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ANALISIS KEMAMPUAN MENGINTERPRETASI DAN MENULIS SYAIR SISWA KELAS X SMA KOTA LANGSAPROVINSI ACEH

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the ability of senior high school studentsin Kota Langsa in interpreting and writing syair. This study examines the correlation between interpreting syair as independent variable and writing syairas dependent variable. This study used test as instrument in gathering the required data: test of an essay consisting of dictions and moral values from 10 bait of 'SyairPerahu' and writing test of five stanzas (bait) of syairabout love for parents. 93 students from two schools, SMAN 1 Langsa and SMA CutNyakDien, were selected as sample of the study. The obtained data were analyzed statistically using Pearson Product-Moment. The finding of this study shows that the ability of the student in interpreting is 67.07 and falls into medium. The ability of the student in writingsyair is 52 and falls into poor. After analyzing the two variables using Person Product-Moment, it is obvious that interpreting syairdoes not significantly influence the student's writing, since the interpreting syair only influences the writing by 9.5%.

Keywords: syair, interpreting, writing, bait,and SyairPerahu.

1. Introduction

Teaching materials of Bahasa Indonesia in schools is not only limited to the syntactical structures, but also requires some materials related to the language itself, particularly the teaching of literature. One of the objectives of teaching literature is to promote change in students' interest, attitudes, values, and the ability to interpret *syair*. As proposed by Elmustian (2003: 1) in accordance with the affective nature, teaching literature should arrive at the aesthetic sensibilities and a positive attitude towards the results of literacy and improves students' capacity in appreciatingliterature. Based on previous arguments, it is obvious that one of the purposes of teaching literature is to give the learning experience for learners. Thus, thelearning experience obtained from the learning process that can corresponds to daily experience of the students.

One of the goals of literary teaching materials in class X SMA is to help students understand and write old *syair*of any kind, namely understanding the elements in composing *syair*. *Syair*is a kind of long poem consisting of four lines. In line with thisis given by KBBI (2005: 1114) where *syair*is defined as a long poem where each stanza consists of 4 linesending with the same sound andis rhymed a / a / a / a /. Unlike *pantun* which uses *sampiran*, each line in *syair*contains the content or the meaning the writer

wants to convery (Waluyo, 1995: 11). *Syair*usually is a long narrative poem or clear message of advice, philosophy, religion, and so on.

Jamila Ahmad (1989) says that *syair*comes from Arabic "*syi'r*" which generally means poem. Alisjahbana (2008: 5) states that the poet refers to the one who composes *syair*, but later the same word is applied and referred to anyone who produces any kinds of poetry.Hamzah Fansuri is one of outstanding figures and considered as one of the pioneers who significantly contributed in the development of poetry. P. Voorhoeve (1952) in Fang (2011) said that the initial convention of *syair* was in hand of Hamzah Fansuri. Voorhoeve argues that:

a. *syair* was not known until the time Hamzah Fansuri wrote it
b. no*syair* has ever been written in Indonesia except those *syairs* written in Javanese that derived from Malay.
c. Ar Raniri who turns to be the antithesis of Hamzah Fansuri was initially influenced by Hamzah Fansuri in composing *ruba'i* in *Bustanus Salatin*.

*Syair*is not just a collection of words without any meaning. However, the presentness of *syair*carries the meaning which is related to the figurative languages such as metaphors, similes, satire, moral values, and religious messages, besides revealing history or fairy tales (Jamila Ahmad, 1989: ix). He further says that theprogress in terms of the content and spirit of the *syair* gains important development in all Malay *syair*s. The folktale and the *hikayat* that become the message and the spirit of Malay *syair*s have changed the way the *syair* writers communicate his thoughts to his surroundings.Jamila Ahmad in Literature (1989) says that the content of any kind of *syair*has been extended to a certain degree by inserting science, human characters,the setback of Islam and Malay in teaching and commerce have been the common themes in *syair*.

As literature, *syair*has characteristics that distinguish it from other genres. *Syair* is a verse. The one that is the closest form to this *syair* is *Pantun*. Both of them are two forms of old verses that still gain their popularity to this time. The other kinds of verses that likely correspond to these two either by the structure of *syair* and *pantun* are *karmina* and *talibun*. *Syair* like *pantun* has its strength in the structure of language or typography or the physical structure of the poem.

