

IMPROVING POETRY WRITING SKILLS THROUGH A THINK-PLUS STRATEGY USING IMAGES OF EVENTS IN NEWSPAPERS

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Abstract

This study raises the issue of the low writing ability of class X students at SMK Negeri 3 Lhokseumawe, Lhokseumawe City. The low ability is identified as a result of the implementation of learning to write poetry that has not been optimal, so that students experience difficulties when they have to write poetry. For this reason, it is necessary to apply learning strategies and media that are interesting and in accordance with the needs of students. In this study, the Think Plus strategy and media in the form of pictures of events from newspapers were used as an effort to improve learning to write poetry in class X. The research was conducted through two cycles, where each cycle included planning, action, observation, and reflection stages. The results showed an improvement in the learning process which had an impact on improving students' abilities and changing their behavior in a more positive direction.

Keywords: *Think Plus Strategy, Poetry Writing Skills, Media Pictures of Events*

INTRODUCTION

In the syllabus of SMK Indonesian Language class X semester 1, there is a Competency Standard (SK) 16 which requires students to express thoughts, feelings and read free poetry. Through free poetry, students are expected not only to understand the structure of poetry technically, but also to be able to express emotions and ideas creatively through poetic forms that are not bound by standard rules. These basic competencies must be mastered by students and the core material taught by teachers becomes a reference for learning poetry, including an understanding of the elements of poetry such as diction, language style, and structure, as well as the application of writing techniques that are in accordance with the context and theme raised. However, the implementation of learning to write poetry in the field still encounters various obstacles, where these challenges arise from the gap between the theory taught and the real practice in the classroom. One of them is the limited knowledge and teaching methods teachers have, which has an impact on the difficulty in implementing learning effectively, because teachers may not have received adequate training or resources to deliver poetry material in an inspiring and communicative manner. In addition, students' low ability and interest also hinder the learning process of writing poetry, as a lack of motivation and in-depth understanding of how to compose poetry can make students feel difficult and unconfident in expressing their ideas. Students' low interest is often related to the selection of learning strategies and media that are not appropriate or interesting so that it is difficult for students to imitate, because the use of monotonous conventional methods or materials that are not relevant to students' daily lives tends to reduce their enthusiasm and creativity. Although students have been introduced to poetry that has complex structures, such as rhyme, rhythm, and other linguistic elements in literature lessons, for learning free poetry, a simpler approach is needed, so that students can more easily understand and apply the concept of poetry without feeling burdened by complex rules. The application of the Think Plus strategy and the use of media in the form of pictures of events from newspapers are expected to be able to simplify the poetry writing process, thus reducing the burden of complexity that has been hampering students' interests and abilities, as well as providing visual stimulation that can trigger students' imagination and emotional involvement in creating more authentic and meaningful works. Based on this description, the author argues that in order for students to be able to write poetry well, it is necessary to apply the Think Plus strategy and the use of media in the form of pictures of events from

newspapers. This approach is expected to create effective learning, with teachers applying learning methods that provide space for students to actively participate, hone their creativity, and innovate. The strategy not only aims to increase students' activeness in class, but also builds their confidence in the learning process, so that each student feels able to optimize their potential. Thus, the use of appropriate strategies and media is expected to reduce existing obstacles and encourage students to be more courageous in expressing their ideas and feelings through poetry. This approach also plays an important role in changing the dynamics of learning to be more interactive and fun, thus increasing students' interest and achievement in writing poetry.

Think Plus strategy is a series of activities in learning poetry writing designed to provide wider opportunities for students to be involved in every stage of the writing process, from the search for ideas or writing objects to the publication stage of the poems that have been composed (Prasetyo 2007: 2). The term "Pikir Plus" itself is an acronym that summarizes the six main steps in the poetry writing process, namely: (1) Determining an interesting or favorite object, (2) Imagining the object deeply, (3) Translating the imagination into a series of words, (4) Arranging the words concisely and developing them into arrays, (5) Integrating and processing the arrays into poetry stanzas, and (6) Publishing the finished poem (Prasetyo 2007: 2). This approach is designed to help students express their ideas and feelings in a creative way through a clear step-by-step structure, so that each stage of writing can proceed systematically and thoroughly. Thus, this strategy not only focuses on improving poetry writing skills, but also plays a role in building students' confidence to express their creativity optimally.

