

An Analysis of Poetry Writing Skills of Fifth-Grade Elementary School Students

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Abstract

Low Indonesian student literacy based on 2022 PISA results with a 359 reading score impacts elementary creative writing abilities, including poetry. This study describes the poetry writing skill profile of fifth-grade students in Kartasura District across content relevance, diction, imagery, figurative language, and typography. A descriptive quantitative method was used with cluster random sampling on 108 students from four public schools. Free poetry writing test data were evaluated using an analytic rubric. Results showed an average score of 70.51, yet 38% had not reached minimum completeness. Figurative language was the most significant weakness (48.5%); 72.2% used only one type. Diction reached 65.4% and imagery 65.0%. These findings indicate that students' poetry writing ability is in the sufficient category with fundamental weaknesses in figurative language mastery and limited poetic vocabulary. Thus, an instructional model integrating vocabulary development through visual stimuli with poetry writing skills is needed.

Keywords: *poetry writing ability, elementary school, diction, figurative language, literacy*

Abstrak

Rendahnya literasi siswa Indonesia berdasarkan PISA 2022 dengan skor membaca 359 berdampak pada kemampuan menulis kreatif sekolah dasar, termasuk menulis puisi. Penelitian ini mendeskripsikan profil kemampuan menulis puisi siswa kelas V SD di Kecamatan Kartasura berdasarkan aspek kesesuaian isi, diksi, citraan, majas, dan tipografi. Metode penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif digunakan dengan teknik *cluster random sampling* pada 108 siswa dari empat SD negeri. Data dari tes menulis puisi bebas dievaluasi menggunakan rubrik analitik. Hasilnya, rata-rata skor siswa mencapai 70,51, namun 38% belum mencapai ketuntasan minimal. Majas menjadi kelemahan paling signifikan (48,5%), dengan 72,2% siswa hanya menggunakan maksimal satu jenis majas. Diksi mencapai 65,4% dan citraan 65,0%. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa kemampuan menulis puisi siswa berada pada kategori cukup dengan kelemahan fundamental pada penguasaan gaya bahasa figuratif dan keterbatasan kosakata puitis. Sebagai implikasi, diperlukan model pembelajaran yang secara sistematis mengintegrasikan pengembangan kosakata melalui stimulus visual dengan keterampilan menulis puisi.

Kata kunci: kemampuan menulis puisi, sekolah dasar, diksi, majas, literasi



INTRODUCTION

Indonesian language instruction in elementary schools plays a crucial role in forming the foundation of students' language skills. As a subject that develops four fundamental language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing Indonesian language learning serves as the backbone of national literacy development. Among these four skills, writing is considered the most complex because it requires the integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects simultaneously in producing written work (Hidayatullah et al., 2022). Writing is the most challenging productive language skill, as it does not merely involve expressing ideas in written form but also requires complex cognitive processes, including planning, translating ideas into text, and revising (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Graham & Harris, 2023).

Poetry writing is a form of creative writing skill that has distinctive characteristics within the Indonesian language curriculum. Unlike narrative or descriptive writing, which allows greater freedom in language use, poetry writing demands aesthetic sensitivity in selecting and arranging words to express feelings, thoughts, and imagination. Septiani & Sari (2021) emphasize that poetry is a literary work that prioritizes linguistic beauty through appropriate diction and the use of engaging figurative language. As a literary genre, poetry is characterized by the use of concise and meaningful diction, imagery that evokes sensory impressions, and figurative language that enriches aesthetic expression.

The ability to write poetry is an essential skill for fifth-grade elementary school students. At this level, students enter the cognitive developmental stage transitioning from concrete operational to formal operational thinking, in which they begin to think abstractly and express ideas symbolically. Poetry writing provides a medium for students to develop creativity, sharpen emotional sensitivity, and practice expressive skills through aesthetic language. Nurgiyantoro (2018) asserts that poetry writing not only enhances language skills but also fosters creativity, aesthetic sensitivity, and the ability to express emotions through beautiful language. Moreover, poetry writing ability serves as one of the indicators of higher-order literacy achievement among elementary school students.