The elements that significantly contribute to the structure of the language used in *syair*are in: (1) the number of syllables in each line; (2) the number of lines in each stanza; (3) the number of stanzas in each *syair*; and (4) certain rules in terms of rhyming and rhythm. *Pantun* and *syair* do not significantly differ. The difference lies in the sampiran. In *pantun*, each stanza consists of four-lineswhere the first two lines serve as sampiran while the last two lines communicate other things which are not related to the first two lines. *Syair*, on the other hand, does not have sampiran and all lines of *syair* embody the contents or meaning to be transmitted to the readers. If *pantun*is complete in a single stanza, *syair* in contrast cannot be completed in a single stanza, because *syair* is a long narrative composition. The four lines of *syair* is the arrangement of syntactical totality that relates the meaning of each line in a stanza.

Generally, the meaning of *syair*is determined by the subsequent stanzas and is very similar to the interaction / construction of paragraphs in a story. Another interesting side of the works of *pantun* and *syair*is that both these kinds of poetry do not

reveal the poets and leave them anonymous (Waluyo, 1995: 9). As a verse, *syair* is bound to both the structure and the meaning which have to follow the convention of *syair* composition which differ in some respect to the contemporary poets. Poem is a long narrative verse. The numberings of lines in *syair* have to be consisting of four to five words each line and the numbers of syllables which have to be 8 to 12 syllables and *syair* is rhymed AAAA (Jamila Ahmad, 1989: ix; Waluyo, 1995: 11).

Since,*syair* belongs to the old poem, it is strictly tied to certain conventional rules which is contrasted to the contemporary poets who base their composition on their preference (Alisjahbana, 2008:9). Alisjahbana (2008) further says that old poems hardly change because of culture – united society, tied to the society, not separated to the society and these characteristics to large extent affect the literature written in the past. Here is the excerpt of a *syair* written by Hamzah Fansuri.

'*Syair* Perahu'

Inilah gerangan suatu madah
mengarangkan syair terlalu indah,
membetuli jalan tempat berpindah,
di sanalah i'tikat diperbetuli sudah Wahai muda kenali dirimu,
ialah perahu tamsil tubuhmu,
tiadalah berapa lama hidupmu,
ke akhirat jua kekal diammu.

The aim of literature teaching based on the curriculum is to help students understand the intrinsic elements of a *syair*. Theme, rhyme, values are sorts of elements which are dealt with the teaching of *syair*. However, *syair* to this day is often perceived as something *exclusive*. This exclusivity is not because *syair* has its own readers, but rather that *syair* has turned to be a piece of old convention which is gradually forgotten by its society.

The above phenomenon has been drawn by Alisjahbana (2008) where *syair* gradually has been left its readers for it is always perceived as dull and cannot comply the need of the modern world. *Syair* has begun to be replaced by contemporary fictions and other modern poems. According to him, *syair* is not very desirable because of the defects in terms of convention and appear to be away from the society. This, he further claims that it is the *syair* which loses its readers, but rather on the inability of *syair* writers to reformulate and reconceptualize *syair*s that fit the contemporary audience.

Syair becomes less popular than *pantun*. The tragic fate of *syair* is similar to that of *gurindam*. The society has significantly contributed to the development of any kind of poems. In Pekanbaru, for instance, *syair* still gains its high status and becomes a piece of literature still that attracts school learners, since *syair* is laways performed and read out in formal occasions and wedding events, entertaining high profiles. In addition, there are always events that regularly organize *syair* contests from all schools levels as a process of preserving culture. If all provinces throughout Indonesia realize the importance of this preservation, students and other parties will be familiar with it.

The literature teaching at class X where the students are exposed to old poems and introduced the features of *syair*. This is important to provide students with strong

background that help them learn more deeply about *syair*. At this stage students are introduced to various works of old poems. It is assumed that the ability to interpret a *syair* has significant correlation with the ability of composing *syair*.

1. Theoretical framework

This study focuses on students' ability in interpreting and writing *syair*. Even though this study explores theories and views that offer concepts on literature, this study is based on Waluyo (1995) concerning the interpretation and writing *syair*. Waluyo puts the emphasis on the importance of understanding elements structuring *syair*; extrinsic and intrinsic elements structuring a *syair*.

Intrinsic features highlight the how a poet chooseshis/her diction and assigns meaning of words that can represent his/her outlook, creating a symbol and metaphors or figures of speech and the how a poetthe body of the poem itself. While the intrinsic is based on the understanding to enable readers comprehend meaning that is carried out through theme, mood, tone, and value which which is constructed in physical structure of a *syair*. Waluyo also gives the emphasis that in order to create a *syair*, one has to selectively choose his/her diction, imagery, preciseness, figures of speech, versification, typography and rhetoric. Waluyo views on *syair* are formulated as indicators to answer research questions.

