

Teaching creative (Literary) writing: Indigenous psychological perspective

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the teaching of creative writing through an indigenous perspective. This study used qualitative methods based on narrative interpretation and exposure. The respondents of this study were 40 students. Data collection techniques were conducted using creative writing, picking, and interviews. The data analysis technique consisted of three stages, namely pre-writing, writing process, and post-writing. The results showed that 77.5% of students answered very well, 17.5% answered well, 32% answered mediocre about the learning process of creative writing uses the perspective of indigenous psychology. Students' responses related to the perspective of indigenous psychology that it makes someone easier to write: 32% of students answered yes, 0% answered no, and 68% answered mediocre. Students' responses regarding the perspective of indigenous psychology that it provides benefits to the learning of creative writing: 90% of students answered yes and 10% answered no. Students' responses regarding the learning of creative writing that it is more easily using the perspective of indigenous psychology: 80% of students answered yes and 20% answered no.

Keywords: creative writing, literature, indigenous studies, indigenous psychology, pre-writing, writing process, post-writing

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1. Introduction

Writing activity in the context of language learning is the most complex writing activity because it requires high skills (Ahmadi, 2019a, 2020a; Hayes, 2012). That is why not all students are able to write and succeed in writing because many indicators are used as parameters (Crossley, Roscoe, & McNamara, 2014) of success. These indicators are not only from the theoretical, methodological, assessment context but also related to the instructor's strategy (Porte, 1995) and the learning environment. Therefore, it is not wrong if there is an assumption that writing is difficult.

Difficulties in writing activities experienced by students are caused by factors (1) the myth that writing cannot be taught (Swander, Leahly, & Cantrell, 2007); (2) writing causes self-anxiety (Grundy, 1985; Huerta, Goodson, Beigi, & Chlup, 2016; Martinez, Kock, & Cass, 2011; Della Sala, Calia, De Caro, & McIntosh, 2014); (3) writing is only owned and understood by students majoring in language or literature, (4) genetic or biological context (Graham, 2018). In addition, no less important is the lack of interest in writing (Tebeaux, 2016). These fifth things are not only the main cause of difficulties in writing but there are many underlying factors, both internal and external factors. Writing skills are needed by students in order to put their thoughts into writing. A writing teacher should master both the writing theory and writing practice so that they can teach the students well and the students can easily identify, understand, and practice good writing. Therefore, a teacher, according to Blikstad-Balas, Roe, and Klette (2018), has sustainably facilitated the learning of writing and not fragmentary to get more successful learning of writing.

The study is indeed multi-perspective, one of which is related to psychology. Several studies have shown the relationship between writing and psychological contexts, both in terms of theoretical, methodological, or evaluative (Bereiter, & Scardamalia, 2013; Barak & Leichtentritt, 2016; Cheng, 2004; Zabihi, 2018; Baoshu & Luo, 2012; Shao, Yu, & Ji, 2013). These researchers have shown clearly the relationship between writing and psychological context or vice versa, a psychology that is associated with writing context. As explained by Furnham (2012, p. 235) that currently there is indeed a lot of discussion about the "therapeutic power of writing". However, research related to writing in psychological contexts has not been done to touch on things related to indigenous contexts. In fact, writing related to the context of indigenous psychology is very interesting and still rare.

Nowadays, the study of indigenous psychology attracts the attention of researchers, especially researchers who focus on indigenous studies. Studies that reinforce original concepts/ theories originating from the east rather than concepts/ theories originating from the west (Ciofalo, 2019; Ratner, 2008; Enriquez, 1990; Kim & Yang, 2011; Rafaei, 2013; Sundararajan, Hwang, & Yeh, 2020). This is due to the fact that not all concepts/ theories originating from the west are relevant to the eastern context. If the concept/ theory from the west is forced to be applied in the context of philosophy, psychology, sociology, and anthropology typical of the east, there will be a 'misdirection' in research.

