A PREPARATION OF DRAMA PERFORMANCE BY CREATING VISUAL SYMBOL RESPONSE AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

PERSIAPAN PEMENTASAN DRAMA DENGAN MENCIPTAKAN RESPON SIMBOL VISUAL DI TENGAH COVID-19

Munikahi1), Rita Inderawati2)

English Education Department, Sriwijaya University, Palembang, Indonesia
Jalan Raya Palembang-Prabumulih Indralaya Ogan Ilir 30662
munikahiserimawati@gmail.com
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Abstract
This study aimed to elaborate on the students’ creativity in responding to literary works, in this case, a poem entitled Beowulf by utilizing visual symbols. The population of this research students from the 4th semester of English education in Sriwijaya University in the academic year 2020/2021 consists of 73 students. The researcher used the purposive sampling method. There were 34 students chosen as samples. The instruments of the research were test and documentation of their Visual Symbol Response which were analyzed by using Rubric for Creativity. The result showed students can appreciate literature using visual symbols. These symbols can help students visualize the words written in literary works so as to form an interesting performance. On the other hand, the students have been able to elaborate on critical thinking and also their creativity. The students were generally not at the degree of “imitative” in any way. The vast majority of students were “creative,” but none of them were “very creative.” Critical thinking may aid readers in discovering the deeper meaning of a piece of prose or poem, as well as allowing them to see the other side or what lies behind it. The students enjoy their creativity as they have strived to create visual symbols to be interesting videos as the early effort to prepare virtual drama performance.

Keywords: Literary works, visual symbols, creativity, and critical thinking

1. INTRODUCTION
Literature, characterized by attributes such as authenticity, artistry, and expressiveness (Lodge, 2015), plays a vital role in enhancing students’ capacity to enjoy, appreciate, and comprehend literary works. Djuanda (2014) suggests that language learning through literary works not only enhances
language proficiency but also adds value to the accompanying experience. The value embedded in literary works aims to provide readers with enjoyment, novel experiences, and a means of expression (Henry & Solari, 2021; Dali, 2021; Rashwan, 2021; Baan, 2021; Revord et al., 2021; Weaver et al., 2021).

Literary competence involves the skill of literary appreciation, defined by Ogenlewe (2006) as the study of creative works as an intellectual pursuit. In Indonesia, students engage with various literary forms, from basic texts, poems, and short tales to more intricate forms such as novels and dramas. Readers explore stories to understand how writers employ text to enrich meaning (Inderawati, 2011).

Inderawati (2013) emphasizes that students analyze intrinsic and extrinsic elements of literary works, expressing their appreciation through reader responses and visual symbols. Visual symbols, methods of conveying information through media visible to the eyes (Taylor et al., 2019), serve as a means to map visual data onto language data during reading. In the context of literary works, these symbols help visualize words, enhancing engagement (Inderawati, 2009). Responding to visual symbols can take various forms, including story maps, sociogram films, and videos.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the creation of drama, a final assignment for the Literature course, faced challenges due to restrictions. Despite the hurdles, students showcased their creativity in adapting to the circumstances and continued their literary presentations. Siti (2018) notes the importance of cultivating critical thinking and creativity, especially in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The focus of this study is on the epic poem Beowulf, chosen for its historical significance and poetic characteristics. Beowulf narrates the leadership qualities of its titular character and stands as one of the oldest poems in the English language. With five epic components, including an epic hero, massive action, literary style, extensive speeches, and a descent into the underworld, Beowulf offers a rich literary exploration.

In the ELT course, students delve into the societal background, characteristics, and authors of literary works, contributing to their understanding of English culture. Collaborative processes in the learning journey involve translating Old English literary works into contemporary English. However, the pandemic prompted adjustments in the teaching strategy, particularly in the execution of drama.

This study aims to harness visual symbols to elucidate students’ creativity in responding to literary works, focusing on the epic poem Beowulf. The virtual drama preparation utilized Canva for visual representation, allowing an exploration of students’ responses to visual symbols and their engagement with Beowulf during the pandemic (Inderawati, 2021).

2. METHODOLOGY

This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach. According to Tavakoli (2012), the descriptive method in qualitative research aims to depict, classify, compare, analyze, and interpret entities and events within various fields of inquiry. It involves presenting elements or interpretations that convey the meaning or significance as perceived by the describer. Consequently, descriptions often involve comparisons and contrasts that encompass measurements, classifications, interpretations, and assessments. Descriptive studies may delve into how or in what manner existing conditions are connected to prior events influencing the current state or situation.

