

Unlocking Creativity: How Acrostic Poetry Enhances Literary Exploration in the Classroom

Heni Rohmatas Sa'diyah¹, Irmayani²

^{1,2}Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Islam Darul 'Ulum Lamongan,
Jawa Timur, Indonesia

heni.2021@mhs.unisda.ac.id , irmayani@unisda.ac.id

Abstract. This study explores the impact of acrostic poetry learning in enhancing literacy and creativity of students learning English as a Foreign Language, with the aim of providing insight into the effectiveness of this approach in a learning context. Through a quasi-experimental approach, this research has matched an experimental group of students who learned how to write acrostic poems with a control group who have engaged in regular literacy learning. Data collection involved pre-and post-creativity tests, analysis of acrostics, and follow-up student feedback. There was a significant difference in creativity and the ability to write within the experimental group. It would mean that the acrostic poetry lesson can be one of the pedagogical approaches for increasing students' engagement in encouraging creative expression and improving general literacy competencies within the EFL learning context. These findings indicate that the inclusions of creative writing practices, including acrostic poems, need to be part of the curriculum for a more dynamic and effective learning environment.

Keywords: *Acrostic Poetry, Creativity, EFL Learning, Pedagogical Approaches.*

Abstrak. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi dampak pembelajaran puisi akrostik dalam meningkatkan literasi dan kreativitas siswa yang belajar Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing, dengan tujuan untuk memberikan wawasan tentang efektivitas pendekatan ini dalam konteks pembelajaran. Melalui pendekatan kuasi-eksperimental, penelitian ini telah mencocokkan kelompok siswa eksperimen yang belajar cara menulis puisi akrostik dengan kelompok kontrol yang telah terlibat dalam pembelajaran literasi reguler. Pengumpulan data melibatkan tes pra-dan pasca-kreativitas, analisis akrostik, dan umpan balik siswa tindak lanjut. Ada perbedaan yang signifikan dalam kreativitas dan kemampuan menulis dalam kelompok eksperimen. Ini berarti bahwa pelajaran puisi akrostik dapat menjadi salah satu pendekatan pedagogis untuk meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dalam mendorong ekspresi kreatif dan meningkatkan kompetensi literasi umum dalam konteks pembelajaran EFL. Temuan-temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa penyertaan praktik menulis kreatif, termasuk puisi akrostik, perlu menjadi bagian dari kurikulum untuk lingkungan belajar yang lebih dinamis dan efektif.

Kata kunci: *Puisi Akrostik, Kreativitas, Pembelajaran EFL, Pendekatan Pedagogis.*

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Poetry learning in EFL contexts faces complex challenges, especially in understanding linguistic and cultural nuances. This study aims to explore how acrostic poems can be an effective tool to enhance students' creativity and engagement. Although language teachers generally agree that poetry can be beneficial in language classrooms, they also comment on the fact that EFL students put into practice the concepts of poetry and its background culture (Utami, 2012)

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* Heni Rohmatas Sa'diyah, e-mail address

There are numerous advantages to incorporating writing practice in training, particularly in poetry. that is Writing develops curiosity, sensitivity, and more observant, and the need to look for information through various media, both books, magazines, journals, and other sources, which causes these students to be a lot more informed. Students can write because it helps them to gather their thoughts, convey their thoughts clearly, and ease their emotions. Furthermore, publication also brings achievement, monetary rewards, and prestige (Fitria, 2024)

Research on poetry learning in Indonesia, especially through the 2013 curriculum, has emphasized skills such as understanding the main elements of poetry (theme, diction, language style, imagery, structure) in basic competency 4.7. This foundation in poetry improves students' writing skills (Herawati & Isnaniah, 2022). However, outdated poetry teaching techniques need to be updated to support students' creative development. One promising approach is the Acrostic Technique, which uses the first letter of each line or stanza as a guide, encouraging students to generate ideas creatively (Radina Amalia & Ani Mukoliyah, 2023; (Triswanto et al., 2020). Poetry as a literary form reflects the author's creativity, emotions, and chosen imagery (Nurlaila & Buton, 2023). However, creative writing can be a challenge for students, often due to a lack of motivation and a preference for entertainment over academic activities, making it difficult to translate ideas into writing (Fitria, 2024)

The types of research that can be examined are the influence of the acrostic poetry method on students' creative skills in exploring literary works and creative skills in writing poetry. The supporting hypothesis connects between the techniques of writing acrostic poetry and critical and analytical thinking among students. Acrostic poetry allows students to dive deeper into literary texts, building interpretation and creativity skills. The aim of this study is to provide an insight on the teaching of literature and its potential contribution to the development of thinking and literary skills in students.