Unfortunately, up to now, the studies about writing which are related to psychology are still rare. In the last 10 years, a study about writing has been conducted by Ahmadi (2019a, 2020b) that studied creative writing related to the psychology context. Other studies on writing in the context of psychology have been conducted by Alluhaybi (2015, 2017), Cabillas (2014), Cloutier (2016), dan Wells et al. (2018). The researchers underlined that writing can be viewed from psychological perspectives. Regarding the previous studies, none of these studies have discussed writing strategies related to indigenous psychology. The results of a creative writing study that is associated with indigenous psychology are expected to be able to give a contribution to the learning of writing. The results of the study also give benefit to the teacher to understand the indigenous psychology of the students. Moreover, it is also

useful for students to fill in the gap related to the strategies in increasing the interests of the learning of writing using psychology perspectives. Related to writing and psychology, this study aims to explore (1) how the pre-writing stages related to indigenous psychology are; (2) how the stages of the writing process associated with indigenous psychology are; (3) how the post-writing stages associated with indigenous psychology are.

Writing and psychology are two things that cannot be separated. Writing which is part of language skills cannot be separated from psychology because it involves mental processes (Smyth, 2004; Matlin, 2010). Through mental processes, someone poured it in written form using language that is appropriate to the context, formal or informal. When associated with psychology, writing is a therapeutic process (Burns, 1992; Nicholls, 2009; Salovey & Haar, 1990; Stino, 1995) for the author. Through writing, someone can express the trauma and stress.

In the context of psychoanalysis, Freud (2016), Jung (2019), and Fromm (1956, 2013), are psychologists who associate writing (literature) with psychology. Literature is an expression of a soul. Therefore, the author with his unconscious nature raise things that are hidden in him (Ahmadi, et al, 2019). When associated with creative writing, psychology brings more important roles. This is due to creative writing that emphasizes the specificity/personality of the author (Harper, 2013, 2014; Williams-Whitney, Mio, & Whitney, 1992). Creative writing is generally closer to the literary context, for example, short stories, poetry, drama, and novels (Bishop & Starkey, 2006) because the content is more imaginative and aesthetic.

Harper (2010, p. 2) asserted that in creative writing there are two main things discussed, namely "the activities of creative writing and the finished works" in the form of products. During this time, in the context of learning writing both at the elementary level and in higher education, more talk about the process of creative writing activities (Blikstad-Balas, Roe, & Klette, 2018), referring to writing techniques (Sosenko, 2016). In addition, creative writing (activity category) is not only carried out in the classroom but can be carried out outside the classroom, for example in camp activities. The process of writing is related to three stages, namely (1) prewriting, (2) writing process, and (3) post-writing.

Creative writing in this paper is associated with indigenous psychology. The term indigenous psychology refers to the terms of authenticity, customs, and more towards eastern psychology rather than western psychology (Jahoda, 2016; Hwang, 2010). Indigenous Psychology is a new study in the context of psychological discipline because it was born around the 1990s. The concepts/ theories used in indigenous psychology are not as strong as western psychology. This is due to the fact that indigenous psychology explores more resources from indigenous people for concepts/ theories. This is in contrast to western psychology which uses more concepts/ theories that are already solid and established.

The main thing of indigenous psychology is indigenous studies. In indigenous studies, psychological problems (Adair, 1991; Sandage, Hill, & Vang, 2003) are examined, sociology (Gabrenya, Kung, & Chen, 2006), anthropology (Clemmer, 2012; Anaya, 2006), and languages (Glasgow, 2010; Sánchez, Mayer, Camacho, & Alzza, 2018). Indigenous psychology studies that refer to indigenous are inseparable from the characteristics: natural and traditional thoughts and souls in a particular society. Even in this modern era, in the perspective of indigenous psychology, the community still maintains matters related to locality.

In connection with the phenomenon of creative writing, the formulation of the problem in this study is to explore creative writing through the perspective of indigenous psychology. The purpose of this study is to describe in-depth the findings related to creative writing from the perspective of

indigenous psychology. Through this research, it is hoped that teachers can gain new insights as an alternative in learning creative writing through a psychological perspective, especially indigenous psychology.

2. Method

The recent psychology studies tend to be qualitative (Brinkmann, 2016). It is because psychology can be used in many other studies, one of them is learning study. Hence, this research used a qualitative-narrative approach. Adapting Creswell's (2017) view, qualitative-narrative puts forward narration in the presentation of data. The narration is based on the researcher's interpretation of the analyzed text (Ahmadi, 2019b, 2020b, 2021a, 2021b). Therefore, the presentation of data is more non-statistical. As with qualitative research, the data used is 'natural' (Seale, 2009) sourced from participants. Participants in this were 40 college students who took the writing skills course (for one semester with a weight of 4-semester credit units) taught by the researcher in the even semester 2019/ 2020, consisted of 29 women and 11 men.