Various studies have shown that the use of innovative learning media can improve student motivation and learning outcomes in various subjects. For example, research conducted by Husna and Yanni (2022) developed electronic modules as alternative teaching materials in informatics subjects, which proved to be able to improve student learning outcomes. In addition, Yanni and Fadhila (2022) examined the application of interactive learning multimedia based on CAI tutorial models that contribute to increasing student learning motivation. In the field of mathematics, research by Andriani, Yanni, and Fadhila (2020) showed that the implementation of Lemang Aceh based on online math games was able to improve students' mathematical representation skills and motivation. Other innovative learning strategies, such as the Think Aloud Pair Problem Solving (TAPPS) approach implemented by Yanni (2018), are also proven to improve student learning activities and outcomes in mathematics. Furthermore, research by Risdayati and Yanni (2022) revealed that the application of cooperative learning models in mathematics learning can significantly improve students' activities and learning outcomes. In addition, research by Azhari, Helmiyadi, and Rahayu (2021) highlighted the importance of teachers' questioning strategies in Indonesian language learning, which plays a role in building active interactions and encouraging students' understanding of the material being taught. In line with these findings, research on the use of visual media, such as short films, can help improve students' writing skills by providing imaginative stimulus and making it easier for them to organize ideas systematically (Aminah, 2022). Thus, the application of learning methods based on real experiences and visual media can be an effective strategy in improving students' learning skills and motivation, both in writing anecdotal texts and in other writing skills, such as poetry.

Integrating pictures of events taken from newspapers into learning to write poetry with the Think Plus strategy is a very appropriate approach. The use of visual media is ideal to be applied in the early stages of the strategy, when students determine an object that interests them. The object in question does not have to be something real, but can also be a visual representation of the events featured in the newspaper. In this way, students will find it easier to get inspired and develop creative ideas from the images. Based on the problems that have been described, this study aims to (1) Describe the improvement in the learning process of writing poetry in class X at SMK Negeri 3 Lhokseumawe after the implementation of the Think Plus Strategy supported by media images of events from newspapers. (2) Describe the improvement in the ability to write poetry of grade X students at SMK Negeri 3 Lhokseumawe as a result of learning that integrates the Think Plus Strategy with the use of media images of events from newspapers. (3) Describe changes in students' attitudes and behavior in participating in learning to write poetry, through the application of the Think Plus Strategy combined with the media of pictures of events taken from newspapers. This approach is expected to not only improve the quality of the learning process and students' writing skills, but also encourage positive changes in their motivation and active participation during teaching and learning activities.

According to Djibran (2008: 75), writing poetry is basically not much different from writing stories or other forms of writing, because the most important thing is the ability to reflect the ideas and feelings you want to convey. In the creation of poetry, the existence of a creative process is essential. This creative process is a change in the structure of personal life that is unique to each author, and cannot be equated with the work of others. The process emerges as an awareness of the individual's unique actions that are a response to the surrounding

environment. This response plays an important role in triggering the emergence of imagination and then developing into an urge to innovate. According to Wiyanto (2005:48), the ability to write poetry is often considered a natural talent so that those who feel they do not have it will think that writing poetry is not for them. However, he emphasizes that talent alone will not develop without consistent practice. Conversely, someone who may not have an innate talent can become skilled at writing poetry through diligent learning and practice. Poetry writing is a type of skill that, like any other skill, must be acquired through learning and practice; the more frequently and diligently one practices, the faster one will master it. Thus, expertise in writing poetry can be achieved through in-depth intensive practice. Continuous practice will provide experience in utilizing thinking effectively, as well as mastering language structures and vocabulary with confidence. Gradually and routinely, such practice will help one to express ideas, knowledge and feelings through good and logical language, in accordance with the expected aesthetic norms.

