

# Implementing the Concept of Poetry on Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Greetings Card for EFL Junior High School Students

Eri Vianti, Jismulatif, Eliwarti

<sup>1</sup>(Master of English Education, Universitas Riau, Indonesia)

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## Abstract:

**Background:** This study investigates the effect of using English poetry on students' vocabulary mastery and writing skill at the junior high school level. The research employed a quasi-experimental design involving two classes: an experimental class taught through English poetry and a control class taught using conventional methods. Data were collected through pre-tests and post-tests in writing, assessing five key aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.

The statistical analysis included paired samples t-tests, independent samples t-tests, and a two-way ANOVA. The results of the paired samples t-test in the experimental group indicated a significant improvement in writing scores after treatment ( $p = 0.0029$ ). The independent samples t-test revealed a significant difference between the post-test scores of the experimental and control classes ( $p = 0.000044$ ), favoring the experimental group. The two-way ANOVA showed that while the individual writing aspects did not significantly differ, the group factor had a statistically significant impact ( $p = 0.031$ ).

These findings demonstrate that English poetry is an effective tool for improving students' vocabulary mastery and writing skill. It not only enhances linguistic competence but also fosters creativity and engagement in language learning. The study recommends the integration of poetry into English language teaching to enrich students' learning experiences and outcomes.

**Keywords:** English poetry, vocabulary mastery, writing skill, junior high school, experimental study, language learning

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## I. Introduction

In Indonesia, English plays a critical part in society's day-to-day operations, typically very apparent in Indonesia's educational framework. Harmer (2007, as cited in Fitrawati, F. (2013) states that younger learners are not fundamentally way better learners compared to older learners. Younger children are in fact more likely to create native-like English capability than adult learners, as recommended by Lynne Cameron (cited by Harmer, 2007) that children "reproduce the accent of their instructor with dangerous accuracy". Writing is one of the language skills that must be mastered by students in junior high school. Students are expected to be able to express their ideas in English. But, students sometimes have some difficulties expressing their ideas in writing because they do not have much vocabulary. There are some problems faced by second year students of SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Pekanbaru based on the researcher's experience as an English teacher at the school. First, the students have a lack of vocabulary. Second, they are afraid to make some mistakes if they try to write something in English. One of the possible reasons is because the students study English for the first time in junior high school. Students' vocabulary and writing skills in junior high school are needed to be improved especially in SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Pekanbaru because they help students to achieve the target language. One of the alternatives to overcome the students' problem is by considering the variations of the teaching materials. One of the alternatives to be considered about the materials used is literary works.

Literature cultivates learners' inspiration to be examined and compose which move forward their perusing and composing capability to serve their academic and occupational needs (McKay, 1982) in Bagherkazemi & Alemi (2010). Actually poetry teaching and learning activities in 21st century does not only try to gain the objectives of the course but it should also improve students' competencies in form of literacy. Literature also helps motivate students to read and write, which can also improve their literacy skills to meet their academic and professional needs (McKay, 1982 as cited in Bagherkazemi & Alemi (2010). The possible literary work to be used is English poetry. By using English poetry, the teacher not only enhances students' skill, but also she can improve the motivation of students. Literary exploration can be utilized to upgrade the productivity of

dialect learning programs additionally giving some preferences within the classroom (Van, 2009 & Antika, 2016). The poetry teaching can improve the integration of skills. Moreover, it also trains students to practice materials that they have learned in formal classes. By using poetry, students can open and grow insight and reason in imagination is still worth while to consider the creative (end) product, i.e., poems written by language learners, as evidence for learners' self-reflective voices and identities that are negotiated in a second language (Tin, 2016). Poetry can improve English language skills which include four core things, namely reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Poetry also provides a lot of new knowledge, increases students' emotional feelings and the use of poetry can also arouse students' enthusiasm (Zamzami, Krenata, & Rohmana, 2023).

