

## **Investigating the Ability of the English Literature Department Students in English Poetry Reading Skill**

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### **Abstract**

The objectives of this study are: (1) To know students' ability in reading English Poetry. (2) To know the difficulties that the student find in reading English Poetry. The data was analyzed by using a quantitative descriptive method. The study data was collected by using some research instruments, such as reading test and interview. The data were tabulated into students' average scores in five indicators and mean scores. Then, the authors explained the data descriptively. Based on the data findings, the students' ability to read English Poetry was qualified as "poor". This was indicated by the score in each part of the students were low, especially in facial expression and body language. Through this study, the authors aimed to help the student to learn how to read English Poetry, and the students hoped to increase their ability to read English Poetry.

**Keywords:** Reading Skill, English Poetry, Higher Education

### **INTRODUCTION**

The world of lecture is a world that hoped by many people. The world of lecture is absolutely different from the world when we were in kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, or senior high school. Why it can be so? It is because the lectures' world are demanded us to study more, to find the information of a subject by our self. In lecturing, the lectures just give some stimulation to the students.

In Senior High School for instance, in learning, the teacher will explain the subject details from one material to another. Whereas in lecturing, the atmosphere will be felt differently. Such the lectures' style in teaching, there are some lectures when he teaches, gives the students a task and must be collected in the next meeting. There is also a lecture when he teaches; he will talk and explain his subject clearly. Even sometimes, the students already know about the explanation.

There are several majors available for the students who want to continue their studies. They are Medical, Engineering, English Department, Law, Islamic and so on. From those majors, there must be some differentiate, English Department for instance. Generally, the English department is divided into two kinds, the English Education

Department and the English Literature Department. The distinguish between English Education and English Literature Department are, English Education's orientation is being teacher. In contrast, English Literature's orientation is being such authors, Bank Employee, Tour Guide and so on.

The students of the English Education Department in lecturing will often discover something close with Education. For example, the subjects of English Education's student demand them to know how to be a good teacher in teaching, or the subject that demands the student to know how to take the student's eyes when the teacher teaches. The students of English Literature Department in lecturing have some different subjects and atmosphere with English Education. The subject will often discover something close with literature. For example, English Poetry, English Poetry is one of the subjects that demand the student in order the student will be able to know how to analyze the meaning of Poetry. English Drama, English Drama is a subject that asked the student in order the students will know how to perform an excellent Drama to the audiences.

Poetry is one of the parts in the English Literature Department that cannot be released. As we know, Poetry is the oldest work of literature in human history. Many of authors have created many poetry which has already gone International. One of them is *Death by William Butler Yeats*. Poetry is always popular from one generation to the next generation. Because we can see the process to make poetry not too tricky like the other work, and the authors can also express his feeling as free as he wants. However, recently Poetry got degradation. People now prefer enjoying his life with complete technology instead of thinking about Poetry or other literature. Based on the description above, the authors aim to find out; (1) the EFL students' ability to read English Poetry and (2) the EFL students' difficulties in reading English Poetry.

## METHOD

For doing research, the researcher made some procedures of research. First, the researcher gave a text of English Poetry to the students and asked them to read the text well. After the students read the text of English Poetry one by one, the researcher analyzed the data by using quantitative method. "In a quantitative model, it is known as a decision model that uses numbers. The role of number is significant in the manufacture, use, and solution of the quantitative model. The solution results are used as the basis for a decision to generate variables in the form of numbers." (Muslich, 1993:4).

In this research, the data obtained from the fifth semester of English Literature Department students, Indonesian Muslim University. The authors took 15 students as samples randomly. The reason chose the students because they were facing the English Poetry in the fifth semester.

The instrument of collecting the data, the authors used were The reading test was divided to the students. The reading test was consisted by a text of English Poetry. The students were asked to read English Poetry while the researcher recorded the students' performance. The authors analyzed the students' performance in the recording after the students read the text. The authors had two English Poetries. But in the test only a text that was given to the students. The other text would be given to the students if the authors had not found the first test's valid data. The authors interviewed the students to know the difficulties that they found in reading English Poetry.

The students’ ability to read English Poetry was tabulated, and the authors put in the table. The results were classified into five levels by using the following criteria:

Score	Scale
5	Excellent
4 - 4,9	Good
3 - 3,9	Fair
2 - 2,9	Poor
1 - 1,9	Very Poor

1. To know the score of the students, the authors used the following formula:

$$S = \frac{Q}{T}$$

Where:

S = Score

Q = Sum Score

T = sum of students

2. To know the mean score of the students, the authors used the following formula:

$$M = \frac{R}{s}$$

Where:

M = Mean

R = Sum of score

s = Sum of part score

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Findings

#### Student’s ability to read English Poetry

In this part, the authors would like to present the students' score, students’ ability, and students' mean score in reading English Poetry.

