



APPLICATION OF POETRY WRITING LEARNING EVALUATION USING ACROSTIC TECHNIQUE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the acrostic technique as a method of formative evaluation in poetry writing learning, addressing the limitations of conventional evaluation which is subjective and focused on the final product. Through a systematic literature review, it was identified that the acrostic technique, which requires the first letter of each line of poetry to form a vertical keyword (e.g., "LOVE" or "NATURE"), offers a structured framework for holistically assessing the creative process. The research results reveal three key findings: (1) Implementation of the formative cycle was successfully integrated into three stages: (a) providing a vertical theme as a guide, (b) drafting with specific feedback per line, and (c) gradual revision based on teacher input; (2) The technique's effectiveness was proven in overcoming writer's block, improving diction precision, strengthening theme comprehension, and integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor assessment; and (3) Student responses were predominantly positive (85%) because the acrostic structure reduced anxiety and triggered creativity, although 15% of students felt the structural constraints restricted their emotional flow. In other words, the acrostic technique serves as an authentic, objective, and process-oriented formative evaluation instrument, aligning with the assessment for learning principle in the Merdeka Curriculum.

Keywords: Formative Evaluation, Poetry Writing, Acrostic Technique, Assessment for Learning, Merdeka Curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

Learning to write poetry is an essential component of the Indonesian language curriculum, aiming to develop literary literacy competence, self-expression, and appreciation for linguistic beauty (Kemdikbudristek, 2022; Permendikbudristek No. 21 of 2022). This skill involves not only technical linguistic aspects but also hones students' emotional sensitivity, creativity, and imaginative thinking (Kurniawan & Wulandari, 2019). Mastery of poetry writing skills is expected to contribute to shaping students' character to be more sensitive to the social environment and human values, in line with national education goals.

However, the implementation of poetry writing learning in the classroom often faces complex challenges. Students frequently experience difficulties in finding original ideas, expressing emotions poetically, choosing appropriate diction, and understanding and effectively applying the building blocks of poetry such as rhyme, rhythm, and figurative language (Nurgiyantoro, 2016). On the other hand, the practice of evaluating poetry writing learning outcomes still tends to be subjective, focused on the final product

(final draft), and pays less attention to the creative process and students' gradual development. This conventional evaluation approach often fails to provide constructive and motivating feedback for improving student work (Andrade, 2019).

The limitations of these traditional evaluation methods demand innovative assessment approaches that are more authentic, formative, and capable of appreciating students' creative processes. Evaluation focused on development (assessment *for* learning) and providing space for repeated improvement (revision) has proven more effective in the context of creative writing learning, as it provides meaningful diagnostic information for teachers and students (Herawati, 2023). An alternative evaluation technique is needed that is structured yet retains freedom of expression and can accommodate the diversity of student learning styles.

One technique with potential for integration into poetry writing learning evaluation is the acrostic technique. This technique requires students to compose a poem where the first letter of each line, when read vertically, forms a word, phrase, or name that serves as the poem's theme (Widiarti & Kurniawan, 2020). The acrostic technique provides a clear and directed framework for beginner students, helping to overcome writer's block by providing a creative initial constraint, while also training precision in word choice to meet the predetermined vertical structure.

Applying the acrostic technique as an *evaluation instrument* in poetry writing learning, rather than merely a writing activity, offers a new perspective. This technique can function as a relatively more objective assessment tool in measuring certain cognitive aspects (such as theme comprehension and ability to follow technical instructions) while facilitating the assessment of affective aspects (creativity, emotional expression) and psychomotor aspects (linguistic precision, structural arrangement) (Febriyanti & Suryaman, 2021). The acrostic framework allows teachers to provide more specific and focused feedback, both on the process (e.g., initial keyword selection) and the product (coherence between lines and the vertical keyword, linguistic beauty), and encourages students to undertake gradual revisions.

Based on this background, this study aims to investigate the application of the acrostic technique as a formative evaluation method in poetry writing learning. The research focus includes the implementation of the acrostic technique in the formative evaluation cycle, its effectiveness in improving students' poetry writing skills, and student responses to this evaluation model. By exploring the potential of the acrostic technique as a creative, structured, and process-oriented evaluation tool, this research is expected to provide practical contributions for educators in designing more meaningful poetry writing learning assessments, encouraging active participation, and supporting students' literary literacy development holistically.

METHOD

This study used a systematic *literature review* method to answer the research questions regarding the application of poetry writing learning evaluation using the acrostic technique. The literature review was chosen because it allows researchers to comprehensively and critically examine findings, concepts, theories, and empirical evidence produced by previous researchers within a specific timeframe, without collecting new primary data (Snyder, 2019). This approach is suitable for mapping knowledge development, identifying research gaps, and synthesizing evidence related to the effectiveness and implementation of the acrostic technique in the context of formative poetry writing evaluation.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

1. Implementation of the Acrostic Technique in the Formative Evaluation Cycle

Research by Widiarti and Kurniawan (2020) shows that the acrostic technique can be integrated into several stages of formative evaluation. In the initial stage, the teacher provides a theme in the form of a vertical keyword (e.g., "LOVE" or "NATURE") which functions as a creative constraint and guide. Students then compose a draft poem ensuring the first letter of each line forms that keyword. During the drafting process, the teacher can provide specific feedback regarding word choice on each line to ensure coherence with the theme and acrostic structure. Febriyanti and Suryaman (2021) add that this technique facilitates the gradual revision process because students can focus on fixing one line at a time based on teacher feedback, without feeling overwhelmed.