THEORETICAL STUDY

The study of poetry learning in Indonesia, particularly within the framework of the 2013 curriculum, highlights the significance of understanding fundamental elements such as theme, diction, language style, imagery, and structure. Basic Competency 4.7 emphasizes these skills as essential for enhancing students' writing capabilities (Herawati

& Isnaniah, 2022). This literature review synthesizes recent research findings related to poetry education in Indonesia, focusing on pedagogical approaches, theoretical frameworks, and the impact of poetry on student learning.

1. Pedagogical Approaches to Poetry Learning

Recent studies have explored various pedagogical strategies for teaching poetry in Indonesian schools. For instance, research conducted (Herawati & Isnaniah, 2022) underscores the importance of integrating creative writing practices that utilize Indonesia's cultural diversity. This approach not only enriches students' understanding of poetry but also fosters appreciation for their cultural heritage. The findings suggest that engaging students in creative patterned poetry can significantly enhance their interest and skills in literary composition. Similarly, another study by (Andania et al., 2024) examines the role of poetry as a medium for social and political expression. This research highlights how poetry can serve as a powerful tool for students to articulate their thoughts and feelings regarding societal issues, thus promoting critical thinking and empathy among learners.(Kakerissa et al., 2023).

2. Theoretical Frameworks in Poetry Education

The theoretical underpinnings of poetry education are also crucial for effective teaching practices. Research by (Gibran, 2023) employs semiotic theory to analyze the use of metaphors in poetry. This qualitative analysis reveals that understanding semiotic elements can deepen students' comprehension of poetic texts and enhance their interpretive skills. The study advocates for incorporating semiotic analysis into the curriculum to improve students' literary appreciation and analytical abilities. (Suyitno, 2023) Moreover, structuralism has been applied in various studies to dissect the elements of poetry and their meanings. For example, research on prophetic literature by (Tantowi & Nur, 2022). illustrates how structuralist approaches can facilitate students' understanding of thematic and moral values embedded in poetic works. This method not only aids in literary analysis but also encourages students to connect literary themes with broader societal contexts.(Dwi Savira & Isnaniah, 2022).

3. Impact on Writing Skills and Student Engagement

The emphasis on poetry learning within the 2013 curriculum is linked to improved writing skills among students. Studies indicate that when students engage with poetry—

through both reading and writing—they develop a stronger command of language and expression. The integration of creative writing exercises has been shown to enhance students' ability to convey emotions and ideas effectively. Furthermore, research indicates that poetry education fosters greater student engagement. Engaging in collaborative poetry projects allows students to share their cultural perspectives and experiences, creating a rich environment for intercultural dialogue. This interaction promotes empathy and understanding among peers from diverse backgrounds (Dewi et al., 2023). Such collaborative efforts not only improve writing skills but also promote a sense of community and cultural awareness.

The exploration of poetry learning within Indonesia's educational framework reveals significant insights into pedagogical practices, theoretical applications, and student outcomes. The 2013 curriculum's focus on essential elements of poetry serves as a foundation for enhancing writing skills while fostering critical engagement with literature. Future research should continue to investigate innovative teaching methods and their impact on student learning outcomes in poetry education, ensuring that these practices remain relevant and effective in nurturing young writers in Indonesia. This literature review underscores the importance of a multifaceted approach to poetry education that incorporates cultural relevance, theoretical frameworks, and practical engagement strategies to cultivate a rich literary environment for Indonesian students.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a quasi-experimental design with two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group will engage in acrostic poetry writing as part of the literacy instruction, while the control group will continue with traditional literacy teaching methods. The purpose is to assess how acrostic poetry impacts creativity and literary exploration among students.