The study involved 34 participants from the fourth semester of the English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University. The selection of these participants was based on their role in the upcoming virtual drama performance.

Data collection utilized documentation and a creativity rubric. The researcher analyzed student footage for documentation, where students created videos showcasing their appreciation of poetry by combining images, incorporating effects (sound and atmosphere), and introducing inventive elements to enhance video appeal. The creativity rubric, developed by Brookhart (2013), was employed to assess students' creativity.
Table 1. Rubric for Creativity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety of ideas and contexts</th>
<th>Very Creative</th>
<th>Creative</th>
<th>Ordinary/Routine</th>
<th>Imitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideas represent a striking variety of important concepts from different contexts or disciplines.</td>
<td>Ideas represent important concepts from different contexts or disciplines.</td>
<td>Ideas represent important concepts from the same or similar contexts or disciplines.</td>
<td>Ideas do not represent important concepts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Variety of sources | Created product draws on a wide variety of sources, including different texts, media, resource persons, or personal experiences. | Created product draws on a variety of sources, including different texts, media, resource persons, or personal experiences. | Created product draws on a limited set of sources and media. | Created product draws on only one source or on sources that are not trustworthy or appropriate. |

| Combining ideas | Ideas are combined in original and surprising ways to solve a problem, address an issue, or make something new. | Ideas are combined in original ways to solve a problem, address an issue, or make something new. | Ideas are combined in ways that are derived from the thinking of others (for example, of the authors in sources consulted). | Ideas are copied or restated from the sources consulted. |

| Communicating something new | Created product is interesting, new, or helpful, making an original contribution that includes identifying a previously unknown problem, issue, or purpose. | Created product is interesting, new, or helpful, making an original contribution for its intended purpose (for example, solving a problem or addressing an issue). | Created product serves its intended purpose (for example, solving a problem or addressing an issue). | Created product does not serve its intended purpose (for example, solving a problem or addressing an issue). |

Source: From How to Create and Use Rubrics for Formative Assessment and Grading (p. 54), by Susan M. Brookhart, 2013, Alexandria, VA: ASCD

The analysis of content was conducted to scrutinize the data. Content analysis serves as a framework for examining documented data, encompassing text, visuals, symbols, and other forms. Typically, data for content analysis is produced or collected by observers who document or transcribe it into textual material, but it may also involve visuals or sound suitable for analysis (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007).

This research employs the content analysis approach to extract information from communication presented in the form of documented symbols or recordings. Through the application of content analysis, an objective, systematic, and comprehensive understanding of the role of communication delivered through mass media or other sources can be attained.
3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Variety of ideas and contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Attack of Grendel</td>
<td>Creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Beowulf vs Grendel</td>
<td>Creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Celebration of Beowulf’s triumph</td>
<td>Creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Goodbye</td>
<td>Creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Beowulf gone</td>
<td>Creative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the rubric above, the majority of them demonstrate creative results. “Creative” if the ideas reflect a shocking diversity of key concepts from many contexts or fields, the created output draws on a variety of sources, such as various texts, media, resource individuals, and so on. Ideas are integrated in novel ways in order to solve a problem, address an issue, or create something new. The created product is intriguing, novel, or useful, and it makes a unique contribution by identifying a previously unknown problem, issue, or purpose. Students use a variety of images and movies to create a single video that tells the story of Beowulf. They can unite and connect stories with picture effects in the video by mixing fresh ideas and the original story of the poetry.

Based on the preceding study, this study described interpreting student replies in the form of Visual Symbols. Students’ reader response in terms of concepts increased after using a learning model based on reader reactions and visual symbols. The results of literary study that combine the reader's emotions with the visual symbols mentioned above can result in a creative business through the performing arts. After creating a learning model based on reader reactions and visual symbols, this study was undertaken to measure student responses in preparation for virtual plays during the epidemic.

