlindung dari virus corona (corona virus).*

The purpose of this research is to describe the use of rhythm, rhyme, sound pattern, repetition, and imagery in a poem by Mahajuana. The method of this research using a qualitative method. This research conduct analysis of elements in a poem as Norton (1983) explains the poet uses everyday language in different ways to encourages readers to see familiar things in new ways, to draw on their sense, and to fantasize with the imaginative quality of their minds. The poet also uses certain devices to create the medley of sounds, suggest a visual interpretation or imagery, and the important one is trying to make a positive message to others or himself. The poet bolds it with rhythm, rhyme, sound patterns, repetitions, but less of figurative language.

## **2. METHOD**

The research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method to gain a comprehensive meaning in the form and content of a poetry (Sandelowski, Docherty & Emden, 1997; Sandelowski, 2000; Nassaji, 2015). This non numerical analysis used the data in a qualitative form and used to get a full understanding about the diction in the poems. The diction related to the sounds of the poem produces. The meaning of the poems was then uncovered.

## **3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In this part, we will try to divide semantic development in 7 years old children can be seen in his poem. Children can explain who, what, when, where, and for whom in his poem, even though with simple language. Just like in these lines:

*Waktu tahun 2019, kita aman.* (In years 2019, **we are saved**)  
*Dan 2018, kita nyaman.* (And 2018, **We are comfort**)

*Tapi sekarang susah.* (But **now is hard**)  
*Semua dewasa tidak bekerja.* (All **adult is not working**)  
*Dan semua anak tidak boleh sekolah.* (And all children can't go to school)

In that line, with his limited knowledge, a child can identify the situations and try to compare those situations that he has been experienced if we look from the previous time and time when he writes his poem. Adult as a subject in this Child's poem can't do everyday activity such as going to their work, and second subject is children that can't go for school. Both of them is as a form of his observation in looking and feeling of the social condition with real. Although, he can explain in his poem just like what, who, where, and for whom, but it feels like stammered when he tries to explain the situation has been changed. The child can capture a huge image of the social condition surround him and write it into a piece of arts, a poem. Besides, semantic development, the phonologic development at the age of seven still occurs. "Spirit poem of elementary students" produced words that have a repetition effect. He knows that a poem consists of sound similarity in several lines and giving certain effects in his poem.

What makes a poem different from other works/genres is the sound pattern. The beauty of a poem is created by the sound pattern. Although some grown-up people say that children's poems cannot be categorized into literary works, the meaning of children's poems that delivered clearly with choosing of the sound pattern becomes an important thing. Pradopo (2005) argues that sound has an impact in deepening in meaning, creating a clear feeling and image, also giving special circumstances.

As they have grown up, children with age 5-7 years commonly have to master the vocabulary, grammar, meaning, and pragmatic in language use. What we see clearly in his poem is when a child considers the aspect of the language sound of his poem. There are two kinds of sounds pattern which has a connection with his poem, euphony, and cacophony. Cacophony is a combination of non-melodious, meanwhile, euphony is vice versa. Euphony usually portrays love, affection, peace, and others that have relations with happiness. But cacophony is the reverse of euphony, the atmosphere is more unhappy and anxious.

His poem has a lot of vocal sound [a] in each line, and vocal [u] in the stanza of the third and fifth. Sound of [a] giving a beautiful and rhyme tone when read by the readers.

The poem consists of circumstances changes or the atmosphere of certain situations, from happiness to anxiety. In the first line, he uses repetition that build a rhyme and that giving a balance impression.

*Waktu tahun 2019, kita nyaman.* (When years 2019, **we comfort**)  
*Dan 2018, Kita nyaman.* (And 2018, **We feel comfort**)

To portrays the balance of daily situations, the word "nyaman" (comfort) repeated twice to assert in the years of peaceful and happy feeling in their daily life, and it's same as the characteristics of euphony. The repetition in his poem also gives a peaceful meaning for the readers. When we try to find Indonesia thesaurus the antonym word of "nyaman" (comfort) are angry person, riot, noisy, poor, and sad.

Meanwhile, the poet doesn't write the word *angry person, riot, noisy, poor, sad* in the next line, he tries to choose the word that doesn't have less negative impact.

*Tapi sekarang susah.* (But **now is hard**)  
*Semua dewasa tidak bekerja.* (All **adult does not work**)  
*Dan semua anak tidak boleh sekolah.* (And all children can't go to school)

That stanza having cacophony and euphony sounds, a total of rhyme in each line are not same. But the poet tries to giving a repetition in his poem, and it gives three possibilities effects that will feel by the reader, euphony, cacophony, or both of them directly.