Data collection tools in this study used recordings, logbooks, and data from observations. Data collection techniques were done in two ways, using a questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was used to recognize, understand, and get to know students' understanding of creative writing. The interview was used by the researcher to find out things related to the context of indigenous psychology. In conducting the interview session, the researcher referred to the viewpoint of Denzin (2001, p. 25) that "the interview as interpretive practice". Therefore, the researcher deeply interpreted the data of student's interview results. Moreover, the researcher used an in-depth review model (Liu, 2019) to obtain deep and best-quality interview results. Data analysis techniques included the stages of identifying creative work, exploring creative work related to indigenous psychology, analyzing creative work, and verifying creative work. The next steps were triangulation of data, triangulation of literature reviews, and methodological triangulation. In addition, the researcher conducted 'intersubjectivity' to make data interpretation is more profound and comprehensive (Cooper-White, 2014) so that it can be scientifically justified.

3. Result

Pre-writing Segmentation

Pre-writing segmentation is the initial stage used by the researcher to recognize and understand the students. This segmentation was carried out in the second week of February 2020. In this phase, the researcher concretely did the following: (1) trying to explore the students' daily lives related to writing and also their understanding of writing. This was done so that researcher was able to understand deeply the views of students about writing and how their daily facts in writing; (2) exploring the writing difficulties experienced by students concerning psychological, sociological, and anthropological contexts. It was very necessary to be able to recognize the problems experienced by students concerning the writing; and (3) exploring the impressions and hopes raised by students in writing. To make the researcher easier on collecting the data of pre-writing, the researcher made a pre-writing instrument. In this case, the instrument was flexible. The researcher used the instrument for a reference in conducting the interview and questionnaire with the students, although in reality, the instrument could be added or reduced according to the data needs of the researcher.

In pre-writing segmentation, the researcher used the discussion and interview. The discussion was carried out in a classical context, especially general matters related to writing. The interview was used by the researcher to understand more personal problems of the students. In the learning of

writing, students were extroverts and introverts. For extroverted students, it was easier to understand their views in writing because they were more open-minded. Unlike the case with students who were introverted types, they were somewhat difficult to open in terms of their views on writing. To anticipate this, the researcher gave a questionnaire. Through the questionnaire, students could fill in things related to the writing context.

The questionnaire consisted of 5 questions that referred to creative writing. Based on the questionnaire sent to the students, the following data were obtained. Question 1. Do you like writing? Based on the results of the questionnaire obtained, the answers were: 31 students answered yes, 9 students answered no. Question 2. Do you like creative writing? 20 students answered yes, 10 students answered no. Question 3. Do you like to read books that relate to the topic of creative writing strategies? 20 students answered yes, 20 students answered no. Question 4. Do you like to read creative writing books of novels, poems, dramas, short stories? 14 students answered yes, 26 students answered no. Question 5. Does creative writing benefit you? 40 students answered yes, 0 students answered no. Question 6. Have you ever heard of creative writing related to indigenous psychology? 0 students answered yes, 40 students answered no. For the context of interviews and discussions, data obtained, among others (1) problems in expressing ideas when writing, (2) writing process that suddenly stalled in the journey so that it is not finished yet, and (3) writing environment that is less supportive for writing.

The second meeting was held in the third week of February 2020. At this meeting, the researcher provided creative writing material in relation to indigenous psychology. In detail, the learning activities are exposed as follows.

First, the researcher gave an apperception about learning to write creatively in relation to indigenous psychology. The researcher provided information about the benefits of learning creative writing associated with indigenous psychology. Indigenous psychology studies in creative work, especially literature, can be reviewed through three things, namely (1) the creative process, (2) the text, and (3) the reader. Furthermore, the material was presented with a lecture and discussion model. Those who feel unclear about creative writing material and indigenous psychology were invited to ask the researcher directly.