Graham (2020), in his study on the relationship between reading and writing, emphasizes that these two skills have a strong reciprocal relationship, establishing a theoretical basis for understanding how literacy conditions shape creative writing outcomes. Kim & Zagata (2024) further reinforce this finding through the Interactive Dynamic Literacy Model, which demonstrates that reading and writing skills are interconnected in a hierarchical, interactive, and dynamic relationship. This model advocates integrated instruction to enhance the development of both skills simultaneously. Fitzgerald & Shanahan (2000) established that reading and writing share fundamental knowledge bases that are directly relevant to poetry writing.

The low level of poetry writing ability among Indonesian students cannot be separated from the still concerning condition of national literacy. Based on the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 released by the OECD in December 2023, Indonesia obtained a reading literacy score of 359 points, which is far below the OECD average of 476 points (OECD, 2023). These data indicate that only 25% of Indonesian students reached Level 2 or higher in reading literacy, compared to the OECD average of 74%. Such low literacy achievement inevitably has a direct impact on students' ability to produce high-quality written work, including poetry writing, which requires higher-order literacy skills.

Despite the importance of poetry writing in literacy development, empirical evidence indicates that the poetry writing ability of elementary school students remains low. This condition is supported by findings from previous studies. Prasetyo & Suryani (2018) found that the free poetry writing ability of fifth-grade elementary school students was still relatively low, with most students experiencing difficulties in developing varied

diction and using figurative language appropriately. Similar findings were reported by Tresnawati et al. (2018), who analyzed poems written by fifth-grade students and found that diction tended to be monotonous, imagery was very limited, and the use of figurative language was almost absent in students' works.

Vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role in poetry writing ability. Lawson-Adams & Dickinson (2020) demonstrated that nonverbal representational elements such as images can enrich students' vocabulary knowledge, a principle that supports the use of visual stimuli in developing the poetic vocabulary needed for effective poetry writing. Prihatin et al. (2022) demonstrated that there was a significant positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and poetry writing quality, indicating that students with stronger vocabulary produced more creative and varied poems. Furthermore, Lavigne et al. (2022), in a study of adult basic education learners, found that vocabulary knowledge and usage contribute significantly to writing quality. In the context of poetry writing, rich vocabulary knowledge enables students to select appropriate diction, develop vivid imagery, and construct engaging figurative language.

The ability to use figurative language is a fundamental aspect of poetry writing. Tin (2024), in a study on the development of language creativity, showed that the production of creative similes and metaphors provides rich opportunities for learning creative writing skills. Hiebert (2020) added that figurative language relies heavily on core vocabulary, allowing students to develop a deep understanding of metaphors and similes from an early stage of their schooling when they possess a strong vocabulary foundation. Kerbs et al. (2024) further explained that teachers often lack confidence in teaching poetry, particularly poetry writing, which results in insufficient scaffolding for students.

Numerous studies have documented limitations in elementary school students' vocabulary mastery as a fundamental factor underlying writing difficulties. Hakiu & Buhungo (2023) found that 87% of students obtained low scores on narrative writing tests, which were influenced by their limited mastery of Indonesian vocabulary. Sari et al. (2022) identified that elementary students' reading habits contributed 44% to the improvement of writing ability, indicating that poor reading habits have a direct negative impact on students' writing performance.

Specific problems faced by students in poetry writing can be identified through various intrinsic elements of poetry. First, in terms of diction, students tend to use monotonous and limited word choices without exploring synonyms or more precise and aesthetically appropriate expressions. Second, regarding imagery, students' ability to construct sensory images through language is very limited. They experience difficulties in presenting visual, auditory, tactile, and other types of imagery. Third, in terms of figurative language, the use of stylistic devices such as metaphors, personification, or similes is rarely found in students' poems (Susilowati & Qur'ani, 2021).

