

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ABILITY IN UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH POETRY AT THE THIRD GRADE OF ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM STATE POLYTECHNIC OF BENGKALIS

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Abstract: *This research aims to analyse the ability of students' ability in understanding English poetry at the third grade of English Study Program, State polytechnic of Bengkalis. The type of the research was descriptive research. The data of the research were collected by administering written English Poetry test. The finding shows that the average score of ability of the students in understanding English poetry is poor. The categories of students' ability were; sound categorized poor, structure categorized poor, and sense categorized poor. It means that the students' ability in understanding English poetry was poor.*

Key words: *Ability, Sound, Structure and Sense of English Poetry.*

INTRODUCTION

Poetry is one of literary works that has been proved beneficial. This is necessary for the language learner or students. The benefits are not only as the source of inspiration but also as a medium to improve language capacities in language learning. By learning poetry the students can enhance their ability in English.

Moreover, it is expected that poetry as a material is able to help students' competency develop.

According to Wei (2008), poetry learning can improve students' critical thinking, language skills in listening, reading, speaking and writing as well as understanding of a different culture. Thus, it is necessary for the students to learn poetry when they want to improve their skill in English or vice versa.

Meanwhile, it is a pleasure to learn poetry. It provides joy and fun. According to Anderson (1981) affective domain involve the emotion

and feeling which help students have good self-concept, self-esteem, value and morality. Sadler and Hayllar (1991) add that poetry can enrich the reader's feeling. It stimulates feeling. It accommodates students' to feel happiness, sadness, concern, and interest. Hence, poetry gives abundant benefits to the students.

As the material that has to be learnt completely in the class. Poetry has to be taught well in a course in the language program class. So, the students can get some knowledge about poetry in the teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, the achievement of the students in poetry has to be measured by conducting evaluation. Beside it figure out the students' mastery, it also can shows the success teaching and learning process. In addition, it shows the problems faced by the students in poetry. Therefore. It is important to conduct a study about the students' ability in understanding English poetry at the second grade of English Department Students.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Poetry is created by using language. Hornby (1995) states that

poetry as a kind of creative writing in expressing thought, valuable concerns and emotion in the awesome language. Timpane (2001) adds that poetry is a way in creating artworks by using language. In addition, Flanagan (2008) states that poetry is an imaginative awareness of experience expressed through meaning, sound, and rhythmic language choices to evoke an emotional response. Thus, poetry consists of line by line which binds reader's feeling and emotional.

Poetry has some poetic elements. They are sound, sense and structure. It is in relation what Perrine (1974) says. There is sound to make the poetry more attractive. Sound consists of rhyme (the repetition of sound (Timpane and Watts (2001)) and rhythm (forms or pattern of stresses in a line or verse (Timpane and Watts (2001))). Both of them make the poetry tempting.

Furthermore, sense makes the word ties the readers' feeling and emotional. It consists of personification, metaphor, simile and symbol. Personification is giving human qualities to object and other creatures (Sadler and Haylar;1991). Metaphor is a pattern in comparing a

thing becomes something else (Sadler and Haylar;1991). Simile is to enable the reader to figure out one thing as being the same as something else (Sadler and Haylar;1991)). Symbol is something which stands or means for something else (Timpane and Watts;2001). To sum up, sense makes the poetry is more alive.

The structure of poetry is entertaining the readers. It consists of limerick, moral, theme and stanza. Limerick is a kind of nonsense verse which is famous and popular (Sadler and Haylar;1991). Moral is something which can be learnt in the poetry by the reader (Madden; 2002). Theme is something previously hidden in a poetry, it gives us understanding into human nature (Madden; 2002). Stanza consists of line or verse.

'Azizah(2016) conducted a research about " The Effect of Students' Passion, Habit and Comprehension of Reading Indonesian Poetry toward the Ability of Writing". One of the investigations of the research was that the relationship of comprehending Indonesian poetry toward the ability of writing. It was found that the more students comprehend the Indonesian poetry the

more competence the students in writing.

The difference between these two researches are; the previous thesis conducted how the students' comprehension in Indonesian Poetry effected the ability of writing. However, this research conducted the analysis of students' ability in understanding English poetry. The next difference is that the previous study conducted the research to high school students, while this was conducted to college students.

RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research was descriptive. It was aimed to figure out the students' ability in understanding English Poetry.