Table 1. Areas of Indigenous Psychology Studies

Category	Information
The author's creative process concerning indigenous psychology	Identifying, classifying, and interpreting the author's creative process in writing creative work. The creative process is associated with creative works written by the author concerning indigenous psychology, specific or personal thoughts, related to traditional things.
Indigenous psychology in the text of creative work	Creative work texts. This relates to the concept/ theory of indigenous psychology or the originality of indigenous psychology contained in the text of creative work.
Indigenous psychology reader	Identifying, classifying, and interpreting indigenous psychology that is related to the reader's response. The reader's response can be related to indigenous psychology contained in the text of creative work, both professional reader and ordinary reader.

Second, after providing material on creative writing in the context of indigenous psychology, the researcher gave a concrete example. Giving a concrete example, in this case, related to Indonesian literature in which indigenous elements of psychology are raised. The emergence of indigenous psychology can be in the form of (1) the mental processes of characters in literature that are manifested in behavior, actions, and also utterances, (2) events that appear in literature that related to the context of indigenous psychology, and (3) the narratives that are raised by the author in literature, both manifest and latent. Indonesian literature related to indigenous psychology, for example *Ikan-ikan Hiu, Ido, Homa* (Mangunwijaya, 2014a), *Burung-Burung Manyar* (Mangunwijaya, 2015), *Burung-burung Rantau* (2014b), and *Laskar Pelangi* (Hirata, 2016). The novels tell the story of Indonesian people with their own unique ideas. In addition, the researcher showed that film can also be considered as a document that is related to indigenous psychology if the film raises matters related to individual, traditional, and personal thought, and behavior.

Third, after providing material related to Indonesian literature that had relevance to indigenous psychology, the researcher provided a session for questions and answers related to the material presented. The session was conducted to know the students that could understand the material presented and the students who still were not familiar with the creative writing material from the indigenous studies perspective.

Writing Process Segmentation

At this stage, students practiced writing through the process of mentoring from the researcher. To facilitate students in creative writing, the researcher provided a RECPRF model (Reading, Exploration, Contemplation, Practice, Revision, Finalization). Students were asked to write a creative genre of short stories. They were free to choose the theme as they like.

In the initial activity, students were asked to read Indonesian literary works (related to indigenous psychology) that had been offered by the researcher (reading stage). In the second stage, students were interested in exploring the results of reading literary books. In this case, someone can be happy to write because he has examples/modeling from other people (the exploration stage). The third stage was contemplation. At this stage, students who had explored were asked to do a contemplation to find an idea for writing. In creative writing, contemplation was very important for the stabilization and maturation of ideas for writing (contemplation stage). The fourth stage was practice. This stage was the core stage of creative writing from the perspective of indigenous psychology. Students practiced writing in their own style (practice phase). The fifth stage was revision. At this stage, the students revised their own work or self-review (revision stage).

Table 2. Stages of the writing process

Stages	Description of activities	Activity output
Reading	Exploring the reading material for creative writing, for example, novels, short stories, poetry, drama related to indigenous psychology.	List of reading results and resume of creative work, at least 2 titles of literature.

Stages	Description of activities	Activity output
Exploration	Exploring creative ideas based on reading results and elaborated with individual experiences.	Draft of category themes will be developed into writing, with a minimum of 3 themes.
Contemplation	Strengthen and deepen ideas so that they are optimal and related to the context of indigenous psychology	A chosen theme that will be developed as creative writing.
Practice	Expressing the ideas in the form of creative writing.	A creative short story genre that uses the perspective of indigenous psychology.
Revision	Identifying grammatical errors and concept errors in expressing ideas.	Edited creative writing.
Finalization	Finalizing the creative writing.	Final and optimal creative writing

The stages in the writing process were reflective and flexible. Students might ask questions and also discuss with the researcher during the creative writing process if they experienced a block in writing. This is indeed sometimes the case when someone writes creatively. The students may stop writing for various reasons, both psychological and non-psychological.

Post-Writing Segmentation

Post-writing segmentation was carried out in the third week of February. Post-writing segmentation related to activities after writing had been revised by students. At this stage, the writings that had been produced by students in the form of drafts, were re-read and revised if there were things that were not quite right. At this stage, writing was given input by peers as peer review. Peers would provide input related to the writing of their friends. This input was related to the linguistic context. As for the context of the content, this was *licentia poetica*. Therefore, in terms of essence, no input was requested from the peer review. However, if there were errors in the logic context, peer-reviewed could provide input.