From the teachers' perspective, several issues also contribute to students' low poetry writing ability. Sukanto (2021) found that many teachers lack a deep understanding of poetic elements, making it difficult for them to provide effective guidance. Teachers often struggle to offer appropriate stimuli to stimulate students' imagination and creativity. Poetry writing instruction frequently begins with direct commands to write poems without providing stimuli that could help students generate ideas. In addition, the instructional media used tend to be conventional and insufficiently exploit visual potential to stimulate students' imagination. Addressing these challenges requires instructional models that can systematically develop both vocabulary mastery and figurative language skills in an integrated manner, a pedagogical dimension that will be further explored in the discussion of findings.

Contextual evidence from Kartasura District specifically highlights the urgency of this study. Kurniawan et al. (2021) found that the implementation of reading corners in elementary schools in Kartasura District had not been optimal in improving students' reading interest due to various constraints, including the low intrinsic motivation of

students to read independently. Aini (2020), in a study at another elementary school in Kartasura, documented that fifth-grade students still faced significant difficulties in developing ideas and selecting appropriate diction when writing poetry, with conventional instructional methods identified as a key limiting factor. Preliminary field observations conducted prior to this study further indicated that the majority of students produced poems with limited diction variety and minimal figurative language, a pattern consistent with the broader literacy challenges documented at the national level. These local contextual conditions establish a clear empirical basis for investigating the poetry writing skill profile of students specifically within Kartasura District.

Drawing on the theoretical frameworks reviewed above, the present study is grounded in a conceptual model that links the key variables involved in poetry writing ability. Specifically, the model posits the following hierarchical relationship: national literacy conditions (as reflected in PISA 2022) shape students' reading habits and language exposure, which in turn determine the breadth and depth of their vocabulary mastery. Vocabulary mastery subsequently serves as the foundational resource that enables students to select appropriate diction and deploy varied figurative language. These two elements diction and figurative language are the primary determinants of overall poetry writing quality. This chain can be represented as: Literacy → Vocabulary → Diction & Figurative Language → Poetry Quality. By situating the study within this conceptual framework, the present research aims not only to document the current skill profile, but also to identify the specific points of weakness in this chain that require targeted instructional intervention.

Based on the above discussion, there is a clear gap between curriculum demands that expect students to write poetry effectively and the reality of students' poetry writing ability, which remains low. Therefore, this study aims to describe and analyze the profile of poetry writing skills of fifth-grade elementary school students in Kartasura District based on the aspects of content relevance, diction, imagery, figurative language, and typography. Specifically, this study addresses the following research question: What is the poetry writing skill profile of fifth-grade elementary school students in Kartasura District across the five assessment aspects of content relevance, diction, imagery, figurative language, and typography?

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive quantitative method with a cross-sectional survey design. This approach was selected because it aimed to describe and analyze the profile of students' poetry writing skills objectively based on numerical data collected at a single point in time. Data collection was carried out during the period of November to December 2025. The research population consisted of all fifth-grade elementary school students in Kartasura District, Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java Province. Kartasura District was selected as the research site because it represents a suburban area with diverse students' socioeconomic backgrounds.

The research sample comprised 108 students from four public elementary schools selected through a cluster random sampling technique: SDN Kartasura 01 (20 students), SDN Pabelan 02 (32 students), SDN Pucangan 04 (35 students), and SDN Makamhaji 05 (21 students). These schools were randomly selected via a lottery method from the population of public elementary schools in the district. The criteria for student participation within these selected schools included: (1) being registered as active fifth-grade students, (2) being present during data collection, and (3) willingness to take part in the poetry writing test.

Data were collected using a free poetry writing test with the theme "My Aspirations." Students' poems were assessed using an analytic rubric consisting of five assessment aspects: (1) content relevance to the theme, (2) diction or word choice, (3)

imagery, (4) figurative language, and (5) typography. Each aspect was scored on a scale ranging from 5 to 20 with intervals of 5, resulting in a minimum total score of 25 and a maximum score of 100. The assessment rubric was developed based on the theory of intrinsic elements of poetry proposed by Nurgiyantoro (2018) and was validated by two experts in Indonesian language education.