In general, the term “strategy” comes from the Greek “strategia” which means the science of warfare or military leadership. Based on this definition, strategy is defined as the art of designing operations in warfare, for example through the arrangement of positions and tactics on the battlefield, both on land and at sea. In the world of education, Gagne (in Iskandar and Dadang, 2010) states that strategy is the internal ability of individuals to think, solve problems, and make decisions. In line with this, Djahmarah and Aswan (2010: 5) describe strategy in general as an outline of instructions or a plan of action to achieve predetermined goals. When associated with teaching and learning activities, the strategy can be interpreted as a general pattern of activities carried out by teachers and students to realize an effective learning process in achieving the expected goals. In addition, Prasetyo (2007: 3) explains that Pikir Plus is a series of steps in learning to write poetry that provides greater opportunities for students to be involved in every stage of writing, from determining ideas to the publication process of the poems they have created.

Photo story is a form of visual presentation that is organized based on a certain topic or event that is relevant. Each picture in this series has the ability to “tell a story” and convey implied meaning that can be understood by the observer (Daryanto, 2011: 108). Meanwhile, according to Sadiman (2008: 29), pictures as educational media are one of the most frequently used learning aids. Images have universal properties, so they can be understood and enjoyed by anyone in various places. In line with this, a Chinese proverb states that one picture can convey more information than a thousand words. Photographic image media, like other visual forms, can be obtained from various sources, such as newspapers, magazines, brochures, and books (Sudjana, 2009: 70). Therefore, pictures of events can be optimally utilized as a tool in the learning process. To be effective, the selection and use of event images as learning media must be adjusted to the learning objectives that have been set.

METHOD

This study used a classroom action research design commonly called PTK which was carried out in four stages, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. These four stages were used systematically in the research process and applied in three cycles, namely the cycle I action process, and the cycle II action process. Both cycles consisted of planning, action, observation, and reflection. This research focuses on poetry writing skills by applying the Think Plus strategy, which is supported by the use of images of various events from newspapers, to class X students of SMKN 3 Lhokseumawe, Aceh. This study has two types of variables, namely the variable of poetry writing skills and the variable of using the Think Plus strategy and the media images of various events in the newspaper. The variable of poetry writing skill acts as the outcome variable in this study, which includes several assessment aspects, such as the suitability of the content with the theme, the selection of diction, the use of rhyme, typography, and the message conveyed in the poem. Meanwhile, the process variable in this study is the Think Plus strategy applied by the researcher in learning to encourage students to be more active in pouring their creative ideas in writing poetry based on imagination. In addition, the event picture media serves as a means for students to gain inspiration and develop creative ideas which are then poured into the form of poetry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study were obtained through actions carried out in two cycles, namely cycle I and cycle II. The research data consisted of poetry test results and non-test results. The poetry test results in both cycles reflected the poetry writing skills of grade X students at SMK Negeri 3 Lhokseumawe after taking part in learning with the Think Plus strategy and the media images of various events from newspapers. Meanwhile, non-test results were obtained through various methods, such as observation, field notes, daily notes, interviews, and photo documentation, which were used to support the analysis of the learning process. Learning to write poetry by

Azhari et al

applying the Think Plus strategy and utilizing images of various events from newspapers in cycle I is summarized in three main stages. The three stages include: (1) apperception and internalization activities to foster students' interest in writing poetry, (2) the process of finding pictures of events from newspapers used as a source of ideas and themes in writing poetry in groups, and (3) the process of writing poetry by students by paying attention to the suitability of the content with the selected pictures, diction, rhyme, typography, and mandate. The test results in cycle I showed an increase in students' poetry writing skills. This improvement was influenced by the use of the self-suggestion method and audiovisual media. The assessment in this learning includes five main aspects, namely: (1) suitability of the content with the picture, (2) diction, (3) rhyme, (4) typography, and (5) mandate. The data obtained showed that the aspect of the suitability of the content with the picture reached 77.78%, followed by the mandate aspect of 76.67%, diction 68.89%, rhyme 61.37%, and the typography aspect which obtained the lowest score of 61.37%. Overall, the average score achieved in cycle I was 69.50. However, this value has not met the target of achieving a class average of 75, so the implementation of cycle II is needed to improve learning outcomes.

