

**Students' Language Creativity in Creating English Poems:
A Linguistic Perspective**

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ABSTRACT

This article is aimed at discussing the language creativity of students of the English Department in creating English poems. The article is based on the analysis of students who created English poems enrolling at the English Department of the State University of Gorontalo. The analysis was conducted from a linguistic perspective. The research has found that the students were creative in creating diction, repetition, and metaphor.

Keywords: Poem, linguistics, literature, diction, repetition, metaphor

INTRODUCTION

There are at least three reasons for choosing the topic of this paper. First, the feature of a poem as a literary genre. Literature might be defined as art that uses language as the medium of expression. Considering the definition, it is considered to study the linguistic feature in a literary work (Traugott & Pratt Mary Louse, 1980). Traugott and Louse suggest considering literature as a literary discourse in which the feature of language is applied. The features of language applied in the literary text are language as creativity and symbol.

Language creativity suggests that humans can make various and infinite meanings by applying the finite language system. It is because the arbitrary nature of language enables humans to produce limited utterances for unlimited meaning. In communication, for example, when someone says *I am a man* he does not merely informs that he is a man, but also, perhaps, intends to say more than the textual means. He might say that he is a man and, therefore, he needs to smoke. (Grundy, 2013).

Through the creativity of language, humans can use language to communicate more than one thing and use language for more than one purpose. The example in the above paragraph can say more than one message beyond the text. That is why one word, one sentence can carry more than one message.

Language creativity in poems leads the poet to use figurative language (Reyes & Saldívar, 2022). Figurative language is used to express strong feelings that can be expressed through ordinary language. In poetry, the figurative language that is frequently used is metaphor and repetition. A metaphor is saying something to mean another thing (Katili, 2021). Hence, when a poet says that life is a hungry animal, he is using figurative to describe the condition of unfriendly life.

Repetition might be defined as repeating certain words or phrases twice or several times. This repetition may impress the reader with the urgency of the message in the repetition.

Language as a symbol suggests that language is a sign. The word sign suggests that language stands for one entity, meaning it carries meaning. The nature of the symbol is arbitrary (Traugott & Pratt Mary Louse, 1980). The meaning of a symbol is conventional, meaning it

depends on the convention of the speaker. That is why one thing may be symbolized variously in various languages.

Concerning language as a symbol, one thing may be symbolized by various symbols. A dead human may be symbolized *to die* or *to pass away*. A poet may choose one of them. This is the so-called *diction* (Traugott & Pratt Mary Louse, 1980). Since a poem is the expression of ideas and feelings, a poet will choose the appropriate diction.

The above discussion leads the writer to discuss the students' language creativity in creating poems. The students involved in this investigation are enrolled in the class of poetry, at the English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Letters and Culture of the State University of Gorontalo. The poems investigated that are written in English. Language creativity aspects investigated are diction, repetition, and metaphor.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Linguistics has been defined as the scientific study of language. The words scientific study suggests that language study must be rational and empiric. Rational means that it must be logic. Empiric means that it must be based on real evidence. As a rational study, it must be based on the theory of linguistics that has been developed through the years. According to the Philosophy of Knowledge, scientific study must be done in three fields of study. They are ontology, epistemology, and axiology. Ontology is the nature of the object of study, epistemology is the science of how to of deeply understand the object being studied, and axiology is the study of the use of the study (Otoluwa & Katili, 2023).

The discussion of linguistics is initiated with the discussion of the nature of language. What is language? Language is a symbol, system, universals, creativity, ambiguity, and action in context (Traugott & Pratt Mary Louse, 1980). A symbol means an entity that stands for another entity. Language as a symbol means that sign in the form of a sound that stands for another meaning.

METHOD

This research was conducted qualitatively in the sense that it is focused in finding the meaning of certain phenomena. The phenomena here refer to the linguistic features found in students' poems. The linguistic feature indicates how the students activate their English language creativity in creating English Poems.

Data were collected by reading poems created by the students. The data collected show the students' language creativity. The data then were analyzed based on the form and meaning. Finally, the writer interpreted the analysis result.

FINDINGS

The writer found that the students were creative in diction, repetition, and creating metaphor metaphors.