The assessment was conducted by two raters (inter-raters), namely the researcher and a fifth-grade classroom teacher, to ensure objectivity and reliability. Inter-rater reliability was calculated using the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC), yielding an ICC value of 0.967, which falls into the excellent category with a significance level of $p < 0.05$. This result indicates a very high level of agreement between the two raters in using the poetry writing assessment rubric. The final score was obtained by averaging the scores from both raters. The Minimum Completeness Criterion (MCC) was set at 70, in accordance with the Indonesian language subject standards applied in the sampled schools.

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean, median, standard deviation, percentages, and frequency distributions. Poetry writing ability was categorized into five levels based on the scoring scale: very good (86–100), good (76–85), sufficient (66–75), poor (56–65), and very poor (≤ 55). The analysis was conducted both overall and for each assessment aspect to obtain a comprehensive description of students' poetry writing skill profiles.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that the average score of fifth-grade students' poetry writing skills in Kartasura District was 70.51, with a standard deviation of 12.44. The lowest score was 20.00, while the highest score reached 92.50, with a median score of 72.50. This median value indicates that half of the students obtained scores above 72.50. The mean score, which is close to the median, suggests that the data distribution tends to be approximately normal. The complete distribution of students' poetry writing skill categories is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Students' Poetry Writing Skill Categories

Category	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
Very Good	86–100	8	7.4%
Good	76–85	30	27.8%
Sufficient	66–75	33	30.6%
Poor	56–65	21	19.4%
Very Poor	≤ 55	16	14.8%
Total		108	100%

Based on Table 1, a total of 8 students (7.4%) were classified in the very good category with scores ranging from 86 to 100. Students in this category were able to write poems that met all five assessment aspects at a very satisfactory level. Furthermore, 30 students (27.8%) were categorized as good, with scores between 76 and 85. The largest group consisted of students in the sufficient category, totaling 33 students (30.6%) with scores ranging from 66 to 75. Meanwhile, 21 students (19.4%) were classified in the poor category with scores between 56 and 65, and 16 students (14.8%) fell into the very poor category with scores of 55 or below.

These data show that 67 students (62%) achieved or exceeded the established Minimum Completeness Criterion (MCC), while 41 students (38%) did not meet the criterion. This proportion of students who failed to reach the MCC is concerning, as more than one-third of the students were unable to meet the minimum standard for poetry writing skills. This finding is consistent with the still low level of national literacy, as

reflected in the PISA 2022 results. The average scores for each aspect of poetry writing skills are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean Scores for Each Aspect of Poetry Writing Skills

Aspect	Mean	Percentage	SD	Category
Content Relevance	19.31	96.5%	2.46	Very Good
Typography	15.42	77.1%	3.46	Good
Diction	13.08	65.4%	3.48	Sufficient
Imagery	13.01	65.0%	3.07	Sufficient
Figurative Language	9.70	48.5%	3.76	Poor
Overall Mean	70.51	70.5%	12.44	Sufficient

Based on Table 2, the content relevance aspect obtained the highest mean score, reaching 19.31 out of a maximum score of 20 (96.5%), which falls into the very good category. This finding indicates that almost all students were able to write poems that were relevant to the given theme, “*My Aspirations*.” Students did not experience significant difficulties in understanding the theme or developing poem content that aligned with it. This result is understandable, as the theme of aspirations is closely related to students’ daily lives and personal hopes, making it easier for them to develop.

The typography aspect achieved a mean score of 15.42 (77.1%), which is categorized as good. In general, students were able to organize poems with an aesthetically pleasing layout, using structured lines and stanzas and paying attention to capitalization and punctuation. However, the relatively high standard deviation (SD = 3.46) indicates considerable variation in students’ typographic skills. Some students still wrote poems in a prose-like form without clearly distinguishing lines and stanzas.

