

EXPLORING *HAIKU* IN STUDENTS' ENGLISH CREATIVE WRITING AT SMA NEGERI 7 KOTA KUPANG

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Received date: 08-03-2023; Accepted date: 31-12-2023

Abstract. Creative writing in the form of poetry can be delivered as an alternative task to help students cope with writing challenges. As one of the simplest poetry writings from Japan, Haiku may help beginner writers explore poetic words on particular objects or topics without using too many words in each line. Struggling writers can also use Haiku to stimulate their creative thinking in descriptive writing. With its simple pattern, Haiku can also boost students' confidence in writing. This study investigated whether students' Haiku writing follows its rules and represents the qualities of creative writing. This qualitative study took 20 students in their third year of senior high school as research participants. This research used documentation as an instrument, which is the students' Haiku poetry writing. In the data analysis, students' Haikus were assessed based on Haiku rules and the qualities of creative writing. It was found that most students have a sufficient understanding of the rules of Haiku writing. Students made some mistakes in their Haikus. However, students showed effort in performing the qualities of creative writing. Thus, the researchers believe that with consistent practices, students can write a qualified Haiku as creative writing. More use of sensory words can further help the students to vary the diction and characterize the image described in their haikus. Finally, using Haiku to express students' feelings and thoughts and stimulate students' creative writing is recommended in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: creative; descriptive writing; haiku; poetry;

INTRODUCTION

Students with writing challenges need to be stimulated to better EFL writing. Lack of vocabulary seems to be the most common problem of challenging writing. Students often write with a limited number of words (Marpaung, 2017, p. 126). It is necessary for EFL teachers to help students with this challenge. This encouragement is supposed to help them write the target language expressions through Haiku writing. It may start with what students are interested in. A simple form of writing may support their confidence and creativity in writing. This kind of writing can reduce the tension of writing in a foreign language.

Each person has a better or poorer capability to write. Therefore, promoting creative writing is one of the essential skills that learners must attempt since writing can be a bridge for them to communicate in written language. People spend only thirty percent of their time daily writing. This activity helps them express their ideas and feelings in written language (Troyka & Hesse, 2005, p. 30). Different kinds of writing of various difficulty levels may provide alternative platforms for people to write according to their interests. This brings more encouragement and boosts more confidence to write.

Hence, they need to learn different kinds of writing from the beginner level to make them better at producing their written language.

In addition, creative writing in EFL classrooms can help students be more engaged in learning. It requires their imagination and figurative language. Students' daily experiences become the foundation of what and how they express their ideas in creative writing. They can recount and describe a topic in specific patterns of dramatic and poetic language (Harmer, 2001 in Aryusma & Putria, 2014: 1038). Haiku, a Japanese pattern of a poem, is claimed as the simplest form of poetry. Its original form commonly expresses the beauty of nature. With its simplicity, the authors encourage the research participants to use Haiku in developing their creative writing.

Creative Writing: Its Indicators

As a productive skill, creative writing needs a process. Burroway (2011) and Mills (2006) state that creative writing includes four major qualities: image, voice, characterization, and story. Image is the first quality, as it is the core of creative writing, which lies in imagination. An image suggests using a series of sensory words (Burroway, 2011, p. 15).

The second quality, voice, is an "external manifestation in the language of the writer's sensibility: how she sees the world; her values and what she is attracted to in terms of subject matter." Unlike speech, which has aural clues such as rhythm and tone. That helps the hearer recognize the voices; the creative writers' only assets are diction, vocabulary, and syntax. In the case of creative writing, it is primarily employed to create images, and the richness of these images makes the writer's voice original and appealing (Mills, 2006; Burroway, 2011).

Characterization as the third quality is present in various genres of creative writing like short stories, novels, or poetry. It is replete with major and minor characters. Thus, for a writer, developing convincing characters is of considerable importance. There are two distinct ways of characterization: (a) Direct characterization, in which the writer directly tells readers what a character is like and is usually accomplished through its description, and (b) indirect characterization, in which the writer gives the readers some information and allows them to conclude the character's personality. This is often accomplished through (a) action, what a character does through the narrative; (b) thought, what a character thinks about, how a character thinks about his/her surroundings; (c) dialogue, what a character says and how it is said, (d) setting: where and when a character is situated in, and (e) symbol: objects and details which signify various information about a character such as names, and entertainment choices.