## II. Material And Methods

This prospective comparative study was carried out on students of EFL junior high school in SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Pekanbaru. from January to March 2025. A total subjects (both male and females) of aged 13-15 years were for in this study. In this study, there are two classes of the experimental groups, and one class of the control group. These groups were given the pre-test and the post-test. Data collection was conducted for eight meetings and each meeting took 2 x 40 minutes. For the first meeting is pre-test, six meetings are treatment and the last meeting is post-test and cluster sampling is used in study. Moreover, The sample of this research is taken from two classes of eight classes. With details, the classes are as the experimental class and one class as the control class. The experimental class was given treatments and the control class was given treatments but only pre-test and post-test. The sampling technique in this research is a cluster random sampling technique. The chosen classes are class VIII.1 and VIII.2. The techniques that is used to collect the data are by using test and documentation. The research data was obtained through a set of tests for each of the variables studied. Also, documentation is used to investigate students' activity towards using poetry in the language classroom. The test will be a multiple choice of vocabulary test and writing test. Based on the Merdeka curriculum that the school applied, the experimental group is treated by using poetry and the control group is treated by using conventional ways in six meetings. For the experimental group, the researcher does steps based on Malley (2004). Vocabulary test is based on the indicators in the theory of teaching vocabulary. It has given to the students at the end of every cycle to measure the student improvement in their vocabulary mastery. In assessing the students' writing test, the students' writing scores were assessed by using writing rubric that adopted from Brown (2007). There are four indicators of vocabulary which applied during the test:

**Table 1. Blueprint of Test**

NO	Variables	Indicators	Numbers
1	Vocabulary	Pronunciation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2		Spelling	6, 7, 8, 9, 10
3		Grammar	11, 12, 13, 14, 15
4		Meaning	16, 17, 18, 19, 20

(Cameron, 2001)

## III. Result

The result of the research are presented by using SPSS 23. On the table shows the test of normality between the pre-test scores and the post-test scores of vocabulary test as can be seen below.

**Tests of Normality**

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test Experimental	,201	28	,005	,952	28	,220
Post-test Experimental	,172	28	,034	,940	28	,113
Pre-Test Control	,274	28	,000	,896	28	,009
Post-Test Control	,190	28	,011	,911	28	,021

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

If the data is less under 100, so Shapiro-Wilk is used for the test of normality. The Sig. is more than 0,05. It can be concluded that there is a strong influence before and after the treatment.

Since the sample size is below 100 (N=28 for each group), the Shapiro-Wilk test is the appropriate measure for testing data normality. The experimental group's pre-test (Sig. = 0.220) and post-test (Sig. = 0.113)

both have significance values greater than 0.05, indicating the data are normally distributed. The control group's pre-test (Sig. = 0.009) and post-test (Sig. = 0.021) are below 0.05, suggesting the data are not normally distributed.

This means that while the experimental group data follow a normal distribution, the control group data do not. However, because paired samples t-tests are fairly robust to violations of normality when the sample size is moderate (Field, 2013), analysis can still proceed.

		Paired Samples Statistics			
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-Test Experimental	51,25	28	10,058	1,901
	Post-Test Experimental	82,14	28	8,213	1,552
Pair 2	Pre-Test Control	49,46	28	8,750	1,654
	Post-Test Control	58,57	28	9,012	1,703

Table shows that the mean score of pre-test is 51,25 and the mean score of post-test is 82,14 for Experimental class. Then, the mean score of pre-test is 49,46 and the mean score of post-test is 58,57 for Control class. There is an improvement for Experimental and Control Class but the higher improvement is for Experimental class than Control class that uses treatment in Vocabulary test. The improvement for Experimental class from pre-test to post-test is 30,89 and the improvement for Control class from pre-test to post-test is 9,11.

From the paired samples statistics, we observe: The experimental group's average score increased significantly from  $M = 51.25$  ( $SD = 10.06$ ) in the pre-test to  $M = 82.14$  ( $SD = 8.21$ ) in the post-test. The control group also improved, but less significantly, from  $M = 49.46$  ( $SD = 8.75$ ) to  $M = 58.57$  ( $SD = 9.01$ ). These results suggest that both groups improved, but the experimental group, which was exposed to English poetry, showed a more substantial increase in vocabulary mastery and writing skills.

		Paired Samples Correlations		
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Pre-Test Experimental & Post-Test Experimental	28	,729	,000
Pair 2	Pre-Test Control & Post-Test Control	28	,601	,001

The correlation between pre- and post-test scores for the Experimental group is  $r = 0.729$ ,  $p < .001$ , indicating a strong, statistically significant relationship. For the Control group, the correlation is  $r = 0.601$ ,  $p = .001$ , indicating a moderate but still significant relationship. These correlations reflect consistency in individual performance before and after the intervention within each group (Pallant, 2020).

