

Promoting Students' Creativity and Expression in Reading Literacy Using Poems

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 pandemic greatly influences the educational world, for example, the learning shifts into online learning. Online learning brings various effects, both joyful and boring effects. This research aims to invite learners to write poetry to lose their boredom. This qualitative research method collected the data with a questionnaire, interview, and literature study. The results showed the expression and creations toward the learning during the pandemic. They were happiness and boredom. From both expressions found in poetry, learners were more creative to write and to express their feeling in written forms. This research is useful to prepare learners with writing skills based on the encountered feeling into poetry. The expression refers to the feeling that is written to produce sympathy toward online learning during the pandemic in Indonesia. Thus, the expressions, such as happiness, missing, annoyance, care, and hope, can be practiced to express in written form, poem.

Keywords: *Pandemic, Creation, Expression, Poem.*

1. INTRODUCTION

For the last two years in this world, covid-19 outbreak has had great impacts, including for education. This impact shifts the learning from *traditional learning* or office learning into distance learning or online learning. Unfortunately, both learners and teachers have problems and difficulties dealing with the learning shifts [1], especially dealing with related facilities and skills to use the online and digital media. Practically, online learning in many countries has been carried out for almost two years since the pandemic, including in Indonesia. Learners seem not to feel satisfied during online learning. They even feel bored studying because they only sit in front of Google Meet, YouTube, Video Call, E-learning, Google Classroom, teleconference, etc. They seemed not satisfied or feel bored with the daily learning. They usually have the classes via Google Meet, YouTube, Video Call, E-Learning of Madrasah, Google Classroom, Teleconference, etc. Recent studies showed the dissatisfaction or the boredom of the learners during online learning. Most of them were due to distraction and reduced focus, psychological issues, and management issues [2]. Thus, many strategies must be developed to deal with the problems.

One of them is expressing the feeling into poems to lose the boredom and dissatisfaction with the online

learning material process. Writing a poem can also represent the feeling or expressions of the learners. With poems, learners could argue, express, imagine and create freely that is important theoretically since poems as aesthetic elements. Theoretically, it is important because poetry is an epic art with an aesthetic element. The aesthetic elements can be the expressive and sharing media for the writer. Pradopo illustrates that an idea and thought in poetry can invoke emotion and feeling. They are the results of a poet's imagination upon the sentence arrangement of a set of beautiful and meaningful vocabulary. It means the poetry describes and interprets the human experience realized into a poetical framework so it becomes meaningful in terms of life meaning [3]. Life experience can be the inspiration source to realize in a poem. The poem allows self-expressive representation and shares the ideas and feelings of individuals. Poetry, from various ways to express feeling, can express something felt or heard. It is a beautiful literature work that integrates rhythms, sounds, words, and emotions. Poetry is a combination of rhymes, sounds, words, and emotions. The collaborations and the integrations make the poem alive and meaningful. Poetry resembles meaningful life [3]. It provides benefits for learners to express their ideas, notions, and feelings to listen, observe, and feel. It can also be a creative and expressive opportunity to express the feeling and thought of a writer with beautiful and exciting words.

Learners need motivation at an early age or primary education to develop their creativity. Writing poems can create and produce new words. This activity indirectly trains learners to develop their imaginative powers. Besides, the emerging thoughts via writing poems may become the reference to determine the learners' cognition divergently because writing poems refer to a process of creating a new world and thinking divergently [4]. The creative process of a poet consists of individual, social, and religiosity [5]. Creative writing offers opportunities for learners, such as to dream of, imagine, prepare the content, express, and think about an ideal freely and actively. It drives the writers to feel happy with their efforts and to compose trusted content (Göçen, 2018b). Creative writing is a primary skill (Arthur & Zell, 1990). Many researchers investigated creative writing, especially learners. Many studies only focused on the creative processes of learners. Creative writing motivates learners to have academic achievements [6]. Leigh, in the researcher's creative process, found that writing with some ideas could lead to collective portraits observed by learners. Leigh used the writing method with some ideas from observation toward some figures collected by learners. By observing a phenomenon, learners could determine the related dictions. The creative thinking process refers to the collective idea developed into a poem [7].