The goal of this study was to elaborate the 4th Semester Students' Visual Symbol Response to Beowulf in the Preparation of Drama Performance amid the Covid-19 Pandemic. After evaluating the data, it is possible to interpret it as follows;

Initially, students were tasked with enhancing their ability to appreciate literary material, a process commonly referred to as literary work appreciation. This procedure involves acknowledging and valuing a work of art by both the artwork itself and its creator, as outlined by Magulod (2018). Generally, the steps for adopting appreciation include observation, perception, understanding, response, assessment, and implementation. In the context of this study, students were assigned the task of appreciating the literary works they were studying, particularly an ancient poem extracted from an English literary narrative titled 'Beowulf.' This narrative depicted the confrontation with the wicked monster named Grendel. Inderawati (2009) highlighted the role of symbols in helping students visualize the words within literary works, contributing to the creation of an engaging performance.

Drawing on previous research, specifically Rita Inderawati's 2013 study titled "The Application of Literature for All and Literature Across Curriculum Concept by Responding Literary Works to the
Enlightenment of Character Education in Indonesia Context," it was revealed that only 3.4% exhibited reader response before the implementation of this approach. Following the application of the learning model based on reader response and visual symbols, students' writing skills, measured in terms of ideas and word choice, significantly increased to 73.98. This signifies that, according to the criteria established in this study, students achieved a good category in their writing ability. It is evident from the findings related to literary appreciation in poetry that students could derive enjoyment from creative videos portraying literary works in poetic form.

Next, students were required to cultivate their creativity and critical thinking for the purpose of producing videos. Concerning the students' critical and creative thinking abilities, critical thinking stands out as a skill enabling them to make reasoned decisions grounded in processed information aligned with their capacities. As outlined by Paul (1995), critical thinking is a distinct and deliberate form of thinking conducted methodically, where thinkers establish norms and criteria for thought processes and employ them to construct reasoned thinking. On the other hand, Brookhart (2013) characterizes creativity as a straightforward concept that gains complexity when thinking is directed towards discovering original and high-quality ideas.

Hence, the deduction can be made that critical thinking involves evaluating the value or validity of existing entities, while creative thinking endeavors to generate something novel. When an individual can develop and apply others' ideas within a specific context, they can perceive situations from fresh perspectives, identify challenges, and devise new approaches that yield superior outcomes. The students' creativity in responding to literary works, such as the poetry in Beowulf, by employing visual symbols with special effects in their self-produced videos, highlights an intricate interplay between critical and creative thinking processes.

Finally, there is the aspect of evaluating creativity. Students have the capability to craft visual symbols in the form of videos using special effects in accordance with the instructions provided by their instructor. As per Wellek & Warren (2014), the literary elements analyzed encompass various strata such as (1) the sound system, euphony, rhythm, (2) unity of meaning and style of language, (3) image and metaphor, (4) symbol and symbol system, (5) method and technique, and so on. From the comprehension above, the learning of appreciation in schools fosters the development of students' skills to enjoy, appreciate, comprehend, and utilize literary works, thereby enhancing insight, enriching life, and advancing knowledge in language skills.

4. CONCLUSION

The outcomes of this investigation indicate that students can derive enjoyment from literature by incorporating visual symbols. These symbols serve as aids for students in envisioning the textual content in literary works, leading to the creation of captivating performances. The findings from their use of visual symbols showcased a diverse range of basic imaginations among students.
asserted that students exhibit the ability to generate novel ideas based on Brookhart's four creativity criteria. Students can employ a variety of images, animations, or videos across different domains of study. It is noteworthy that the level of inventiveness varies significantly among students. Their imaginative capabilities manifested in various ways, contributing to the enhancement of critical thinking and creativity. Importantly, students, by and large, avoided being purely imitative, and while the majority demonstrated creativity, none reached the classification of "very creative."

The cultivation of critical thinking skills is essential for readers to comprehend the profound meaning within written works or poetry and to discern what lies beneath the surface. Readers should employ critical thinking not merely for comprehension but also for an enhanced appreciation of prose or poetry.

A substantial number of students exhibit proficiency in creating videos incorporating visual symbols, particularly through the integration of special effects. Firstly, students possessing high levels of creativity can be presented with challenges that align with their creativity levels. Conversely, students with lower creativity levels can be motivated to produce more innovative videos through various methods, including assigned tasks. Additionally, instructors can administer a Creativity Assessment at the commencement of program lectures to gauge the creative aptitude of their students roughly. Educators are granted the flexibility to select teaching and assessment approaches that align with their preferences. In conclusion, the researcher suggests that future studies on literary appreciation utilizing special effects could yield even more insightful findings for scholars exploring the same topic. This current study is anticipated to provide valuable information and support for subsequent research endeavors.

5. REFERENCES