During the learning process in cycle I, most students showed a positive response. A total of 26 students, or about 72.22% of the total number of students, seemed excited and enthusiastic in participating in learning to write free poetry. In addition, there were 25 students, or about 69.44%, who paid attention to the teacher's explanation well. Students' interest in the media images of various events from newspapers used in learning is also quite high, with 26 students (72.22%) giving positive responses. In terms of activeness during the learning process, both in asking and answering questions, there were 10 students who were active, with a percentage of 72.77%. In addition, as many as 26 students (72.22%) showed seriousness and diligence in working on poetry writing assignments.

Although most students showed a positive attitude, there were still a number of students who showed negative behavior. A total of 10 students, or around 27.78% of the total number of students, lacked enthusiasm and enthusiasm in participating in learning to write poetry. In addition, there were 11 students (30.56%) who did not pay attention to the teacher's explanation well and engaged in irrelevant activities, such as talking to themselves, pacing, lying down, or making unimportant notes. There were also 10 students (27.78%) who showed negative responses to the newspaper media used in learning. During the learning process, 26 students (72.22%) seemed passive and busy with things that were not related to the poetry writing task. On the other hand, as many as 10 students (27.78%) worked on the poetry writing task while doing irrelevant activities.

The action in cycle II was a continuation of cycle I, which was carried out because the results of cycle I had not reached the minimum target of completeness set, which was 75 or good category. In addition, there were still negative student behaviors found during learning. Therefore, cycle II was carried out to improve the shortcomings that existed in cycle I. The data obtained from the learning process in cycle II showed that each aspect of writing poetry had improved compared to the first cycle. The first aspect, namely the suitability of content with images, increased by 3.89%, from 74.44% in cycle I to 78.33% in cycle II. This shows that students are increasingly able to harmonize the content of the poem with the chosen theme. The second aspect, diction, increased by 6.66%, from 71.67% in cycle I to 78.33% in cycle II. This shows that the appropriate and effective action made it easier for students to express their ideas through a more precise selection of words, although they faced difficulties at the beginning, but the results were very satisfying.

The third aspect, rhyme, increased by 7.78%, with an average score in cycle I of 63.33 which increased to 71.11 in cycle II. The fourth aspect, typography, increased by 15.00%, with an average score in cycle I of 63.33 and in cycle II reaching 78.33. These two aspects, rhyme and typography, showed an increase from the fair category in cycle I to the good category in cycle II. This indicates that students have succeeded in determining the right rhyme and typography in writing poetry.

The last aspect, namely the mandate, showed an increase of 8.33%, with an average score in cycle I of 78.89 which increased to 87.22 in cycle II. In the aspect of mandate, students did not face significant difficulties. Based on the average score obtained, students have managed to convey the message or mandate well in their poems. The increase in average scores per aspect listed in the table above can be visualized in diagram 16 below.

Table 1. Test Improvement of Poetry Writing Skills in Each Aspect in Cycle I and Cycle II

No	Assessment Aspect	Average Score		Improvement (%) SI-SII
		SI	SII	
1.	Content conformity with the theme	74,44	78,33	3,89
2.	Diction	71,67	78,33	6,66
3.	Rhyme	63,33	71,11	7,78
4.	Typography	63,33	78,33	15,00
5.	Mandate	78,89	87,22	8,33

The data showed an increase in each aspect of poetry writing between cycle I and cycle II. The first aspect, the suitability of the content with the picture, increased by 3.89%, with a score in cycle I of 74.44 and in cycle II of 78.33. This shows that students succeeded in adjusting the content of the poem to the theme they chose. The second aspect, diction, increased by 6.66%, from a score of 71.67 in cycle I to 78.33 in cycle II. This shows that with the right approach, students can easily put their ideas into words. Although they faced some difficulties in the beginning, the students' ability to choose the right words showed satisfactory results.

The third aspect, rhyme, showed an increase of 7.78%, with an average score in cycle I of 63.33 and increased to 71.11 in cycle II. The fourth aspect, typography, increased by 15.00%, from an average score of 63.33 in cycle I to 78.33 in cycle II. Both aspects, rhyme and typography, improved from the "fair" category in cycle I to the "good" category in cycle II. This shows that students are now able to organize rhyme and typography better in writing poetry.