The delivered argument variety of the authors reveals the creative process of the learners consisting of developing ideas, thinking, selecting the diction, and writing. The previous studies about the creative poetry of learners emphasized on intrinsic elements of poetry. Andi Srimularahmah explained the objective of writing poetry was to find theme, suggestion, tone, diction, linguistic style, feeling, words, and typographical aspects [8]. However, the author only focused on writing contemporary poetry as media to express feeling. Therefore, this study maps learners' feelings expressed via poetry. This research, this research deals with online learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic. By mapping the feelings based on the learners' sharing, the researcher could determine the emotion levels of the learners during the online learning. This research also aims to find out the learners' creativity in writing, especially writing a poem.

2. METHODS

The applied method consisted of research approach, data and data source, data collection technique, data validity technique, and data analysis technique. Based on the collected data, this category of this research is qualitative research. Qualitative research focuses to understand problems experienced by subjects. It describes the problems in the forms of words or language uses in a certain natural context scientifically. Leach also argues that the qualitative method, besides the quantitative epidemiological method, is useful due to its

transparency and focus that deals with *what* and *how*. Interview, group discussion, and observation explore and reveal various perspectives, meaning, and motivation. From the interview, the researcher obtained data about the occurring phenomenon in the certain community [9]. Krale (1996: 174) explains interviews as a data collecting method via conversation. It uses some questions from an interviewer to make a respondent answer or describe certain phenomena or events the respondent encounters. Schostak (2006: 54) explains interview is an extended conversation between speakers and speech partners to obtain comprehensive information about a certain topic, subject, or phenomenon. This technique allows interviewers to interpret the meaning delivered by the interviewed respondents. Marshall & Rossman (2006) explains that focus group interview is also frequently used besides individual interview. Alshenqeeti, in the research titled "Interviewing as a Data Collection Method: A Critical Review," explains four applicable methods of interviewing techniques. The first one was - structured interview. This method consisted of questions for respondents so the respondents do not have the freedom to answer. The second method was - open interview. This method allowed interviewers to ask questions so that respondents could select various answers. The third interview was semi-structured. This interview was more flexible because the respondents had opportunities to answer and they could look deeper into their problems. The fourth interview was a group interview. The interview was selected by respondents to represent each group or population [10].

Thus, in this research, the researchers used semi-structured interviews because it allowed respondents to argue freely dealing with the engaged problems. This semi-structured interview provided answers so respondents freely argue the problems. The most common data collection for qualitative research, according to Oakley, is the qualitative interview. It refers to the practical and standard framework that is not only recorded but also achieved, challenged, and revised. The reason is - all research interviews must have structures. Then, most qualitative research interviews are semi-structured, moderate structured, or deep structured. The unstructured interview still becomes a recommendation for a researcher because it involves extended thoughts. This method has wider scopes of cognition. More time investment lead to wider ideas and notions to establish [11].

The data collecting techniques consisted of literature study, data analysis technique, and semi-structured interview in the forms for questionnaire for learners as the instrument. With this technique, the researcher obtained expressed feelings in the poetry toward online learning the learners experienced for almost two years. The researcher used the interview to the preliminary research data, to find the investigated problems, to find out more comprehensive matters of the respondents in a limited number of respondents. The researchers did the

interview excellently to obtain comprehensive data that the questionnaire could not collect. This superiority was possible because the interview allowed the researcher to re-ask the incomplete information [12]. In this research, the data were from the analysis samples. They were X, XI, and XII graders of the language department in Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Grobogan (Islamic State Senior High School). After collecting the data, the researcher mapped the feeling of the learners during the online learning. The researcher processed the data from the mapping stage, grouping those who enjoyed the learning and felt bored with the online learning. The data were then analyzed with the applied theory.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Etymologically, poetry is derived from Greece language, *poema*. It means ‘to create or *poesis*, ‘the creation’. In English, this term is known as poetry. Composing poetry refers to an activity of individuals to create their worlds based on their imagination. From the poems, the writers may reveal their visible and invisible feelings [8]. Poetry expresses the evoking and stimulating thoughts that trigger the imaginations of the senses in rhymed situations. Poetry is the record and interpretation of human impressive or important experiences. Pradopo argues that poetry has both physical and mental structures. The physical structure establishes poetry from diction, imagination, concrete word, figurative speech, versification, and typography. The mental structure, on the other hand, deals with the theme, the author’s feelings, tone, and attitude toward the readers, and the moral value [8].