2. Effectiveness of the Acrostic Technique in Improving Poetry Writing Skills

A synthesis of various studies (Febriyanti & Suryaman, 2021; Widiarti & Kurniawan, 2020) indicates that the acrostic technique significantly helps students in:

- a. overcoming writer's block due to the presence of a vertical framework that provides writing direction.
- b. increasing precision in selecting diction to fulfill the acrostic structure while maintaining linguistic beauty.
- c. strengthening comprehension of the poem's theme, because students must maintain consistency between the lines of poetry and the vertical keyword.

Herawati (2023) asserts that this approach is more effective than conventional evaluation which only focuses on the final product, because the acrostic technique accommodates the gradual development of student skills through feedback and revision cycles.

3. Student Responses to the Acrostic-Based Evaluation Model

A study by Febriyanti and Suryaman (2021) on elementary school students reported that 85% of students gave a positive response to the acrostic technique. Students felt this technique simplified the poetry writing process, which was initially perceived as abstract and intimidating. The structured framework reduced anxiety and increased confidence. At the secondary school level, Widiarti and Kurniawan (2020) noted that this technique sparked creativity because, despite structural constraints, students remained free to express themselves in developing each line. However, 15% of students stated that the acrostic structure sometimes restricted their emotional flow.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of the acrostic technique in formative poetry writing evaluation has proven effective as a cognitive *framework* that overcomes writer's block. The vertical framework (like the words "LOVE" or "NATURE") functions as a creative constraint that triggers *cognitive shifting*. This shifts students' focus from the anxiety of facing a "blank page" to directed diction exploration. The mechanism of specific feedback on each line allows for gradual revision without overburdening cognition, as observed by Widiarti & Kurniawan (2020) and Febriyanti & Suryaman (2021).

Student responses to this technique reveal a unique dialectic between freedom of expression and creative constraint. 85% of students felt helped because the acrostic

structure simplified the complexity of writing poetry, where a constraint actually strengthens originality through strategic adaptation. However, 15% of students felt hindered, indicating incompatibility with a *diverger* learning style that relies on free emotional flow. This phenomenon confirms the need for technique modifications (e.g., semi-free acrostic) to accommodate learning style diversity.

From an assessment perspective, acrostic bridges quantitative and qualitative objectivity. The consistency of the vertical keyword provides a measurable indicator for theme comprehension (cognitive aspect), while the gradual revision process appreciates the development of emotional expression and linguistic precision (affective-psychomotor aspects). This approach aligns with the *assessment for learning* philosophy in the Merdeka Curriculum (Permendikbudristek No. 21/2022), which emphasizes process assessment (*process over product*) and flexibility (*differentiated assessment*), for example, through students choosing personal themes.

Pedagogically, these findings highlight acrostic as a *diagnostic tool* for mapping students' specific difficulties (weakness in diction vs. theme coherence). The minority response (15%) feeling restricted serves as a reminder of the importance of providing alternative options (such as partial acrostic). Nevertheless, the generalization of findings is limited by the dominance of elementary-middle school samples in the literature reviewed.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the application of the acrostic technique as a formative evaluation instrument in poetry writing learning has proven effective and provides significant benefits. This technique was successfully integrated into the formative evaluation cycle through three structured stages: (1) providing a vertical theme (e.g., "LOVE" or "NATURE") as a creative guide, (2) composing a poetry draft with specific feedback per line, and (3) gradual revision based on teacher input. This implementation holistically overcomes writer's block, improves diction precision, strengthens theme comprehension, and integrates cognitive, affective, and psychomotor assessment.

The majority of students (85%) responded positively because the acrostic framework reduced anxiety, simplified the complexity of writing poetry, and triggered creativity through structured constraints. However, a small portion (15%) felt the vertical structure restricted their emotional flow, indicating the need for technique modifications (such as semi-free acrostic) to accommodate learning style diversity.

From an assessment perspective, this technique bridges objectivity and qualitative aspects by measuring theme comprehension through keyword consistency (cognitive aspect) while assessing the development of emotional expression and linguistic precision (affective-psychomotor aspects). This approach aligns with the *assessment for learning* principle in the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes process assessment (*process over product*) and flexibility (*differentiated assessment*). Pedagogically, acrostic also functions as a *diagnostic tool* to identify students' specific difficulties, such as weakness in diction or theme coherence. Thus, the acrostic technique offers an authentic, structured, and student-development-oriented evaluation alternative, although the generalization of findings needs to consider variations in educational levels.

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