STUDENT'S CREATIVITY IN DICTION

Diction might be defined as word choice. Words used in a poem are chosen by the poet to represent the idea of feeling s/he wants to convey. The words are chosen accurately in the sense that they can express the idea or feeling more perfectly. It is in line with the following definition

of poetry which defines poetry as a kind of language that says more and says more than ordinary language (Perrine, 1983). The keywords are a language that says more and says more than ordinary language. This means that language says something more intensively than ordinary language. It also means that the poetic use of language is more intensive than ordinary language.

I make sense of more intensive as a word that says more than one sense. A word used in a poem does not merely make sense in terms of reference but also has a deep meaning. It can reveal the connotative meaning that is in line with emotive meaning. Therefore, for instance, a poet will use *to pass away* instead of *to die*, for the first word has a very emotive meaning. A poet namely Robert Burns says *My bonnie lass*, instead of *My beautiful girl* because the first word can represent his deep feeling of love or is more romantic than the second word.

Following the above discussion, an expert says that diction in a poem can cause special effects (Anindita & Satoto, 2017). The special effect here means that it can bring a sense more intensely that brings effect to the poem and the reader. Therefore, for example, William Blake in his poem *Tyger* brings the effect of the image of a tiger. And to the reader, it may shock mentally, because suddenly Blake presents the image of a horrible tiger. Now, regarding students' poems, here is some analysis.

Rainbow Love

Love is like a rainbow as if to remind my love for you
Red for our love
Green for our memories
Blue for the day we ever spent together
And yellow for our final farewell
A rainbow of love is always beautifully engraved in my heart
Always and forever

This poem was composed by anonym. The poet uses the word *Rainbow love* instead of colorful love. This word leads the reader to imagine a rainbow. This will lead the readers to understand love in terms of a rainbow. Furthermore, the poet elaborates on the colors of the rainbow to invite the readers to perceive love in terms of rainbow colors, as read in the following lines.

In the following lines, the poet invites the readers to perceive love in the rainbow. The nature of love, i.e., *Love is full of memory of the day that has been spent together by the lovers*. In line six the poet says that the beauty of the rainbow is engraved in his/her heart. S/he uses *engraved in my heart* instead of remembering. This may mean to affect the readers that love can never be gone from the memory.

In the following poem by Novityia Febriyanti Nani, the poem is initiated with the personnel pronoun, *You*. This word indicates that the poem is addressed directly to the second person. This might be meant to insist that she is talking directly to *you*. The poem reads:

You
Is that you

Who came from the star
Is that you
Who blinds my heart

But is it, not you
Who with me now
And it is not you
Who broke my heart now

The lines in the first stanza are formulated in interrogative sentences that consequently indicate that she doubted about the man she loves. While in the second stanza, she formulates the lines in declarative sentences. Consequently, this affects the meaning, that the man she loves later is not the man she questions in the first stanza.

The phrase *blinds my heart* is associated with the proverb *Love is blind*. Therefore, it means that she is falling in love blindly. The previous phrase *who comes from the stars* indicates that blindly she considers the man is amazing and that is why she is in love blindly,

However, the diction in this poem is a contradiction between love in the first stanza and the second stanza. The dictions in the second stanza indicate that the man she loves is not the man who is with her and broke her heart. The next poem reads:

“NOTHING”
I am sitting
And remember something
One thing
And it is nothing

Dreaming
About everything
One thing
It is nothing
(anonym)

The dictions of *something* and *nothing* are contradictory. Nothing is the opposite of something. These dictions result in confusing meanings. The poet remembers and dreams of something that is nothing. Consequently, it says nothing but an unanswered puzzle.

This chapter concludes that students are sufficiently creative in using diction to compose English poems. They can choose the appropriate words to denote and connote meaning. However, unlike the previous poem, the last poem presents an unanswered puzzle. The contradiction of something and nothing is presented in the poem can cause readers confusion to understand it.

STUDENTS' CREATIVITY IN REPETITION

Repetition might be defined as repeating certain words or phrases in a poem. In the following poems, students seem to apply repetition to express certain strong feelings, as reads in the following poem by Opin Anogu:

Only God

Only God created me and my heart
Only God created yourself and your heart and
Only God created our love
Thank God

There are several words and phrases repeated. The words repeated are *only*, *God*, *created*, and *heart*. The words *only* and *God*, then, form phrases, such as *Only God*. This stage of forming a phrase affects the meaning. The word *only* suggests that there is no other thing except what is mentioned in the following. The word *God* repeated three times suggests that it is urgent.