To examine the correlation between the variables of interpreting*syair* and the ability in composing it, Jabrohim's view (2003) that the creation of *syair* that should be based on good understanding of the elements constituting *syair* is referred. Thus, based on Jabrohim's view it is assumed that the better the students understand the elements constituting *syair*, the better the students compose it.Therefore, the hypothesis in this study attempts to examine whether or not there is significant correlation between interpreting and writing *syair*.

The assessment used to determine the students' ability in composing *syair* is based on the general indicators of constituting *syair*. The composition can be only assessed when students write a minimum five stanza. Those who do not write a minimum five stanza is not scored. If the students meet the minimum requirements, students must write four lines in each stanza. If the number of words in each line is 4 to 5 words, the students are given a score of 2.5.The ability to identify diction in a *syair* is the indicator to determine the students' ability in interpreting *syair*. The students who correctly answer is given 1.

2. Research methodology

93 students of class X of SMAN 1 Langsa and SMA Cut Nyak Dien Langsa were taken as sample of the study. Tests were used as instruments in this study. The test investigating students' ability in interpreting *syair* consists of a battery of 20 questions about diction and theme. To find out the students' ability in writing a sayir,the students were asked to compose *syair* with at least 5 stanzas on affection to parents.

The scorings of students' ability in interpreting *syair* are as follows:
a. Each correct interpretation of a diction in each stanza is given 1. 10 is the maximum score given, since the *syair* consists of 10 stanzas.

b. Each correct interpretation of moral value in each stanza is given 1. 10 is the maximum score given, since the *syair* consists of 10 stanzas.

c. The correct interpretation of theme in *syair* is given 1.

While the maximum scores of the students' writing a poem will be given if their composition meets the following criteria:

1. Each stanza consists of four lines.
2. Each satnza is rhymed aa aa.
3. Each line consists of 4-5 words.
4. The *syair* uses figures of speech.
5. Sentence organization.
6. The use of diction in accordance with the situation described in the poem.
7. There is a message in each stanza.
8. The content of *syair* is relevant to the theme given.

The ability to write poetry is simple with the theme of compassion to the parents, the data is analyzed by the details, write a five-stanza poem simple keeping with the theme of love to parents and in accordance with the characteristics of poetry, the number of lines in each stanza, the number of words in each line and rhyme / a / a / a / a / in each stanza. Instrument to obtain data on the ability to write poetry in the form of a test's ability to write poetry.Features that will be assessed in writing a poem.

The way to correct aspect assessment will be done with a simple statistical test, for both variable and variable interpret the ability to write *syair*. Furthermore, to see whether the ability to correlate significantly with the ability to interpret the writing will be done using product moment correlation analysis with SPSS 16.0.

3. Findings

A. Interpreting '*Syair* Perahu'

The moral value of the first stanza is that one has to improve one's life and it is the one who takes the initiation of such change. In attempting to this, students varied in the answer as can be seen in *Inilah gerangan suatu madah / Mengarangkan syair terlalu indah / Membetuli jalan tempat berpindah / Di sanalah i'tiqad diperbaiki sudah.* In interpreting the moral value of the first stanza, the ability of students falls into medium where the average score obtained is 67.06.

Many students interpret the word *i'tiqad*to mean *keyakinan* (belief). Since the word 'belief' is closely related to guidance therefore can be justified as true. Most students have been found to have misinterpreted the word 'diammu' in *Wahai muda kenali dirimu /Ialah perahu tamsil tubuhmu / Tiada berapa lama hidupmu/ Ke akhirat jua kekal diammu.* Most of the studentsinterpret the word *diam* as 'death' which is supposed to be 'eternal life' since the poet metaphorizes the human body as a 'boat' . What the writer wants to convey is that life is temporal while the life hereafter is eternal.

Students mostly misinterpret the word **insan**. Most of the studentsinterpret the word *insan* to mean soul while the word in the relation to other words refers to human being which consists of body and soul as we can observe in *Hai muda arif budiman /Hasilkan kemudi dengan pedoman / Alat perahumu jua kerjakan / Itulah jalan*

membetuli **insan.** The poet wants to convey that any deed done in the world must be in line with the religious standard.