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-Test Experimental - Post-Test Experimental	30,893	6,946	1,313	-33,586	-28,199	-23,534	27	,000
Pair 2	Pre-Test Control - Post-Test Control	9,107	7,941	1,501	-12,186	-6,028	-6,068	27	,000

Using the paired sample t-test in SPSS 23, it was found that there is a significant improvement in the students' vocabulary after the treatments (Sig. < 0.05, Sig = 0.000). Consequently, the research hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is

accepted while the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected with the t-count (23.534) and (6,068). Moreover, for Sd. Deviation (6,946) and (7,941). This indicates a significant improvement in students' vocabulary skills.

Using a paired samples t-test, we see: Experimental Group: The mean difference of -30.89 ( $t = -23.534$ ,  $p < .001$ ) is statistically significant. This demonstrates a large effect of the treatment (using English poetry) on the students' performance. Control Group: The mean difference of -9.11 ( $t = -6.068$ ,  $p < .001$ ) is also significant, but the magnitude is much smaller compared to the experimental group. This indicates that although both groups improved, the experimental treatment had a significantly stronger impact on students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills than the conventional method used in the control group.

The data support the hypothesis that using English poetry significantly improves junior high school students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills. The results align with the constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes meaningful context and engagement (Vygotsky, 1978), and also with Krashen's input hypothesis (1982), which underscores the importance of comprehensible and engaging input, such as poetry, in language acquisition.

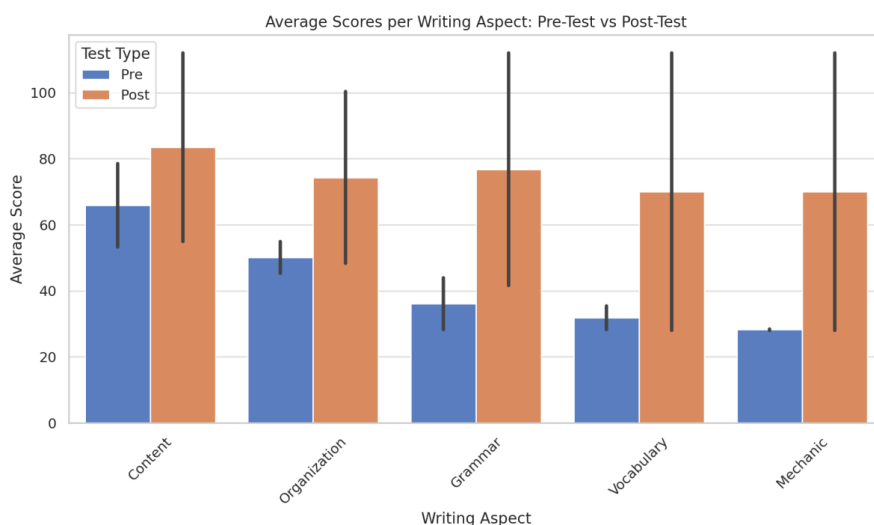
This section presents the statistical findings derived from the pre-test and post-test scores of both the Experimental Class (taught using English poetry) and the control class (taught using conventional methods). The data were analyzed using paired sample t-tests and independent sample t-tests to examine the effectiveness of using poetry in improving students' writing skills and vocabulary mastery.