The use of repetition is to construct the poetical effect (Rachman et al., 2022). This poem affects the construction of the poetical effect. In this poem, the poetical power enables the readers to see the essence of God to create two different things, i.e., the poetical self of the speaker and the person to whom he speaks. The dependent morpheme *self* is repeated twice to refer to two different references, *myself* and *yourself*. This phenomenon, consequently may impress the readers that there are two persons of opposites sexes being united in love by God. Like the above poem, the following poem is also composed with a strong repetition:

How

I don't know who are you
I don't know where are you
I don't know how to look at you
I don't know how to meet you
 But, you have to know
You have to feel
I love you
 I really love you
Please, tell me
How to now you
How to meet you
And how to love you
 Because I love you
 I love you
 I love you
 And last I love you

The above poem by Opin Anogu uses repetition. The phrase *I don't know* was repeated for times. In the first line, the speaker uses it to mean that he does not know the person he loves. In the second line, it is used to mean that the speaker does not know where she is. In the third

line, it is used to mean the speaker does not know how to look at her. In the fourth line, it is used to mean the speaker does not know how to meet her.

The second phrase repeated is *How to*. It is repeated twice in the ninth and tenth lines. The speaker requests her to inform him how to know her and how to meet her. However, it is expressed in two lines with two repeated phrases. This consequently impresses the reader that the speaker was in love strongly. The strong feeling of love is expressed in the last repetition *I love you*. This phrase is repeated three times.

The entire repetitions in this poem collaboratively impress the reader that the poetic speaker has a strong feeling of love. Therefore, the student creatively uses repetition to express a strong feeling of love for a girl whom he does not know. The other repetition is found in the following poem by Nofiyana Citra Sara:

Unilateral Love

I remember you
I thinking about you
I revere you
And I want you
 BUT
Do you remember me the way I do?
Do you think about me the way I think?
Do you revere me the way I revere you?
Do you want me?
 NEVER
It's only my unilateral love for me

First, repetition of the word *I*. This first-person personal pronoun is repeated four times. The second is *You*. This second-person personal pronoun is repeated four times in the first stanza. It is repeated as the object. It is the object of *I*. *You* is the object of *I* who remember *you*, think of *you*, revere *you*, and want *you*.

In the last stanza the poetic speaker *I* want to be the object as *you* in the first stanza. This implies that she has reciprocal love, a balanced love. However, this strong feeling is just a unilateral love. She has a very strong feeling of love to him but he does not have the same feeling to her. In short, students of the English Department of the State University of Gorontalo have been creative in using repetition to express their feelings in poems. The repetitions have successfully been used to strengthen the effect of expression. The various samples of poems discussed above show that repetition carries various strong feelings.

STUDENTS' CREATIVITY IN METAPHOR

Metaphor is very important for imaginative language (Rasse et al., 2020). Since poetry is a literary genre and, therefore, it is imaginative, then metaphor is very important for poems (Hart, 2022). From the two above citations, it is clear that metaphor cannot be separated from the poem as the use of imaginative language. It also implies that metaphor is imaginative. E.g., when one says that time is money, then it is imaginative since time is imagined as money.

A metaphor can be defined as saying or perceiving something in another term (Katili, 2021). In the above example, time is perceived in terms of money. Therefore, when someone is wasting time then s/he is wasting money, and therefore, s/he is in huge loss. When Thomas

Campion says in the poem *There Is a Garden in Her Face*, he triggers the readers' imagination to imagine the beauty of a woman by presenting the beauty of a garden.

According to Abdul Wahab (Katili, 2021), the metaphor might be interpreted by analyzing its shared predication. Therefore, when Thomas Campion says that there is a garden in her face, one should analyze the shared predications of a garden:

1. It is full of flowers
2. It is beautiful
3. It is fresh

Then, one might conclude the metaphor is to mean the great beauty of a woman since a garden is beautiful with its flower and fresh air. In some poems, students, as the poets, have demonstrated creativity in creating metaphors, as read in the following poem by Miranda Kasim:

Our Love

When my heart was broken

I felt that I can't get more than you

My heart lost in the deep of the ocean

And the tear is my friend anytime

But, when you come to me with all of your flaws

I get back my heart

With you, together with you, happy with you

Until the sky and the sea united

There are two metaphors in the poem. The first one is *My heart lost in the deep of the ocean*. In this line, the speaker's heart is metaphorized as a thing that is lost in the ocean. The heart is associated with love. In the first line, she says that her heart was broken, which means she is very sad. To the heart that is lost in the deep of the sea, it meant that she is in deep sadness.