When interpreting the fourth stanza of *Perteguh jua alat perahumu / Hasilkan bekal air dan kayu / Dayung pengayuh taruh di situ / Supaya **laju** perahumu itu*. The word *laju* is used by the author to convey the idea of having a good life must be line with sticking oneself to the social convention. Students mostly answer that the word *laju* as 'quick' where the author wants to share the idea that one has to stick to the right path as provision to the life hereafter.

The students also found difficulty in interpreting the word **kabir** in the next stanza. *Sudahlah hasil kayu dan ayar / Angkatlah pula sauh dan layar / Pada berasjantanlah taksir / Niscaya sempurna jalan yang **kabir***. In interpreting the word **kabir** most of the students interpret it as its denotative meaning to its indonesian equivalent *besar* (big), whereas the intention of theauthor when using this word implies the right path or the blessed path. By having provision in the life, it will lead one to be blessed by Allah in the next life.

Students also misinterpret the word ***mamang***in *Di dalam dunia banyaklah mamang / Ke akhirat jua tempatmu berpulang / Janganlah disusahi emas dan uang / Itulah membuat badan terbuang* where the students misinterpret the author's intended meaning that *mamang* stands for temptation which is supported by the instances 'gold' and 'money'. Many are after the woldly matters that derive them forget their afterlife. The poet states that many people to suffer because of their pursuit of the world. The message the author wants to convey is many people forget the afterlife because of thinking about the world.

In *Tuntuti ilmu jangan kepalang / Di dalam kubur **terbaring** seorang / Munkar wa Nakir kesana datang/ Menanyakan jikalau ada engkau sembahyang,* many students interpret the word *terbaring* (lying) to mean *asleep*. Of course this is not justifiable. What the author wants to share is seek knowledge and do not leave prayers.

In *Lengkapkan pendarat tali dan **sauh** /Deramu banyak bertemu musuh /Selebu rencam ombak pun cabuh / La Illaha 'illa Allah akan tali yang teguh,* the students interpret the word *sauh* to mean anchor as its denotative meaning., wheres the author wants to say that one has to keep remembering Allah in any kind of situation since He is the one who will come to save the people.

In *La Illaha 'illa Allah jangan kau **lalaikan,** Siang dan malam jangan kau sunyikan, Selama hidup juga engkau pakaikan, Allah dan rasul juga yang menyampaikan*explains that one has to always remember Allah and His Messenger, never stop remembering God day and night. The poet very obviously warns humans not to obsessed with worldly matters and forgets Allah.

In *La Illaha 'illa Allah tempat musyahadah / Menyatakan tauhid jangan berubah / Sempurnalah jalan iman yang mudah/ Pertemuan Tuhan terlalu terlalu susah,* the stanzaagain reminds the audience to remain assured to Allah because He is the One to whom we refer when in darkness.The word *Tauhid* expressesthe basic idea of belief in God. The stanza tells that one has to regularly and persistently do good deeds as provision towards the afterlife.

The theme of this *syair* is about the religious by employing more specific themes of belief in Allah, the need to do Allah's command. Most of the students

correctly draw conclusions about underlying theme of this *syair*with interesting ideas contained in each stanza. This is in accordance with what Nurhadi, et al (2007) says that in order to conclude the theme of a poem, one can go by concluding ideas presented in every stanza, grouping ideas, matching the number of series of stanzas, and concludes the theme of the *syair*.

B. Ability to write *syair*
Students' composition when asked to write a simple composition of a *syair* falls into less satisfactory (52). Mistakes are often made by students in determining the numbers of lines in each stanza. Of the samples tested, the samples still wrote each stanza with less than 4 lines or more than 4 lines. Surely this cannot be justifiable, because we know that the main requirement is a poem consisting of four lines.In addition, the most common mistake of students is when writing the end rhyme of a *syair*. Students found difficulty diction to determine the rhyming aa aa at the end of each line.

However, this study found that many students use alternatives to the end rhyme. They used -ku, -mu to produce appropriate sounds effect each line. The overall aspects of the end sound in each line can be said satisfactory, however, by the aspect of variation of the word their composition falls into less satisfactory.

The next aspect of the assessment deals with the number of words in each line. Each line of a *syair* is generally composed of 4-5 words or 8-12syllables. There are many students who do not pay much attention to the rules of the number of words or syllables in the writing of the *syair*. Students tend not to pay attention to the number of words. They only based their *syair* on the feeling and not on the convention of a *syair*. The number of words they use is less than required and some use words more than required.