The COVID-19 pandemic broke out in the last 2019 Cover Day in some different areas and periods. Nine hundred and ninety-three countries struggled to settle the virus spread. Indonesia’s government issued some policies to prevent the COVID-19 virus spread. The policies impacted both internal and external sectors of the government. One of the government’s decisions that has a massive impact is regulation and environmental component regulation. Social distancing provides spatial and time limitations toward the routine activity in a learning system for each University level starting from pre-school, primary school, moderate school, and higher education. Online learning, as an alternative to prevent COVID-19 virus spread, had specific impacts on the effort to fight the virus. The impacts were management and technological supports, E-learning awareness of the learners, and high information technology demand for instructors, students, and universities. Blended learning is the most suitable system to practice. However, the result showed the use of technology in an institution required excellent E-learning readiness during the pandemic [13].

Rosidi argues that writing is an activity to express thoughts, notions, and feelings in a written language [14]. Writing is the highest language level for individuals to communicate and learn. Learners that develop their writing could control their thinking skills, use their cognitive patterns, and learn effectively [15]. Expressing feelings is a high creativity level because it needs selective dictions to write poems. This part of writing is the most difficult skill. Thus, this process is also known as the creative process. Therefore, the skill is important for the creative process. McKay (1980) argues literature skills of individuals could improve language skills and linguistic awareness. The evidence is the use of various vocabulary and complex and accurate syntaxes. Littlewood (1986) explains literature writing is useful to develop language skills. It is important to explain grammatical aspects and show various types of language uses [16]. Thus, learners could lose their boredom by expressing their feeling in a poem. From the questionnaire, the researcher found the problems felt by the learners.

3.1. The Description of the Learner’s Feeling Dealing with Online Learning

Teachers, learners, and their families had new challenges in this COVID-19 pandemic, such as lack of school readiness and learning from home readiness. The challenges dealt with lack of school readiness and learning at home. For example, the learners did not have adequate devices to support the online learning so that this inadequacy hindered the learning management. Online learning instruction should also consider the curriculum needs. It included the learners as consideration because they directly got into learning practices. The considerations should cover the adequacy of school management for online learning and the minimum standard of the COVID-19 prevention rule [17]. Online learning lasts until the present day. It brings challenges because online learning is something newly promoted during the pandemic. It also happens in Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Grobogan learners. From 1.300 learners, the researcher took the related data about the X, XI, and XII graders of the language department learners as the sample. The questionnaire results showed the responses and sharing of the learners during the online learning. The results showed 97% of learners felt bored with online learning while only 3% of learners found it joyful. It has a significant difference. The descriptions of feeling bored and enjoying may be an interesting matter to investigate. The joyful feeling of the learners showed that the learners referred to online learning. It became the choice for years of learning with direct classroom learning or face-to-face learning. These learners argued that only learning made them relaxed and creative. They could have a meal, lay on the bed, and do many things during online learning. They found the

situation was different with face-to-face learning with reading and noting activities. Besides that, they could do the tasks calmly.

On the other hand, the boredom feelings were found in the learners' sharing. This feeling indicated that the learners were saturated while learning without the guidance of the teachers. This lack of guidance made them difficult to understand the material comprehensively. The feeling of boredom was realized into saturation, loneliness, injury, disappointment, annoyance, insecurity, sadness, difficulty to understand the material, laziness to mobile, lacks of friends, social interaction, patience, care, an intimate relationship with God, and missing. Here are the expressions of the learners.

RINDU MADRASAH

*Selama pandemi
 Hari hariku amat membosankan
 Ingin ku pergi jalan-jalan tapi tak bisa karena PPKM
 Aku bosan terkurung di dalam rumah
 Lelah sudah aku menunggu
 Letih rasanya jiwa dan raga ini
 Males dan mager
 Seolah menggerogoti jiwaku
 Aku rindu sekolah
 Pandemi kapan kau berakhir
 Cepatlah berlalu dan sirna dari dunia
 (Zahra Oktaviani, X Language)*

SENANGKU MERADANG

*Awalku diumumkan
 Hatiku berdendang
 Senang dan melayang
 Belajar di rumah saja
 Aktivitas di rumah saja
 Belajar sambil makan
 Belajar sambil rebahan
 Betapa bahagia belajar tak mengenakan baju sekolah
 Syalala lala syalala
 Tapi
 lama-lama tak bermakna
 (Diah Fatmawati, X Language)*

The excerpts describe the boredom and missing of the learner. In the beginning, the learner was happy to study at home because it symbolized freedom. The learner thought studying at home might lose the learners from dictating, noting, and uniting the activities of the school. However, the learners lost happiness because of the boredom and saturation effects. Staying at home for a long time made learners bored and saturated. Studying at home for a long time made the learners might not understand the material. Thus, they needed further explanation from the teacher. This reality indicated the un-readiness of the learners with digital learning support because they relied on traditional learning instruments.