The fourth quality is the story. Literally, the story refers to a narrative that puts events in a sequence from A to Z. Story as a quality of creative language implies that instead of conveying a purpose (to inform, to enlighten, and to entertain.) through a formal statement, the writer provides the reader with some information which allows the reader to draw his/her conclusion about the purpose of the text (Mills, 2006). For instance, the familiar fable, *The Hare and the Tortoise*, signifies that slow and steady always wins.

The four major qualities of creative writing are also presented in Haiku poetry. The topic of the Haiku poem represents a topic related to nature. Haiku writers may present images, voice, characterization, and story using figurative language and exploring the five senses.

Haiku, a Japanese Poetry

Haiku (Japanese poetry) can be used in the teaching-learning process. It will be helpful for students to master creative writing because it is one of the short poems. Haiku, called *hokku* in the Japanese language, means the beginning or starting verse, which consists of three lines of 5-7-5 moras (Hakutani, 2009, p. 1). In English, moras in Haiku are adapted and called syllables. The first line of Haiku consists of five syllables, the second one is seven syllables, and the third line is five syllables. The third line has the same number of syllables as the first one. It does not depend on rhyme or rhythm for structure. They are usually written about things that are recognizable to the readers. Nature and seasons are examples of recognizable topics students might enjoy exploring. The object can be about animals, plants, rivers, mountains, mounts, stars, sun, and seasons. These objects are described in creative language expressions.

The intersection of 17 syllable terms into two parts where each part forms an image called the "Kireji Function." Kireji in Japanese Haiku is in the form of specific letters, which have their meaning in the Japanese literary tradition. Kireji has no translation in languages other than Japanese, so in other languages, it is divided by a cutting word or punctuation so that it is not counted as syllables. Punctuation can be points, semicolons, colons, commas, or exclamation points. The cutting word "creates an imaginative distance, although both sections remain, to some degree, independent of each other" (Toyomasu, 2001 in Iida, 2010: 29).

Like any other form of creative writing, Haiku presents images of a particular object. It describes a highly selected image based on what the Haiku writers see, smell, hear, taste, or feel (Reichold, 2002: 15). It is written with specific diction that provides the pictures or characteristics of an object. This can be described with sensory words such as colorful, blurry, and green (sense of sight); fishy, fragrant, and rotten (sense of smell); noisy, silent, and buzzing (senses of hearing); salty, crunchy, and creamy (sense of taste); lonely, happy, and soft (sense of feeling). Students who explore their senses can then produce suitable language expressions in their writing. Marpaung (2017) further mentions that Haiku writing in her EFL classroom lets students experience stimulated learning by exploring their senses in writing about anything in nature. Using Haiku can also stimulate the creative process in an intercultural language in describing the objects. In this case, students learn to describe objects in the English language by adjusting the cultural context of the students.

Early Haiku poets incorporated seasonal elements in each poem because they recognized how the changing seasons are experiences common to all people. Haiku is a poem describing nature, about the relationship between humans and nature, and the environment around them. The object is told in such a way as to inform, enlighten, or entertain about everything that exists in nature and also about human activities related to nature. Below are some examples of Haiku Poetry by Basho Matsuo.

この道や / 行く人なしに / 秋のくれ

Konomichiya / yukuhitonashini / aki no kure

Along this road / Goes no one, / This autumn eve.

Matsuo's Haiku written above is an image of a season, which is autumn. The writer uses his sight sense. He visually describes a silent night of autumn when no one is around. He expresses his voice about quietness when he once experienced a night in autumn, probably on foot, to get a deep feeling about the situation. He also characterizes autumn as a season of loneliness. This image has created a story of autumn to represent a lonely feeling when nobody is around.