The next aspect of the assessment is the aspect of the precision of the words used in terms of the use of words or sentences which comply to the Indonesian – standard such as punctuations, spellings, prepositions and affixes. One of the students, for example wrote the word 'budian' to match the end rhyme. Likewise the word 'disebalik' is a diction used by a student to represent the idea he/she wants to convey.

The sentence organization becomes an important aspect of the assessment in students' composition.It was found that students shows inaccuracy in the organization of the sentence where the students' composition lacks of the arrangements of words into well - organized sentences. For example, the inaccuracy in forming interrogative sentence, inversion and a sentence which often carries more than a single idea.

The use of hyperbole was very often found in the students' composition. They based their writing on hyperbole in order to beautify their *syair*. Hyperbole was used by students to express the idea of their love to their parents. Apart from hyperbole, litotes was also found to have been used by students in delivering their ideas. They used litotes when expressing their sadness of not being able to return or repay the kindness of their parents.

The aspect of correct usage of diction to describe the situation in *syair*is also investigated in this study. Diction selection by studentswas taken by students to beautify their *syair*. The use of natural objects, as well as the diction related to divinity was very often found in the students' writing. They associate the objects of nature as

manifestation of the love towards their parents, for example the sun.The sun is often used as a symbol of a mother's love who does everything sincerely without expecting any return to what she have done.The word 'dew' is used as a symbol of love that can relieve their distress. The word 'wind' was used by the students to convey their affection to their parents.

Much of students' composition does not have any explicit and implicit moral values. Many have written *syair* which express explicitly the affection of the parents towards them without any message to repay the kindness of the parents who have raised them. On the other hand, some students tell that the kindness of parents cannot be repaid and only Allah who can reward them. Thus, the way they can repay the kindness is through prayers to Allah to protect them.

The final aspect to be considered in the assessment is the conformity of the content of the *syair* with the theme. In this respect, the majority of the students are correct. *Syair*s written by the students tell about the affection of parents towards the children or the effort of the children in repaying the kindness of the parents. The idea articulated by the students has been easily identified apart from the used word choice in imperfectly expressing the idea.

Nurgiyantoro (2001: 298-305) states that test is a reliable instrument to gather information on the students' ability in students' composition. He stresses that the assessment used on the students' composition must be holistic, impressive, and quick; holistic assessment must be based on the impression gained from reading the students' composition.

Kurniawan (2009) says that the awareness of the appreciation grows after conducting a series of activities related to literature. Students who can create a simple *syair* can be simply said as active readers.Active readers for Kurniawan (2009) is categorized productive. According to him, at this stage, a reader is able to produce a piece of literary work.

B. Relationship between interpreting and writing *syair*

It is important to correlate whether or not there is significant correlation between interpreting and writing *syair*. Below is the correlation table.

TABEL 1

Correlation

		Interpreting	Writing
Interpreting	Pearson Correlation	1	.308[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	93	93
Writing	Pearson Correlation	.308[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	93	93
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The above table shows the correlation coefficient values of interpreting and writing *syair* which depicts:

1. The value of the probability or sig. (2-tailed) was 0,003 smaller than 0,05, thus Ho is rejected. This means that there is a significant correlation between the interpretating and writing *syair*.
2. The correlation coefficient of interpreting and writing *syair* is 0.308 which shows a positive correlation. This shows that the more students are able to interprete, the better they will write a *syair*. To find out how big the impact, the data were analyzed by regression analysis with SPSS 16.0.it shows that the percentage of independent variable or predictor variablesignifies the dependent variable. It is obtain 0, 95 which implies that the independent variableinfluences dependent variable in only 9.5%, while 90.5% (100% -9, 5%) is influenced by other variables.

4. Conclusion

Based on the description in the previous section, this study concludes:
1. The ability of students to interpret *syair* is classified as medium with an average of 67.06.
2. The ability of the students to write simple *syair* is relatively less satisfactory since the average obtained is 52.
3. There is relationship between interpreting and writing *syair*.

5. Suggestion

Based on the conclusions derived from the results of this study, this paper raises some suggestions to related parties:
1. Teacher
   It is advisable for teachers to give more exercises on appreciating old poems, especially *syair*. With more exercises, students are expected to better possess the ability to compose *syair*.
2. Curriculum designer
   Curriculum and syllabus should be directed towards the preservation of cultural heritage
3. Researcher
   a. It is suggested that future study will examine in depth the appreciation of *syair*.
   b. This study is expected to be reference for future studies investigating similar issues.

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