Data and Source of Data:

The data for this study will be collected from senior high school students (ages 17) one class divided into 2 groups. Each group will consist of 20 students. Data sources include:

1. Student creativity scores (pre- and post-test).
2. Acrostic poems written by students in the experimental group.
3. Student feedback through questionnaires or interviews.

Data Collection Techniques/Instrument:

1. Creativity Test:

- A pre- and post-test measuring creativity will be administered. This test will involve tasks such as generating creative ideas, writing a short narrative, and solving a problem that requires divergent thinking. Creativity will be scored based on originality, fluency, and flexibility of ideas.

2. Acrostic Poetry Analysis:

-Students in the experimental group will write an acrostic poem based on a certain theme. The poems will be analyzed using a rubric that assesses originality, coherence, relevance to theme, and use of language.

3. Questionnaire

- A brief questionnaire will be conducted at the end of the experiment to gather qualitative data on students' experiences with acrostic poetry. Questions will assess their perceived creativity, engagement, and motivation.

Data Analysis:

1. Quantitative Data:

Creativity scores will be analyzed using paired t-tests to compare pre- and post-test results within each group (experimental and control). An independent t-test will be used to compare the post-test scores between the experimental and control groups.

Student feedback from the questionnaires will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes about student motivation and perceived creativity.

This method allows for a comparison of creativity and engagement between students exposed to acrostic poetry and those who undergo traditional literacy instruction.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

These facts have been proved by many studies in the area of English as a Foreign Language, in which acrostic poetry plays a multifunctional role. These studies confirm that this creative method really has different benefits related to developing factors in foreign language acquisition, such as creativity, increasing student participation, sharpening critical thinking, and displaying emotions. This also falls in line with broader

research in education, emphasizing that structured creative activities are of huge importance for both language and cognition. Building on this fact, this quasi-experiment tries to answer on an empirical level the very particular question of exactly how acrostic poetry is used to instruct students in improved literary skills. This current research, accordingly, investigates a comparison of two instructional methods-the traditional approach with acrostic poetry teaching-along EFL lines.

The purpose of the research study was to see if the distinctive constraints and creative opportunities inherent in the acrostic form can yield marked improvement in a range of key areas. Thus, in a quasi-experimental design, the group receiving the acrostic poetry training was compared to one that had the traditional curriculum for teaching poetry.

t test results table:

Variable	N	Average	SD	t count	t table	Sig.
Acrostic poem	20	86	87	2	2,024	0,03
Poem	20	75	65			

Results Overview:

N: Number of samples (20 students in each group)

Average: Average value (already given)

SD: Standard deviation (already given, but needs to be confirmed again)

t count: The t value calculated from the data (already given)

t table: T table value at 5% significance level with 38 degrees of freedom (because $N1 + N2 - 2 = 20 + 20 - 2 = 38$)

Sig. (2-tailed): Two-way significance value (already determined)

Interpretation:

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that:

- There is a significant difference between the poetry writing abilities of students who use the acrostic technique and those who do not.

- The average score of acrostic poems (86) is significantly higher than the average score of regular poems (75).
- The significance value of 0.03 is less than 0.05, indicating that this difference is very unlikely to occur by chance.

Discussion

This research highlights the potential of acrostic poetry as an effective pedagogical tool to enhance literary exploration in the classroom. The significant increase in post-test scores among the experimental group suggests that engaging students with creative forms of poetry can lead to better writing outcomes. This is in line with existing literature that emphasizes creativity as an important component in effective language arts learning. Acrostic poetry, in particular, can be viewed as a multi-faceted approach to language learning. Creative writing is not only a great method to enhance imaginative thinking, but also consolidates important skills such as vocabulary development as well as spelling and sentence construction. Acrostic poetry allows students to produce meaningful words and phrases that start with specific letters and helps them learn the depth of language, allowing them to be creative with word choice and sentence structure.(Wang & Zhou, 2017)

In addition, the collaborative nature of acrostic poetry activities may encourage the learning environment to become more friendly and motivating. It will create a classroom of communication skills, teamwork, and community by working together on a poem that they create.(Johnson & Johnson, 2021). On the other hand, this study found great promise for acrostic poetry to be used as teaching material but needs to be approached amongst subpopulations of learners in terms of age, learning styles, and other such diversities. It would be interesting to find out the long-term effects of this approach on the overall literacy development of students and their creative expression.