The diction and imagery aspects were both classified in the sufficient category, with mean scores of 13.08 (65.4%) and 13.01 (65.0%), respectively. These findings suggest that students still require further development in selecting appropriate word choices and in constructing sensory imagery through language. The relatively high standard deviations (SD = 3.48 for diction and SD = 3.07 for imagery) indicate a substantial gap in ability among students in these two aspects.

The figurative language aspect emerged as the most significant weakness, with a mean score of only 9.70 out of a maximum score of 20 (48.5%), which falls into the poor category. This finding is particularly concerning, as figurative language is a key element that contributes to the aesthetic quality and depth of meaning in poetry. The high standard deviation (SD = 3.76) further indicates wide variability in students’ ability to use figurative language.

The significant weakness in figurative language can be further understood through the lens of vocabulary limitation. Students who lack a rich and varied vocabulary repertoire are naturally constrained in their ability to produce metaphors, similes, and other figures of speech, as these require not only linguistic creativity but also a sufficiently broad pool of words from which to draw. The dominance of personification and simple repetition in students’ poems the two most elementary forms of figurative language suggests that students are operating at the lower boundary of their available linguistic resources. This pattern is consistent with findings by Susilowati & Qur’ani (2021), who similarly observed that elementary school students’ figurative language use was largely limited to the simplest and most familiar forms.

It is also noteworthy that the typography and content relevance aspects performed considerably better than diction, imagery, and figurative language. This gap suggests a dichotomy in students’ poetry writing competence: students demonstrate adequate control over the structural and thematic dimensions of poetry, but experience substantial difficulty with its linguistic and aesthetic dimensions. This pattern implies that current instructional practice may successfully scaffold students’ understanding of what to write about and how to format a poem, while leaving the more linguistically demanding

aspects word choice, imagery, and figurative expression insufficiently developed. The following figure presents a visual summary of mean score achievement across all five aspects.

A visual comparison of achievement across poetry writing aspects is presented in Figure 1.

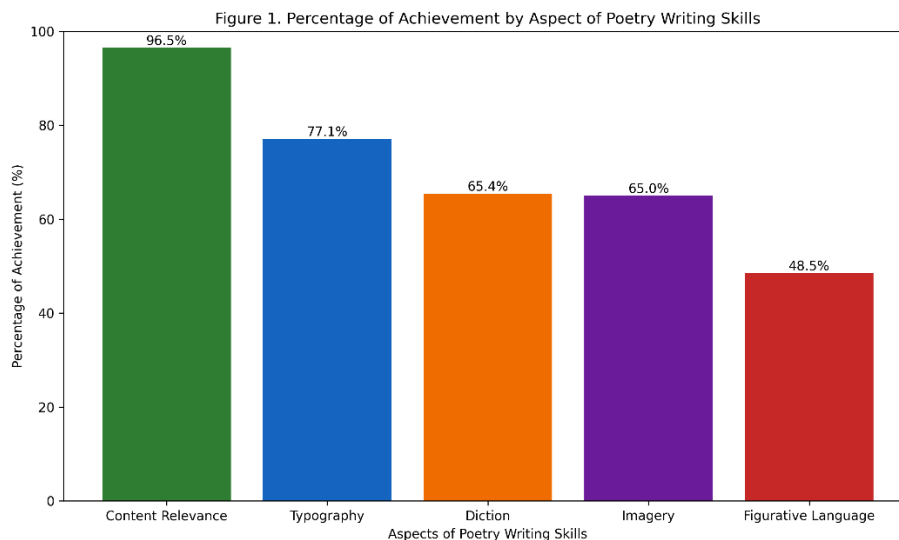


Figure 1. Percentage of Score Achievement for Each Aspect of Poetry Writing Skills

Figure 1 clearly illustrates a significant gap between the content relevance aspect (96.5%) and the figurative language aspect (48.5%). This nearly 50-percentage-point difference indicates that although students are able to understand and develop the theme of a poem effectively, they experience substantial difficulty in using figurative language. The typography aspect (77.1%), which ranks second, suggests that students are relatively capable of organizing poems in an aesthetically appropriate format. Meanwhile, the diction (65.4%) and imagery (65.0%) aspects, which are almost equal, indicate that both require comparable levels of attention in instructional practice.