When at least one sensory detail is used, students have explored their ability to see, hear, taste, smell, or feel/touch. They can personally experience whatever they try to describe; it reminds them of their own experiences. Using sensory words can help students improve their creative writing, and using them also helps students provide more details and examples in their creative writing. Marpaung & Hambandima (2018: 55) confirm that five senses exploration effectively stimulates students' writing and successfully increases the quality of students' descriptive writing.

Teaching Haiku in EFL Classrooms

According to Lee (2011), pupils progress through five steps in using Haiku poetry to teach creative writing. The five-step plan for a Haiku creative writing classroom is as follows.

At the beginning of the haiku writing class, the concept of English haiku is explained. However, before defining Haiku, showing students examples of Haiku in English is more attractive. Showing a model Haiku will increase students' understanding of how Haiku works by mentioning a specific place, identifying an object, and expressing the writer's response to the occurrence.

In the second step, the students are given an opportunity to respond freely to model Haiku and to articulate those responses in discussion with their peers, which is one way to promote such active reading. Such discussions will also help them write their own Haiku more easily because discussing a specific Haiku will give them the scaffolding to organize their thoughts. In the discussion, learners will be speaking to each other but also can be guided or questioned by the teacher in order to come to an understanding of local issues, such as the meaning of phrases, or global issues, such as the construction of the Haiku; finally, students will arrive at a "comprehensive interpretation of the poem" (Hanauer, 2001, p. 306).

In the third step, students are asked to write a Haiku. Students can start writing Haiku as a draft guide by the instructor. They can explore their five senses by noting what they see, hear, smell, taste, and feel. This exercise will occur in a student-centered atmosphere. In the writing process, the teacher plays a collaborative role as an "enabler" who "is confident enough to share control with the learners, or perhaps to hand it over to them entirely" and "whose job is to create the conditions that enable the

students to learn for themselves" (Scrivener, 2005: 25). This facilitates the learners' exploration of the language for themselves. An image of a place is suggested in the first line, the observation of an object is depicted in the second line, and finally, the feeling of the moment is expressed by the sound.

Once all the students have written their Haiku, they can compare their Haiku and share their works with other learners in small groups. Both (Carter & Long,1991) and (Kramersch,1993) suggest that the students can read their Haiku aloud to each other within their group. (Carter and Long,1991:84) comment that "reading aloud can be a relief, it can heighten the impact of a line or phrase, it can effectively dramatic key points in the action, and it can reveal humor which may not otherwise be noted in the printed word." During this reading, students can confirm whether the flow of the language in their Haiku is natural or if it has to be changed. In a variation on this, (Kramersch, 1993, p. 171) suggests making each student who is in the listening role write down something "he or she particularly liked about the poem" or suggest the points "he or she would have said differently ."Peer review benefits not only writers but also readers. Being a critical reader of friends' work will help learners become "more critical readers and revisers of their writing" (Rollinson, 2005, p. 24).

In the assessment of Haiku, the evaluation sheet suggested by (Iida, 2008, p. 178) for use in Haiku writing classes makes a good starting point for assessment. It is divided into five categories: personal voice, audience awareness, organization, Haiku conventions, and linguistic conventions. In Iida's scheme, personal voice is weighted most heavily as the approach is firmly based on expressive writing pedagogy.

METHOD

This paper qualitatively describes Haiku and its use to reinforce EFL students' English creative writing. The students who participated in the third year of high school were promoted to better literacy and creative writing. Haiku writing was implemented to stimulate students' creative writing by exploring their five senses to describe a particular object. Students' writing was individually assessed based on the rules of Haiku and the qualities of creative writing.

DISCUSSION

In the early stages of learning Haiku poetry writing, the writers taught students majoring in language who are active in English club activities. Students were taught about the use and function of five sensory detail words: sound, touch, taste, smell, and sight. They also shared vocabulary lists of five sensory words that are often used and help in the creative writing process. In the next stage, the writer explains what Haiku poetry is, the rules of Haiku writing, and how to write Haiku poetry.