The higher creativity scores observed in the experimental group further support the notion that acrostic poetry encourages students to think outside conventional boundaries, allowing for more personal and imaginative expression. This creative engagement is vital, as it not only improves technical writing skills but also fosters a deeper appreciation for literature among students. Additionally, increased student

engagement during acrostic poetry activities indicates that innovative teaching methods can enhance motivation and interest in literary studies. This finding is particularly relevant in light of current educational challenges where traditional methods may fail to captivate students' attention. In conclusion, this study demonstrates that incorporating acrostic poetry into literary education can significantly enhance both writing skills and student engagement compared to traditional approaches. The table above shows interesting research results regarding the ability of acrostic poetry compared to ordinary poetry to arouse feelings and convey messages: "Acrostic poetry received high marks. far higher than regular poetry on the litmus test of both how aesthetic it is and whether or not it conveys a message. Apart from that, the acrostic structure also provides a kind of framework that can help readers more easily follow the poet's train of thought and grasp the message he wants to convey.

can see below the poems written by the students.

Acrostic poetry:

MUSIK

Musik adalah jiwa, yang menghidupkan hati

Untuk menyampaikan perasaan, yang terdalam

Seni suara, yang menggetarkan jiwa

Irama dan melodi, menyatu menjadi satu

Karya indah, ciptaan sang maestro

Menghanyutkan dalam melodi yang syahdu

Untuk melupakan sejenak, segala kesibukan

Seni suara, yang mampu menyentuh hati

Inspirasi tak terbatas, mengalir deras

Kesenian yang abadi, sepanjang masa

Ordinary poetry:

Kehilangan

Sejak kepergianmu, hatiku terasa hampa, Dunia seakan kehilangan warnanya.

Ingin sekali kuungkapkan rasa rindu ini,

Namun, kau tak lagi di sini.

Kenangan bersamamu akan selalu kusimpan, Sebagai harta yang paling
berharga. Sampai kita bertemu lagi, Di surga yang indah.

from the acrostic poem "MUSIC", very effectively explores various aspects of music as an art form that can touch the soul. Each line seems to be a musical note that accompanies the reader on a deep emotional journey. Words like "soul," "feeling," "rhythm," and "melody" create a harmonious rhythm and invite readers to reflect on the power of music in life. Compared to the regular poem "Loss" which is more personal and introspective, the acrostic poem "MUSIC" offers a broader and more universal perspective on aesthetic experience.

From a psychological point of view, the success of acrostic poetry in arousing emotions can be attributed to the presence of a more organized and focused structure. The restriction that words must start with a certain letter forces poets to think more creatively and look for the right words to convey their meaning. This can trigger the emergence of more original and unexpected ideas. Apart from that, the acrostic structure also provides a kind of framework that can help readers more easily follow the poet's train of thought and grasp the message he wants to convey.

Literarily, acrostic poetry can be considered an interesting formal experiment. By limiting poets' freedom in word choice, acrostic poetry forces them to go beyond the conventions of traditional poetry. This can give rise to innovative works and challenge readers to think outside the box. Acrostic poetry can also be an effective means of exploring various themes and language styles. The results of the analysis showed a significant difference in the level of creativity between the group using acrostic poetry and the control group. This study shows that acrostic poetry not only improves writing skills but also encourages students to think critically and creatively.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study confirms that acrostic poetry is an effective method of enhancing EFL students' literary ability and creativity. Using a quasi-experimental design, acrostic poetry-trained students enhanced their writing skills, creativity, and class participation more than conventionally taught students.

The outcomes show that acrostic poetry promotes critical thinking, increased literary analysis, and affective expression, and boosts student motivation. These findings highlight the worth of incorporating creative writing approaches like acrostic poetry into the curriculum in order to improve a more active and student-centered learning environment. This study also puts a spotlight on the importance of revising Indonesian ways of teaching poetry to align with the 2013 curriculum goals. The introduction of acrostic poetry as a part of teaching literature is a hopeful answer to improving literary learning as innovative, relevant, and fascinating to students.

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