To gain a deeper understanding of the weakness in the figurative language aspect, a further analysis of the distribution of figurative language scores was conducted, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of Scores for the Figurative Language Aspect

Category	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Low	0–1 type of figurative language (score ≤10)	78	72.2%
Medium	2 types of figurative language (score 10–15)	27	25.0%
High	>2 types of figurative language (score >15)	3	2.8%
Total		108	100%

Based on Table 3, a total of 78 students (72.2%) were only able to use a maximum of one type of figurative language in their poems, placing them in the low category. Of these 78 students, 30 students (27.8%) did not use any figurative language at all, receiving a score of 5, while 48 students (44.4%) used only one type of figurative language, resulting in a score of 10. Furthermore, 27 students (25.0%) were able to use two types of figurative language, which placed them in the medium category with a score of 15. Only 3 students (2.8%) were able to use more than two types of figurative language, categorized as high. Notably, none of the students achieved the maximum score of 20 for this aspect.

The most frequently used types of figurative language were personification and repetition, which are among the simplest and most familiar forms for students. Personification commonly appeared in expressions such as “*the wind whispers*” or “*the sun smiles*,” while repetition was evident in the recurrence of words or phrases at the beginning or end of poetic lines. In contrast, more complex forms of figurative language, such as metaphors, hyperbole, and similes, were rarely found in students’ poems. Students’ inability to employ a wider variety of figurative language indicates limited understanding of figurative expression as well as restricted vocabulary resources to express ideas metaphorically.

A further analysis was conducted on the diction aspect to identify students’ specific weaknesses in word choice. The distribution of diction scores is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of Scores for the Diction Aspect

Category	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Low	1–2 descriptors (score 5–10)	42	38.9%
Medium	3–4 descriptors (score 15)	62	57.4%
High	6 descriptors (score 20)	4	3.7%
Total		108	100%

Based on Table 4, a total of 42 students (38.9%) were classified in the low category, meeting only one to two diction descriptors with scores ranging from 5 to 10. Students in this category tended to use simple, everyday words without paying sufficient attention to the aesthetic aspects of word choice. Meanwhile, 62 students (57.4%) were categorized in the medium category, meeting three to four descriptors with a score of 15. Only 4 students (3.7%) reached the high category by fulfilling all six diction descriptors, namely accurate spelling, compliance with standard Indonesian orthography, relevance to poem content, cohesion between words, the use of rhyme or rhythm, and the appropriate use of figurative meaning without writing errors.

The findings regarding students’ low poetry writing ability, particularly in the aspects of figurative language and diction, are consistent with Graham (2020)’s assertion that writing and reading skills have a strong reciprocal relationship. Students’ low poetry writing performance can be linked to the still weak national literacy condition, as reflected in the PISA 2022 results. Students with limited reading habits tend to possess restricted vocabulary repertoires, which in turn affects their ability to select appropriate diction and employ varied stylistic devices.

Limited vocabulary mastery emerges as a fundamental factor influencing students’ poetry writing ability. Guo et al. (2025), in a study of kindergarten students, found that early word reading instruction significantly predicts children’s composition productivity. Similarly, Prihatin et al. (2022), in their study of fourth-grade elementary school students in Indonesia, identified a significant positive relationship between vocabulary mastery, reasoning ability, and poetry writing skills. Students with limited vocabulary knowledge tend to produce less creative poems because they lack a sufficient “word palette” to express ideas and emotions. The findings of the present study reinforce this theoretical perspective, as students with restricted vocabulary were only able to use simple words without exploring synonyms or more precise and aesthetically appropriate lexical choices.