Then, in the process of learning about Haiku, some students experienced difficulty in writing the poem. The main reason the students find it difficult is that this kind of poem is unfamiliar to them. Some students could not distinguish the syllables in words. However, they tried to understand the rules of writing Haiku. Some of them have learned this poem from the internet. This has earned them early knowledge of how to write Haiku correctly.

After that, students learned to write Haiku as the first draft. They explored their senses and reviewed their Haiku with their friends in groups to learn more about using sensory words in their haikus. At this point, the teacher led the students to use sensory words and write Haiku correctly. Below are the haikus the students have written.

Table 1. Students' Haiku Writing

Student 1 Tall Sunflowers Haying grown old Walking among them	Student 2 The squalling cute cat The howling dog by the door The squeaking mouse
Student 3 The sun has a face Shines flowers on the garden And birdies singing	Student 4 The sound of sparrows More I heard the chanting It feels more peaceful
Student 5 The heat of the sun gone The kids playing on the ground Come running with sound	Student 6 You are so lovely Colorful curve in the sky Beautiful rainbow
Student 7 I feel a strong air Too much rainy comes a flood Natural forces	Student 8 The softest worship Beckons me closer to You I love You, Jesus
Student 9 Cool and refreshing Rain is sweet summer love Refreshing the world	Student 10 January rain Rainy starts heavily Busily in time
Student 11 A peaceful morning Sparrows singing together With pretty chirping	Student 12 Little butterfly Flying soaring through the sky Rejoice you're still here
Student 13 Cloudy dangling long Crying clouds in the sky high The frog is chanting	Student 14 The children playing Tracking mud and bringing bugs Foot prints on the rug
Student 15 Twinkle twinkle stars The travelers in the dark Thanks for your tiny sparks	Student 16 Spruce evergreen trees Rain mist mingled in the dark On a lonely road
Student 17 Butterflies fly high Tease flowering mango tree It's the rainy season	Student 18 Rain is in the air Flowers are blooming beautiful Children are laughing
Student 19 The sun is shining	Student 20 A mystical tale

A bird flying in the sky Beautiful nature	At the end of a rainbow A hidden treasure
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From this learning result, most of the students have been able to produce their own haiku poetry.

Table 2. Students' Haiku Writing Assessment

No	The rules of Haiku writing	Yes	No
1.	It contains three lines	1-20	-
2.	It has five moras (syllables) in the first line, seven in the second line, and five in the last line. It contains 17 syllables in total.	3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20	1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 15, 17, 18
3.	It is written in the present tense and focuses on associations between images	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20	4
4.	It does not rhyme.	1-20	-
5.	It frequently has a kigo, or seasonal reference, and is usually about nature or natural phenomena.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20	8
6.	It has a stanza or a verse.	1-20	-
7.	It uses sensory words to figure out the object.	1-20	-

Based on Table 1, all students follow the three-line rule of Haiku. Most of them have 17 syllables with a 5-7-5 syllable pattern. It shows that more than half of the students understand how to write Haiku in the correct syllable pattern. Some students have miscounted the number of syllables on the words used in each line. However, they have made an effort to carefully place the syllables in each line as they should.

Most of the students' haikus describe the object in the present tense. Those haikus do not use rhyme as they should. Nature is also the topic mostly presented in them. Students wrote haikus in a verse. The use of sensory words is also present in the students' Haiku. Rain, rainbow, sun, summer, animals, and flowers are the themes used by the students in their Haiku.

As beginner creative writers, students try to fulfill the qualities of creative writing. Students present an image of an object in nature. They use typical diction to describe the image. While writing Haiku, students were encouraged to seek new vocabulary of sensory words from their dictionary. They were excited to be able to enrich their glossary with sensory words to express the images of the object adequately with correct diction in words or phrases. When students encounter situations where their choice of words does not match or does not fit into syllable patterns, they are expected to find alternatives by searching in the dictionary, understanding their usage and meaning,

ascertaining how they work, and deciding to use them in haiku poetry. This process made it difficult for some students to write Haiku. However, this process allows greater awareness of creative writing knowledge. In other words, an experiment in adjusting 5-7-5 syllable patterns allows EFL students to look at and choose language items carefully.