Learners tended to rely on traditional learning. Moreover, the learners were lack of autonomous learning.

The following figure describes the learners' feelings:



Figure 1 The Opinion Recapitulation about the Online Learning.

3.2. Poems as Creative Opportunity and Feeling Expression During the Pandemic

Reading and writing are the offered curriculum by Blake. Blake feels lucky to use this observation by focusing on the learners. Experience during the pandemic became the object to express the learners' feelings in poems. This activity became an excellent practice based on Blake's opinion. The author realized that the experienced condition was the learner's emotion or the reflective feeling. Blake argues that poems allow learners to express their daily stressed emotions during the lockdown and the reality that makes them spend days at home without seeing their friends [18].

The excellent practice to express the selected online learning by learners of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Grobogan based on the questionnaire was writing poetry. The learners wrote poems to represent their boredom and saturation feelings. The activity made them relaxed and joyful. Poems could also be a creative opportunity for learners to express their feeling during online learning. From all poems, the researcher found a poem that explicitly expressed the writer's feeling with irony, hyperbole, analogy, etc. The expression was varied, such as feelings of saturated, lonely, injured, disappointed, annoyed, insecure, sad, difficult to understand the material, lazy to move, lacks friends, social interactions, patience, care, close relationship to God, and missing. Writing poems could lose the boredom of learning online and train the learners' creativeness. Besides that, writing poetry was part of writing creativity training. With the excellent practice of writing poetry, learners expressed the feeling without any violation. The saturated learners also found poetry could manage their saturations. The feeling of disappointment, boredom, and annoyance due to online learning could be relieved by writing poetry. Thus, the creative activity during a pandemic could be the alternative to alter the boredom of online learning.

PADAM LENTERAKU

*Belajar tanpa guru
Bagaikan ilmu yang beku
Yang datang tanpa tujuan
Yang lewat tanpa menetap
Seolah-olah tiada guna dalam kehidupan
Begitu sulit dunia ini tanpanya
Betapa sulit dalam memahaminya
Tak ada gairah untuk belajar
Semua berlalu saja tanpa bekas*
(Tika Farhana Novia Fitri, XI Language Class)

PEJEJE

*Keceriaan bertemu kawan
Hanya sebatas angan
Ramah tamah menyapa guru
Hanya sebatas halu
Hari demi hari memegang ponsel bisu*
(Novia Lailatul Fatimah, XI Language Class)

The excerpt expresses the learners' feelings. They missed the teacher figures. For the learners, online learning brought them disadvantages because they did not understand the material without the teachers' guidance. It indicated the importance of teachers' roles to guide the learning and to motivate the learners. Teachers' presence motivated learners to study and to construct knowledge. Teachers are the source of knowledge for learners to facilitate their understanding. They did not obtain this quality when they used a smartphone or digital device, the non-living objects. In the poems, the researcher found some beautiful dictions that contained metaphorical extensions, such as without the teacher's guidance, the knowledge would be frozen. It indicated the analogical extension.

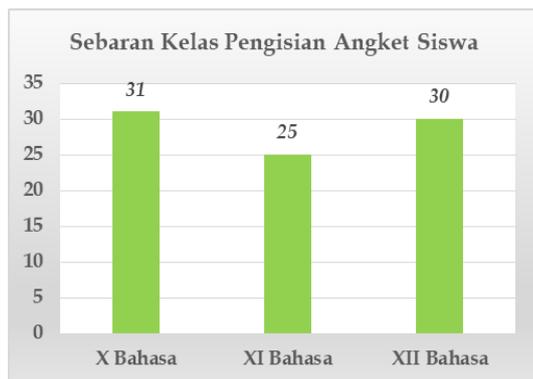


Figure 2 The Distribution of Learners' Questionnaire Filling.