The weakness observed in the figurative language aspect further indicates that students have not yet developed an adequate understanding of how to use language figuratively. Tin (2024) explains that the production of creative metaphors and similes requires the ability to integrate features from one concept into another in unique combinations. This cognitive process generates nuanced meanings and enables writers to transcend limited modes of expression. The results of this study show that the majority

of students (72.2%) have not yet been able to perform this cognitive process, as reflected in the dominance of simple personification and repetition in their poems.

Tresnawati et al. (2018), in their study involving fifth-grade students at SDN 1 Nagarasari, reported similar findings, indicating that figurative language and diction were the primary weaknesses in students' poetry writing. Students' inability to use figurative language in a varied manner suggests a need for more explicit instruction in figurative language supported by adequate visual stimuli. Prasetyo & Suryani (2018) further emphasized that poetry writing instruction in elementary schools tends to remain theoretical in nature and lacks sufficient scaffolding to support students in developing stylistic language skills.

The implications of these findings highlight the necessity of instructional models that systematically integrate vocabulary development with creative writing skills. Kim & Zagata (2024) proposed three principles for effective integrated reading–writing instruction: (1) utilizing reading and writing assessment data to inform effective integrated instruction; (2) ensuring the development of lower-level skills while simultaneously supporting higher-level skill development; and (3) making reading–writing connections explicit and visible to students.

The Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM), developed by Calhoun (1999), offers a promising solution as it integrates vocabulary development through visual stimuli with writing skills through ten structured instructional phases. PWIM provides concrete visual stimuli as a starting point for imagination development, thereby reducing students' difficulties in generating ideas when writing poetry. The ten phases of PWIM systematically build students' vocabulary through the identification, labeling, and categorization of words derived from images, directly addressing limited vocabulary as the root of the problem. Moreover, the inductive approach embedded in PWIM enables students to actively and meaningfully explore linguistic patterns and figurative language use.

Lee et al. (2020) found that PWIM not only enhances vocabulary breadth but also improves vocabulary depth and retention among young learners. Apriliana et al. (2024) integrated PWIM with a multiliteracies approach and demonstrated that this modification significantly improved elementary school students' descriptive writing skills. The consistency of these findings suggests that PWIM holds strong potential for addressing students' weaknesses in diction and figurative language, as identified in the present study. Therefore, the implementation of PWIM adapted specifically for poetry writing warrants empirical testing to determine its effectiveness within the context of poetry instruction in Indonesian elementary schools.

Taken together, the findings of this study can be interpreted through the theoretical lens of the Literacy Vocabulary Poetry Quality model proposed in the introduction. The overall mean score of 70.51, while nominally in the sufficient category, conceals a pronounced internal disparity: students perform very well on content relevance (96.5%) but fail substantially on figurative language (48.5%). This disparity indicates that students are capable of understanding and expressing the thematic dimension of a poem, yet they lack the linguistic resources specifically the figurative vocabulary and metalinguistic awareness needed to elevate their writing to a higher aesthetic level. This pattern is precisely what the literacy chain model would predict: when students' reading exposure is limited (as indicated by Indonesia's PISA 2022 score of 359), their vocabulary breadth is constrained, which directly impairs their ability to diversify diction and construct figurative expressions. The present findings thus validate the theoretical model empirically in the specific context of Kartasura District, and reinforce the importance of addressing literacy at a systemic level to improve creative writing outcomes.