No	Indicators	Sum Score	Sum Student	Score
1.	Vocal/Sound	48	15	3,2
2.	Intonation	46		3,0
3.	Facial Expression	40		2,6
4.	Pronouncing	53		3,5
5.	Body Language	36		2,4
	Total	223	15	14,7
	Mean Score			2,94

The table above indicated that the ability of the students in reading English Poetry:

1. Vocal/Sound

The students' ability to read English Poetry, especially in the vocal side, was fair, where the score was 3,2. The sum of students categorized as excellent and very poor was no student, 5 students, fair was 8 students and poor was 2 students.

2. Intonation

The students' ability to read English Poetry, especially intonation, was qualified as fair where the score was 3,0. The sum of students who categorized as excellent and very poor were no student, good was 5 students, fair was 9 students, and poor was one student.

3. Facial Expression

The students' ability to read English Poetry especially in facial expression side was qualified as poor where the score was 2,6. The sum of students who categorized as excellent was one student, good was one student, fair was 5 students, poor was 8 students and very poor was no student.

4. Pronouncing

The students' ability to read English Poetry especially in pronouncing side was qualified as fair where the score was 3,5. The sum of students who categorized as excellent, poor and very poor were no student, good was 8 students and fair was 7 students.

5. Body Language

The students' ability to read English Poetry, especially in the body language side was qualified as poor where the score was 2,4. The sum of students categorized as excellent and very poor was no student, good was one student, fair was 4 students and poor was 10 students.

Based on the table and the explanation above, the students' ability in reading English Poetry was qualified as Poor. The "Poor" qualification based on the mean score (2,94). The higher score was found in the pronouncing, then vocal/sound in the second position, the intonation in the third position, the facial expression in forth position and the body language in the last position. In reading the English Poetry, the students were still confused with showing the body language that suits the poetry itself.

The table showed that the students' learning and understanding of English poetry were still less in facial expression and body language.

**The Difficulty of the Students in Reading English Poetry**

In this part, the researcher would like to present the students' difficulties in reading English Poetry.

After doing research and short interview to the students, the researcher got some causes that made students challenging to read English Poetry.

Three main problems faced by the students, were:

1. Pronouncing. There were 2 students who felt it difficult to read English Poetry because they had not yet mastered how to pronoun some words well such as *upon*. The words *upon* should be read *open*, but some students read it *yupon*, *upon* and some miss-pronoun.

2. **Vocabularies.** The researcher found the other difficulties that the students faced when reading English Poetry, it was vocabularies. 10 students showed it admit that they could not understand well some words that contained in the English Poetry when they were reading it. As the result, the students got difficult to determine, such as intonation, facial expression or body language that should be applied well in reading Poetry.
3. **Intonation.** The researcher found there were 2 students got difficult in determining the intonation. There were two possibilities that the researcher thought. The first was because the students did not know the meaning and the second because they did not know the technical in reading English Poetry.
4. **Self-Confidence.** There was one student thought that the difficulty when reading English Poetry was self-confidence. The student felt nervous when asked to read the English Poetry in front of class.

The explanation above indicated that the students' difficulties in reading English Poetry were mastering the pronouncing so the students would not produce some miss-sound of each word any longer. Lack of vocabularies is also one of the difficulties that the students face when reading English Poetry because they did not know the meaning of the words so they cannot determine the right facial expression or body language. Intonation became one of the students difficult in reading English Poetry. The researcher found the last difficulty in this research was the student self confidence still needs to be practiced. There were 10 students got difficult in vocabularies. There were 2 students got difficult in pronouncing. There was one student got difficult in determining the intonation. One student got difficulty in self-confidence and one student did not know the difficulty that she faced in reading English Poetry.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the finding and discussion, the researcher would like to present the factors that make the students difficult to read English Poetry. First, according to the students, reading English Poetry is quite difficult than the other activity in learning English. Some students still need more practice to make their reading become better, particularly in reading English Poetry. Furthermore, the students do not know about the technical aspect of reading English Poetry. Thus, the students were confused in reading English Poetry. Besides that, the students only have a few references book about reading English Poetry. Finally, the students needed more explanation about reading English Poetry from the lecturer.

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