Personal perception is also used in some students' haikus. Students used the present tense in their Haiku. Continuous present tenses are commonly used to express the ongoing action or happening in the story of the object described by the students as they explore their five senses. Simple present tenses are used to tell about the factual actions of the object told in the haikus. However, some Haikus are grammatically incorrect to suit the number of syllables. This is a challenge for haiku writers. Still, this challenge can be solved by using phrases instead of complete sentences since Haiku does not require complete sentences.

Some things in the students' haikus are characterized by action, thought, setting, and symbol. Action is represented by words like running, flying, chanting, blooming, squalling, and howling. The thoughts of the objects in the haikus tell a story of how the students see, hear, taste, smell, or feel. For example, sensory words in adjectives like tall, cute, beautiful, little, and pretty are used for the sense of sight, such as howling, chanting, and crying, to tell what the students hear.

Each point concludes that overall, the results of data analysis show that writing Haiku in English is an invaluable task for learning creative writing and is able to enhance the development of a student's creative writing. The main thing in making haiku poetry is the development of language awareness. From the data obtained, most participants agreed that writing Haiku helps improve vocabulary, obtain new vocabulary, and choose appropriate lexical items to present emotions in Haiku. Making Haiku requires the writer to choose lexical items to fit the syllable patterns 5-7-5. For example, In this way, students' perceptions of haiku writing reflect the theoretical assumption that the use of literature enhances students' writing abilities and creative language. The results of this analysis also illustrate the evidence that creative haiku writing positively impacts awareness of self-expression. Most students consider writing Haiku as a valuable assignment, a particular genre to express ideas from students. They are considered a good task for students to convey meaning to express their ideas on Haiku. The fact is that, however, self-expression is the main difficulty faced by some students in the haiku writing process. This difficulty is caused by their previous learning experience (for example, minimal experience in writing English or not being familiar with expressing emotions and ideas in a language). However, the challenge to express each idea and emotion in predetermined rules allows students to be able to build, develop, and produce meaning. As a result, it leads to the development of greater curiosity. In writing Haiku poetry, stressing the importance of self-expression and compiling Haiku assume the conceptual aspects of writing this poem. In this case, haiku writing can be a feasible approach to developing self-expression with the five greater senses in creative writing. Then, it shows the contribution of writing Haiku to other genres. The students who have written Haikus have shown that they can show their creative writing potential with sufficient knowledge and practice in Haiku writing.

CONCLUSION

From the Haiku practice, students' creative writing has been stimulated. They learn Haiku rules and make an effort for their Haiku to follow the Haiku conventions. The researchers conclude that writing creatively using Japanese haiku poetry can help develop students' creative writing qualities. From the assessment of the students' Haiku, students have gained sufficient knowledge and skills in writing Haiku as a product of creative writing made by students by following the rules of writing Haiku; most students understand the rules in writing Haiku, which consists of 3 lines, and each line consists of 5- 7- 5 syllables. Haiku is written in the present tense and focuses on image association. Haiku has Kigo or seasonal references and commonly talks about nature, using figurative language represented in sensory words. Haikus are written in stanzas or verses as paragraphs that do not have rhyme.

Existing rules help students in creative haiku writing; students are able to place each word correctly. In addition to being able to place words correctly indirectly, students also acquire and improve new vocabulary in writing Haiku. Moreover, students can use sensory words in creative writing and produce their work, haiku poetry. The study shows that most students positively respond to using poetry in the learning process, especially in learning creative writing. Moreover, students also believe that haiku poetry is easy to learn while learning creative writing, even though it is still new for them.

Using Haiku to stimulate and develop students' competence in creative writing can be used as a reference for EFL students to write poetry in their local or first language. This can help EFL students to use and preserve those languages since, nowadays, goals of education also require the maintenance of local cultures, languages, and wisdom. Therefore, the researchers suggest that Haiku writing be used to facilitate EFL students in achieving education goals.

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