In terms of practical implications, the findings point to several actionable directions for teachers and curriculum developers in Kartasura District and comparable

suburban educational contexts. First, poetry writing instruction should be redesigned to incorporate explicit vocabulary enrichment phases before the writing task itself, such as guided word exploration, synonym mapping, and figurative language modeling activities. Second, given that content relevance was the strongest aspect, teachers can use thematic familiarity as a scaffold building on students' natural ability to relate to the theme in order to gradually introduce more complex linguistic features such as metaphor and hyperbole. Third, assessment rubrics used in classroom practice should give greater weight to figurative language and diction, signaling to students that linguistic aesthetics, not merely thematic accuracy, are central to quality poetry. At the school and district level, professional development programs for teachers are needed to strengthen their own competency in poetic language, as Kerbs et al. (2024) noted that teacher confidence in teaching poetry directly affects the quality of scaffolding provided to students.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, although the sample was selected through cluster random sampling, it was limited to four public elementary schools in Kartasura District. This scope restricts the generalizability of the findings to other districts or school types, including private schools and schools in different rural or urban settings. Second, the study relied solely on a single written test performance to measure poetry writing ability; it did not capture the process of writing, including planning, drafting, and revision, which are important dimensions of writing competence. Third, the cross-sectional design provides a snapshot of students' ability at one point in time, without tracking developmental changes over the course of a semester or school year. Fourth, while the inter-rater reliability was high (ICC = 0.967), the assessment rubric used focused on five intrinsic elements of poetry and did not capture other relevant dimensions such as originality, emotional expressiveness, or overall aesthetic coherence. Future studies are encouraged to address these limitations by using larger and more diverse samples, employing mixed-methods designs that include think-aloud protocols or stimulated recall interviews, and testing the effectiveness of specific instructional interventions such as PWIM on poetry writing outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the poetry writing skills of fifth-grade elementary school students in Kartasura District are at a sufficient level, with a mean score of 70.51 out of 100 and a standard deviation of 12.44. A total of 67 students (62%) met or exceeded the Minimum Completeness Criterion (MCC), while 41 students (38%) failed to achieve the required standard. The categorical distribution indicates that 8 students (7.4%) were classified as very good, 30 students (27.8%) as good, 33 students (30.6%) as sufficient, 21 students (19.4%) as poor, and 16 students (14.8%) as very poor.

Aspect-based analysis reveals a varied profile of students' poetry writing abilities. Content relevance emerged as the strongest aspect, with a mean achievement of 96.5% (very good category), indicating that students were generally able to understand and develop the theme "*My Aspirations*" effectively. Typography achieved 77.1% (good category), suggesting that most students were capable of organizing poems using aesthetically appropriate line and stanza structures. However, diction (65.4%) and imagery (65.0%) were classified as sufficient, reflecting limitations in word choice and the ability to construct vivid sensory images.

The most critical weakness was identified in the use of figurative language, which obtained an average score of only 48.5% (poor category). Further analysis revealed that 78 students (72.2%) were able to use only one or no type of figurative language in their poems, with personification and repetition being the most frequently used forms. Meanwhile, 27 students (25.0%) were able to use two types of figurative language, and only 3 students (2.8%) demonstrated the ability to use more than two types. None of the

students achieved the maximum score for this aspect. In terms of diction, 42 students (38.9%) were categorized as low, 62 students (57.4%) as medium, and only 4 students (3.7%) reached the high category.

These findings indicate limited vocabulary mastery and insufficient understanding of figurative language, which negatively affect students' creativity in poetry writing. This condition is consistent with the PISA 2022 results, which revealed Indonesia's low reading literacy performance (score of 359, ranked 71st out of 81 countries), a factor that directly influences students' creative writing abilities. The findings underscore the urgent need for instructional approaches that systematically integrate vocabulary development with creative writing instruction.

Based on the results, several recommendations are proposed. First, teachers are encouraged to employ visual stimuli and adequate scaffolding to support students in developing varied diction and diverse figurative language. Second, poetry writing instruction should explicitly integrate vocabulary development activities, such as word identification, classification, and exploration of language patterns, prior to the writing process. Third, the Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM) is recommended as a promising instructional alternative to address students' weaknesses in diction and figurative language, as it provides visual stimuli and systematically builds vocabulary through ten structured instructional phases. Future research is suggested to empirically examine the effectiveness of PWIM in improving elementary school students' poetry writing skills, particularly in diction and figurative language, which were identified as the most problematic aspects in this study.

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