The instruments of this research was the writing test. The test was administered to the students of English Department, grade III at State Polytechnic of Bengkalisin order to measure their ability in understanding poetry. Furthermore, the indicators to see their ability in understanding English poetry are; the first is sound. Sound consists of rhyme and rhythm. The second is sense. Sense consists of metaphor, personification, simile and

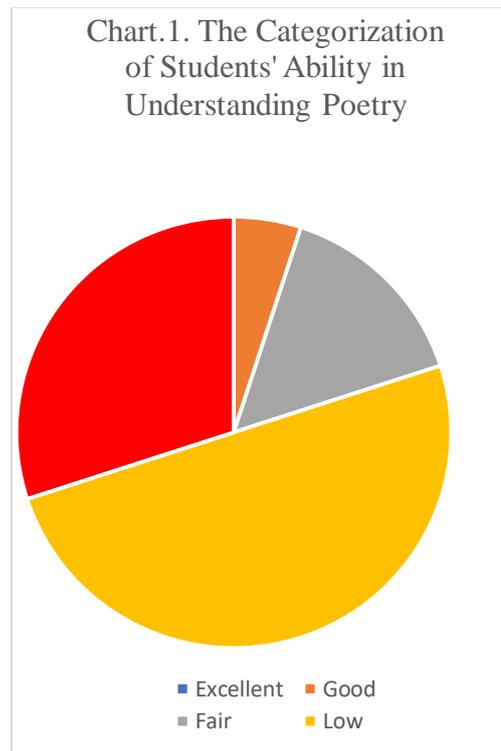
symbol. The last is the structure of the poetry. It is divided into limerick, moral, theme and stanza.

After having been collected from the field, the data were analysed and interpreted by and using descriptive techniques.

In addition, the conclusion was derived from the finding.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

All of the data obtained in this research were collected by using students’ written poetry test. The students’ written poetry test was used to see the students’ ability in understanding poetry. The data gotten are related to the students’ ability in understanding poetry. Then, the data themselves described the students’ ability in understanding English poetry by considering following indicators such as sound, sense, and structure of poetry. The data were gotten in the form of grade (range 0-100) and the grading quality (bad, low, fair, good, and excellent).

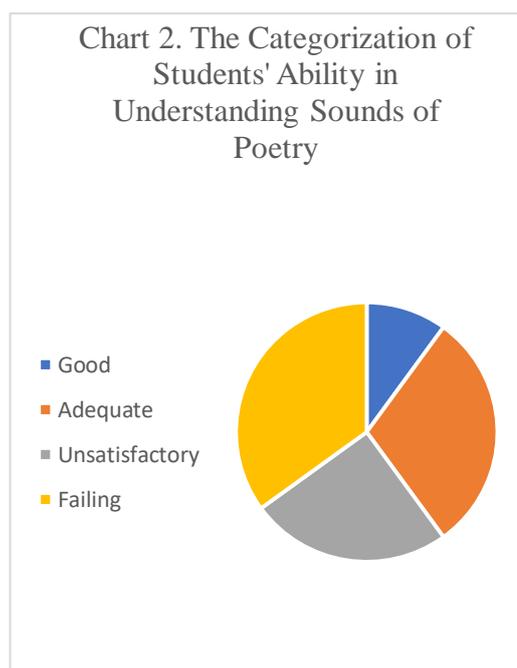


Based on the chart above, it can be seen the categorization of students’ ability in understanding English poetry. For excellent performance, there is 0% students. It means that there was no student getting excellent performance in understanding poetry. Then, for good performance, there are 5% students. It means that there was only one student getting good performance in understanding English poetry. Next, for fair performance, there are 15% students. It means that there were three students getting fair performance in understanding English poetry. After that, for low performance, there are 50% students. It means that there were

10 students getting low performance in understanding English poetry. For bad performance, there are 30% students. It means that there were six students getting bad performance in understanding poetry.

Then, the data showed the ability of students' in understanding English poetry were separated into several indicators. They were sound, sense and structure of poetry.

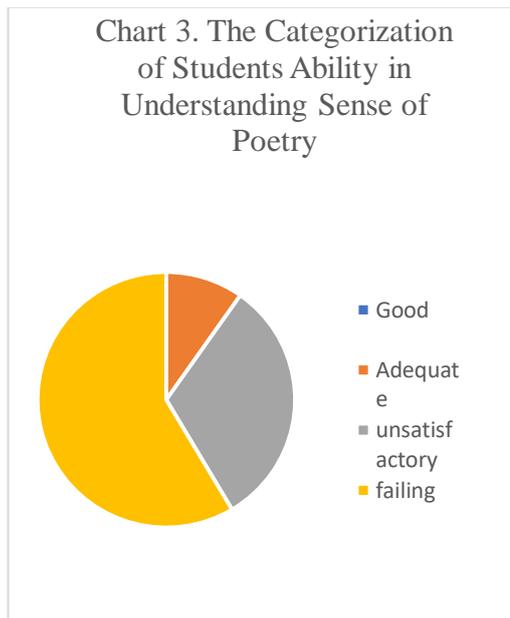
The first indicator of the students' ability in understanding poetry is that the ability of students in understanding sound of English poetry. They have to comprehend the rhythm and rhyme of poetry. The ability of students in understanding sound of poetry can be seen in the following chart.



From the chart above, it can be seen that the highest categorization obtained by the students in understanding poetry is good. There were 10% students getting good categorization in understanding sound of English poetry.

