THE ABILITY OF PROSPECTIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN MAKING LYRIC CONTAINING NATIONAL CHARACTER

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Abstract - Making lyric containing national character is a fundamental requirement for prospective elementary school teachers in Indonesia. Without the music applications' assistance, students would face difficulties in making lyrics. This paper aims at analyzing the ability of students in making lyrics containing national character with the assistance of MuseScore music application. The method used was content analysis using computer media. The data were collected through surveys and collections of the midi files containing songs' melody, the lyrics of which were written afterward by students. Sixty-six students from the primary school teacher education program were taken as the samples. The results showed that the majority of students already had a good ability to choose diction in the lyrics of the song and to write the lyrics that match the designated theme. However, students in general did not have adequate ability in making the lyrics of songs that matched the melodic phrase of the song.

Keywords - Student Ability, Creating Song Lyrics, Music Notation Software, National Character Theme.

I. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, elementary school teachers are required to be able to write lyrics based on the required theme of learning. This refers to the curriculum in elementary schools, which is one of the basic competencies in grade one, point 4.4 states: reciting children's songs [1]. Through a character education program in schools reinforced by the Regulation of the President of the Republic of Indonesia Number 87 of 2017 on Strengthening Character Education, all lessons at school are required to instill the values of national character to students. Therefore, in any music lessons, the songs taught must contain the values of national characters. In Indonesia, the character values were formulated into 18 characters [2], which then in 2017 were re-formulated into five main character values consisting religious, nationalist, independent, mutually cooperative, and virtuous [3], each key value was then subdivided into sub-values.

The ability of primary school teachers to write lyrics containing national character has not been easily formed. It requires a serious exercise because the ability to write lyrics is a part of the ability to process words, and certainly a part of the creative process. Effective lyric writing is not just a semantic confluence of words with penumbras of meaning—it also encompasses syntactical conventions (conversational, vernacular, localised and genre-specific tribal idioms), functional, pragmatic constraints (song length, message, target audience demographic, reach), and, importantly, phonology (the sound of the words and syllables themselves) [4]. Therefore, the ability to write lyrics needs to be established since in the tertiary level, especially when the students are enrolled in the primary school teacher

education program. Ideally, writing lyrics for elementary school children can be done easily. However, in reality, the prospective primary school teachers have difficulty to do so. In addition to the limitations of their abilities to process words with certain content, it is also caused by the limitations in making the melody of the song. Therefore, this research aims at analyzing the ability of prospective elementary school teachers in making lyrics of songs that contain national character through the aid of music notation software, MuseScore application. It is described in musescore.com that MuseScore is a company devoted to helping aspiring musicians in their journey to master the music they love [5]. It was selected because it could be downloaded for free and was easy to use.

Some previous studies related to songs and lyrics have been done by [Long and Barber \[6\]](#), [McIntyre \[7\]](#), [Ko \[8\]](#), [Bennett \[9\]](#), [Fiveash and Luck \[10\]](#), [Mori and Iwanaga \[11\]](#), [Pettijohn and Sacco \[12\]](#), [Ruth \[13\]](#), [Guéguen, Jacob and Lamy \[14\]](#), [Moschini \[15\]](#), [Stratton and Zalanowski \[16\]](#), [Sousou \[17\]](#), [Bridle \[18\]](#), [Lester and Gunn \[19\]](#), [Ali and Peynircioğlu \[20\]](#), [Hansen and Hansen \[21\]](#), [Napoleto \[22\]](#), and [Mazzucchelli \[23\]](#). However, there has not been any research that investigates on writing lyrics by using music notation software, or writing lyrics by referring to the melodies of songs that have been provided, or writing lyrics containing national character themes for elementary school students. Therefore, this research is directed to the development of prospective teacher in making lyrics containing national characters with the assistance of music applications. The writing of the song lyrics is different from the making of the melody of the song, therefore this research seeks to focus on making song lyrics. The

theme of the proposed song is tolerance, one of the 18 characters developed in education in Indonesia.

II. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Site and Subject

The research was conducted in one of the universities in West Java Province, Indonesia, in the primary school teacher education program. It involved 66 sixth-semester students consisting of 16 (24.2%) male and 50 (75.8%) female students. The subjects were from various regions in the province of West Java. A total of 27 (40.9%) students were from Sumedang area, 19 (28.8%) students were from Bandung, four (6.1%) students were from Majalengka, three (4.5%) students were from Cirebon, four (6.1%) students were from Garut, two (3%) students were from Kuningan, two (3%) students were from Indramayu, one (1.5%) student was from Subang, three (4.5%) students were from other areas in West Java, and one (1.5%) student was from other areas outside West Java.

2.2. Procedures

The steps taken in this research included: 1) students were assigned to install the latest MuseScore application version 2, on their laptop; 2) the melodic songs were made by the researchers to be filled by lyrics written by students in the form of midi file; 3) students were tested to write the lyrics of the song according to the given theme; and 4) students were given survey related to the lyrics they wrote. Following is Fig.1., which is a melody of the song that should be filled with lyrics written by students under tolerance theme.

Fig.1. The Melody of Tolerance-Themed Song

2.3. Data Analysis

Song lyrics written by all students were examined and analyzed one by one from several aspects, namely: the use of diction, the suitability between the meaning of lyrics with the theme, and the accuracy between the numbers of syllables with the melody of the song. The analysis was made into a linear scale ranged 1 to 5. The results of the analysis were interpreted and matched with survey results and relevant theories.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. MuseScore Application Installation Process

In the process of installing MuseScore applications in the computer of 66 students, 59 (89.4%) students did

not experience any problems. On the other hand, 7 (10.6%) students experienced problems. "When I downloaded the MuseScore app on a regular computer, it could be downloaded but could not be installed. It always failed. Finally, I used the MuseScore application downloaded by my friend and it could be installed. What odd was the MuseScore's version was the same, one could not be installed, while the other could" (R1).

3.2. Analysis of Lyrics Written by Students

Before tested to write the lyrics, students were assigned to fill the survey. They were asked, "Have you ever written song lyrics?" A total of 48 (72.7%) students answered 'Yes' and 18 (27.3%) students answered 'No'. Thus, the majority of students already had experience in writing song lyrics. However, researchers had not figured out the true quality of the song lyrics previously written by the students. Therefore, through the tests given to them, the researchers attempted to find out the quality of the song lyrics written by students.

All melodies of songs in a midi file that had been filled with lyrics written by 66 students were analyzed one by one. The results of the analysis can be seen in Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3 below.

Table1: Diction Analysis

Theme	Diction				
	Very Improper	Improper	Not So Proper	Proper	Very Proper
Tolerance	1	1	13	24	27

Based on Table 1, it has been identified that the majority of the students had demonstrated good ability in choosing diction for song lyrics. Many students already used proper diction, which was 36.36%, and very proper diction, which was 40.91%. Meanwhile, a few others still showed poor selection of diction. The selection of diction becomes an important element in writing the lyrics of the song, because "lyric diction is considered to describe appropriate pronunciation, enunciation, and expression" [24]. One student said, "the theme of the song made us hard to choose diction" (R2). Therefore, students' difficulties in choosing diction were influenced by the theme song.

Table2: Lyrics and Theme Analysis

Theme	The Meaning of Lyrics with Themes				
	Very Unrelated	Unrelated	Not So Related	Related	Very Related
Tolerance	1	6	21	24	14

Based on Table 2, it has been identified that the majority of the students had shown good ability in writing song lyrics in which the meaning was related to the theme of the song. This was shown by 36.36% of the students who successfully wrote lyrics that were unrelated to the theme, and 21.21% of students managed to write lyrics that were very related to the theme. In addition, there were quite a lot of students

who showed poor results. Thus, this capability also needed to be improved, because song texts that were not exquisite, and did not go well with the melody flow nor with the song theme, will produce an unappealing song to hear, and sometimes potential to make the listener get bored, irritated, or even angry [25].