The second metaphor is *And the tear is my friend anytime*. The tear is metaphorized as a friend and is associated with sadness. A friend is a person who accompanies us. Therefore, the tear is a friend means that she is very sad. This metaphor is creatively used to express the long sadness.

The third metaphor is *Until the Sky and the sea united*. The poet creatively defined love metaphorically. She defines love in terms of metaphor the unification of the sky and sea. The shared predication is part of the cosmos above the sea, and, hence, the sea is under the sky. Therefore, the unification will, potentially, trigger the readers to associate with erotic love. The other metaphor is in the following untitled poem by Sandi Sutrisno:

The time will be stop

When I see from a distance

The river will stop to flow

When you come closer

The earth will stop to rotate

When you touch my deep feeling

Something ringing in my heart

And I can't control my mind

There are five metaphors in the poem. The first three metaphors are *That time will be stopped*. In this line, time is metaphorized as a moving thing that can never be stopped. However, in this line, it is stopped. The reader potentially can interpret that it is something powerful that can stop time. The same also happened with the river; it stopped flowing, and the earth that will be stopped to rotate. All the objects mentioned are moving and can never be stopped except by big power.

The fourth metaphor is *When you touch my deep feeling*. The feeling is metaphorized as a concrete object that can be touched. To interpret this the reader should refer to the next metaphor in the next line, i.e., *Something ringing in my heart*. The last metaphor is potentially inferred as the strong feeling that the speaker cannot control as spoken in the last line.

In short, the metaphors in this poem are very creative in the sense that they can express the poet's feelings intensively. Furthermore, they should be interpreted, not only by analyzing the shared predications proposed by Wahab (Katili2021) as discussed in the previous paragraph, but by referring to the other words and metaphors in this poem. The next poem that contains metaphor reads:

Love

Love ...

Why do you grow rapidly in the liver someone

But can not be quickly lost or erased

From the heart

Love ...

Why people who break up could despair,

Stress and even suicide

Because love is a gift of God

Which can grow at any time

But it is hard to get

The poem is entitled Love composed by Wiwin Pasingi. She initiated the poem with questions in the first, second, and third stanzas. She metaphorically questions about love that grows rapidly in someone's liver and cannot be erased quickly. She uses the liver instead of the heart. This may imply that according to the poet, the liver is more important than the heart, for the liver is a body organ in which the metabolism process takes place. Hence, this might imply that love, according to the poet, is a food substance. Concerning other words in this poem which says love is a gift of God that can grow, that can grow anytime, the metaphor means that love is an essential thing. It can make people despair and suicide when broke up.

DISCUSSION

The analysis shows that the students were very creative in creating poems in terms of linguistics. They creatively used diction, repetition, and metaphor to express their feeling and thought. In terms of diction, they showed creativity in choosing the appropriate words. For example, in the diction, *Rainbow of Love* in “The Rainbow of Love” The students used a rainbow of love instead of colorful love. This indicates that the students have chosen the appropriate words to express the feeling of love in terms of the rainbow.

In terms of repetition, they were also creative. They created repetition to express certain strong feelings. For example, in the poem “Only God by Opim Anogu. This student repeated the phrase *Only God* Three times. This is to express the feeling that it is God who created love.

The students were also creative in creating metaphors. They could express their feeling creatively in metaphor. For example, in his poem, students namely Sandi Sutrisno said, *Something ringing in my heart*. This is a metaphor for the expression of love. This indicates that their creativity in creating metaphors is sufficient.

CONCLUSION

This article concludes that the students of the English Department of the State University of Gorontalo, from a linguistic perspective, have been creative in using the English Language in creating poems. They were creative in terms of diction, repetition, and metaphor. In terms of diction, they are creative in using appropriate words to express their idea and feelings. In terms of repetition, they are adequately creative in creating repetition to impress the reader with the strength of the feeling. In terms of metaphor, they can create metaphors appropriately to express feelings that cannot be expressed successfully literally but metaphorically.

To close this suggests that it is urgent to provide the students of the English Department who are enrolling in the class of poetry with the language creativity to create good English poems. This can be done by providing them with the chance to practice writing English poems. It means that poetical and language creativity is inseparable.

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