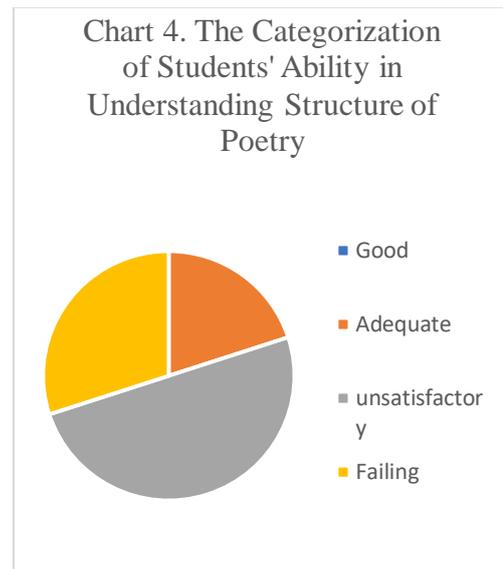
In addition, from the chart above, the lowest categorization obtained by the students in understanding sound of poetry is failing. There were 35% students getting failing categorization in understanding sound of poetry.

The second indicator of the students ability in understanding poetry is that the ability of the students in understanding sense of English poetry. The students have to have competency in understanding metaphor, personification, simile, and symbol of the poetry. The ability of the students in understanding sense of poetry can be seen in the following chart.



From the table above, it can be seen that the highest score obtained by the students in understanding sense of poetry is categorized adequate. There were 20% students getting adequate categorization. The lowest categorization obtained by the students is failing. There were 65% students getting failing categorization in understanding sense of poetry.

The last indicator of students' ability in understanding English poetry is that the ability of the students in understanding the structure of English poetry. The students have to have competency in understanding limerick, moral, theme and stanza. The students' ability in understanding structure of poetry can be seen in the following chart.



From the chart, it can be seen that the highest categorization obtained by the students in understanding structure of poetry is adequate categorization. There were 20% students getting adequate categorization. While, The lowest categorization obtained by students in understanding structure of poetry is that failing categorization. There were 30% students getting failing categorization.

Poetry is one of literary works which has to be mastered by the students. It becomes necessary because it provides many benefits to the students. Thus, they have to own understanding in poetry and the elements of poetry; sound, sense and structure.

Based on the finding, most of the students get low criterion in

understanding poetry. There is only one student gets good criterion. While, by having good comprehension on poetry, the students can take many good impacts toward themselves. According to Sage (1987) having competency in poetry influences the special quality of life because it gives emotional benefits and cultural transmitter. Thus, good in poetry provides important contribution to the personal capacity and language learning.

Sound is the way to make the poetry more attractive. In this case, the students were demanded to have competency to understand the repetition of sound in the poetry and the forms of patterns of stresses in a line or verse. While, based on the finding, there is only a few students get good criterion in understanding sound. Meanwhile, most of the students get low criterion in understanding sound of poetry. It means that the students do not understand the sound poetry. In fact, sound of poetry is important to comprehend by the students. According to Vardell and Hadaway (2011) comprehending sound of poetry, rhyme and rhythm, is an

optimal way in learning language for the learner. In addition, according to Çubukçu (2001) in Rai (2012) having good experience in rhyming and rhythm of the poetry, it will give good contribution to language learning. The students become more familiar with English as target language. Ara (2009) adds the mastering sound of poetry accommodates the students to convert the meaning of the poetry. Hence, by understanding the sound of poetry, it helps the students improve their competency in English.

Furthermore, based on the finding, there is no student getting good criterion in understanding sense of poetry. Most of the students get unsatisfactory criterion in understanding of poetry. It means that most of the students do not understand the sense of poetry. They faced difficulties to conceive the sense of poetry that connects feeling and emotion. While, the competency owned by the students in the sense of poetry contributes to the students themselves in learning language. According to Norris (2010) learning poetry offers many benefits to the students consist of some contents. One of them is the sense of poetry itself.

Hence, understanding sense of poetry accommodates students in learning language.

Structure of poetry is one of some competencies which should be achieved by the students. Nevertheless, based on the finding, most of the students got poor criteria in understanding the structure of the poetry. There was no students getting good criterion in understanding structure of poetry. It means that most of the students did not understand the structure of the poetry well. Meanwhile comprehending structure of poetry affects the students comprehension about poetry. According to Vardell and Hadaway (2001) having good understanding in the structure of the poetry helps the students enjoy the vocabulary as well as the use of language. It means that comprehending poetry by learning it improve the students competency in learning language.

CONCLUSION

English poetry is one of literary works which the students have to have competency on it because it give many benefits to the language learner. While based on the finding the

students had low competency in understanding English poetry. It is suggested to the language learner to read and practice poetry regularly. So, they can master poetry to improve their English skill. It is suggested to continue this research to get innovative strategy to in order to improve the students' competency in English Poetry.

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