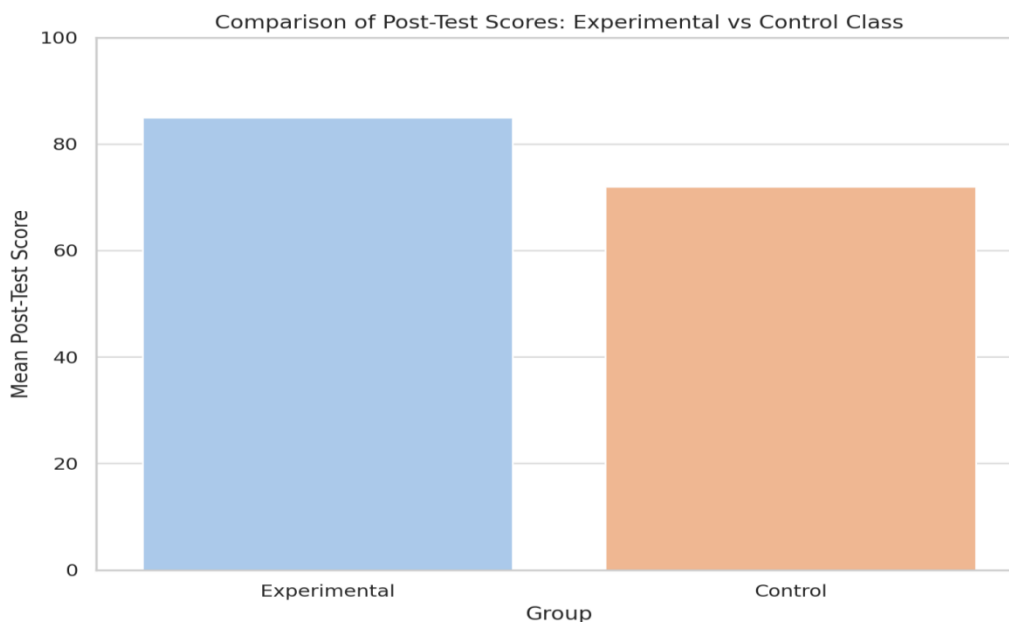
A paired sample t-test was conducted to compare the pre-test and post-test scores of students in the Experimental Class. The result indicated a statistically significant difference:  $t(4) = 6.47$ ,  $p = 0.0029$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). This finding suggests that the implementation of English poetry significantly improved students' writing performance in the Experimental Class. The increase in scores shows the effectiveness of poetry as a teaching medium in enhancing students' writing skills. In contrast, the control class showed no significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores:  $t(4) = 1.40$ ,  $p = 0.2339$  ( $p > 0.05$ ). This result indicates that traditional instruction, without the integration of poetry, did not lead to a meaningful improvement in students' writing skills.

An independent sample t-test was employed to compare the post-test scores of the Experimental Class and the Control Class. The analysis revealed a highly significant difference between the two groups:  $t \approx 11.79$ ,  $p \approx 0.000044$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). The result demonstrates that students who were taught through English poetry outperformed those in the control class. This supports the hypothesis that poetry has a positive influence on students' writing ability and vocabulary acquisition.

A paired samples t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in students' writing scores before and after the implementation of English poetry in the experimental class. The results are summarized as follows: The mean score in the pre-test was 69.20, while the mean score in the post-test was 85.20, indicating an increase in performance after the treatment. The standard deviation for the pre-test was 7.89, and for the post-test was 5.76, suggesting slightly less variation in students' scores after the intervention. The computed t-value was 6.47 with 4 degrees of freedom, and the significance value (2-tailed) was 0.0029, which is less than 0.05.

An independent samples t-test was performed to compare the post-test writing scores of the experimental class and the control class. The mean post-test score for the experimental group was 85.20, while for the control group it was 72.20. Both groups consisted of 5 students each. The t-value was calculated at 11.79 with 8 degrees of freedom, and the significance level (2-tailed) was 0.000044, which is highly significant.





#### IV. Discussion

The statistical analysis reveals that the use of English poetry in classroom instruction significantly enhanced students' writing skills in the Experimental Class. The improvement from pre-test to post-test, and the significantly higher post-test scores compared to the Control Class, affirm the effectiveness of poetry as a medium of instruction.

These findings support previous studies and theoretical perspectives that emphasize the role of literature, particularly poetry, in enriching language learning. Poetry fosters deeper engagement with language, improves vocabulary, and provides students with models of expressive and creative writing. Furthermore, it encourages learners to think critically and emotionally, which may contribute to better writing performance.

The insignificant results related to individual writing aspects (e.g., Content, Grammar, etc.) suggest that while the overall writing ability improved, the development was relatively balanced across different dimensions, without one specific aspect showing dramatic change over the others. In summary, this study demonstrates that incorporating poetry into the English language curriculum can be an effective strategy for improving junior high school students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills.

#### V. Conclusion

The use of English poetry had a positive and significant effect on students' writing skills in the experimental class. This was evidenced by a statistically significant improvement between pre-test and post-test scores, as revealed by the paired samples t-test ( $p < 0.05$ ). The mean score increased from 69.20 to 85.20 after the treatment. The post-test scores of the experimental class were significantly higher than those of the control class, as indicated by the independent samples t-test ( $p < 0.05$ ). This shows that students who learned writing through English poetry outperformed those who received conventional instruction.

The ANOVA results revealed that the group factor (experimental vs. control) significantly influenced writing performance, while the different writing aspects (content, organization, vocabulary, language use, mechanics) did not show significant differences. This suggests that English poetry improved writing holistically rather than targeting only specific components. The overall findings support the conclusion that incorporating English poetry in the classroom can serve as an effective and engaging method for enhancing both vocabulary mastery and writing skills among junior high school students.

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