After getting input from peers, the researcher gave input related to the creative work written by the students. At this post-writing stage, the researcher asked students to provide reflection and evaluation related to the creative writing of indigenous perspectives. The reflection and evaluation were in the form of a questionnaire distributed to students through the Google Form. In the questionnaire, there were 3 questions. Question 1: In your opinion, what is the learning process of creative writing that uses the perspective of indigenous psychology? 77.5% of students answered very well, 17.5% of students answered well, 13 students answered mediocre. Question 2: Does creative writing from an indigenous psychological perspective make it easier for you to write? 32% of students answered yes, 0% of students answered no, and 68% of students answered mediocre. Question no 3: Does the creative writing of the perspective of indigenous psychology benefit you? 90% of students answered yes and 10% of students answered no. Question 4: Is learning to write creatively using the perspective of

indigenous psychology easy? 80% of students answered yes, while 20% of students answered no. For interviews and discussion on post-writing data obtained (1) students felt more comfortable writing creatively using the perspective of indigenous psychology because based on personal experience. They felt it was easier than telling about other people's experiences; (2) creative writing using the RECPRF (Reading, Exploration, Contemplation, Practice, Revision, Finalization) methods was easier because there are clear stages in the writing process. This facilitates students in creative writing.

5. Discussion

The results showed that the learning of creative writing, as same as other subjects, can be taught to students. The results of this study are in line with the viewpoint of Graham (2019) that writing can be taught. In this context, the learning of creative writing is associated with an indigenous psychological approach. Creative writing through indigenous psychology eases students in writing and it provides more benefits for the writers. As is in line with the studies conducted by Ahmadi (2019b, 2020a), it showed that research in learning writing is more optimal through a psychological approach because the study of psychology in learning writing focuses more on the students as the “main character” in learning. By recognizing the psychological context of the students will be easier to provide the learning material.

The results of this study also support the researchers who associated writing and psychology, for example, Alluhaybi (2015, 2017), Cabillas (2014), Cloutier (2016), dan Wells et al. (2018). The researchers pointed out that psychology and learning are closely related. As a disciplined study that learns mental and behavioral processes, psychology can provide a great contribution to learning. Psychology can explore individual problems that exist within the learners so that it helps them to identify themselves and adjust to the learning context in college or school. Psychology also bridged teaching between the psychology of the teacher and the students. If the two of them are emotionally familiar and comfortable, the learning of creative writing will be optimal. Moreover, the writing context that is closer to the psychology of the students will make the students easier to write because they experienced what they wrote.

6. Conclusion

The learning of creative writing is indeed not easy. Therefore, based on preliminary research, the result showed that students have difficulty in writing. Related to that, creative writing with an indigenous psychological perspective was offered using the RECPRF model (Reading, Exploration, Contemplation, Practice, Revision, Finalization). Based on the learning process of creative writing, it is concluded that learning to write creatively using the perspective of indigenous psychology makes the students more easily expressing ideas. This is caused by two main factors, namely (1) creative writing using the perspective of indigenous psychology is self-telling. Therefore, it becomes easier and makes students write fluently and (2) clear stages in creative writing so that it makes students easier to write creatively by using design.

Concerning the recommendations, this research is a study that focused more on the context of writing using indigenous psychology. The results of this study can be used as a comparison for the next researchers or researchers in the same field. Therefore, further research can examine the learning of creative writing through another psychological approach, for example, the psychology of feminism or masculinism. A study with the psychology of feminism or masculinism approach is interesting because the learning of creative writing cannot be separated from the psychological context of students, both male and female students. Regarding the results of the study, the researcher acknowledged that this study has limitations in terms of respondents and interpretations. Therefore, next researchers can

optimize it by increasing the variety of respondents and making interpretation more refined. Thus, the research findings can be more valid and comprehensive.

7. Recommendations

Universally, the research on the learning of creative writing has indeed been done a lot. This research was one of the contributions in the context of learning creative writing through psychological perspectives. As is well known, the learning of creative writing that is viewed through psychological perspectives was still not widely used. The lack of the psychology approach in this field is caused by one factor, namely the researcher. In learning writing, researchers in the fields of language and literature rarely come from the field of psychology or learn psychology comprehensively. This has resulted in the lack of studies on the learning of creative writing through a psychological approach. Therefore, this research is expected to give more insight into the study of learning creative writing through a psychological context, both for teachers from the eastern and western regions.

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