Uncertain sounds of cacophony and euphony describing anxiety and emotional changes that feel by the children, starting from stable and comfortable circumstances become a riot or chaos in doing past routines. Sadness is also become a hard moment is trying to describe by the poet with the word "*sekarang susah*" (now is hard), "*dewasa tidak bekerja*" (adult does not work), "*anak tidak boleh sekolah*" (and all children can't go to school).

Comfortless in a seven-year-old point of view is through three discourses in the three lines of his poem.

Diction choosing that portrayed the child's experience in facing his hard life is quite simple. Child experience and observation are finite and simple also creating a simple language of a poem. The poem is far from complicated dictions or a lot of metaphors. Word choosing is quite simply similar to the daily language. Simplicity in choosing words is related to the children's language that has still develops, and also having a limited in the numbers of vocabularies. The meaning of the stanzas of his poem is denotative. Mastery of allusion and connotation is having a distance for seven years old child, especially in creating a poem. But, for deepening the

meaning, the child considering the sound of language in his poem.

*Sekarang tidak boleh jalan-jalan, tidak oleh bersentuh.* (Now, we can't go for a walk, can't touch)

*Dan kalau salam tidak boleh dekat.* (And we can't close for greet)

In creating creative expression in his poem, the child is using a simple technique. With simple techniques he tries to make a several significances, with the freedom in expressing his/her idea and feel, the student also can choose the language style in describing it (Ampera, 2020: 58). If we look at the Spirit Poem from an elementary student that was posted by the governors, the language is considered to be the daily language uses. It indicated that the poem has its own freedom in expressing the ideas, and choose its own style of language, with natural and simple ways.

Looking into children semantics development, then the words that he chooses in his poem are influenced by social conditions, geography, economy, of its own neighborhood. so, the word that he creates doesn't far from of words "work", "school", "hard" and prohibition sentence "don't" "take cover", "desperate". Some of the words is related to the spreading news that he heard in his own ears, regarding to covid-19.

Most of the news brings up some fear for the society, and there are also many sentences in that news contain negative words such as "don't" "should not" or "no" during the pandemic. Through the news or from family chit-chat, children heard all of the sentences, and fill it into his poem. It could be a sign that the social conditions, geography, and economy surround him influenced the development of children's semantics in creating literary works or poem in this case.

Related to diction choosing and sound language, the poem's imagery is to create emotional changes such as anxiety versus hope. It can be seen in the first line which is called the word "*nyaman*" (comfort) appeared twice, then in the next lines, the poet writes the word "*susah*" (hard) as a signified of sudden social changes that experienced by the poet. In the next line, the poet also writes the word "don't", "not work" and "don't despair" in the two last stanzas. Words of "don't" repeat seventh times, and the word "can't" also appear in some stanzas.

It becomes a sign which describe that there are so many prohibitions in doing daily activities. In the first stanza, he tries to compare the conditions in the years of 2018 when he live with a normal situation with the years of 2019 when the situations upside-down. In the next line of his poem, he is not using the word of "uncomfortable" as a comparison, but he tries to explain that there is consist of a comfortless situation in this pandemic era. He feels so anxious, and so do they (children or adult) in facing the new situation. As a characteristic of children's

literary works, his poem also has a hope or a big wish in confronting the current situations.

*Tapi kita tidak boleh menyerah.* (But we don't give up)

*Kita tidak boleh putus asa.* (We don't despair)

The poet wants to give a spirit and a wish to the readers that there will be hope or solution in the middle of uncertain situations. in the last two stanzas, there is an invitation for the readers to keep tight to the hope for a better future. This is a typical of children vision as person who has a space in the middle of adult discourses. Positive with high expectations is an important thing in facing the future in children's imaginations, and it can be a positive vibe during pandemic for all of the adult societies.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Through the limitations of their knowledge, children have their way of expressing the situations surrounding them, naturally and artistically. Children literatures have their special characteristics. In this case, the works are written by a child, and as we can see that children as a person who has a right in expressing their feeling try to educate the reader (children or adult) to have a positive feeling for what we experience today, especially related to the conditions during the pandemic.

#### AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows: study conception and design: Dheka and Erik; data collection: Dheka; analysis and interpretation of results: Dheka, Erik, Kiki; draft manuscript preparation: Dheka, Erik. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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