The last aspect, namely mandate, showed an improvement of 8.33%, with an average score in the cycle I test of 78.89 and increased to 87.22 in the cycle II test. In this aspect, students did not face significant difficulties. Based on the average score obtained, it can be concluded that students succeeded in conveying a clear and good mandate or message in their poems. The data regarding the increase in average scores per aspect in the table can be depicted in diagram 16 below.

To answer the question regarding changes in student behavior after participating in learning to write poetry using the Think Plus strategy with media images of events from newspapers, it can be concluded that there are positive behavioral changes in the way students learn.

Analysis of Observation Results of Cycle I and Cycle II

a. Increased Student Positive Behavior

Table 2. Observation Results of cycle I and cycle II based on Increased Positive Student Behavior

Observation Aspect	Number of Students		Percentage		Percentage Peningkatan
	SI	SII	SI	SII	
Positive Behavior of Students Students are enthusiastic and enthusiastic about learning to write free poetry;	26	34	72,22	94,44	22,2 %
Students pay attention well when the teacher explains;	25	33	69,44	91,66	22,22%

Students respond positively (interested) to the media images of various events contained in the newspaper used by the researcher	26	34	72,22	94,44	22,22%
Students are active during the learning process of writing poetry (asking or answering)	10	21	27,78	58,33	31,00%
Students do the task of writing free poetry seriously, and diligently;	26	34	72,22	94,44	22,22%

b. Reduction in Students' Negative Behavior

Table 3. Observation Results of cycle I and cycle II based on Reduction in Student Negative Behavior

Observation Aspect	Number of Students		Percentage		Percentage Decrease
	SI	SII	SI	SII	
Students' Negative Behavior					
Students are less enthusiastic and less enthusiastic about learning to write free poetry.	10	2	27,78	5,56	22,22%
Students did not pay attention to the teacher's explanation properly and did unnecessary activities (talking to themselves, pacing, lying down, and making unimportant notes);	11	3	30,56	8,33	22,23%
Students respond negatively (less interested) to the newspaper media used by the researcher.	10	2	27,78	5,56	22,22%
Students are passive during the learning process of writing free poetry while doing unimportant things (lying down, joking, etc.)	26	15	72,22	41,67	30,55%
Students do the task of writing free poetry while doing unimportant things (lying down, joking, etc.)	10	2	27,78	5,56	22,22%

Azhari et al

Based on table 2 above, the results of observations made by researchers in cycle I and cycle II show that every positive aspect observed has increased from cycle I to cycle II.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion and research results, it can be concluded that the application of the Think Plus strategy and the utilization of images of various events from newspapers can improve the poetry writing skills of class X students at SMK Negeri 3 Lhokseumawe. The results showed that after participating in learning to write poetry with the Think Plus strategy using images of various events from newspapers, the average score of grade X students at SMK Negeri 3 Lhokseumawe increased. In cycle I, the average score of 69.17 increased by 12.96% compared to the pre-cycle average score of 56.22. Furthermore, in cycle II, the average score increased to 77.83, an increase of 10.88% from cycle I and an increase of 23.84% from the pre-class average score of 56.22. With the average value of cycle II that has exceeded the KKM standard, which is 75, no further action is needed in the next cycle. Changes in the behavior of class X students showed positive developments, where they became more interested, excited, and enthusiastic in participating in learning to write poetry. Based on the research results and conclusions, the suggestions that can be given are as follows: (1) Indonesian language teachers should apply the right learning strategy and choose appropriate media so that students are more motivated, interested, and active in learning to write poetry, so that learning objectives can be achieved. The Think Plus strategy and the utilization of images of various events from newspapers can be used as an alternative in learning to write poetry or in other subjects to support the achievement of learning objectives. (2) Students are advised to be more active in practicing writing poetry by utilizing the strategies that have been applied in this study. In addition, they can also use pictures of various events from newspapers available at home as a source of inspiration to find interesting ideas or ideas as themes in writing poetry.

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