3.3. The Use of Poems for Learners

Psychologically, poetry is a valuable tool to measure the learners' and students' affections at schools or universities. Poems are works of words based on the writers' feelings with beautiful words. With poems,

teachers and lecturers could find out the learners' and students' feelings. For example, in the University of Nigeria, Africa, teachers and lecturers asks the learners and students to know their feelings during the climate changes [19]. Poems are an aesthetic expression of the writers. All things the poets write refer to what they feel, see, and encounter. The expression tranquil the poets' feelings. The activities to express the learners' feelings into the imagination in poetry could lose learners' boredom and saturation due to online learning. The positive and excellent expression must be developed for personal and collective interest. Besides that, writing poetry could lose saturation and trigger creativity for writing. It is because writing poetry requires high language skills [20]. Here is the excerpt of the poetry containing hopes and prays.

PINTAKU

*Pergilah coronavirus
Hari demi hari penuh dengan kekhawatiran
Sekolah daring membuatku kepikiran
Banyak materi yang tidak ku mengerti
Belajar dari rumah membuatku bosan
Namun harus kuikhhlaskan
Aku harus terus mengasah kesabaran
Ya Allah
Semoga pandemi ini cepat berakhir
Musnahkanlah virus yang mematikan ini*
(Nur Alfiyatul Mukaromah, XII Language)

The excerpt indicates anxiety and saturation of the learners due to coronavirus. However, the learners realized everything was from Allah. Thus, the learner asked Allah to make everything normal and to remove the disease. The writing indicates a high writing level because it does not merely contain hopes and prays. Gradually, the learners could develop his or her writing skills. Thus, writing poems or poetry is an excellent expressive way during the pandemic. Writing poems also made learners could respond to the surrounding phenomena or wider phenomena.

PITA HITAM UNTUKMU

*Teruntuk Pahlawan Covid-19
kalian berjuang menyembuhkan
Aku berjuang belajar
Jarak jauh
Engkau bersungguh-sungguh
Aku pun memupuk belajar
agar aku bisa memahami
semua materi dari guruku
Selamat berjuang wahai pahlawan Covid-19
Semoga kita bisa melewati semuanya*
(Himatul Ulya, XII Language)

MONITOR BISU

*Bernyawa tapi tak berdaya
Pagi, siang, sore, malam menatap layar
Selalu diberi bahan ajar
Tapi aku tak bisa menakar
Semakin semu pahamku*

*Tanpa bimbingan guru
Aku semakin gagu
Tuhan engkau maha Tahu
Kapan koronavirus ini berlalu
Enyahkanlah dari hadapanku
(Era Mukti, XII Language)*

The excerpts show tender expressive feelings. The feelings refer to acknowledgment for other people and their struggles and fights. For almost two years, medical workers have had important roles to manage COVID-19. Their roles are crucial because without them there would have been many COVID-19 patients. The feeling of care is shown via the poem with positive responses from the learners. The expressed feeling has excellent and good responses from the learners. This activity influences the learners' attitudes, such as their empathy, sympathy, and critical thinking toward the surrounding phenomena.

The researchers expect the results could be implemented in online and offline learning or to be the ice breaker for learners' boredom. The analysis review could be wider by taking broader literature works, such as short stories, novels, and genres of other literary works. If this research remains being carried out, it will influence the learners. They will be more directed to share their feelings via writing and trigger their creativity and achievements to compose literature works via the expression on the poems and other literary works. This activity will trigger the creativity and achievement of the learners. Thus, the literature study will be developed.

4. CONCLUSION

Online learning causes saturation and boredom because learners stay at home for a long time. This research aims to invite learners to use writing poems as the opportunity to express themselves, to lose boredom, and to lose saturation. This opportunity is a real effort to lose the boredom during online learning. The expression is useful for learners to establish and develop. With writing poems, learners were free from anxiety and boredom. Some experts explain poetry can be the medium of expressing feeling. This activity would tranquilize and free the burdening feeling. The process of expressing feeling is categorized as excellent practice with a high level of creative process. It was because learners could select beautiful words into the excellent display. This action is not something easy to do. The activities could habituate them to express their feeling via poems and lead to excellent achievements. Therefore, feeling bored and saturated could be managed well via poems or poetry to express feeling.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors conceived and designed this study. All authors contributed to the process of revising the manuscript, and at the end all author have approved the final version of this manuscript.

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