One student said that the difficulty he experienced was "connecting the meaning of the lyrics to the theme of the song" (R3). This statement further reinforced the finding that students had difficulties in writing song in a particular theme. As prospective primary school teachers in Indonesia, the aforementioned problem had the potential to make them face difficulties when teaching music in elementary school because the learning is divided into themes, so that the lyrics of the song must be in accordance with the theme being taught.

Table3: Syllables and Song Melody Analysis

Theme	Suitability of Syllables with Song Melody				
	Very Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Not Suitable	Suitable	Very Suitable
Tolerance	1	12	23	23	7

Based on Table 3, it has been identified that the majority of students did not have a good ability in writing lyrics with syllables that were suitable with song melody. Only 45.45% were already on the positive side, and 54.55% were still on the negative side. This capability obviously still needed to be improved. The song text is an extremely important part of the song. A good song text should be harmonious with the melody of the song that will bring the listener to delightful and pleasant mood [25].

In Fig.2., example of lyric written by student that was not good can be seen because the division of the syllable (in Indonesian) did not match the number of melodies of the song. Like the word "ya-ng" on the first and the ninth bars that were separated. In fact, the word "yang" should be put together in one tone.

Fig.2. Example of Lyrics Written by Student

The students were asked about the difficulty in writing the lyrics of the song, "What was the most difficult thing to do when writing the lyrics?" As many as 10 (15.2%) students answered making interrelationship between words, 12 (18.2%) students answered choosing diction, 16 (24.2%) students answered making a connection between the meaning

of the lyrics to the theme of the song, and 28 (42.4%) answered matching the syllable of the lyrics with the melody of the song.

Some students also put up different reasons for the difficulty of making lyrics, such as the following:

"It was difficult to make meaningful words" (R4).

"Lack of good vocabulary" (R5).

"Inspiration could be lost suddenly" (R6).

"What was poured out in a lyric was usually in accordance with the content of the heart or an idea that we really wanted to convey. When the theme was determined before, there were some that were not the same with the content of the heart so it was a little difficult to make the lyrics" (R7).

"Creating lyrics in which the messages can be always remembered by children" (R8).

"Starting the writing of the lyrics that would be created and matching the lyrics with the existing melody were difficult" (R9).

"It was difficult to concentrate if the environment is not conducive" (R10).

Based on the aforementioned statements by the students, the difficulties in making the lyrics of the song were quite diverse, which were from the lack of vocabulary, ideas, themes, and messages to be conveyed. Students difficulties in terms of ability in the basic skills of the music has been identified, this is in accordance with the idea that to make a good lyric, the songwriters or composers usually consider rhythm, harmony, theme, even the fluctuation of melody [25, 26].

3.3. The Effectiveness of the MuseScore Application

A survey was conducted to find out the effectiveness of MuseScore application in the process of making the lyrics of the song. Following is students' statements about the use of MuseScore application.

Table4. The Use of MuseScore Application

Effectivity	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fairly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
MuseScore application makes it easier to write song lyrics.	1	1	6	28	30
MuseScore application is easy to operate.		2	19	35	10

Based on Table 4, it has been identified that the majority of the students were in agreement that the MuseScore application made it easier for them to write song lyrics, and it was also easy to operate. This kind of application obviously assisted students who had no background in music education. It was in accordance with other research results, that the music notation software allows to perceive clearly the relationship between written notation and sound and

probably it makes easier the memorization of these pairs [27].

CONCLUSIONS

From this research, it could be concluded that the majority of students already had a good ability to choose diction in the lyrics of the song and to write the lyrics that match the designated theme. However, students in general did not have adequate ability in making the lyrics of songs that matched the melodic phrase of the song. Additional lessons were required to improve basic music skills and knowledge for the prospective primary school teachers.

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